

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held remotely using Microsoft Teams on Wednesday 18 November 2020.

Present: David Lamb (Chair), Richard Bacon, Jenny Body, Augusta Chidinma Nnajofofor (until G20.11.12), Laura Claydon, Professor John Craven, Richard Holmes, Clive Lewis, Ian MacKenzie, Grant Mansfield, Dr Mark Mason, Dr Chris Moore (until G20.11.12), Professor Jane Roscoe (until G20.11.12), Professor Steve West (until G20.11.12).

Apologies: Kalpna Woolf, Andrea Young.

In Attendance: Dr Jodie Anstee, Clerk, Professor Martin Boddy, PVC Research and Enterprise (until G20.11.12), Professor Amanda Coffey, DVC and Provost (until G20.11.12), William Liew, Chief Financial Officer (until G20.11.12), Jo Midgley, Registrar and PVC Student Experience (until G20.11.12), Professor Paul Olomolaiye, PVC Equalities and Civic Engagement (until G20.11.12), Richard Strange, Chief Information Officer (until G20.11.12), Joanna Wallis, FOI and Governance Officer (until G20.11.12), Christine Gledhill, Deputy Clerk (minutes).

G20.11.1 APOLOGIES

G20.11.1.1 Apologies were noted as set out above.

G20.11.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None received.

G20.11.3 OPENING DISCUSSION

G20.11.3.1 The Chair informed the Board that this new standing agenda item was an opportunity for Members to raise any matters of concern or of strategic interest for the University and the Board.

G20.11.3.2 Professor John Craven, Co-opted Member, reflected on the Engineering presentation by Dr Lisa Brodie, Head of Department Engineering Design and Mathematics, shared with the Board before the meeting, in which it was described how the new Engineering building had been a huge contribution to morale. He added that it would be interesting to hear whether there were further plans for new buildings.

The Vice-Chancellor responded that some of this would be picked up in discussions later in the meeting.

G20.11.3.3 Dr Chris Moore, Academic Board Nominee, shared his own perception that generally staff were feeling tired, having encountered and addressed a great deal of change over the recent months of the pandemic. He added that while this period had been challenging, it had also presented opportunities to learn.

G20.11.3.4 The Chair thanked Chris Moore for his comments, adding that they were a helpful reminder of the amount of change occurring in people's lives.

STRATEGIC ITEMS

G20.11.4 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

Paper G20/11/01 was received

G20.11.4.1 Members noted the content of the report and received an update from the Vice-Chancellor.

G20.11.4.2 *Student Recruitment*

- i. Figures to 9 November 2020 showed that the University was currently exceeding the targets set for student recruitment. These figures remained provisional at this stage.
- ii. 39 postgraduate programmes had been pushed back to January 2021 – latest indications were that the January recruitment target for this provision would be met. Following the latest lockdown announcement, the University was running additional webinars for these starters.
- iii. The University was working hard to understand how definite those starts were and how to ensure students returned after the Christmas break.

G20.11.4.3 *Covid-19 Matters*

- i. Christmas break
 - a. the government had announced that universities should encourage student to return home between 3rd and 9th December (the 'Student Travel Window').
 - b. The University had applied to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) to provide lateral flow testing facilities. It was expected that the materials to administer this would be received within the next two weeks. This would be a very tight timescale for which the logistics would be challenging, due to the scale of numbers involved.
 - c. Testing was voluntary and many students would choose to return home without being tested.
 - d. Location of lateral flow testing facilities would be linked to the overall coronavirus rates of particular locations; it was anticipated that the University's request would be endorsed.
- ii. Test Centre – the community Covid-19 Mobile Test Unit was due to be removed and a new permanent Local Test Site facility would be in place and operational in Car Park 2 on the Frenchay Campus by the end of the week.
- iii. Mental Health and Wellbeing – the pandemic was impacting across the whole of the sector, at all levels, from different perspectives, affecting both staff and students.
- iv. A meeting had taken place the previous day with representatives of the Universities and Colleges Union (UCU) to discuss issues raised by some of its members in relation to both online and on campus teaching and the messaging around how best to support students. There were issues at national level for the UCU and the local UCU had recently declared that it was in dispute (stage one) with the University. The University was adopting its processes and procedures regarding the management of disputes.

