

NOTES OF MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY

HELD ON TUESDAY 28th JULY 2020 AT 10.00 A.M.

IN THE MPC, FAULKNER BUILDING

Meeting commenced at 10.10 a.m.

Declarations of Interest

Nil

The Chairman welcomed Cllr. Sharon Tolan to her inaugural Governing Body meeting and is looking forward to working with her during the term. Cllr. Tolan is replacing Cllr. Greehan who was recently appointed Senator for Louth.

G.272.1. M.271 Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday 7th July 2020

Dr. Tom Dooley sought clarification on the following extract from G272, page 8 “*Academic Council Terms of Reference/Constitution to be circulated to the next Governing Body meeting. Consultative review group to include members of Academic Council including the Governing Body nominees.*”

Dr. Dooley did not recall this from the previous meeting. The Chairman stated that he did recall this. Dr. Dooley referenced the legislation for Academic Council and Mr. Bill Sweeney referenced Section 10.6 legislation too.

The Governing Body agreed to adopt the Minutes Ref 271 dated 7th July 2020.

Proposed by: Cllr. Nick Killian

Seconded by: Ms. Aprilanna Barker

G.272.2 Matters Arising

G271.5 Committees

Ms. Anna Shakespeare referenced the Draft Minutes (G271.5 Committees to be set up) and the email sent to the President’s Office and the Chairman.

It was her understanding that sub-committees would not be set up until the report on Governing Body Effectiveness was available. She had also requested an organisation chart and policies including Procurement.

The email was acknowledged by the President's Office and forwarded to the President.

The following are the requested documents for circulation:-

- Organisational Structure
- External Review of Effectiveness of Governing Body.
- Procurement Policy
- Internal Governance Committees

G.271.9

Cllr. Nick Killian enquired if legal advice had been sought as suggested by Ms. Sadie Ward McDermott at the previous meeting (*"Ms. Sadie Ward McDermott proposed that legal advice should be sought on the legislation and that the Terms of Reference of Academic Council be reviewed". G272, page 8*)

The HR/Secretary to Governing Body to revert at the next Governing Body meeting.

PwC Report

Ms. Anna Shakespeare and Dr. Fiona Lawless enquired about the Financial Management Information Reporting (PwC Report). The Chairman stated this item would be discussed later under Agenda Item 5, Update on Finances.

Cllr. Nick Killian enquired about Standing Orders. He was informed that Standing Orders is an Appendix A (page 77) in the THEA Code of Governance.

G.272.3 Correspondence

The President confirmed that he had written to Simon Harris, T.D. Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

G.272.4 COVID-19 Preparation: Return to Campus Staff and Students Blended Learning Model

Ms. Irene McCausland, VP of Strategic Planning, Communications and Development (VP SCD) commenced the presentation on COVID-19 Preparation and was joined by her colleague, Dr. Sheila Flanagan, VP for Academic Affairs & Registrar. A copy of the presentation was tabled at the meeting.

Both VP s outlined the following:

Immediate response to COVID-19 Pandemic March 2020

March 2020 - Established COVID-19 Core Group of key staff members to oversee the transition to a post-COVID-19 campus. Facilitators: VPAAR, VPSCD and HR Manager

The COVID-19 Core Group (12 people) met on a weekly basis from March 2020 (continued to date) to address:

1. How the academic year 2019/2020 would be completed:
 - Classes, practicals and tutorials
 - End of year exams/ assessments
2. How the functional and professional units would manage their work off-campus
3. Communications: to keep staff and students informed on key advice/messages and updates on a weekly basis via email and the website. Maintain a connection to the campus while working/studying from home. Particularly dealing with international students who could not travel home.
4. Successfully closed out the academic year.

