

Board of Governors

Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 March 2016

Present:

Andrew Scarborough (Chair)
Victor Agboola
David Baker
Sue Dutton
Sylvia Hughes
Ron Mendel
Mark Mulcahey
Nick Petford
Nick Pitts-Tucker
Nick Robertson
John Skelton
David Watson

Apologies:

Margaret Gardner, Sara Goodwin, Richard Horsley, Martin Pettifor and John Skelton.

In attendance:

Jane Bunce (Director of Student and Academic Services), Robert Griggs (Waterside Project Director), Mark Hall (Director of Finance), Miriam Lakin (Clerk), Deborah Mattock (Director of Human Resources), Terry Neville (Chief Operating Officer) and David Prynn (Assistant Clerk).

37/16 Brand Development

37.1 The Director of Marketing introduced external consultants from Lambie-Nairn brand consultancy to give an update on brand development. It was explained that work had been undertaken to capture the identity of the University through consultation with staff and students. Members noted their support for the underlying framework presented, and discussed the potential for risk where there was not sufficient buy in from stakeholders for branding exercises.

37.2 Given the timeframe for Waterside it was noted that work on branding would need to be completed in enough time to ensure that signage could be properly accommodated into the building works. To support the exercise it was agreed that a working group including two members would be created. It was explained that work was to continue on two of the identified strategies with a recommendation made to the Board in due course.

37.3 It was noted that as part of their other work, Lambie-Nairn are running training for writers and communicators in the University about the use of language. Board members were invited to attend, and details would be forwarded by the Clerk.

Action: Clerk

37.4 The Board welcomed the presentation and requested a further update in due course.

Deborah Mattock left the meeting.

38/16 Welcome, Apologies and Quorum

38.1 The Chair welcomed members and noted the apologies that had been received.

39/16 Declarations of Interests

39.1 There were no additions made to the standard Declarations of Interest held in the Clerk's Office.

40/16 Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 February 2016

40.1 The Board approved the minutes presented in Paper A as a true record of the meeting held on 24 February 2015.

41/16 Matters Arising

41.1 The Board received and noted Paper B on actions arising from previous meetings. Additional comments were made on the following matters:

41.2 Update on Potential Decreased HEFCE Funding (Minute 266.2 refers)

The Director of Finance informed members that further information was provided in Paper E, the Draft Budget Summary. He explained that the HEFCE funding letter is expected on 19 April and will be presented at the April Board.

41.3 Electronic Board Solutions (Minute 293.1 refers)

It was reported that possible alternative solutions were being explored. Possible alternative rooms with dedicated teleconferencing facilities had been identified in the Senate Building and on the Park Campus.

41.4 Reporting of Additional Surplus (Minute 298.12 refers)

The Director of Finance informed members that further information was contained within Paper E, the Draft Budget Summary. He explained that additional reporting would be included in the Draft budget presented to the Board in July.

41.5 Interaction with New Deans (Minute 301.2 refers)

It was reported that this will be addressed through planning the agenda for the Board over the 2016-17 academic year.

It was agreed that a standing invitation to Board meetings would be issued to the Director of Human Resources and the Executive Dean of Student Experience.

Action: Clerk

42/16 AshokaU Exchange

42.1 The Deputy Chair updated members on participation at the recent AshokaU Exchange by the Vice Chancellor, Students' Union President and herself. She explained that the University is recognised as a leader for embedding social impact into its curriculum and for having an Ashoka sponsor at board level.

42.2 The Students' Union President reported that the SU was hosting the Ashoka Student Exchange in July. He explained that this coincided with work undertaken by the Students' Union to encourage the incorporation of Changemaker into the curriculum, working closely with the new academic structure.

42.3 Members discussed how the University could publicise the positive reception from the conference. It was explained that social media was being used, as well as notification to staff through the staff newsletter.

42.4 The Board welcomed the update.

43/16 Risk Register

43.1 The Chief Operating Officer presented the Risk Register (Paper C). He noted that following a recent internal audit, some of the risk management practices of the University had been identified as an example of good practice for the sector.

Item 43.2 is contained in the confidential section of these minutes.

43.3 The Board received the report from the Chief Operating Officer.

44/16 Performance Framework

44.1 The Chief Operating Officer presented the Performance Framework 2015-2020 (Paper D). He explained that significant work had been undertaken following the approval of the operational plan in October 2015.

44.2 Members requested that an additional dedicated presentation to the Board on partnerships, especially those overseas, was added. Given the growth in this area, it was noted that it is important for the Board to receive satisfactory oversight and assurance.

Action: Clerk

44.3 The Director of Student and Academic Services informed members that a review of Academic Quality had been presented to Senate and would be presented to the April Board.

44.4 The Board welcomed and approved the Performance Framework 2015-2020. Having been approved, it was agreed that the paper was no longer confidential.