G20.11.4.4 Members questioned whether the views of the UCU were shared by a significant number of staff at the University. Members noted that there were some that were aligned with that position, but most understood that students needed to be engaged with on campus activity.

G20.11.4.5 Members acknowledged that the blended approach adopted by the University was appropriate and they recognised the many advantages brought by providing a physical presence, than by operating solely online.

G20.11.4.6 *Strategy 2030 Implementation Planning*

- i. The commitments set out across Strategy 2030 and its Transforming Futures supporting strategies had been mapped to a portfolio of work, focused on UWE Bristol's Purpose, People and Place.
- ii. Members noted the challenges of the year and the imperative to deliver high quality courses for both students and staff, and to guide them through this difficult period, in order to ensure that students settled in well, were inspired and could progress.
- iii. Complementing this activity were several strategic activities, including:
 - a. Student Journey Programme
 - b. Student accommodation project
 - c. Projects to enhance UWE Bristol's values and culture
 - d. Projects in preparation of new delivery that required the University to operate in a different environment, such as apprenticeships
 - e. Digital enhancement and its impact on teaching, research and administration
 - f. Consideration of career pathways.

G20.11.4.5 *Masterplan*

Considerations included:

- i. The legacy of the Nightingale Hospital – the hospital provided an opportunity to advance the possibility of relocating Glenside provision to Frenchay, which could entail a mix of the conversion of this space and possible new build; this would enable the integration of Health provision with other areas, such as Engineering.
- ii. The Digital Futures Academy and its impact on job roles.
- iii. Creative Industries and Bristol Old Vic Theatre School collaborative delivery in South Bristol.
- iv. Planning – the extent of capital investment required over the next 10 years was anticipated to be in the region of £500m. To achieve this would require hard work and considered strategic decision-making on the University's shape, the nature of its partnerships and what it wanted to create in its graduates. Members acknowledged that this may require some aspects of the curriculum to be divested.

G20.11.4.6 Members noted that all of these considerations were framed and phased within Strategy 2030, at the centre of which was the University's core focus on delivering an outstanding experience for students and staff.

G20.11.4.7 *Strategic Risks*

Members noted the increase in risk level for People Risk (S.003), Research Risk (S.004) and Strategic Planning Risk (S.007), in recognition of the post-Covid environment as reported in September.

G20.11.4.8 *Senior Recruitment Process*

- i. Early discussions of the process to recruit for the two PVC Executive Dean roles (FBL and FET) were likely to start in the new year. Deputy Deans were currently holding the positions in an interim capacity.
- ii. Chief People Officer – the Registrar and PVC Student Experience was working closely with HR on the department structure. The move to the recruitment process was likely to take some time. Members noted the need for a clear articulation of requirements for the role and post-holder, which the People Strategy and restructuring would help to inform.

G20.11.5 PURPOSE: PROPOSAL FOR PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN HE AND FE

Paper G20/11/02 was received

G20.11.5.1 The Vice-Chancellor reminded Members of the introduction at the last meeting of the development of a new Digital Futures Academy (or Digital Futures Institute) in partnership with Weston College and added that the paper provided by the College's

Principal and CEO Dr Paul Phillips, set out a summary of key opportunities and issues from its perspective.

The Vice-Chancellor provided an updated on developments since the last meeting.

G20.11.5.2 Members noted that Strategy 2030 was aligned to both national and local industrial strategies, involving the development of 'ecosystems' and partnerships, working with partners in the Further Education (FE) sector in particular, in addition to schools and Multi Academy Trusts. There would be a focus on addressing educational and social inequalities, developing new approaches and opportunities to create new pathways to higher level skills and graduate education, focusing on the future skills needs of the region.

