

BOARD OF GOVERNORSMinutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2017

Present

Clive Edwards	Independent member	Chair of the Board
Lesley Munro		Clerk to the Board
Martin Ainscough	Independent member	
Roy Bayfield	Support Staff member	Elected
Evelyn Carnegie	Academic staff member	Elected
John Cater	Vice-Chancellor	Ex-officio
Graeme Collinge	Independent member	Chair: Resources Committee
Christine Donnelly	Independent member	
Rob Green	Independent member	
Lisa Greenhalgh	Independent member	Chair: Audit Committee
Matthew Greenhalgh	Student Member	Students' Union President
Louise Robinson	Independent member	
George Talbot	Academic staff member	Academic Board nominee
Denise Walker	Independent member	

In attendance

Mark Allanson	PVC (External Relations)
Lynda Brady	PVC (Student Experience) & University Secretary
Andrew Brown	ABW Architects (for item 8)
David Diggle	Turley Planning (for item 8)
Steve Igoe	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Paul Malone	Students' Union General Manager
Anthony Turjansky	Director of Quality Assurance (for item 18)

Apologies

Richard Benjamin	Independent member
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Absent

Gareth Shanks	Student member
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Preamble

The Clerk reported that Bernard Laverty had left the Board in January and, in the light of this and the resignation of David Owen in August 2016, Nominations

Committee had met to consider proposals for current officer vacancies on the Board. Following discussion, the Committee had made the following recommendations which had been approved at a meeting of Independent Governors on 30 January (file copy in minute book) and would be ratified through receipt of Nominations Committee minutes:

Chair of the Board:	Clive Edwards
Deputy Chair:	Lisa Greenhalgh
Chair of Resources Committee:	Graeme Collinge

It was further reported that, since the last meeting, resignations had been received from Simon Pope in the light of work commitments and Edith Sim for family health reasons.

BG.16.051 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

BG.16.052 Chair's Announcements

The Chair noted the recent terrorist incident at Westminster in which a number of Edge Hill students involved in a visit to the Houses of Parliament had been injured. He recorded his thanks to the Vice-Chancellor and officers of the University for their professional handling of the situation and the support provided to students and their families at a difficult time. The Vice-Chancellor indicated that all students had been reunited with their families and those injured were making good recoveries although some longer term psychological impact might be expected. Appropriate action was being taken to ensure students were not academically disadvantaged by the event. He paid particular tribute to Paula Keaveney, the lecturer supervising the visit, for her commitment in looking after all members of the party in the immediate aftermath.

It was noted that the University had been shortlisted for awards by *Target Jobs* and *What Uni* and that Governors had been invited to attend the associated ceremonies taking place over the next couple of weeks.

Whilst noting that this was not a current issue, the Chair reported that he had attended an interesting CUC session in Manchester concerned with the complexities of appointing a new Vice-Chancellor.

BG.16.053 Chair's Action

There was no Chair's Action to report.

BG.16.054 Minutes of the previous meeting

Received: Document BG/039/16

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2016 were agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

BG.16.055 Action Log

Received: Document BG/040/16

The Action Log was received noting all actions as implemented.

BG.16.056 Matters arising not included elsewhere on the agenda

There were no other matters arising.

PRESENTATION

BG.16.057 Estates Masterplan

(Clerk's Note: Copies of the powerpoint presentation were circulated and a copy is held in the minute book)

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor introduced this item which was currently subject to consultation within the University.

David Diggles from Turleys outlined the historical planning context which underlay the development of the Estates Strategy, highlighting the importance of the comments of the Local Plan Inspector (2006) in confirming the need for the Local Authority to facilitate the University's expansion of the campus site into the Green Belt. This allowed the development of a detailed plan, underpinned by strong structuring principles including pedestrianisation, connectivity and flexibility. Key elements of the Plan were high quality buildings, the development of a central square and attention to Public Realm issues including traffic management and car parking. Progress to date was noted along with possible future development options. Andrew Brown from ABW provided a detailed view of the design principles for the new Library.