45/16 Draft Budget Strategy 2016/17

45.1 The Director of Finance presented the Draft Budget Strategy 2016/17 (Paper E). He explained that student recruitment was slightly favourable compared to the previous year however, the budget would remain based on maintenance of the current student numbers.

45.2 The Board noted that the ratio of income to staff costs puts the University in a favourable position. It was explained that the University's budget strategy continued to prioritise the student experience.

45.3 Members asked about how academic workloads are scrutinised. It was explained that this scrutiny was part of the normal budget setting process. Its aim was to ensure effective deployment of staff, the University's biggest expense. Members were informed that all reasonable requests for additional academic staff were considered, and that investment was being made where student numbers were growing.

45.4 Members were informed that following recommendations from an internal audit, work was taking place alongside the academic restructuring work stream to review academic work load planning.

45.5 The Board requested at an appropriate time reports from the Deans about their plans to grow student numbers.

Action: Clerk

45.6 Members requested that revenue from overseas partnerships, research and increasing student numbers is reported separately so that its contribution to the budget can be identified.

Action: Director of Finance

46/16 Period 7 Management Accounts

46.1 The Director of Finance presented the Management Accounts as at 29 February 2016 (Paper F).

46.2 It was noted that the variance to budget for the year to date was £7,165k favourable. The University was therefore on course to meet its budgeted surplus.

46.3 It was reported that the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) loan drawdown of £28.5m would be included on the April management accounts.

46.4 The Board noted the budget position for the School of Social Sciences.

46.5 The Board noted the management accounts as at 29 February 2016.

47/16 Tuition Fees 2016/17

47.1 The Director of Finance presented proposed Tuition Fees for 2016/17 (Paper G). He explained that the proposal had been supported by the Deans and the University Management Team.

47.2 Members asked how prices impacted on recruitment. It was explained that a perceived link between quality and higher prices existed

in the UK HE market, and that this protected projected student numbers, but was less visible amongst applicants from the EU. The University has increased bursaries for EU students to address this.

47.3 The Board welcomed and approved the Tuition Fees 2016/17.

48/16 Student Representation on the Board

48.1 The Student's Union President presented a proposal for increased Students' Union representation on the Board (Paper H). He explained that in line with the Instrument and Articles of Government, guidance from the Committee of University Chairs and practice elsewhere in the sector, it is proposed that a second Students' Union Sabbatical Officer joins the Board.

48.2 The Board agreed and supported the proposal. It was agreed that in addition to the President of the Students' Union, the Students' Union should nominate one further representative from amongst its Vice Presidents. It was agreed that this arrangement would begin from September 2016.

49/16 PAC Minutes and Update on Waterside Project

49.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Project Assurance Committee (PAC) held on 15 March 2016 and Waterside update report (Paper I) were received.

Items 49.2 – 49.6 are contained in the confidential section of these minutes.

49.7 The Board welcomed the PAC minutes of the 15 March meeting and the Waterside update.

50/16 Report from the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer

50.1 The Chief Operating Officer presented a report from himself and the Vice-Chancellor (Paper J).

50.2 Members were alerted to a communication from the University and College Union to the Vice-Chancellor, and noted the risk of industrial action beginning in May 2016.

50.3 The Board **received** the report from the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer.

51/16 'Prevent' Duty

51.1 The Director of Student and Academic Services presented a report on compliance with the Prevent Duty (Paper K).

51.2 It was explained that front line staff in student residences and security had received training. A plan was in place to train the remainder of staff and governors following the release of sector specific training produced by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education. It was reported that provided that a training plan is in place, there is no risk at the current time of the University being penalised over the delivery of training.

51.3 The Board received the update report on 'Prevent' Duty compliance.

52/16 Senate Minutes

52.1 The Vice Chancellor presented the minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2016 (Paper L).

52.2 The discussion on Tier 4 attendance monitoring was highlighted.

52.3 The Board received the minutes of Senate held on 10 February 2016.

53/16 Signing of Documents Under Seal

53.1 The Board ratified the signature of a document under seal as set out in Paper M.

54/16 Any Other Business

54.1 Anti-Fraud Policy

The Board agreed three amendments to the Anti-Fraud Policy.

Amendments were as follows:

- Addition of section 4.3.4, 'Human Resources provide online training for Fraud, Bribery and Corruption for all staff, refreshed on a 36 month cycle'
- Under section on 'Current Relevant Legislation', addition of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
- The section entitled 'Response and Investigation' is held in a separate document which is not for publication.

Action: Director of Finance

54.2 Student Elections

The President of the Students' Union reported that the annual Student Union elections had taken place. He explained that there would be a new President from 1 July 2016.

54.3 Student Teaching and Representation Awards

The Chair reported on the recent Student Teaching and Representation Awards run by the Students' Union, noting a successful event which recognised the achievements of both students and staff.

55/16 Confirmation of Availability of Papers

The following papers were confirmed as confidential to the meeting:

Paper I – PAC Minutes 15 March and Waterside Update

56/16 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 20th April at 10.15am in Sunley Conference Centre.