

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minutes of the Board of Governors meeting held on Thursday 6 July 2017.

Present: Sandy Forbes (Chair), Jenny Body, Zain Choudhry (until G17.07.24), Professor John Craven, Rob Fraser, Martin Hagen, Richard Holmes, David Lamb, Clive Lewis, Mark Mason, Jocelyn McNulty, Professor Steve Neill (until G17.07.24), Graham van der Lely, Professor Steve West (until G17.07.24), Donna Whitehead (until G17.07.24).

Apologies: Sonia Mills, Simon Moore.

In Attendance: Delia Bean, Mark Davis (for G17.07.6), Debbie England (for G17.07.7 and G17.07.8), Christine Gledhill (Deputy Clerk), Professor Jane Harrington (until G17.07.24), William Liew (until G17.07.24), Bill Marshall (until G17.07.24), Alison Weeks (for G17.07.4).

G17.07.1 MEMBERSHIP

G17.07.1.1 Governor Appointments

Members noted that the SU President at UWE, Zain Choudhry, became a Governor with effect from 3 July 2017 and would remain so whilst in office. Members welcomed Mr Choudhry to his first meeting.

G17.07.1.2 Term of Office Renewals

Following due and careful consideration, the following recommendations of the Nominations and Governance Committee were **approved**:

- i. Mr Richard Holmes, Independent Member to serve for a second term of office to 30 November 2020
- ii. Dr Mark Mason, Independent Member to serve for a second term of office to 30 November 2020.

G17.07.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None received.

G17.07.3 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Paper G17/07/01 was received.

G17.07.3.1 Members approved the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2017.

G17.07.3.2 Capital and Major Projects Programme (G17.03.6.6 refers)

Members noted that the Wallscourt Foundation would fit out as well as construct Building 2 at Bower Ashton.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

G17.07.4 Health and Safety Update

Paper G17/07/10 was received.

- G17.07.4.1 Members noted that there had been no RIDDOR reportable accidents since the last report to the Board in March 2017. For the year, of the 142 accidents reported, 2 were RIDDOR reportable, plus 1 near-miss incident that occurred in October 2016, previously reported to Governors.
- G17.07.4.2 Members were reminded of the details of the near-miss incident and the issue of an Improvement Notice as the outcome of an investigation carried out by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the requirements of which were to be remedied by 30 June 2017.
- G17.07.4.3 Members noted the following:
- i. The HSE Inspector visited the University on 14 June 2017 and was very positive about the work being done and the system the University was embedding;
 - ii. The HSE had confirmed the University's compliance with the Improvement Notice on 27 June 2017;
 - iii. The development of a University Health and Safety Standard, "Work with Biological Agents";
 - iv. The setting up of a Biological Safety Committee (BSC), chaired by the Head of Health and Safety and reporting to the University's Health and Safety Committee. The BSC would ensure compliance to the new standard and approve all new work with Hazard Group 2 biological agents (or substances containing them). The BSC would provide an annual report to the Directorate and the Board of Governors;
 - v. Shared services arrangement with the University of Bristol, using their Biological Safety Adviser and in return, providing an audit service to their own systems;
 - vi. Ongoing work with the Bristol Robotics Laboratory and its work on urine products, to improve their Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) assessments;
 - vii. The Head of Health and Safety was currently writing a 'lessons learned' report with the Faculty, intended to overlay the new principles and practices in place.
- G17.07.4.4 Members also noted that staff involved in the initial incident had been supported.
- G17.07.4.5 Members also noted that the BSC, led by the Head of Health and Safety would audit the new biological safety management system in June 2018, the outcome of which would be reported back to the Board by way of the usual Health and Safety update.

ACTION: Head of Health and Safety

Mrs. A. Weeks left the meeting.

G17.07.5 Vice-Chancellor's Report

- G17.07.5.1 Members noted the content of the report and received an update from the Vice-Chancellor on the following:

