

## **BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

Minutes of the Board of Governors meeting held on Thursday 2 July 2020.

**Present:** Sonia Mills (Chair), Richard Bacon (until G20.07.12.5), Jenny Body, Augusta Chidinma Nnajofofor (until G20.07.17), Laura Claydon, Professor John Craven, Rob Fraser, Richard Holmes, David Lamb, Clive Lewis, Grant Mansfield, Mark Mason, Chris Moore (until G20.07.17), Professor Steve West (until G20.07.17), Denis Woulfe.

**Apologies:** Professor Jane Roscoe, Kalpna Woolf.

**In Attendance:** Jodie Anstee, Clerk (until G20.07.17), Professor Martin Boddy, PVC Research and Enterprise (until G20.07.17), Professor Amanda Coffey, DVC and Provost (until G20.07.17), Kadisha Lewis-Roberts, Director HROD (until G20.07.17), William Liew, Chief Financial Officer (until G20.07.17), Jo Midgley, Registrar and PVC Student Experience (until G20.07.17), Joanna Wallis, FOI and Governance Officer (until G20.07.17), Christine Gledhill, Deputy Clerk (minutes).

**Observer:** SallyAnn Hunting, Good Governance Institute

### **G20.07.1 WELCOMES AND APOLOGIES**

G20.07.1.1 The Chair welcomed the following new Members to their first meeting: Augusta Chidinma Nnajofofor, Student Nominee, Laura Claydon, Independent Member, Chris Moore, Academic Board Nominee.

Members noted that whilst ratification of these appointments was to be considered later in the meeting, the individuals would participate in the first part of the meeting, to consider the Transforming Futures strategies and the Strategy 2030 Corporate Scorecard.

The Chair also welcomed the new DVC and Provost, Professor Amanda Coffey to her first meeting of the Board of Governors.

Members were reminded that the meeting was being observed by SallyAnn Hunting of the Good Governance Institute, as part of the ongoing Board Effectiveness review and SallyAnn was welcomed to the meeting.

G20.07.1.2 Apologies were noted as set out above.

### **G20.07.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None received.

## **ITEMS FOR APPROVAL (PART ONE)**

### **G20.07.3 TRANSFORMING FUTURES STRATEGIES**

*Paper G20/07/01 was received*

G20.07.3.1 Members were reminded of the seven supporting strategies developed to provide more detail on the commitments made in Strategy 2030 (S2030). These were due to

have been considered by the Board at the Strategic Away Day in March, which was cancelled due to the coronavirus situation that was developing at the time.

- G20.07.3.2 Members noted that the strategies had since been updated to take into account further feedback received and the change in circumstances arising from Covid-19.

The Chair invited each of the Directorate leads to present the strategies.

- G20.07.3.3 *Transforming Futures Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Strategy (Thematic)*
- i. Amanda Coffey, DVC and Provost<sup>1</sup> had oversight of the strategy.
  - ii. There was a piece of work currently being undertaken to ensure that EDI read across the whole suite of strategies sitting beneath S2030 and there was connectivity in terms of consistency of language and communication.
  - iii. Recognition of prevailing heightened sensitivities and the importance of EDI and consideration of how best to present that to students and staff.
  - iv. The strategy had been updated to reflect staff feedback, such as clear and decisive messaging.
  - v. The detailed implementation plan had been removed to ensure the strategy had the same look and feel of others, whilst maintaining a high level summary of the University's aspirations and approach.

<sup>1</sup> Post-meeting note:

Professor Paul Olomolaiye, PVC and Executive Dean of the Faculty of Environment and Technology at the time of the meeting, was subsequently appointed as PVC Equalities and Civic Engagement and would share oversight of this strategy.

- G20.07.3.4 During discussions, Members observed that all of the draft strategies were powerful documents and that a test of a good strategy would be to understand the choices being made.

- G20.07.3.5 Members noted that the S2030 document itself illuminated those choices and was the main driver required to be delivered through its Core, Enabling and Thematic Strategies that were currently being discussed.

- G20.07.3.6 Members also made the following observations:
- i. Referring to the statement 'Increase the diversity of the workforce' – there was a challenge presented by the absence of targets and an understanding of what 'good' looked like and how this was different to the current position.
  - ii. The omission of reference to the Board of Governors
  - iii. A question as to whether the University was sufficiently objective about what it was trying to achieve.
  - iv. The value of EDI as a force for good could be captured more clearly upfront in the strategy, with reservations raised about phrases such as 'sector-leading'.
  - v. This was a commendable strategy although there were several vague assertions in comparison to the People Strategy – more specificity was needed.

