

Board of Governors

CONFIRMED MINUTES

DATE: 13 October 2022

TIME: 4:00pm

LOCATION: CSM Hospitality Suite, Llandaff Campus.

Governors Present:

1. John Taylor (Chair of the Board)
2. Professor Cara Aitchison (President & Vice-Chancellor)
3. Nick Capaldi (Independent Governor)
4. Roisin Connolly (Independent Governor)
5. Venky Gonavaram (Student Governor – SU President)
6. Sheila Hendrickson-Brown (Independent Governor)
7. Dr Malcolm James (Academic Staff Governor)
8. Menai Owen-Jones (Co-Vice Chair and Independent Governor)
9. Professor Myra Nimmo (Independent Governor)
10. Professor Kelechi Nnoaham (Independent Governor)
11. Kirsty Palmer (Academic Board Representative Governor)
12. Natalia-Mia Roach (Student Governor – SU Vice-President)
13. Dr Chris Turner (Co-Vice Chair and Independent Governor)
14. Alison Thorne (Independent Governor)
15. Scott Waddington (Independent Governor)
16. Denn Yearwood (Professional Services Staff Governor)

In attendance:

1. Professor Jacqui Boddington (Pro Vice-Chancellor Student Engagement)
2. Professor Sheldon Hanton (Pro Vice-Chancellor Research & Innovation)
3. Professor Rachael Langford (Deputy Vice-Chancellor)
4. David Llewellyn (Chief Officer (Resources))
5. Professor Julia Longville (Dean of Cardiff School of Education & Social Policy) – for agenda item 8
6. Emily Voisin (Governance Officer)
7. Greg Lane (Head of Governance and Deputy Clerk to the Board) - minutes

# Part A (1): Items for Brief Discussion and/or Approval

# Apologies for Absence and Preliminaries (agenda item 1)

## The Chair welcomed Natalia-Mia Roach (SU Vice-President Student Voice) to their first meeting on the Board of Governors.

## Apologies for absence were received from Karen Fiagbe, Chris Pilgrim, Paul Matthews, Matthew Tossell and David Warrender (all Independent Governors). Apologies for absence were also received from Christine Fraser (University Secretary and Clerk to the Board) and Mairwen Harris (Head of Strategy, Planning and Performance).

## Apologies for lateness were received from Sheila Hendrickson-Brown, Professor Kelechi Nnoaham and Alison Thorne (all Independent Governors) and Denn Yearwood (Professional Services Staff Governor).

# Declarations of Conflict of Interest (agenda item 2)

## There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

# Minutes: 7 July 2022 (agenda item 3)

## The Board Resolved:

## To approve the minutes of 7 July 2022.

# Matters arising (agenda item 4)

## There were no matters arising.

# Chair’s Report (agenda item 5)

## The Chair of the Board updated that he had compiled an initial note on proposed changes to the Governor level Committee structure. The main aim was to ensure that the work of the Board and its committees was creative and forward thinking and able to help the University achieve and deliver the objectives of the new Strategic Plan ‘Strategy 2030’. Future discussions would centre on how best Governors could add value. The Chair advised that he had met with Committee Chairs, the Governance and Nominations Committee and VCEG to discuss initial proposals. Work on the development of the proposals was ongoing.

## The Chair provided a brief update on UCEA related matters following his attendance at the UCEA Board meeting on 11 October 2022.

## The Chair informed the Board that he had attended a ChUW meeting at Aberystwyth University on 5 October 2022. The meeting had a full and frank exchange of information and views about the upcoming challenges facing the University Sector over the next few years. The meeting covered future planning and preparedness for Covid, the impact of the cost-of-living crisis for staff and students, the impact of increased inflation on university finances, the implementation plan/timetable for the new Tertiary and Research Commission (TERC) and progress against the Camm Review of Governance.