Publication of the Governments Return to Work Safety Protocol

Maintained the COVID-19 Core Group of key staff members facilitated by: VPAAR, VPSCD and HR Manager to manage the response going forward Considered a more structured approach in preparation for the new academic year 2020/2021 to develop a detailed Operating Plan setting out all the policies/protocols:

1. How the academic year 2020/2021 would be delivered:
 - **Flexible blended delivery** / Labs/Tutorials / Assessments
2. How the functional and professional units would manage their work
 - Focused heavily during this time on digital marketing to try to secure student numbers across all student groups
3. Health and Safety perspective - how would we ensure the campus as a safe working environment
4. Finance and HR implications – policies and protocols
5. Communications: to keep staff and students informed on key advice/messages and updates on a weekly basis via email and the website

There was a Consultative Working Structure: to devise, plan, manage and implement new working and delivery practices. The purpose of the structure was to ensure:

1. adherence to government guidelines and health a safety practices with all areas conducting detailed Risk Assessments
2. consistency of approach cross Institute
3. quality deliver of programmes
4. effective and inclusive staff consultation and engagement
5. effective and inclusive communication to staff and students and key stakeholders.

The three planning groups overseen by COVID-19 Core Group in relation to the Operating Plan were Academic Contingency Planning Group; Academic and Professional Services Planning Group and Operational Planning Group in conjunction with the Institute Management Safety Committee (ISMC)

The Operating Plan for Returning to Work is a 107 page documents with an additional 18 Appendices. There were numerous areas addressed in the Operating Plan.

There was also a discussion on the impacts for student capacity with 2m social distancing versus 1m social distancing.

Academic Contingency Planning Group (ACP)

- Established as a working group of the Academic Council in semester 2 2019/2020.

The Institute's policies and procedures were reviewed with best practice both nationally and internationally being embedded as appropriate.

- Minimal changes were made with the inclusion of “sunset provision” as appropriate.
- Undertook survey of staff and students to inform planning
- Responsible for planning of academic programme delivery, assessment, quality assurance and enhancement in light of COVID-19.
- Output: **Guidelines for Academic Planning document**
- Guidelines for Academic Planning informed by: *Principles and Guidelines for the delivery of Higher Education Programmes in the 2020/21 Academic Year in the context of the Covid-19 Pandemic* (THEA) and noted by Academic Council in June.
- Delivery and assessment of Programme Outcomes as detailed in the relevant Approved Programme Schedule are maintained.
- Almost all lectures in Semester 1 will be delivered virtually
- Lectures may be delivered by staff in DkIT i.e. utilising vacant classroom and delivered by video to the student group off campus.
- Students will attend the campus as much as possible for face-to-face laboratory classes, workshops, studios and small group interactions (e.g. tutorials and seminars).
- The relative volumes of F2F and remote delivery will vary across programmes and stages. The Institute will attempt to provide as much face-to-face content as possible.
- Particular care will be taken to provide a positive induction element to first year students, including international students.

COVID-19 Budgets and Lead Times

22nd July 2020, Department Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Announcement €168 million package of supports for further and higher education institutions and students, but it is not clear how this will be distributed to Institutes.

The Budget based on the campus knowledge to date was discussed. The estimated budget requirement is €2,106,086 and the estimated budget requirement up to 31st August 2020 (excluding Library/CELT/Schools) is €439,335.

The VPSCD outlined that the Budget estimation comes with caveats as the COVID-19 pandemic is evolving. Such caveats include but are not limited to: 2m distance versus 1m distance: Timetable and Labs;

- Second wave;
- Students may need PPE for Labs;
- 20%-45% presence on campus;
- Remote working costs – work station assessments;
- Changes to Government Guidelines;

The Operating Plan and Budget Living Document/Projections are subject to change.

Reopening:

Regional Development Centre (RDC) – Companies Only	1 st July 2020
Researchers accessing campus	1 st July 2020
Technicians accessing campus	1 st July 2020
DkIT Sports	1 st July 2020
Functional and Professional Services Staff	20 th July 2020 restricted return/17 th August 2020
KSG Caterers	17 th August 2020
Academic Staff Return to Work	1 st September 2020
Semester 1 commences Incoming 1 st years Induction	28 th September 2020
Remainder of Students	30 th September 2020

The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar outlined the Submission by DkIT to QQI for the Evaluation of COVID-19 Emergency.

