A meeting of the Council was held in Room 110, Building L022, London Road on Monday 26 March 2012 at 2.15pm.

Present:
The President
The Vice-President (Mr R Dwyer)
The Vice-President (Mrs J M Scott)
The Vice-Chancellor
The Deputy Vice-Chancellor
The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor G Brooks)
The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor S J Mithen)
The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor C M Williams)

Professor J Board
Mr R Buller
Dr B Cosh
Mrs B Edwards
Professor R H Ellis
Dr P Erskine
Mr R E R Evans
Professor S Hawker
Mr K Hobley
Professor A M Hodge

Dr I Mueller-Harvey
Mr H W A Palmer
Dr P R Preston
Dr A P Reed
Mr S P Sherman
Mr A Slater
Sir John Sunderland
Professor G H Tucker
Ms S M Woodman

The University Secretary

In attendance:
The Director of External Affairs
The Director of Estates and Facilities Management
The Director of Finance and Corporate Services
The Director of Student and Academic Services

Apologies were received from Mr T Bartlam, Mr J D Fishburn and Professor G Marston.

The President reported the death of Dr Peter Harris who had been appointed Lecturer in the Department of Soil Science in 1962 and had retired in 1998.

Referring to the successful meeting of the Court earlier in the day, the President asked that any comments on the style or format of the next such event be relayed to the University Secretary. Dr Hodge suggested that the research prizewinners from each Faculty be afforded the opportunity to speak briefly about their work.
12/18 The minutes (12/01-12/16) of the meeting held on 30 January 2012 were confirmed and signed.

**Items of Report**

12/19 **Report of the Strategy and Finance Committee** (Item 2(a))

* The Council received the Report of the meetings of the Strategy and Finance Committee held on 27 January and 5 March 2012 relating to items for report.

**Resolved:**

“That the Report of the meetings of the Strategy and Finance Committee held on 27 January and 5 March 2012 relating to items for report, now submitted, be received.”

12/20 **Documents sealed and to be sealed** (Item 2(b))

* 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**

12/21 **Report of the Vice-Chancellor** (Item 3)

The Vice-Chancellor made a presentation to the Council (copy inserted in Minute Book) under the title *A framework for a new University Strategy*. He explained that it was his intention at this stage to chart a course for the future and to engage in more detailed planning and consultation within the University throughout the Summer Term. Sir David set out five key priorities by which the University might fulfil its mission and realise its ambition, each of which was illustrated by indicative actions that were either in train or to follow. In turn, the ways it which it was intended that these priorities be sustained and supported by services of the highest quality were illustrated similarly.

Much of the ensuing discussion was coloured by the recent admission of four institutions, all formerly a part of the 1994 Group, into the Russell Group. Initially, members enquired as to the attributes which the University might emphasise and develop over time in order to position itself for a similar transition but, in debate, came collectively to the view that the University should instead have confidence in its distinctive identity and, irrespective of informal groupings, seek to dominate a
market niche that was consistent with its own ambitions. For now, there remained scope for the 1994 Group to make common cause in the name of research intensity and the University stood to gain from a continuing association with it.

On the question of ambition, Mrs Scott stressed the need for boldness at this particular juncture and Dr Reed suggested that the emphasis accorded to impact within the Research Excellence Framework played to the University’s strengths and should be exploited to the full. More generally, it was imperative that a balance be struck between the pursuit of opportunities on the one hand and the underlying financial position on the other. As the University sought to rebalance its activities, all aspects of its cost base would be subject to scrutiny in the months ahead and, throughout this exercise, communication with staff must be at once realistic, positive and unrelenting.

In conclusion, the Vice-Chancellor invited members of the Council to be in touch with him between formal meetings as the present framework evolved into a more detailed, though still concise, strategy.

**Resolved:**

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

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**12/22 Reports of the Strategy and Finance Committee (Item 4)**

The Council received the reports of the meetings of the Strategy and Finance Committee held on 27 January and 5 March 2012 relating to items for discussion and decision.

In regard to item 4(a), the Financial Report: January 2012, the President explained that, following a half-year review of the financial position of all resource units within the University, the forecast operating deficit for the Academic Group in the year ending 31 July 2012 had been adjusted from the budgeted figure of £3.9m to £5.9m. This arose largely from a delay in the operational commencement of the Halls Accommodation Project and a worsening of the budgeted deficit position in the Institute of Education and in Catering, where strenuous efforts were being made to bring a newly configured operation to profitability.

In response to a question from Dr Mueller-Harvey, the Director of Finance and Corporate Services explained that the capital receipt from UPP in respect of the Halls Accommodation Project was being applied, for the most part, to discharging the debt that had been incurred in building the Halls that had now been transferred and to eliminating the University’s overdraft.

