

**NEWMAN UNIVERSITY****University Council****Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016  
at 2.00pm in DW111/112****Present:**

Dr Mark Goodwin	Vice-Chair of the Council (Acting Chair)
Dr John Carlisle	
Rev Canon David Evans	
Ms Deirdre Finucane	
Mr David Harris	
Mr Phillip Lennon	
Archbishop Bernard Longley	
Professor Peter Lutzeier	Vice-Chancellor and Principal
Mrs Rosemary Thorp	
Mr James Westwood	Student's Union President
Mr John Westwood	Council Member Designate

**In Attendance:**

Ms Andrea Bolshaw	Registrar and University Secretary and Clerk to the Council
Professor Peter Childs	Pro-Vice-Chancellor - Research and Scholarship
Professor Duncan Lawson	Pro-Vice-Chancellor - Formative Education
Mr Nathan Richards	Students' Union Vice-President
Mr Tony Sharma	Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Miss Jude Sloan	Acting Minute Secretary
Margaret Holland	University Chaplain (in attendance for item 3.4.1)

The meeting of the Council opened with prayers led by Archbishop Bernard Longley.

**1 Work of the Council****1.1 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Mr Jonathan Day, Mr Glen Alexander, Mr Mark Davies, Mr Stephen Kenny and Ms Sarah Parkes.

**1.2 Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 February 2016**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 February 2016 were received and confirmed as an accurate record subject to a minor amendment.

**1.3 Matters Arising from the Minutes**

2.1 The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the University had signed a memorandum, through the British Council, for the provision of a scholarship through the remission of fees, to an academic from a university in Palestine. However the University has not yet received any application from eligible

academics. The University has accepted another Article 26 student coming onto the first year in September 2016 but the programme is yet to be confirmed.

2.4 The Council was informed that the Centre for Christian-Muslim Relations has passed the proposal stage and discussions are now being held about how to best progress and receive support for this centre.

1.4 Council Away Day

Apart from those already on the agenda, the council had no further issues arising from the Away Day. The Archbishop highlighted to the Council the recently published THEOS report on what it means to be a Catholic institution.

1.5 Appointment / Reappointment of new Council members

The Vice-Chair reminded the Council of the death of Professor Annette Cashmore, whose funeral took place on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June. The Vice-Chair passed on sincere thanks from Professor Cashmore's husband to the many members of Council who had attended the funeral.

It was confirmed that Mrs Rosemary Thorp and Mr Mark Davies had both been re-elected for a third term. A minor amendment was noted that Mr Dave Harris is on his first term of office.

1.5.1 Report from Nominations Committee (Oral)

The Chair of Nominations Committee reported that the Committee is exploring the issue of increasing the maximum membership of council from 14 to 20 as the workload is intensifying. This would require Privy Council approval. It was agreed that gender balance and skills gaps should be considered when appointing new members. The Council's attention was drawn to the overview of the 'dashboard' of the make-up of members of the University Council and Sub-Committees. Council members were asked to review their noted skills and update them through the Clerk to the Council. This would be used to assist in appointing new members.

1.5.2 Student Council Member

The Students' Union had not elected a Student Council Member for 2016/17, and the 2016/17 President of the Students' Union will become a Council Member. Therefore the Vice President or another nominated member of the Students' Union will be in attendance.

The Council Vice-Chair gave a vote of thanks to the incumbent Students' Union President for all his contributions.

1.6 Reports from the Committees

1.6.1 Nominations Committee

Council received the minutes of the Nominations Committee meeting held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

### 1.6.2 Finance and General Purposes Committee

It was reported that the Committee had approved the proposal for the new hall of residence to be considered as zero rated for VAT and the University are moving forward with this. This requires the University to contract for the building. Newman Firmtrust will need to be a non-dormant company and moved to a trading company. Advice had been received from lawyers and VAT advisors.

The Committee had also discussed a set of the University's financial metrics from 2014/15 and made comparisons with those of the Cathedrals Group and local universities. The University appeared to perform reasonably well in relation to benchmarks to those two groupings. The only area for further consideration was the staff costings and resource costing as a proportion of the turnover. However it was felt this was congruent with the values of the University and the relationships with their students, along with investments in library and IT resources.