Looking to the future, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor indicated that whilst there was now very little virgin space available for new build, there were redevelopment opportunities around the Back Halls, the Students' Union complex, the Student Information Centre and the current Library and LINC buildings which would be vacated on completion of the new Library development. In addition, it was noted that the Local Authority were keen to retain graduate skills in the area lending a more positive approach to potential off-site development with the possibility for some collaborative projects. Relocation of the synthetic surfaces and further land purchase could also be considered.

In discussion, the following points were noted:

- The new Library was due to be completed in 2018. Priorities for future projects formed part of the current consultation with proposals likely to come to the Board in 12 months time;
- High external build quality was integral to the design principles adopted by the University with inbuilt internal flexibility ensuring the long term use and value of buildings;
- Whilst the University was surrounded by Green Belt land, the Local Authority was taking a more proactive approach to the economic development of the local area which could be beneficial;
- It was suggested that some further consideration be given to car-parking options.

Thanking David Diggle and Andrew Brown for their presentation, members welcomed the Masterplan consultation noting that final documentation would come to the Board for approval.

Action: Deputy Vice-Chancellor

SECTION A ITEMS

BG.16.058 Minutes of Committees

.01 Nominations Committee (30 January 2017)

Received: Document BG/041/16

The Chair introduced the minutes noting the appointment of officers as indicated in the Preamble and the arrangements for the recruitment of new members.

The Nominations Committee minutes were received

.02 Resources Committee (20 February 2017)

Received: Document BG/042/16

The Chair of Resources introduced the minutes noting the discussions on Treasury Management, Insurance renewal, the Students' Union audited accounts and the annual reports from Learning Services and Facilities Management. He highlighted the following points:

- Changes to the University's account with Barclays necessitated by the requirement to comply with new ring-fencing legislation;
- The decision of the Students' Union to increase investment in staffing and the subsequent impact on costs;
- Learning Services' use of new assistive technology such as Lecture Capture which was providing benefits for all students;
- The strong service culture encouraged within Facilities Management recognising the effect on the student experience.

The Vice-Chancellor updated members on a number of ongoing negotiations:

Alder Hey

(The Deputy Vice-Chancellor declared an interest in this matter)

Discussions on a possible investment at Alder Hey were making slow progress. The University would only bring a proposal to the Board if the terms were satisfactory.

Wrightington

Discussions on a collaborative proposal were continuing despite the withdrawal of funding from the major sponsor.

Chorley Woodlands

Lancashire County Council had indicated that they would not be vacating the site until September. The Council had acknowledged that the University had user rights in perpetuity.

It was noted that the Committee had discussed the implications of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and the requirement for the University to publish an annual Slavery and Human Trafficking statement to demonstrate that appropriate action was being taken to ensure that slavery and human trafficking was not taking place in its business practices or supply chains. A copy of the statement was attached to the minutes.

On recommendation from the Committee, **the Board approved the 2015/16 statement and agreed that this duty should be delegated to Resources Committee in future.**

Action: Deputy Vice-Chancellor/Clerk

The Resources Committee Minutes were received.

.03 Audit Committee (6 March 2017)

Received: Document BG/043/16

The Chair of Audit introduced the minutes drawing attention to the following points:

- Approval of data returns to HEFCE (Transparent Approach to Costing return), the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL Audit Grant return) and the Office for Fair Access (Annual Monitoring return).
- Approval of an increase in the capitalisation level to £10,000.
- Receipt of the Value for Money update report, the Risk Management report and a number of Internal Audit reports all of which provided substantial assurance to the Board.

It was noted that the Committee had looked in detail at the proposed amendments to the Scheme of Delegation arising from new provision and amendments following the first year of

operation. A copy of the revised scheme was attached to the minutes and the Clerk took members through the proposed changes.

On recommendation from the Committee, **the Board approved the revised Scheme of Delegation.**

Action: Clerk

The Audit Committee minutes were received.

BG.16.059 PREVENT Annual Report: HEFCE Response

Received: Document BG/044/16

The HEFCE letter confirming that the University's PREVENT annual statement had demonstrated sufficient evidence of due regard to the PREVENT duty was received.

BG.16.060 Management Information January 2017

Received: Document BG/045/16

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor reported that with increased income and gap savings on expenditure, the projected surplus was now £2.8 million ahead of budget. The cash balance position was also ahead of forecast at £37.1 million. The position continued to be regularly monitored with Quarter 2 review meetings in progress.

