



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

## The Senate, 7 December 2011

### Report of the Vice-Chancellor

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper presents a summary of key background information on recent developments, and is based on the Vice-Chancellor's report to Council on 11 July 2011.

The Vice-Chancellor will introduce the report at the meeting and will provide members of the Senate with the opportunity to raise questions on any aspect of the report.

#### 1. EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

##### 1.1 White Paper: Students at the Heart of the System

- The University has responded to the consultation on the Government's Higher Education White Paper (the response is available on the Council MUSE site), and to HEFCE on its consultation on the detail of teaching funding and student number controls for 2012-13. In its responses, the University suggests that the proposals could lead to unintended consequences for students and universities. Of particular concern are the potential negative impacts of the proposals in relation to student number controls - the 'AAB+' proposal, and the 'core-and-margin' proposal. These could adversely affect social mobility, student choice, and future institutional viability. The University, in common with the vast majority of responders, has suggested a more phased approach to the changes.
- Council members may be interested to read a critique of the White Paper published by the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI). This concludes that while the White Paper proposals will probably succeed in keeping the government on-budget, this is likely to be at the expense of a true market mechanism, institutional autonomy, and widening access.

<http://www.hepi.ac.uk/466-1987/Higher-Education--Students-at-the-Heart-of-the-System.-An-Analysis-of-the-Higher-Education-White-Paper-.html>

- A response is being prepared to the BIS consultation on a new regulatory framework for the HE sector, as laid out in the White Paper. This 'technical consultation' outlines an overview of the shape and purpose of the new regulatory framework, and consults on the proposed changes in procedures, powers and duties to be considered, particularly in forthcoming legislation, to bring about the new regulatory regime from 2013-14. These include 'lead regulator' powers for HEFCE, and a new duty for HEFCE to promote the student interest, as well as significant changes to the criteria for degree awarding powers, and for the use of the title 'university'.

<http://discuss.bis.gov.uk/hereform/technical-consultation/>

<http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=417090&c=1>

## 1.2 UUK Annual Conference, 6-8 September 2011

- The incoming President of Universities UK, Professor Eric Thomas (VC, Bristol University) summed up his vision for universities in his speech:

'Universities will combine their traditional strength of scholarship with their proven capacity to develop and change in order to meet society's needs. Working with our students and staff, we will provide the most effective and diverse education and research so that the technologies and the people are developed to meet our future known and unknown challenges. We will also provide the intellectual and moral leadership to overcome those challenges.'

- Secretary of State Vince Cable also made a speech, which largely re-iterated policy outlined in the White Paper.

<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Newsroom/Speeches/Pages/ProfessorEricThomasAnnualConference2011.aspx>

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/speeches/vince-cable-uuk-conference-2011>

## 1.3 Postgraduate issues

- Increases in tuition fees for postgraduate study in the wake of the move to higher fees for UK and EU undergraduates are causing concern across the sector. The latest national survey of UK tuition fees for the 2011-12 academic year shows a significant increase in the cost of postgraduate courses, raising questions about affordability, access, and the health of the future UK economy. The government postgraduate review group led by Sir Adrian Smith has been asked to consider how postgraduate study can be supported in the future.

## 1.4 Efficiency and effectiveness in HE: UUK report

- A Universities UK report says that efficiency and effectiveness are already key priorities for the UK HE sector, and that universities must continue to demonstrate good value for money in the new funding environment. The report focuses on identifying how universities can work across the sector more effectively to overcome duplication or fragmentation, both at institutional and sector level.
- Its key findings and recommendations include:
  - Information on the costs of operational activities in HE needs strengthening, to help demonstrate how value for money is achieved in these areas.
  - Benchmarking is vital to increasing efficiency, but currently its practice is piecemeal and fragmented and would benefit from more effective sector-wide coordination.
  - Shared services are often viewed as an 'off the shelf' solution, but simplifying, streamlining and improving internal processes must be a priority in order to realise its benefits fully.
  - There is potential for outsourcing and the development of strategic relationships with the private sector to deliver services.
  - The sector is not yet making full use of its size and purchasing power to generate additional savings, particularly in England. A more strategic coordination of HE procurement is proposed, along with challenging targets.

- Following publication of the report, HEFCE has announced a new £1m HEFCE and Leadership Foundation fund for projects that stimulate efficiencies in UK HE.  
<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/Documents/2011/EfficiencyinHigherEducation.pdf>  
<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/hefce/2011/efficiency.htm>

## 1.5 Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development: Education at a Glance 2011

- Recent figures from the OECD show that the UK spent 1.2 per cent of its gross domestic product on tertiary education in 2008, below the OECD average of 1.5 %. The fall from 2007, when the figure was 1.3 %, was due to a drop in the amount of public money going into HE from 0.7 % to 0.6 % of GDP. The report also shows that the share of private expenditure on HE in the UK had almost doubled from 32.3 % of total spend in 2000 to 65.5 % in 2008, owing to the tuition fee reforms of the last decade. In 2008-09, well before the current funding reforms, students in the UK were paying the third highest annual tuition fees among OECD countries at \$4,840 (£3,046) – behind the US and Korea.  
[http://www.oecd.org/document/2/0,3746,en\\_2649\\_39263238\\_48634114\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/2/0,3746,en_2649_39263238_48634114_1_1_1_1,00.html)