Council discussed whether the relatively high staff costs were due to the volume of staff or pay levels. It was confirmed that the pay levels for academic staff are similar to other similar institutions but that the pay levels of professional support staff are significantly lower. Other institutions tend to have higher operational costs and more bank interest than Newman University. Regarding staff costs, unions are asking for an increase of 5%. The offer is currently 1.1%. The University has budgeted for a maximum of 2% but considers it unlikely that this will be required.

Council was reminded of the challenges in having a fixed cost base, which is the situation in sectors which most offer permanent full-time contracts, and changes such as the increase in employer's National Insurance of 3.5% It was noted that the Committee actively managed risk and it was felt that the risks incurred by high staff costs were justified by the higher risk of achieving the University's strategy. The Committee will keep this under consideration. It was stated that the relatively high staff costs, due to the staff / student ratio, matched with the University's ethos of placing value on students.

The Vice-Chancellor assured the Council that staff costs were taken very seriously. Furthermore the Voluntary Severance Scheme had been introduced to give the opportunity for staff, who do not feel their future aligns with the University's strategic plan, to move on and this will have a positive impact on staff costs.

It was confirmed in the Extraordinary Meeting report that Stellar Metcalfe have completed the demolition as required and that the outgoing costs have not been affected.

### 1.6.3 Audit Committee

The Audit Committee of 23 June 2016 had addressed the regular business of audit and had also received training from the internal auditors, which the committee felt was extremely helpful. The Committee had also received the internal auditors' regular assessment

reports of Risk Management, Student Services (with specific focus on the Library) and Data Quality. Overall there were very good outcomes of evaluations with only a few suggestions. The next three years of plan for internal audit was considered and approved.

The importance of the Audit Committee was noted, including its duty to evaluate its own effectiveness and its responsibility for governance in general and how it links to the Council. The Committee intends to consider these duties and responsibilities and from that review the make-up of the Committee.

#### 1.7 Schedule of Council and Sub-Committee Meetings 2016/17

The Schedule of Council and Sub-Committee Meetings 2016/17 was received and confirmed by the Council.

## **2 Future Issues**

### 2.1 Vice-Chancellor's Report: Past and Present

The Vice-Chancellor highlighted from his report the White Paper presented to Parliament by Minister of State for Universities and Science Jo Johnson, which confirmed the policy intent, directions and proposals of the Green Paper. The Vice-Chancellor brought attention to the surprise announcement that there will not be a student number limit on university title.

The Vice-Chancellor told the Council of the enthusiastic reception which he, Mr Gautam Rajkhowa and Mr John Westwood had received at the Xavier Board of Higher Education Triennial Conference in India. Mr Gautam Rajkhowa and the Vice-Chancellor had each given a presentation to over 200 senior people representing 85 Catholic universities and Newman is now keen to follow up the overwhelming interest.

The Vice-Chancellor highlighted to the Council that the institutions represented at the conference have a very clear mission of service. They cater for their poor and marginalised. Strikingly there are many colleges founded for the education of women in engineering. He felt that there was a meeting of minds and that it would be very good for Newman if a handful of meaningful partnerships were developed, which among other things may take the form of two or three regional hubs where existing colleges would have a Newman presence. One of the issues with which Newman could assist is in the qualification of staff, for example in postgraduate qualifications and / or Newman staff going out to India. The Council noted that Management and Economics in the context of Catholic social teaching had great potential.

The Vice-Chancellor highlighted to the Council that the future of the University relies on its willingness for diversification and internationalisation. The School of Education needs to diversify its offers and cannot rely on the education of teachers. There needs to be educational offers for other areas as well. Furthermore the school needs to have much more involvement in and enthusiasm for internationalisation. There are clear opportunities in, for example, India and Latin America, including the current partnerships with three

Chilean universities who have a need for the training of teachers of English and have Chilean government support for this.

The University is making progress in raising its profile. The current marketing team is going to be rebadged as marketing / student recruitment. This role is vital for the budget and sustainability of the University. A separate team is being created for corporate marketing and the post of Director for Corporate Marketing is to soon be advertised. The Director for Corporate Marketing will report to the Chancellor and the Head of Marketing / Student Recruitment will continue to report to the Director of Finance and Corporate Services.