G20.11.5.3 Members also noted the following:

- i. Government thinking currently revolved around T levels (more practice-led), apprenticeships and BTECs as well as A' levels.
- ii. Institute of Technology (IoT) – UWE Bristol was working in partnership with local FE colleges (Weston, Yeovil, Gloucester and Bath) in the development of the IoT, the programmes of which would be technical in the main, with some creatives.
- iii. A government response to the Augar Review recommendation had been anticipated the previous year and now a Further Education White Paper was due to be published at the end of November, which was expected to signal a desire to strengthen FE, possibly a different way of funding, and which may also pose questions about the relationship between HE and FE.
- iv. The University's recently agreed project to deliver 5G on campus – a capability that could provide a proving ground for exciting developments in 5G technology.

G20.11.5.4 *Digital Futures Institute*

The proposal in Dr Phillips' paper was outlined and demonstrated the potential for a jointly created facility that would be focused on empowering local communities to gain the Level 3 skills and qualifications required to progress into higher level skills at UWE Bristol and into sustainable careers. The facility would support:

- T-level development
- Apprenticeships at Level 2 to 5
- Foundation/Access programmes for adults and
- WECA Adult Education Budget funded programmes – including English, Maths and digital skills – with an explicit link with progression to UWE and careers within the regional economy.

The 'University Centre Weston' referred to in the paper was Weston College's higher education facility, the programmes of which were validated by either UWE Bristol or Bath Spa University.

G20.11.5.5 Members noted that Weston College was the FE Lead in the IoT partnership, had TEF Gold rating, was graded outstanding in all areas by Ofsted and was financially secure.

G20.11.5.6 Members also noted that the next phase would be the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) allowing both parties to explore the partnership, governance model, and potential financial and academic models.

G20.11.5.7 Members acknowledged that under current legislation Weston College could not relinquish its legal status to a Higher Education provider. Members were reminded of the strategic partnership with Hartpury College, which had started as an associated faculty of UWE Bristol whilst remaining a legal entity in its own right throughout the partnership.

G20.11.5.8 *Opportunities with City of Bristol College (COBC)*

Members noted that the University would be signing a MOU with City of Bristol College for South Bristol to focus on the development of Construction and Health pathways. This was expected to include opportunities for apprenticeships and adult reskilling and would provide a positive opportunity to build participation in a very challenged area of the city. A further verbal update would be provided to the Board in due course.

ACTION: Vice-Chancellor

G20.11.5.9 Members referred to the statement in the paper that there was “insufficient access to high quality Level 3 provision linked directly to HE progression in Bristol” and asked the extent to which there was confidence that this joint venture would create demand.

G20.11.5.10 Members noted that there were shortages of high quality FE provision and that Weston College had demonstrated success in working with local industries; most significantly engineering and digital technologies. Members also noted the probability of fewer large colleges within the next 5-10 years.

G20.11.5.11 Members observed that much of the proposed activity appeared to be in Bristol and South Bristol and enquired how this married with the University being based in South Gloucestershire. Members were reminded of the breadth of the University’s FE partners in the IoT development and that South Gloucester and Stroud College (SGS) was more aligned with the University of Gloucestershire. UWE Bristol had no strategic partnership with SGS beyond a relationship in terms of pathways to its own HE programmes.

G20.11.5.12 Members also observed the suggestion in the paper that the University and Weston College needed to work better together and questioned whether this indicated a potential issue. The Vice-Chancellor assured the Board that this statement was more about both partners learning to be more agile.

G20.11.5.13 Members also queried if there was an indication of the extent of the collaboration and noted that whilst there were examples in the sector where universities had incorporated and merged FE within, in the majority of such cases the FE provider had been in significant distress, either in terms of finances or quality or both. Weston College was not in that space and therefore this proposed strategic partnership was different.

