

# THE MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

## BOARD OF GOVERNORS

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 MARCH 2023

Present: Simon Duffy (Chair)  
Philippa Anderson  
Sean Anstee  
Evelyn Asante-Mensah  
Dr David Birch  
Professor Tim Brennan  
Professor Darren Dancey  
Janet Dawson  
Carlo Frondaroli  
Mohammad Habeebullah  
Andrew Heyn  
Stella Ibifunmilola  
Letitia Nicole Jones  
Bridget Lea  
Professor Malcolm Press  
Miles Rothbury  
Simon Rutter

In attendance: Professor Steve Rothberg (Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor)  
Andrew Hewett (Chief Financial Officer)  
Professor Karen Moore (Chief Operating Officer and Clerk to the Board)  
Martin Conway (Head of Governance and Secretariat)  
Rachel Beckett (Director of Library and Cultural Services) for minute 2075  
Andrew Fallon (Director of Estates, Facilities and Capital Development) and Matt Hill (Assistant Director Capital Development) for minutes 2074 & 2075  
Chris Robinson (Chief Information Officer) and David Harmes (Deputy Director IT & Digital) for minute 2076  
Professor Jenny Watling (Pro-Vice-Chancellor International) for minute 2079

#### **2071 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Kate Green and Andy Forbes.

#### **2072 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Board members were invited to declare any possible conflicts of interest on any matters being discussed at the meeting. None were declared.

## **2073 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S BRIEFING**

The Vice-Chancellor presented a report on the latest University developments (BG/23/11). The key points of discussion included the following:

### **2073.1 Pay Award 2023/24 and Industrial Relations**

The Vice-Chancellor provided an update on the announcement of the pay award for 2023/24, and on industrial relations. The University had implemented the interim uplift of the 2023/24 pay award from February 2023, with the remainder of the pay award due to be applied from 1 August 2023. As part of this, the University had implemented an uplift to meet the Living Wage rate from November 2022, which meant the minimum hourly rate for staff would be £11.45, 55p more than the Living Wage. In relation to the ongoing sectoral dispute on pay, UCEA, as the body representing universities in pay negotiations, continued to engage with unions nationally, while the University continued to engage locally. The University was also managing issues resulting from industrial action, with little or minimal direct disruption to students experienced thus far.

### **2073.2 Attendance Monitoring**

A semesterised model of delivery was introduced at the start of the academic year, and early monitoring of student attendance had showed improved attendance across Semester 1 and 2, and a strong level of engagement with Future Me week.

### **2073.3 QS World University Rankings**

The Manchester School of Architecture had been named as the world's fifth best in the QS World University Rankings by Subject. This was an improvement of two places from last year, and part of a sustained improvement over the last eight years. The University had scored particularly well for citations, affirming the quality of its research.

### **2073.4 Annual Apprenticeships Awards**

On 14 March 2023 at the Annual Apprenticeship Conference, the winners of this year's awards were announced. The University had secured two Provider of the Year awards, for Care Services and Digital Apprenticeships. The Board was represented at the Conference by Andy Forbes, Independent Governor.

### **2073.5 Greater Manchester Innovation Accelerator Funding**

The recent Budget had announced a number of projects would receive funding as part of plans to create three national "innovation clusters" in Manchester, Birmingham and Glasgow. The Greater Manchester cluster would focus on: sustainable advanced materials and manufacturing; digital and tech; health innovation; and technology to become carbon neutral by 2038.

The University was leading two of the projects, the Greater Manchester Electro-chemical Hydrogen Cluster, and the Centre for Digital Innovation (CDI).

- 2073.6 UCAS Applications to Higher Education**  
New figures released from UCAS had indicated that the sector could see up to 30% more higher education applicants over the remainder of the decade. This was contrasted with static UG fee levels, and a government push for greater diversity in post-18 study and work. The Board discussed the University's ambitions for international growth and the requirement to challenge misperceptions that such growth would restrict study opportunities for home students.
- 2073.7 Other Updates**  
The Vice-Chancellor also provided information on the triple accreditation of the Business School, academic misconduct and AI, the Education Innovation Scholar Scheme, and on Student Money Week.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

## **2074 ESTATE STRATEGY AND FRAMEWORK OF PROJECTS**

The Director of Estates, Facilities and Capital Development and the Assistant Director Capital Development presented for approval the Estate Strategy 2023-2030 and Framework of Projects (BG/23/12). The Strategy had been endorsed by the Finance and Resources Committee on 1 March 2023 and was recommended for approval by the Board.