In response to the Vice-Chancellor's report, Mr John Westwood informed the Council that the response over the two days of the Xavier Board of Higher Education Triennial Conference was possibly the most positive he has experienced. He highlighted that although the Indian government is prioritising other religious education and that Catholic education is not a high priority for the government, the conference delegates responded in a way which was hugely humbling. Cardinal John Henry Newman was well-known and well-respected and the delegates all wanted to know what Newman University could do. The Secretary General of the Federation of Catholic Universities, who has previously visited Newman, sees the University as a key player in the UK.

Mr John Westwood brought to the attention of the Council that the funeral of Father Eamon Clarke, which took place on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April, was well attended. He was first chaplain at Newman and served in that position for 19 years.

Council congratulated the University on its nominations for the two THELMA Awards and wished them luck for the Awards Ceremony.

### **3 The Current State of the University**

#### **3.1 Institutional Sustainability and Risk Management**

##### **3.1.1 List of Principal Risks and 3.1.2 Risk Register for June 2016**

Council was reminded that the Risk Register is considered by the NMG, the Audit Committee and the Council.

Risk 5.3 was highlighted as although the number of applications is up from last year, the number of accepted offers is currently down. However as acceptances are still coming in, the increase on the risk register scale is advisory.

Risk 5.9 has been increased on the risk register due to the industrial action planned by the unions.

Risk 5.16 was discussed as the raw risk score of 18 was suggested to be very high. It was noted that if the campus suffered failure of major facilities on a day such as the first day of term, the impact would be severe, but that on the occasions there is failure on campus it is usually isolated to a particular building and mitigated promptly by estates. It

was noted that the University of Birmingham suffered a failure of major utilities last year and that the impact lasted many weeks. It was felt that with the current construction work on site the likelihood recorded of 3 was reasonable. It was further noted that in the longer term the current revamping of infrastructure should lower the risk.

It was highlighted under Scholarship and Enterprise risk 3.1 (Finding / maintaining research validating partner not successful) had been significantly reduced through the agreements with Liverpool Hope University and risk 3.3 (Failure to attract / keep staff with appropriate research experience) had been significantly reduced.

Under Student Formation, risk 1.1 (Decline in Student Satisfaction), it was highlighted by the Students' Union President that 'NSU representation on all University committees' was not vital, but rather that there is to be NSU representation on all University committees where it is relevant to have a student's perspective and contribution.

It was agreed that there are risks associated with recruiting a new Vice-Chancellor but that these did not need to be included on the Risk Register at present. It was noted that the key risks are failure to recruit, the interim process whilst the successful candidate acclimatises, and making an inappropriate appointment.

### 3.1.3 HEFCE Assessment of Institutional Risk

The HEFCE letter received, it was reported, informs the University that it is not assessed to be at 'higher risk'. This is the most positive assessment possible.

### 3.1.4 Prevent Update

The Council received an additional document to the papers already received, which was a report that summarises the University's arrangements for the other topics covered by the prevent duty Statutory Guidance.

The Clerk to the Council updated the Council that the University had made the required submission of the report and the required External Speaker policy to HEFCE on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and had received the highest possible judgement outcomes laid out regarding their Prevent Duty Policy, namely that the University had satisfied HEFCE that it is meeting its statutory duty under the Prevent Guidance. JISC guidance is awaited about IT filtering as this is a very sensitive and complex issue.

The Audit Committee has not yet received the report due to the time constraints of the submission process and has decided to review it at the next meeting of the Committee. Council noted that students have been very helpful in the discussions about this policy and that naming it as a Safeguarding policy is a positive move. It was noted that a helpful inclusion in the University Policy on External Speakers (March 2016) was that it details policy and procedure for the organising of events only 'with external speakers to be held on University premises or under the

auspices of the University but which do NOT form part of the University's normal academic or administrative business'.

The University needs to finalise a freedom of speech policy for staff as this is required under the Prevent Duty. A concern was noted that this could be controversial. The Prevent Working Group is developing into a broader Safeguarding Group and this policy will be on their next agenda. The draft policy will be passed to the Audit Committee and also Senate. Leaders of student societies will be trained on the policy of external speakers. It was felt that the new appointment of a staff member by the Students' Union who is dedicated to the oversight of student societies will lead to a much better communication of the expectations of societies.