G20.11.6 PLACE: STUDENT ACCOMMODATION PHASE 1 (CARROLL COURT)

Paper G20/11/03 was received

G20.11.6.1 Professor Martin Boddy, PVC Research and Enterprise briefly outlined to the Board the progress made to date on the accommodation project, the brief of which was to deliver c.900 bed spaces on the Carroll Court site (Phase 1), with the other phases – Phase 2 (car parks 1-3) and Phase 2/3 (Area 4 car park) – currently paused.

G20.11.6.2 Members noted that a full planning application had been submitted to South Gloucestershire Council, along with an outline planning application for Phase 2. A decision was anticipated to be issued by March 2021.

G20.11.6.3 Members questioned whether Brexit would impact on procurement rules. Members noted that the project’s cost consultants had looked closely at procurement, and that potential tenderers had expressed confidence in their ability to attract a field of contractors. William Liew, Chief Financial Officer, advised that such rules would not change within the project’s specific timescale; however, Brexit was likely to affect prices and the availability of workers. The University continued to gauge contractors’ opinions on a regular basis.

- G20.11.6.4 The Chief Financial Officer informed Members that there had been some surprise among contractors at a passivhaus project of this size. The cost of the project would be reflected in the rent (expected to be in the region of £6,002 in September 2023). This compares with a current average student rent in Bristol of £6,005.
- G20.11.6.5 Members noted that the current cost projection was £79.1m, to be funded from cash, with some potential use of a Revolving Credit Facility (RCF).
- G20.11.6.6 Ian MacKenzie, Finance, Estates and IT (FEIT) Committee Chair, confirmed that the Committee had had a detailed discussion of the proposal and had recommended to the Board that the project be approved to proceed to the tender stage.
- G20.11.6.7 Members **approved** the Student Accommodation Project Phase 1 (Carroll Court) to proceed to the tender stage.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL (FINANCIAL)

G20.11.7 REPORT, ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL FORECASTS

Paper G20/11/04 was received

- G20.11.7.1 The Chair reminded Members that the Annual Report, Financial Statements 2019/2020 and the Financial Forecasts 2024-2025 had been considered by the FEIT Committee and the Audit Committee. Consideration had also been given by the Remuneration Committee to the remuneration commentary within the Annual Report. The Chief Financial Officer had also provided a presentation to Board Members on 22 October 2020.
- The Chair invited the Chief Financial Officer and the Committee Chairs to present the report.
- G20.11.7.2 William Liew, Chief Financial Officer reported that there had been no changes to the numbers in the accounts since they were presented to the FEIT Committee on 22 October 2020.
- G20.11.7.3 Members noted that the financial forecast incorporated the draft first half of the Masterplan 2030 of £400m, which included the cost of the student accommodation project reported earlier in the meeting, offset by a £50m revolving credit facility (RCF).
- G20.11.7.4 Ian MacKenzie, FEIT Committee Chair reported that the Committee's recommendation of the Annual Report and Financial Statements came on the back of in-depth discussions and the helpful presentation provided by the Chief Financial Officer. He added that the FEIT Committee was comfortable with the assurance received and:
1. Has noted the out-turn of the financial performance for the year ended 31 July 2020 and has confirmed to Audit Committee that they are in order for acceptance.
 2. Is content to advise the Board of Governors that the University's financial controls and reports are adequately in place to oversee and monitor the management of the University's financial viability and sustainability.
 3. Has noted and endorses the draft financial forecasts to 2024/25 for formal approval by the Board of Governors, prior to submission to the Office for Students (OfS).
- G20.11.7.5 Richard Bacon, Audit Committee Chair highlighted for the Board's attention that the External Auditor had found the disclosures on going concern, and the analysis which supported them, to be fair and appropriate, resulting in a standard unqualified and unmodified audit opinion.

Members acknowledged that this was a significant achievement, given the exceptional latter part of the year.