- G20.07.3.7 Members were reminded of the Board's previous request not to include targets that referred to protected characteristics, although it was acknowledged that Governors were now giving a clear steer on the need for a balance of targets and objectives. Members noted that this would present its own challenge in the sense of how the Board would hold the Executive to account to follow that through and where there was a case for targets, what those targets should be.

- G20.07.3.8 Members noted that diversity could be powerful and transformational in a university setting and there should be a determined commitment to deliver what was stated in the strategies; targets needed to be relevant, realistic and clear in stating what was

being measured. Members noted that it was possible to draw high level targets from operational plans.

G20.07.3.9 *Transforming Futures Community and Business Engagement Strategy (Core)*

- i. Martin Boddy, PVC Research and Enterprise held oversight of the strategy.
- ii. Diagram 'The Engaged University' showed:
  - a. How the University sat within the region and more widely
  - b. Five axes of engagement, with lists within of businesses, partners and stakeholders within each
  - c. How the University defined itself as an institution across all its activities.

G20.07.3.10 Members' observations included:

- i. The phrase 'across the West of England' – did this require a geographical description. Members noted that:
  - a. The majority of the University's students came from within the area of the four local Unitary Authorities.
  - b. Using the four local Unitary Authorities' areas as a descriptor would be accurate to cover the University's activity and business (also referred to as 'the Bristol City Region'); however, governments were able to change boundaries and focus, which may prove disadvantageous to the University in the future.
  - c. The phrase 'we align ourselves with key government delivery mechanisms for the area' could be used.
- ii. Concern that the diagram showed Health Trusts placed at the bottom of the list of stakeholders for the 'Civic Engagement' axis. Health extended beyond civic engagement; it also reached learner and business engagement – particularly at the current time – perhaps there was a case for making this an axis in its own right. Members noted:
  - a. The challenge in how the level of engagement would be measured as a sixth axis, but that there was merit in moving it to a more prominent position in the list of stakeholders.
  - b. A number of UWE Bristol students went into placements/internships and Health students made up 90% of those.
  - c. That the 'civic' axis would be better titled 'public sector'.
  - d. Whilst the remaining headings were mainly clear, it was less clear under the headings what should go into which area. The overall 'wrapper' of community engagement was key, however the stakeholders within that were defined.
- iii. KEF metrics (referred to in the appendix) – the need to be clear on which of these the University chose to focus on.

G20.07.3.11 *Transforming Futures Health and Wellbeing Strategy (Thematic)*

- i. Jo Midgley, Registrar and PVC Student Experience held oversight of the strategy.
- ii. This Strategy built upon the work undertaken over a number of years, from the University's 'Feel Good' activities for example, through to its Mental Wealth Strategy which it was recognised was more focused on students than staff.
- iii. The Strategy would take forward this work at a higher level to the whole University community in
  - a. How it would support its members to take care of their health and wellbeing – both physical and mental – and live healthier lives
    - i. Public health issues and prevention
    - ii. Engagement in healthy activities
    - iii. Reducing risk behaviours such as drug/alcohol abuse, addictions, etc.

- iv. It was recognised that Covid-19 was having a significant impact on mental health.
- G20.07.3.12 Members acknowledged the challenge in setting targets in this area as much of what would be achieved was predicated on the personal choices made by members of the University community; the University would however, continue to instil a mind-set of healthy living into its community.
- G20.07.3.13 *Transforming Futures Learning and Teaching Strategy (Core)*
- i. Amanda Coffey, DVC and Provost had oversight of the strategy.
  - ii. The Strategy had been updated to reflect a strengthened commitment to the digital space.
  - iii. The Strategy was built upon Strategy 2020 and had 4 strategic themes:
    - a. Personalised experiences for all learners
    - b. Practice-led, research informed learning and teaching
    - c. Digitally-enabled education, problem based education
    - d. Championing teaching excellence and supporting staff to deliver that; this would cross over with People Strategy work.
  - iv. Mentoring and coaching to support students to navigate their opportunity at university –
    - a. The mentor would know the student as an individual and their ambitions.
    - b. This exciting and necessary initiative had been accelerated because of the Covid-19 situation and was currently being worked through to establish who those mentors would be.
    - c. It was recognised that the University would continue to adapt in an environment where there was more digitally enhanced delivery and it was essential that this initiative was operationalised in the correct manner.
  - v. In keeping with the EDI Strategy, work was also underway to explore the decolonisation of the curriculum and to increase the visibility of this intention in the Learning and Teaching Strategy.
- G20.07.3.14 Members commended the Strategy and urged that communications reinforced the University's continued strong belief in the personal experience for students and face-to-face contact.
- G20.07.3.15 *Transforming Futures People Strategy (Enabling)*
- i. Kadisha Lewis-Roberts, Director of Human Resources and Organisation Development (HROD) had oversight of the strategy.
  - ii. A 'roadshow' of workshops had taken place with staff (c.600 in total had attended), to discuss:
    - What is the University now?
    - What is the desire for it to be?
    - What is required to be done in order to achieve that?
  - iii. Three pillars to the Strategy:
    - i. Culture (the key enabler for transformation)
    - ii. Effectiveness
    - iii. Talent.
  - iv. Culture: staff responses ranged widely from those who sought to be given increased trust and empowerment to carry out their roles, to others who felt a deep sense of entitlement.
  - v. Effectiveness: two-way approach – drive continuous improvement and problem-solving, remove complexity and provide the right framework for people to operate within.
  - vi. Driving Talent: the University wanted to nurture its own, to foster and grow the talent of its staff; in order to do that it needed to provide career pathways

