

UNIVERSITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CONFIRMED

Minutes of the meeting held on 08 October 2019

Present: Mr G Donnelly (Chair), Miss F Aiken, Mrs E Bales, Mr J Batty, Ms K Brookes, Mr C Bush (until 19:11), Professor L Challis, Professor J Lee, Mr I Looker, Professor J Mennell, Ms J Stannard, Mr P Yates

In attendance: Dr J Brown (University Secretary)
Mr D Chesser (COO/DVC)
Mrs K McLaughlin-Flynn (Director of Finance & Resources) (for item 19:03 and 19:04)
Professor R Trimble (PVC Academic)
Professor B Webster-Henderson (PVC Health)
Mr M Williams (Associate Director, Director Designate)

Having already completed introductions, welcoming Ian Looker and Martin Williams to the Board and Emma Bales back to the Board having been re-elected as Staff Director, the Chair congratulated Fiona Aiken on becoming an Honorary Fellow at the University of Lancaster before starting the meeting. The order of the agenda was changed to allow flow from the pre-Board presentation into the formal business.

19:01 Apologies for absence Verbal
Apologies were received from Revd Canon C Butland and Ms J Johnston

19:02 Declaration of Interests Verbal
There were none. The Chair reminded Directors to complete and return their Register of Interests form for 2019/20.

19:03 Borderlands Update UB19/10

Received: A report on the Borderlands Initiative

This item was recorded as a separate confidential minute.

19:04 Estates Strategy Update UB19/11

Received: An update on the delivery of the Estates Strategy

The Director of Finance and Resources introduced the paper and asked for any questions.

The Board approved the sale of The Howes, as set out in the paper.

Detail was requested on the power purchasing agreement noted in the paper as an option for the Lancaster campus. The Director of Finance and Resources gave the Board some background on the heating system on the Lancaster campus, the requirement for the District Heating System to be replaced and the various options that have been considered. The potential for a system linked to the development of the SE corner of campus was outlined, with the proposal being that power would be purchased as part of a long term agreement, with no capital outlay for the University.

AGREED

- To approve the sale of The Howes, Ambleside
- To note the report

19:05	Minutes of the previous meeting	UB18/75 a-c
	<p>The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2019 were approved as an accurate record as were the confidential minutes of the pre-Board planning session.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Board formally approved the collaboration with Lancaster University.</p>	
19:06	Matters Arising	UB18/75 d-e
	<p>The action log and confidential action log from the previous meeting were reviewed and noted.</p> <p>It was agreed to record the Board's congratulations to the Energy Coast UTC on getting an outstanding Ofsted inspection outcome.</p>	
19:07	Chair's Business	Verbal
	<p>The Chair of University Board updated the meeting on his activities since the last meeting, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An item was recorded as a separate confidential minute. • The one-to-one conversations took place over the summer, as reported elsewhere on the agenda, the Chair thanked Directors and Associate Directors for their time. • Resubmissions of the Access and Participation Plan for 2020-2025 had been approved. • Minor changes to the Student Protection Plan had been approved. • Attendance at the CUC Northern meeting, and the CUC plenary later in the week. • Secretary's note: As agreed at the previous meeting, the appointment of the new Directors / Associate Directors had been approved, as set out elsewhere on the agenda. <p>AGREED To note the update.</p>	
19:08	Vice Chancellor's Report	UB19/01
	<p>Received: a) The Vice Chancellor's Report b) Summary of the Vice Chancellor's activities and engagements</p> <p>The Vice Chancellor highlighted the following elements of her report:</p> <p>Access and Participation Plan & Student Protection Plan The Vice Chancellor drew Director's attention to the updates in the report on the two documents required as part of the University's registration with the OfS.</p> <p>UoC2020 Finance & Resources Committee, Audit & Risk Committee and Employment Policy Committee were thanked for their feedback on the project bringing together a number of strands in the AOP, 'UoC2020'. It was noted that the AOP would be refined to reference the project being the mechanism by which the key objective of the University in 2019/20 would be delivered.</p>	

Sunday Times University Guide

The improvement of four places in the recently published Sunday Times University Guide was highlighted. It was noted that the improvement was not overly significant at this stage, but was a good indication of the improvements that should be seen coming through as metrics improve.