- G20.11.7.6 Members also noted that the External Auditor had been very positive on how the audit had progressed and on the co-operation of the Chief Financial Officer and his team, given that the audit had been undertaken completely online. The Audit Committee Chair formally conveyed the External Auditor's thanks.

The Committee Chair confirmed that the Audit Committee:

1. Has reviewed and discussed the report and financial statements to the 31 July 2020 and determined that there are not any audit matters that should be brought to the attention of the Board.
2. Can confirm to the Board that the report and financial statements 2019/2020 have been prepared in accordance with statutory and regulatory requirements.
3. Can recommend to the Board that the financial statements can be prepared on a going concern basis.
4. Has commented on the External Auditors Draft Audit Completion Report and Management Representations Letter and has agreed the contents of the Management Representations Letter to endorse to the Board for approval.

- G20.11.7.7 Clive Lewis, Chair of the Remuneration Committee (REMCO) endorsed the assurances provided and added that REMCO had recognised the significance of the Vice-Chancellor's leadership during a difficult year, which was reflected in the positions achieved in the various league tables.

- G20.11.7.8 The Board **approved** the Annual Report and Financial Statements 2019/2020, and the Management Representations letter for signature by the Vice-Chancellor, on its behalf.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL (ACADEMIC ASSURANCE)

G20.11.8 ANNUAL STATEMENT OF ACADEMIC ASSURANCE

Paper G20/11/05 was received

- G20.11.8.1 Professor Amanda Coffey, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost, reminded Members that the annual statement provided assurance in relation to the areas of activity delegated to Academic Board, namely (references are to OfS ongoing conditions of registration):
- Conditions B1-6: Quality, reliable standards and positive outcomes for all students.
 - Condition E2: Academic governance effectiveness.

The report also set out how Academic Board had fulfilled its duties in 2019/2020.

- G20.11.8.2 Members noted that the report was considered in detail by Academic Board at its meeting on 14 October 2020, whose Members confirmed that it was satisfied with the University's compliance with the conditions of registration and that assurance could be provided to the Board of Governors. The report was then considered by the Strategic Planning and Performance Committee on 20 October, who also recommended it to the Board.
- G20.11.8.3 Members noted the updating of the number of external examiner reports made to the tables on pages 5 and 6 of the report, the receipt of some of which had been slower than normal due to the prevailing pandemic circumstances. The DVC and Provost confirmed that all reports had now been received and that no significant issues had been raised.

- G20.11.8.4 Jenny Body, SPPC Chair, confirmed that there had been a good discussion of the report, which had been supported by the fact that Richard Holmes, Independent Member, had attended the October Academic Board meeting and had observed the work undertaken there in the scrutiny of the report.
- G20.11.8.5 Richard Holmes confirmed that all Academic Board members had been focused on the business of the meeting throughout, and in particular, towards learning and the welfare of UWE Bristol students. He confirmed that the process he had observed at Academic Board and participated in as a member of SPPC, was robust and that the Board should be assured.
- G20.11.8.6 Richard remarked that observing the Academic Board meeting had been a valuable experience as a Governor and he encouraged Board Members to consider doing the same.
- G20.11.8.7 Members **approved** the Annual Statement of Academic Assurance.

G20.11.9 RESEARCH INTEGRITY ANNUAL REPORT

Paper G20/11/06 was received

- G20.11.9.1 Professor Martin Boddy, PVC, Research & Enterprise, reminded Members of the Concordat to Support Research Integrity requirement for the University to produce a short annual statement, present it to the Board to note and to approve for publication. Academic Board had considered the statement at its meeting on 14 October 2020 and had recommended it to the Board of Governors for approval.
- G20.11.9.2 Members noted that the report applied to the period 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020 and that it provided a summary of actions and activities to support and strengthen the application of research integrity, covering three main areas: Research Ethics, Human Tissue and Animal Welfare.
- The report also provided a summary of two instances of research misconduct, both of which had been concluded and appropriate action taken.
- G20.11.9.3 Members requested assurance that the nature of the two misconduct instances had not posed any reputational risk for the University and noted the confirmation that they had not.
- G20.11.9.4 Members noted the contents of the report, **approved** the publication of the report, and **confirmed** that no risks have been identified, through the report, in terms of compliance with the Concordat.