and develop opportunities to enable staff to progress; a personalised development framework.

- G20.07.3.16 Members highlighted references to ‘flexibility’ that had been made during discussions and questioned where this featured in a high level strategy such as this.
- G20.07.3.17 Members noted that the Covid-19 situation had enabled the University to realise very quickly the benefits of flexible working; this may mean contractual changes and the Trade Unions had indicated that they would be open to discussions. A short-term variation to the Flexible Working Policy was being made and the revised policy was expected to be ready in September 2020.
- G20.07.3.18 *Transforming Futures Research (Core)*
- i. Martin Boddy, PVC Research and Enterprise held oversight of the strategy.
  - ii. The previous Research strategy was well-established and had focused on ‘research with impact’ – this had been refined and refocused to:
    - a. Build on the University’s strengths
    - b. Prioritise challenge-based research and real world challenges
    - c. Provide an inter-disciplinary approach to drive innovation and enterprise
    - d. Shape the University’s priorities and reputation by focusing on four Research Beacons:
      - i. Digital futures
      - ii. Health and wellbeing
      - iii. Creative industries and technologies
      - iv. Sustainability and climate change resilience.
- G20.07.3.19 Members urged the addition of a clear definition of ‘research integrity’ to ensure that the quality of the University’s research governance was captured.
- G20.07.3.20 *Transforming Futures Climate Action and Sustainability Strategy (Thematic)*  
Martin Boddy, PVC Research and Enterprise held oversight of the strategy. Members noted the intention to practise, promote and influence understanding of Sustainability with all partners and stakeholders. Members also noted that this Strategy would be interwoven with the University’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- G20.07.3.21 Members **approved** the seven supporting strategies to S2030, subject to suggested amendments.

#### **G20.07.4 STRATEGY 2030 CORPORATE SCORECARD**

*Paper G20/07/02 was received*

- G20.07.4.1 Members noted that the SPPC had engaged with the proposed Scorecard at their meetings in January and June. The June update included:
- A Climate Change and Sustainability measure
  - Identified ownership (from the Directorate) of each scorecard measure
  - Finalised targets (noting the significant uncertainty for the next 2-3 years against a number of these measures)
- G20.07.4.2 Members were informed that the BAME attainment gap measure reflected the University’s initial focus as this gap was particularly wide; however, the University recognised that gaps also existed in other groups and these too would be monitored.
- G20.07.4.3 Members **approved** the Strategy 2030 Scorecard and noted that the completed version of the document would be circulated.

**ACTION: Deputy Clerk**

## **G20.07.5 GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS**

*Paper G20/07/03 was received*

Members **approved** the following recommendations of the Nominations and Governance Committee:

G20.07.5.1 Mr Ian MacKenzie

To serve as an Independent Member of the Board for a term of office of three years, from 1 August 2020.

G20.07.5.2 Ms Andrea Young

To serve as an Independent Member of the Board for a term of office of three years, from 1 August 2020.

G20.07.5.3 Ms Laura Claydon

Members were reminded that Ms Claydon's appointment as an Independent Member of the Board was due to be ratified at the Board of Governors meeting on 17 March 2020, which was cancelled, having been approved in principle prior to that meeting.

Members **approved** Ms Claydon's appointment as an Independent Member for a term of office of three years, from 17 March 2020.

G20.07.5.4 Mr Jamie Paddon

To serve as a Co-opted Member of the Audit Committee for a term of office of three years, from 1 August 2020.

G20.07.5.5 Ms Augusta Chidinma Nnajifor, Student Nominee

Members **approved** the nomination of the new Students' Union (SU) President and welcomed Augusta to her first meeting as the Student Nominee.

