

CONFIRMED

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minutes of the Board of Governors meeting held on Tuesday 21 July 2015.

Present: G Camm (Chair); Professor J Craven (from Min. G15.07.4.1); S Forbes; Professor A Gilkison; Professor J Harrington; M Mason; J McNulty; S Mills; S Moore, J Polson; Professor S West.

Apologies: C Booy; R Fraser; Dr M Hagen; R Holmes; ; D Lamb; G van der Lely.

In Attendance: D Bean; V Russell Emmott (for item G15.07.9); C Gledhill (Deputy Clerk); W Liew; H Lloyd Wildman (Clerk); W Marshall.

G15.07.1 Governor appointments

G15.07.1.1 On behalf of the Board, the Chair welcomed Jack Polson, UWESU President, to his first meeting.

G15.07.1.2 Academic Board Nominee

Members received the Vice Chancellor's nomination from the Academic Board of Professor Steven Neill, Pro Vice Chancellor, Health and Applied Sciences for membership to the Board of Governors.

The nomination was **approved**.

G15.07.1.3 Mr Iain Gray

Members noted the recent resignation of Iain Gray and **endorsed** the Chair's expression of thanks to Mr Gray for his service to the Board.

G15.07.2 Board Composition

Members received an update from the Chair on the recent meeting of the Nominations and Governance Committee, held on 16 June 2015.

G15.07.2.1 Members noted in particular:

- i. the Committee had discussed a number of potential Governor candidates
- ii. the imperative to improve the diversity of Board membership.

G15.07.2.2 The Chair requested that Board Members consider their professional networks for possible suitable individuals and notify the Head of Governance, who will follow up the recommendations.

ACTION: All Members/Head of Governance

G15.07.2.3 This minute is confidential to the Board.

G15.07.3 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None received.

G15.07.4 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Paper G15/07/01 was received.

Members approved the minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2015.

G15.07.4.1 UWE Brand
Members received a brief presentation of the new University logo and an outline of the project timeline.

Members noted that the new brand would be launched internally at the University during the autumn term and externally in January 2016.

Members also noted that a 'brand policy' was being developed to ensure appropriate and consistent use.

Mr J Craven arrived at this point of the meeting.

G15.07.4.2 UWE: Research Strategy
Members noted that the paper on the University's research positioning – including benchmarking, monitoring and alignment with teaching – was deferred until the next meeting.

ACTION: Pro Vice Chancellor (Research)

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

G15.07.5 Higher Education Funding Arrangements
Paper G15/07/02 was received.

Members received an update from the Vice-Chancellor on the implications of the political landscape in terms of budget, quality assurance and risk.

G15.07.5.1 Members noted in particular:

- i. Conversion of undergraduate maintenance grants to loans for new students from England from 2016/2017 and total maintenance support would increase to a maximum of £8,200 per year;
- ii. Consultation to take place over the summer on the freezing of the student loan repayment threshold for 5 years;
- iii. UUK would monitor the impact of the above changes to ensure that applicants from the most disadvantaged backgrounds were not deterred from applying to universities;
- iv. the appointment of Jo Johnson as the new Minister of State for Universities and Science who, whilst continuing the direction of travel instigated by his predecessor, had expressed a keenness to ensure a balance between profiling research and the delivery of high quality teaching and learning – the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF);
- v. inflation-linked rises in tuition fees would be introduced through the TEF from 2017 for English institutions offering high quality teaching;
- vi. Regius Professorships would be created to recognise scientific excellence in universities across the UK, to be awarded near to the Queen's 90th birthday;
- vii. Apprenticeships: introduction of a levy for large UK employers to fund new apprenticeships, leading to 3m new apprenticeships by 2020; the implications for the University would be assessed;
- viii. Students were increasingly picking up a significant proportion of the cost of HE and there was a need for a mechanism to be in place to enable them to see whether or not they were getting value for money;
- ix. Significant cut of £250m was yet to hit the sector, most of which had been absorbed by BIS. Confidence was expressed that this would not have an adverse impact upon the budgets that were currently being finalised by the University;
- x. New ways of measuring success in HE: current league tables were not fit-for-purpose in terms of outcomes, quality of education, NSS, number of degree classifications, destinations data, etc.;
- xi. Immigration Bill: changes to control immigration may make the UK a less attractive destination for international students and the government may look at the numbers of visas being rejected for institutions. It was therefore important for UWE to monitor how it managed those risks;

- xii. Extremism Bill: the sector awaited further details of how this affected universities, although vice chancellors held ultimate responsibility and the Secretary of State had powers to intervene. The University was currently reviewing its assurance on meeting government expectation and legal obligation. Governors would be informed of the outcome of this review. The Chair reported that the government was looking to governing bodies to take more responsibility in respect of this agenda and that training was being provided for Chairs of Boards, the resources of which she would share with Members.