REPORTS

G20.11.10 COMMITTEE ASSURANCE REPORTS

- G20.11.10.1 **Finance, Estates and IT (FEIT) Committee**
Ilan MacKenzie, FEIT Committee Chair, reported that the greater part of the meeting held on 22 October 2020 had been spent considering the Annual Report and Financial Statements, and the Student Accommodation Phase 1 proposal.
- G20.11.10.2 The Committee had also received and had considered in detail a number of assurance reports in relation to:
- Student Journey Programme
 - Commercial activities
 - Estates and Facilities (hospitality)
 - Campus 2030
 - IT matters, including cyber security.

G20.11.10.3 Strategic Planning and Performance Committee (SPPC)

Jenny Body, SPPC Chair, shared with the Board the topics of discussion at its meeting on 20 October 2020, including the Annual Statement of Academic Assurance which the Committee considered in detail and recommended to the Board of Governors.

G20.11.10.4 Members also noted that SPPC had received and noted a detailed report on the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 and the University's preparations for its submission.

G20.11.10.5 SPPC also received assurance on the following:

- the implementation of Strategy 2030 and how strategic actions were mapped to specific project boards
- the University's performance in The Guardian and The Times league tables
- Health and Wellbeing Annual Report – the Committee was encouraged by how this agenda was being discussed and addressed
- EDI: Access and Participation Plan – following the discussion at the September meeting of the Board of Governors, SPPC received an update on progress against the plans targets. A further update – including data from the most recent academic year – was scheduled for the SPPC meeting on 19 January 2021
- Student Casework Annual Report
- Student recruitment – a verbal update on the provisional outcome of recruitment for September starters – currently above target, with deferrals at a similar rate to previous years and campus accommodation fully booked.

G20.11.10.6 Audit Committee

Richard Bacon, Audit Committee Chair, informed Members that the primary focus of the 5 November 2020 meeting had been the Annual Accounts.

G20.11.10.7 Members also noted the Committee's recognition of the work undertaken by Mark Webster, Business Continuity Manager, with regard to risk management, the reports for which now had a focus on risk assurance.

G20.11.10.8 Members also noted that the challenges presented by the pandemic over the last few months had tested the University's business continuity plans and whilst these had operated satisfactorily against those challenges, the situation had evidenced that these plans would benefit from different configuration.

G20.11.10.9 The Committee Chair reported that the Internal Auditors had presented their annual report for 2019-2020, the work of which had included the review of key controls affected by the pandemic situation.

G20.11.10.10 Members noted that the Audit Committee had also considered the results of the mapping of its practice against the CUC's Higher Education Audit Committees Code of Practice.

G20.11.10.11 Remuneration Committee

This item would be considered as reserved business at the end of the agenda.

G20.11.10.12 Nominations and Governance Committee

David Lamb, Chair of Governors and Chair of the Committee, reported that it had confidence in the results of the mapping exercised that had been undertaken in relation to the following:

- Office for Students Ongoing Conditions of Registration
- Committee of University Chairs (CUC) Higher Education Code of Governance (revised September 2020)

- CUC Higher Education Audit Committees Code of Practice.

- G20.11.10.13 Members noted that on behalf of the Board of Governors, the Committee had endorsed the largely immaterial changes made to the UWESU Constitution.
- G20.11.10.14 The Chair informed Members that the substantive discussion of the meeting was in relation to the recruitment process for the current Co-opted Member vacancy and the three Independent Members vacancies arising that month.
- G20.11.10.15 Members noted that the Committee had discussed the value in Governors identifying potential candidates within their own networks who may have the required skills-sets, and who might be persuaded to apply. The Chair encouraged Board Members to consider such individuals from within their connections and advise the Clerk or Deputy Clerk of the details.

