

the
GOVERNING BODY

**MINUTES of the Governing Body Spring 2023 Strategy Session held on
Wednesday, 15 March 2023, in Room 123, Jellicoe Building, Medway campus, Central
Avenue, Chatham Maritime, Kent ME4 4TB and via Microsoft Teams,
commencing at 10.00 am**

Present:	Ms B Hill CBE (in the Chair)	Mrs A Mehta (via Teams)
	Professor J Harrington (Vice-Chancellor)	Mr M Orr
	Mr R Hicks	Ms S Ragab
	Mrs T King	Mr S Saluja
	Professor A Maragiannis	Mr A Sharma (via Teams)
	Mr C McWilliam (via Teams)	Mrs E Sideris

In attendance:

Mr A Baral, Student Officer, Greenwich Students' Union
Ms L Blair (Associate Director, Global Greenwich)(Item 22/8)
Mrs T Brighton (SEO Governing Body) (minutes)
Ms G Brindley (Director of Human Resources)
Mr P Garrod (University Secretary)
Ms H King (Executive Director, Marketing & External Relations)
Ms C Matthews (Associate Director, UK Recruitment) (Item 22/6)
Professor D Moore (PVC Faculty of Education, Health & Human Sciences)
Professor J Roscoe (Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost)
Mr P Taylor (Chief Operating Officer)
Ms L Watson (Chief Financial Officer)
Professor A Westby (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Knowledge Exchange))

Guest Speaker: Ms S Harris (Chief of Staff & Senior Advisor to the CEO, UUK)
(via Teams)

Apologies for Absence:

Mr Y R Javed
Miss D Larnder

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION: Bronwyn Hill, Chair of the Governing Body, and Professor Jane Harrington, Vice-Chancellor

The Chair welcomed attendees to the strategy session which would provide an opportunity to update the Governing Body on progress with the strategic plan. There would be a specific focus on partnerships to increase understanding of their strategic importance and the scope for strengthening them. She welcomed Stephanie Harris from UUK, who would set the scene by providing the external context of trends affecting the wider higher education sector and a forward look on developments that might affect Greenwich.

The Chair congratulated Richard Hicks on his recent appointment as Chief Executive of Medway Council of wef July 2023 and looked forward to the University continuing to work in partnership with the Council.

The Vice-Chancellor stated that Greenwich's partnerships activities were central to its strategic work and welcomed the chance to improve the Governing Body's understanding of the various components of this work.

THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

2. THE UNIVERSITY OF 2030: Stephanie Harris, Chief of Staff & Senior Advisor to the Chief Executive, UUK

Stephanie Harris, Chief of Staff, Universities UK, gave a presentation on the emerging trends, opportunities and challenges for the higher education sector in the context of understanding what the University of Greenwich might look like in 2030.

- **Demand and Demographics:** There had been an increase in demand for UK university places in recent years. The current entry rate for 18-year-olds stood at 37%, with the demand for postgraduate entry at 33%. 53.4% of today's 17-year-olds were expected to enter higher education by the age of 30. The population of 18-year-olds was projected to increase by nearly 25% in the ten years leading to 2030 and demand was predicted to grow further. The UK also continued to be a popular destination for international students with strong demand for undergraduate education from non-European countries, especially from China and India. Over 40% of all postgraduate students were international. A similar rise in international demand was forecast, particularly from China and India. It was worth thinking about future demographics in the coming years. Some regional disparities in demographics existed, together with gaps across the access and participation characteristics. However, by 2035 one fifth of English 18-year-olds would be from London.
- **Delivery of HE:** The modes of delivery of higher education in UK universities were changing. Transnational education and offshore provision were growing. Over 500,000 students were studying in TNE partnerships across the globe in 2021 (+13% on 2020). There had been a corresponding increase in UK providers entering the marketplace. A challenge for the sector was the decline in part-time study, although degree apprenticeships and higher-level qualifications were on the increase. The Government was committed to research and development, while research and innovation activities continued to grow and brought in a large part of revenue to some HEIs.
- **Financial Sustainability:** Most universities undertook research and Home student teaching activities on a loss-making basis, relying on International student income and commercial activity to cover their costs. Tuition fees for Home undergraduates had remained stagnant and had not increased in line with inflation, meaning that the increase in costs was a particular challenge. In real terms, Home fees had devalued by about a third.
- **Government:** The Government was considering the future of the student loan system. At March 2022 outstanding student loans totalled £182 billion. The higher education landscape across the UK was evolving and regulation was increasingly important, with a divergence of regulatory approaches among the four Home nations and questions about the regulatory stance adopted by the OfS. Further tightening of current immigration policies around international students could lead to serious ramifications for the sector in terms of overseas demand for a UK university education.
- **Public Perception:** The public perception of the value of a university education was changing, with an increase in the proportion who questioned whether the benefits outweighed the cost. This was a worrying development for the sector and needed to be taken seriously.

