

UNIVERSITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CONFIRMED

Minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2022, in room 119, Blencathra Building, Carlisle

Present: Mr M Williams (Chair), Miss F Aiken, Mr J Batty (until part way through item 21:137), Revd Canon C Butland, Mrs J Johnston (until item part way through 21:137), Mr I Looker, Professor J Mennell, Mr C Nall (from item 21:137), Mr I Purdham, Ms A Robinson, Ms P Tatlow (until 21:124), Mr P Yates

In attendance: Dr J Brown, University Secretary
Mr A Heron, Deputy Director of Finance & Planning (from item 21:123)
Mr D Marshall, Incoming Staff Director
Ms M McConnell, Outgoing Student Director
Mrs K McLaughlin-Flynn, Deputy Chief Operating Officer (item 21:122)
Mrs E Shaw, Committee Officer
Professor Rob Trimble, DVC (Academic)
Professor B Webster-Henderson, DVC (HE&I)

21:112 Introductions and apologies for absence Verbal

The Chair welcomed Ms A Robinson to University Board as the new Student Director, and Mr D Marshall as the new Staff Director Designate.

Apologies were received from Ms E Bales, Professor J Lee and Ms S Swindley.

21:113 Declaration of Interests Verbal

Mr I Looker declared an acquaintance with the proposed new Associate Director.

21:114 Minutes of the previous meeting UB21/76
a, b & c

The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting of University Board held on 19 May 2022 and the notes of the pre-Board presentation on 19 May 2022 were confirmed as an accurate record, other than the addition of the point that the Student Director left the Board meeting.

21:115 Matters Arising UB21/77

The action log was noted. There were no matters arising.

21:116 Chair's Business Verbal

The Chair outlined the plan for the meeting: it would begin with briefings from the executive, followed by items for approval and concluding with a discussion regarding the focus for the subcommittees for the next year with the aim of proactively adding value.

There had been no activities that the Chair had been engaged with, in his role as Chair of the Board, since the last meeting.

21:117 Vice Chancellor's Report UB21/78
a & b

Received: A report from the Vice Chancellor

This minute has been recorded in a separate confidential set of minutes.

AGREED: To receive the report.

21:118 Student's Union Matters

UB21/79

Received: A report from the Students' Union.

The outgoing Student Director spoke to the report highlighting that changes had been made to the training for sabbatical officers, with this now embedded into the new staffing structure in the Students' Union. Following feedback, the student support data included in the report would be compared with previous numbers. A link to a video was provided which gave a roundup of recent activities relating to the officer campaigns. It was noted that actions regarding the NSS results would be the focus of the incoming Student Director.

The outgoing Student Director was thanked for their contributions to University Board.

AGREED: To receive the report.

21:119 Academic Matters

UB21/80

Received: Reports from the DVC(Academic) and the DVC(Health Environment & Innovation)

a)
b)

DVC (Health Environment & Innovation)

The DVC(HE&I) spoke to the paper, starting by highlighting the work within Student Services with respect to disability. He set out how there were some issues with the provision, with an external review of disability policies and practices planned for over the summer before any additional staff were recruited.

The work on the development of a Student Wellbeing Unit was noted, with the Director of Student Services and the Student Director having looked at areas where more support and awareness was needed.

With respect to Health, meetings were being held with the chairs and senior officers of the newly developed local Integrated Care Boards, which were legal entities from the start of July.

The DVC(HE&I) finished by noting the ongoing situation with Covid19, with cases being closely monitored in liaison with the local Directors of Public Health.

In the discussion that followed, it was asked whether the same trends as being seen elsewhere were being observed, with increases in mental health referrals for younger individuals. The DVC(HE&I) responded that there had been an increase across all ages of students looking for help, with mental health often impacting on their ability to study. He noted that it was positive that students were coming forward for support, however the University needed to be able to respond rapidly.