## The Board Resolved:

## To note the Chair’s Report.

# Vice-Chancellor’s Report (agenda item 6)

## The Vice-Chancellor presented their report that covered a range of matters including: University Finance; Support with the cost of living for staff and students; headline results from the University staff survey 2022; the University’s performance in UK League Tables; the University’s success on Graduate Prospects; an update on Universities UK work on Changing the Culture; an update on the University’s preparedness for a Covid outbreak; an update on the recruitment of senior staff; and an update on sporting success and achievements by University students, staff and alumni over the summer months.

## Board members had brief discussions on: the impact of the support the University was providing to staff and students in response to the cost-of-living crisis; the University’s approach to international student recruitment with specific reference to UK Government immigration rules; and specific aspects of the staff survey results re career development and opportunities for personal growth.

## The Board Resolved:

## To note the Vice-Chancellor’s Report.

# Students’ Union Update (agenda item 7)

## The Student Governors jointly presented the Students’ Union Update. The SU Vice President Student Voice confirmed that all recruitment to the SU Leadership Team had been completed and relevant training had been delivered. The SU Vice President conveyed that the Fresher’s Fayre held on Cyncoed campus on 21 September had been very successful with a record 5,610 students attending the Fayre. Both SU sport and SU societies had received good levels of sign ups with many welcome events and trial events having taken place. The SU Vice President advised the Board that Centro, the SU’s facility at Cyncoed had been refurbished and was proving to be very popular with students.

## The SU President Affairs and Community highlighted a range of student concerns that had been raised with the SU. These concerns related to the cost-of-living crisis, student housing, and student space – particularly on the Llandaff campus.

## Board members expressed concern about the impact that the cost-of-living crisis and student housing problem was having on students. It was recognised that most universities located in urban areas of the UK were experiencing similar problems. Board members recognised that these issues could have a detrimental effect on students’ mental health and wellbeing. Board members agreed that these issues should be kept high-upon the Board’s agenda. The Pro Vice Chancellor for Student Engagement informed the Board of initiatives that were being taken forward to ensure that students had all possible guidance, assistance and support available.

## A Board member who had attended the Fresher’s Fayre advised that he had spoken to staff on the Cardiff and the Vale Health Board stall about student registration with GPs. Unfortunately, student sign up on the day had been limited. The Board member therefore asked the University and SU to promote GP sign up in order to help ease potential pressure on local health services.

## Board members discussed the lack of student space on Llandaff campus for activities run by student societies and queried how the University and the SU were working together to overcome this problem. It was acknowledged that the SU needed to be visible to students on both campuses.

## The Board Resolved:

## To note the Students’ Union Update.

## Part A (2): Items of Specific Importance for Discussion and/or Approval

# Estyn Inspection Outcome Report: Report on Cardiff Partnership for Initial Teacher Training (agenda item 8)

## The Dean of Cardiff School of Education and Social Policy provided a PowerPoint presentation on the Estyn Inspection Outcome Report. The inspection on the Cardiff Partnership for Initial Teacher Education was carried out from December 2021 to July 2022. It was explained that the Partnership comprised the University, its initial teacher education (ITE) partnership schools, other universities, consortia and local authorities. The partnership provided three programmes of ITE covering PGCE Secondary (11-18), PGCE Primary (3-11) and BA (Hons) Primary Education with QTS (3-11).

## The Estyn Inspection Outcome Report advised that *‘The Cardiff Partnership is founded on strong collaborative working relationships and a sense of mutual endeavour. Partnership members share a vision for initial teacher education, rooted in national priorities with a commitment to developing high quality professionals. Senior leaders provide strong and sensitive leadership. There is a clear leadership structure that allows all partners to play to their strengths and work together effectively for the benefit of students’.*

## The Dean of School provided background context from the previous inspection that had advised that whilst performance was assessed as ‘adequate’ the prospects for improvement had been deemed as ‘unsatisfactory’. A significant amount of improvement work had been carried out prior to the inspection in 2021-22. The Dean of School highlighted the values used to drive the Partnership and detailed the composition of its members. The process for inspection visits was also outlined.

