

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd October 2016

The Board held a one minute's silence in remembrance of Dr Aude Leonetti, formerly Vice Chair.

1. APOLOGIES AND ABSENCES

1.1 For a record of attendance and apologies, please see attached list.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 No declarations were made.

3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

3.1 The minutes were received and agreed by the Committee as an accurate record of the meeting held on 4th July 2016.

3.2 The Clerk advised the Board that the Privy Council had notified the University on the day of the Board meeting that the proposed changes to the Instrument and Articles of Government have been accepted. Formal confirmation will be received within a few days.

3.2 The Board received the notes of the Board Strategy Away Day held on 24th September 2016. The Chair thanked colleagues for their active and enthusiastic engagement at the event.

3.4 As a result of group discussions at the Away Day extensive feedback had been received on the business planning work associated with financing the Capital Development Programme. A number of questions had been raised that the Board would like addressed in preparation for its formal decision in November on the financing strategy and application to HEFCE for additional borrowing. The Chair explained these questions would be answered through four channels:

- The presentation of the Credit Story by the Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive later on the Agenda of this meeting.
- Papers and presentations relating to the workshop on the 24th October that had been requested at the Strategy Away Day. Board members will be presented with the financial model and details of the key assumptions that underpin it.
- Papers for the Board's formal approval at the meeting in November 2016.
- briefing from the Clerk if there are any outstanding questions that the Chair identifies as not having been addressed. This briefing would be sent out before the meeting on 14th November 2016.

3.5 The Chair also noted that the workshops on the Review of Board Effectiveness and the work of the sub-committees had highlighted some very helpful themes and practical suggestions, some of which will be implemented before the final report of the Effectiveness Review is received. The Report will be received by the Board in February and will include additional information provided by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE). A governance consultant from LFHE is providing external scrutiny and has offered to benchmark the responses in the online questionnaire completed by Board members in the summer, with results from other Universities that have used the LFHE Toolkit.

3.6 The Board welcomed these proposals and thanked the Chair and the Clerk for the work undertaken to make the Strategy Away Day successful.

4. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

- 4.1 The Chair provided a verbal report of key developments that have taken place since the Board last met at the beginning of July.
- 4.2 It was noted that the event held to give an honorary degree to Aude Leonetti had been both moving and well-received. The Chair, the Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive, Anna Hooper and the Clerk had been present, along with Aude and her family and friends. Anna Hooper has kindly agreed to represent the Board and the University at a remembrance day to celebrate Aude's life that will take place on 22nd October 2016.
- 4.3 During the summer the Chair conducted the annual appraisals of the Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive and the Clerk to the Board. The Clerk has successfully completed her probation.
- 4.4 As was reported previously to the Board, the Chair, the Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive and the Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor (Inclusive Sport and Educational Development) represented the University at the Rio Paralympic Games. Worcester was the only University invited to attend and present at the International Paralympic Community Conference. During the visit, the University's delegation also met with the International Paralympic Academy (to discuss the University providing an education programme to support Paralympic coaches and committees throughout the world) and the organisers of the Paralympics in Japan in 2020. Contacts were also established with educational institutions in Brazil and with organisations promoting inclusive sports, such as the Student Wheelchair Games. The Board agreed that this had been very important in terms of continuing to raising the profile and enhancing the reputation of the University.
- 4.5 The Chair advised the Board that he would be attending HEFCE's Annual General Meeting and the Annual Conference of the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) in October.
- 4.6 The Board also discussed the two workshops that had been provided by HEFCE in August and September, concerning the funding of major capital developments and the process associated with the application for additional borrowing. It was agreed that these, along with the Away Day and forthcoming workshop on the business plan, had provided important opportunities for the Board to review and discuss critical aspects of the Capital Development plans and their financing, prior to the formal decision-making at the Board meeting in November 2016.

5. VICE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

- 5.1 The Board received for information and discussion the report from the Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive. A version of the report had been received by Finance and Development Committee on 26th September 2016, which included:
- the University's financial year-end position for 2015/16 – which will be better than budget;
 - financial performance in 2016/17 to date – early signs are promising and suggesting potentially another record year in terms of the number of new students registered to study at the University;
 - the summer works programme of estates developments;
 - government policy changes relating to undergraduate fees and the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF);
 - student demand for accommodation;
 - senior staff appointments.
- 5.2 The Board paper also included information concerning the University's performance in national league tables recently published and the National Student Survey (NSS).
- 5.3 It was noted that the University had risen 10 places in the *Sunday Times Good University Guide* to be ranked 90th. In *The Times* league table of teaching quality and student experience, the University was ranked joint 36th. The University has also been shortlisted as one of six Universities for the *Times Higher Education Supplement's* University of the Year award. During discussion amongst the Board, it was noted that Universities such as Worcester, with innovative shared services such as the Hive, are disadvantaged in relation

to the league table measure of academic spend. In addition, the University's mixed student profile means that its non-completion rates are sometimes a little higher than some other Universities.

5.4 **[Commercial in confidence item]**

5.5 **[Commercial in confidence]**

5.6 The Board was advised that the University held one of its regular applicant open days on Saturday 1st October and had attracted a record number of registered attendees: 779 compared to 699 last year, representing an increase of 11%. It was noted that applicant behaviours change from year to year and that the University staff continue to discuss ways to innovate, attract and retain applicants through the applications cycle.

