

University Board

04 October 2019, 09:00 to 12:30

The Boardroom, 5th floor, Poole House

Board Members and Attendees

Present

Richard Conder (Chair), Paula Alliston (Professional & Support Staff Member), Jim Andrews (Chief Operating Officer), Nicholas Beal (Independent Board Member), Graham Beards (Finance Director), John Beswick (Independent Board Member), Alistair Brien (Independent Board Member), Karima Fahmy (Independent Board Member), David Furniss (Independent Board Member), Stuart Jones (Independent Board Member), David Kane (Independent Board Member), Jean Lang (Deputy Chair), Sara Luder (Independent Board Member), Y T McIntyre-Bhatty (Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Des Pullen (Independent Board Member), Tim Rees (Academic Staff Member), John Vinney (Vice-Chancellor), Deborah Ward (Independent Board Member), Deborah Wakely (Clerk to the Board), Geoff Rayment (Corporate Governance & Committees Manager), Jane de Vekey (Head of Student Voice & Policy, SUBU (Item 4.1 only))

Meeting minutes

1. CPD Briefing: The Admincontrol Board Portal (Stephen Gillies, Admincontrol)

19/001 The meeting opened with a CPD session on the use of the new Board Portal which would be used to securely distribute papers for future meetings. The user guide and contact details for the technical support service would be circulated to Members following the meeting.

2. Welcome and Apologies (Chair)

19/002 Apologies were noted from Independent Members Annette D'Abreo, Karl Hoods, Tola Oloyede, Yemi Oluseun (Board Apprentice) and Ade Balogun (SUBU President).

3. Declarations of Interest (Chair)

New declarations and any existing declarations relevant to agenda items for this meeting

19/003 Mr Kane declared that he had been appointed Non-Executive Director of a local fund management company with effect from 1st October 2019. This would be added to the register of interests.

4. Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 5th July 2019 (Chair)

19/004 The minutes were **approved** as an accurate record.

4.1. Matters arising and actions register (Chair)

19/005 The Actions Register was noted with most outstanding actions either being on the agenda (below) or not yet due.

19/006 In respect of action 145 the COO advised that there was no specific insurance in place regarding the issues with construction company Kier, however a parent company guarantee had been put in place as part of the contract.

19/007 In respect of the actions regarding KPI reporting, Mr Beswick thanked the VC and DVC for the special sessions which had been held for new members explaining the KPIs, which had been very helpful.

19/008 Following on from the discussion at the previous meeting, the Chair welcome Jane de Vekey (Head of Student Voice and Policy, SUBU) to the meeting to give a short presentation on the SimOn student feedback mechanism. This bespoke system allowed students to provide feedback, either directly or via SUBU reps, all year round. SUBU would ensure that comments were shared with the relevant sections (for example, the Library if the comment related to Library services) or the relevant academic staff for consideration and response. It was intended to complement, rather than replicate, other feedback systems used by the University, such as MUSE (the Mid-Unit Student Experience survey).

19/009 The system provided a high level of granularity with over 9,500 comments being received in 2018/19. Feedback could be provided on any subject and the data could also provide feedback under the main headings used by

the NSS. The majority of comments related to 'Teaching on my Course' (28.3%), followed by 'Assessment and Feedback' (14.7%); 'Organisation of my Course' (11.1%) and 'Campus Facilities' (10.5%). Summary reports were produced every 3 months in addition to an annual report and work was ongoing to improve the timeliness of reporting to Faculty Executive teams. The data was provided anonymously although it was possible to segment the data according to the student representatives' cohorts.

19/010 Members asked if an alert system was provided for feedback requiring urgent action (e.g. harassment accusations). Ms de Vekey explained that this was not explicitly part of the feedback system, but that the student reps were trained to deal with such issues and the central SUBU team also reviewed the data periodically to ensure comments were being handled appropriately. The COO added that much work had been undertaken by BU to promote other routes for reporting issues of harassment and to date no cases had been raised via the SimOn system.

