

**UNIVERSITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

CONFIRMED

**Minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2023 on Teams**

**Present:** Martin Williams (Chair), Emerita Professor Shirley Atkinson, John Batty, Revd Cameron Butland, Jill Johnston (from item 22:56), Professor John Lee, Ian Looker, Gary Lovatt, Dean Marshall, Professor Julie Mennell, Charles Nall (from item 22:56), Annabelle Robinson, Pam Tatlow.

**In attendance:** Dr Jean Brown, University Secretary  
 Andrew Heron, Deputy Director of Finance & Planning (item 22:58)  
 Mark Swindlehurst, Chief Operating Officer  
 Professor Rob Trimble, DVC (Academic)  
 Professor Brian Webster-Henderson, DVC (Health, Environment & Innovation)  
 Professor Jill Stewart, Director of the Institute of Engineering, Computing and Advanced Manufacturing (item 21:61)

**22:50 Introduction/Apologies for Absence** Verbal

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, being held on Teams due to the rail strike. He noted that the Board meeting to be held in May would be at BAE in Barrow, an additional separate meeting would be held to take the decision relating to the progress of the Citadels project, after the May Board meeting.

Apologies were received from Ian Purdham and Peter Yates.

**22:51 Declaration of Interests** Verbal

The University Secretary (Uni Sec) reminded Board Directors to let her know of any amendments required to their Declaration of Interests. Interests were then only required to be made at the start of a meeting if they related to a decision being made at the meeting.

**22:52 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting of University Board held on 29 November 2022; the Pre-Board presentation notes from the 29 November meeting; the notes from the Cumbria School of Medicine webinar held on 16 November 2022; and the confidential notes from the Board Strategy Day on 25 and 26 January 2023 were all confirmed as an accurate record.

UB22/35  
a) b) c) & d)

UB22/36

**22:53 Matters Arising** UB22/37  
(Action Log)

The action log was noted.

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

**22:54 Chair's Business** Verbal

The Chair reported that he had approved the application of the National Pay Award for 2023/24, as recommended by FRC and PPCC, in order for timely payment of the aspect to be paid from 1 February 2023.

The Chair of FRC reported that he had approved the contract for provision of Occupational Health services on behalf of FRC.

## **22:55 Nomination Committee Approvals**

UB22/38

**Received:** Recommendations from Nominations Committee

The University Secretary introduced the paper, with the recommendations from Nominations Committee to appoint a Director and Associate Director.

**AGREED:** To approve the appointment of Rev'd Canon Dr Benjamin Carter as a Director and Sarah Graves as an Associate Director, as set out in the paper.

## **22:56 Vice Chancellor's Report**

UB22/39

**Received:** A report from the Vice Chancellor  
a) Vice Chancellor's report  
b) Summary of the Vice Chancellor's activities & engagements

The Vice Chancellor spoke to her report. With respect to the 2023/24 pay award she reported that UCEA and the trade unions had reached an impasse which covered a number of areas, including pay. It had been agreed that universities were able to seek approval to pay the final offer for 2023/24, which included a part payment from 1 February 2023. The detail of the award was set out. The cost of the part payment in 2022/23 was circa £0.5m, with the full pay award adding circa £2m in 2023/24. With respect to the pay award for staff on the Corporate Leader pay spine, there had been a recommendation to Remuneration Committee, which had been approved, that these staff received the same uplift as those at the higher end of the national pay spine from 1 February 2023, ie 2%. The normal process and timings would then be followed for the full award for 2023/24, with a view to reviewing and refreshing the pay scale alongside this process.

Moving on to the industrial action, the Vice Chancellor set out that the impact was currently difficult to quantify, including any impact on the NSS which was currently live. This was particularly the case where students had had placements in industries where staff had also been taking action.

The Vice Chancellor gave an overview of the work ongoing with respect to the portfolio. One aspect of this work was the commissioning of an external agency to do some data analytics; initial feedback on this work had been received. The work included looking at the University's market share, trends in subject areas of relevance to the University and entry tariff. It was proposed that the work be shared with University Board later in the year.

Work was progressing on the People and Culture Strategy with an emphasis on engaging staff. The work was cognisant of the make up of the staff body and their expectations, values and incentives, as well as the career development pipeline.

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

It was noted that the progress expected had not been made as yet with respect to the Ambleside campus, however work was progressing, with it important that it remained an area of focus.

The Vice Chancellor reported that £350k had been received from the OfS related to apprenticeship provision with a requirement to demonstrate how the funding was spent rather than outcomes; the amount of funding was related to student numbers and was one of the highest in the sector.

The Vice Chancellor ended by setting out that planning for 2023/24 and beyond was well underway, including work on the budget for 2023/24. The University remained on a growth trajectory, but the cost base was rising considerably, with £4m extra costs anticipated for 2023/24. How the required operating surplus would be delivered in light of the rising cost base was being worked through. One area where cost reductions would be delivered was in staffing reductions in the Institutes of Education and Arts, with a voluntary severance scheme having been launched in these institutes. Further changes would come through the establishment of the Institute of Education Arts and Society, which was being formed from the bringing together of the existing Institutes of Education and Arts to bring a clearer strategic focus and critical mass to enable future growth. The formation, vision and structure of the new Institute was being worked through, with one strand of the work being to ensure that the resource base was in line with the income projections. With respect to planning for 2024/25 and beyond, work was ongoing to quantify the required reduction in operating costs to balance the real terms drop in income per student and rising cost base, and to work on solutions.

The Vice Chancellor was thanked for the comprehensive update.

In the discussion that followed it was commented that there was a lot of change at the level below higher education; information about the pathways and how the University would adapt to the changes was requested in due course.

What the position was with the new Director of People and Culture was asked. The Vice Chancellor responded that head-hunters had been engaged and had started work, with the advert to be released shortly.

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

Clarification was requested with respect to payment of both aspects of the pay award and how affordable this was. The Vice Chancellor responded that the University had committed to implement the full award for 2023/24, with the recommendation having been made (to FRC and PPCC prior to the Chair of the Board) with both affordability and staff morale in mind.

The Chair noted the importance of relevant committees of the Board providing proper scrutiny of various matters reported.

**AGREED:** To receive the report.

**22:57 Honorary Award Nominations**

UB22/40

**Received:** Proposals from the Honorary Awards Committee

The proposals were discussed. The Director who was a member of Honorary Awards Committee confirmed that there was a process at the Committee where each nomination was looked at in some detail prior to recommendation for approval, initially via Academic Board.

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

*The agenda order was changed at this point in the meeting; items have been minuted as received*

**22:58 Month 5 Management Accounts / 2022/23 Mid-Year Forecast / Student Recruitment Update**

UB22/46  
UB22/47

**Received:** The latest management accounts / mid-year financial forecast / update on 2023/24 recruitment

The Chair asked that the management accounts, mid-year financial forecast and recruitment papers be received together, noting that they had been discussed at the recent meeting of FRC.

The Deputy Director of Finance and Planning (DDF&P) spoke to the papers:

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

**AGREED:** To receive the reports

## **22:59 Students' Union Matters**

UB22/41

**Received:** A report from the Students' Union

The Student Director spoke to her report highlighting a range of matters. These included that the Students' Union Executive Committee had passed a mandate to hold a referendum on affiliation with the NUS, with work being undertaken to progress the vote. Updates were given in relation to academic representatives, the advice service, work with the University on communications to students of assessment board outcomes, the impact of the cost of living challenges on students and the work of each of the sabbatical officers. It was noted that the Academic Officer had recently resigned from her role, with the work split between the other sabbatical officers until the end of their terms of office.

Whether anything in particular had promoted the decision to hold a referendum on membership of the NUS was asked. The Student Director responded that affiliation was not seen as good value for money and that the NUS was not seen as relevant to the University's students.

The academic representatives in place for apprenticeship programmes were welcomed.

The Student Director was thanked for her comprehensive report.

**AGREED:** To receive the report

## **22:60 Academic Matters**

UB22/42  
a & b

**Received:** a) A report from DVC (Academic)  
b) A report from the DVC (Health Environment and Innovation)

### DVC (Academic)

The DVC(A) noted that Ofsted and the position in relation to ITE had been covered earlier in the meeting. An update was given on the new Trans National Education (TNE) Partnership with a College in Singapore. The new partner had been through the University's due diligence and quality assurances processes, with the latter stages of programme approval currently in progress. The aim was for the partnership to be operational by the end of the academic year.

The DVC(A) reported that the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) submission had been made to the OfS, with the Students' Union thanked for their support with the document, as well as making their own student submission. It was noted that the University had volunteered and been

accepted to be in the first wave of institutions to develop its new style Access and Participation Plan for 2024/25.

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

It was commented that the new partnership with the College in Singapore was very positive. The Chair agreed, noting that the TNE partners were making an increasingly positive contribution, however they did bring different types of risks to the University. A briefing for the Board was requested.

**Action:** Uni Sec to arrange.

#### DVC (Health Environment and Innovation)

The DVC(HE&I) highlighted that two tenders had been won, one for the setting up of a Musculoskeletal Clinic with the NHS at Fusehill Street. This enabled further working with the NHS as well as facilities for simulation for use by physiotherapy students. The second tender was from Health Education England (HEE) and related to the delivery of an on-line module, Preparation for General Practice Nursing, with the University being one of very few institutions that had been awarded the contract, and the only one nationally. The DVC(HE&I) noted that HEE was to be replaced by the Education Directorate of the NHS at the end of March, with the potential for amendments to be made to contracts already in place.

The DVCs were thanked for their reports.