### 3.2 Financial Matters

#### 3.2.1 Financial Expectations for 2015/16

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services reported to the Council that there were no particular concerns to report. The current year shows a strong surplus and strong cash. In overall terms, tuition fee income is significantly above budgeted levels and expenditure is below budgeted levels. The year-end surplus is likely to be higher than budgeted by around £1.1million. This is expected to result in a £1.7million - £2million surplus which is approximately 7%. This includes an allowance for the costs of the Voluntary Severance Scheme, the deadline for which is 31<sup>st</sup> July 2016. Capital expenditure is likely to be higher than budget due to the acceleration of the commencement of the Halls of Residence and Sturge Extension projects, and current cost forecasts. The achievement of student enrolment and subsequent retention will be important in achieving the budgeted surplus. Over the coming months non-pay costs will increase nearer in line with budget, and year-end capital/revenue transfer will occur.

Currently the costs incurred around the Estate Master Plan are considered as work in progress. As part of a year-end revenue some of these are likely to be moved into revenue. If elements of the Estates Master Plan do not go ahead then a significant proportion of the costs incurred would move into revenue. This will depend heavily on the decisions to be made by the Finance and General Purposes Committee in July this year. The University's default is to put elements through revenue unless there is a reason to capitalise.

The Council received the report.

#### 3.2.2 University Budget 2016/17

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services reported to the Council that the University Budget 2016/17 paper was reviewed at the last meeting of the Financial and General Purposes Committee in June 2016 and it was recommended to the Council that this budget is adopted. It was highlighted that student numbers are similar to last year, staff costs are higher in this year's percentage of income and that the latter is due to further investment in new posts and the rising cost of employing

staff, in particular the increase by 3.5% of Employer's National Insurance contributions. It includes an assumption of significant capital spend in relation to the completion of the Julian of Norwich building and Sturge Extension projects, and some additional loan finance.

Key risks in the budget are not recruiting students to the level assumed, staffing costs, high capital expenditure and the fulfilment of external contracts. The University will need to recruit approximately the same number as last year through Clearing. Staffing costs equal approximately 64% of turnover which is at the top end of the University's finance strategy maximum of 65%. Next year's budget will include a large amount of capital spend. Importance was placed on the risks to the University. The costs will need to be managed within budget and the financial impact of disruption needs to be minimised. It was also noted that where there are external contracts, the University needs to perform against those contracts.

Council commented that the Voluntary Severance Scheme is forecast to result in a saving of approximately £300,000 but that some new posts are being added, some of which will be in-year. A 2% pay review has been assumed, plus 0.5% for incremental gain. The working assumption of a £700,000 vacancy factor was highlighted and a question was raised as to whether this was the norm. Council was assured that the vacancy factor was the norm and that charities and higher education institutions generally have very small surpluses. Council was reassured that the pay award is not expected to go above budget, the incremental drift and vacancy savings were accurate and that new staffing had been prudent as almost all the posts which have already been agreed are mostly student facing and needed to be in post by September. The only risk considered significant is the targeted saving of £350,000 through the Voluntary Severance Scheme which is not expected to be fully achieved. This may need to be mitigated by either an increased income through an increase in student recruitment or postponing the recruitment of some new staffing, which would mostly not be student facing. Headlines of the success of student recruitment will be evident in October, in time for the next meeting of the Council, but full details will not be known until November.

### **Resolution 5/16**

Council agreed to adopt the recommended budget.

#### **3.2.3 Tuition Fees Schedule 2017-18**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services informed Council that the significant change in the schedule is the assumption that the University will be TEF (Teaching Excellence Framework) compliant and therefore will be graded as at least a TEF 1. This would result in an increase in full-time undergraduate fee from £9,000 to £9,250, the maximum set out by government. Lesser changes include a slight reduction in fees for part-time postgraduates and slight increase in fees for part-time undergraduates.



The Tuition Fees Schedule 2017-18 was reviewed at the last meeting of the Financial and General Purposes Committee in June 2016 and it was recommended to the Council for approval.

### **Resolution 6/16**

Council agreed to approve the recommended schedule.

#### 3.2.4 Financial Forecasts 2016

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services informed Council that the set of Financial Forecasts 2016 was reviewed at the last meeting of the Financial and General Purposes Committee in June 2016 and recommended to the Council for approval.