A question was asked as to whether all support was provided in house. The DVC(HE&I) responded that it was, with the model of provision having changed so that staff were skilled to deal with students presenting with different problems.

When the outcomes of the review of disability services would be presented back to Board was asked. The DVC(HE&I) explained that the work being done with the external company should be completed relatively quickly, with the aim of implementing changes swiftly. The Students' Union and Board would be kept updated.

DVC(Academic)

A section of this minute has been recorded in a separate confidential set of minutes.

A question was asked as to when an inspection of the University's apprenticeship provision was expected. The DVC(A) responded that it was expected that there would be an inspection by October 2025, with work ongoing to ensure the University was prepared. What needed to be done to achieve outstanding was being looked into. It was noted that the inspection could happen at any time.

AGREED: To receive the reports.

21:120 National Student Survey (NSS) 2022 Results

Presentation

Received: A presentation

The DVC(A) gave a presentation on the 2022 NSS results. In terms of the sector there had been little movement compared to 2021, with a mixed picture of changes at institutional level, driven in part by the portfolio.

Looking at the University's position, the DVC(A) started by setting out that the response rate was 70%, in line with the sector. It was noted that the responses related to 5% of the University's student population. An overview of the University's results over the last three surveys was provided, with the result for the overall satisfaction question having gone down by more than the other aspects of the survey. The changes since 2021 for the eight themes were set out. It was noted that the data relating to the OfS B3 condition of registration did not include the NSS results; the proposed TEF metrics included some of the themes.

A section of this minute has been recorded in a separate confidential set of minutes.

AGREED: To receive the presentation

21:121 Barrow Learning Quarter Update

UB21/82

Received: An update on the Barrow Learning Quarter

The DVC(A) spoke to the paper which had been presented to Finance and Resources Committee (FRC); feedback from FRC was highlighted on the cover paper. The position with the Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) was set out, with it positive that it was to be split so that Furness College and the University would have their own agreements. The GFA was expected by the end of July 2022. It was noted that the legal agreements with BAE Systems were being progressed. The Vice Chancellor added that finalising the legal arrangements relating to the Learning Quarter was high on the agenda for BAE Systems.

The potential timing of the GFA and legal agreements being ready for approval and signing was discussed, with it noted that it was unlikely to be

imminent. The Chair set out that once the agreements were ready for review at Board level there would need to be consideration of the best way to seek any additional endorsement needed from the Board and to brief the new Chair of ARC.

The Vice Chancellor highlighted the Secretary's note regarding a bid to the OfS.

AGREED: To receive the report.

21:122 Citadels Project Update

UB21/83

Received: An update on the Citadels Project

The DCOO gave an overview of the paper, noting that the project was progressing well. There were aspects of good progress but also some challenges, with a significant one in relation to the updated cost plan from Gardiner and Theobald which had identified a significant increase in the cost of the project, largely due to inflation. Work was ongoing to see how much the costs could be reduced through value engineering.

The DCOO gave an update on developments since the paper had been written, including that: discussions were now ongoing with all of the head lease holders; work was ongoing to see if both existing campuses in Carlisle could be fully vacated, with this work to conclude shortly; RIBA stage 3 design was being finalised; and there has been an informal notification that £4m had been secured for the Carlisle Business Exchange.

The Chair commented that it was good that the project was continuing to move forward, but it was important for the Board to stay informed of challenges.

AGREED: To receive the report.

21:123 Month 9 Management Accounts and Forecast

UB21/84

Received: The University's 2021/22 financial performance at Month 9 and the final full forecast for the year

The DDF&P spoke to the paper. The headline was positive, with a surplus forecasted at year end. Looking at the detail, there had been some issues affecting income levels from full-time tuition fees, mainly due to students taking breaks in study resulting in lower fees than budgeted. This had also affected the paramedic income, with the largest reason for taking a break in study being related to health grounds, with a strong link to Covid19. In London intakes on the paramedic apprenticeships had also been impacted by students not being able to complete the level 4 training and thereby not being able to start their apprenticeship. Other aspects of income were balancing these challenges, hence the headline figures. The DDF&P added that there was also a positive message re expenditure, with staff costs being well controlled. There were some challenges with respect to non-pay expenditure relating to inflation and increased need for repairs on campuses, however underspends in other areas were balancing these out.