ACTION: All Members

G20.11.10.16 Departing Independent Members of the Board

The Chair informed the Board that this month would see the departure of Independent Board Members Denis Woulfe, Richard Holmes and Mark Mason. Members noted that Denis's first term of office had ended on 15 November 2020 and that Richard and Mark would step down at the end of the month, having both served two terms of office.

- G20.11.10.17 The Board of Governors endorsed the Chair's thanks to the three Members and the recognition of the time, commitment and enthusiasm they had contributed throughout their respective terms of office.

The Chair of Governors would write a formal letter of thanks to the three Members, on behalf of the Board.

ACTION: Chair of Governors

G20.11.11 CLERK'S REPORT

Paper G20/11/07 was received

G20.11.11.1 Compliance with the Prevent Duty 2019-2020

The Prevent Duty Monitoring Accountability and Data Return 2020

Members noted the following:

- i. Jo Midgley, Registrar and PVC Student Experience was the University's Prevent Lead;
- ii. No Prevent-related cases had been escalated to the Prevent Lead;
- iii. No requests for events/external speakers had been rejected.
- iv. The number of key staff receiving induction Prevent training, refresher training and broader welfare/safeguarding awareness training/briefing.

- G20.11.11.2 Members **approved** a three-year cycle for the refresh of Prevent training for key staff.

- G20.11.11.3 Jo Midgley informed the Board that Ofsted was the body responsible for the quality monitoring of apprenticeships and that it was anticipated there would be a need to identify staff within those areas who also needed to complete the training. Further information would be brought to the Board in due course.

- G20.11.11.4 During discussions Members also noted the details of the following:

- i. Prevent Duty Risk Assessment
- i. Prevent Duty Action Plan
- ii. Annual Report of Safeguarding Cases.

G20.11.11.5 Prevent Annual Accountability Statement

Following full and careful consideration of the information provided, Members **approved** the following declaration for signature by the Chair and the statement as set out in the Clerk's Report:

Throughout the year and up to the date of approval, the University of the West of England:

- has had due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism (the Prevent duty)
- has provided to OfS all required information about its implementation of the Prevent duty
- has reported to OfS in a timely way all serious issues related to the Prevent duty, or now attaches any reports that should have been made, with an explanation of why they were not submitted
- has reviewed, and where necessary, updated its Prevent risk assessment and action plan.

G20.11.11.6 Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Policy

Members noted the changes to the revised policy, which include the articulation of the responsibilities of:

- the Board of Governors
- Committee Chairs
- staff and students, and
- managers.

G20.11.11.7 Members also noted the policy's broad principle of going beyond legal compliance requirements.

G20.11.11.8 Members approved the revised Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy.

G20.11.11.9 Risk Policy and Risk Management Procedure

The Board noted that the policy and procedure had been updated in line with the two-yearly review schedule, with minor changes made. These revisions had been approved by the Audit Committee on 5 November 2020, noting that a fuller review of the policy, to create a more agile and concise document, would be progressed in the Spring.

G20.11.11.10 IHRA Definition

The Clerk reported that in October the Secretary of State for Education had written to all Vice-Chancellors requiring universities to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of anti-semitism before the end of the year.

G20.11.11.11 Members noted that the University had considered the IHRA definition in May 2019 and following detailed discussion across several departments and a number of considerations, the University concluded at that time that rather than adopt external definitions, action should focus on reinforcing the University's general anti-discrimination agenda and approach. The reasons for not adopting the definition at that stage were outlined, as provided in the report.

G20.11.11.12 During discussions, Members noted the following:

- i. The legal difficulties of the definition and the legal opinion issued in 2017.
- ii. The sector had received further legal commentary that there was no legal obligation on universities from the Secretary of State's letter to adopt the definition.
- iii. The Secretary of State was requesting that officials explore options for enforcing this 'moral obligation', including 'directing' the Office for Students to impose a registration condition or suspend funding streams. Members noted that the OfS currently did not have the powers to do this.