Real opportunities for the sector existed. The House of Lords inquiry on the OfS was expected to recommend reform to the regulatory framework to reduce burdens on the sector. Upskilling the population was central to the Government's agenda and opportunities existed around the Lifelong Learning Entitlement in terms of the provision of part-time and flexible learning. There

was a firm commitment by the Government to the importance of research and development and the recognition of the higher education sector's key role in this work.

The Governing Body thanked Ms Harris for the comprehensive overview. [REDACTED]

The challenge for universities in keeping up with the changing demands of regulation was recognised, and the Chair acknowledged that this was an important risk.

The following points were made in discussion:

- In response to a question about how Greenwich should prepare for the future, Ms Harris advocated proactive financial planning in the expectation that the value of the Home undergraduate fee would continue to fall. Consideration should be given to the future delivery of teaching and the costs of delivering a variety of modes whilst innovating for the future. There were opportunities for TNE and the international recruitment market and for diversifying through fresh partnerships.
- The presentation highlighted at a national level, the cross-subsidy between teaching overseas and Home students and the Governing Body asked about the Government's position towards overseas students. Ms Harris reported that UUK was lobbying the Government on this subject. There was a perception that universities were cash rich and the sector needed to make the Government aware of the true cost of delivering higher education. [REDACTED]
- Concern about the impact of the economic environment on the University's widening access and participation agenda was expressed and Ms Harris confirmed that there was an increasing push for universities to work with schools. The Vice-Chancellor noted that the afternoon's session would provide more detail on Greenwich's work on partnerships including its work with schools.
- The Governing Body noted that Greenwich's plans for the future included diversification. The Government was interested in promoting degree apprenticeships as a mode of study. Degree apprenticeships were not economic at the moment for HE institutions and a change in regulation and how employers used the levy pot were required. There was a call for a more wider skills levy.
- Reform of the higher education sector was anticipated. The Bill relevant to the lifelong learning entitlement was currently going through Parliament. Changes to tuition fee funding, removal of ELQ (studying equivalent level qualifications) and the ability to access maintenance loans for part-time learners were being called for.
- 43% of people felt that a university education did not lead to graduate level employment. The sector needed to do more to adapt its offer to align with industry needs and the skills gap.

The Chair thanked Ms Harris for her stimulating presentation and noted the sector's appreciation of the work of the UUK in championing the work of higher education institutions.

3. MEDWAY STRATEGY: Richard Hicks, Medway Council

Richard Hicks presented an overview of Medway Council's strategy for the region and the role of higher education. The strategic ambitions centred on making the area a great place in which to live, work, learn and to visit.

The Medway region had seen significant population growth in recent years. There had been considerable regeneration around Chatham, Rochester and the Medway peninsula, where a new rural town was being developed to meet this expansion. There were plans to position Medway as an economic powerhouse in the south-east. Major commercial companies operated in the region and an innovation park near Rochester Airport was helping to drive economic growth.

Medway Council recognised the importance of education as a pathway for careers and employment. It was proud of its universities which were the centre of the community. The Universities at Medway (Greenwich, Kent and Canterbury Christ Church) celebrated 20 years in 2022. Alongside the higher education offer provided by these HEIs and the University for the Creative Arts, 10,000 students in Medway were in Further Education.

The region had an outstanding tourism offer providing 7,000 jobs and bringing £360m revenue to the economy. Visitors were attracted by the rich cultural heritage of Rochester and Chatham and enjoyed the free programme of annual festivals and events.

The Council had limited financial resources and it was important to have access to the kind of knowledge bank available within its universities. In the future, the Council believed that these partnerships could help shape its thinking and inform plans and policies in areas around social care and welfare. The Council would be bidding to become UK's City of Culture in 2025 and development of its cultural offer provided further opportunities for engagement and collaboration with its universities. Food and drink were an emerging growth sector in the region and NRI's Food Innovation Centre and climate change work were obvious areas for strengthening Greenwich's partnership with the Council.

The Vice-Chancellor thanked Richard Hicks for his presentation and confirmed that Greenwich was proud to be involved in Medway's regeneration.