The January 2017 Management Information was received.

BG.16.061 EHU/WLBC Forum (17 March 2017)

The Chair gave a verbal report on the meeting noting that input from Council officers had been positive. Ambitious local plans recognised the importance of retaining graduate skills for the area and the need to develop appropriate job opportunities with affordable housing. Officers had indicated that University involvement would be welcomed.

The report on the EHU/WLBC Forum was received.

SECTION B ITEMS

BG.16.062 Vice-Chancellor's Report

Received: Document BG/046/16

The Vice-Chancellor introduced his report and highlighted the following points:

- The Westminster incident demonstrated the resilience of students and staff involved and the University would ensure that active support would continue to be provided to all those affected. In addition to the impact on individuals, this had required a major Public Relations response from the University and the Vice-Chancellor recorded his thanks for the professionalism shown at all levels;
- In addition to a number of recent award nominations, the University had achieved a further improvement in the THE student experience survey recording the best performance for a diversified modern University. These results were important in promoting reputation and validating the University's commitment to its mission and core values.
- Whist recruitment was likely to be lower than the previous year, performance was still strong and overall numbers would remain stable with a larger second year moving through.
- Participation in the current NSS survey was ahead of sector whilst graduate employment rates continued to improve with a further increase in the number of students obtaining highly skilled jobs;
- The University was continuing to invest in new staff appointments despite the increase in associated costs such as pensions. It was noted that contributions to the Lancashire County Council scheme were now set at 14%.
- National pay negotiations had opened with a 7% staff claim incorporating a number of complex aspects. It was noted that the new legislative requirement for the support of 50% of eligible voters made the potential for strike action less likely.

The Vice-Chancellor's report was received.

BG.16.063 Student Report

Received: Document BG/047/16

The Students' Union President introduced the report noting activity on campaigns including the delivery of a collaborative workshop with Student Services for Housing Week. He reported on the success of the 'Food for Thought' sessions where students gave feedback on particular topics in exchange for free food. The topics covered in the first two sessions highlighted significant support for anonymous marking and some concerns about the routes for students to access support for stress and anxiety. These issues would be raised at Academic Board. A further innovation had been PubhD where researchers offered informal talks on their research area in a pub environment to increase accessibility.

A major project had been undertaken to run a consultation with students in relation to the Estates Masterplan. This had been very successful and had identified a number of themes around aspects such as accommodation, services and types of spaces on campus to be taken into consideration. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor congratulated the President on the consultation which had provided some very useful information for the planning team. In discussion, it was agreed that a copy of the consultation should be circulated to members.

Action: SU President/Clerk

Reporting on the recent Students' Union elections, the President reported the following outcomes:

President: Ben Whittle
Vice-President Academic Representation: Luke Myer
Vice-President Activities: Dan Bocharnikov
Vice-President Welfare: Katie Roberts
Student Governor: Thomas Dodd

It was noted that a full report on the elections would be received at the next meeting and it was agreed that Ben Whittle and Thomas Dodd should be invited to attend as observers.

Members received the report from the Students' Union.

BG.16.064 Capital Projects Update

Received: Document BG/048/16

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor introduced the report noting that planning permission had been received for both current projects. Work on the residential accommodation was well underway with most units already let whilst a tender exercise for the steelwork for the new Library was in progress.

In response to members' questions, it was noted that:

- There was some limited flexibility in relation to the Library design;
- Student input to internal layout was being co-ordinated through the Director of Learning Services;
- The building contract would be put out for tender although the cost and timescales were likely to limit responses.

The Capital Projects Update was received.