ACTION: Vice Chancellor to update Members on the outcome of the review.

ACTION: Chair to share Prevent training resources with Members, via the Deputy Clerk.

- xiii. EU referendum was promised before the end of 2017;
- xiv. Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill – UWE was encouraging the four local authorities to explore devolution and what this would mean for business, health, education and skills, and leadership;
- xv. Comprehensive Spending Review: the Treasury was seeking information (re numbers and case studies) on the impact of the removal of Student Opportunity Fund and Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF);
- xvi. The University continually assessed the suitability of its strategy to ensure that sufficient resources were in place at the appropriate times in terms of manpower and funds;
- xvii. A significant proportion of staff were funded through HEIF and the impact of any potential cut would need to be assessed as part of this process;
- xviii. UWE's HEIF totalled around £1m, Student Opportunity Fund approximately £5m;
- xix. The challenge to government would be that cuts to these particular funds would potentially damage widening participation and access.

G15.07.6 Disabled Students' Allowance

Members received a presentation from the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic on the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) modernisation agenda and the University's response.

Members noted the following in particular:

- i. Up to 3000 UWE students were supported by DSA (approximately £2m per annum);
- ii. 90% of these were students with dyslexia, the funding for which would be affected;
- iii. UWE was an Access for the West of England Centre, for which it received an additional £700,000;
- iv. The government aimed to cut 50-70% of the spend to the sector and this would impact particularly on this University;
- v. The legal obligation to support disabled students would continue, despite the cuts;
- vi. Year-on-year increases in mental health issues;
- vii. Inclusive agenda – part of Learning 2020 – would shift the emphasis from support work to enabling students to learn without that support being in place. The term “inclusive teaching and learning” meant that all students benefitted from strategies, not just those with additional needs;
- viii. The tracking of outcomes (dyslexia) was undertaken annually and with individuals through the tutorial system. There was a challenge in improving the quality of data – particularly in terms of serious mental health issues – as often these were not disclosed at the point of entry, which impacted upon the University's ability to provide support and to connect with relevant local support services;

- ix. The surgery with which the University Health Centre was associated was introducing a dedicated mental health nurse from September 2015;
- x. The University linked with external sources of support, including relevant charities;
- xi. Scale of financial impact equated to a potential shortfall of £100k to £700k and the University was currently assessing how this could be mitigated;
- xii. The key risk for the University was that of failing to meet student needs in the future.

G15.07.7 Self Evaluation Document

Paper G15/07/03 was received.

The Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic provided Members with an outline of the content and format of the draft SED.

G15.07.7.1

Members noted that:

- i. QAA reviews occurred every 6 years and this was the first for UWE under the new methodology;
- ii. the structure followed was partly determined by the QAA, was based upon the QAA UK Quality Code and the terms used were therefore very specific;
- iii. the QAA Code was converted at the University into its Quality Management & Enhancement Framework (QMEF);
- iv. 1000 pieces of evidence had been submitted to support the SED;
- v. It was usual practice for reviewers to split the document and therefore key messages were repeated throughout;
- vi. The University's students had shared with the Academic Board their own Student Written Submission;
- vii. The reviewers would seek to be assured that there was triangulation in the University's quality assurance processes;
- viii. The University was hopeful that the good practice that was in place such as peer-assisted learning, online assessment, the Graduate School, student representation and participation would be recognised;
- ix. The review would take place during the week commencing 12 October and three weeks prior to this the QAA would inform the University of the themes for the review;
- x. Outcomes would include the affirmation of areas for improvement and recommendations, the identification of good practice and the judgement as to whether standards had been met;
- xi. there were no reviewers with experience of the new methodology and the University had logged this fact with the QAA.

G15.07.7.2

Members welcomed an offer from the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic to provide any interested Governors with a workshop/briefings on the University's quality assurance process, including detailed flow diagrams outlining how this connected with the QAA visit.

ACTION: Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic

G15.07.7.3

It was **agreed** that outcomes of the review would be shared with Governors as soon as possible following assimilation and assessment by the senior team.

ACTION: Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic/Deputy Clerk

G15.07.8

League Tables

Paper G15/07/04 was received.

Members received from the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic an overview of the University's response to student survey results.

