

BOARD OF GOVERNORSMinutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2016

Present

Bernard Laverty	Independent member	Chair of the Board
Lesley Munro		Clerk to the Board
Martin Ainscough	Independent member	
Roy Bayfield	Support Staff member	Elected
Richard Benjamin	Independent member	
Evelyn Carnegie	Academic staff member	Elected
John Cater	Vice-Chancellor	Ex-officio
Graeme Collinge	Independent member	
Clive Edwards	Independent member	
Rob Green	Independent member	
Lisa Greenhalgh	Independent member	Chair: Audit Committee
Jade McDonald	Student member	Elected
David Owen	Independent member	Deputy Chair & Chair of Resources Committee
Louise Robinson	Independent member	
Steven Rouke	Students' Union President	
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
David Diggle	Turley Planning Consultancy (for agenda item 11)
Steve Igoe	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Paul Malone	Students' Union General Manager
Lana Orr	Head of Directorate Office (Observer)
Liam Owens	Director of Student Recruitment (for agenda item 9)

Apologies

Simon Pope	Independent member
------------	--------------------

The Chair welcomed Roy Bayfield, Director of Corporate Communications, to his first meeting as the newly elected Support Staff Governor and Lana Orr, Head of Directorate Office, who was attending as an observer.

BG.15.050 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest specific to the meeting.

BG.15.051 Chair's Announcements

There were no Chair's Announcements.

BG.15.052 Chair's Action

There was no Chair's Action to report.

BG.15.053 Minutes of the previous meeting

Received: Document BG/037/15

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2015 were agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

BG.15.054 Action Log

Received: Document BG/038/15

The Action Log was received noting all actions as complete.

BG.15.055 Matters arising not included elsewhere on the agenda

There were no other matters arising.

SECTION A ITEMS

BG.15.056 Sports Centre Licences

Received: Document BG/039/15

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor sought approval for the licences which allowed Edge Hill Enterprises Ltd to manage the University's sports facilities under a formal Licence to Occupy. The seven licences were for twelve months or less and would be subject to annual renewal,

allowing for potential transfer back to the University at a future date as changes of use for some of the facilities might apply.

The Board approved Licences to Occupy for Edge Hill Enterprises Ltd in respect of: The New Sports Building; Sporting Edge; The New Gym; The Old Gym; The Old Running Track; The New Running Track, Five-a-side Courts, Hockey Pitch, 3G Synthetic Pitch and Football/Rugby fields and The Tennis Court.

Action: Deputy Vice-Chancellor

SECTION B ITEMS

BG.15.057 Recruitment and Retention: The Student Journey Programme

Received: Document BG/040/15

The Director of Student Recruitment outlined the key aspects of the Student Journey Project which had been established to ensure the best possible student experience from point of enquiry through to graduation enhanced through the use of sector-leading services, systems and processes benchmarked against modern, effective customer service models such as Amazon.

Whilst some Universities had undertaken expensive major business process engineering projects to address crisis issues in student administration, it was noted that this was not the case at Edge Hill, rather that the programme would build on successful practice by adding coherence across the variety of Departments involved in student processes, avoiding duplication and overlap. In particular, by placing the student at the heart of the experience, it was hoped the University would gain valuable insight into student emotional responses, perceptions, views and behaviours which would impact favourably on conversions, completion rates and student satisfaction thereby adding competitive advantage as well as increasing efficiency and reducing costs.

The programme involved Academic Registry, Admissions, Student Recruitment and Student Services encompassing 23 discreet projects with 4 workstreams. Staff from the Services were enthusiastic, welcoming the opportunity to engage with, and lead, reviews of their own areas. Work was still at an early stage and it was expected that groups would report back in the autumn.

In discussion, it was noted that capturing the student voice was vital and it was for each group to determine how this could best be achieved. The programme did not cover the student academic experience.

Thanking the Director of Student Recruitment for the presentation, the Board received the report on the Student Journey Programme.

BG.15.058 Estates Masterplan

Received: Document BG/042/15

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor outlined the need to refresh the Estates Strategy given the changing business and political context and the national and local planning environment. He highlighted the achievements to date and asked the Board to consider what kind of strategy would be appropriate assuming status quo in terms of institutional size, no borrowing and a fixed income generating regular surpluses of around £10 million.

The Board split into four discussion groups. Detailed feedback was noted by the representative from Turleys and is attached to the minutes. Major points of consensus were:

- Support for continued high quality investment to enhance the student experience both academic and social;
- Support for both on and off-campus projects, especially in terms of residential accommodation;
- Maximising the use of existing facilities such as the Hub, LINC and Rose Theatre including the potential for developing a 'Social Strategy';
- Upgrading older elements of the existing campus such as the back halls;
- Exploration of partnership working and further retail opportunities;
- Careful appraisal of proposals such as a new Library or Students' Union building to ensure these would meet long-term needs given changing behaviour and demands and the impact of further technological developments.

In discussion, the Vice-Chancellor highlighted the changing nature of Health provision and the need to consider investment within partnership settings in order to maintain influence.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor thanked members for the helpful contribution to the next phase of the development of the Strategy.

BG.15.059 Green Paper: Update

Received: Document BG/041/15

The Vice-Chancellor introduced this item which included the University's formal response to the consultation drawn from discussions across the institution. He drew attention to the specific nature of the questions suggesting that there would be little opportunity to influence strategy and noting that the White Paper was expected to be published shortly.

In considering the major aspects of the proposals, the Vice-Chancellor highlighted the following points:

- The approach of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) aligned well with the regulations for private utilities in focusing on targets and penalties with a view that sufficient regulation would lead to enhanced performance without consideration of the mechanisms used to achieve outcomes;
- Determination to introduce the TEF was not based on evidence of poor teaching although some unfairness in the current system, such as the variation in contact hours, might be perceived. As currently outlined, the impact of the TEF might have unintended outcomes on institutional reputations;
- The link between levels of excellence and the ability to lift fees in line with inflation was an irrelevance in the current financial climate and could be counter-productive in terms of the overall reputation of British Higher Education;
- The emphasis on marketisation, opening up competition and allowing institutions to fail was embedded in the proposals representing a particular government mindset which was unlikely to shift.

In discussion, it was noted that higher education did not represent a true market and that managed institutional failure had always been a part of the landscape but handled out of the spotlight through mergers which did not impact on student outcomes.

Members recognised the importance of the proposals in the Green Paper and thanked the Vice-Chancellor for his insightful report.

BG.15.060 Any other Business

The Chair thanked Richard Benjamin for his help in facilitating a very successful meeting at the Museum and for the informative preceding tours.

SECTION C ITEMS

BG.15.061 Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 21 March 2016.