In regard to item 4(b), Financial Forecasts 2012/13-2015/16, the President explained that the Financial Forecasts, as presented to the Strategy and Finance Committee, had drawn together, for the first time, a number of initiatives (such as the Academic Investment Project and a significant
increase in overseas student numbers) that were either in train or contemplated and sought to plot a path to financial sustainability as the planning period progressed. Against a background of seeking to achieve an operating surplus equivalent to 1.5% of income by 2015/16, and taking into account a number of measures the net effect of which was to shift resource away from the estate and administration and towards the University’s core areas of teaching, learning and research, the Financial Forecasts as currently drawn foreshadowed a deficit of some REDACTED S.43 in 2012-13, a very modest surplus in 2013-14, and increasing surpluses thereafter. In response to questions, the Vice-Chancellor explained that the Promoting Excellence Project, currently underway, was intended not only to energise and reward colleagues but also to address underperformance where such existed; and the President commented that, given the prolonged period of capital investment in the estate now concluding, he believed that the University should consider itself to be appropriately resilient to proposed reductions in the recurrent maintenance budget from the levels previously envisaged.

The Council was informed that Financial Forecasts had formally to be submitted to HEFCE by 20 June 2012. Noting that permission had been granted for the University’s submission to be made on the authority of the Strategy and Finance Committee at its meeting on 11 June, with subsequent approval by the Council at its meeting on 9 July, the Council pronounced itself accepting of the position set out in the Report of the Strategy and Finance Committee.

In regard to item 4(c), the Academic Investment Project, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor Williams) reminded the Council that the fundamental aim of the Project was to benefit the University’s performance in the Research Excellence Framework 2014, to achieve competitive success in the winning of grants and to signal its ambition to thrive as a research-intensive institution. Whilst some of the additional cost of recruiting up to fifty additional Academic Staff would be offset by greater QR and grant overhead income together with larger numbers of postgraduate research students who had been attracted to Reading by these new colleagues, the major share of the costs would be met by an increase, over time, in the quantum of overseas students from 2,000 to 3,000. Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor Mithen) commented that early progress towards this target was encouraging and reassured the Council that the University’s predominant reputation overseas was one of a strong, high-class, research-intensive, institution.

In regard to item 4(d), University of Reading Malaysia, the President reminded the Council that the development agreement entered into by the University with Iskandar Investment Berhad (IIB) in December 2011 to operate a branch campus in Malaysia contained certain conditions precedent which were to have been fulfilled by 10 March 2012 in order for the agreement to become unconditional. In view of uncertainty over the precise location of the campus which were only now approaching resolution, it was not feasible to agree the campus design to the original timetable and thus not possible to satisfy the conditions precedent by the due date. Accordingly, IIB had agreed to extend the period for the
fulfilment of the relevant conditions precedent from 10 March to 31 July 2012, thus allowing time for the location issues to be resolved, the campus design issues to be settled and the Business Plan to be further developed and finalised prior to approval by the Council at its meeting on 9 July 2012. The project remained central to the University’s strategic ambitions.

In regard to item 4(f), Analysis of Research Grants and Contracts: FQ1 & 2, 2011-12, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor Williams) was pleased to report that the University had entered listings of the top twenty UK institutions in terms of the number of grants awarded to lead applicants and had, in this respect, outperformed many of its peers. The relatively buoyant position of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Science was worthy of note.

In regard to item 4(g), the Report of the Health and Safety Committee: Spring Term 2012, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor Williams) explained that, currently, the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service would attend in the event of an unconfirmed fire alarm in sleeping accommodation but not elsewhere in the University. Accordingly, security staff and others had been trained in - and equipped to carry out - fire investigation procedures in order that alarms might, where necessary, be confirmed. Professor Williams stressed that the importance of maintaining constant vigilance and detailed records in regard to biological and radioactive materials had been impressed on all relevant colleagues; and Mr Dwyer noted that issues around lone working remained actively under consideration by the Health and Safety Committee.

In regard to item 4(h), Major Capital Projects, the Director of Estates and Facilities Management reported that Phase 2 of the Halls Accommodation Project was proceeding on time and to budget. Although a very late request to add specialist facilities for Theatre Arts, Education and Deaf Studies (valued at £700k) to the scope of the Institution of Education Project had placed the agreed budget under enduring pressure, the President took the opportunity to thank all those responsible for the revitalisation of the London Road campus which the Council, and earlier the Court, had been pleased to see at first hand.

