

Board of Governors
Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 April 2017

Present:

Andrew Scarborough (Chair)

David Baker

Liam Bligh

Sue Dutton

Sara Goodwin

Jeff Halliwell

Richard Horsley

Sylvia Hughes

Mark Mulcahey

Nick Petford

Martin Pettifor

Nick Pitts-Tucker

Nick Robertson

Danjie Zhong

Apologies:

David Baker, Frank Jordan, Lee Machado, John Skelton

In attendance:

Jane Bunce (Director of Student and Academic Services) for items 79 onwards,

Emma Finlay (Administrator, Clerk's Office), Miriam Lakin (Clerk), Deborah

Mattock (Director of HR, Marketing and International Relations), Terry Neville (Chief Operating Officer), Steve O'Brien (Dean of Health and Society) for item 75, Ann Shelton Mayes (Executive Dean of Student Experience)

71/17 Welcome, Apologies and Quorum

71.1 The Chair welcomed those present and confirmed quoracy.

72/17 Declarations of Interest

72.1 No declarations of interest were received in addition to those held on file by the Clerk's Office.

73/17 Minutes of Previous Meetings

73.1 The Board approved the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2017 as a true record.

74/17 Matters Arising

74.1 The Board received Paper A on actions arising from previous meetings.

Additional comments were received on the following:

74.2 Court

It was confirmed that the list of those invited to Court events had been shortened, and that those who had not attended events for several years had been removed. However, if governors or members of staff were aware of names which should be reinstated or added, they should notify the Clerk.

75/17 Faculty of Health and Society

75.1 The Board received a report on the Faculty of Health and Society from its Dean. This covered the challenges facing the new Faculty, and how it was responding to them, as well as key metrics and an analysis of the strengths,

weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the Faculty. The Board received a tabled paper with supporting data (*Clerk's Note: filed as Paper O*).

75.2 Board members praised the work of the Dean and the Faculty in building volume and capability, and for the influential and important position it now occupied in the county through its collaborative work with a range of partners.

75.3 Members asked what was being done to ensure the creation of a coherent and positive culture in the Faculty and to improve underperforming areas, given that it brought together two former Schools. The Dean discussed the development of culture and robust performance management through the Faculty Executive Group. Board members gave the Dean their strongest support in this.

75.4 Members asked about the vision for the Faculty over the next five years, and the resources that would be needed to achieve this. The Dean stated that he would wish to ensure that, given the changes especially to health courses, the portfolio of courses was strong and was based on continued good working relationships with other organisations. He stated that there were further opportunities to develop research and enterprise activity, and through the new emerging health professions. In terms of resources, he stated that investment in a research leader for the Faculty, and ensuring that the space at Waterside was used efficiently and effectively would be important.

75.5 The level of engagement of different health and social care bodies with the Faculty was discussed. It was noted that working relationships were strong with NHS partners, particularly in respect of community services and mental health and were emerging in social care.

75.6 It was noted that the work of the Faculty would also have international appeal. The potential to grow international student numbers was noted.

75.7 The Board thanked the Dean of Health and Society for his presentation and noted that the Faculty was in a strong position.

76/17 HR Annual Report

76.1 The Board received Paper B, the Annual Report from Human Resources. It was noted that the report presented data at the highest level and that breakdowns were available for the management teams of faculties and professional services.

76.2 The Board approved the areas identified for monitoring and action as a result of the analysis of data in the report.

76.3 Members asked if having a PhD was an essential or desirable characteristic for an academic role. It was reported that this depended on the role, as some required professional experience or qualifications. It was noted that the data on staff qualifications included individuals recruited on an hourly basis to give specialist professional input. Targets had been set to ensure that there was sufficient focus on the substantive staff, for example there was a plan in place to ensure that all achieved accreditation from the Higher Education Academy (HEA).

76.4 It was noted that the effect of the abolition of the statutory retirement age was that more staff were choosing to work for longer.

76.5 Members asked about growing the number of international staff in teaching roles, and how this could be monitored. It was reported that this data was not currently gathered.

76.6 The Board thanked the Director of HR for a clear and comprehensive report.

77/17 UCAS Applications and Decisions

77.1 The Board received Paper C, UCAS application and decision data to 10 April 2017. It was reported that the expected shortfall in student numbers for 2017 entry was still being tracked but that the estimate of 300 fewer students was unchanged since the previous report and the budget strategy presented to the Board on 22 February 2017.

77.2 Members asked about the strategy to mitigate any shortfall in applications. It was reported that there had been a telephone campaign to applicants and that in the right circumstances, unconditional offers had been made as a result of this. For the next recruitment cycle, it was planned to begin earlier and again to consider unconditional offers where this was justified, bringing the University more into line with its direct competitors. In addition to the telephone campaign, there had been marketing packs to applicants, and the use of social media to communicate with them.

77.3 Members noted that the number of applications to the University was fewer than to those competitors, and asked what influenced that behaviour. It was reported that a review of the portfolio of courses had begun, as in some areas the course offer was not as attractive as that of other institutions. It was noted that this was seen from the survey of those who declined offers from the University. Whilst the survey could not give information on those who had decided not to apply, it could be a useful guide to applicant behaviour.

77.4 It was reported that two recruitment campaigns run concurrently, one focusing on creating applications and one on converting applications to acceptance of offers. There was consideration of how the available funding could be directed effectively into ensuring the most impressive communication with and offer to applicants.

77.5 The Board discussed how it could receive assurance about the executive's plans to mitigate any downfall in student numbers. It was noted that the monthly statistical report was useful. It was requested that explanations of some of the terminology would help governors to understand better the report. It was requested that at an appropriate time a more detailed report was presented on the lessons learnt from the current recruitment cycle and plans for the coming cycle.