19/011 The Board noted the presentation and it was agreed that the slides would be circulated to Members.

ACTION: Circulate SimOn presentation slides to all Members for information.

Action by: Clerk to the Board

4.2. Report back on written resolutions (Chair)

19/012 The report was **noted** and the Chair confirmed that Mr Pullen had now been appointed to the Remuneration Committee.

5. Board and Committee Appointments (Chair) (Tabled Paper)

19/013 The Board **approved** the appointment of Dr Luciana Esteves to the Honorary Awards Committee to fill the Senate Member vacancy with effect from 5th October 2019 for a term to run consecutively with her membership on Senate.

19/014 The Board **approved**, subject to the receipt of satisfactory references, the appointment of Dr Lois Farquharson as Academic Staff member of the Board for a 3 year term effective from the Chair's sign-off of the references obtained.

6. Fundraising Regulator's Levy (COO)

19/015 The COO presented this report which was now within the Board's responsibilities following the winding-up of the Development Funding Committee. The Board was asked to approve the payment of the current year's levy to the fundraising regulator and consider delegating future approval to the University Executive Team (UET).

19/016 The Board **approved** the payment of the levy of £1,000 for 2019. The Board **delegated** authority for future years' decisions to UET, except where it was decided not to pay the levy, or if the levy was subject to a significant increase, in which case the decision would be referred back to the Board.

7. Borrowings [Confidential]

7.1. Proposal to Increase the Revolving Credit Facility (FD) (Tabled Paper)

19/017 The FD tabled a paper concerning a proposal to increase the Revolving Credit Facility (RCF). ~~UET~~

19/018 ~~UET~~

19/019 ~~UET~~

19/020 The Board were asked to note this development and the proposal which would be set out in further detail in a paper to the next meeting of the Finance & Resources Committee (FRC) in October. If content, the FRC would make a

recommendation to the Board to approve the increased RCF and this would be presented to the Board for approval via a written resolution for expediency.

19/021 **U&A**

ACTION: Circulate future FRC paper on the proposal to increase the RCF to the full Board for information.

Action by: FD

ACTION: FRC and Board to be provided with assurance on how the monthly cash flows were stress tested.

Action by: FD

7.2. Approval of Amendments to Borrowing Facility (FD)

19/022 The FD presented this paper which sought approval to enter into an amended agreement regarding the long term borrowing from Scottish Widows (a wholly owned subsidiary of Lloyds). There were no changes to the terms of borrowing, but the amendments implemented internal changes and updates to nomenclature (e.g. HEFCE to OfS). The solicitors for Scottish Widows had mandated the form of resolution required [appended at Annex A] and, if approved, the Chair would sign an extract to confirm that it was passed.

19/023 The Board **approved** the resolution.

8. Lease of part of Student Centre and part of Poole House to the Students' Union at Bournemouth University (COO)

19/024 The COO presented this report seeking approval to enter into the lease with SUBU on the terms set out in the paper.

19/025 The Board approved the disposal of part of the Student Centre and part of Poole House to SUBU by way of a lease to 27th March 2027 at nil financial consideration.

9. Renewal of Tenancy Agreement for Atlantic House, St John's Road, Boscombe (COO)

19/026 The COO sought Board approval to enter into the renewal of the Tenancy Agreement for Atlantic House, Boscombe. This student accommodation comprised 28 rooms available for postgraduate students from January to January. The renewal was for 2 years.

19/027 The Board approved renegotiating and entering into the tenancy agreement for 28 rooms in Atlantic House, St John's Road, Boscombe for a term from and including 24th January 2020 to and including 23 January 2022. The total liability for the University over the two year period is approximately £**U&A** plus the RPI increase for year 2 (maximum 4%) if no beds were filled.