**AGREED:** To receive the reports

#### **22:61 Introduction to the Institute of Engineering, Computing and Advanced Manufacturing**

Presentation

**Received:** A presentation

The Director of the new Institute of Engineering, Computing and Advanced Manufacturing (IECAM) was welcomed to the meeting and spoke to her presentation. She started by introducing herself and the new Professor in the Institute, Professor Paul Stewart, including their career history and research successes. The mission, case for, and opportunities related to the new Institute were each set out. The new courses to be delivered by the Institute were detailed, including the course structures and timeline for launch. The teaching ethos and ways in which the requirements of businesses were being taken into account were detailed. The presentation concluded with an overview of the research activity currently undertaken and planned, as well as the engagement with local businesses.

In the discussion that followed whether any challenges were anticipated in recruiting academic staff was asked. The D of IECAM responded that the offer was such that it was not anticipated that there would be challenges, other than potentially with respect to undergraduate teaching expertise. In the eventuality that there were challenges in this area the potential solutions were detailed.

Where students were expected to come from was asked. The D of IECAM set out that this was expected to be varied, with demand expected from the region as well as further afield, with demand currently exceeding supply in the heavily populated areas that the University was close to. In addition, less place based access to courses was being planned, working with the Director of the Centre for Digital Transformation. The DVC(A) added that work was ongoing with respect to an accommodation offer in the locality.

Whether the Institute could deliver any courses from Ambleside was asked. In response the D of IECAM set out that there was interest in renewables that could be delivered alongside geography, with there also being opportunities with respect to research.

The position with international students wishing to study engineering in the UK was asked about. The D of IECAM set out that the messaging from the UK was deterring some international students, however there were opportunities for international exchange programmes.

The D of IECAM was thanked for her excellent presentation.

**AGREED:** To receive the presentation

**22:62 Chief Operating Officer Matters / Health and Safety Update**

UB22/43  
UB22/49

**Received:** A report from COO and update on Health & Safety matters

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

**AGREED:** To receive the reports

**22:63 Barrow Learning Quarter Update**

UB22/44

**Received:** An update on the Barrow project

The DVC(A) gave an update on the teaching and learning agreement and the student numbers within it that were now agreed with BAE. Work was ongoing to finalise the agreement in time for approval at University Board in May. The COO went on to give updates on the other legal agreements. On other matters, it was noted that planning permission had now been received and design work was progressing, with RIBA stage 4 design due to be completed by mid-April following which a full review of the costs of the building would be undertaken so that they could be confirmed prior to approval. The COO set out that the tender would go out in mid-April, with the assessment and award taking place after the Board meeting in May, as such the approval from the Board would be requested subject to the contract award being within budget.

In the discussion that followed whether there was any indication of receipt of funding from the OfS to cover all or part of the additional £1m was asked. The COO responded that there was still a possibility, however the planning assumed that the money would come from the University.

The Vice Chancellor gave an update on the positive relationship with BAE noting that the programmes being delivered in Barrow would not be limited to BAE staff, with the potential for significant interest.

Whether the University would get the required approvals to allow international students to study in Barrow was asked. The Vice Chancellor responded that this would be something to consider.

**AGREED:** To receive the report and delegate approval of the revised FBC to the Chair of the Board, Vice-Chair of the Board, Chair of FRC and Chair of ARC

**22:64 Citadels Project**

UB22/45

**Received:** A update on the Citadels project

The COO spoke to the paper, reporting that the strategic options appraisal was progressing alongside the design work for a revised phase one scheme. Work was also ongoing with the local councils on funding options.

**AGREED:** To receive the update

**22:65 OfS and DfE Communications** UB22/50

**Received:** An update on communications with the Office for Students and Department for Education

The Uni Sec introduced the report, noting that the main items within it had been discussed under other agenda items.

**AGREED:** To receive the report

**22:66 Risk Management** UB22/51

**Received:** The Strategic Risk Register and current assessment of institutional risk

The Chair commented that the risk register provided an overview of the high level risks affecting the University, to ensure that the Board had a shared understanding in this area.

The Chair of ARC reported that the Committee had received the risk register at its recent meeting and had committed to having an in-depth review of the register at its next meeting.

It was commented that the staffing risks was one of the highest but was not something that had been discussed by University Board.

**AGREED:** To receive the risk register

**22:67 2023/24 Board and Committee Dates** UB22/52

**Received:** Approval of the dates for 2023/24

The Uni Sec asked that any feedback on the proposed dates be provided outside of the meeting, following which the dates would be confirmed.

**AGREED:** To receive the dates for 2023/24

**22:68 Academic Board reporting** AB22/39

**Received:** Minutes of the meeting of Academic Board held on 15 December 2022

**AGREED:** To receive the minutes

**22:69 University Board Committees**

<b>Received:</b>	The minutes from the following committee meetings:	AGC22/14
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Governance Committee : 3 November 2022</li> <li>and 19 January 2023</li> <li>• People Performance &amp; Culture Committee: 17 November 2022</li> </ul>	AGC22/25
		PPCC22/08

**AGREED:** To receive the minutes

**22:70      Future Meetings**

Verbal

Thursday 18 May 2023  
Thursday 13 July 2023