Action: Director of HR, Marketing and International Relations

78/17 Waterside Update

78.1 The Board received and noted Paper G, the minutes of the meeting of the Project Assurance Committee which took place on 11 April 2017.

Minute 78.2 is in the confidential section of these minutes.

79/17 Changemaker Challenges KPI Review

79.1 The Board received and noted Paper D, a report on progress towards the achievement of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each Changemaker Challenge as set out in the Strategic Plan. It was noted that a discursive report had been presented in the interim and that numerical KPIs would be developed and ready for presentation to the Board in the autumn or winter of 2017.

79.2 Members asked if it was proposed to review the impact of First for Wellbeing. It was reported that a review was not yet appropriate as the company had been running for a short time.

80/17 Access Agreement 2018-19

80.1 The Board received Paper E, the draft Access Agreement with the Office of Fair Access (OFFA) for 2018-19. It was reported that the deadline for submission was 25 April 2017.

80.2 The Board approved the Access Agreement as a draft and empowered the Head of the University Centre for Employability and Engagement to make such final changes as he saw fit in order to submit the agreement on time. Any significant alterations to the draft text should be reported to the next Board meeting.

81/17 Management Accounts

81.1 The Board received and noted Paper F, the management accounts at 31 March 2017, and noted movements since the previous period.

81.2 Members noted the current positive variance. It was reported that as far as possible funds had been released to provide additional student support.

82/17 Students' Union Town Centre Venue

82.1 The Board received and discussed Paper H, a recommendation for refurbishment of a building in the town centre to create a new venue for the Students' Union.

Minutes 82.2. and 82.3 are in the confidential section of these minutes.

82.4 The Board approved:

- a. The award of the contract to refurbish and fit out the venue to the Sandell Group (UK)
- b. That the Students' Union would pay directly for an upgrade to the electrical supply to the building
- c. The transfer of £2m to the Students' Union for the project.

83/17 Notes from Open Meetings with Staff

83.1 The Board received and noted Paper I, a summary of points raised during open meetings between members of the Board and members of staff.

83.2 It was noted that the majority of comments were around the practicalities of the move to Waterside.

84/17 External Committee Members

84.1 The Board received Paper J giving proposals for external members of the Board's committees.

84.2 The Board approved the following:

- a. The reappointment of external committee members as follows:
 - John Eves for a second term on Audit Committee from 31/07/2017 to 31/07/2019
 - Margaret Pratt and Bishop John Holbrook for second terms on the Nominations Committee from 30/04/2017 to 30/04/2019
- b. The appointment of Jacqueline Moore as an external member of the Remuneration Committee from 17/07/2017 to 17/07/2019
- c. That in future external members of all of the Board's committees would be appointed for a period of two years, renewable twice
- d. That the Terms of Reference of the Nominations Committee would be amended to reflect this decision.

Action: Clerk

85/17 Report from the Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer

85.1 The Board received and noted Paper K, a report from the Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer. The potential for the recent announcement of a general election to have an impact on the progress of the Higher Education and Research Bill was noted.

85.2 The Vice Chancellor reported on a recent trip to China to visit key partners and develop new partnerships. It was notable that there was interest in a greater range of courses than had been seen previously, for example in health care, education and sport.

85.3 Contacts made during the Annual Leather Fair held in Hong Kong had been very interested in the development of the Vulcan works and some financial assistance had been pledged.

85.4 The Vice Chancellor would travel to Iraq shortly at the request of the Iraqi Ministry of Education which wanted to explore work with the University around health.

85.5 The Board noted that a public announcement had been made about the appointment of the Reverend Richard Coles as Chancellor, and that there had been much positive comment from within and outside the University.

86/17 Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting held on 16 March 2017

86.1 The Board received and noted Paper L, the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 16 March 2017.

86.2 It was reported that the planned tender exercise for an external auditor had been delayed, and Board members were asked to make themselves available if at all possible for a rescheduled date when this was advertised.

87/17 Minutes of the Senate Meeting held on 1 February 2017

87.1 The Board received and noted Paper M, the minutes of the Senate meeting held on 1 February 2017.

87.2 It was reported that since the meeting had been held, it had been officially announced that Tresham College would merge with Bedford College, and that this might have implications for the Silverstone University Technical College in which Tresham College was a partner.

88/17 SOCIETAL Travel CIC

88.1 The Board, acting for and on behalf of the University of Northampton Higher Education Corporation received and approved Paper N on the creation of the SOCIETAL Travel Community Interest Company (CIC).

88.2 The Board approved:

- a. The appointment of Damian Pickard and Simon Denny as the University of Northampton Higher Education Corporation's directors of SOCIETAL Travel CIC
- b. The signature by Damian Pickard and Simon Denny of SOCIETAL Travel CIC's Memorandum, Articles and application for registration as a company on behalf of the University of Northampton Higher Education Corporation.

89/17 Confirmation of Availability of Papers

The following papers were confirmed as confidential to the meeting:

Confidential section of the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2017

Paper C – UCAS Applications and Decisions

Paper D – Changemaker Challenges Key Performance Indicators Review

Paper G – Minutes of the Meeting of the Project Assurance Committee held on 11 April 2017

Paper H – Town Centre Students' Union Venue - Tender

Paper I – Board of Governors Open Meetings with Staff March 2017

Paper L – Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit Committee held on 16 March 2017

Paper O – Faculty of Health and Society Performance Measures

90/17 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 17 May at 10.30am in the Senate Board Room, Senate Building.

Followed by lunch at the Sunley Conference Centre.