G20.07.5.6 Dr Chris Moore, Academic Board Nominee

Members **approved** the Academic Board's nomination of Dr Chris Moore, Senior Lecturer and Programme Leader for BSc (Hons) Biomedical Science, for membership to the Board of Governors.

G20.07.5.4 **Deputy Chair of the Board of Governors**

Members noted the nomination of Mr Clive Lewis to take up the office of Deputy Chair from 1 August 2020 and that this was the only nomination received.

Members **approved** the election of Clive Lewis as Deputy Chair of the Board of Governors, from 1 August 2020.

## **G20.07.6 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

*Paper G20/07/04 was received*

G20.07.6.1 Members **approved** the minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2019.

G20.07.6.2 Membership and Apologies (G19.11.2.2 refers)

Members noted that the current ways of working were entirely online/virtual due to the Covid-19 lockdown situation.

G20.07.6.3 Deputy Chair Role (G19.11.4.3 refers)

This item is dealt with in G20.07.5.4 above.

G20.07.6.4 Compliance with the Prevent Duty 2018-2019 (G19.11.8.3 refers)

Members noted that the link to the EHRC's report 'Tackling racial harassment: universities challenged' in an email to Members with the Vice-Chancellors' annual address.

G20.07.6.5 Petition to the Board of Governors to Declare a Climate and Ecological Emergency (G19.11.11.8 refers)

Members noted that the final statement was agreed following the November Board meeting and subsequently published.

G20.07.6.6 Any Other Business – Annual Report (G19.11.18 refers)

Members noted that the Annual Report had been amended to reflect the University's commitment to eliminating the BAME attainment gap.

## ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

### G20.07.7 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

*Paper G20/07/05 was received*

G20.07.7.1 Members noted the content of the report and received an update from the Vice-Chancellor on the following:

G20.07.7.2 *Covid-19 Recovery Co-ordination*

- i. Fortnightly updates by the Vice-Chancellor to all Governors continued, records of which were being made. Live Q&A sessions with staff were also being held as the Covid-19 situation continued to develop.
- ii. A Recovery Co-ordination Group (RCG) was in place to oversee the University's response during this period, which was now progressing to the opening of more parts of the campus to staff and students in an appropriate manner. The RCG was supported by a number of task and finish groups.
- iii. Staff who were working from home were being provided with equipment where this was needed.
- iv. The gradual and limited reopening over the summer would enable the University to test plans for students' return to campus.
- v. Staff had reported a mix of feelings with regard to working from home and the University was looking at ways of providing a structure to manage work/life balance, as well as the expectations and challenges for its staff community.
- vi. University management recognised that the cycle of working hours differed among staff.

G20.07.7.3 *Office for Students (OfS) Matters*

- i. Student Number Control (SNC):
  - a. A one-year SNC for 2020/2021 had been introduced by the Department for Education (DfE) to secure stability in the sector.
  - b. The University's SNC had been set at 7,022 including 5% margin.
- ii. Consumer protection:
  - a. New OfS guidance on student and consumer protection during the Covid-19 pandemic had been published, including the need for provision of clear and timely information for prospective students.
  - b. UWE Bristol's applicants and current students had received communications that a mixed approach to learning and teaching would be adopted for 2020/2021.
- iii. Data returns: the University continued to ensure its compliance with all required data returns.
- iv. Reportable events:
  - a. The University had notified the OfS of programmes which it had, or intended to, cease or suspend delivery.
  - b. The OfS had been interested to understand whether post graduate students had paid a non-refundable deposit for the programmes being suspended ahead of the previously planned start date in September 2020 – it was confirmed that this was not the case.

- v. The OfS were also interested in the University's preparations for reopening, its financial modelling and preparation for the new academic year. Other Vice-Chancellors had received similar enquiries.

G20.07.7.4 *Alexandra Warehouse*

Members noted that the University was working through the process of closure, and that there had been no issues.

G20.07.7.5 *School of Health and Social Care*

- i. The University was in the process of creating a new School of Health and Social Care in direct response to a number of external and internal drivers.
- ii. Anticipated start date for the new school was mid-January 2021.

G20.07.7.6 *Faculty of Arts, Creative Industries and Education (ACE) – Department Merger*

- i. A proposal by the ACE Faculty would be progressed, to merge two current departments, Arts and Cultural Industries and Film and Journalism into one: Creative and Cultural Industries.
- ii. The change was driven by the ambitions set out in Strategy 2030.

G20.07.7.7 *Philosophy*

- i. Based upon data collected over the past four years in relation to the BA Philosophy, the University was suspending recruitment to the programme for 2021/2022 entry.
- ii. In line with the University's Student Protection Plan, students would be consulted on the future direction of the subject area, ahead of a recommendation to Academic Board in the autumn.

G20.07.7.8 *Health and Safety*

Members noted the following:

- i. The decrease in accidents and in the number of RIDDOR reportable events upon the previous year. The decrease in the number of overall accidents was unsurprising, given the limited activities that had taken place on site since the lockdown period started.
- ii. The current risk score for Health and Safety continued to remain below the risk level that would require escalation to the Strategic Risk Register.

G20.07.7.9 *Stand Against Racism and Inequality (SARI)*

Members noted that the Vice-Chancellor and the SU President, Augusta Chidinma Nnajofofor, were due to meet with a SARI representative the following week to discuss the development of an approach to educate students on and sensitise themselves to recognise racist conduct.

G20.07.7.10 Members were informed that SARI – a community oriented agency – had reported having received feedback from a small number of BAME staff who had raised concerns. The meeting would be an opportunity for the University to discuss the matter with SARI and to share the steps being taken. More information would be provided to the Board in due course.

**ACTION: Vice-Chancellor**

**G20.07.8 STUDENT JOURNEY PROGRAMME**

*Paper G20/07/06 was received*

G20.07.8.1 Jo Midgley informed the Board that progress updates on the programme had been presented from appropriate perspectives to the SPPC, FEIT Committee and Audit Committee in June. She added that the programme was moving very quickly and the presentation circulated with the Board papers had been written before the re-profiling exercise had completed and she gave an update on the progress made so far by way of a tabled presentation.

G20.07.8.2 Members noted the following:

- i. The SJP covered a number of capabilities and projects, including Web Transformation Project, Curriculum Management Project (CMP) and Student Information and Relationship Management (SIRM).
- ii. During the lockdown period the new website and the CMP had been delivered successfully.
- iii. The re-profiling exercise was complex and related predominantly to the SIRM capability.
- iv. The programme had been de-risked by dividing it into the key stages of the student journey, all predicated on a September 'drop'.
- v. Four options were considered as part of the re-planning exercise and 'Option B' was felt to be optimal, keeping the Enquirer Capability (split into two phases) and Applicant Capability together for September 2021 delivery.
- vi. The revised plan was challenging and the SJP team had worked very closely with the provider Ellucian to examine risk interdependencies and to agree that the plan was feasible.
- vii. The revised plan had yet to be presented to the SJP Board.
- viii. Financial summary – this was constantly reviewed. The plan was on budget and was forecast to remain so.
- ix. Assurance - the University was partnering with PwC who would provide external assurance on the programme – potential assurance activities had yet to be endorsed.
- x. Governance -
  - a. The overall programme governance remained unchanged and transition arrangements were maturing.
  - b. Progress updates had been provided to the Board of Governors, the FEIT Committee and others, in addition to the Directorate and oversight provided by the SJP Project Board. Programme sponsors met monthly.

G20.07.8.3 Members commented favourably on how the University had successfully accelerated several aspects of the programme because of the Covid-19 lockdown situation.

G20.07.8.4 The Chair of FEIT remarked upon the fact that several committees had recently received an update on the programme and he informed the Board that the FEIT Committee was content to be the primary forum to undertake the ongoing review of the programme on the Board's behalf, whilst mindful that the matter would still periodically require consideration from a strategic perspective by the SPPC.

G20.07.8.5 Members asked if the University management was satisfied that the specific points made by PwC were captured and embedded in the revised plan. Members were informed that this was the case, although one recommendation – the strengthening of the Project Management Office – required careful balancing in terms of resources and had yet to be confirmed.

G20.07.8.6 Members were assured that the PwC Assurance team membership had changed from its original composition and the relationship with that team had been reset. An agreed way of working and protocol had been established, and the University now had confidence in them as an assurance partner moving forward.

## **G20.07.9 STAFFING STATISTICS**

*Paper G20/07/07 was received*

G20.07.9.1 The Chair invited Kadisha Lewis-Roberts to present the paper, which had been considered by the SPPC at its meeting on 9 June 2020.

G20.07.9.2 Members noted that a focused discussion had taken place on the number of BAME staff on non-standard forms of employment and that the Committee had requested

details of the number of staff on temporary and fixed term contracts and a breakdown of these staff by gender, disability status and ethnicity.

- G20.07.9.3 During discussions Members also noted that there had been an increase in the number of grievances, which reflected the performance management and change that was taking place across the University.
- G20.07.9.4 Members asked if the grievance process and the involvement of Governors in that process would be reviewed as part of the People Strategy. Members noted that this was a procedure that required consultation with the Trade Unions and that discussions had already commenced.
- G20.07.9.5 Members were informed that the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) had produced a number of surveys on grievance and employee relations, which had highlighted the crucial role line managers played in anticipating grievances. Members asked if there was a case to better equip managers to undertake this role more effectively.
- G20.07.9.6 Members noted that poor implementation of Reasonable Adjustments had been a feature of some grievances and the University had provided targeted training for managers on this, facilitated by Eversheds. Further distinct groups of required training also would be delivered.