10. BU 2025 Progress Report (VC)

19/028 The VC gave a presentation on progress with the implementation of BU2025, which also aimed to address the Board's previous discussions on KPIs and the NSS results. He began by setting out the ongoing sector changes. Current government priorities included seeking to secure EU research funding and Erasmus post Brexit; the reintroduction of the post study work visa for 2020/21; reviews of admissions (including post-qualification admissions); subject level TEF; the response to the Augar review (now expected next April); student protection; and access and participation.

19/029 Rates of participation in HE were increasing but numbers had fallen nationally, as expected, due to the demographic drop in the number of 18 year olds (expected to increase again from 2022). BU student numbers had grown despite the demographic dip and contributing factors for this were the improved accommodation offer; the introduction of new programmes; and growing professional and statutory body accreditation.

19/030 The VC explained that BU2025 provided a clear strategic direction against this background of continual change. He recapped the BU2025 purpose, vision, values and outcomes set out in the strategy and how these informed the KPI set.

19/031 On managing resources and performance, 2018/19 had seen changes in how the University Leadership Team and its committees were run which had improved decision-making; costs had been controlled; and the risk register had been reviewed and reset. For 2019/20 there would be a move towards budgeting on a 3-yearly cycle whilst managing

resources dynamically.

19/032 Investment in People objectives had been taken forward during the year through key academic appointments including Heads and Deputy Heads of Departments. This would continue through 2019/20 with ongoing reviews of succession planning and staff/leadership development. The changing staff profile was shown in the Critical Mass KPI and this would be updated to reflect the new Department structure. More than 79% of Professors now had at least 2 of the critical mass requirements.

19/033 The VC outlined the various methods of engagement being undertaken with staff, students and external stakeholders on the implementation of BU2025. Student engagement would be enhanced through the ViS2ION focus group (specific strategic discussions with groups of 100-200 selected students twice a year).

19/034 On Worldwide Recognition, the University had continued to focus on internationalisation on campus and had improved its ranking in the THE Young 200 league table and overall THE ranking in the UK THE Impact rankings.

19/035 The VC then turned to an analysis of the NSS results and set out the 27 questions which comprised the NSS, with the 27th question being the overall satisfaction score. The University had improved its scores across both 'learning resources' and 'assessment and feedback' and was also above sector on the learning community questions. Student Voice scores, however, had fallen significantly. The VC set out the existing student engagement mechanisms and highlighted the new ViS2ION group as well as new student staff liaison committees to enhance feedback and support the development of real-time solutions.

19/036 Turning to NSS Overall Satisfaction results across the HE sector, the majority of providers were in the 80-89% range and there was a great deal of volatility in individual providers positions. Very few scored 90% or more (only 5 in 2019). Some BU areas were high performing and others had made substantial improvements. Planning was in place to ensure that best practice was shared.

19/037 In preparation for NSS 2020 all Departments and Faculties had put response plans in place and had made changes for new and returning students. Institutional measures included changes to induction and improvements to student communications, a stronger student voice and improved placement support. Culture change was being driven through staff engagement and leadership programmes, including a new support and reward structure for programme leaders. Further investment in the physical and virtual environments would continue through 2019/20 with the opening of the Poole and Bournemouth Gateway buildings and further investment in the digital enablers programme.

19/038 Preparations continued for the Research Excellence Framework (REF) review in 2021 (with its focus on inclusivity) and the Minister had announced the launch of the Knowledge Exchange Framework this year, with consultations on the Framework and the supporting Concordat having taken place.

19/039 Work had progressed in establishing working groups for each of the Strategic Investment Areas and the first project had been approved by the Board – the Institute for the Modelling of Socio-Environmental Transformations (IMSET). Further proposals were expected to be put to the Board in the coming year.