Resolved:

“That: 

(a) the Financial Report: January 2012, now submitted, be received;
(b) a paper on Financial Forecasts 2012/13-2015/16, now submitted, be received;
(c) a paper on Academic Investment Project, now submitted, be received;
(d) a paper on the University of Reading Malaysia, now submitted, be received;
(e) the Financial Regulations, now submitted, be approved;
(f) the Analysis of Research Grants and Contracts: FQ1 & 2, 2011-12, now submitted, be received;
(g) the Report of the Health and Safety Committee: Spring Term 2012, now submitted, be received;
(h) the Report on Major Capital Projects, now submitted, be received."

12/23 Overdraft Facility with Barclays (Item 5)

The Council received a paper from the Director of Finance and Corporate Services in regard to the University’s overdraft facility with Barclays Bank (“the Bank”) together with a document containing the commercial terms as well as the standard terms for a Composite Accounting System (CAS) overdraft facility (together “the Facility Agreement”) from Barclays Bank to the Borrower (“the University”) setting out the terms and conditions upon which the Bank is prepared to make available to the University a CAS overdraft facility (“the Facility”).

Resolved:

“That, in regard to the Overdraft Facility with Barclays Bank,

(a) the borrowing by the University of up to the full amount of the Facility on the terms and conditions set out in the Facility Agreement is in the interests of and for the benefit of the University and is most likely to promote the success of the University for the benefit of the members as a whole and that such terms and conditions be and are approved and accepted;

(b) Mr D C L Savage and Ms C A B Wright be authorised to sign the Facility Agreement on behalf of the University to indicate acceptance of the terms and conditions;

(c) the Bank be authorised to act in all matters concerning the Facility and upon instruction from the University, signed in accordance with the Bank’s mandate for any of the accounts of the University held with the Bank current from time to time.”

12/24 Report of the Appointments Committee (Item 6)

The Council received the report of the meeting of the Appointments Committee held on 27 January 2012.

Resolved:

“1. That, with reference to item 2, Mr T. Bartlam be re-appointed to the Council in Class 2 for the period from 1 August 2012 to 31 July 2014.”

“2. That, with reference to item 3, Mr J.D. Fishburn be re-appointed as Chair of the Development Board for the period from 1 August 2012 to 31 July 2013.”
“3. That, with reference to item 4,

(a) in the category Up to twenty representatives of Local Schools

Mrs M. Ball (Baylis Court School, Slough)
Mr C. Clare (Geoffrey Field Junior School, Reading)
Mr A.J. Linnell (Desborough School, Maidenhead)
Ms P. Opalko (St Edmund Campion Primary School, Maidenhead)

each be re-appointed to membership of the Court until the date of the Yearly Meeting in 2017, and that

Mr P.G. Dick (Kennet School, Thatcham)
Mrs K. Gauld (Hillside Primary School, Lower Earley)
Mrs M. Hernandez Estrada (Slough Grammar School)
Mrs V. Houldey (The Downs School, Compton)
Mr C. House (Dove House School, Basingstoke)
Mr P. Lewis (Bulmershe School, Woodley)
Mr A. McGrath (Leighton Park School, Reading)
Mr D.J. Ramsden (Little Heath School, Tilehurst)
Mr T. Royle (Highdown School, Emmer Green)
Mrs B.E. Stanley (The Abbey School, Reading)
Mrs K. Winrow (Ranelagh School, Bracknell)
Mrs H. Winter (The Piggott School, Wargrave)

each be appointed to membership of the Court until the date of the Yearly Meeting in 2017;

(b) in the category Up to six representatives of The Friends of the University

Mr T. Bottomley
Dr J.M. Grainger
Mr W. Hartley Russell
Mrs A.E. Haworth
Mrs B.L. Morris
Mr D.G. Wood

each be re-appointed to membership of the Court until the date of the Yearly Meeting in 2017;

(c) in the category Recent Honorary Graduates

Professor J.R.L. Allen
Professor J. Beer
Dr A. Carnwath
Lord Hennessy of Nympsfield
Dr C.P. Peacock
Professor J.M. Slingo
Dr P. Walsh
each be appointed to membership of the Court and that henceforth appointment to the Court become an automatic entitlement of all those upon whom an Honorary Degree is conferred;

(d) in the category *Former Members of the Council of the University*

Dr J.C.F. Hayward
Dr G. Marshall
Dr P.T. Warry

each be appointed to membership of the Court and that future appointments in this category remain at the discretion of the Council on the recommendation of the Appointments Committee.”

12/25 Report of the Support Services Policy Committee (Item 7)

The Council received the report of the meeting of the Support Services Policy Committee held on 27 January 2012.