These forecasts focus from this year up to 2018-19. The most important data that informs these forecasts are the student number forecasts as they generate the income. The forecasts include the assumption of a 2.5% increase in student numbers over the period forecast and an increase in tuition fees per student. The realisation of both of these factors is essential as staff costs will continue to rise as the University invests in academic excellence and as an increase in student numbers has been agreed as important for the sustainability of the institution in the long-term.

It was highlighted to Council that although the set of forecasts assumes an increase in overall student numbers, it predicts a decrease in undergraduate and postgraduate Initial Teacher Education numbers. This in turn will require an increase in HEFCE students in order to keep a steady state. It was noted that new programmes being approved and changes being discussed as regards marketing are in support of the sustainability of the University. It was acknowledged that the growth of research contracts will not cover their own costs but will enhance the University in other ways, and that an increase in undergraduate revenue will be needed to mitigate these financial costs.

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services informed Council that the set of Financial Forecasts 2016 were conservative and hopefully would be exceeded. He noted that the audience for these forecasts, aside from Council, were HEFCE and the banks and that this set of forecasts should reflect both the reality and aspirations of the University.

### **Resolution 7/16**

Council agreed to approve the Financial Forecasts 2016.

#### 3.2.5 Treasury Management Policy

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services informed Council that the Treasury Management Policy is reviewed every three years and this version remains unchanged from the previous version. Its aim is to safeguard the cash of the University and therefore the University chooses to use UK banks and investments of safety which are protected by the government, rather than high interest and high risk investments.

The policy sets principles for borrowing and states which roles have authority to approve borrowing. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services informed Council that the set of Financial Forecasts 2016 was reviewed at the last meeting of the Financial and General Purposes Committee in June 2016 and recommended to the Council for approval.

### **Resolution 8/16**

Council agreed to approve the Treasury Management Policy.

#### 3.2.6 Estates Strategy Update – Commercial: In Confidence

The Julian of Norwich Chapel refurbishment, which commenced two weeks ago, is currently on time, on budget, on quality and safe. The aim for completion is mid-November 2016. There is a delay in contracting for the Sturge Extension and the Halls of Residence as the costs for the Halls of Residence is significantly higher than the original forecasts and agreed budget. The design team and contractors are in negotiation to reduce the costs to within budget. Proposals for this are expected in early July and a Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting will be scheduled for mid-July. The Halls of Residence is the first priority as they will promote recruitment for September 2017.

There is a tension between the total envelope of money which needs to be maintained and the cost per bed space which has significantly increased, the reasons for which are being investigated. Due to time restraints with the Halls of Residence needing to be open by September 2017, seeking an alternative supplier is currently not an option.

Current expectation is that the Sturge extension will be deferred and the Halls of Residence will be delivered. The business case around the Sturge extension was based on projected growth, the current forecasts for which are less than previously. However it was noted that the Sturge extension would also provide decant space, which would be particularly useful during the building work and that student growth is still expected in the long term. Council will not meet until November, by which time many decisions will have had to have been made. In June 2015 Council delegated authority of the project to the Finance and General Purposes Committee and that authority continues, therefore it was agreed that they will make the required decisions.

Council was also assured that promotion hoarding and information boards are to be erected in time for the University Open Days and that this will send a message that development is exciting and positive. Council asked whether there were plans to screen off the construction work more effectively. In response, it was stated that there needs to be a balance between maintaining routes around the campus and closing off areas, accompanied by pictures of the future completed work and that decisions about this would continue as the construction work moved around the campus.

#### 3.2.7 Football Foundation Resolution

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services informed Council that in June 2015 the Finance and General Purposes Committee considered the

refurbishment of the astroturf. The cost of refurbishment would be £400-500k with a 79% grant towards the cost being offered by the Football Association (FA). A condition of the grant is that the FA have asked that a charge be placed on the land and have proposed a claw-back of the total sum of the grant for a period of 21 years if the facility was used for another purpose. Now approval is being sought from the Finance and General Purposes Committee and Council to grant the giving of a charge, which lawyers would organise on behalf of the University.