BG.16.065 Access Agreement 2018/19

Received: Document BG/049/16

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) & University Secretary introduced the paper which set out the underlying principles to be incorporated in the 2018/19 Agreement which would need to be submitted to the Office for Fair Access (OfFA) before the next meeting. She reminded members that obtaining approval for the Agreement was a condition for institutions charging higher fees and required the University to demonstrate that a reasonable proportion of additional income was committed to supporting the widening participation (WP) agenda. The following points were highlighted:

- Whilst the University performed well against many of its WP targets, OfFA's expectations were that these should be stretching and had identified a set of strategic priorities which the University needed to address;
- The University's intention was to build on the successful work of previous years and, given that a high proportion of Edge Hill's

students were from under-represented groups, to emphasise activities that benefited the whole student population;

- The new posts agreed last year would focus on further improving engagement from particular disadvantaged groups;
- Whilst OfFA was encouraging institutions to take up school sponsorship as part of their commitments, Edge Hill would continue to provide enhancement activities across the range of its extensive school partnerships. OfFA had indicated that this was an equally satisfactory approach;
- The current financial support package would be maintained. This was reviewed last year and, whilst evaluation results were not yet available, the scheme appeared to be working well;
- Assuming continuation of government provision for institutions achieving gold or silver level in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) to increase fees in line with inflation, it was expected that fees would be set at approximately £9,500 for 2018/19.

In discussion, it was noted that:

- The University would be expected to participate in the National Collaborative Outreach Programme which effectively replaced the defunct Aim Higher scheme;
- The University was interventionist in seeking to understand and act on the reasons for early student withdrawal;
- The financial commitment identified in the Agreement would be in excess of £3 million which would cover the costs of the financial support package and a range of mainstream activities around outreach, progression and student success.

The President of the Students' Union drew attention to the fact that fee increases affected continuing as well as new students and indicated that it would be helpful if they could be advised of the benefits that would accrue from their additional investment.

Action: PVC (Student Experience)

Following discussion, the Board approved the principles and fee levels as outlined in the 2018/19 Access Agreement Briefing paper.

Action: PVC (Student Experience)

BG.16.066 Key Performance Indicators (annual update)

Received: Document BG/050/16

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor introduced the report which provided a full set of the currently agreed set of KPIs for the University. It was reported that these were due for review but agreed that this should be deferred until a more stable environment prevailed for the sector.

In considering the current indicators, the following points were noted:

- The fall in application and conversion rates from the exceptional levels seen in 2015 and 2016 largely reflected national changes to nursing and teacher training provision with HEFCE funded provision showing a much smaller reduction;
- Entry standards had continued to improve and it was intended that this would be maintained even if that led to a slightly smaller intake. This was important in terms of reputation and preferable to participating in a 'race to the bottom' which would bring challenges for retention. Current indications were that overall student numbers would remain stable given the large second year cohort moving through;
- Staff and student satisfaction levels remained high whilst the University remained in a strong position financially;
- Information submitted to the TEF suggested the University would achieve Silver level with an improving profile which would enhance performance in future years.

In discussion, it was suggested that the indicator for applications should be set at amber to reflect the current position and it was noted that the numbers shown for acceptances through Clearing was incorrect with the University taking less through this route each year.

The Key Performance Indicator report was received.

BG.16.067 CUC IPN on Academic Governance

(Item taken after the Estates Masterplan presentation)

Received: Document BG/051/16

The Director of Quality Assurance introduced this item which offered a suggested reporting framework to provide the Board with the necessary assurance to sign off the required academic governance statements which were now incorporated in the HEFCE Annual Assurance Report (AAR). Reference was made to the workshop held last year which members had found very helpful in preparing for the first year of the inclusion of these statements although the volume of information had been daunting. It was noted that a new condition had been added this year which required confirmation that the University continued to meet Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines.

In considering the nature of any report(s) to the Board, it was agreed that these should reflect Academic Board's responsibilities for this area of work. It was further agreed that the CUC paper provided a useful template for the development of a report and that the Clerk should work with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) and the Director of Quality Assurance to draft a full proposal for consideration at a future meeting.

Action: Clerk/PVC (Student Experience)/Director of Quality Assurance

BG.16.068 LFHE Governance Effectiveness Review

Received: Document BG/052/16

Discussion on this item was deferred to the next meeting.

BG.16.069 Any other Business

There was no other business.

BG.16.070 Reserved Item: Investigations Update

SECTION C ITEMS

BG.16.071 Academic Board Minutes (23 November 2016)

Received: Document BG/053/16

The minutes were received.

BG.16.072 Update to the Agreement on Institutional Delegation

Received: Document BG/054/16

The Update was received.

BG.16.073 Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 15 May 2017.