- G17.07.5.2
- i. The University's solid achievement of a Silver category in the TEF and its having been identified as having very strong characteristics (partnerships, business links, the development of enterprise skills and meeting the diverse needs of students). Universities were each benchmarked against their own group of universities;
 - ii. Confirmation that the University had also fully met HEFCE's requirements in the Annual Provider Review (APR) for quality and standards;
 - iii. The University's explanation for the anomaly relating to part-time students following health modules that, due to the manner in which they were registered counted as non-progressing, had only partially convinced the panel from a TEF perspective. However, the same explanation had fully satisfied the Annual Provider Review Group;
 - iv. The University had been shortlisted in all 9 categories for which it had applied in the UK and Ireland 2017 Green Gown Awards and was now a finalist.
- G17.07.5.3 Members also noted that the TEF was an England-only initiative and that whilst the sector welcomed a focus on the quality of teaching, there was some debate as to the appropriateness of the metrics being used.
- G17.07.5.4 Members acknowledged that exercises such as this would stimulate improvements to the student experience across the board.
- G17.07.5.5 Members noted the measures in place to secure the University's objective of the provision of outstanding learning and ready and able graduates, which included:
- A focus on teaching excellence, involving the development of staff as well as performance management;
 - NSS Task Force;
 - The recently developed DHLE (Destination of Leavers of Higher Education) Task Force which had a particular focus at departmental level;
 - Enhancement Framework for academic programmes and practices, including a new Continuous Improvement tool which would be accessible to all staff and would provide real-time data. A demonstration of the tool would be shared with the Board in the coming months;
- ACTION: Deputy Vice Chancellor and Provost**
- Enterprise was running throughout all programmes;
 - Enhanced Year and the '360 degree' nature of the UWE offer.
- G17.07.5.6 Members also noted that the Learning 2020 Strategic Programme was at the core of this activity, augmented by Campus 2020, exploring the University's physical needs, and Performance 2020 focusing on what was needed to improve delivery of the University's core business.
- G17.07.5.7 Members also noted the current recruitment position:
- i. Undergraduate (UG) Applications to UWE, including direct were up 16%, UCAS applications were also up by 10%, against a sector which was still down 4% and against the Alliance Group, also down 10%. Faculty details: ACE: +16%, FBL: +36%, FET: + 28% and HAS: +1% (reflected declines in allied health and nursing)
 - ii. Acceptances: Unconditional Firm (UF) up 4%, Conditional Firm (CF) up 24%; 989 more firm acceptances than in 2016

- iii. International UG applications: UF were up 27%, CF up 30% ; 260 more firm acceptances than in 2016
- iv. 9% growth in Postgraduate applications, 100 more firm acceptances.

G17.07.5.8 Members noted the University's prudent step not to budget for full recruitment in light of the fragile position of international recruitment generally given the overall government mood in the wake of the decision to leave the EU and a general feeling emerging among parents that the UK was unsafe. Members also noted that other universities had a far greater reliance on international recruitment.

G17.07.5.9 Members also noted that in Vietnam UWE was the most popular institution for recruitment and that the University had recently signed an agreement with the Vietnamese government for them to support student bursaries to UWE over the next 3 years for £1.5 million.

G17.07.5.10 Members were informed of the announcement the previous day that Nicola Dandridge, currently Chief Executive of Universities UK (UUK) had been appointed as Chief Executive of the Office for Students (OfS). Members also noted that the Vice Chancellor and 5 other HEFCE Board members had been appointed to the OfS Board, chaired by Sir Michael Barber and would transition from HEFCE over the coming months.

G17.07.5.11 Members noted the details and forthcoming changes to the Vice Chancellor's external positions. Members noted in particular that the Vice Chancellor was currently Interim Chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership and that he may continue to do so should the terms of reference and Board Members be secured.

G17.07.6 Strategy 2030 Update – Technology 2030
Paper G17/07/02 was received.

G17.07.6.1 Members noted the following highlights of the presentation:

- i. The rate of technological change was accelerating, product life cycles were becoming shorter and by 2030, digitalisation would be inherent in all aspects of life and would influence the way we worked;
- ii. Data and intelligence would be critical to how the University operated and activity would be centred around five areas:
 1. IT Foundation: the IT estate, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Virtual Learning Environment (VLE, network, etc.) – there was currently a shift to cloud-based environments and UWE's IT similarly would function wholly from this – on-site solutions would be very limited;
 2. Student/Staff Experience: this will be a key driver; the virtual workplace, the transition from face-to-face learning to virtual would be seamless, bringing digital into the physical, in an augmented experience. The use of tools such as Microsoft's HoloLens, Google Tilt Brush and others, would mean the way we interacted with technology would be very different. UWE could be involved in developing its own such apps;
 3. Internet of Things: 'location-aware content' would provide a personalised experience for students, e.g. notification of favourite bands playing locally. Deakin University in Australia had a digitally-

enabled “Cloud Campus”, underpinned by 5G; such campuses would accelerate in development and would be critical to UWE’s future;

4. Eco Systems and Integration: collaborative use of data, enabling students to develop applications using data from a number of sources – an example would be a virtual placement environment;
 5. Data and Intelligence: the above four areas would feed into this. The application of algorithms and intelligent programmes based on data would enable a personalised student experience and preference-driven learning. There would be some social/ethical questions and other barriers to overcome in respect of the use of robotic assistants, unconscious thought, etc.
- iii. These developments would require the University to invest in the way it integrated and designed its systems, data intelligence, etc. and to explore different ways of training – the University was in an excellent position to embrace this;
 - iv. Student feedback indicated that they still liked personal delivery of teaching.

