

THE COURT**Minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2019**

Members: Prof Shirley Congdon; Prof Udi Archibong; Prof John Bridgeman;
Prof Alastair Goldman; Terry Hartwell; Prof Zahir Irani;
Stuart McKinnon-Evans; Crina Oltean-Dumbrava; Nikki Pierce;
Riley Power; And 26 members who names have been recorded
including 2 members who attended by skype.

In attendance: Eleanor Clyde-Evans, Associate Director (Engagement, Alumni & External Affairs), for panel discussion;
Ayman Malik, Education Officer, for panel discussion;
Bharti Mistry, Committee Secretary.

Apologies: Kate Swann (Chair); Emily Wolton; Howell Edwards;
John Russell; Paul Jagger.

The meeting was chaired by the Vice-Chancellor in the Chancellor's absence

1.19-20 University update by the Vice-Chancellor

1.1 The Vice-Chancellor welcomed all Court members and gave a brief overview of the format for the meeting, on behalf of the University Chancellor, who was unable to attend;

1.2 The Vice-Chancellor presented an overview of the University activities and highlighted the challenges that continued to face the sector. Attention was drawn to:-

- The new branding on the external University website, - <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/external/>;
- That the University had been named 'University of the year for Social Inclusion' by The Times and the Sunday Times; this prestigious national award recognised Bradford's outstanding impact on social inclusion;
- Key impact facts and figures 2018/19;
- The development of the revised University Strategy;
- The new regulator for the HE sector, the (Office for Students);
- The next five years for the University of Bradford;
- Equality and Diversity;
- The Student Experience – care about, understand it, enhance it, modern and connected;
- Research and Innovation - world problems, Bradford solutions;
- 'Born in Bradford' – one of the world's largest research studies;

- Mission and Vision –
 - Learning Teaching and Student Experience;
 - Research and Innovation;
 - Engagement; Business and Community;
 - Equality and Diversity;
- Areas of Research and Innovation strength;

The presentation concluded with examples of the 'This is Bradford, this is us' marketing campaign.

2.19-20 **Panel Discussion on key strategic priorities:**

- 2.1 The Vice-Chancellor welcomed the panel members who introduced themselves and gave a brief overview of their role and the key priorities;
- 2.2 Student Union-Education Officer – Ms Ayman Malik;
- 2.2.1 This year the Union had worked in close partnership with the University in sharing a new strategy and vision for the University;
- 2.2.2 The Student Union had introduced a new initiative called 'Kickstart' which aimed to engage undergraduate students in UBU projects, and to give students the opportunity to develop and gain transferable skills, whilst creating a social network.
- 2.3 Interim Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic, Innovation and Quality) – Professor Zahir Irani;
- 2.3.1 Provided an update on the University's outreach activities working with schools, to ensure that the students are supported and able to develop and how this also supported the University's ambitions;
- 2.3.2 This linked with the Access and Participation Plan, working with Marketing, Admissions, Student Academic Services, IT, non-academic services, such as Alumni. Ensuring the connection to all those points of delivery to all the schools and right through to the delivery of non-engagement Professional Development and Executive Education.
- 2.4 Professor of Diversity – Professor Udy Archibong;
- 2.4.1 The University had been perceived to be doing extremely well with Equality and Diversity;
- 2.4.2 The area of ongoing development, would be to reinforce the University structure and to look at how we can create an inclusive culture, that would allow people to bring themselves together to work and contribute;

