

the
GOVERNING BODY

**MINUTES of the meeting of the Governing Body held on Tuesday,
17 May 2022 in Room 123, Jellicoe Building, Medway Campus, Central Avenue,
Chatham ME4 4TB / by Microsoft Teams commencing at 4:00 pm**

Present:	Ms B Hill CBE (in the Chair)	Mrs A Mehta
	Ms A Ayoub	Mr M Orr
	Professor J Harrington (Vice-Chancellor)	Ms S Ragab
	Mr R Hicks	Mr S Saluja
	Mrs D Khanna	Mr A Sharma (via Teams)
	Miss D Larnder	Mrs E Sideris
	Professor A Maragiannis (via Teams)	Professor A Westby

In attendance:

Mrs T Brighton (SEO Governing Body) (minutes)
Mr P Butler (Director of Information & Library Services)(item 21/48)
Mr C Forster (Director of Estates & Facilities)(item 21/48)
Mr P Garrod (University Secretary)
Ms H King (Director of Communications & Recruitment)(item 21/48)
Professor J Roscoe (Deputy Vice-Chancellor) (via Teams)
Mr P Taylor (Chief Operating Officer)
Ms L Watson (Chief Financial Officer)

Apologies for Absence: Mrs T King, Mr C McWilliam

GB 21/43 TOUR OF MEDWAY CAMPUS

The meeting was preceded by a tour of the Medway campus led by Professor Peter Griffiths, Interim Pro Vice-Chancellor: Faculty of Engineering and Science.

GB 21/44 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

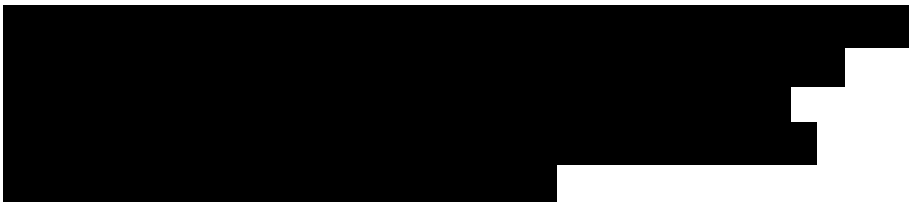
In relation to the appointment of KPMG LLP as Internal Auditors, the Chair declared a personal association with a senior manager of the company.

GB 21/45 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND ACTIONS LIST (GB 21/P76)

The minutes of the Governing Body business meeting held on 22 February 2022 and the Governing Body Strategy Session held on 25 March 2022 were approved as a correct record. The actions list was received.

GB 21/46 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT (GB 21/P77)

The Governing Body received a report from the Vice-Chancellor on recent developments:

- Following release of the REF2021 results, the University had significantly improved its research quality and research volume across all subject areas. This had enabled the University to improve its ranking in the sector by 25 places based on grade point average, taking it to join 78th place and representing the fourth greatest improvement nationally. The Governing Body recorded its thanks to Professor Javier Bonet, former Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise) for his commitment and drive in leading the work (see also min GB 21/49).
- The update on strategic KPIs, provided in the Governing Body's information pack, indicated that the University's BAME awarding gap for the 2020/21 academic year had increased to 11.8 percentage points against a sector gap of 8.7 percentage points. This was a disappointing result which the University took very seriously. An action plan in response had immediately been put in place. It was hoped that this would have a positive impact on next year's results.
- 
- Professor Andrew Westby had commenced as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Knowledge Exchange) from 1 April 2022 following Professor Javier Bonet's retirement. Recruitment of a new Director of NRI and permanent Pro-Vice-Chancellor for the Faculty of Engineering and Science, following the departure of Professor Martin Snowden, was underway.
- The University had commissioned an external agency to undertake a review of academic and executive governance and examine the appropriateness of the core internal structures and processes. The outputs would be used to improve and streamline governance structures. Recommendations would be implemented in advance of the 2022/23 academic year.
- University staff had been shortlisted for two University Alliance awards. Vincent John, who had recently retired as Director of Procurement, had been shortlisted for the Jubilee Award for his long

service to higher education and the Safety Unit had been shortlisted for the Professionals Award for their work on Covid-19.

- The consultation process with staff and students on antisemitism definitions was continuing. Once the process was complete, a recommendation would be taken through the relevant committee process to the Governing Body for approval.
- UCU had recently undertaken several days of industrial action. Support measures had put in place in order to minimise disruption to students. A further period of action was expected following a UCU ballot in March 2022, but details were still to be announced.
- The University had submitted institutional responses to a number of Government consultations on proposed higher education reforms. In particular, it had registered opposition to the introduction of student number controls and Minimum Eligibility Requirements. The latter would have worrying implications for widening participation.

GB 21/47 STUDENT GOVERNOR'S REPORT (GB 21/P78)

The Governing Body received a report from the Student Governor, Aatika Ayoub, summarising GSU's activities in Term 2. GSU Officers were working to complete their project work in advance of the ends of their terms of office. She highlighted the work to establish an 'Activism Hub' to educate students on democracy and the wider student movement, the liberation events such as the Women's History Month, and work to support students affected by the Ukraine/Russia conflict.

