

THE MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31 JANUARY 2020

Present: Ms Vanda Murray (Chair)
Mr Sean Anstee
Ms Evelyn Asante-Mensah
Ms Rowena Burns
Mr Darren Dancey
Mrs Janet Dawson
Mr Simon Duffy
Mr Carlo Frondaroli
Mr Mohammad Habeebullah (from minute 1856)
Mr Norman Harrison
Ms Penny Macbeth
Mr Mike Perls
Professor Malcolm Press
Mr Mark St John Qualter
Mr Neil Thompson (to minute 1861)
Ms Karen Varty
Mx Anna Welsh

In attendance: Professor Steve Decent (Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor)
Mr Andrew Hewett (Director of Finance)
Professor Karen Moore (Chief Operating Officer)
Mrs Marie Morrissey (Head of Governance and Secretariat)
Professor Jenny Watling (Pro-Vice-Chancellor International) for minute 1856
Mr Dominic Boyd (Director of Development and Alumni Relations) for minute 1857
Mr Michael Stephenson (Director of Public Affairs) for minute 1858
Ms Caroline Hilton (Director of Legal Services) for minute 1859
Mr Matt Robinson (Students' Union CEO) for minute 1859

1853 APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

Apologies for absence were received from Dr David Birch, Ms Lucy Follon, Professor Donna Lee and Mr Miles Rothbury.

Mr Sean Anstee, new Co-opted Governor, and Professor Steve Decent, new Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, were welcomed to their first meeting of the Board.

1854 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Board members were invited to declare any possible conflicts of interest on any matters being discussed at today's meeting. One declaration was received from

Mx Anna Welsh, Students' Union President, in relation to the item on the Students' Union Articles.

RESOLVED

that the declaration of interest be noted.

1855 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S BRIEFING

The Vice-Chancellor presented an update (BG/20/01) on University and sector developments. The main points of discussion included:

1855.1 Business School

The Board was pleased to note the Business School's recent success in gaining EQUIS accreditation, which meant that the Business School now held the 'triple crown' of accreditations (AACSB, AMBA and EQUIS), moving it into a group of 1% of Business Schools worldwide holding the accreditation.

Professor Julia Clarke had now left the University and taken up her new role at the University of Wolverhampton. Whilst the process to appoint a new Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellor was taking place, Professor Christine Horrocks had been appointed to the role on an interim basis.

1855.2 Coronavirus

Following the latest developments with the Coronavirus, the University had stopped all travel to China and was providing support to staff and students on an ongoing basis. The Vice-Chancellor assured the Board that the wellbeing of staff and students was a priority and the University's Incident Response Plan had been implemented.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

1856 INTERNATIONALISATION STRATEGY UPDATE

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor International presented an update (BG/20/02) on progress made with the University's Internationalisation Strategy including:

- International student recruitment
- International partnership development
- Student and staff mobility
- Alumni engagement

1856.1 Progress

Although further progress had been made, it was acknowledged that the achievement of the University's targets remained

challenging, particularly the recruitment of international students onto campus. Recent successes included the opening of the China Office and collaborations with Hubei University, China. During discussion, it was confirmed that:

- The University was focusing on other areas in addition to China.
- International fees and scholarships were kept under review to ensure competitiveness.
- A great deal of work had been undertaken to improve the University's digital presence.
- Work was ongoing to ensure provision of a high quality student experience for all students including international students.
- The data in future reports would be presented in a consistent format to help Governors to monitor performance and enable trends to be seen.

1856.2 Conclusion

The Board welcomed the progress that had been made and agreed that internationalisation remained a priority for the University. It was noted that success in international performance was dependent upon reputation and league table performance, which, in turn, were dependent upon the successful implementation of the University's Education and Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategies.

It was also noted that Business and Management was a very popular subject area for international students. This, therefore, represented an opportunity for the University in light of the recent accreditation success.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

1857 DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS UPDATE

The Director of Development and Alumni Relations presented an update (BG/20/03) on the University's Development and Alumni Relations activities.

Since additional investment into this area in 2018, the University's performance had improved and a great deal of work was taking place to increase income. This included:

- The effective promotion of philanthropic projects such as First Generation and the Manchester Poetry Library, and research projects that delivered real societal impact, to inspire potential donors.
- Delivery of engaging events.
- Increased solicitation.
- Better stewardship.

It was noted that growing the donor pipeline was a key priority and the Board had an important role to play in the following areas:

- Influencing and championing
- Introducing and opening of networks
- Attending University events and receptions

Governors welcomed the progress that had been made and noted their role in this area, particularly in helping to promote the University.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

1858 IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECEMBER 2019 GENERAL ELECTION

The Director of Public Affairs presented an analysis of the December 2019 General Election (BG/20/04) and the potential implications for the University and higher education more generally. It was concluded that, although the current political and policy landscape was challenging and uncertain, the University was reasonably well placed to deal with it. In addition, there would be opportunities for the University to implement an effective engagement strategy, working with key stakeholders, to help improve the economy and society in general.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

1859 STUDENTS' UNION ARTICLES

The CEO of Students' Union presented a report (BG/20/05) on the Students' Union incorporation project, which proposed a change to its legal structure from an Unincorporated Association to a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee (CCLG).

It was noted that the Union had worked with its own solicitors and with the University's Legal team in drawing up the proposed new Articles. Following approval by the Board, the new Articles would be submitted to the Charity Commission and to Companies House. The Union would continue to work closely with the University's Legal team on the transfer arrangements, which were expected to be completed by September 2020.

RESOLVED

that the Students' Union Articles for its new legal entity as a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee be approved.

1860 MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 29 NOVEMBER 2019

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the Board meeting held on 29 November 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

1861 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

A report (BG/20/06) was submitted setting out actions to be taken following the meeting of the Board held on 29 November 2019 and progress made with regard to those actions.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

1862 OFFICE FOR STUDENTS REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The Director of Strategic Planning presented an overview of the Office for Students (OfS) Regulatory Framework (BG/20/07) and the Board's responsibilities in assuring compliance with the Framework. The main areas covered included:

- OfS registration
- Ongoing monitoring against conditions of registration
- Interventions and sanctions
- Reportable events
- Responsibilities of Governors, the Accountable Officer and Executives.

There was discussion about the specific responsibilities for governing bodies and how the Board would receive the assurance it required to help it to discharge its duties effectively.

It was noted that an OfS Compliance Group, chaired by the Chief Operating Officer, had been established to monitor the University's compliance with the ongoing conditions of registration and to provide updates to the Board. Current priorities for the Group included:

- Assurance mapping
- Overseeing the reportable events process
- Agreeing materiality thresholds for reportable events
- Reviewing and assessing regulatory advice from the OfS

It was agreed that the Board's Audit Committee would be responsible for overseeing the University's compliance with the ongoing conditions of registration with any issues escalated to the Board as required. In the first instance, the Audit Committee would receive an update on the assurance

mapping work that was currently taking place and then as a minimum would receive an annual report.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

1863 ACTION TAKEN BY THE CHAIR

A report (BG/20/08) 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.

1864 SCHEDULE OF AGENDA ITEMS

The Schedule of Agenda Items for 2019/20 (BG/20/09) was submitted for information. There was discussion about a possible regular item on the student voice and it was agreed that consideration would be given to including this as part of the next Strategy Meeting.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

Signature of Chair _____

Date _____