

CONFIRMED

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minutes of the Board of Governors meeting held on Wednesday 20 March 2013.

Present: C Booy; G Camm (Chair); S Forbes; I Gray; Dr M Hagen; Dr J Harrington; J Laycock; S Mills; S Moore; E Okon; Professor P Olomolaiye; T Smallwood; G van der Lely; Professor G Upton; Professor S West.

Apologies: Professor P Gough; Trevor Smallwood.

In Attendance: W Liew; W Marshall; A Osborn (Deputy Clerk); J Rushforth (Clerk); M Small (Minute Clerk).

G13.03.1 Declarations of Interest

None received.

G13.03.2 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

G13.03.2.1 Minutes of the meeting 29 January 2013

Paper G13/03/1 was received and approved.

G13.03.2.2 Masterplan Update

At the request of the Chair Governors received an oral summary of the discussions at the Finance Estates and IT Committee, during which it was noted that the committee had received outline business plans from the Faculties of:

- i. Arts, Creative Industries and Education;
- ii. Business and Law; and
- iii. Health and Life Sciences.

G13.03.2.3 During discussions it was noted that:

- i. Finance Estates and IT Committee had strongly endorsed the Executive's proposals for the direction of travel and choreography of projects;
- ii. a group of interested Governors had been convened to discuss, and advise the Board of Governors on, the development of the supporting campus infrastructure;
- iii. the individual business cases would be considered by the Board of Governors as they became available. An overview of the timeline and approvals process for the projects would also be provided to the next meeting of the Board;
- iv. all Governors would be invited to attend a meeting with local business during which the projects would be showcased and feedback sought.

ACTION: Pro Vice-Chancellor (Commercial Director and Corporation Secretary) and Deputy Clerk provide an overview of the timeline and approvals process.

G13.03.2.4 Portfolio Review (*Minute G13.1.4 refers*)

The Vice-Chancellor informed Governors that as a result of the discussions held at Academic Board, as well as those with other stakeholders, the University would:

- i. Collapse the four Politics and International Relations programmes into one programme to be offered as part of a new approach to Social Sciences delivered within the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences. The MA Human Rights would also be closed;
- ii. similarly reduce the number of non-professional Education programmes; and
- iii. close the postgraduate Music Therapy programme.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

G13.03.3 **UWE Strategy 2020**

Papers G13/03/2 and G13/03/3 were received.

G13.03.3.1

Governors received a presentation from the Vice-Chancellor updating them on useful discussion at Academic Board on the new Strategy and noting that its members had:

- i. broadly supported the emphasis of the new Strategy;
- ii. identified that the precise wording of the practice led or practice orientated ambition mattered less than the University accurately and concisely articulating what it meant by the phrase;
- iii. queried the level of ambition expressed within the strategy for UWE's international activities in addition to the performance indicators identified for the *Research with Impact* work stream;
- iv. highlighted the potential difficulties of delivering an ambition of all students being "taught by...practitioners in their field" and requested that "practitioner" be replaced by "expert" although the importance of the level of industry connectivity expressed by the former was recognised;

In light of Academic Board's comments particular thought continued to be given to the support required from the University in order to deliver teaching by practitioners.

G13.03.4.2

The Vice-Chancellor further noted that due to the timing of Academic Board the Executive Team had not reflected the discussions into the version of the strategy before the Governors; as a result the final version would likely see further amendments although they would not be material in nature.

G13.03.4.3

Building on discussion at the previous meeting Governors:

- i. reflected on the importance placed on research by representatives attending the Student/Governor Forum and that although all academic staff would be expected to undertake scholarly activity, they could not all have research funded. As a result it continued to be important for those research active staff to engage with teaching undergraduate students.
- ii. recognised that the University's research ambitions had been carefully phrased but requested that further consideration be given to the consistency with which the balance between teaching and research was reflected within the strategy and questioned whether a measure of research investment should be captured within the second enabler of *Place, resource, estate and Infrastructure*;
- iii. considered whether there was scope to raise the profile of employability within the strategy and how the institution could further engage businesses to both provide work opportunities for students and graduates as well as inform the design of programmes;
- iv. recognised that marketing and the message conveyed by the institution were key enablers but that it would be inappropriate to reflect them within a public document;

- v. welcomed planned engagement with the new Director of Human Resources on the HROD plan to operationalise the *People: performance and development* enabler which, alongside systems infrastructure, were unanimously considered to be crucial to the success of the overall strategy.

G13.03.4.4 The Vice-Chancellor also outlined the Executive structures which had been refreshed in order to manage the programme of developments and noted that the Executive Groups provided advice and capacity to senior managers who were in turn responsible for the individual projects contributing to the success of the macro strategy.

G13.03.4.5 Governors noted that there was no consistent approach to change management within the sector but that through the use of the Executive Groups and support from Transformation Services the Executive Team were confident that the structures provided sufficient support for senior managers and balanced the need to allow people to progress unimpeded whilst retaining a strong grasp on multiple strands of activity.

G13.03.3.6 Subject to the due consideration of, and where appropriate amendment to reflect, comments by the Board of Governors and Academic Board the UWE Strategy 2020 was **approved**. Governors would receive a hardcopy of the finished article as soon as it became available.

G13.03.4 **2014/15 Fees and Access Agreement**
Paper G13/03/4 was received.

G13.03.4.1 Members received a briefing from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Operations) on the fees and access agreement and noted that:

- i. due to the late release of guidance from the Office For Fair Access, Finance Estates and IT Committee had received an oral update and had endorsed the continuation of the nine thousand pound tuition fee for the majority of undergraduate degree programmes;
- ii. nationally widening participation (WP) had been reconceptualised to include student success within the context of social mobility with emphasis placed supporting and retaining students with lower levels of academic achievement. This articulated well with UWE's continued preference for supporting students with bursaries over fee waivers which benefited students at the time they needed;
- iii. it continued to be too early to judge the impact of the increased student contribution and the effectiveness of the measures taken by the Government and, at a more local level, by the University to support WP activities. However in line with OFFA requirements UWE continued to research the efficacy of its approach.

G13.03.4.2 During further discussion Governors:

- i. noted the Access Agreement was a technical document completed in line with the institution's widening participation strategy agreed by the Board of Governors;
- ii. welcomed the offer from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Operations) to meet with members who wished to engage further with UWE's approach to WP;
- iii. strongly supported the continued preference of bursaries over fee waivers.

G13.03.4.3

Members **agreed** that the:

- i. standard full time undergraduate fee for students studying at UWE would continue to be set at £9000 for the 2014/15 academic year;
- ii. Vice-Chancellor be given delegated authority to approve the 2014/15 Access Agreement;
- iii. Vice-Chancellor be given delegated authority to approve future Access Agreements that were consistent with the widening participation strategy set by the Board of Governors subject to the alignment between the strategy and any Access Agreements submitted in future years being noted within the Vice-Chancellor's update.

REPORTS**G13.03.5****Vice-Chancellor's Report**

Paper G13/03/05 was received and noted.

G13.03.6**Finance Report**

Paper G13/03/06 was received.

Members welcomed the new dashboard and an update from the Director of Finance highlighting that:

- i. the projected surplus continued to improve on previous forecasts
- ii. the timing of commitments for the academic space refurbishment would be monitored closely;
- iii. a reserve had been established in order to support investment, where required, to deliver the portfolio review outcomes.

G13.03.7**Date of Next Meetings**

All meetings held at 15:00 in the Dartington Suite, Wallscourt Farmhouse.

21 May 2013

8 July 2013