#### **G20.07.10 STAFF SURVEY**

*Paper G20/07/08 was received*

- G20.07.10.1 Kadisha Lewis-Roberts presented highlight results of the survey, which had been also considered in detail by the SPPC at its June meeting.
- G20.07.10.2 Members noted that whilst the engagement survey provided some good data, a different approach was needed in order to bring about true transformation and drive cultural change. The University was engaging the provider A Great Place to Work (GPTW) who were currently providing the University's 'Covid Care' pulse surveys. GPTW were a global provider capable of benchmarking with international companies such as Coca Cola and Unilever and undertaking 'Culture Audits' focusing on HR leadership practices and 'Trust Index' employee surveys.
- G20.07.10.3 Members were informed that the SPPC had discussed in detail the fact that staff grades G-H had given the least favourable views and that there may be some correlation with length of time in service. It was noted that the University would focus heavily upon this area and that the work being done on the new SJP and around job roles would help to secure progress, although it was recognised that this would take time.

#### **G20.07.11 INCLUSIVITY ANNUAL REPORT**

*Paper G20/07/09 was received*

- G20.07.11.1 Amanda Coffey informed Members that the report provided an update on progress against the University's current Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Plan and would be refreshed following approval of the EDI Strategy.
- G20.07.11.2 Members noted that the report reflected the University's current position and how attention was being directed towards developing an institution-wide approach to EDI leadership and how this was embedded across the University. This would be brought back to the Board for Members to engage with those developments.
- G20.07.11.3 Members asked whether the University knew what was specifically required to make the difference and that it would be helpful for this to be shared, in order that Governors could understand what would be delivered. Members noted that there was a lot of work across the sector that the University could draw upon.

G20.07.11.4 Members asked if this could be shared at the next meeting and endorsed the proposal that the Emergency Committee be engaged as the mapping of the specifics began to take shape, prior to discussion at the Board on 24 September 2020.

**ACTION: DVC and Provost**

G20.07.11.5 The Deputy Chair requested that per usual practice, the minutes of these Emergency Committee meetings be shared with all Governors and access to the paperwork be made available to them if requested, with the caveat that those of a confidential or sensitive nature would be restricted initially in an appropriate manner.

**ACTION: Deputy Clerk**

## **ITEMS FOR APPROVAL (PART TWO)**

### **FINANCE, ESTATES AND IT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **G20.07.12 FINANCIAL ESTIMATES AND FORECASTS**

*Paper G20/07/10 was received*

G20.07.12.1 William Liew, Chief Financial Officer gave a presentation to Members on the financial impact of COVID-19 on the Income and Expenditure accounts for the current year including the following:

- i. Income loss from: student accommodation rental income, catering and conference income, rent waivers for tenants including those in Future Space.
- ii. Estimated additional costs from:
  - a. An increase to hardship funds to assist students in digital poverty
  - b. An increase in IT support
  - c. An increase in provision for bad debt
  - d. Increased operating costs related to Covid-19.
- iii. The total estimated cost of Covid-19 to the University was £10m for this financial year.
- iv. Tuition fees had not been refunded.
- v. Mitigating actions included curtailment of non-essential spend, staff recruitment freeze and the re-profiling of investments to protect against market volatility.
- vi. The forecast operating surplus at year end was currently estimated as £5.3m, before any accounting adjustments.
- vii. Subject to Board of Governors' approval of plans for new student accommodation (to be considered later in this meeting) and the demolition of Carroll Court, the cost of Carroll Court would be written off over the next two years.
- viii. The Income and Expenditure accounts would be closely monitored and further adjustments made if necessary before the year end.
- ix. Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) deficit would not impact upon the cash position.

G20.07.12.2 Members also noted the level of support proposed for the Students' Union for 2019/2020 and the allocation of the 2020/2021 block grant, which also required Board approval.

G20.07.12.3 The Chair of the FEIT Committee confirmed that there had been a good debate at the committee meeting on 11 June 2020, the greater part of which had focused upon the emergency budget for 2020/2021.

#### **G20.07.12.4 Emergency Budget 2020/2021**

Members noted that the draft Emergency budget had a 'Covid-19 contingency' of £25.8m built into it and would deliver a budget surplus of £2.8m whilst also meeting the University's financial targets. Mitigations such as a recruitment freeze and the curtailment of non-essential spends, would continue.