The Board acknowledged that it was encouraging to see a number of green shoots, including that turnover was higher than the previous year for the first time in a number of years. The importance of the NSS was noted by the Board as critical; it was noted that detail on activity to continue to enhance student experience would be covered later on the agenda.

AGREED To note the report

19:09 Student Union Matters

UB19/02

Received: A report from the Student Director

An update on recent activity within the Students' Union was provided by the Student Director, as outlined within the paper with the addition of updates on activity that had taken place since it was drafted. The Board's specific attention was drawn to:

- The three sabbatical officers had made a public manifesto, following work with the Vice Chancellor.
- The 'Big Vote' had taken place, where students were asked their view on proposals to change the structure of the Students' Union for 2020/21. 94% of students supported the proposal, which would come to the next University Board meeting for approval.
- Further work had taken place to analyse the NSS results for the Union. Outcomes included additional work with the academic representatives, enhancing their training, and work in specific subject areas where the results had been particularly poor.

Directors asked how Welcome week had gone from the Union's perspective. The Student Director replied that it had been very successful, with students engaged in the various activities.

AGREED To note the report

19:10 Academic Matters

UB19/03

Received: a) A report from the PVC Academic
b) A report from the PVC Health
c) A report from the PVC Region & Employer Engagement

The PVC Academic presented the headlines of his report:

- Welcome week had been enhanced for this year and was well received. Returning students were reminded to re-enrol, which had worked well.
- A new approach had been implemented for international student recruitment, with the contract with the agent being brought to a close and a new international director recruited. The new approach should allow an increase in the number of students and trans-national partners.
- The new Institutes were now in place, with a development day held recently for the staff with new senior roles in the Institutes.

- Communications with the OfS with respect to the Access and Participation plan were continuing, with a clarification provided on the day of the meeting. Later in the meeting it was confirmed that the Plan had been passed to the Director of Fair Access within the OfS for approval.
- There had been a good piece of work on the causes of the poor responses to the organisation and management questions in the NSS following the results last year, with a robust range of interventions identified. The aspects that the University wished to continue have been embedded into plans for 2019/20.
- That it had been confirmed that there will be a subject level TEF, which the University was preparing for.

The Chair thanked the PVC (Academic) for his report. He noted that he was aware of around fifty Access and Participation Plans had been published to date, with a significant number having enhanced monitoring associated with them.

There was a discussion on the causes of the poorer NSS results in some areas, whether there was a need for a 'deep dive' into the causes, and whether there was sufficient top down influence on the actions to be taken. It was noted that the qualitative responses were all reviewed and the main theme was that the University needs to do what it says it is going to do in a consistent manner. In order to look at student outcome measures in a holistic manner, the plans had been brought together, reviewed to ensure alignment with the new Student Achievement Strategy, and would be reported to the next AGC.

Directors asked what the main reasons were for the University's TEF being bronze. The NSS results were the main reason, with the data being three year averages not helping where data was starting to see improvements.

In response to a question on any form of Brexit impact on international student recruitment it was noted that there would be no impact on international students, other than the potentially positive impact of a weak pound, and the University had few EU students.

The Chair noted that good progress was being made, and the Board looked forward to this coming through in the University's results.

The PVC Health presented the headlines of his report and some more recent updates:

- Recruitment in the Institute of Health was slightly above target, although there were some areas that were not delivering to target. These areas had been reviewed and changes built into their marketing plans.
- Work was on-going to increase placement capacity for some courses. The placements had been increased for midwifery and the higher targets had been achieved.
- There was a complex system with Health Education England for Continuing Professional Development, the University had been working with them to secure a minimum payment, which had just been achieved.
- Paramedic provision was going from strength to strength, with contracts in place with 9 out of the 10 trusts in the country. The University had just been notified that it had won the contract to deliver training for 300 paramedics in the South of England.

- Research activity was ongoing, with the University being successful in a bid for an Applied Research Collaboration in NE England – with income of £16m over five years across the partners. This award was reputationally significant, and was the first time the University had received funding from the National Institute of Health Research.

Directors asked whether there was any likelihood of bursaries returning for health students. The PVC (Health) reported that he is heavily involved in the national activity in this area, working with the Chief Nurse. There was agreement that a grant for all healthcare students, some funding for up-front travel costs and a loan repayment system if graduates worked in the NHS was being seriously looked at, with an announcement expected imminently.