The projected life-span of the new pitch is approximately 20 years, with a new carpet needed in approximately 10 years. Without refurbishment a new carpet would be needed next year and would cost approximately £200k, therefore the 79% funded refurbishment is viewed as a way of gaining a better facility at a lower cost. Council noted that this is an appropriate funding model for refurbishment in the same way that this is a successful model for research funding.

Council was informed that refurbishment was expected to be completed in time for the new academic year.

It was recommended to Council that it authorises approval to enter into security for 21 years and delegates authority for this to the Vice-Chancellor.

### **Resolution 9/16**

Council agreed to approve the University entering into this security arrangement with the Football Association.

### 3.3 Report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Formative Education)

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Formative Education) highlighted to the Council that the University had received Good (Grade 2) for both Primary and Secondary in the Ofsted inspection and a large number of positive comments.

The University has been nominated for two THELMAs (Times Higher Education Leadership and Management Award). The University's nominations are in Outstanding Support Student Support Team and Outstanding Administrative Support Team.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor clarified that the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) is not just about teaching, moreover it is about everything that happens to a student. The government rhetoric is that it is all about 'student choice' and that students will be able to make a better informed choice about the 'nature of teaching' with the information provided from the TEF. The TEF assessment evaluates three aspects of quality: Teaching Quality (in this context 'Teaching' is used in its traditional meaning), Learning Environment, Student Outcomes and Learning Gain.

These three aspects are split into two parts each, totalling six metrics. Five of the six metrics are already decided and are not being consulted on.

- Teaching Quality metrics: Scores in NSS questions 1 – 8 (about Teaching, and Assessment and Feedback)
- Learning Environment metrics: scores in NSS which relate to Academic Support (this does not include content about library or IT resources) and Retention data
- Student Outcomes and Learning Gain: currently there are no measures in place for this, HEFCE are running some pilots which have yet to report. The Minister insists that 'Learning Gain' will remain as a marker for the future. The decided metric for Student Outcomes is DELHE (Destination of Leavers of Higher Education); what percentage of students is in employment or further study six months after graduation. The other metric is yet to be decided. It is planned to have a 'higher skilled jobs' metric. This will need to be established by October 2016 at the latest.

Each of the metrics has flags of positive, neutral and negative using standard deviation. The panels will use these heavily therefore strong, evidenced statements from a contextual statement will be needed to persuade the panel otherwise.

Institutions will be given their metrics by HEFCE and have the opportunity to submit a fifteen page contextual statement. This statement can be used to explain the metrics, particularly if the metrics appear to not be as strong as wished, such as the nature of the University's student recruitment. It can also set out aspects which are not recorded in the metrics such as our relationship with students, any issues which sets Newman apart from other institutions and why Newman is an outstanding place to study. HEFCE is currently recruiting 65 panel members and assessors of peers across the Higher Educational sector. The technical consultation closes at the end of July, final guidance is to be published by mid-October and institutions have to submit their contextualisation statement by the end of December.

There are three possible outcomes – which are heavily contested; Level 1 – Meets Expectations, Level 2 – Excellent, Level 3 – Outstanding. The titles may change but the grading will be 1, 2, 3.

Participation is voluntary, but those institutions who do not participate cannot increase fees above £9000 including increasing in line with inflation. In year one, participation automatically guarantees a grading of at least Level 1. After the first year there are no guarantees and institutions will need Level 2 or 3 to be given to increase their fees in line with inflation. Level 1 will allow an increase less than that of inflation. The level of inflation will be determined by HEFCE.

Government expects that 20% of institutions will be graded as Level 1, 50 – 60% as Level 2 and 20% - 30% as Level 3 as part of trying to create differentiation. It will be made public on a website whether an institution participated along with their contextual statement, grading and potentially their metrics.

In year 3 HEFCE will pilot discipline level assessment with the aim of discipline focussed assessment being applied across the board in year 4. It was noted that this could lead to institutions playing to their strengths and closing departments that do not receive high scores as has happened with the REF (Research Excellence Framework).

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor expressed concern that there was a lack of geographical context in the TEF evaluation and noted that in the future information will be used about salaries not just employment of students after graduation and that this will negatively bias institutions that do not offer programmes in higher paid professions such as medicine, law and also institutions that are not part of the Russell Group.

Regarding the challenge of retention, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor assured the council that the University is developing a number of strategies for projects aimed at improving retention targeting specific sectors of the student communities.