There were ambitious plans for affordable housing and the Head of the School of Design (one of the Staff Governors) expressed interest in exploring opportunities for graduates to be part of those plans.

4. TOUR OF FOOD LABORATORIES AND CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT SITES

The PVC: Faculty of Engineering and Science and the Head of the Department of Food & Markets hosted a tour of the new Medway Food Innovation Centre and the science and engineering laboratories on the campus.

PARTNERSHIPS AND OUTREACH

5. THIS IS OUR TIME IMPLEMENTATION AND PARTNERSHIPS: Professor Jane Harrington, Vice-Chancellor and Heidi King, Director of Marketing & External Relations

The Vice-Chancellor reported that the Partnerships Sub-Strategy set out the University's ambitions for its partnerships and outreach work and its plans for creating opportunities, building partnerships and delivering impact.

Ms King updated Governors on progress with implementation of the strategy since October 2022. A new Partnerships Hub had been established in January 2023 to provide a front door for the University's partnerships and outreach activities. The Hub facilitated conversations between Greenwich and prospective partners to ensure that they were connected with the relevant subject expert to meet their needs. A partnerships dashboard was being developed in order to measure outputs and KPI performance. A central customer relationship management system was also planned.

6. UK PARTNERSHIPS: Professor Jane Roscoe, Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost and Heidi King, Director of Marketing & External Relations

The Governing Body received an overview of the University's partnerships work and the three key workstreams around UK education, workforce and skills and international education. A new Partnership Framework, created to oversee the activity, contained three defined stages: Engagement, Approval and Management. The framework helped the University manage the partnership relationship journey from the initial assessment and due diligence stages to approval, management and monitoring. Once approved, partnerships were assigned a Bronze, Silver or Gold status according to the complexity of the relationship. The Vice-Chancellor noted that the governance arrangements for assessing and approving new partnerships were still evolving.

The University had commissioned a piece of work to understand the socio-economic impact and social value of Greenwich's partnership work.

It was reported that next steps included finalising the baseline data and linking to KPIs. New agreements would be issued for new partnerships and faculty Industry Advisory Boards would be established.

All new programmes were to be co-created with employers, professional bodies or alumni. The Governing Body was briefed on two case studies relevant to this work:

Governors agreed that the examples provided a more tangible sense of the University's work and asked how a programme was co-designed. It was explained that the curriculum was shaped with a particular employer's skills gap or skills agenda in mind. A booklet of case studies was being assembled and would be provided to Governors when completed.

Governors recognised that there were real opportunities in this work but were mindful of the risks and the importance of due diligence in ensuring that the engagement with a partner was the right one. The Partnership Hub would help to build connections and trust between the University and partners, leading to a meaningful, productive relationship. The Vice-Chancellor reported that Governors could be useful ambassadors for this work and invited them to send details of potential partners who might be interested in speaking to the University to her, the Director of Marketing and External Relations or the University Secretary.

7. SCHOOL AND FURTHER EDUCATION (FE) PARTNERSHIPS AND WIDENING ACCESS: Professor Jane Roscoe, Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost, Professor Derek Moore, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Faculty of Education, Health & Human Sciences), Heidi King, Director of Marketing & External Relations, Peter Taylor, Chief Operating Officer and Claire Matthews, Associate Director, UK Recruitment

Schools and Further Education

Professor Roscoe reported that the University's work with schools and FE colleges provided an opportunity to consider different entry paths into higher education and engage students early in the pipeline. In order to deliver on its widening access ambitions, the University was considering a variety of different modes of delivery such as part-time opportunities, micro-credentials and life-long learning.

In relation to the University's **Schools and FE Partnerships** work, Ms Matthews reported that the University worked with 60 schools across London and the south-east as part of its outreach and educational partnership activity. Schools were selected based on a number of factors including widening participation categories. In addition, the University worked with schools

through themed industry events or as part of its GREat skills programme, providing academic and personal skills training to give confidence to students uncertain about entering higher education.

The University worked with five Further Education partners (London South-East Colleges, Mid-Kent College, North Kent College, Hadlow College (part of North Kent College) and Bird College). Further education provided opportunities for young people in less traditional more modern subject areas. The educational framework in this area was changing and the new T-Level qualifications were now accepted as a pathway into Greenwich. The University mapped the different pathways, through level 3 (A-level) up to level 7 (Masters), to help prospective students understand their opportunities for education and careers.

The Governors were briefed on a case study involving Plumpton College, which had approached Greenwich to quality assure their provision from September 2023. The College offered the country's only viticulture courses and had been added as a partner following careful due diligence process and consideration of its strategic fit.