In response to Governors' interest in the Global Greenwich initiative, Ms Ayoub explained that it aimed to support international students and help their transition into student life and was funded by the University. A Global Festival Week in February designed to celebrate all cultures of Greenwich's diverse student body had been well received.

GB 21/48 THIS IS OUR TIME: SUB-STRATEGIES (GB 21/P79)

Introducing the final versions of the strategic plan sub-strategies and enabling strategies, the Vice-Chancellor stated that the documents were the culmination of considerable work. Following the presentations to the Governing Body's strategy day on 25 March 2022, the sub-and enabling strategies had now all been launched across the three campuses. Minor changes had been made to the documents and the consistency of tone and styling reviewed. The strategies were living documents and would continue to evolve.

In discussion, the following points were made:

- In response to a question about the estates plans for professional services staff based at Avery Hill, the Chief Operating Officer advised

that no specific plans were anticipated apart from a general aim to better utilise office space and reduce the footprint across the campus through the implementation of hybrid working. There were aims referenced in the People Strategy for professional services staff, associated with career pathways and the development of a professional services framework. The Vice-Chancellor agreed that the Estates and People sub-strategies would be reviewed to include specific mention of space for professional services.

- In discussing the correlation between student satisfaction and attaining TEF Gold status, the Vice-Chancellor informed the Governing Body that there had to be year-on-year improvement in student satisfaction in order to achieve Gold. Other areas, such as teaching and learning, also needed continuous improvement. The University was able to scrutinize the qualitative data about individual courses and was working to improve consistency of experience across programmes. Governors recognised that the work of the Student Success sub-strategy and other enabling strategies were instrumental in putting good foundations in place. The Chair noted that the discussion reinforced the need for Governors to be brought up to date on the work of the NSS Task Force and asked that an update on the NSS Task Force should be scheduled for 2022/23.

The Governing Body discussed how it could monitor the strategies in a way which added value. The Vice-Chancellor indicated that it was proposed that the Vice-Chancellor's Group, which met weekly, would convene once a month with a broader membership to act as a strategy board. Various possible options for Governor oversight and engagement were discussed. It was noted that the Governing Body's strategy sessions would provide an opportunity to update Governors on the progress of the strategies. The Chair and Vice-Chancellor would discuss how to take forward the Governing Body's engagement with the sub- and enabling strategies.

The Governing Body expressed its appreciation for the iterative way in which the sub-strategies and enabling strategies had developed and formally approved the strategies. They would lay solid foundations on which to build success and Governors looked forward to seeing how they developed. The Governing Body endorsed the Vice-Chancellor's thanks for the efforts of the strategic leads and their wider teams.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Knowledge Exchange) presented the outcome of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 exercise. The headlines of the results, which had been released between 9 and 12 May, were:

- A rise of 25 places in Greenwich's sector ranking based on grade point average, taking it to joint 78th place, representing the fourth highest increase in the sector;
- Significant improvement in research quality and volume across all subject areas;
- Doubling of the University's market share (weighted to 4* / 3* multiplied by FTE), placing Greenwich in the top 15 institutions by increase in market share;
- Overall increases in all three elements of the Units of Assessment, including the largest change in rank for the environment element nationally.

Professor Westby reported that there were many reasons to celebrate. The University had submitted a significantly higher proportion of staff (60%) in the REF than any other University Alliance member. Greenwich was now positioned firmly in the middle of the University Alliance, having achieved a GPA average ranking of 7th out of 14 members and 4th in terms of research power. In terms of the individual Units of Assessment, there had been some impressive outcomes for the English Language and Literature and Engineering outputs which had been scored as internationally excellent and world leading. The impact case studies for Law were both considered to be world leading, whilst those for Agriculture, Veterinary and Food Science, Anthropology and Development Studies, Chemistry and Law had been rated as 3* or 4*.

The Governing Body was informed that the notification of QR (quality-related research) funding from the REF results was not expected until late autumn. The University would, in the interim, take a prudent view in its budgeting on the level of QR funding allocated. The University had full autonomy to use the QR funding as it chose but the research priorities for the coming years would be determined by the Research and Knowledge Exchange (R&KE) sub-strategy. There was currently a degree of fragmentation in activities and the formation of centres to address the major challenges was critical to the success of the sub-strategy.

In terms of the enablers behind the improvement in REF performance, Governors were informed that the process of annual monitoring (the GREAT exercise) had been key, as it had broadened the data around metrics and highlighted the areas requiring greater focus. Targeted investment in the Research and Enterprise Training Institute (RETI) and the Centre of Lifecourse Development had also been important.

The Vice-Chancellor stated that research and learning and teaching were equally important. There needed to be a balance in investment between R&KE and learning and teaching; it was recognised that improving the NSS was an immediate priority. This work was encompassed in the Student Success sub-strategy and the activities to be launched to improve academic quality and achievement. There was also work to be done around culture

and behaviour and it would be important to recruit the right staff for the task ahead.