5.7 Discussion focused on the work being undertaken by the senior leadership to engage with the LEP in order to promote the types of opportunities that had been highlighted in the first HEFCE workshop in August. The Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellor is taking a small delegation from the LEP to Valencia to show them a model adopted by a partner, which could be developed at the proposed Centre for Entrepreneurship and Business Growth.

5.8 The Board also discussed the availability and specification of teaching space. It was confirmed that whilst there is sufficient space overall to accommodate some growth in student's numbers, work is focused currently on enhancing timetable and space utilisation in terms of both efficiency and effectiveness.

6. REPORT FROM THE STUDENTS' UNION

6.1 The Board received for information the report from the Students' Union. It was noted that Welcome Week this year had been particularly successful and there had been good engagement by new students with the Union. Union officers had attended 36 course induction events.

7. **[Commercial in confidence item]**

8. CUC HIGHER EDUCATION CODE OF GOVERNANCE

8.1 The Board received for discussion and formal approval the annual review by the Clerk of the University's compliance with the CUC Higher Education Code of Governance. Whilst the University is largely compliant with the code, a number of innovations had been highlighted, reflecting particularly the University's commitment in its strategy to recognised as excellent in terms of governance.

8.2 The Board **resolved to approve** all of the recommendations. Having noted the potential additional work for the Clerk and other members of the senior leadership, it asked that these be prioritised and implemented in phases over the next two academic years.

9. FORMAL APPROVAL ITEMS

9.1 Review of Academic Governance

9.1.1 The Board received and granted formal approval for amendments to the committee structure and constitution of the committees of Academic Board, and their terms of reference. The Governor Observer noted that this proposal had been scrutinised thoroughly and was received very favourably by Academic Board.

9.2 Schedule of Delegation

9.2.1 The Board approved formally minor amendments to the Schedule of Delegation to reflect principally new senior appointments and adjustments in wording to assist internal communication of the Schedule.

10. REPORT ITEMS

10.1 Chair's Action

10.1.1 The Board received for information the report of Chair's Action that had been taken since the last meeting.

11. BUSINESS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEES

11.1 Audit Committee

11.1.1 The Board received the minutes of the meetings of the Audit Committee that was held on 13th June 2016

12.1 Finance and Development Committee

12.1.1 The Board received the minutes of the meetings of the Finance and Development Committee that was held on 26th September 2016. [*Secretary's Note: Copies of the Minutes of the meeting held on 20th June 2016 that ha been missed from the circulation, were received by the Board in its papers for the workshop o 24th October 2016*].

12.2 Academic Board

12.2.1 The Board received the minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board that was held o 6th July 2016.

12.3 Nominations Committee

12.3.1 The Board received the minutes of the meeting of the Nominations Committee that was held on 25th August 2016, to which were annexed the letters of application and CV's of the candidates proposed by the Nominations Committee for appointment to the Board. The Board approved formally the following recommendations made by the Nominations Committee:

- The appointment of **Ms Michelle Chamberlain** as Vice Chair for the next two academic years until 31st July 2018
- The inclusion of **Mr David Iddon** as a member of Nominations Committee for 2016/17.
- The appointment of **Mr Ian Smith** for a term of four years as an Independent Member commencing on 1st January 2017.
- The appointment of **Professor Gloria Agyemang** for a term of four years commencing on 1st January 2017, initially as a co-opted member and then from 1st August 2017 as an Independent Member

13. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

13.1 The Board received and approved the forward agenda for 2016/17, which also included the dates of training and development events for the Board.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

14.1 There was no other business.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

15.1 The date of the next meeting is 14th November 2016.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS ATTENDANCE – 4th October 2016

Key

= Absent with apologies.

INDEPENDENT MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

John Bateman (in the chair) Chair of the Board of Governors

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Carl Arntzen

Michelle Chamberlain

Douglas Dale

Vice-Chair

Charmian Di Nunzio

Diana Gant

Anna Hooper

David Iddon

Zadvinder Padda

Reverend Dr Alwyn Pettersen

Sarah Speck

Julie Swan

CO-OPTED MEMBERS APPOINTED BY THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

John Yelland Nominated by the Board of Governors
Odette Fielding Nominated by non-academic staff

VICE CHANCELLOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Professor David Green Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive

MEMBERS OF UNIVERSITY STAFF NOMINATED BY THE ACADEMIC BOARD

Dr Derek McDougall
Dr Richard Woolley

STUDENT MEMBERS NOMINATED BY THE STUDENTS' UNION

James Gunther Vice President: Education, Students' Union
Jade Haley President, Students' Union

CLERK TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Dr Simone Clarke Clerk to the Board of Governors

IN ATTENDANCE

Jane Britton Director of Communications and Participation
Ro Bonham Director of Finance & Resources
Dr Heather Forland Pro Vice Chancellor (International)
Professor Sarah Greer Deputy Vice Chancellor
Helen Johnstone Acting University Secretary

A Hemeka Pathiranage Vice President Worcester Students' Union
Ross Renton Pro Vice Chancellor (Students)