- 2.4.3 To develop a strategy that would pull things together, allowing inclusion and to be integrated in every aspect of the University in terms of Learning and Teaching and the way we interact.
- 2.5 Associate Director of External Affairs – Eleanor Clyde-Evans;
- 2.5.1 Updated Court on how the University could build momentum to activities and contribution to the City of Bradford;
- 2.5.2 The University would be developing a Civic University Agreement that would set out clear civic place based priorities, which would enable us to increase the University’s local and regional impact.
- 2.6 Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge and Transfer) – Professor John Bridgeman;
- 2.6.1 Updated Court on how the University was facilitating research and enhancing performance across the four Faculties. The University has some areas of excellent research and research strengths and does some great work, but needs to increase the quantity of high quality research;
- 2.6.2 To improve research performance, the University would need to focus on key areas.
- To Improve the quality of research;
 - Enhance the impact of research;
 - Asset basis – Invest in areas of (emerging) excellence;
 - Increase external funding we generate;
 - Increase quality of the number of Postgraduate Students;
- 2.6.3 To empower staff and students with the opportunities to reach their full potential in research, supporting creativity to deliver ambitious and collaborative working across disciplines;
- 2.6.4 To empower and encourage the University’s researchers to deliver internationally leading, interdisciplinary research and innovation that will shape and benefit future societies.
- 2.7 The panel discussion focused on University’s key strategic priorities. Questions to the panel included:
- 2.8 *Question on challenges of discrimination and job opportunities, due to Artificial intelligence and robotics - automating processes. Which would give the potential to make 3 million jobs redundant in the UK;*
- 2.9 Interim Pro-Vice -Chancellor (Academic, Innovation and Quality) replied the University would not try to compete with Computer Scientists, but would try to solve

a Diversity and Quality issue. The University would be looking at the real challenges the community was facing. What defines us a University in terms of what is valuable and what is important? The University would be changing the way it engaged with its students;

2.10 The University would need to be one step ahead of the game to see what kind of skills the students need and to give them every opportunity to engage in a wide spread of jobs;

2.11 *Question on the University strengths and how it could gain the support of academic staff, where in a larger University would be difficult;*

2.12 The Vice-Chancellor responded that the University did need to be more agile. Staff were ready for the challenges and change. In the Staff Survey recently carried out 75% staff said that they liked to work for the University. The staff wanted to make a difference and wanted to make it a success;

2.13 *Question on how the University would prepare the local students to spread their wings and move out of Bradford?;*

2.14 Professor of Diversity and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic, Innovation and Quality), Associate Director of External Affairs replied that the University would be working with employers to create an environment where students think outside the box and flourish;

2.15 The University would look at what was taught and how, to see what the connections were, for a more joined up approach;

2.16 *Question of where does the University see the engagement with the City?;*

2.17 The Vice-Chancellor replied the University was concentrating on working on integrating its activities with the priorities of the City Bradford, as the University played an important role in the City and the region;

2.18 *Question if lecturers from other departments could be called upon to lecture?*

2.19 Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge and Transfer) replied the University would be identifying strengths that can be developed across the University. People were more interested in interdisciplinary research to form a stronger team. Research would be facilitated across the University and not just focusing on individual disciplines.

3.19-20 **Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2019**

3.1 The University Pro-Chancellor and Treasurer, Mr Terry Hartwell presented a brief overview of the financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2019. He then

introduced the Chief Finance Officer, Mr Stuart McKinnon-Evans, who drew the Court's attention to the headline financial results, including in respect of income, expenditure and surplus;

- 3.2 The financial statements were available on the University's website <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/finance/financial-information/financial-statement>
- 3.3 The University's financial strategy had been successful, despite challenges with organisational changes.
- 3.4 Question and Answer session
- 3.5 *Question on staffing and jobs losses in the Professional Services and Academic roles.*
- 3.6 The Vice-Chancellor, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge and Transfer) and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic, Innovation and Quality) explained the basis on which questions of staffing changes were determined within the University during recent periods and how impacts were being managed;
- 3.7 *Question would there need to be an optimum number of students before we need further investment?;*
- 3.8 The Chief Finance Officer replied that there would be no limit, the constraint would be, would we have the capacity for a very large influx and how would we support this.

4.19-20 The Vice-Chancellor thanked all members for attending the meeting.

5.19-20 The date of next meeting was to be determined.

Secretary: Bharti Mistry, Legal and Governance Administrator;

Date: December 2019