A meeting of the Council was held in Room 201, The Carrington Building, on Friday 25 March 2011 at 2.30pm.

Present: The President
The Vice-President
The Treasurer
The Vice-Chancellor
The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Professor T A Downes)
The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor S J Mithen)
The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor R L Robson)
The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor C M Williams)

Mr T Bartlam
Professor J Board
Professor G Brooks
Mr R Buller
Ms N Cazimoglu
Mrs H Dominick
Mr R Dwyer
Professor R H Ellis
Mr R E R Evans
Mr J D Fishburn

Professor S Hawker
Dr J C F Hayward
Ms J Lazarczyk
Professor G Marston
Councillor F Pugh
Dr A Reed
Mr S P Sherman
Councillor P Swaddle
Professor S F Walker

The University Secretary

In attendance: The Director of Academic Services
The Director of External Affairs
The Director of Finance and Corporate Services
The Director of Human Resources
The Director of Student Services

Apologies were received from Professor Berry, Dr Erskine, Mr Gilchrist, Professor Hodge, Dr Mueller-Harvey, Mr Palmer, Sir John Sunderland and the Director of Estates and Facilities Management.

The President reported the deaths of:

**Mr Dermot O’Rourke** who had been appointed in 1954 and had retired as Senior Sub-Librarian in 1984.

**Professor Paul Stiff** who had been appointed in 1980 and had been Professor of Typography at the time of his death.
Dr Terence Willett who had been founder Warden of Windsor Hall from 1963 until 1970.

*11/14 The minutes (11/01-11/12) of the meeting held on 28 January 2011 were confirmed and signed.

**Items of Report**

11/15 Report of the Strategy and Finance Committee

* The Council received the Report of the meetings of the Strategy and Finance Committee held on 28 January and 7 March 2011 relating to items for report.

Resolved:

“That the Report of the meetings of the Strategy and Finance Committee held on 28 January and 7 March 2011 relating to items for report, now submitted, be received.”


Resolved:

“That the Annual Report of the Museum of English Rural Life 2009-10, now submitted, be received.”

11/17 Documents sealed and to be sealed

* The Council received a list of documents sealed and to be sealed.

Resolved:

“That the Council approve the action taken by the Officers and Members in affixing the University Seal to documents sealed since the last Ordinary Meeting of the Council and authorise the Seal of the University to be affixed to the documents to be sealed as now reported.”
Items for Discussion and Decision

11/18 Report of the Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor

(a) noted that the national context in which universities were expected to operate remained uncertain. The point of intersection between higher tuition fees and access agreements was still unclear and the intended White Paper on Higher Education had been further delayed as the politics of compromise continued to dominate a confused scene. Such guidance as it was possible to provide had been made available to those within the University who had responsibility for liaising with applicants and their advisers;

(b) reported that the HEFCE grant letter for 2011-12 saw the University some £1.5m worse off than forecast but the outcomes of the Three-Year Planning Process were still to be implemented as intended. Many successes in which the University could take pride were recorded in the most recent edition of Research Review and the University’s rate of success in securing research grant funding continued to rank ahead of the best among its peers;

(c) assured the Council that a practical, sympathetic, approach was being extended to all those members and associates of the University who had been affected by a succession of natural disasters in Japan.

Resolved:

“That the Report of the Vice-Chancellor, now submitted, be approved.”

11/19 Reports of the Strategy and Finance Committee

* The Council received the Reports of the meetings of the Strategy and Finance Committee held on 28 January and 7 March 2011 relating to items for discussion and decision.

In regard to item 4(a) the Financial Report: January 2011, the President noted that the projected operating deficit for the year ending 31 July 2011 had been adjusted from £2.1m to £5.9m despite an encouraging improvement in the financial position of the Henley Business School which, nonetheless, remained vulnerable to cyclical pressures. The Treasurer commented that, were one element of the income due to accrue from the Halls Accommodation Project to be received as planned, a modest retained surplus for the University Group would result but observed that the University had continued to make a loss, both this year and last, on its day-to-day operations. In considering revised Financial Forecasts at its meeting on 13 June 2011 it would be for the Strategy and Finance Committee to take a view on how best to address these and further pressures on revenue in the year ending 31 July 2012 ahead of a
fundamentally changed funding regime for higher education in the year ending 31 July 2013.

In response to a question from Mr Evans, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor explained that the University had achieved some 85% of savings it had hoped to make at the outset of the reshaping exercise. Mr Evans commented that this represented a commendable achievement.

In regard to item 4(b) Analysis of Research Grants and Contracts: FQ1 & 2, 2010-11, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor Williams) reported that she was considering ways in which the traditional quarterly reports might be recast, the better to reflect the University’s strategic research aspirations and achievements. Mrs Scott welcomed such a development which she saw as fundamental to providing the Council with assurance that the University was doing all it could to sustain and enhance its research-intensive status.