- 2074.1 Aim of the Strategy**  
The Strategy was designed to support the University's priorities of providing excellent education and delivering research with impact, as well as taking current capital investment projects through to completion. It would also support ManMet's international ambitions, and had sustainability at its core, stipulating that all new construction, refurbishment and day-to-day operations continued to meet the highest environmental standards. The Strategy also reflected the need to focus on social, wellbeing and collaborative spaces.
- 2074.2 Framework of Projects**  
A framework of projects had been developed and campus investment had been identified and categorised as immediate, short-term, medium-term and long-term, and a prioritisation exercise would be undertaken. Business cases would be brought forward for each project, within the overall provisional

investment funding envelope of the Estate Strategy and Framework of Projects, and established University governance gateways would be followed. The framework of projects was divided into a series of Lots, covering committed/completed investments 2017–2024, identified investment 2023–2030 (including the Library Transformation, the Embedded International Study Centre, the Bellhouse, and Dalton Building East), residences, and investment requirements beyond 2030.

### **2074.3 Financing**

While the University had strong revenues and surpluses to fund the Estate Strategy, there were a number of challenges, including rising inflation, supply chain market volatility, meeting student number targets and the continued achievement of the target to generate cash equal to 10% of income.

In considering the Estate Strategy and Framework of Projects the Board discussed the following:

- The approach to residences and wider pressures relating to accommodation within the Manchester City Region. The strategic approach recognised the demand from students for accommodation on campus, or close to campus, and also the needs of commuter students for a rich on-campus experience with high-quality study space. The Lot identified for Residences included the redevelopment of the Cambridge Hall as a specific priority. Partnering would also feature in the approach, both in terms of third-party funding opportunities, and in working with the City Council to ensure adequate provision.
- The need to roll out and implement the Strategy with a keen awareness of plans and developments that were close to, or directly impinged upon, the University. The University was well placed to do this through its close working with the City and partners, its representation on the Oxford Road Corridor partnership and its knowledge of private plans, acquisitions and proposals for development.
- The opportunity within the Strategy to draw out and celebrate the University's investment in decarbonisation, as this provided an opportunity to raise profile and further demonstrate the University's commitment to sustainability and net zero.

RESOLVED

that the Estate Strategy 2023-2030 and Framework of Projects be approved.

## **2075 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTE**

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

## **2076 IT & DIGITAL ROADMAP**

The Chief Information Officer and the Deputy Director IT & Digital presented for approval the IT & Digital Roadmap (BG/23/14). The Roadmap provided an outline of potential projects and costs over a four-year period, informed by the recently approved IT & D Strategy. The key points included:

- Excellent education and research with impact were the key drivers and first points of alignment for the Roadmap alongside market direction, external trends and risk mitigation.
- A clear baseline of the University's technology and licences had been built and modernisation had been balanced against short-term investments that addressed technology legacy, secure platforms, and reduced risk.
- An investment of £83m over the next four-year period was forecast to enable the ambition and Roadmap to be delivered. However, individual business cases would be developed for each project and a benefits analysis would be undertaken prior to approval.
- The IT & Digital Team had been restructured and work was ongoing to develop the culture to establish a "learn and adapt" team.
- Engagement had taken place with colleagues on the legacy applications to gain a better understanding of their capability requirements.

In considering the IT & Digital Roadmap, the Board discussed the following:

- The effectiveness of governance oversight over delivery, including reference to the focus undertaken by the Finance and Resources Committee for each project brought forward, the learning gained from the Student Journey Transformation Programme, and the independent assurance that would be provided periodically as part of the Board and Finance and Resources Committee's ongoing monitoring.
- The capacity of the University to deliver a number of strategically important initiatives simultaneously. The Strategic Programmes Office would adopt a large-scale project methodology for the projects within the Roadmap and seek to ensure a keen focus on delivery of the intended outcomes and benefits realisation.

RESOLVED

that the IT & Digital Roadmap be approved.

## **2077 REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION FROM THE FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

The Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee presented a report from the meeting held on 1 March 2023.

The Board noted the Committee's consideration of the IT & Digital Roadmap, the Estate Strategy and Framework of Projects 2023-2030, and the Library Transformation Programme Outline Business Case. The Board also noted the

Committee's recommendation concerning two proposed Revenue Works projects over £1m for summer 2023 which had been signed off by Chair's Action, based on UEG approval of the business cases. As the total project cost was £7.15m, it had been agreed, following the Committee meeting, that the recommendation should be submitted to the Board of Governors for final approval.

#### RESOLVED

- (1) that the report be received.
- (2) that that the University proceed with a project to decarbonise the Birley Energy Centre at a total cost of £7.15m, made up of a £1.52m contribution from the University and c. £5.63m of Salix funding.

## **2078 STUDENT VOICE REPORT**

The Students' Union (SU) Officers presented the Student Voice Report from Term 1, 2022/23, and an SU Officers' Update (BG/23/16).

In discussing Student Voice, the Board noted the following:

- The Student Voice Report provided information on Course Reps, PGR Academic Reps, Academic Societies, the Advice Centre and BAME Ambassadors.
- The Officers' Update highlighted work in collaboration with the University on the cost of living, accommodation, the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) submission, welfare, sport, assessment, and the Greater Manchester Student Assembly.
- The Student Voice Report and Officers' Update continued to be welcomed by members, who expressed appreciation for the additional information on student matters.

RESOLVED

that the Student Voice Report be received.