19/040 The Board thanked the VC for his presentation and the Chair invited questions from Members. Discussions focussed on the NSS results and plans for the next survey. Members asked what the University's peer group was doing and the VC explained that there was no single successful approach. Rather they focussed on engaging students in dialogue and reviewing communications. It had to be noted that there were strict rules governing NSS communications with students, for example it should not be linked to league table results. MUSE feedback provided some opportunities to address issues mid-unit, ahead of students completing the NSS. The role of the Programme Leader was also recognised as being crucial.

19/041 Members asked whether there was clarity over the ownership of improving league table results. The COO and DVC explained the new leadership development and coaching initiatives in place for new Heads and Deputy Heads of Departments.

19/042 Members asked about how communications and engagement were maintained during students' placement years. The COO explained that there was some variation in practice, but that work was being undertaken to improve the situation and the transition for students back into study following their work placements.

19/043 Turning to research, Members discussed the ongoing measures to ensure that all staff were engaged with the research agenda, particularly given that there was only one opportunity to participate in REF during the life of BU2025. The VC explained that the University had a 3 year research plan, with REF taking place every 6 years, so the efforts were actually focused more on long-term academic sustainability than just the REF exercise. The successful mock REF exercise suggested that the majority of staff were engaged with research.

11. Any Other Business (Chair)

19/044 The COO advised Members that the Student Village lease from the Talbot Village Trust (TVT) and the possible release of an undeveloped area adjacent to car-park H to TVT were still under discussion and Board approval may need to be sought via written resolution before the November meeting.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Friday, 22 November 2019 at 9.00am to 12.30pm

13. Appendix A - Amendments to Borrowing Facility, Resolution

Extract from the minutes of a meeting of the University Board of Governors of Bournemouth University Higher Education Corporation (“Board”) held on 4 October 2019

1. At its meeting on the 7 July 2017, the Board approved in principle new long-term funding of £10m to support the BU2018 capital expenditure programme and the replacement of an existing £10m revolving credit facility.

2. At its meeting on the 24 November 2017, the Board approved:

2.1

5. The Board considered:

5.1 the terms of the Scottish Widows Amendment Documents; and

5.2 the delegation of responsibility to the Finance Director and the Vice-Chancellor (or in either or both of their absences the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and/or the Chief Operating Officer) to execute the Scottish Widows Amendment Documents on behalf of the University.

6. A copy of the Scottish Widows Amendment Documents had been circulated to all members of the Board electronically prior to the meeting (and each member attending the meeting confirmed that they have each had the opportunity to review and consider the same).

7. After due and careful consideration, and with a view to furthering the University’s charitable purposes and being in compliance with all obligations under applicable charity law, the Board unanimously **resolved** that:

7.1 it was in the best interests of the University to approve the Scottish Widows Amendment Documents;

7.2 the Finance Director and the Vice-Chancellor (or in either or both of their absences the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and/or the Chief Operating Officer), whose name and signature is set out at paragraph 8 (the “**Authorised Officers**”) are hereby authorised to execute the Scottish Widows Amendment Documents for and on behalf of the University and that such documents be dated and delivered to the other parties thereto; and

7.3 the Authorised Officers are hereby authorised (either alone or with one another in accordance with the University’s Finance Regulations) for and on behalf of the University to execute, to despatch and do all such acts, matters and things including the agreeing, signing, executing, dispatching and delivery of any deeds, documents, certificates and notices as such Authorised Officer, in their absolute discretion, may consider necessary, expedient or desirable to be done or executed in connection with the execution or performance by the University of the Scottish Widows Amendment Documents or any other document or agreement connected to such Amendment Documents.

8. The Vice Chancellor, Finance Director, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer of the University each set

out their specimen signatures below:-

Signature Name: John Vinney

Signature Name: Graham Beards

Signature Name: Tim McIntyre-Bhatty

Signature Name: Jim Andrews

I certify that this is a true and complete minute extracted from the minutes of a meeting of the University Board, the meeting was duly convened and quorate and the resolutions referred to above remain in full force and effect.

Signature:

Name: Professor R Conder

Position: Chair of University Board

Date: