

University of Central Lancashire

Unreserved Minutes Of The Board Meeting Held On 31st January 2019, Commencing At 5.00pm In The Conference Room, Adelphi Building

Present:

David Taylor (Chair)

Andrea Adams	Jon Hogan
Fiona Armstrong	Lesley Lloyd
Nicky Danino	Ruth Lowry
Maria Darby-Walker	Anne McCarthy
Jim Edney	Caitlin McLaren
Ridwanah Gurjee	

In attendance:

Michael Ahern (Chief Operating Officer)
Liz Bromley (Deputy Vice Chancellor (Corporate Planning & International Strategy))
Ian Fisher (University Secretary and Legal Officer)
Ken Lee (Executive Director for Human Resources)
Peter McMellon (Governance and Compliance Officer)
Fiona Winters (Deputy Clerk to the Board) (in part)
Sarah Woolford (Deputy Finance Director - Acting Director of Finance)

UB707. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting. Apologies for absence had been received from Richard Hext, Sue Ion, Bill McQueen and Lorraine Norris. Apologies had also been received from Lynne Livesey (Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)).

The Chair reported that Mr Hext and Dr Ion had submitted comments on agenda items. He and Mr Edney undertook to feed these into the discussion as appropriate.

UB708. Declaration of Interests

No additional declarations of interests were made.

UB709. Chair's Announcements

Text Redacted – Reserved Minutes

(ii) American University of the Caribbean – Long-term Partnership Agreement

The Chair reported that, immediately before the meeting, colleagues from the AUC had attended UCLan for the formal signing of a long-term agreement on the provision of medical education. He anticipated that, whilst challenges need to be addressed, this offers the prospect of an extremely positive development benefiting both institutions and he confirmed that the Resources Committee and the Board would be kept informed of developments.

(iii) In4.0 PLC at UCLan

The Chair reported on the successful and informative launch event which he had attended. Contributions from UCLan students at the event had been particularly impressive.

UB710. Reserved and Unreserved Minutes of the University Board Meeting held on 15th November 2018

Resolved: That the Reserved and Unreserved Minutes of the University Board Meeting held on 15th November 2018 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

UB711. Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Independent members of the Board held on 15th November 2018

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the independent members of the Board held on 15th November 2018 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

UB712. Matters Arising from the University Board Meeting held on 15th November 2018

Text Redacted – Reserved Minutes

UB713. Terms of Office of Governing Body Members

Mr Taylor, Mr Hogan and Mrs Armstrong declared an interest in this matter and took no part in the discussion or vote.

Mrs Adams (Chair of Nominations Committee) reported the Nominations Committee's recommendation that the terms of office for Mr Hogan and Mrs Armstrong be renewed. In doing so, the Committee had noted that Mr Hogan was likely to stand down well before the expiry of the extended term.

Resolved: That Mr Hogan and Mrs Armstrong be reappointed for three year terms of office expiring on 31st January 2022.

Mr Fisher reported that the current term of office for Mr Taylor also expires on 31st January 2019 but that the Nominations Committee was not quorate to make a recommendation in respect of Mr Taylor. However, the inquorate meeting recommended that Mr Taylor also be re-appointed.

Resolved: That Mr Taylor be reappointed for a three year term of office expiring on 31st January 2022.

UB714. Annual Equality and Diversity Report 2018

Mrs Bromley (Deputy Vice Chancellor (Corporate Planning and International Strategy)) presented the Annual Equality and Diversity Report 2018. A copy of the Report is set out in the Minute Book.

Mrs Bromley reminded the Board about the University's general and specific obligations from the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to collect and publish equality information. She then commented on each section of the Report.

It was noted that the Staff Data profile tables provided evidence of a reassuring degree of appropriate diversity, although greater levels of disclosure under the 'Sexual Orientation', 'Disability' and 'Religion and Belief' continued to be sought.

Mrs Bromley also provided further comment on the content of the 'Over 21' category (Student Data profile) and undertook to produce a more detailed break-down of this element. She also noted that the addition of (sector) benchmark data would assist the Board in evaluating the data.

Mr Lee (Executive Director of Human Resources) provided further data regarding any possible impact of the diverse workforce on discrimination and guidance on arrangements for staff complaints and for counselling support, emphasising that the numbers of staff involved are reassuringly small. He also confirmed that the usual report on 'gender pay gap' is being compiled and will be reported to the Board in due course. He anticipated that this would reveal positive progress. Finally, Mr Lee outlined arrangements for the monitoring of and reporting on hate crimes.

Resolved: That the Annual Equality and Diversity Report 2018 be approved.

UB715. Masterplan Delivery Update

Mr Ahern (Chief Operating Officer) presented the Masterplan Delivery Update report (31st January 2019). A copy of the report is set out in the Minute Book.

Mr Ahern confirmed that, in terms of quality, time and budget, the progress reported is very reassuring. The University now expects to be in a position to enter into contracts for the completion of the Masterplan. He provided details on the expected contract values (a) for the Student Centre and University Square, and (b) for the Highways and street scene element. He confirmed that the values/costs are covered by existing budget provision. With construction expected to commence in April/May 2019, a 'soft opening' should be feasible before the end of 2020.

Mr Ahern advised on arrangements for the shops in the St Peter's Square vicinity and he also outlined the VAT position, acknowledging that this is a complex matter where specialist advice is obtained. Mrs Woolford (Acting Director of Finance) commented on the VAT limitations and regulations applying to HE institutions.

Mr Edney confirmed that detailed consideration had been given at the Resources Committee meeting on 10th January 2019 to the matters now reported. The Committee had noted the adequacy of the finances already assigned to the Masterplan. However, the Committee had also agreed that, given the significance of the two contracts now proposed, the formal approval of the Board should be sought.

Text Redacted – Reserved Minutes

UB716. Senior Executive Update

Mrs Bromley (Deputy Vice Chancellor (Corporate Planning and International Strategy)) presented the Senior Executive Update. A copy of the report is set out in the Minute Book.

The Chair suggested that the Senior Executive Update as now produced and presented marked a significant improvement in both format and content so as to facilitate the Board's governance and strategic endeavours. He then directed the Board to each section of the Update.

(i) **Text Redacted - Reserved Minutes**

(ii) **Planning, Student Recruitment and Student Recruitment Planning Cycle for 2018/19**

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Mrs Bromley then confirmed the extent of the University's use of Unconditional Offers. She emphasised that, compared to many institutions, UCLan continued to apply a very cautious approach and had managed the strategy effectively. She advised on the use of bursaries, but confirmed that no 'hidden' conditions were relied upon (in contrast to tactics used elsewhere).

The Chair drew attention to Mr Hext's complimentary observation about turn-around time improvement. Mrs Bromley also confirmed that early indications suggest that the 'Together' marketing campaign has contributed positively to student recruitment. She undertook to report further on this in due course.

Finally, the anticipated impact of various Brexit outcomes was discussed. The extent to which the Brexit 'threats' might be productively converted into student recruitment opportunities were noted.

(iii) Academic Activity

Mrs Lowry drew attention to the student recruitment targets for the Burnley campus and Mrs Bromley outlined how attainment of the targets through a 'centre of excellence' (health and well-being courses) approach was being developed. She also reported on progress in the development of a strategy for the University's involvement in East Lancashire under the leadership of the Executive Director for Marketing, Communications and Engagement.

(iv) External Audits of University Activity

Mrs Bromley reported on the reassuring outcome of the basic compliance audit (Tier 4 Sponsor) confirmed by UKVI in December 2018. The University's visa application/acceptance rate was impressively high.

Regarding the 2017/18 Access Agreement targets/performance, these were generally impressive, with only narrow shortfalls on the targets which had been missed.

The Board then discussed the growing burden of 'compliance' which the University has to manage. The significant resources consequence of compliance was noted. Mr Edney drew attention to Mr Hext's comments on HESA Data Futures. Mrs Bromley advised on the University's management of HESA requirements.

(v) International and UK Partnerships Updates

In response to Ms Danino's question about possible work in Dubai, Mrs Bromley reported on exploratory discussions which the University was already pursuing.

Mrs Bromley also undertook to produce a simple briefing paper for Board Members showing current UCLan international activity.

(vi) Masterplan Update

This had been covered under UB715 above.

(vii) Staff Issues, Equality and Diversity

This had been covered under UB714 above.

(viii) Marketing, Communications and Engagement

Regarding the PR and Media information provided, Mrs Armstrong suggested that figures allowing comparisons with other institutions would be useful.

Regarding 'league tables' Mrs Bromley advised that it was expected that one outcome from an ongoing piece of work on league tables will be a 'beginner's guide' briefing paper addressing all key considerations involved in the contribution to and interpretation of league tables.

Progress on the development of the University's website was noted. The Chair commented on impressive new options and approaches which he had recently seen demonstrated.

Finally, while echoing the Chair's comments about the vastly improved style of Senior Executive Update report, Mr Hogan requested that consideration be given to the inclusion at the beginning of each report of a 'hot topics' executive summary.

Resolved: That the Senior Executive Update be noted.

UB717. Committee Chairs' Updates

(i) Resources Committee

Mr Edney (Chair of Resources Committee) reported on the issues covered by the Resources Committee at the meeting on 10th January 2019. He drew attention to the presentation by the University's Interim Director of Innovation and Enterprise and to the Committee's request for a further report on proposals for creation of a 'pre-seed fund'. He also reported that the presentation on behalf of the Training 2000 Ltd 'TurnAround Team' had allowed the Committee to conclude that appropriate progress is now being achieved in directing the Company towards sustainable financial self-sufficiency.

Regarding staff pensions, a special meeting of the Committee (5th March 2019) has been scheduled with the expectation that this will allow for the formulation of recommendations for Board consideration.

(ii) Nominations Committee

Mrs Adams (Chair of Nominations Committee) reported on the issues covered by the Nominations Committee at the meeting on 10th January 2019. She advised on progress on Honorary Fellowship Awards and she also confirmed the Board membership (terms of office renewal) recommendations already considered under UB713 above.

Mrs Adams then drew attention to the Committee's recommendation regarding the appointment of an additional member to the Nominations Committee itself.

Resolved: That Mrs Darby-Walker be appointed to the Nominations Committee with effect from 31st January 2019.

(iii) Text Redacted – Reserved Minutes

Resolved: That the Committee Chairs' Updates be noted.

UB718. University Risk Register

Mrs Bromley presented the University Risk Register. A copy of the Register is set out in the Minute Book.

Mrs Bromley confirmed that the Register had not changed since the Board meeting in November 2018, but she drew attention to Risk 025 (changes to senior team) and Risk 035 (Corporate Manslaughter Act – travel arrangements) which had been reported as new risks at that point.

As regards to the priority order of risks, ‘student recruitment’ remained the highest rated risk, but ‘pensions’ continued to occupy and concern all institutions in the sector.

Regarding Risk 004 (space available on campus), Mr Ahern and Mrs Bromley advised on the contingency planning which anticipated variations in courses/students recruitment. The linking of Masterplan proposals with the overarching University Business Plan is key to obtaining optimal use of available facilities, and consideration is routinely given to the suitability of non-traditional teaching delivery modes. It was, nonetheless, acknowledged that additional investment in the maintenance of the general fabric of many buildings is needed.

Regarding Risk 020 (Brexit), contingency plans and arrangements already in hand were noted. These included arrangements for maintaining the well-being of students on campus. The impact on staff and student recruitment/retention was discussed. Mr Lee advised on arrangements in place for assisting employees, including where employee partners/families are affected.

On the wider Brexit planning front, there was little reassurance in reports about the deliberations of key organisations and bodies operating at regional and national levels.

Resolved: That the report on the University Risk Register be noted.

UB719. People Plan Update

Mr Lee presented the People Plan Update (January 2019) report. A copy of the report is set out in the Minute Book.

Mr Lee confirmed that attention is now directed towards the setting of clear priorities and the matching of resources so as to secure optimal benefits.

Resolved: That the People Plan Update (January 2019) be noted.

UB720. Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Communities : An Institutional Delivery Model

Mrs Bromley presented the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Communities ; An Institutional Delivery Model report. A copy of the report is set out in the Minute Book.

Resolved: That the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Communities report be noted.

UB721. Any Other Business

(i) Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation

Mrs Bromley reported on the recent meeting which she had attended with Mr Chris Skidmore (Minister of State), along with the Vice Chancellor of the University of Coventry. The meeting had covered a range of topics (including the anticipated outcomes from the Augar Report), many of

which were matters of direct interest/relevance for UCLan. The Minister suggested that there would at least be a further period of consultation following the Augar Report. The Minister also intimated that the Government has other priorities ahead of any response to the Augar Report. It was agreed that consideration should be given to inviting the minister to visit UCLan.

UB722. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Resolved: That the next meeting be held on Thursday, 21st March 2019 at 5.00pm (venue to be confirmed but provisionally in the new Engineering Innovation Centre).

**I M Fisher
Clerk to the Board**