- iv. The OfS Board was due to discuss the matter at the end of the month.
- v. The conflict posed by the definition with other duties such as academic freedom and freedom of speech.

G20.11.11.13 Following full and careful deliberation, Members **agreed** to confirm that the Board had considered the IHRA definition of anti-semitism and believed that its current anti-discrimination policy framework and approach were sufficient to cover this agenda. The Board also recognised that there may be a need to consider the matter again at a future date.

G20.11.11.14 **UWE Students' Union (UWESU) Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year end to 31 July 2020**
Members noted the audited financial results of the UWESU for the year-end 31 July 2020.

G20.11.11.15 **Health and Safety RIDDOR Summary**
Members noted that of the 15 accidents that had been reported this academic year to the end of October 2020, none were RIDDOR reportable.

G20.11.11.16 **Consultations**

Office for Students – Regulating Quality and Standards in Education

Members noted the consultation that had been published the previous day, to which the University would respond.

G20.11.11.17 Post-Qualification Admissions

Members noted that Universities UK (UUK) had recently published its Fair Admissions Review, elements of which may be put out to consultation. The DfE was also anticipated to consult on post-qualification admissions.

G20.11.11.18 There were no questions raised on the Clerk's Report, the remaining contents of which were noted by the Board.

G20.11.12 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Paper G20/11/08 was received

G20.11.12.1 Members **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2020.

G20.11.12.2 Matters Arising

Members noted that all actions from the last meeting were either completed or had been considered in the business of this meeting.

G20.11.12.3 Members noted that the draft March 2021 Away Day programme would be circulated.
ACTION: Deputy Clerk

G20.11.13 RESERVED BUSINESS

This item is recorded as a confidential minute.

ITEMS TO NOTE

***G20.11.14 AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES**

*Paper *G20/11/09 was received and noted.*

***G20.11.15 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES**

*Paper *G20/11/10 was received and noted.*

***G20.11.16 REMUNERATION COMMITTEE MINUTES**

*Paper *G20/11/11 was received by Independent Members via protected email.*

***G20.11.17 NOMINATIONS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES**

*Paper *G20/11/12 was received and noted.*

***G20.11.18 FINANCE, ESTATES AND IT COMMITTEE MINUTES**

*Paper *G20/11/13 was received and noted.*

***G20.11.19 STUDENT GOVERNOR FORUM MINUTES**

*Paper *G20/11/14 was received and noted.*

***G20.11.20 AUDIT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT**

*Paper *G20/11/14 was received and noted.*

***G20.11.21 REMUNERATION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT**

*Paper *G20/11/14 was received and noted.*

***G20.11.22 MAPPING THE UNIVERSITY'S GOVERNANCE PRACTICE TO SECTOR REGULATION AND CODES**

*Paper *G20/11/15 was received and noted.*

***G20.11.23 CORPORATE SEAL**

*Paper *G20/11/16 was received and noted.*

***G20.11.24 ACADEMIC BOARD MINUTES**

*Paper *G20/11/17 was received and noted.*

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

16-17 March 2021 inc. Away Day Clevedon Hall (TBC)
8 July 2021 13:00 – 18:00

OUTSTANDING ACTIONS			
Meeting	Minute	Action	Status
18.11.2020	G20.11.5.8	Vice-Chancellor to provide an update on developments with COBC, as required.	
18.11.2020	G20.11.10.15	Members to advise the Clerk or Deputy Clerk of potential candidates for the forthcoming Governor vacancies.	
18.11.2020	G20.11.10.17	The Chair of Governors to write a formal letter of thanks to the three Members, on behalf of the Board.	
18.11.2020	G20.11.12.3	Deputy Clerk to circulate the draft March 2021 Away Day programme to Members.	