Council discussed the implications of participating and not participating in the TEF. Implications of participating included being able to raise fees above £9000 but it will require significant work and could result in negative marketing to potential students. Participating opens the only opportunity to increase fees and provides at least a TEF rating with which to engage in dialogue with students.

The Acting-Chair confirmed that this is an issue for Senate but that Council's opinion should be considered. It was noted that the participation in the TEF is also an item of concern for the Finance and General Purposes committee and SMT.

The QA Review is changing from every 5 – 6 years, to an annual review that is 'lighter touch'. This new review does not include a visit and is driven by HEFCE. HEI governing bodies will be required to give a statement about Academic Quality in addition to the current statements. The nature of this is as yet undetermined but will be piloted 2016/17. HEFCE have employed The Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, an independent body, to provide piloting training preparation of governing bodies. HEFCE is welcoming expressions of interest from institutions who would like to be involved in the pilot. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor recommended to the Council that the University should submit an expression of interest.

### **Resolution 10/16**

Council agreed to submit an expression of interest. The Clerk to the Council will progress this.

## 3.4 Internal Reports

### 3.4.1 Annual Report from the Chaplain

The University Chaplain expressed deep thanks to the Vice-Chancellor, as well as the Council and staff and students for their support of Chaplaincy throughout the year.

She acknowledged the particular sadness felt for the passing away this year of valued staff members and students.

The hugely positive response of students to the refugee crisis was highlighted including the participation in the 'Hope not Hate' event at Birmingham Central Mosque. Events in pursuit of common ground were

highlighted, such as 'the cup of tea' events where the only caveat for a free cup of tea is the requirement to talk to someone they do not know. These will continue next year.

Inspired by the chapel refurbishment, there are plans to introduce the 'Chaplain's Table' which invites representatives of staff and students to meet each other and share a free, simple lunch. There are also plans for the University to partake in a shared exhibition project, with Maryvale Institute and St Mary's College, Oscott, of Cardinal Newman's life, which could include a type of campus pilgrimage and speaker visits. It was noted that the Oratory may be willing to lend a number of artefacts for the exhibition.

The Chaplain reported that Step into the Gap continues to develop and that a new graduate from Durham will be starting at the University in November.

The Chaplain formally thanked the Vice-Chancellor for his constant support of the chaplaincy and wished him well for his future.

Council noted the excellent foundation lecture this year and was informed that it is hoped that Sarah Teather, Chief Executive of the Jesuit Refugee Service will present a lecture in the next academic year. Council thanked the Chaplain for her valuable work and praised her partnership with the Jesuit community. It was noted that it was very positive that the Jesuit community will remain in Harborne.

The Archbishop formally thanked the Chaplain, on behalf of the diocese, for her valuable work within the University and beyond.

#### 3.4.2 Student Discipline and 3.4.3 Complaints

Council expressed thanks for the useful papers relating to Student Discipline and Complaints. Due to time constraints of the meeting, Council agreed to defer these items to the next meeting of Council.

#### 3.4.3 This item was considered in Committee.

## 4 **Any Other Business**

The Archbishop highlighted to the Council that the Archdiocese of Birmingham had been informed it had been selected as one of two case studies under Stream Two of the independent Goddard Inquiry into child sexual abuse. Stream Two relates to Religious institutions. Stream Five relates to Child Migration and there will be some contact with the Archdiocese through their links with Father Hudson's Care. The Archdiocese has been asked for documentation and an indication of any sister institutions of the Archdiocese, which would be considered to be part of the Archdiocese's mission. In this context the University is considered to be one such institution. Information regarding this inquiry is publically available on [www.iicsa.org.uk](http://www.iicsa.org.uk)

The first public hearings will be in mid-July 2016 which will establish which institutions will have full participation status, for which the Archdiocese has applied. The main public hearings are expected to take place in early 2017. No institutions are named in

the Inquiry and there is no implication that the University would play a material part in it, however the Archbishop felt it was prudent that Council was informed about it.

The Archbishop agreed to produce an update for a future meeting of Council.

**5 Date of the Next Council Meeting**

The date of the next meetings of Council were confirmed as Friday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2016 and Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

The meeting of the Council closed with prayers led by Archbishop Bernard Longley.