DkIT strives to ensure the quality of the student experience and maintain the integrity and standards of its awards in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The technological sector recognises that the evolving extraordinary situation in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted and is impacting on the lives and work of our Institutes, our staff and our students. Throughout this emergency, we have followed and are following the advice of the public

health and education authorities in relation to the crisis. In so doing, we have put in place measures to ensure continuity of service to our stakeholders.

The contingencies that DkIT implemented in the academic year 2019/2020 which will be enhanced further in the academic year 2020/2021.

- A communication strategy was implemented at Institute, School and Department levels for both staff and students.
- Subsequently a COVID-19 Academic Contingency Planning Group (ACP) was established as a working group of the Academic Council to oversee academic contingencies required as a result of the COVID-19 emergency.
- The Institute's Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) provided supports to academic staff and student regarding online delivery.
- A survey was distributed to academic staff in the four Schools to be completed by 25th March 2020. The objective of this survey was to gather information on the status of teaching, learning and assessment in each module on programmes. This was used to inform academic contingency for the remainder of semester 2 2019/2020.

The VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar outlined what the survey involved.

- On the 27th March 2020 the Academic Council (devolved to the Standing Committee) passed a motion adopting principles and contingencies regarding assessment resulting from issues related to the COVID-19 emergency, specifically:

Q&A after presentation and the following are a few comments made:

- Congratulations to both VPs for their informative presentations.
- Operational Plan is covered for Clubs and Societies too.
- Staff/Lecturing – additional staff recruitment at short notice?
- Procurement
- Commendation to all staff since the 12th March 2020, a major achievement by both staff and students.
- The €168m not enough for replacing staff.
- Exams. VP AAR stated with the exception of Nursing, placements were pulled. Some are outstanding currently. Students not disadvantaged. She worked with Student Union, Student Services and colleagues.
- Deferrals. The VP AAR said there appear to be low numbers deferring.

VP SCD informed the Governing Body that Lead Work Representatives are on the COVID-19 group and attended a recent meeting.

VP AAR had dialogue with QQI following their evaluation and they complimented both staff and students.

The Chairman on behalf of the Governing Body congratulated both VPs for their informative presentation. He also wished to congratulate all staff and students over the last few months and appreciated all the work done to date.

G.272.5 Update on Finances (document attached)

The document circulated in the pack was updated. The President's Office emailed the update and hardcopies circulated at the meeting.

Mr. Stuart Quinn, Financial Analyst referred to the presentation that was emailed and tabled at the meeting.

The presentation covered the following:

- 2019/20 Projection at 6th July 2020 – revised projection = (€147,540)
- Breakdown of COVID-19 Additional Costs = €370,000
- Return to Work/Open Campus
- Return to Work Protocol Costs
- Revised Projection at 20th July 2020 including COVID-19 Income reduction, COVID-19 Additional costs, Funding released, leaves an overall revised projected deficit as at 20th July = (€586,895)

Discussion and Q&A followed the presentation.

- The Financial Analyst said that we have not received a grant yet.
- Budget is a living document.
- Upgrades for software.
- The Financial Analyst Capital Expenditure.
- Dr. Lawless mentioned that there is a huge impact on staff re social distance 2m versus 1m has implications for both staff and students re timetabling.
- Dr. Flanagan concurred with Dr. Lawless. Dr. Flanagan and colleagues are working on 2 as this is the guideline from the Government and it is extremely challenging.
- Dr. Anna Shakespeare enquired about Cashflow/Deficit re figures and Questioned the difference. What is the impact and plan?
- Cllr. Nick Killian asked if there is any indication of number for foreign students and what arrangements are there for them.
- Dr. Flanagan stated that she had been told by the Recruitment Office that there was 120 new last year and possibly 70 this year. Visa Offices are closed. The International Students arriving are required to self-isolate. They also arranged transport for students and duty of care. The International Office communicated each week with the International Students that stayed in Ireland.

The Chairman thanked the Financial Analyst for his presentation. He also conveyed his appreciation for the contribution from both Vice Presidents.