## The Dean of School highlighted six outcomes of the inspection. These were as follows:

## The partnership is founded on strong collaborative working relationships and a sense of mutual endeavour;

## Partnership members share a vision for initial teacher education;

## Senior leaders provide strong and sensitive leadership;

## Despite the challenges of Covid, the partnership worked creatively with its partner schools to deliver placements;

## The partnership fully supported students’ wellbeing;

## The promotion of a strong research culture.

## The Dean of School highlighted that the inspection had yielded four specific recommendations: These were:

### Improve students’ lesson planning skills;

### Improve students’ critical skills, especially in relation to linking theory and practice;

### Improve the quality of mentoring;

### Strengthen the continuity and progression of learning experiences in all programmes.

## The Dean of School highlighted that work would be undertaken to: enhance students’ ability to reflect critically on their teaching; ensure quality and consistency of teaching in the University; improve the structure and content of the University-based programme; and ensure impact and quality of self-evaluation.

## The Board noted the significant improvements made on the Partnership and congratulated the Dean of School and her team on the results of the Inspection Outcome. Board members discussed potential barriers to the successful recruitment of student teachers with particular reference to the relative lack of BAME student teachers and the need for an increased number of student teachers able to teach in the Welsh language.

## The Board Resolved:

## To note the Estyn Inspection Outcome Report.

# Students’ Union Annual Report for 2021-22 (agenda item 9)

## The Student Governors jointly presented the Students’ Union Annual Report. The report set out the SU’s achievements over 2021-22 in building back after the Covid-19 pandemic. The report highlighted the following: SU representative arrangements; work on SU elections; role of SU societies; work on volunteering; commitment and work on fair trade and environmental issues; work on the Cardiff Met Award; provision of SU sport and running of Varsity contests. The report outlined work on campaigns and events covering a range of matters including, period dignity, support for freshers, provision of night-time events, Diwali, international student welcome, and promotion and support of student wellbeing. The report also highlighted the provision of SU advice and support to students, work on EDI and engagement with further education and transnational education partners.

## Board members commended the SU on the report and the wide range of activities that the SU had undertaken over 2021-22 academic year. Board members were advised that the SU was planning a Governance and Democracy review. This would help inform the SU’s future work in engaging with students – particularly in relation to elections – with a view to increasing student participation in the process.

## The Board Resolved:

## To note the Students Union Annual Report for 2021-22.

# National Student Survey Results 2022 (agenda item 10)

## The Pro Vice Chancellor for Student Engagement presented the report that detailed the University’s performance in the National Student Survey Results 2022. The report identified activity strands to respond and enhance the student experience and effect improvement in the 2022-23 academic year.

## The NSS Results for 2022 had been very disappointing with the Overall Satisfaction score falling from 76% (2021) to 72% (2022) and falling below sector average by 4%. This resulted in the University falling to 8th in Wales, out of 9 HEIs (from third the previous year). This had contributed to a notable drop in league table rankings across the Complete University Guide, the Times Good University Guide and the Guardian University Guide. The Pro Vice Chancellor advised that the University had, in conjunction with the Students’ Union, developed detailed action plans for submission to HEFCW. The detailed action plans were developed at university, theme and programme levels to address concerns identified. The Action Plans and related documentation were appended to the report.

## The Pro Vice Chancellor provided further observations on the tabulated information in the report covering the University’s performance against all themes in the NSS and student satisfaction levels for individual programmes. The Pro Vice Chancellor also informed the Board of specific actions and enhancements for 2022-23 academic year covering a range of areas including School NSS Review and Monitoring Meetings, work of the Student Insight Team, introduction of Module Evaluation software, targeted staff induction, improved communication with students and the formation of a Student Experience Working Group.

## Board members discussed the NSS Results 2022 in detail and noted that relevant action plans had been developed and submitted to HEFCW. Board members had a brief discussion on how the University tracked and managed student expectations. Board members also discussed the relationship between Entry Tariffs and student satisfaction and retention.