As Chair of the Committee, Mr Dwyer explained that the meeting had taken Employability as its focus and had been encouraged to hear of levels of activity which were beginning to be reflected in improved first destination returns. In response to a question from Mrs Scott, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Professor Brooks) confirmed the intention that Tutors should work in seamless partnership with the Student Employment, Experience and Careers Centre to inculcate employability skills in students and the Vice-Chancellor commented that he had encountered a number of examples of this in practice during his visits to Schools.

Resolved:

“That the Report of the meeting of the Support Services Policy Committee held on 27 January 2012, now submitted, be approved.”

12/26 Report of the Senate (Item 8)

The Council received the report of the meeting of the Senate held on 14 March 2012.

Resolved:

“1. That, with reference to item 1, Professor C.M. Williams be re-appointed as Pro-Vice-Chancellor for the period from 1 August 2012 to 31 July 2016.

“2. That, with reference to item 2,
(a) Professor M.J. Gooding be re-appointed as Head of the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development for the period from 1 August 2012 to 31 July 2014;

(b) Professor J.C. Bignell be re-appointed as Head of the School of Arts and Communication Design for the period from 1 August 2012 to 31 July 2016;

(c) Professor R.L. Gilchrist be appointed as Head of the School of Human and Environmental Sciences for the period from 23 April 2012 to 31 July 2015;

(d) Professor C.J.H. Duggan be re-appointed as Head of the School of Literature and Languages for the period from 1 August 2012 to 31 July 2016;

(e) Dr L.T. Butler be appointed as Head of the School of Psychology and Clinical Language Sciences for the period from 1 August 2012 to 31 July 2016; and

(f) Professor P.J. Byrne be appointed as Head of Real Estate and Planning in the Henley Business School for the period from 1 April 2012 to 31 July 2015.

“3. That, with reference to item 3, the following be accorded the title of Visiting Professor:

Professor S. Archer (Emeritus Professor of Accounting and adviser on Islamic Finance), ICMA Centre, Henley Business School, for the period to 31 March 2015

Professor R.M. Bateman (Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew), School of Biological Sciences, for a further period to 31 December 2014

Professor P. Clark (University of Surrey), School of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, for a further period to 31 March 2015

Professor Renchu Gan (Beijing Institute of Technology), Henley Business School, for a further period to 31 December 2014

Professor Rifaaat Ahmed Abdel Karim (Islamic Financial Services Board), ICMA Centre, Henley Business School, for the period to 31 March 2015

Professor Zheng Qin (South University of Science & Technology of China), Henley Business School, for the period to 31 December 2014

Mr A. Ross (HM Treasury), School of Politics, Economics and International Relations, for the period to 31 March 2015

Mr J. Shalit (ROAR Global), Henley Business School, for the period to 31 March 2015.”
“4. That, with reference to item 4, the following alterations to Ordinances be approved:

(a) alterations to Ordinance XLV (University Board for Teaching and Learning) to include the Vice-Provost (Academic) of the University of Reading Malaysia in membership of the Board and to accord the right of attendance at its meetings to the Head of the Student Employment, Experience and careers Centre (SEECC);

(b) a new Ordinance (Degree of Professional Doctorate awarded jointly with other institutions) to provide for the award of Professional Doctorates jointly with other institutions; and

(c) alterations to Ordinance LX (Degree of Professional Doctorate) to formalise the provision of a Professional Doctorate in Agriculture and Food (DAgriFood) as part of the University’s suite of Professional Doctorates; to replace references to “the Director of Student Services” with “the relevant University Officer”; and to require that a candidate henceforth submit two hard bound copies and one electronic copy of their thesis.”

“5. That, with reference to item 5, an Equality & Diversity Code of Practice for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014, now submitted, be approved.”

12/27 Report of the Students’ Union Liaison Committee (Item 9)

The Council received the report of the meeting of the Students’ Union Liaison Committee held on 30 November 2011.

As Chair of the Committee, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor commented that the financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2011 suggested an enterprise that was responsibly run and with which the University continued to work in harmony. The excellent turnout in the recent elections for student officers had been a healthy sign of enthusiasm and engagement. The Vice-Chancellor thanked the representatives of the Students’ Union and their colleagues for the warmth of the welcome that had been extended to him by the student body and the President reported that he had invited Mr Hobley to make a valedictory presentation to the Council at its next meeting.

Resolved:

“That the Report of the meeting of the Students’ Union Liaison Committee held on 30 November 2011, now submitted, be approved.”
12/28 Date of final meeting of the Council in the Session 2011-12

Monday 9 July 2012 at 2.15pm

12/29 Provisional dates for meetings of the Council in the Session 2012-13

Friday 23 November 2012 at 2.15pm
Monday 28 January 2013 at 2.15pm
Monday 25 March 2013 at 2.30pm preceded by a meeting of the Court in the morning
Monday 8 July 2013 at 2.15pm