G20.07.12.5 Members were informed of the University's proposed pay award position, namely a 0% increase for 2020/21 and to maintain that position for at least 11 months; this position would be held even if a percentage increase were to be agreed as part of national negotiations.

Mr R. Bacon left the meeting.

G20.07.12.6 Members were reminded that the University had modelled several financial scenarios using varying student numbers for 2020/2021. William Liew reported that the 'awful' scenario did not include:

- any reduction in public sector funding
- the implementation of recommendations of the Augar Review
- increasing pension contributions.

G20.07.12.7 Members noted the current positive position of student application and acceptances, which were reported as being higher than at the same time last year; this was being closely monitored and the University recognised that international student numbers were particularly difficult to predict.

G20.07.12.8 Members commended the manner in which the University had responded to the Covid-19 crisis and its performance throughout the lockdown period, highlighting in particular the University's confidence to state that all financial targets would be reached.

G20.07.12.9 Members asked if the University's recruitment would be impacted by deferrals and whether it had considered how to pitch its position in this regard. Members noted that a campaign around this by UUK was about to start and the Vice-Chancellor had already recorded a piece to camera addressed to prospective students. The purpose of the recording was to provide students with as much information as possible, to remind them that the virus would continue for some time, impacting on both travel and employment opportunities, and to encourage them to consider the opportunities that studying at UWE Bristol could provide. Students who would be put at significant risk health-wise by coming to the University were encouraged to engage with the University to discuss deferral.

G20.07.12.10 Members were informed that the University would not continue to offer the accommodation 'pods' (Purbeck Court) following the pilot this year.

G20.07.12.11 Members **agreed** to:

- Note** the financial forecasts for the year to 31 July 2020.
- Approve** the draft Emergency Budget for 2020/2021.
- Note** the financial scenarios and potential remedial options.
- Note** the proposed draft Masterplan 2030 and cash flow forecasts.
- Approve** the financial support for UWESU for 2019/2020 and allocation of the 2020/2021 block grant.

### **G20.07.13 BANK MANDATE APPROVAL**

*Paper G20/07/11 was received*

Members **approved** the recommendation that Professor Amanda Coffey, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost be an authorised signatory for all the University's bank accounts.

### **G20.07.14 STUDENT ACCOMMODATION PROPOSAL**

*Paper G20/07/12 was received*

G20.07.14.1 William Liew reminded Members of the Student Accommodation Proposal (SAP3) shared with the Board the previous year, which had identified the need for a 2,000+ accommodation project on the Frenchay campus. Members noted that the whole

project was to be delivered in two phases by September 2022 and Easter 2023, the details of which were provided.

- G20.07.14.2 Members noted that due to the financial impact of Covid-19 and related uncertainty on student recruitment in the immediate term, the decision had been made to switch the two phases, starting with the smaller phase on Carroll Court (c881 units), delayed for at least six months. This delay would allow the University to secure clarity on its student recruitment position and finances.
- G20.07.14.3 Members were informed of the University's intention during August to secure planning permission for the Carroll Court site and to submit an outline planning application for the second phase (Car Parks 1, 2 and 3) to secure permission at least in principle. The second phase would necessitate the re-provision of a car park and a full application for Area 4 would also be submitted.
- G20.07.14.4 During discussions, Members noted the need to plan the write-off of Carroll Court over two years in the financial statements, starting this year and that a full business case to proceed to tender would be presented for Board approval in the autumn 2020.
- G20.07.14.5 Members were informed that 253 bed spaces would be lost by the demolition of Carroll Court and that extensive nomination agreements were in place for 2020/2021 which could be rolled forward into the next academic year.
- G20.07.14.6 Members **approved** the recommendation that the revised proposal proceed as described in G20.07.14.3 and that the planning of the write-off of Carroll Court commence.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **G20.07.15 DEGREE OUTCOMES STATEMENT**

*Paper G20/07/13 was received*

- G20.07.15.1 Amanda Coffey informed the Board that the SPPC had considered the statement in detail at its meeting on 9 June 2020 and had recommended it for the Board's approval and for subsequent publication.
- G20.07.15.2 Members noted that the purpose of the statement was to set out the value of awards in the context of an increase of good honours across the sector. Members were assured that the University monitored this very closely and kept all of its awards under review as an institution. The University's statement detailed how it protected the value of its awards and how its academic standards aligned to sector benchmarks.
- G20.07.15.3 Members were informed that there had been an increase in good honours over the five-year reporting period, but that this was below the sector average and the annual rate of increase had slowed.
- G20.07.15.4 Members also noted that the statement demonstrated some of the ways in which the University had maintained a strategic focus on enhancing learning and teaching, the learning environment and other factors to ensure student success which would lead to an increase in good honours.
- G20.07.15.5 Members' attention was drawn in particular to the fact that the scrutiny around degree outcomes confirmed the attainment and award gap between BAME and white students that had been identified separately.
- G20.07.15.6 Members **approved** the Degree Outcome Statements for publication on the University website at the end of the current academic session.