G17.07.6.2 Members also noted that the University was already exploring Bluetooth solutions to measure and better understand student engagement/attendance.

G17.07.6.3 Members further noted that all new campus developments were built with flexibility in mind so that buildings could be re-purposed in the future as required.

G17.07.6.4 Members acknowledged that as technology advanced, it was important to put in place sufficient periods of time where computers and other technology was not in use or available to safeguard students’ mental health and wellbeing.

G17.07.6.5 Members noted the value in allowing other institutions to be the early adopters of advanced technology and to face the challenges that that brought. However the University would seek to be in the vanguard of technological development from a research perspective, given that the superior abilities of Artificial Intelligence (AI) had already been identified in areas such as reading radiographs and imaging.

Mr M. Davis left the meeting.

G17.07.7 Annual Inclusivity Report
Paper G17/07/03 was received.

G17.07.7.1 The Director, HROD reminded Members that the Board of Governors had strategic oversight of the public statutory duty. Members noted the contents of the report and the progress made in relation to the University’s inclusivity agenda over the year.

G17.07.7.2 Members questioned how BME enrolment – which had remained static at round 14% for the last 3 years – compared with other institutions. Members noted that against similar universities UWE compared well, although regionally it fell below benchmark.

G17.07.7.3 Members endorsed the view that the priority concern was the performance level of this group and the need to address its levels of progression, retention and performance before examining how to improve recruitment. Members noted that the Future Quest project, led by UWE to support young people to take advantage of educational opportunities, would be critical to this.

G17.07.8 Staff Survey and Communication Plan
Paper G17/07/04 was received.

G17.07.8.1 Members noted the high level results of the survey and in particular:

- i. 71% participation rate (+9 from the previous survey);

ii. The very positive responses to 6 key employee engagement questions.

G17.07.8.2 Members noted that the results would be shared with senior managers the following week and that a communications plan would run throughout the coming year.

G17.07.8.3 Members also noted that details of all 40 questions would be presented to the Strategic Planning and Performance Committee at its meeting on 28 September 2017.

ACTION: Director HROD/Deputy Clerk

G17.07.8.4 Members further noted that a staff survey of this scale took place every two years although the University was currently reflecting as to whether a tool as large as this was appropriate or if others such as snap surveys, etc. would be more suitable.

G17.07.9 Board Developments

Paper G17/07/05 was received and noted.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

G17.07.10 Financial Estimates and Forecasts

Paper G17/07/06 was received.

G17.07.10.1 The Director of Finance led Members through the highlights of the report and drew attention in particular to the following:

- G17.07.10.2
- i. The report had been considered in detail at the meeting of the Finance, Estates and IT Committee held on 8 June 2017;
 - ii. All forecasts were predicated on the continuation of the current tuition fee regime;
 - iii. The increase to the forecast operating surplus for the current year that was previously reported to the Board;
 - iv. The financial performance of each Faculty was discussed and presented in the papers;
 - v. For the 2017/18 budget,
 - a. the student recruitment contingency was reinstated at £2.5m;
 - b. The approval of 43 FTE additional academic posts;
 - c. The 12% increase to the Student Union Block Grant. The SU would be required to provide reports of evidence-based results and performance of the additional funding for projects; the University would also cover the additional business rates for the new SU building;
 - vi. The possible need for additional medium-term revolving credit facility in 2-3 years' time (depending on the Masterplan) and the University would ensure that this was done within the current financial covenants of our existing lenders. The business case for additional loan facilities would be presented to the Board of Governors in due course.

G17.07.10.3 The Chair of Finance, Estate and IT Committee confirmed that FEIT Committee had a detailed presentation from the Director of Finance on the Financial Forecasts 2016/17 to 2019/20, and was content to endorse them to the Board for approval.

G17.07.10.4 Members **agreed** to:

- i. **Note** the projected financial outturn for 2016/17,
- ii. **Approve** the 2017/18 budget estimates (adopted and recommended by the Finance, Estate and IT Committee as the framework within which the Vice-Chancellor will determine final detailed budgets for individual budgetary units),
- iii. **Approve** the allocation of 2017/18 block grant and additional resources to the Student Union,
- iv. **Approve** the financial forecasts for 2018/19 and 2019/20,
- v. **Endorse** that the University is in a satisfactory financial sustainability position,

- vi. **Approve** the Financial Forecast 2017 (Appendix 2) for submission to HEFCE, and
- vii. **Note** the potential requirement of additional medium term revolving credit facility to mitigate cash flow constraints, which would require further analysis and Board of Governors' approval in due course.