The Chair of FRC reported that the paper had been discussed at the Committee's recent meeting. The forecast for the year was looking positive, with a 15% increase in income. Monitoring against the long term financial plan, this outturn would result in being slightly ahead of budget in relation to cash generation.

It was asked if the reasons for the large numbers of students in nursing suspending studies were known and whether there was any link to matters highlighted by the NSS. The DVC(HE&I) responded that many were intercalating due to mental health reasons, in line with what was being seen within the NHS due to the pressures resulting from the pandemic. He set out that there was a link between the messages from the NSS and student experiences on placements in the pandemic, for both nursing and paramedic students.

Whether there was a clear route for students to return to study was asked. The DVC(HE&I) explained that for the paramedic students there was a clear plan of return for every individual student. With regards to nursing plans were being made for every student, however he was not as confident in their return to study. The Vice Chancellor added that the rate of students returning from intercalations was higher than in previous years.

AGREED: To receive the report.

21:124 Student Recruitment Update

UB21/85

Received: The 2022/23 recruitment performance to date and forecast

The DDF&P reported that the data in the paper reflected the point in the recruitment cycle, including that the June UCAS deadline, where students holding an offer were required to make a decision, had passed. The report was fairly consistent with the previous update, with key aspects highlighted. The DDF&P set out that the data had been used to create a forecast, with this caveated in that it used assumptions based on the previous year. It was noted that it was a forecast not a plan, with work in train to look to exceed the forecasted numbers.

A section of this minute has been recorded in a separate confidential set of minutes.

AGREED: To receive the report.

21:125 AOP 2021/22 Delivery

UB21/86

Received: An overview of delivery against the University AOP

The Vice Chancellor spoke to the paper which set out an assessment of delivery of the Annual Operating Plan objectives for the current year. She expressed a need to challenge the assessments included in the report to ensure they were appropriate, but noted that good progress had been made across the majority of objectives.

AGREED: To receive the report.

21:126 Risk Management

UB21/87

Received: A paper on risk management and the University risk register

The Chair of Audit and Risk committee (ARC) reported the paper had been discussed at ARC. The Committee were pleased with the more nuanced approach to risk appetite, which should enable staff as well as the Board to use risk appetite better in their decision making. The risks identified were broadly thought to be the key ones for the University.

AGREED: To receive the report.

21:127 Office for Students matters UB21/88

Received: An update on communications from the OfS and DfE

AGREED: To note the update.

21:128 Health and Safety Update UB21/89

Received: An update on Health & Safety matters

AGREED: To note the update.

21:129 Academic Strategy UB21/90

Received: The Academic Strategy

The DVC(A) set out that the Academic Strategy had been reviewed by Academic Governance Committee (AGC) with the Committee recommending it for approval, subject to the amendments detailed on the cover paper. The next steps were to look at the delivery of the strategy, with it likely that rather than further strategies, this would be via delivery plans. The portfolio section would be reviewed particularly in terms of speeding up the development of the portfolio for on-campus provision.

A section of this minute has been recorded in a separate confidential set of minutes.

A question was asked as to what would be seen to be different in adopting this strategy. The DVC(A) responded there had not been an Academic Strategy prior to this. The aim had been to draw together themes in a concise document which sets out the direction of travel in an integrated manner. Differences in approach included, for example, the focus on an active learning. The DVC(HE&I) added that a clear signal was being communicated that research and knowledge exchange was as valuable as teaching as part of an academic's role, in line with the Towards 2030 Strategy.

How it was planned to communicate the strategy and get staff engaged with it was asked. The DVC(A) explained the strategy had been shared at Academic Board and would be communicated to all staff. Relevant academic staff would also be involved in the development of the plans for the delivery of the strategy.