The PVC (Health) noted that the Chief Nurse had visited the University recently, and had spoken to both staff and students. She had been very impressed by the quality of the questions from the students.

The PVC (Health) presented the headlines of the PVC (R&EE) report:

- The visitor economy is a key areas of focus, as detailed in the report.
- Project management courses are being marketed across Sellafield's supply chain companies.
- Work is ongoing to ensure that the University is meeting the regulatory requirements in relation to apprenticeships in the most efficient manner across all relevant subject areas.

The Chair thanked the PVC (Health) for his report, and the PVC (R&EE) in her absence.

AGREED To note the reports

19:11 Academic Governance Committee Annual Report to the Board

Received: The AGC Annual Report to the Board

UB19/04

The University Secretary introduced the report, and the historical regulatory requirement in relation to an annual report on academic matters, and the current best practice in this area. This was the first year that the report is from the Academic Governance Committee (AGC) to the Board, as opposed to from management. The report looked to provide an overview of the work of the Committee over the year, which was also aligned to the relevant OfS conditions of registration to provide University Board with assurance over the range of conditions in the Committee's remit.

The Chair of AGC added that the Committee was not the norm in the sector, but enabled University Board to get closer to academic matters, in an appropriate manner. The Committee endeavoured to be constructively challenging to management, but was based on trust and understanding. Student involvement on the Committee, through the Student Director, was seen as an imperative.

The Chair thanked the Committee for its work and noted that the pre-Board session in November would be in relation to academic matters. He commented that more general questions such as 'what is the student experience like at the University?', 'how does the Board know that the academic mission is being delivered?' would be useful, with KPIs.

It was noted that it needs to be recognised that the University is very diverse, i.e. there is not one student experience. However, consistency in the experience was seen to be something that the University was aiming for.

AGREED To note the report

19:12 Management Accounts

UB19/05

Received: The 2018/19 Period 12 Management Accounts

The COO/DVC introduced the period 12 2018/19 management accounts noting that performance had been maintained as predicted in the months leading up to year end. The University did not quite close the gap in income due to some activity being deferred, however this was the first time that year on year income growth had been seen for some years.

The 2018/19 financial statements were reported as having been audited, with no audit adjustments being required. A few areas were being discussed with the external auditors prior to the accounts being finalised.

The Chair noted that the formal audited accounts would progress to University Board in November, following presentation and discussion at Finance & Resources Committee and Audit & Risk Committee.

AGREED To note the report

19:13 Student Recruitment 2019/20

UB19/06

Received: An update on student recruitment for 2019/20

The COO/DVC confirmed that the report was as received by Finance & Resources Committee on 24 September 2019, with the verbal update provided in the pre-Board meeting providing the more recent position. He confirmed that the process was continuing with the next meeting of Finance & Resources Committee receiving the settled forecast position.

The Board noted that under-graduate core numbers remained lower than the previous year. The Vice Chancellor reported that further work had been undertaken to understand the position by subject area and the University was confident that declines in numbers were being addressed where they could be, and other action was being taken where the declines were not able to be addressed.

AGREED To note the report

19:14 Annual Operating Plan

UB19/07

Received: A progress update on delivery of the AOP 2019/20

The Vice Chancellor noted that the AOP 2019/20 would be reviewed to reflect the various strands being incorporated into the UoC2020 project, simplifying reporting and ensuring that effort was not being duplicated.

Directors noted that the NSS Organisation and Management metric was not included in the AOP KPIs. It was agreed that they should be. **Action** COO/DVC.

AGREED • To note the progress update

- To note the review of the document in the context of UoC2020
- To add a KPI for the NSS Organisation and Management score

19:14 Health and Safety Annual Report

UB19/08

Received: The Health and Safety Annual Report for 2018/19

The Chair of Employment Policy Committee (EPC) reported that the Committee had reviewed the report in detail, with the key points included in the cover paper to the Board report.

The Chair asked whether the increase in incidents was due to an underlying issue or to better reporting. The Chair of EPC confirmed that the Committee had been assured that the increase was due to better reporting. In addition, the incidents were not significant in nature, which also indicated a reporting matter.

