

BOARD OF GOVERNORSMinutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2018

Present

Clive Edwards	Independent member	Chair of the Board
Lesley Munro		Clerk to the Board
Martin Ainscough	Independent member	
Paul Aplin	Academic staff member	Elected
Roy Bayfield	Support Staff member	Elected
Julian Bucknall	Independent member	
Graeme Collinge	Independent member	Chair: Resources Committee
Thomas Dodd	Student member	Elected
Christine Donnelly	Independent member	
Clive Elliott	Independent member	
Lisa Greenhalgh	Independent member	Deputy Chair & Chair: Audit
Tony Rankin	Independent member	
Louise Robinson	Independent member	
George Talbot	Academic staff member	Academic Board nominee

In attendance

Mark Allanson	PVC (External Relations)
Lynda Brady	PVC (Student Experience) & University Secretary
Seth Crofts	PVC/Dean Health & Social Care
Steve Igoe	Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Paul Malone	Students' Union General Manager
Lynnette Turner	PVC/Dean Education

Apologies

John Cater	Vice-Chancellor	Ex-officio
Mike Rush	Independent member	
Ben Whittle	Student member	Students' Union President

Sabbatical

Rob Green	Independent member
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Absent

Denise Walker	Independent member
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BG.17.062 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

BG.17.063 Chair's Announcements

.01 Proposed Change of name: UCLAN

The Chair reported that the University of Central Lancashire had put forward a proposal for a change of name to the University of Lancashire. It was noted that there were three Universities in Lancashire and it was agreed such a change was therefore highly inappropriate. **The Board resolved that the proposed change of name for the University of Central Lancashire should be vigorously opposed.**

Action: Chair

.02 New member

Paul Aplin was welcomed as the newly elected academic staff governor.

BG.17.064 Chair's Action

There was no Chair's Action to report

BG.17.065 Minutes of the previous meeting

Received: Document BG/046/17

With reference to minute 17.055 relating to the report on Key Performance Indicators, it was noted that further discussion was required to agree the final content and format of this report.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor requested that any suggested amendments or additions to the already provided KPI's be provided to him via the Clerk.

Action: All

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2017 were then agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

BG.17.066 Matters arising not included elsewhere on the agenda

There were no other matters arising.

SECTION A ITEMS

There were no Section A items.

SECTION B ITEMS

BG.17.067 Medium Term Forward Strategy

*Received: Document BG/047/17
(Clerk's Note: Presentations were circulated prior to the meeting and copies are held in the minute book)*

The Chair introduced this session with presentations from the PVC/Deans and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor to facilitate discussion of medium term strategy in the light of challenges such as recruitment, retention, NSS and TEF and highlighting any opportunities for future development.

.01 Faculty of Health and Social Care

The PVC/Dean of Faculty, Seth Crofts, presented a positive picture of Faculty development in recent years with an enhanced portfolio, strong partnerships, good retention and excellent NSS results. Challenges in recruitment were acknowledged following the introduction of tuition fees for professional undergraduate programmes as was continuing to source appropriate placements given the volatility of the NHS environment. The negative impact of fee charges on the mature student market was particularly disappointing. Nevertheless, the Faculty was alert to the potential for new growth through schemes such as Nurse Associates and Nursing Apprenticeships and expected to build on the recognised demand for more qualified health professionals using the strong relationships established with partners to expand provision wherever possible.

Longer term aims to establish a small undergraduate medical school, increase postgraduate presence and further grow research and consultancy work were critical to moving the Faculty forward. The

importance of the expansion of simulation facilities, which were a distinctive element of the EHU brand was highlighted as a key part of the strategy.

In discussion, the following points were noted:

- Whilst nurse training provision was becoming more competitive, recruitment remained relatively buoyant although certain specialisms were proving challenging;
- The requirement for employers to commit to a four-year salary provision on top of the government's apprenticeship levy could undermine the Nursing Apprenticeship scheme with the two-year Nursing Associate Scheme perhaps being more adaptable;
- The establishment of an undergraduate medical school would carry associated costs although these could be minimised by building on collaborative arrangements already established with hospitals such as Alder Hey as clinical partners. Some staff and portfolio enhancement would be necessary in areas such as biomedical science which also offered an opportunity for inter-faculty working. Whilst the costs for clinical staff were high, they would be employed on fractional contracts;
- There was a demand for more undergraduate medical places nationally and an opportunity for new providers offering a different kind of added value. The University had built a strong reputation with potential partners and had received significant support for its initial application to establish an undergraduate medical school;
- Faculty income contribution to the University was currently in the region of £15 million, estimated to rise to around £25 million by 2020 with the developments outlined in the presentation. Provision of applied health and social care programmes offered the most profitable income line with student numbers in this area forecast to reach 1,000 by 2020. Consultancy and enterprise activity was also targeted for growth;
- It was noted that professional healthcare training carried only small profit margins and that medical school students (planned intake 30) would initially be a drain on resources but that the establishment of a medical school offered a major enhancement of provision with wider development potential. In terms of risk, it was important for

the Faculty to use the opportunities provided by its growing reputation to avoid stagnation and enhance the University's standing;

- The development of simulation facilities was integral to the Faculty's strategic plan and, whilst there were costs attached, enhanced provision offered opportunities for collaboration and sharing expertise across faculties.