G15.07.8.1

Members noted in particular that:

- i. Outcomes in relation to the National Student Survey (NSS) and Student Experience Survey (SES) had been mixed over the last 5 years, leading to

- fluctuations in league table positioning and the inability to sustain increases year-on-year;
- ii. UWE's score for overall satisfaction had fallen by 2% points upon the previous year, in comparison to a sector score that continued to increase;
- iii. The NSS score held a 25% weighting in the Guardian University Guide (GUG) and this had contributed to the drop of 30 places in the GUG;
- iv. The spread of scores (page 1, NSS-UWE overview) demonstrated the need for focus on feedback and assessment work;
- v. From summer 2015 the University would adopt a more targeted and structured approach to the management of survey scores, led by a new NSS/SES Taskforce;
- vi. The taskforce would support the identification of improvement actions and the sharing of good practice;
- vii. NSS Summer 2015 was based on data collected prior to the establishment of the taskforce;
- viii. Every Faculty had programmes scoring 90% or more and there was a lot of good practice across the University and intervention would be applied for those that did not, meaning that potentially improvement in positioning could take a couple of years to achieve;
- ix. There was a need to capture 'customer spend' more accurately and this would be 'tagged' to spend categories from September 2015.

The Equality and Diversity Manager joined the meeting.

G15.07.9 Annual Equality and Diversity (Inclusivity) Update

Paper G15/07/05 was received.

Members received an overview from the Equality and Diversity Manager of the progress made to date in relation to the Inclusivity agenda over the past year.

G15.07.9.1 Members noted the following in particular:

- i. Progress in relation to the six core themes of the current Single Equality Scheme 2012-2015:
 - a. Anti-abuse UWESU campaign had received over 800 student pledges and was now running into its second year
 - b. 5-month disability service for staff had been launched in July 2015
 - c. Marking of key dates – e.g. Black History Month and LGBT History Month – as a whole institution
 - d. Recruitment of 6 VCAB equalities champions and the Deputy Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer as overall Senior Diversity Champion
 - e. Consultation on the Race Equality Charter Mark – Governors would be included in the early drafts of the action plan;
- ii. 1 September 2015 – an interim Single Equality Scheme would be put in place to 2016, when a new 4-year strategy would be launched and embedded into the 4 strands of Strategy 2020;
- iii. Prevent agenda:
 - a. a task-and-finish group was in place to implement an action plan, which would include staff training
 - b. the University would remain 'alive' to the issue and would continue to work in partnership with a number of other agencies;
- iv. any clubs or societies proven to support or promote inappropriate behaviour would be shut down – an approach shared by the Vice Chancellors of both UWE and the University of Bristol;
- v. Freshers' Week would include no-alcohol events and the Healthy University Group was currently working with UWESU in relation to alcohol awareness;
- vi. Staffing Compendium – aimed for a diverse, inclusive and reflective environment;
- vii. The culture of the organisation was set by the Board and the Directorate and

it was important to ensure that diversity was reflected in the membership of both;

- viii. Positive actions in terms of recruitment of new staff included:
- advertising on websites targeted to improving the diversity of the workforce and also cascading vacancies to a number of networks
 - using radio networks
 - Guaranteed Interview Scheme
 - Unconscious bias training was in place.

G15.07.9.2 The Equality and Diversity Manager invited suggestions of key headlines for the new Single Equality Scheme to be communicated to her.

ACTION: Governors to relay suggested key headlines via the Deputy Clerk.

The Equality and Diversity Manager left the meeting.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

G15.07.10 Financial Estimates and Forecasts

Paper G15/07/07 was received.

The Director of Finance and Planning provided Members with a report on the University's financial position.

G15.07.10.1 Members noted that:

- Forecast outturn for 2014/2015:
 - Overachievement against the budgeted surplus of £11.7m – all budget areas continued to be monitored closely and it was forecast that this could increase by a further £2m
 - Recovery work on the outstanding Student Loan Company (SLC) income had led to a reduction in the overdue debt to £1m and this was expected to dip slightly by the financial year-end
 - EIB loan – a final draft financial agreement was in place and EIB had confirmed that the margin on the loan was substantially lower than that used in the working assumptions
 - The summary of Faculties' and Services' budgets compared with forecasts, as detailed in Appendix 4;
- 2015/2016 budget estimates:
 - The proportion of direct grant from HEFCE would fall to 7% of total income and tuition fees would account for 74%
 - The SU block grant would be increased to enable the SU to lease the new building from the University
- Forecasts:
 - £9,000 fee would remain the same and this together with the continued reduction in block grant meant that cost increases would need to be covered by efficiency gains, savings in existing operations or growth in student numbers.

G15.07.10.2 Members **agreed** to:

- Note** the projected financial outturn for 2014/2015;
- Approve** the 2015/2016 budget estimates, as adopted and recommended by the FEIT Committee as the framework within which the Vice Chancellor will determine final detailed budgets for individual budgetary units;
- Confirm** that the University is in a satisfactory financial position with regard to financial sustainability;
- Approve** the financial forecasts 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 for submission to HEFCE by 31 July 2015.