The Vice Chancellor noted that mental health was an increasingly recognised and important element of health and safety. The PVC (Health) reported on the two day festival of mental health planned on the Lancaster campus, with a range of practitioners attending, including Lord M Bragg.

The Board asked whether safety audits were still undertaken; the COO/DVC noted that they took place routinely.

The Chair thanked the team for their work in this area.

AGREED • To note the Health and Safety Annual Report

19:14 Pensions

UB19/09

Received: An update on the Pensions Review

The COO/DVC reported that the Pensions Task and Finish Group had met and the paper set out what had been agreed. It was noted that the work was part of the UoC2020 project.

An element of this minute was recorded as a separate confidential minute.

The Vice Chancellor noted that agreement had been obtained from the two Trades Unions to move forward with the alignment of the holiday year to the financial year.

The Chair confirmed that the Board approved the work to be progressed.

AGREED • To note the progress update and approve the work to be progressed as set out in the report.

19:15 Risk Register

UB19/12

Received: An update on the current assessment of institutional risk

The University Secretary introduced the risk register, noting that the Audit & Risk Committee had considered the register and had agreed that

UoC2020 should be referenced. This would be undertaken prior to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee confirmed that the Risk Register had been discussed in detail at the last meeting of the Committee on 26 September 2019. The Committee had also considered a no-Deal Brexit risk assessment / action plan.

An update was requested on the Nursing and Midwifery Council accreditation visit. The PVC (Health) confirmed that the outcome had been positive.

The alignment of the risk appetite statement with the decisions being made in relation to the Borderlands Initiative was questioned. It was agreed that the Task and Finish group would propose the institution's red lines, which could then be triangulated against the statement. It was also noted that the decision making was in line with the second paragraph of the risk appetite statement.

AGREED • To note the current assessment of institutional risk

19:16 Governance Matters

AB19/13a-d

Received: a) a report on Board and Committee Effectiveness 2018/19
b) the Statement of Primary Responsibilities 2019/20
c) the Terms of Reference and Membership 2019/20 for the Committees of the Board
d) the final composition of the Board for 2019/20

The University Secretary introduced the governance papers noting the introduction of Deputy Chairs for the Board Committees and the proposal to change the name of Employment Policy Committee to People, Performance and Culture Committee.

The Board approved the Statement of Primary Responsibilities, the Terms of Reference and Membership for the Committees of the Board in 2019/20, and the change of name to People, Performance and Culture Committee.

The University Secretary noted that the approval of Martin Williams as the Archbishops' Council appointment to the Board was anticipated within the week.

AGREED • To note the report on Board and Committee Effectiveness
• To approve the Statement of Primary Responsibilities for 2019/20
• To approve the Terms of Reference and Membership for Committees of the Board for 2019/20
• To note the final composition of the Board for 2019/20

19:17 Academic Board Reporting

AB18/59

Received: The minutes of the meeting of Academic Board held on 19 June 2019

The Board noted the key items of business covered by Academic Board at its meeting on 19 June 2019, as outlined by the PVC (Academic).

It was noted that the work to enhance the two way communication via the Academic Representatives was working well.

AGREED To receive the minutes

19:18 University Board Committees

Received: The minutes of the following Committee meetings:

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| • Academic Governance Committee 10 July 2019 | AGC18/41 |
| • Academic Governance Committee 19 September 2019 | Verbal |
| • Finance & Resources Committee 24 September 2019 | Verbal |
| • Audit and Risk Committee 26 September 2019 | Verbal |
| • Employment Policy Committee 1 October 2019 | Verbal |

The Board noted the minute set as provided, with the remaining minutes to be received at the next meeting of the Board. The Chair of Employment Policy Committee added that the decision on whether or not to withhold the pay award until the 11th month was to be taken at the next meeting of the Board, on the recommendation of management, as per the process last academic year. The recommendation would be based on the financial position which would be better known once the recruitment position was settled in mid-October.

AGREED To note the business of the Committees, as presented within the minutes and associated meetings updates

19:19 Remuneration Committee

The Chair of Remuneration Committee noted that the meeting would be continued at a later date, and reported on at that point.

Verbal

19:20 Dates of future meetings

Thursday 21 November 2019, Carlisle

Verbal