The Governing Body recognised the challenge of the Government constantly reviewing its FE provision. It supported Greenwich's strategy of looking for new FE providers and identifying new pathways for young people into higher education. The relationships were complex and the University needed to ensure that they were viable and that numbers were sustainable.

Access and Participation

Professor Moore reminded Governors that the OfS required HE providers to produce Access and Participation Plans (currently covering the period to 2025). The OfS Director for Fair Access and Participation had introduced recent changes to the OfS's requirements and wanted more work in schools to improve access and raise attainment in under 16-year-olds. A more risk-based targeted approach was advocated. HE providers were now required to use the OfS's new Equality of Opportunity Risks Register to help focus on areas of improvement. Targeted projects for the risks would need to be established in the University's next access and participation plan.

Professor Roscoe indicated that further work was needed to ensure that the University's interventions in widening access and participation would have the impact that was expected.

A new Access and Participation Plan dashboard would help to map the student journey and progression into employment. As part of its overall strategy on reducing the BAME awarding gap, the University was working with Greenwich Students' Union on the University's Widening Participation Committee and taking a more targeted approach to supporting the different intersecting categories.

The Governing Body agreed that the presentation had been very helpful but that more remained to be done. In enquiring about the University's response to tackling the issues, it was reported that the BAME Awarding Gap Project had oversight of the work and there needed to be a more accurate evaluation of its effectiveness. Data was normally retrospective making assessment of the effectiveness of interventions difficult.

The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the University was committed to having a zero attainment gap and would continue to invest in this. An update on progress would be provided to the Governing Body in due course, focussing on the data and lessons learnt. The Vice-Chancellor agreed to provide some examples of successful interventions to a future meeting. In the meantime, the University was working with an external consultant to establish support workshops to understand the theory of change and effectively evaluate resource projects.

[REDACTED]

The University's experience with degree apprenticeships had not been straightforward and some programmes had very small numbers. It was a heavily regulated area and efforts were being made to build up the team to support delivery of the work. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The Employability & Apprenticeships team was working with its employer partners to ensure they were making full use of their apprenticeship levy and that the right spaces were available for the apprenticeships.

[REDACTED]

the University's Midwifery degree apprentices had recently completed the first ever Midwifery degree apprenticeship in the world. Two new degree apprenticeships sponsored by the Business School had recently been approved for delivery in 2024/25.

The Chair stated that it was helpful to understand the lessons learnt and plans for improvement.

<p>8. <i>INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS: Professor Jane Roscoe, Deputy Vice-Chancellor & Provost, Heidi King, Director of Marketing & External Relations and Louise Blair, Associate Director, Global Greenwich</i></p>
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[REDACTED]

Ms Blair reported that the University was reviewing its TNE partnerships, with a renewed focus on the quality of partnerships. [REDACTED]

A clear and transparent process for managing TNE partners across the University was being introduced, including aligning Faculty and International relationship managers. A new approval process for new international partners had been implemented. Business cases were evaluated assessing the financial sustainability and quality of delivery together with the strategic and ethical fit of a prospective new partner. Onboarding a new partner involved considerable work in terms of supporting academics and partnership and account management. In instances where partnerships were not delivering, the University needed to be mindful of reputational issues and take into account its duty for looking after students when discontinuing its relationship.

[REDACTED]

In considering the risks, it was reported that there were many different modes of delivery of TNE and it was important that the financial cost of delivering TNE programmes was fully understood. A strategic aim was for all students to have some kind of international experience

by 2030. To meet this aim, the University needed to find more partners for study abroad, while ensuring appropriate due diligence.

The Governing Body welcomed the insight into the thoroughness of the process of review of international partnerships. It was asked whether there were any areas in the world that Greenwich would not consider working in, and the Vice-Chancellor advised that this would include some parts of the Middle East, Russia and areas where physical safety was a high risk.

[REDACTED]

9. <i>ROUND-UP AND CLOSE OF STRATEGY DAY:</i>

The Chair thanked the presenters for their insightful presentations which had provided the basis for some valuable conversations on the opportunities and challenges of partnerships. Governors now had a greater understanding of the scope and scale of Greenwich's work in this area and were reassured that the University was working to adapt itself in order to be fit for the future. On behalf of the Governors, she expressed their appreciation of the visit to the Medway Food Innovation Centre and its impressive work.

The meeting ended at 4:00 pm.

T A Brighton / Peter Garrod
11 April 2023