On behalf of the Governing Body, the Chair congratulated all those involved for the excellent outcome of the REF exercise, and specifically recognised the significant contributions of Professor Bonet and Professor Westby. The results helped to build confidence in the future of Greenwich's research. It was acknowledged that the work on research and knowledge exchange would go hand in hand with learning and teaching.

GB 21/50 OfS STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS ON HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT (GB 21/P81)

The Governing Body received an update on progress in addressing the OfS's Statement of Expectations on Harassment and Sexual Misconduct.

The University Secretary reported that, as a result of the work to review and redraft relevant student policies, a new Student Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy, revised Student Disciplinary Procedure and new Accommodation Conduct Procedure had been approved by the Academic Council. The Student Harassment and Sexual Misconduct Policy provided a single over-arching statement of institutional commitment for preventing and addressing student-related bullying, harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct and ensured a more cohesive and coordinated approach to the management and investigation of incidents. The next phase of work would review staff policies and the way they interacted with student cases, which could be complex.

With regard to other aspects of the work, arrangements to implement the 'Report + Support' reporting package were continuing and a soft launch for students was planned over the summer. Support services to students in this area were being refocused to expand the pool of staff to help students. Student and staff training was planned for the Welcome Weeks in September 2022 including the creation of a Moodle course for students.

For the first time, the annual report on student casework contained data on student bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct cases and an overview of the work of the Sexual Violence Liaison Officers in supporting students. The 2020/21 report had been reviewed by Academic Council at its April meeting and was being revised prior to presentation to the June meeting of the Governing Body.

The University had signed the Can't Buy My Silence's Universities Pledge not to use Non-Disclosure Agreements in relation to complaints of sexual misconduct, harassment and bullying. A review by the General Counsel had confirmed that there was no history of Greenwich using NDAs in this way.

The University Secretary noted the positive contribution of Greenwich Students' Union officers to the work in this area. In response to an enquiry

about the current status of the University's processes and systems, the University Secretary reported that some improvements were needed, but the University already had strong foundations on which to build. There were no particular issues of concern, but it was likely that there was some under-reporting which would be addressed by 'Report + Support', which included anonymous reporting.

The Governing Body welcomed the more systematic approach to capturing data and the prominence of the work on the training of staff and students. Once it was developed, the link to the Moodle training course would be provided to Governors who were interested in undertaking the training.

GB 21/51 HONORARY AWARDS (IN CONFIDENCE) (GB 21/P82)

The Governing Body considered recommendations from the Honorary Degrees Panel for honorary awards for 2022. In discussing the merits of awarding honorary doctorates, the Vice-Chancellor reported that the University was keen to promote better engagement with its honorary graduates. The process for identifying potential candidates was to be improved and would incorporate the direct involvement of Faculties in order to find individuals who could offer real benefit to the University's work.

The Governing Body **approved** the recommendations for Honorary Awards.

GB 21/52 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR (GB 21/P94)

The Governing Body noted that the contract of the current Internal Auditors, BDO LLP, was due to expire on 31 July 2022 and a tender exercise had been held to appoint new Internal Auditors for the period commencing 1 August 2022. A tender presentation and evaluation panel meeting on 20 April 2022, chaired by Ameet Sharma (a member of the Audit & Risk Committee), had assessed the tenderers who had submitted proposals. The panel had reached a unanimous decision based on cost, depth of HE experience, the understanding of the University's strategy and innovativeness of the proposal.

Subject to finalisation of the Auditor's engagement letter, the Governing Body **approved** the recommendation to appoint KPMG LLP as the University's Internal Auditors for the period 2022 to 2025, with the option to extend the agreement to 2027 subject to satisfactory performance.

GB 21/53 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

53.1 Professorial Inaugural Lecture

The Chair announced that Professor Anastasios Maragiannis would be delivering his professorial inaugural lecture later at 6.30 pm in Stockwell Street. A reception would be held afterwards and all Governors were welcome to attend.

GB 21/54 INFORMATION PACK

The Governing Body received the following documents which had been circulated separately as an information pack:

- 54.1 *From the Finance Committee held on 4 April 2022*
Management Accounts to 28 February 2022 (GB 21/P83)
- 54.2 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey: Action Plan (GB 21/P84)
- 54.3 Update on the performance of Strategic KPIs (GB 21/P85)
- 54.4 Prevent Duty Return to OfS (GB 21/P86) confirming that the OfS had no further queries on the University's Prevent Duty Return for 2020/21
- 54.5 Governing Body Calendar 2022/23 (GB 21/P87)
- 54.6 Approval of Orders over £5m (GB 21/P88), where it was noted that Chair's Action approval had been given [REDACTED]
- 54.7 Governing Body Cycle of Business 2021/22 (GB 21/P89)
- 54.8 The minutes of the following Governing Body committees:
 - Audit & Risk Committee held on 7 March 2022 (GB 21/P90)
 - Finance Committee held on 4 April 2022 (GB 21/P91)
 - Academic Council held on 19 January 2022 (GB 21/P92)
 - University Health & Safety (H&S) Committee held on 17 February 2022 (GB 21/P93)

The meeting ended at 17:30.