In response to a question from Professor Hawker, Professor Williams explained that every effort was being made to improve research grant earnings in the Faculty of Social Sciences – and, indeed, more generally - by encouraging an interdisciplinary approach targeted strategically towards available funding streams.

In regard to item 4(c) Halls Accommodation Project, the Director of Finance and Corporate Services reported that Preferred Bidder status had been granted to UPP in the week beginning 7 March 2011 and that both parties were continuing to work in good faith towards Financial Close at the end of May.

In regard to item 4(d) Undergraduate Tuition Fees for 2012-13, the President explained that the Strategy and Finance Committee had engaged in a lengthy discussion of this complex and continually evolving matter and had, on that occasion, determined that the undergraduate tuition fee across all programmes be set at or towards the upper end of the permitted range. The Vice-Chancellor now reported that, conscious of the true cost of a degree programme and mindful of the financial commitment that would be necessary in order to meet the Government’s goals for widening participation against a background of severe reductions in public funding and the imperative of continuing to provide the highest quality student experience, the recommendation was for the University to set its fee at £9,000. He explained that, throughout the sector, fee levels remained subject to the approval (by 11 July 2011) of an Access Agreement by the Office for Fair Access (OfFA).

A number of members spoke in support of the recommendation which they considered to be in the best interests of the University. Noting that a number of kindred institutions had recently set a fee at the maximum permitted level, the President and the Vice-President Democracy and Campaigns of the Students’ Union expressed the hope that the University had determined its position on the basis of the quality of its offering to students and that it would spare no effort in maintaining and enhancing its commitment to widening participation and outreach. Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor Robson) reminded the Council that the University
already had considerable experience of improving access upon which it could build and Professor Marston expressed the view that it was well placed to go further and become an acknowledged leader in the field.

In regard to item 4(e) Major Capital Projects, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor drew attention to those projects which had attracted an 'amber' notation. Handover of the Film, Theatre & Television building was now expected on 4 April 2011 in line with the University’s timetable for occupation and a revised operational commencement date for the Library Repository had been set. Delays to the London Road Infrastructure and Institute of Education Projects were interlinked such that the planned phased handover of the latter had come under pressure and contingency planning was now underway.

In regard to item 4(f) the Report of the Health and Safety Committee: Spring Term 2011, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor Williams) commented that good progress had been made in relation to those matters reported therein.

Resolved:

“That:

(a) the Financial Report: January 2011, now submitted, be received;

(b) the Analysis of Research Grants and Contracts: FQ1 & 2, 2010-11, now submitted, be received;

(c) the Report on the Halls Accommodation Project, now submitted, be approved and that, bearing in mind the planned contractual completion date of 31 May 2011, the President, the Vice-Chancellor and the Treasurer, acting together, be authorised on behalf of the Council to approve the final form of the contract and authorise the Director of Finance and Corporate Services to sign the necessary documentation on behalf of the University, once the University’s legal and other advisers are satisfied that it is appropriate to do so;

(d) the Report on Undergraduate Tuition Fees now submitted, be received and that, for the academic year 2012-13, the undergraduate tuition fee for all the University’s degree programmes for full-time Home and EU students (pro rata for part-time students at or above FTE 0.25) be set at £9,000;

(e) the Report on Major Capital Projects, now submitted, be received;”

(f) the Report of the Health and Safety Committee: Spring Term 2011, now submitted, be received.”
11/20 Charter and Statutes

* The Council received a report from the University Secretary in regard to proposed alterations to the Charter and Statutes relating to changes in its own composition which had been agreed at its meeting on 28 January 2011.

Resolved:

“That, in accordance with Ordinance XLVIII (Charter and Statutes), the proposed alterations to Articles V (The President of the Council and the Vice-President of the Council), VII (The Treasurer and other Officers) and XIV (Statutes of the University) of the Charter and to Statutes I (Preliminary), II (The Members of the University), IV (The President of the Council and the Vice-President of the Council), VI (The Treasurer), XIV (The Council), XV (Powers of the Council) and XXXII (Removal and Retirement of Officers and Members) relating to changes in the composition of the Council, having been approved by the Council at its meeting on 28 January 2011 and having been communicated to the Senate and to the Standing Committee of Convocation, now be confirmed for submission to the Privy Council.”

11/21 Report of the Audit Committee

* The Council received the Report of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 24 February 2011.

Resolved:

“1. That, with reference to item 2, KPMG be appointed as external auditors for the University for the financial year ending 31 July 2011 and that their remuneration be settled with the Chairman of the Audit Committee.”

“2. That the Report of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 24 February 2011, now submitted, be approved.”

11/22 Report of the Appointments Committee

* The Council received the Report of the meeting of the Appointments Committee held on 31 January 2011.

