

THE MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 JUNE 2019

Present:

- Ms Vanda Murray
- Mr Russell Andrews
- Ms Evelyn Asante-Mensah (from minute 1809)
- Ms Amie Atkinson (from minute 1809)
- Dr David Birch
- Dr Darren Dancey
- Mrs Janet Dawson
- Mr Simon Duffy
- Ms Lucy Follon
- Mr Carlo Frondaroli
- Mr Mohammad Habeebullah
- Mr Norman Harrison
- Professor Donna Lee
- Ms Penny Macbeth
- Mr Mike Perls
- Professor Malcolm Press
- Mr Mark St John Qualter
- Mr Neil Thompson
- Mr John Varney
- Ms Karen Varty

In attendance:

- Mr Andrew Hewett (Director of Finance)
- Professor Karen Moore (Chief Operating Officer)
- Mrs Marie Morrissey (Head of Governance and Secretariat)
- Mx Anna Welsh (Students' Union President Designate)
- Professor Helen Laville (Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education) to minute 1810
- Mr Mike Sheppard (Director of Estates, Facilities and Capital Development) for minutes 1813 – 1816
- Dr David Lambrick (Deputy Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Science and Engineering) for minute 1815
- Mr Alex Thorley (Academic Registrar) for minute 1817

1806 APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Calum Mercer and Mr Miles Rothbury.

Mx Anna Welsh, Students' Union President Elect, was welcomed to the meeting.

1807 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Board members were invited to declare any possible conflicts of interest on any matters being discussed at today's meeting. No declarations were received.

Attention was drawn to the additional guidance that had been provided in relation to making declarations.

1808 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S BRIEFING

The Vice-Chancellor presented an update (BG/19/25) on University and sector developments. The main item of discussion was the report of the Augar Review of Post-18 Education and Funding, which had been published in May 2019.

1808.1 Review of Post-18 Education and Funding (Augar Review)

The Vice-Chancellor outlined a number of recommendations in the report and key issues and risks for the University. The recommendations included some positive measures that the sector had lobbied for, which included:

- The reintroduction of means-tested maintenance grants.
- Improved support for flexible and life-long learning.

Key Issues arising from the report for the University included:

- The removal of loan support for Foundation Years.
- The withdrawal of funding for level 6 and above apprenticeships for those who had previously undertaken a publicly-supported degree.
- Reduced fees without a corresponding increase in grant funding.
- The funding of high cost non-STEM subjects, such as the creative arts.

Although it was currently unclear whether recommendations arising from the review would be implemented, the Board was assured that the University was not complacent and work was currently taking place to plan for reductions. Scenario planning was taking place and there was a continued focus on achievement of the University's strategic priorities and more efficient and effective ways of working.

1808.2 Student Success

Attention was drawn to the recent success of a first year Manchester Metropolitan University student in a television quiz show.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

1809 EDUCATION STRATEGY UPDATE

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education presented an update (BG/19/26) on progress made with the University's Education Strategy.

1809.1 Current Position and Progress during 2018/19

An overview was given of the University's performance in the educational KPIs. The University had met its target on entry quality ahead of schedule and although improvements had been made in teaching quality, academic ambition and employment ambition, these had not been at the pace required.

It was concluded that a great deal of activity was taking place and that good progress had been made since the Strategy had been approved by the Board in June 2017. In particular, attention was drawn to the following:

- The development of innovative and flexible approaches.
- The empowerment and reward of talent.
- The effective use of data.
- The focus on differential student outcomes.
- Leaner and more effective systems, structures and processes.

1809.2 Metrics

It was noted that data was used extensively to monitor performance and identify areas for improvement across the University. It was suggested that it might be useful for Governors to be provided with course and department level data to help improve understanding of performance across the University.

1809.3 Staff Engagement

It was noted that, as part of the ongoing work to deliver the Education Strategy, there had been a great deal of change taking place across the University and, as a result, further work might be required on staff engagement in some areas. It was acknowledged that staff engagement and student satisfaction were very closely linked and therefore staff engagement would be a key priority in 2019/20.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

1810 ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN 2020/21 – 2024/25

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor Education presented the University's Access and Participation Plan (BG/19/27), which set out the support that would be provided to new undergraduate students from 2020/21 to 2024/25.

It was noted that the plan, which had been prepared in accordance with the guidance issued by the Office for Students, included an assessment of current performance, identified areas of challenge and outlined the University's strategic approach to addressing these areas of challenge. It included stretching and challenging targets focusing on the improvements that were expected over the five years of the plan and outlined the evaluation strategy

that would be adopted to ensure that the interventions were having the required impact.

The Board welcomed the plan, noting its alignment with the University's Education Strategy. There was discussion about the work that was taking place to improve differential student outcomes and the Board was pleased to note the actions taking place in this area.

RESOLVED

that the University's Access and Participation Plan for 2020/21 – 2024/25 be approved for submission to the Office for Students.