## 2. ACADEMIC STRATEGY

### 2.1 Student applications

Figures for applications for 2011 entry as at 1 September 2011 (ie immediately prior to intro week and registration) show increases and decreases on the previous year as follows:

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| ▪ Home undergraduate: -13%      | ▪ Overseas postgraduate taught: +2%    |
| ▪ Overseas undergraduate: +13%  | ▪ Home postgraduate research: +19%     |
| ▪ Home postgraduate taught: +4% | ▪ Overseas postgraduate research: +20% |

A report on actual registrations for 2011-12 will be provided for Council's next meeting on 29 November 2011.

### 2.2 National University Performance Metrics / Tables

- The second tranche of the 2011 HESA Performance Indicators was published in July 2011. These are based on 2009-10 data and cover employment and research indicators. Sheffield's employment indicators outperformed our benchmark in three of the four measures and the percentage of leavers from full-time first degree courses in 2009-10 either employed or studying has increased since the previous year (from 91.2% in 2008-09 to 92.5% in 2009-10), leading to an increase in rank within the Russell Group plus York. This measure makes no distinction between graduate and non-graduate level outcomes. The research indicators show measures of research output per research input and do not include a benchmark. For three of the four measures, Sheffield is shown to be producing an output greater than the sector average. For the measure for which Sheffield's output is slightly below the sector average (the ratio of research grants and contracts per funding council research allocation), Sheffield is not out of line with many competitor institutions, and is for example ranked above Cardiff, Bristol, Nottingham, Newcastle and Queen's Belfast.
- The latest People and Planet Green League was published in June 2011, and includes nine measures relating to management and policy (e.g. ethical investment, carbon management and sustainable food) and four measures relating to environmental performance (e.g. waste and water consumption). In 2011, Sheffield was ranked 114<sup>th</sup>, compared with 86<sup>th</sup> in 2010. Sheffield's highest ranking of 13<sup>th</sup> was in 2009, and large fluctuations in rank can partly be attributed to substantial changes to the methodology.

There are no Russell Group institutions in the top 20 of the 2011 Green League. UEB's Corporate Social Responsibility Group will consider whether and how steps should be taken to improve Sheffield's performance in this ranking.

- The Shanghai Jiao Tong Academic Ranking of World Universities was published in August 2011 and uses mainly research related measures (for example Noble Prize winners and research publications and citations). In 2011, Sheffield was ranked joint 97<sup>th</sup>, compared with 88<sup>th</sup> in 2010. Sheffield remains in 10<sup>th</sup> place within the UK. In addition, the publication includes top 100 rankings in broad subject fields and in a number of narrower subject areas. For the broader subject fields, Sheffield appears in the top 100 for: Engineering, Life Sciences and Medicine.
- The QS World University Rankings were published in September 2011. The rankings use a mixture of opinion surveys and data-based measures (including citations and staff-student ratios). Sheffield was ranked 72<sup>nd</sup> in 2011 compared with 69<sup>th</sup> in 2010 and has dropped to 13<sup>th</sup> place in the UK compared with 11<sup>th</sup> last year.
- The Sunday Times University Guide was published in September 2011. The University was ranked 13<sup>th</sup> in the UK, compared with 15<sup>th</sup> in the 2010 rankings. The rankings are based on a range of measures including NSS performance, graduate employment and a peer review of academics. In addition, Sheffield appears in 29 of the subject tables, with the highest rankings being for Communications and Information Studies, and Social Work, both ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the UK.

### **3. FINANCE**

#### **3.1 Financial results to 31 July 2011**

The consolidated financial results to 31 July 2011 will be presented to Council for approval at the meeting on 29 November 2011.

The key points from unaudited University only results for the year ended 31 July 2011 are as follows:

- Total income is £437.2m against a budget of £425.6m, giving a positive difference of £11.6m.
- Total expenditure is £405.6m against a budget of £427.6m, giving a positive difference of £22.0m.
- Operating surplus (after indirect contribution) is £30.1m, compared to a budgeted deficit of £1.9m, giving a positive difference of £32.0m.

Key differences between the actual results and the budget are as follows:

- Funding Council Grant income is £2.8m less than budget. This shortfall includes the reductions in income notified in the March 2011 grant letter of £2.5m in the Teaching grant and £0.9m in the Research grant, offset by additional earmarked grant income.
- Income from academic fees and support grants is £9.4m higher than budget, primarily due to additional overseas students compared to budget.
- Research grant and contract income is £4.9m higher than budget, but is offset by additional research expenditure of £3.1m, leading to a positive contribution difference of £1.8m.
- The contribution from Residences, Catering and Conferences is £0.3m, which shows a significant improvement on the previous year, with occupancy levels of 98%.
- Other income is £0.7m higher than budget and includes the receipt of two large donations towards the end of the year totalling £0.7m.

- Expenditure against core academic activity is £13.0m less than budget, with all faculties reporting underspends. These underspends are due to a combination of staff vacancy savings and control over expenditure, in anticipation of the reduction in grant income notified in the March grant letter.
- Professional Services departmental costs are £1.1m less than budget, with the majority of departments reporting small underspends.
- Expenditure on shared costs is £6.6m less than budget. Expenditure is significantly less than budget in the following areas: restructuring costs £3.7m, FRS 17 Pension costs £2.6m, energy costs £1.5m, scholarships £1.3m and bad debt provisions £1.1m. These underspends are offset by additional expenditure of £2.8m against repairs and maintenance, primarily due to asbestos removal works and the impairment of an asset held for resale of £1.4m.
- Other expenditure, including indirect costs, is £1.9m less than budget. This includes an underspend against the Strategic Development Fund of £1.3m, comprising £0.5m of unallocated funds, £0.7m earmarked in respect of overheads attributed to the AMRC and £0.1m underspend against the allocations made in 2010-11.

### **3.2 HEFCE Annual Accountability returns 2010-11 to 2014-15**

- HEFCE are currently considering the possibility of deferring the financial forecasts part of the annual accountability submission until 2012. This is due to the uncertainty regarding student recruitment for 2012-13 and the impact of the HE White paper. HEFCE are suggesting that forecasts could be submitted in June or July 2012.

Should it be deferred then the document presented to Council on 29 November 2011 would include the Financial Statements for 2010-11 and the budget for 2011-12. The financial forecasts reviewed by Council in July 2011 would be updated as necessary for more recent information available relating to 2011-12 and subsequent years. This forecast information may be for internal purposes only and would not require approval for submission to HEFCE.

### **3.3 External Factors**

- The Financial Sustainability Strategy Group (FSSG) has published a report describing the findings of a UK-wide study to develop indicators of institutional sustainability. One of the recommendations from the report is that each HEI governing body makes a formal annual assessment to assure itself about the sustainability of the institution in the expected environment and with the academic and other strategies being pursued. It should do this primarily for its own purposes, but also to provide the consistent metrics that funders need and that were recommended as part of the Wakeham review.

The outcomes of the University's assessment on sustainability in accordance with the FSSG report will be reported to the November meeting of Council.

<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/finance/fundinghe/trac/fssg/>

### **3.4 Standard and Poors rating**

- The University's credit rating from Standard and Poor's has been confirmed as stable at AA-. Copies of the Standard and Poor's report have been circulated to members of Council.

## **4. CAPITAL PROJECTS**

### **4.1 CIF programme 2008-11**

- Most projects are close to practical completion. HEFCE capital funding was expended within the timescales and the projects have been managed within agreed budget levels.

## **4.2 Future CIF funding**

- HEFCE light touch status for CIF2 was awarded to the University subject to a number of conditions. HEFCE have accepted our responses to the CIF2 conditions relating to our investment plans and carbon reduction targets. The final condition response, relating to our space allocation processes was submitted in July 2011. HEFCE have since confirmed that the University has successfully complied with all the conditions attached to the current capital funding round and grant income is being received on a quarterly basis.

## **4.3 Future Capital Pipeline 2011-12 to 2015-16**

- The 2011-15 capital programme is commencing. Project Executive Groups (PEGs) have been established and have met on several occasions. They will report quarterly on progress to UEB's Estates and Capital Sub Group.
- Phase 3 capital projects will be presented at future meetings of Council in 2012.

## **5. THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

### **5.1 Learning and Teaching**

- As previously reported, the new Learning and Teaching Strategy was approved by Senate in June. Phase 1 of the implementation is focusing on preparing for 2012 with a series of UEB-led workstreams in progress. These cover flexibility in the academic year, 'discover and understand', employability, internationalisation, HEAR, and services supporting student skills development, as well as Faculty-led action to improve consistency of provision with respect to student research experience, academic and personal support, and sense of community.
- Excellent progress has been made with plans for the development of premises at 301 Glossop Road to provide a new student academic skills and development centre. Building work is due to start in October 2011 with an anticipated completion date of August 2012 (ready for student use in September 2012). Work on the structure and design of the building is being overseen by a stakeholder steering group chaired by Professor Paul White. A second group, chaired by Dr Andrew West, is taking forward the service development aspects. Both groups have student, Faculty and service provider representation and will work closely together.
- In the National Student Survey, 90% of final year students who responded to the survey were satisfied with their course (above the sector average of 83%). The University was ranked joint third in the Russell Group, behind Oxford and Cambridge, and came top in the Yorkshire region. Thirty out of our fifty-five subjects received an overall satisfaction score of 90% or above, with a further nineteen subjects gaining a score of 80% or above. Business Studies, Microbiology and Molecular Biology, Biophysics and Biochemistry all received top overall satisfaction scores of 100%. Five subject areas (Music, French Studies, Archaeology, Law and Management/Accounting) were identified as performing below expectations in 2011. In these cases further analysis has been undertaken to identify any trends that are of concern and action plans are being put in place to address the issues raised by students.

### **5.2 Other student-related issues**

- Following a consultation process which involved students' unions and universities, the Office of Independent Adjudication (OIA), has reached a decision on publication of cases of student complaints and appeals with which they are involved. From January 2012, the OIA will adopt a policy of publication of summaries of selected cases by name of university. Decisions about which cases to publish will be taken using a public interest test and published summaries will exclude the names of complainants and of university staff.

- As one of a range of measures to help students reach an informed decision, the Government (through HEFCE) has proposed that HEIs publish a Key Information Set (KIS) for each full and part-time UG course offered. Each KIS will contain information on 16 specific areas including student satisfaction, graduate careers, learning and teaching activities, tuition fees and student finance. The range and volume of data collection involved in this process will have implications across the University and work is currently underway to gather the data needed in time for the HEFCE submission deadline of March 2012. It is proposed that HEIs will then publish KISs on their websites by the end of September 2012.
- To promote integration between international and home students, a new programme of events was piloted during the week before Intro Week 2011. Discovery Week is an informal non-residential series of events aimed at local and international students, designed to promote cross-cultural interaction and integration and effect a smoother transition from home to University. We delighted to report that approaching 200 students took part in the pilot.

## **6. RESEARCH AND INNOVATION**

### **6.1 Research awards**

- New awards for the 12 months ended 31 August 2011 totalled £106.0m, which compares favourably with £103.5m at the end of August 2010.
- The order book at the end of August 2011 for revenue research work yet to be undertaken is £182.2m.
- There is a strong correlation between the number of individual grants with a value over £1m and overall performance. In 2010-11, this figure was 17, which is the highest since before 2005-06, when full economic costing was introduced (and grant values increased in general).
- The research funding environment is becoming increasingly challenging with Research Councils and some large charities pursuing strategies which will concentrate funding for certain areas in particular institutions or make awards to particular individuals. With this background, it will be a challenge to improve on the last year's performance. Research and Innovation Services (R&IS) will be supporting faculties to identify areas of strength, match to funder priorities and write high quality bids to ensure that Sheffield remains competitive.

### **6.2 Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF)**

- The HEIF Institutional Strategy was submitted to HEFCE in July 2011.
- A newly established Knowledge Exchange Steering Group has met on two occasions. Faculties are developing knowledge exchange plans (in alignment with the University IIKE Strategy) and the HEIF funding will be allocated to support the delivery of the KE plans.
- A Proof of Concept fund, for ideas which have the potential to be commercialised, was launched in September 2011.

### **6.3 Strategic developments and partnerships**

- A number of different scenarios for industrial partner support for the Centre for Assistive Technology and Digital Healthcare within the School of Health and Related Research (SchARR) have been developed and consultation with potential partners is currently taking place to agree a suitable partnership model.
- The University was one of a number of HEIs invited to submit a bid to the Wellcome Trust's Institutional Strategic Support Fund. The bid is worth up to £0.5m per year for three years, with an expectation of at least 50% matched funding from the University

from core funding of HEIF-5 funds to support a range of activities including senior staff recruitment, early careers support post-Roberts and translational activities. R&IS will be using this as an opportunity to engage with Wellcome on their strategic goals.

#### **6.4 Research Excellence Framework 2014**

- HEFCE is currently consulting on the draft 'Panel Criteria and Working methods' documents, which will guide institutions in preparing their submissions to REF2014. There is far greater consistency in the guidance than in RAE2008, and therefore reduced complexity in terms of institutional preparations. The consultation closes on 5 October 2011, with the final guidance due to be published in January 2012.

#### **6.5 Research Council news**

- In response to the new Research Councils UK rules on capital equipment funding, the University has been working with the N8 group of universities on a capital equipment asset sharing initiative, both to improve efficiencies in equipment use and to position the N8 to host potential new capital equipment facilities that may be forthcoming in the future. The University is also developing its own internal equipment sharing capabilities which will dovetail into the N8 infrastructure. The EPSRC met with representatives from the N8 universities on 29 September 2011 to understand the benefits to be realised by this initiative.

#### **6.6 Research student matters**

- The AHRC has published its call for expressions of interest for the second tranche of Block Grant Partnership (BGP2) funding for PhD study. BGP2 will be more selective than BGP1, in line with the concentration agenda. AHRC encourages HEIs to consider consortia bids to pool strengths and also envisages a cohort approach to the research training of funded students, which mirrors the approach to Centres for Doctoral Training adopted by other Research Councils. R&IS will be supporting the faculties of Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences to prepare an Expression of Interest, in what is likely be an extremely competitive process.
- As part of a Leeds-led White Rose bid the University has submitted an application to the BBSRC Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) scheme to support up to 21 PhD studentships per year for three years at c.£1m per year. The DTP will support studentships across the BBSRC portfolio with Mechanistic Biology at its heart, in the context of key strategic needs in food security, bioenergy, biorenewables and industrial biotechnology. In line with the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Training Centres and the current Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Block Grant already won by Sheffield, this partnership will represent a line in the sand in respect of those HEIs which are being recognised and funded to offer the highest quality research student cohort doctoral experience.
- The Faculty of Arts and Humanities has been given a substantial grant to enhance postgraduate research, from the Wolfson Foundation. Sheffield is one of only nine universities across the UK selected to take part in a pilot funding programme of postgraduate scholarships. The Foundation will be donating up to £225,000 over three years, funding scholarships for three PhD students within the Faculty.

### **7. HUMAN RESOURCES**

#### **7.1 Employment policy update**

- **Agency workers**  
The Departments of Finance and HR undertook a review of the University's usage of agency workers in order to maximise business efficiency, cost effectiveness and

compliance with the Agency Worker Regulations which take effect from 1st October 2011. These outcomes will be achieved through the introduction of a formal framework agreement with three approved Agency Providers; internal process improvement; and additional monitoring processes to ensure compliance. Since departments were made aware of the review, agency worker usage across the institution has reduced from around £1m per year to around £650k, over a 12 month period.

▪ **Recruitment and Selection: Points-Based System**

The changing political landscape around the employment of migrant workers continues to present challenges for the University.

- Since the introduction in April 2011 of the annual limit on Tier 2 (General), the University has applied for and been granted 12 of the 20,700 restricted certificates of sponsorship (RCoS) available to sponsors. Applications are made monthly and are scored against set criteria, and cases are considered in open competition and on a national basis. RCoS are approved solely on points scored.
- The University is in the process of strengthening its guidance for departments on academic visitors and sponsored researchers. The guidance will assist departments in determining whether a visitor to the University will require entry clearance into the UK.
- The University continues to seek to influence future Government policy and changes where possible, and during the summer responded to two consultations on settlement; from the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) and the UK Border Agency.
- The Government is currently considering the introduction of a new Highly Trusted Sponsor (HTS) status for Tiers 2 (General) and 5 (Government Authorised Exchange). It is anticipated that the University will be amongst those sponsors eligible to apply, and further work will be undertaken to ensure the University is prepared to respond appropriately should HTS be introduced.
- The new exceptional talent route opened on 9 August 2011 with 1,000 places available. Applications under this route require endorsement by world-renowned 'competent bodies' in the fields of science, the arts, engineering and humanities. The University is hopeful that this category will facilitate the arrival of more exceptional talent to the UK.

▪ **Age and retirement**

From 1 October 2011 the Default Retirement Age of 65 will be removed from legislation. This will mean that retirement will no longer be considered a fair reason for dismissal. The University is responding to this change in a number of ways including:

- A procedure to provide employees with a process for retirement resignation. This is currently being agreed with the campus Trade Unions.
- Support for managers to focus on workforce and succession planning.
- Support for employees who may be considering retirement will be available to help them plan effectively.
- As pension changes will enable institutions to introduce forms of flexible retirement the possibility of a formal scheme may be considered in the future.
- Appropriate changes to the University's terms and conditions of employment are currently being discussed with the campus Trade Unions.

## **7.2 Changes to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS)**

- The UCU ballot in relation to changes to USS closed on 14 September 2011 and resulted in a vote in favour of strike action and action short of a strike. Around 42% of the total UCU membership voted, with 58% voting in favour of strike action (25% of UCU membership) and 77% voting in favour of action short of a strike (32% of UCU membership). UCU have posted the results to the ballot on an aggregated basis, combining all votes posted nationally into one overall result, rather than providing an institution by institution breakdown of votes cast within each University.
- The University understands that UCU are planning to escalate their action, including participation in the TUC national day of action on 30 November 2011.
- The University is committed to ensuring that the impact of any industrial action is minimised, particularly in relation to the student experience. Work will be taking place to plan for and respond to any action that is taken by UCU. UCU membership at the University is around 1,100, which represents 28% of staff on grades 6 and above.
- Meanwhile, the changes agreed by the USS Board are due to be implemented from 1 October 2011, and members of USS will see changes to their contribution levels in their October pay, with new members after 1 October 2011 joining USS in the Career Average Re-valued Earnings section. The agreed changes include the modifications to the original proposals put forward by the employers following the consultation with affected employees and their representatives. .
- The Departments of Finance and Human Resources are now working to implement the changes at the University of Sheffield, including system amendments and communications ahead of 1 October 2011. Further details of the changes and updates have been posted at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/finance/staff-information/mymoney/mypension/uss>.

## **7.3 Changes to the University of Sheffield Pension Scheme (USPS)**

- Following the Council decision on 18 May 2011 to close the final salary section of USPS to future accrual and to launch a new cash balance section at a point to be determined no later than 31 March 2012, the trade unions Unite and UNISON took strike action on five separate days in June and July 2011 and held a rally to coincide with an undergraduate open day. The University had contingency plans in place to deal with the days of action and all student activity was able to go ahead as planned, with minimal disruption to other University business.
- As a result of talks with both unions following the strike action, an agreement was reached in which the unions suspended any further industrial action until at least 31 October 2011, and the University committed to delaying implementation of the changes to USPS until 1 December 2011. The intervening period allowed for further talks to go ahead between the University and the unions with the aim of resolving the dispute, whilst noting the decisions reached by Council on 18 May 2011.
- A total of 12 meetings have taken place in September and October. These meetings have provided an opportunity to further explore those areas which may minimise the detriment for some or all of those staff affected by the changes. Thus far no agreement has been reached which will resolve the dispute although both sides remain committed to an on-going dialogue. Both parties have agreed to involve ACAS to assist with resolving the dispute.
- The combined membership of both UNISON and Unite at the University is around 700 people. Of the total membership, around 300 are on grades 1 to 5 and are members of USPS, and so directly affected by the proposals (41% of the overall membership). There

are around 1,800 staff on grades 1 to 5, and 925 (52%) of those are members of USPS.

- The University is making preparations for implementation with effect from 1 December 2011.
- Staff are being kept up to date via the web pages at [www.shef.ac.uk/uspsreview](http://www.shef.ac.uk/uspsreview). Further face to face communications/workshops with staff are now being delivered

#### **7.4 Outstanding achievements and awards**

- Professor Matthew Holley (Biomedical Science) has been honoured for his contribution to the work of Action on Hearing Loss, the largest charity representing the 9m deaf and hard of hearing people in the UK. He was presented the National Award for Championing the Cause for Action on Hearing Loss 2011 during HRH the Duke of Edinburgh's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration at Buckingham Palace.
- Professor Jenny Saul (Philosophy) became the first person in the UK to receive the Distinguished Woman Philosopher Award. The annual award, given by The Society for Women in Philosophy, will be presented at a ceremony in Washington, DC, in December 2011.
- Professor Alan Walker (Sociological Studies) and Dr Paul Reynolds (Civil and Structural Engineering) have been awarded prestigious fellowships in recognition of excellence in their chosen fields. Professor Walker has been made a Fellow of the British Academy, while Dr Paul Reynolds has been awarded a five-year Leadership Fellowship from the UK Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) into Advanced Technologies for Mitigation of Human-Induced Vibration.
- The University of Sheffield has been named as one of the UK's top enterprise educators at the third annual National Enterprise Educator Awards.
- The University has been shortlisted in three of this year's Times Higher Education awards categories:
  - Widening Participation Initiative of the Year category: Storying Sheffield
  - Early Career Support for Researchers category: Think Ahead Programme in Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health
  - University of the Year.

A judging visit for the University of the Year category is scheduled for late September, and the winners will be announced on 24 November.

- The HR Team has been shortlisted for the national CIPD People Management Awards in the Excellence Through Technology category, for their highly successful implementation of e-Recruitment. Other finalists include Unilever, KPMG and BSKyB.

#### **7.5 New key appointments**

- Dr Paul Evans has been appointed as Chair in Cardiovascular Science in the Department of Cardiovascular Science with effect from 3 October 2011. Dr Evans is currently a Reader at Imperial College London.
- Professor John Flint has been appointed as Chair in Town & Regional Planning in the Department of Town & Regional Planning with effect from 1 October 2011. Professor Flint is currently a Professor of Housing & Urban Governance at Sheffield Hallam University.
- Professor Kate Gerrish has been appointed as a Chair in Nursing Research in the School of Nursing & Midwifery with effect from 7 November 2011. Professor Gerrish is currently a Research Professor of Nursing at Sheffield Hallam University.
- Professor Neil Hopkinson has been appointed as Chair in Manufacturing Engineering in

the Department of Mechanical Engineering with effect from 1 October 2011. Professor Hopkinson is currently a Senior Lecturer at Loughborough University.

- Professor Paul Overton has been appointed as Chair in Neuroscience in the Department of Psychology with effect from 1 August 2011. Professor Overton was previously a Senior Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Sheffield.
- Professor Jenny Roberts has been appointed as Chair in Economics in the Department of Economics with effect from 1 August 2011. Professor Roberts was previously a Professor at Leeds University.
- Professor Marco Viceconti has been appointed as Scientific Director of the Virtual Physiological Human Institute in the Department of Mechanical Engineering with effect from 1 October 2011. Professor Viceconti is currently a Researcher at Istituto Ortopedico Rizzoli.
- Professor Hendrik Wagenaar has been appointed as a Chair in Town & Regional Planning in the Department of Town & Regional Planning with effect from 1 November 2011. Professor Wagenaar is currently an Associate Professor at Leiden University.
- Ms Louise Woodcock has been appointed as Head of Learning & Teaching Services (LeTS) within the Department of Student Services with effect from 15 August 2011. Ms Woodcock was previously an Assistant Registrar at the University of Sheffield.
- Ms Tracy Wray has been appointed as Assistant Director of Human Resources (HR Operations) in the Department of Human Resources with effect from 3 October 2011. Ms Wray is currently a Human Resources Operations Director at the Skills Funding Agency.

## **8. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

### **8.1 International Relations Office**

- A new International Relations Office (IRO) came into being on 1 August 2011, as one of a number of developments designed to ensure that Sheffield is better positioned on the global stage. The IRO initially brings together people and teams with existing roles and responsibilities in the areas of international business development, collaborative provision, student mobility and exchanges, but it is likely that the team's work will evolve and change as the University's new international strategy takes shape.

### **8.2 Sport Sheffield**

- The University has taken a major step forward during 2010-11 with the development of a new strategy for Sport. The strategy, based on a 'sport continuum', has been a joint project developed by managers within U Sport and officers in the Students' Union with involvement from senior University officers and assisted by an external facilitator.
- The resultant strategy has been warmly welcomed by UEB, which endorsed its approach, aims and areas of focus. The challenge for 2011-12 will be for all those involved to come together operationally to chart an effective course for the implementation of the strategy; to manage sport activities within the continuum in ways that are consistent with the aims of the overarching strategy; and for the University to assemble a Board comprising senior staff and students who can monitor the implementation of the strategy and report on its progress; advise on its development; and lend support at a senior level, serving as a collective champion for Sport at the University.
- Steps are now being taken to establish the Sport Sheffield Board (so called to reflect the new brand underpinning the strategy). Chaired by a Pro-Vice-Chancellor, this will report periodically to UEB and annually to Council. In addition to staff and students, its membership will include a member appointed by Council (on which the advice of the Nominations Committee will be sought) and three external co-opted members.

## 9. EXTERNAL RELATIONS

### 9.1 External relations: international

#### ▪ **Vice-Chancellor's visits**

The Vice-Chancellor, accompanied by the Registrar, visited the USA in April 2011 and August/September 2011 to meet with alumni donors in New York, San Francisco and Washington DC, to attend a board meeting of University of Sheffield in America and to visit the University of California, Berkeley.

#### ▪ **Nanjing Science Park / South-Eastern University, China**

A small delegation led by Professor Rebecca Hughes, Pro Vice-Chancellor (International) visited Nanjing Science Park to explore the possibility of a joint venture campus development in Nanjing with South-Eastern University. Discussions are at an early stage and are continuing both with Nanjing and across the wider University community.

#### ▪ **The University of Shanghai for Science and Technology (USST), China**

Following the allocation by the Shanghai government of £5m initial funding (+ £5m follow-up funding) to a joint research centre in Shanghai between Sheffield and USST, an initial scoping visit to USST was carried out by Dr Iain Todd (Materials) in July 2011. A reciprocal visit by a delegation of senior staff from USST is due to visit the Faculty of Engineering in October 2011. By the end of this visit the areas for joint research, the modality of industry collaboration and the timetable for project development will be established.

#### ▪ **Sino-British College (SBC), China**

Sino British College is a subsidiary college of USST, managed by the Northern Consortium (NCUK) of which the University is a founder member. Students may either progress to the NCUK partner universities as part of a 2+2 articulation or continue at SBC to complete degrees awarded by partner universities. The University has established a BA Business Management programme under which students will come to Sheffield for the third year of their studies and complete their degree at SBC. The first cohort of students has been recruited and up to 50 very high quality students from SBC will now be able to pursue this pathway.

#### ▪ **The Centre for Engineering and Industrial Development (CIDESI), Mexico**

Following an agreement signed by the Vice Chancellor in Mexico City in March 2011 between the University and CIDESI, an initial cohort of students has been recruited by the Mexican side, with a further cohort to arrive in semester 2. Prof Dwyer-Joyce (Mechanical Engineering) will visit CIDESI centres shortly to plan research collaboration and lay the groundwork for industrial research collaboration.

#### ▪ **Mahanakorn University of Technology (MUT), Thailand**

A visit to Sheffield by the President and senior staff of MUT at the beginning of September has resulted in the signing of an articulation agreement with the Faculty of Engineering. The agreement will result in the arrival of a stream of suitably qualified international fee paying undergraduate students from 2014 into programmes in the departments of Chemical and Biological, Civil and Structural, Electronic and Electrical and Mechanical Engineering. It is expected that the collaboration will expand to include other subjects. The relationship with MUT will further establish a recruitment base in Thailand with potential to develop research and exchange activities.

### 9.2 External relations: regional and national

- The University played an active role in the recent MADE Entrepreneurs Festival, held in Sheffield in September. The event received significant coverage in the national business media.

- The Vice Chancellor and others are involved in discussions with the Local Economic Partnership about how to maximise collaboration opportunities between the two Universities and industry.
- Meg Munn MP visited the University to learn more about our EPSRC research. A further event is scheduled with her in the autumn around the topic of Women in Science and Engineering.
- The University's relationship with Santander continues to develop. In July, an agreement covering their second year of support was signed by the Vice Chancellor and Luis Juste (Head of Santander Universities).
- Agreement has been reached with Jessica Ennis's management company for various activities to raise the University's profile through Jessica Ennis's on-line presence in the run up to the 2012 Olympics.
- A successful 'Ideas Bazaar' event was held in Firth Court, bringing together the region's creative and cultural community and University researchers. This event is the precursor for the bigger 'Festival of the Mind' scheduled for September 2012.

### **9.3 External relations: community**

- A Dream Bigger Dreams event was held as part of the Sheffield Fayre in Norfolk Park over the August bank holiday weekend, and provided fun educational activities to showcase the positive contribution of students and staff to the City. The event was extremely well attended and raised the profile of the University amongst Sheffield residents who would not normally interact with the University. Further A series of similar events around the City are planned for the coming academic year.
- To accompany the Dream Bigger Dreams Campaign, a pack of Teacher Materials, providing a range of games, activities and stories, has been launched. This is currently being tested by five local primary schools prior to being rolled out to all local primary schools and beyond.
- Various community meetings/events were attended and supported over the period including:
  - Crookes Residential Association
  - City Centre Community Forum
  - Broomhall Neighbourhood Action Group
  - Walkley Forum
  - Good Neighbours, Great Communities meeting
  - City Neighbourhood Action Group
  - Broomhill Forum
  - Strategic Major Events Forum (Creative Sheffield)
  - Olympic Torch Planning meeting (Sheffield City Council)
- Community reps are once again being recruited from the student body to support our Community Relations efforts over the coming academic year, and to encourage positive relations between student residents and local community.

### **9.4 Media coverage**

- The University generated 1,580 cuttings in the press and media between 21 June 2011 and 26 September 2011. This amounted to £1,631,560 in AVE (the amount the coverage would have cost if paid in terms of advertising) and included coverage on BBC Look North, ITV Calendar, The Independent, The Financial Times, Times Higher Education, The Times,

BBC News, Daily Mail, The Mail on Sunday, Daily Telegraph, The Guardian, Yorkshire Post, Sheffield Telegraph and Sheffield Star.

- A unique collaboration between the worlds of fashion and science, led by the University of Sheffield and London College of Fashion, has seen pioneers explore how clothing and textiles can purify the air we breathe. This story appeared in the Daily Mail, BBC News, BBC Radio 1, BBC Local Radio, Times Higher Education, Vogue and The Ecologist.
- A bag, which can protect planes from bombs in passenger luggage, has been developed by an international team of scientists, including academics from the University of Sheffield working within University spinout company Blastech Ltd. This story received coverage on News of the World, The Engineer, International Airport Review, Airport Technology, Professional Engineering, Professional Security, Yorkshire Post.
- Researchers at the University of Sheffield developed polymers that fluoresce in the presence of bacteria, paving the way for the rapid detection and assessment of wound infection using ultra-violet light. This story featured in The Guardian, BBC News, The Scotsman, MSN UK, Chemical Engineer, The Engineer, First Science, Patient UK.

### **9.5 Internal communications**

- A new channel for internal communications has been launched to complement other already existing channels. Follow @SheffUniStaff on Twitter.
- Following feedback from the recent Internal Communications Survey, work is underway to restructure the staff web pages to include more of a rolling internal news service featuring stories of University achievements of interest to staff.

### **9.6 Corporate Marketing**

- Work has started overhauling departmental web pages to incorporate key 2012 messages for prospective students. Departmental propositions will be articulated through these pages, and brought to life with a series of case studies of students, alumni and staff illustrating the benefits of a UoS degree.
- In addition to communicating key messages to prospective 2012 students, a PR campaign is being planned to specifically target parents and other 'influencers' of prospective students. This will increase positive messages about the benefits of a UoS degree within traditional and social media.

### **9.7 Events**

- Fifteen degree congregations were held during the period 18 - 22 July 2011, and included the award of nine honorary degrees and the admission of Jonathan Stone to the University's roll of benefactors. Senate Awards for excellence in learning and teaching were also presented, and the Graduation Dinner was held on the evening of 22 July.

## **10. SERIOUS INCIDENT REPORTING**

- In its role as principal regulator of HEIs as charities, HEFCE requires an annual declaration that serious incidents have been appropriately reported. This declaration is made on behalf of members of Council, and it is therefore appropriate that they should be informed on a regular basis about incidents reported to HEFCE. HEFCE defines a serious incident as 'one which has resulted in, or could result in, a significant loss of funds or a significant risk to a charity's property, work, beneficiaries or reputation'.
- Details of any serious incidents reported to HEFCE will be notified to Council through this report.
- During the period since 1 July 2011, no serious incidents have required report to HEFCE.