G15.07.11 Student Accommodation Phase 2

Paper G15/07/06 was received.

G15.07.11.1 Members received an update from the Pro Vice Chancellor (Commercial Director and

Corporation Secretary) on the second phase of student accommodation at the Frenchay campus.

G15.07.11.2 Members noted that:

- i. The University was selecting Interserve PLC as the contractor on the grounds of price, certainty of delivery and design;
- ii. The new contract could provide a minimum of 431 bedrooms at an all-in cost of £18.3m or a maximum of 562 bedrooms (subject to necessary planning approval allowing up to 6 storeys) at a cost of £22.8m;
- iii. The cost per room was therefore between £42.5k and £40.6k, compared with an original cost per room of £47.5k that had been originally presented to the FEIT Committee.

G15.07.11.3 Members **approved** the second phase student accommodation at a cost of between £18.3m and £22.8m, with the final value dependent upon the number of bedrooms given planning approval.

REPORTS

G15.07.12 Vice Chancellor's Update

This item was covered as part of the Vice Chancellor's presentation delivered earlier in the meeting and recorded in Minute G15.07.5.1

G15.07.13 UWE Stadium

Paper G15/07/08 was received.

G15.07.13.1 This minute is confidential to the Board.

G15.07.14 FEIT Committee: Capital and Major Projects Update

Paper G15/07/09 was received.

Members received an update from the Pro Vice Chancellor (Commercial Director and Corporation Secretary) highlighting Campus 2020 capital and major projects.

Members noted:

- i. The new Students' Union building would be opened on 24 July 2015 for fitting out. The Chair commented on the value of holding the next Board meeting at the new building.

ACTION: Deputy Clerk to liaise with UWESU CEO for permission to hold the November Board meeting in the SU Building.

The UWESU President informed Members that a VIP lunch event was being organised to take place during Freshers' Week, to which Governors would be invited.

ACTION: UWESU President to issue invitation to Governors via the Deputy Clerk.

- ii. FBL Building: the contract was now ready for signature and the ceremony to commemorate the start of the main build and the burial of a time capsule had taken place on 7 July 2015;
- iii. Bower Ashton: the planning application was ready to be submitted;
- iv. Enterprise Zone: the Vice Chancellor was due to sign off the Stage C design report on 24 July 2015;
- v. Arncliffe: the strategic partnership had been signed that the building was bought and would be leased back in part; 360 UWE students would be studying at the location from September 2015 and there would be a celebratory event to which Governors would be invited.

ACTION: Pro Vice Chancellor and Executive Dean, ACE to arrange invitations to opening event to Governors, via the Deputy Clerk.

- vi. A meeting was planned with the Wallscourt Foundation for November 2015 to discuss research investment and the possible development of 'Wallscourt Professors'.

G15.07.15 Remuneration Committee

Members noted the update from the Chair on the discussions of the Remuneration Committee at the meeting held on 16 June 2015.

ITEMS TO NOTE

G15.07.16* Health and Safety Update
Paper G15/07/10 was received.

G15.07.17* University Companies and Directors
Paper G15/07/11 was received and noted.

G15.07.18 Reporting of Governor Attendance

The Chair reminded Members of the Board Effectiveness Review planned for the summer term 2016 and of the decision made in 2013 to reduce the number of Board meetings from 8 to 3 each year in order to accommodate Governor involvement in other activities.

G15.07.18.1 Members noted the recent invitation to notify the Governance Office of any areas of particular interest or for help in visiting Faculties and other areas of the University.

G15.07.19 Board of Governors Calendar 2015/2016
Paper G15/07/12 was received and noted.

The Chair also reminded Members to contact the Governance Office to confirm attendance at 2015/2016 Board and committee meetings.

G15.07.20* Minutes of Board Committees and Academic Board
Paper G15/07/13 was received and noted.

G15.07.21* Corporate Seal
Paper G15/07/14 was received and noted.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

G15.07.22 Grant Thornton's Financial Health of Higher Education Sector
The Vice Chancellor informed Members of the recent publication of Grant Thornton's review of financial statements of the UK university sector.

G15.07.22.1 Members noted that the University was placed in the first quartile of institutions.

G15.07.22.2 Members also noted that the review indicated matters of particular significance for the sector that the University had already identified as priorities.

G15.07.22.3 Members also noted that the review also indicated that some institutions were facing financial challenges and that the removal of the cap on student numbers would cause some instability.

G15.07.22.4 It was **agreed** that the electronic link to the document be provided to Members as soon as this was available, with hard copies for the Chair of the Board, Committee Chairs and the Clerk to the Board of Governors.

ACTION: Head of Governance

G15.07.23* Date of Next Meeting
Thursday 26 November 2015.