AGREED: To approve the Academic Strategy.

21:130 Degree Outcomes Statement UB21/91

Received: The proposed Degree Outcome Statement

The DVC(A) gave a brief overview of the changes to the Degree Outcome Statement from the previous year. The Statement had been reviewed by AGC and was recommended to University Board for approval.

AGREED: To approve the Degree Outcome Statement

21:131 National Pay Award UB21/92

Received: UCEA's final offer for the 2022/23 pay award

The Vice Chancellor set out that the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) had made a final pay offer to the trade unions of 3%, with higher increases at the lower end of the pay scale. Whether institutions would be asked to pay the award from 1 August 2022 was not as yet known, with any change to this final offer needing backing from the institutions within the national pay framework.

The proposed award had been reviewed by FRC in the context of the budget and by PPCC.

It was proposed that University Board approve payment of the final offer i.e. 3% with higher increases for the lower points on the pay scale, subject to UCEA asking institutions to pay this award from 1 August 2022. If the award settled at a different level this would require review by FRC and PPCC prior to any Board decision.

AGREED: To approve payment of UCEA's final offer for the 2022/23 pay award, 3% with higher increases for the lower points on the pay scale, subject to UCEA's request to pay from 1 August 2022.

21:132 2022/23 Budget UB21/93

Received: The proposed 2022/23 budget

This minute has been recorded in a separate confidential set of minutes.

AGREED: To approve the budget for 2022/23

21:133 Honorary Awards UB21/94

Received: Proposals from the Honorary Awards Committee

The Uni Sec gave an overview of the four nominations, noting the change to Honorary Doctorate for one nomination. There were comments regarding the positive nature in the diversity of the nominations.

AGREED: To approve proposals from the Honorary Awards Committee as set out in the paper

21:134 Student Protection Plan UB21/95

Received: The proposed Student Protection Plan for 2022/23

The Uni Sec introduced the paper. It was agreed that a minor amendment regarding the campuses being in the early stages of development was required.

AGREED: To approve the Student Protection Plan for 2022/23 subject to the minor amendment being made.

21:135 Nominations UB21/96

Received: A paper with proposed appointments of a new Board Director and a new Associate Director

The Chair outlined the proposed appointment of a Board Director and Associate Director following a process undertaken by Nominations Committee. The proposed new Director, Professor Shirley Atkinson, was known to the Vice

Chancellor through a previous role, with this considered by the Committee through the interview process. With her experience, if appointed, Professor Atkinson would chair ARC. The proposed new Associate Director, Stephen Talboys, would sit on FRC.

AGREED: To approve the appointment of the proposed new Board Director and Associate Director

21:136 University Board Committees

Received: Finance and Resources Committee Minutes and confidential minutes 3 May 2022 FRC21/147 a&b

AGREED: To receive the minutes

21:137 Priorities for the Committee in 2022/23

Verbal

Received: The objective and priorities of the Board Committees in the year ahead

The Chair asked the Board to consider potential topics/areas of focus for its committees in the coming year. The emphasis was placed on areas which would add value to the University. Each committee was discussed, with the Chair, or senior representative, starting the discussion with a reflection on the work undertaken through 2021/22 before potential priority areas for 2022/23 were outlined.

A section of this minute has been recorded in a separate confidential set of minutes.

AGREED: To discuss and agree the objective and priorities of the Board Committees in the year ahead

21:138 The Chair noted it was the last meeting for Fiona Aiken and the outgoing Student Director. Both were thanked and presented with thank you gifts. Thanks would be passed to the outgoing Staff Director by the Chair in due course.

21:139 Future Meetings

Verbal

- Thursday 20 October 2022
- Tuesday 29 November 2022
- Thursday 26 January 2023
- Thursday 16 March 2023
- Thursday 18 May 2023
- Thursday 13 July 2023