The Chairman referred to PwC Report and this will be circulated at the next meeting.

G.272.6 Technological University Status (Technological University Research Network (TURN) (submission attached)

The Chairman introduced Dr. Tim McCormac, Head of Research to the Governing Body and he gave a powerpoint presentation on “Technology University Research Network TURN”. A hardcopy of the presentation was circulated at the meeting.

The Head of Research gave an Introduction to Technology University Research Network (TURN)” and “Technology University Transformation Call 2020”.

- Established in Feb 2019 by the Department of Education and Skills - examine and report on how emerging TUs could achieve their sectoral and national strategic objectives and what supports would be required
- Three Pillars requiring government investment
 - investment in research capacity building
 - investment in integrated digital infrastructure
 - realignment of the policy framework and funding for Tus
 -
- Preceded by the Higher Education Authority’s Landscape Call
- 3 year funding platform of €90M (2020-2022)
- Significant achievement for Institute has been our ability to now access this funding
- Key aim – to assess our TU readiness and roll out our 2-3 year strategic development pathway in collaboration with HEA

TU Legislation – Two key criteria

“enrolment in the applicant institution in research programmes at Levels 9-10 will not be less than 4% of FTE enrolments at levels 8 to 10”

AND

“at least 45% per cent of full time, higher education, academic staff, will hold a Level 10 qualification or the equivalence in professional experience”

We have currently 98 PGs by research and approximately 32% FTE Academics with Level 10

Positives yet challenges are increasing PG research graduations and increasing UG numbers at level 8

Funding Outline

Landscape continuation from 2019 success (€821,409)

- Continue FE to HE Support Office “NEFHEA”
- Support Growth towards 4% and 45% TU Targets

External Advisor (€125,000)

- Assess TU readiness of Institute

Imperative 1 (€396,000)

- Increasing levels of dedicated senior research and innovation staff

Imperative 2 (€1,050,000)

- Digital infrastructure for blended learning needs – Covid19

Imperative 3 (€850,000)

- Refurbishment of existing space for research and innovation growth – emphasis on labs and equipment

Key Areas of Strength

- Drug development for disease states
- Regulated software for medical sector
- Living Technology for Assisted
- Lake catchment and monitoring
- Freshwater studies
- Nanoscale sensors technology
- Renewable energy – storage

We collaborate with the following Universities: Queens University Belfast, DCU, University College Cork, Ulster University, University Limerick, Trinity College.

Key High Level Achievements

- Excess of €70M in research funding – diversified base
- 1 Research Institute
- 6 research centres and 4 research groups – academic and industry facing research
- Translational research focusing on excellence and impact
- Over 100 Level 9 and 10 research graduations
- 2 High Potential Start Ups from EI seed funding through the commercialisation fund
- 615 peer reviewed publications with 6025 citations
- Excess of 3000m² research space

- 13.51% success rate in attaining EU research funding (8th out of 19 HEIs)
- Projected growth of PhD cohort to achieve in excess of 110 by 2022
- 45% Target of staff with level 10 to be achieved by 2022

The presentation was followed by a discussion and Q&A session:

Mr. Alec McAllister said the presentation was excellent and asked where the postgraduates are from and enquired about the amount of €3m.

The Head of Research responded that there is no guarantee around the €3m requested. The space issue impacts on research. We have to target STEM areas. Most of the postgraduates are international researchers. There can be issues with visas. He can see more Irish postgraduates but we need to sell it to them.

Dr. Dooley said that the only reason we are now accessing TURN funding is because of Industrial Action, as we were excluded because we were not part of a TU. It is important the direction that the Institute takes. Last year €38m went to Consortia/TUs and DkIT got €1.05m.

Ms. Barker enquired about the growth in Irish Students and did COVID-19 impact?. The Head of Research does not think COVID-19 did impact but we have to get more domestic students.

Ms. Barker and Cllr. Killian also enquired about DCU and expression of interest and how might that affect the relationship?