G17.07.11 Financial Regulations

Paper G17/07/07 was received.

- G17.07.11.1 Members noted that no significant revisions had been made to the regulations, but were rather a consolidation of 31 regulations into a single comprehensive document.
- G17.07.11.2 Members noted the following in particular:
 - i. The removal of some parts – such as Data Protection, the governance of which extended beyond financial responsibilities and were covered elsewhere by the University;
 - ii. An additional appendix relating to fraud and its prevention, detection and investigation;
 - iii. The reporting requirements related to the finances of the Students' Union.
- G17.07.11.3 Members also noted that the revised Financial Regulations would be part of the Finance Masterclass that was presented to all senior staff and that the department would work with staff to distil policies and procedures.
- G17.07.11.4 Members further noted that the University Financial Procedures remained valid, but were in the process of review to make them more accessible. Members requested that a paper confirming this assurance be presented to the FEIT Committee at its meeting on 12 October 2017.

ACTION: Director of Finance

G17.07.12 Pension Update and Strategy

Paper G17/07/08 was received.

- G17.07.12.1 This item is recorded as a confidential minute.

G17.07.13 Investment in Engineering

Paper G17/07/09 was received.

- G17.07.13.1 This item is recorded as a confidential minute.

REPORTS

G17.07.14 Updates from Committee Chairs and Minutes of Board Committees

- G17.07.14.1 Strategic Planning and Performance Committee, 9 May 2017

Paper G17/07/11i was received and noted.

- G17.07.14.2 Nominations and Governance Committee, 14 June 2017

Paper G17/07/11ii was received and noted.

- G17.07.14.3 Finance, Estates and IT Committee, 8 June 2017

Paper G17/07/11iii was received.

- G17.07.14.4 Members noted that the Governors' Stadium Sub-Group had met for the first time on Friday 9 June 2017 and that Heads of Terms were expected to be finalised in time for presentation to the September Board meeting.

ACTION: Pro Vice Chancellor, Commercial Director and Company Secretary

- G17.07.14.4 Audit Committee, 21 June 2017

Paper G17/07/11iv was received and noted.

G17.07.15 Finance, Estates and IT Committee – Campus 2020

Paper G17/07/12 was received and noted.

G17.07.16 Fire Safety at University Campuses and Buildings

Paper G17/07/13 was received.

G17.07.16.1 Members noted that the University had initiated a review of its campuses and buildings before the advice had been issued from the Department for Communities and Local Government, in light of the devastating tower block fire in London on 14 June 2017.

G17.07.16.2 Members also noted that no cladding on University buildings contained combustible materials and that the University was awaiting a response from Unite as to the outcome of its review of accommodation used by UWE students. The Board would receive an update on Unite's response at the next meeting.

ACTION: Pro Vice Chancellor, Commercial Director and Company Secretary

G17.07.16.3 Members further noted the measures and controls in place to mitigate the risk of fire at the University, including:

- i. All buildings had monitored fire alarm systems linked to manned 24hr monitoring locations, that were regularly tested and maintained;
- ii. PAT testing of electrical items and regular testing of fixed electrical systems;
- iii. No 'stay put' policy – University procedure was always to fully evacuate the building and evacuation drills were carried out on a regular basis.

ITEMS TO NOTE

G17.07.17 University Companies and Directors

Paper G17/07/14 was received and noted.

G17.07.18 Minutes from the Student Governor Forum

Paper G17/07/15 was received and noted.

G17.07.19 Academic Board Minutes

Paper G17/07/16 was received and noted.

G17.07.20 HEFCE Grant Letter

Paper G17/07/17 was received and noted.

G17.07.21 HEFCE's Annual Assessment of Institutional Risk

Paper G17/07/18 was received and noted.

G17.07.22 Corporate Seal

Paper G17/07/19 was received and noted.

G17.07.23 Any Other Business

G17.07.23.1 Pro Vice Chancellor and Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts, Creative Industries and Education (ACE)

Members noted the appointment of Professor Jane Roscoe as the new PVC and Executive Dean, ACE. Professor Roscoe was currently Director of the London Film School and would take up her post at UWE on 11 September 2017.

G17.07.23.2 HR Online

Members noted that the new system had been due to go live the previous day but due to data migration issues, was being delayed until September.

RESERVED BUSINESS

G17.07.24 Remuneration Committee

Paper G17/07/20 was received.

This item is recorded as a confidential minute.

Dates of Future Meetings

13 September 2017	13:00 – 18:00
15 November 2017	13:00 – 18:00
20-21 March 2018	inc. Away Day
11 July 2018	13:00 – 18:00