Resolved:

“1. That:

(a) Mr R.E.R. Evans be re-appointed to the Council in Class 3 to serve for the period from 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2014;
(b) Mr H.W.A. Palmer be re-appointed to the Council in Class 3 to serve for the period from 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2014;

(c) Mrs J.M. Scott exceptionally be re-appointed to the Council in Class 3 to serve for a final period from 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2013; and

(d) Sir John Sunderland be re-appointed to the Council in Class 3 to serve for the period from 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2014;”

“2. That, with reference to item 3,

(a) it henceforth be the normal expectation for the President of the Students’ Union to have an involvement in the selection process for the appointment of a Vice-Chancellor;

(b) a Deputy and Pro-Vice-Chancellor Committee henceforth comprise:

The President of the Council (Chairman)
One Vice-President of the Council nominated by the Council
The Vice-Chancellor
One Dean of a Faculty (not being themselves a candidate for the office(s) to be filled) nominated by the Deans of the Faculties
The member of the Senate appointed by the Senate to the Council
Secretary: The University Secretary.

“3. That the Report of the meeting of the Appointments Committee held on 31 January 2011, now submitted, be approved.”

11/23 Report of the Support Services Policy Committee

* The Council received the Report of the meeting of the Support Services Policy Committee held on 31 January 2011.

Mrs Scott reminded that Council that the Committee adopted a thematic approach to its work: at its last meeting it had focussed on health and wellbeing and at the next intended to concentrate on careers and employability. Mr Buller expressed concern at the growing pressures which were evident within the Counselling and Wellbeing Service but was reassured by the Director of Student Services that the University was alert to the situation and was monitoring it closely.

Resolved:

“That the Report of the meeting of the Support Services Policy Committee held on 31 January 2011, now submitted, be approved.”
The Council received the Report of the meeting of the Senate held on 16 March 2011.

**Resolved:**

“1. That, with reference to item 1, Professor A.C. Goodwyn be re-appointed Head of the Institute of Education for the period from 1 August 2011 to 31 July 2015;”

“2. That, with reference to item 2, Professor M. Brown (Med Pharm) be accorded the title of Visiting Professor in the School of Chemistry, Food and Pharmacy for the period ending 31 December 2013;”

“3. That, with reference to item 3,

(a) consequent upon the merger of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities and the Faculty of Social Sciences with effect from 1 August 2011, references to those Faculties within Ordinances be altered to read “Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Science” *passim*; and

(b) consequent upon the merger of the Academic Services Directorate and the Student Services Directorate with effect from 1 August 2011, references to those Directorates within Ordinances and the Regulations for Conduct be altered to read “Student and Academic Services Directorate” *passim*; and that references to the Director of Academic Services and the Director of Student Services within Ordinances and the Regulations for Conduct be altered to read “Director of Student and Academic Services” *passim*.

“4. That the Report of the meeting of the Senate held on 16 March 2011, now submitted, be approved.”

The Council received the edited Report of the standing Restructuring Committee which differed from the full Report presented at Minute 11/30 below only in the absence of the name of an individual staff member being recommended for dismissal by reason of redundancy.

In regard to support staff in the School of Systems Engineering, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor reported that consultation with the holder of a post dedicated specifically and exclusively to the activities of the Centre for Advanced Computing and Emerging Technologies (ACET) which had closed on 31 July 2010 was proceeding positively towards a negotiated settlement. As Chairman of the standing Restructuring Committee, Mr Dwyer commented that, in his view, it was a remarkable achievement for so
extensive an exercise to have realised its aims predominantly by voluntary means. The President thanked all members of the standing Restructuring Committee, in particular Mr Dwyer and Mrs Scott, for the time and patience they had committed to this important work. In turn, Mr Dwyer thanked all those members of the University who had helped in any way and made especial mention of the Human Resources team.

11/26 *Effectiveness of the Council*

The Council received an oral report from the President and concurred with a proposal that it was timely for it to initiate a periodic review of its own effectiveness. It was suggested that members of the Council give early consideration to this matter and communicate any preliminary views they might have to the University Secretary.

**Resolved:**

“That:

(a) a review of the effectiveness of the Council be undertaken in accordance with the CUC Governance Code of Practice;

(b) Mr H W A Palmer (Chairman), Dr J C F Hayward and Professor G Marston be invited to conduct the review, consulting as appropriate;

(c) the proposed terms of reference for the review be submitted to the Council for approval at its meeting on 11 July 2011 and the outcome of the review be submitted to the Council for consideration at its meeting on 30 January 2012.”

11/27 *Report of the Students’ Union Liaison Committee*

* The Council received the Report of the meeting of the Students’ Union Liaison Committee held on 1 December 2010.

**Resolved:**

“That the Report of the meeting of the Students’ Union Liaison Committee held on 1 December 2010, now submitted, be received.”

11/28 *Date of final meeting of the Council in the Session 2010-11*

Monday 11 July 2011 at 2.15pm

11/29 *Provisional dates for meetings of the Council in the Session 2011-12*

Friday 25 November 2011 at 2.15pm
Monday 30 January 2012 at 2.15pm
Monday 26 March 2012 at 2.30pm preceded by a meeting of the Court in the morning
Monday 9 July 2012 at 2.15pm

At this point student members left the meeting, as the remainder of the agenda consisted of Reserved Business.