In concluding discussion, **the PVC/Dean of Health and Social Care extended an invitation to members to tour the Faculty to view facilities.**

Action: Clerk

.02 Faculty of Arts and Sciences

The PVC/Dean of Faculty, George Talbot, presented the medium-term strategy for the Faculty which recognised current challenges, especially around demographics, whilst identifying development opportunities in areas such as international recruitment and research collaboration.

He stressed the importance of maintaining brand and reputation through the demographic downturn for young student recruitment and the consequent continued emphasis on high entry standards (even at the expense of smaller cohorts), good retention and employability rates and excellent TEF scores. In terms of Faculty potential, new programme areas were being developed but opportunities such as apprenticeship schemes and accelerated degrees were likely to be of limited value. There was however a significant opportunity to develop international recruitment from its current low base of less than 2% to around 10%.

The further development of research capability and output was a critical element of the University's strategy to enhance brand and reputation with the most significant contribution coming from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. The number of PhD completions had increased appreciably and work was in hand to develop capacity across the institution with an expectation that around 75% of staff would be returned in REF 2021.

In discussion, the following points were noted:

- The large size and diversity of the Faculty was noted whilst recognising the current structure was operating well;
- The need to obtain more work placement opportunities for students in the Faculty was noted with currently only around 3% participating;
- The Foundation Year offered to international students was not available to the domestic market although the University did run a major access programme for older students (Fastrack) which recruited well;
- Whilst the University was committed to maintaining entry standards, consideration was given to appropriate compensation to committed applicants once results were available;
- Work was in hand to develop international opportunities with a British Council accreditation visit for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) provision anticipated and further collaborations with Chinese institutions being explored. It was also hoped to increase exchange activity. The importance of maintaining an intake mix from a variety of countries was noted;
- The potential to extend the current range of Integrated Masters programmes (4 year undergraduate programmes leading to a Masters qualification) was noted;
- It was noted that whilst Faculty recruitment had increased its national reach, around 75% of students were still drawn from the North West region. It was reported that the University's recruitment strategy was based on targeted relationship management using an algorithm to maximise effectiveness in generating applications. This was being modified to take account of acceptance rates;
- In relation to resource allocation, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor confirmed that this was strongly linked to activity and was reviewed annually in budget meetings;
- The potential for development of distance-based on-line provision was seen to be limited and rarely profitable with the market for Massive Open On-line Courses (MOOCs) dominated by a small number of large providers.

Members thanked the PVC/Dean of Arts and Sciences for his presentation.

.03 Faculty of Education

The PVC/Dean of Faculty, Lynnette Turner, outlined the current position of the Faculty which was facing significant challenges in the light of ever changing government policy towards the training of teachers. She emphasised the Faculty's well-established reputation for the provision of teacher training and the importance of a likely Ofsted inspection this year in enhancing the Faculty's potential in this area. The impact of government policy had been keenly felt in the recent reduction in applications at Secondary and PGCE levels driving a commitment to diversify provision to cover a wider range of programmes relevant to the field of Education more generally. The Faculty had recently restructured to provide a more effective base for the future.

Alongside portfolio development, the Faculty was seeking to grow its research base, tapping into the extensive partnership network of schools and colleges which underpinned its work.

In discussion, the following points were noted:

- Immediate priorities for the Faculty were diversification, delivery on TEF indicators and building research;
- Continual changes in policy coupled with the well-publicised stresses and strains on the profession were contributing to a crisis in both the recruitment and retention of teachers nationally;
- The emphasis on school-based qualification routes combined with the general pressures on schools made it more difficult to find appropriate placements for trainees. No-cost professional development opportunities could sometimes be used as a way to build relationships and lever commitment to placement provision;
- The operation of schools and colleges as businesses could provide opportunities for targeted leadership training;
- The Faculty was being well-supported by the University through a challenging period.

Members thanked the PVC/Dean of Education for her presentation.

.04 University

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor presented the University's position in relation to the sector highlighting the success of the institution in recent years in the context of an increasingly challenging and volatile environment. He drew attention to demographic changes which had impacted negatively on demand (especially in relation to the University's current ethnic profile), increased regulation through the new Office for Students (OfS) and rising cost pressures - all of which underlined the need to nurture a distinctive brand and enhance reputation in order to prosper. The decline in applications to low tariff institutions was particularly marked and added weight to the University's decision to maintain entry standards even if that meant some resizing of the business. The strength of the University's financial position provided a buffer over the next few difficult years although careful cost management would be key to allowing the continued investment needed for the University to be in the best position to benefit when the upturn in the birth-rate fed through to the sector.

In discussion, the following points were noted:

- Cost management was a priority but this was already a well understood discipline within the University through regular meetings with budget holders;
- Future investment proposals would need to be clearly identified against strategic priorities;
- Tight control of staff costs was already in place with VC/DVC approval required for every post advertised. Careful management allowed for investment in new and growing areas/disciplines where this was required;
- Whilst application rates had fallen in some areas, the University could ameliorate this to some extent with further improvements in retention;

Members thanked the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for his presentation.

Concluding discussion overall, members welcomed the opportunity provided for discussion through the presentations which had offered a

valuable Faculty perspective on future strategy. The Chair thanked all the presenters for their contributions.

Resulting from the evening's discussions, **the following items were noted for future Board consideration:**

- **International Strategy**
- **Revised Strategic Plan and associated KPIs**

Action: Clerk

BG.17.068 Any other Business

There was no other business.

SECTION C ITEMS

BG.17.069 Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 26 March 2018.