## The Board Resolved:

## To note the Report on the University’s National Student Survey Results for 2022.

## To note detailed Action Plans and related documentation appended to the Report.

# Student Recruitment Update (agenda item 11)

## The Deputy Vice-Chancellor introduced the report and provided an update on student recruitment numbers versus expectation from all mode, level and domicile groups. The Board was advised that Home Undergraduate recruitment was over expected levels by 153 but that enrolments were at expectation. Postgraduate Home recruitment was less than expected (-107) so that Overall Home recruitment was +74 (including part time) but could be under by up to 80 depending on final enrolment.

## The Deputy Vice Chancellor advised that Overseas conversion had been lower than in previous years meaning lower than expected recruitment (91% of total at the time), although this total was still significantly higher than in previous years. The overall plan for this intake was for a similar Home number and an increased Overseas Postgraduate cohort that would increase the total. The Deputy Vice Chancellor informed the Board that whilst the sources were not as expected, the pattern remained. Overall recruitment was at 99% expectation.

## The Board Resolved:

## To note the Student Recruitment Update.

# Governance and Nominations Committee Summary Report (3 October 2022) and Annual Report for 2021-22 (agenda item 12)

## The Chair of Governance and Nominations Committee presented the 3 October 2022 Meeting Summary Report and the Annual Report for 2021/2022. The Committee had held a useful discussion with the Chair of the Board on the review of governance and committee structure that was being undertaken following Governor appraisal discussions. The Committee looked forward to receiving an updated draft of proposals at its meeting in January 2023.

## The Chair of the Committee provided an update on work the Committee was undertaking on achieving Board Diversity. The Committee would develop an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan for the Board in accordance with Camm Review and Charter requirements. To this end the Chair would meet with Staff Network representatives to seek their views in the development of the Plan.

## The Board Resolved:

## To note the Governance and Nominations Committee 3 October 2022 Summary Report.

## To approve the Governance and Nominations Committee Annual Report for 2021/22 for publication on the University’s website.

# Campus 2030 Programme Board (agenda item 14)

## The Vice Chancellor provided the Board with an oral update on the first meeting of the Campus 2030 Programme Board meeting that had been held on 11 October 2022. The Programme Board had considered two options for investment in the University’s sports estate via a fully costed needs-based assessment provided by Tom Pinnington, Director of the Sports Consultancy. The Programme Board concluded that building a new facility on Cyncoed campus was the preferred option to be pursued rather than taking on the Council owned Pentwyn Leisure centre on a leased basis. The new building on Cyncoed campus was viewed as the most financially advantageous option and would add the greatest value to student experience. The Programme Board meeting had also received a presentation from Simon Trew, Regional Director of Stride Treglown on early design concepts for the proposed new build facility on Cyncoed campus.

## The Vice Chancellor advised that the Programme Board had also considered revisions to its terms of reference. This included appointing Alison Thorne (Independent Governor) as Chair of the Programme Board. The revised terms of reference were tabled for the Board of Governors to consider and approve.

## The Board Resolved:

## To note the oral update from the meeting held on 11 October 2022.

## To approve the revised terms of reference for the Campus 2030 Programme Board.

## To approve the appointment of Alison Thorne (Independent Governor) as Chair of the Campus 2030 Programme Board.

## To approve the appointment of Professor Cara Aitchison (Vice Chancellor) as Vice Chair of the Campus 2030 Programme Board.

# Any Other Business

## The Chair of the Board informed Board members that Denn Yearwood (Professional Services Staff Governor) would retire as a Board member at the end of November 2022. This was therefore his last Board meeting. The Chair and Board members thanked Mr Yearwood for his contribution as a staff governor over the previous three years.

## There was no other business raised.

## Part B: Items for Noting

# Audit Committee Summary Report (26 September 2022) (agenda item 14)

## The Board Resolved:

## To approve the amendments made to the Campus 2030 Estates Programme Board.

(Meeting concluded: 6:25pm)

**John Taylor  
Chair of the Board of Governors**