## STANDING ITEMS

### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

#### G20.07.16 Departing Members of the Board and Committees

##### Rob Fraser, Independent Member

The Board expressed its sincere thanks to Mr Fraser for his service over the last five years as a Governor, the last three years as Chair of the FEIT Committee and for his service to the Chairs Group, REMCO, Nominations and Governance Committee and the Emergency Committee, as well as the Financial Sustainability Sub-Group, the Enterprise Campus Group and for his role as Chair of the University Investment Committee.

##### Andrew Martyn-Johns, Co-opted Member of the Audit Committee

Members endorsed the Chair's comments of appreciation and thanks to Mr Martyn-Johns for his nine-year service and valuable contribution to the Audit Committee.

Members agreed that the Chair write to Mr Martyn-Johns on behalf of the Board.

**ACTION: Chair**

##### Sonia Mills, Independent Member

Members endorsed the comments of the Deputy Chair in his expression of thanks on the Board's behalf. Ms Mills was thanked for her twelve and a half years' service as a Governor and her role as Chair of the Board, the Chairs' Group, Nominations and Governance Committee and the Emergency Committee and for her previous role as Chair of FEIT Committee, prior to appointment as Chair of the Board.

On behalf of the Directorate, the Vice-Chancellor thanked Ms Mills and Mr Fraser for their guidance and support.

#### G20.07.17 & G20.07.18 RESERVED BUSINESS

The two items of reserved business are recorded as confidential minutes.

## ITEMS TO NOTE

- \*G20.07.19 APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**  
Members formally noted the election of David Lamb as Chair of the Board of Governors from 1 August 2020.
- \*G20.07.20 CHAIR'S ACTIONS**  
*Paper \*G20/07/15 was received and noted.*
- \*G20.07.21 EMERGENCY COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
*Paper \*G20/07/16 was received and noted.*
- \*G20.07.22 MINUTES OF THE BOARD'S COMMITTEES**  
*Paper \*G20/07/17 was received and noted.*
- \*G20.07.23 ACADEMIC BOARD MINUTES**  
*Paper \*G20/07/18 was received and noted.*
- \*G20.07.24 OFFICE FOR STUDENTS' PREVENT MONITORING OUTCOME LETTER**  
*Paper \*G20/07/19 was received and noted.*
- \*G20.07.25 UNIVERSITY COMPANIES AND DIRECTORS**  
*Paper \*G20/07/20 was received and noted.*
- \*G20.07.26 MINUTES OF THE STUDENT GOVERNOR FORUM**  
*Paper \*G20/07/21 was received and noted.*
- \*G20.07.27 OFFICE FOR STUDENTS' GRANT LETTER**  
*Paper \*G20/07/22 was received and noted.*

**\*G20.07.28 CORPORATE SEAL**  
*Paper \*G20/07/23 was received and noted.*

**\*G20.07.29 Dates of Future Meetings**

24 September 2020	13:00 – 18:00	Governor Development event in the morning
18 November 2020	13:00 – 18:00	
16-17 March 2021	inc. Away Day	Clevedon Hall (TBC)
8 July 2021	13:00 – 18:00	TBC

<b>OUTSTANDING ACTIONS</b>			
Meeting	Minute	Action	Status
02.07.2020	G20.07.3.22	Jodie Anstee, Clerk to amendment of the S2030 sub-strategies as appropriate, ahead of publication	
02.07.2020	G20.07.4.3.	Chris Gledhill, Deputy Clerk to circulate the S2030 Corporate Scorecard when complete.	
02.07.2020	G20.07.7.10	Vice-Chancellor to provide the Board with further information in relation to the meeting due to be held with SARI.	
02.07.2020	G20.07.11.4	Amanda Coffey, DVC and Provost to share the mapping of specific requirements of EDI actions required with the Emergency Committee prior to discussion at the Board on 24 September 2020.	
02.07.2020	G20.07.11.5	Chris Gledhill, Deputy Clerk to ensure the minutes of the Emergency Committee meetings are shared with all Governors, and access to the EDI paperwork be made available to them if requested, as appropriate.	
02.07.2020	G20.07.16	Chair to write to Andrew Martyn-Johns on behalf of the Board.	