The Head of Research stated that we have a good relationship with Dublin City University (DCU) and have a Memorandum of Understanding with DCU for the Graduate School.

Cllr. Killian asked if the Institute was confident the submission would be successful with discussions with the HEA.

The President noted that the HEA required validation of our TU metrics and assessment of our readiness for TU designation – this would inform the Developmental Path and the level of funding required. Our focus needs to be on securing the funding and engagement with the HEA on merger arrangements to secure designation. The President informed the Governing Body that he was invited to an online briefing with the HEA and other consortia in relation to this years €30m funding. We are competing with others. There will be further interaction during the month of August, 2020. On

September 8th a decision will be made by the HEA and referred to the Minister who will then make an announcement.

Within our TURN submission we indicated a target of 2/3 years for designation (current consortia are not available 3/5 years).

The President informed the Governing Body that Dr. Alan Wall, CEO, HEA was willing to meet with the Governing Body.

Ms. Isabell Murphy asked if the CUA are the only option – should we be progressing this? If they are not, what option does DkIT have?

Mr. Bill Sweeney proposed a motion to write to the Minister for Higher Education on the basis set out in the HEA Development Path DKIT will be ready for TU designation in 3 years and given that no partner is currently available Governing Body requests the Minister to give consideration to a suitable mechanism to enable TU designation for the Institute.

Dr. Tom Dooley read a statement at the meeting - proceed with exploration of an expression of interest with CUA as our preferred partner.

Cllr. Nick Killian has an issue with the word “preferred” it is not acceptable. He appreciates the work done to-date but as a new Board member was not in a position to make a decision yet. Cllr. Killian said he seconded Mr. Bill Sweeney’s motion.

Dr. Fiona Lawless referenced the commitment made by the Institute re TU where by the Governing Body would be given a preferred option by the Leadership Team and a commitment was to be made by the end of July.

Dr. Dooley and Dr. Lawless referenced TUI and Industrial Action in relation to TU.

The Chairman agreed with Cllr. Killian that the current Governing Body did not make a commitment to make a decision on a preferred option by the end of July. There was no Governing Body in place to agree a decision.

The Chairman mentioned the following points:-

- Metrics are close to TU, need to be improved as soon as possible.
- Preferred Bidders are not there AIT/LIT; TUD; CUA door ajar;
- Referenced Bill’s comments
- The Chairman looked at the legislation and needs to be amended if going alone. Dr. Dooley said this can take years.

- No alternatives on the table at the moment
- Institute will be at a disadvantage when all others are TUs
- Appropriate merger partner, the HEA have an open mind on this.

Further discussion followed in relation to the role of Governing Body members and the TUI being mentioned at this meeting.

On behalf of the Governing Body, the Chairman thanked Dr. McCormac for his presentation and the progress made to date.

The Chairman announced a 10-minute interval at 12.30.

Meeting reconvened at 12.40.

Ms. Isabell Murphy proposed holding a Special Meeting to discuss TU.

Proposed by: Ms. Isabell Murphy

Seconded by: Mr. Alec McAllister

Ms. Brenda McGeeney and Dr. Dooley concurred. Both stated that it is very important to have a meeting with a 1 Item Agenda.

Mr. Aidan McKenna suggested:-

- 1) Offer Expression of Interest to CUA;
- 2) Letter to Minister Harris;

Ms. Anna Shakespeare supported Mr. McKenna's suggestion. Ms. Shakespeare referenced the documents that were circulated re TU, CUA was referenced. She queried the decision to pull out of the CUA in 2017?

The President responded that DkIT was never a member of CUA.

Mr. Bill Sweeney said there should be a minute in Governing Body 3-4 years ago regarding this. The Chairman asked the President's PA to check the Governing Body records.

Ms. Shakespeare stated again that she supports Mr Sweeney's proposal and also agrees with Mr. McKenna.

Cllr. Killian asked if we ever formally wrote to Institutes etc.?

The President told the Governing Body that as part of the recent process we met TU Dublin and Consortia.

Cllr. Killian also enquired if public representatives and other areas that we serve were contacted.

Ms. McCausland, VP SCD responded that the Institute consulted numerous representatives, organisations etc during the Strategic Plan and looking at the 3 TU options discussed both internally and externally:

NEFHEA/SERC/All Consortia. We have a lot of commissioned reports. Over 30 consultations. Lots of pros /cons, nothing unanimous. Nothing is clear and simple for the Governing Body to make a decision.

Dr. Lawless said that what Mr. McKenna and Ms. Shakespeare proposed are the only avenues available.

Cllr. Kelly proposed a Special Meeting with Dr. Alan Wall, CEO, HEA re Developmental Plan, as the HEA are the Institute funders. The Institute needs to know the consequences with the HEA.

The Chairman stated there was nothing to stop us doing both options above. The Chairman was not invited to Public Representative meetings since he took up the role. He wrote to TDs in Louth, Cavan, Meath and Monaghan but received very few responses and no subsequent follow up other than Ged Nash.

The President said that the HEA are focused on Developmental Path for DkIT and they decide on our funding to achieve TU. Ms. Shakespeare referenced the large documentation that was circulated in relation to TU. The Governing Body have not seen letters that were sent to the potential Consortia partners. All the Governing Body are hearing is a verbal account. There has been no formal engagement between Governing Body.

The President told the Governing Body that the Leadership Team and TUI Observers along with him had online meetings with the Consortia and the HEA.

Ms. Murphy reiterated her proposal for a Special Meeting to now include Dr. Alan Wall.

Cllr. Kelly is adamant that the Governing Body have a meeting with the CEO, HEA prior to any decision being made.

After lengthy discussions, the President to contact the CEO, HEA and invite him to meet with the Governing Body.

The Chairman stated this meeting will be a 1 Item Agenda.

The Governing Body agreed to a Special Meeting with Dr. Alan Wall, CEO, HEA.

The Special Governing Body meeting is Tuesday 1st September at 10.00 a.m.

G.272.7 Committees to be set up (Deferred from previous meeting G.271):

- **Finance Audit & Risk (FAR)**

The Chairman read the names of Governing Body members who emailed the President's Office interested in being members of the Finance Audit & Risk (FAR) Committee, Mr. Bill Sweeney, Ms. Sadie Ward McDermott, Ms. Anna Shakespeare, Cllr. Clifford Kelly and Mr. Aidan McKenna.

1) Mr. Bill Sweeney

Proposed by: Ms. Aprilanna Barker

Seconded by: Cllr. Nick Killian

2) Ms. Sadie Ward McDermott

Proposed by: Mr. Patrick Malone

Seconded by: Cllr. Clifford Kelly

3) Ms. Anna Shakespeare

Proposed by: Mr. Aidan McKenna

Seconded by: Michael Mulvey, Ph.D.

4) Cllr. Clifford Kelly

Proposed by: Mr. Bill Sweeney

Seconded by: Cllr. Nick Killian

5) Mr. Aidan McKenna

Proposed by: Mr. Patrick Malone

Seconded by: Ms. Brenda McGeeney

Cllr. Clifford Kelly proposed Mr. Bill Sweeney as Chairman of the Finance Audit & Risk Committee (FAR). The Governing Body concurred.

It was stated at the meeting that Mr. Brendan Murtagh is available to return as the external member on the FAR.

Ms. Anna Shakespeare enquired if the external personnel had financial / accounting experience. Mr. Bill Sweeney said that there can be 2/3 external nominees and they would have financial / accounting experience.

- **Gender Equality** – Deferred until September
- **Land and Buildings** – Deferred until September
- **Strategic Plan** – Deferred until September

G.272.8 Governing Body representatives to Academic Council (2 nominees)

Deferred until September.

G.272.9 Personnel Report

Recent Staff Progressions and Appointments were noted and confirmed.

G272.10 Land and Buildings Update (document attached)
Deferred to September.

G.272.11 AOB
Bereavements noted.

Meeting concluded at 13.30.

Patrick W. Malone
Chairman

Date: