

Minutes of Meeting

Court

7 February 2024, 2.15-3.15pm

Location: Online (Zoom)

Members present:

Jamie Agombar	Eesha Ganesh	Bernie Morley
Jimena Alamo	Sabina Gheduzzi	Adrian Price
Ghazwa Alwani-Starr	Barry Gilbertson	Drew Ritchie
Georgina Andrews	Felix Maria Goñi Urcelay	Chris Roche
Dawn Bonfield	Sarah Hainsworth	Dine Romero
Richard Bonner	Hanna Hajzer	Elliot Rose
Robert Brain	Geoff Hammond	Simone Sharma
Alan Bramley	Titus Hiller	Jonathan Slack
Rob Branston	Wera Hobhouse	Amber Snary
Pamela Chesters	Aaron Horwood	Jeff Thompson
James Davenport	Steve Huckvale	Chloe Turner
Kate Ehrig-Page	Alexandra Joseph	Abigail Watkin
Chris Eldridge	Jonathan Knight	Steve Wharton
Trevor Elworthy	David Lam	Ian White
Helen Featherstone	Calum Mercer	Cassie Wilson
Lynne Fernquest	Justine Mercer	Geof Wood
Antonio Ferrer-Montiel	Jane Millar	Mahima Yadav
Tim Ford	Charlotte Moar	
Ruth Foreman	Sarah Moore	

In attendance:

Martin Williams, Director of Finance

Secretariat:

Laura Andrews
Andrew Browning
Karen Gleave

Apologies:

HRH The Duke of Edinburgh	Derek Brewer	Gary Davis
Andie Barlow	Judith Brown	Jayne Davis
Kimberley Bingham	Pete Capener	Melissa George
John Buckingham	Julian Chaudhuri	Kevin Guy
Teslim Bukoye	Vivien Ching	Alan Hayes
Penny Burke	David Collard	Mark Hepworth
	Marian Curran	David Kelly

Professor Kloppe
Hartmut Logemann
Dan Norris
Daniel Paul
Jura Neveauskaite

Peter Redfern
Ben Rhodes
Kiara Singh
Michael Storey
Jason Tudor

Ghehan Wanduragala
Chris Watts
Jane White
Snow Wu

Introductory items

28 - Welcome and Quorum

Pro-Chancellor, Ruth Foreman, welcomed members and attendees and confirmed that the meeting was quorate. Apologies were noted.

29 - Declarations of Interest

Councillor Sarah Moore declared that her husband was an employee at the University.

30 – Membership and Terms of Reference - Paper CT23/24 - 01

Court noted the membership and Terms of Reference for Court.

Professor Georgina Andrews fed back their change in job title which was now Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost of Bath Spa University, to be updated on all correspondence.

31 - Minutes of the Previous Meeting - Paper CT23/24 - 02

Court approved the minutes of the previous meeting of Court held on 13 June 2023.

Due to the distance between meetings of Court, amends to the minutes would be requested within one month of today's meeting.

Part I: Main Business

32 – Update from the Vice-Chancellor and Annual Accounts

Pursuant to Statute 15.2(b), Professor Ian White, Vice-Chancellor, gave an update on the University's strategic activities, based on the [University Strategy 2021-2026](#). A copy of the presentation slides can be found in Appendix 1.

The following points were made in the question and answer session which followed the presentation:

- It was acknowledged that arguments existed that international rankings performance correlated with scale for some universities. However the performance of the University of Bath at departmental level showed that scale did not correlate so directly and that scope remained to improve the global rankings further.
- There were no current plans to resume historic conversations regarding the potential benefits of a merger between the University of Bath and Bath Spa University. There was a mutual respect between the two universities.
- Regarding international strategy, the University had a tiered set of international relations, many of which were very strong. There were major links with a modest number of other universities which were multi-faceted. The University had

developed MOUs with a second tier of universities which highlight specific subject areas. The University also had exceptional links with placement providers overseas.

There was a strong vote of thanks from Court members including the Mayor of Bath, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost of Bath Spa University and the Chair of the City of Bath World Heritage Site Advisory Board towards the Vice-Chancellor for his strong leadership and everything that he had achieved during his time in post. Partnerships between Bath Spa, Bath College and the Council had strengthened under his leadership and the University had become a stronger part of the Bath community.

Court received the University's [Annual Accounts](#) for the year ended 31 July 2023, as formally approved by the University Council at its meeting on 23 November 2023.

Treasurer, Calum Mercer, responded to two queries raised by Dawn Bonfield ahead of the meeting:

- UK Industry Research – The value in the University's accounts was £2.0m in 2022/23, down from £2.5m the previous year. IAAPS was key to increasing this number and the delayed opening impacted the 2022/23 number. The current IAAPS forecast for 2023/24 was £2.3m, so the University should see substantial growth this year and next.
- Building Maintenance – The University's maintenance budgets for 2023/24 amounted to £10.1m. It was expected that this cost would increase in the coming years, as the original parade buildings were at or beyond their design life. A piece of work was underway to address the on-going maintenance need and to develop a replacement programme.

The Chair thanked the Vice-Chancellor, acknowledging his contribution to the significant positive trajectory on external rankings, his scrupulous recognition of the work of the University's staff and students, his clear and positive messaging and reassuring grasp of detail over the previous few years.

The Vice-Chancellor departed the meeting.

33 – Update on the appointment of the next Vice Chancellor

Pam Chesters, Chair of Council gave an update on the recruitment of the next Vice Chancellor, Professor Phil Taylor, who would join the University on 1st August 2024.

Council formally appointed Professor Phil Taylor as incoming Vice-Chancellor on the 8th January 2024. Professor Taylor would serve an initial 5-year term commencing 1st August 2024, with a structured transition commencing from May 2024.

The process for recruiting the Vice-Chancellor was clearly laid out in Section 5.1 of the [Statutes of the University of Bath](#). A Joint Committee had been formed consisting of the Chancellor, Chair of Council and two other members of the Council and three members of the Senate. The Students Union President and a senior representative from professional services had been co-opted. In addition Sir Peter Gregson, who had previously served as Vice Chancellor at two Universities had been invited to join the committee as an external advisor. Staff, students, alumni and bodies such as Court had been consulted about the desired attributes of a new Vice-Chancellor. The role was advertised extensively; 56 applicants were reduced to a longlist of 15 and then a final shortlist of 5 candidates was

invited to attend a 2-day engagement exercise which included a presentation and Q&A session with a group of staff and students, a mock roleplay as well as a conventional 'final interview'.

Committee members were unanimous in the decision to recommend Professor Phil Taylor to Council for the role, given his high academic standing and his extensive experience in working with industry. Professor Taylor was currently Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise at the University of Bristol and previously Head of the School of Engineering at Newcastle University, where he also led the Helix project, a new urban quarter collaboration between the University and the City. He was appointed to the Government's Net Zero Innovation Board and became Chair of the Board for the GW4 alliance of the universities of Bath, Bristol, Cardiff and Exeter. Professor Taylor's knowledge and experience would build on the University's strong trajectory in taking Bath forward into the next chapter.

Part 2: Closing items

34 – Next meeting

Court noted that the proposed date of the next scheduled meeting of Court would be 5 February 2025 at 2.15pm.

35 – Any Other Business

A request was put forward by members for in-person meetings of Court in the future, with a hybrid element to allow the option for remote attendance. The Governance Team would consult with Court members regarding the logistics of future meetings.

The meeting closed at 3.25pm.