1811 FINANCIAL OUTTURN REVIEW

The Director of Finance presented an updated financial forecast for 2018/19. It was noted that the forecast performance was expected to be better than budget and operating performance and cash generation continued to exceed Financial Strategy targets. There was discussion about treasury management and it was noted that any changes to the University's Treasury Management Policy would be submitted to the Finance and Resources Committee for consideration.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

1812 UNIVERSITY DRAFT BUDGET FOR 2019/20 AND FORWARD OUTLOOK

The Director of Finance presented for approval a proposed budget for 2019/20 (BG/19/29) as recommended by the Finance and Resources Committee on 12 June 2019. Attention was drawn to the following points:

- Scenario planning had taken place to inform both the proposed budget and financial forecasts.
- Although the University was operating in a challenging external environment, the proposed budget would allow the University to continue to invest in key areas.
- The forecasts indicated that operating performance and cash generation would continue to exceed Financial Strategy targets, allowing the University to maintain healthy cash reserves with minimal reliance on external borrowing.
- Although there were encouraging signs of improving income diversity, particularly in international, postgraduate and research, the current political landscape presented ongoing uncertainty around governmental priorities.
- Priorities were a continued focus on quality; student recruitment and retention; delivering the expected benefits from investments, both financial and non-financial; and income diversification.

There was discussion about the current uncertain external environment and the importance of scenario planning, controlling costs and making efficiency

savings. It was agreed that the University's financial position would continue to be kept under close scrutiny to ensure a sustainable future.

RESOLVED

that the proposed budget for 2019/20 be approved.

1813 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE

Not for publication in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

1814 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE

Not for publication in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

1815 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE

Not for publication in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

1816 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE

Not for publication in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

1817 FREEDOM OF SPEECH CODE OF PRACTICE

The Academic Registrar presented for approval a revised Freedom of Speech Code of Practice (BG/19/34) for use from the start of the 2019/20 academic year. It was noted that the Code of Practice had been updated to ensure continued compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, including the new Office for Students requirements in relation to external speakers.

RESOLVED

that the revised Freedom of Speech Code of Practice be approved.

1818 MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 5 APRIL 2019

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the Board meeting held on 5 April 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

1819 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

A report (BG/19/35) was submitted setting out actions to be taken following the meeting of the Board held on 5 April 2019 and progress made with regard to those actions.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

1820 ACADEMIC BOARD REPORT

A report (BG/19/36) was submitted providing an update on business conducted by the Academic Board at its meetings on 20 May and 6 June 2019.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

1821 ACTION TAKEN BY THE CHAIR

A report (BG/19/37) was submitted outlining actions that the Chair had taken on behalf of the Board in accordance with Article 6.2 of the Articles of Government.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

1822 RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

A report (BG/19/38) was submitted by the Chief Operating Officer providing an update on risk management.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

1823 PREVENT MONITORING: RISK ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

A report (BG/19/39) was submitted informing the Board that the Office for Students had confirmed that, following submission of the University's accountability and data return, the University had demonstrated due regard to the Prevent duty and was not considered to be at higher risk of non-compliance with Prevent.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

1824 COMMITTEE REPORTS

The following Committee reports were submitted for information:

- Audit Committee Meeting – 24 May 2019 (BG/19/40)
- Finance and Resources Committee Meeting – 12 June 2019 (BG/19/41)
- Nominations and Governance Committee Meeting – 12 June 2019 (BG/19/42)
- Remuneration Committee Meeting – 12 June 2019 (BG/19/43)

1824.1 Committee Membership Changes

Arising from the Nominations and Governance Committee Meeting Report, it was noted that a number of Governors were retiring from the Board and Brenda Smith, whose Board membership had been on hold for a year, had confirmed that she would not now be returning to the Board. In light of these changes and recent new appointments, a number of changes to the Board’s committee membership were proposed as follows:

Name	Change
Evelyn Asante Mensah	To move from Nominations and Governance Committee to Audit Committee
David Birch	To move from Remuneration Committee to Finance and Resources Committee
Rowena Burns	To join Remuneration Committee
Janet Dawson	To join Finance and Resources Committee
Simon Duffy	To join Remuneration Committee
Mike Perls	To join Nominations and Governance Committee
Neil Thompson	To move from Finance and Resources Committee to Audit Committee
Karen Varty	To join Nominations and Governance Committee

RESOLVED

that the proposed changes to the Board’s Committee membership be approved

1825 MEETING DATES FOR 2020 AND DRAFT 2019/2020 AGENDA SCHEDULE

A report (BG/19/44) was submitted setting out the proposed schedule of meetings for 2020 and a draft Agenda Schedule for 2019/20.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

1826 BOARD MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

It was noted that this was the final Board meeting to be attended by the following Governors:

- Mr Russell Andrews
- Ms Amie Atkinson
- Mr John Varney

In addition, this would have been Mr Calum Mercer's final meeting. All were thanked for their contribution to the work of the Board and were wished well for the future.

1827 QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

Mr Mike Perls was congratulated for his award of MBE for services to the community of Manchester in the 2019 Queen's birthday honours list.

Signature of Chair _____

Date _____