## **2079 EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ANNUAL UPDATE**

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor International presented a report (BG/23/17) providing an update on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion activity at the University for students and staff over the period 2021-2022.

In discussing the Report, the Board noted the following points:

- The staff data highlighted some key priorities for the University, including increasing ethnic and gender diversity at senior leadership level, and improving diversity in staff recruitment at all grades, including lower grades where there was a higher proportion of ethnic minority staff.
- The student data highlighted the need to maintain focus on closing and, ultimately, eliminating differential progression rates and awarding gaps for ethnically diverse students.
- The Board expressed thanks to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor International for her leadership in this area and to those across the University who had worked on this important agenda.

RESOLVED

that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Update be received.

## **2080 ACADEMIC BOARD REPORT**

The Vice-Chancellor presented a report (BG/23/18) arising from the meeting of the Academic Board held on 9 March 2023.

The Board noted the Academic Board's approval of the Doctoral Student Strategy, and the changes made to Business School department names.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

## **2081 BOARD AND COMMITTEE ARRANGEMENTS**

The Chief Operating Officer and Clerk to the Board of Governors presented a report (BG/23/19) outlining recommendations from the Nominations and Governance Committee.

*Simon Duffy and Miles Rothbury withdrew from the meeting for the discussion*

*on their reappointment.*

**2081.1 Reappointment of Independent Governors**

The Chair of the Board of Governors, Simon Duffy, was willing to be considered for reappointment as an independent member of the Board of Governors for a further 18 months until 31 December 2024.

Miles Rothbury, currently Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, had indicated that he was willing to be reappointed as an independent governor for a further three-year term of office.

The Deputy Chair, Janet Dawson, having served for eight years on the Board and recognising the maximum tenure of nine years, had indicated she would not be seeking reappointment beyond the end of her current term of office.

**2081.2 Reappointment Policy**

The Board's agreed policy on terms of office was that Governors would not usually serve more than two terms (six years) unless there were circumstances that justified reappointment for a third term (maximum nine years), e.g., fulfilling a Chair role or possessing a skillset not otherwise readily available to the Board.

**2081.3 Remuneration Committee**

The Committee acknowledged that in order to ensure a smooth transition upon the departure of the Deputy Chair, the Remuneration Committee would particularly benefit from additional support, initially on a co-opted basis.

**2081.4 Independent Governors**

Further to expressions of interest and discussions with the University and the Nominations and Governance Committee, two individuals were recommended for appointment as independent governors.

**2081.5 Finance and Resources Committee**

The Committee considered a proposal arising from the last independent Board Effectiveness Review, seeking to give greater Board emphasis to people and HR matters.

RESOLVED

that the following be approved:

- (1) The following reappointments as Independent Governors:
  - Simon Duffy, for a term of office from 1 August 2023 to 31 December 2024.



- Miles Rothbury, for a term of office from 26 September 2023 to 25 September 2026.
- (2) The appointment of the following individuals as new Independent Governors, initially for a three-year term of office from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026:
    - Jill McCormack
    - Nick Read
  - (3) The appointment of Catherine Ward as a co-opted member of the Remuneration Committee for a one-year term of office, from 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024.
  - (4) In respect of the Board's Committees, Jill McCormack should be invited to join the Audit and Risk Committee on taking up membership of the Board of Governors, and Andy Heyn should be invited to take up the Chair of the Remuneration Committee, from 1 September 2023.
  - (5) The Finance and Resources Committee be renamed as the People, Finance and Resources Committee (PFRC) with an additional meeting scheduled each year to ensure adequate coverage over all its responsibilities. The Committee should also undertake a review of its terms of reference, to ensure people matters received an appropriate level of focus and attention.

## **2082 MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 27 JANUARY 2023**

### **RESOLVED**

that the minutes of the Board meeting held on 27 January 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## **2083 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

A report (BG/23/20) was submitted setting out actions to be taken following the meeting of the Board held on 27 January 2023 and progress made against those actions.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

#### **2084 RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

A report (BG/23/21) was submitted by the Chief Operating Officer providing an update on risk management.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

#### **2085 ACTION TAKEN BY THE CHAIR**

A report (BG/23/22) 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.

#### **2086 COMMITTEE REPORTS**

The following reports were submitted for information:

- Audit and Risk Committee – 17 February 2023 (BG/22/23).
- Nominations and Governance Committee – 6 March 2023 (BG/23/24).

RESOLVED

that the reports be received.

#### **2087 SCHEDULE OF AGENDA ITEMS**

The Schedule of Agenda Items for 2022/23 (BG/23/25) was submitted for information.

RESOLVED

that the report be received.

**2088 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**2088.1 Evelyn Asante-Mensah, OBE**

On the occasion of her last meeting as an independent member of the Board of Governors, the Chair and Vice-Chancellor expressed their sincere thanks to Evelyn Asante-Mensah for the contribution she had made to the work of the Board and the University, and particularly in her role as the Board's Equality and Diversity Champion.

Signature of Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_