

MINUTES

BOARD OF GOVERNORS, BG-124

Date: Wednesday 6 April 2022

Time: 1500

Location: Boardroom, Staffordshire University: London (HereEast)

1. Items marked with an asterisk (starred items) were for information only or regarded as noncontentious.
2. Items classified as Confidential, and their subsequent minutes (highlighted here in blue), will be redacted before publication of the agenda and minutes on the University's public website.

Members		
Peter Baines	External Member	P
Hannah Blackburn	Student Governor (President, Students' Union)	P
Jonathan Chapman	External Member	A
Glenn Earlam	External Member	A
Tony Evans	External Member	Ab
Hannah Gibbard	Staff Governor (professional support staff)	P
Kevin Gould	External Member	P
Colin Hughes (Chair)	External Member	P
Professor Martin Jones	Vice Chancellor	P
Baljinder Kuller	External Member	P
Dr Simon Smith	Staff Governor (academic staff)	P
Jonathan Vardon	External Member	P
Anthony Wallace	Student Governor (Vice President, Students' Union)	P
Sara Williams	External Member	A
In attendance		
Ian Blachford	Chief Operating Officer and Clerk to the Board of Governors	IA
Dr Annabel Kiernan	Pro Vice Chancellor - Education	IA
Dr Kevin Hetherington	Deputy Vice Chancellor	IA
Sally McGill	Chief Financial Officer	IA
Lauren Rooke	Assistant Clerk to the Board of Governors (<i>minutes</i>)	A

P = Present; A = Apologies; Ab = Absent; L = Late; IA = In Attendance; T = via Teams

The usual Know Your Business session prior to the meeting was replaced by a site tour of Staffordshire University London.

1 MEETING MANAGEMENT	
2812	Apologies for Absence were received from Jonathan Chapman, Glenn Earlam and Sara Williams. Tony Evans was absent. It was noted that this was the last meeting for Glenn Earlam - he was thanked for his significant contribution to the University and the Chair of Board would write to thank Glenn for this. Peter Baines was welcomed to his first full Board of Governors meeting.
2813	There were no new Declarations of Interest .

2814	The Minutes of the last meeting of the Board of Governors , 23 Nov 2021 BG/124/01 were confirmed as a true and accurate record.
2815	<p>Matters arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minute 2774 – Update on the Financial Context and Future Direction – it was noted that the item on scenario-planning had been considered at the March meeting of the Sustainability and Resources Committee, as planned. • Strategic Event (Spring 2022) – it was noted that this was scheduled for Thurs 28 April 2022 in the Catalyst, Leek Road. • Prevent Annual Report and Return 2020-21 – it was noted that following submission in December 2021, at the time of writing OfS had not yet confirmed that the University’s Prevent assessment for 2020-21 had been concluded (however no issues were anticipated). • Development Board – it was noted that an update on the Development Board’s strategy and work was planned for the June 2022 meeting, following the appointment of a new Chair.
2 STRATEGIC OVERVIEW	
2816	<p>The Board received and noted an update on Strategic developments and organisational performance (VC report) BG/124/02 from the Vice Chancellor. The report covered the external context, University performance, University business, and senior staff appointments and departures.</p> <p>Members and attendees commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the board of Governors were pleased with the quality of the recent appointments to senior positions within the University. • Discussion ensued about the apparent contradictions within different aspects of Government policy and emerging OfS Regulation, with uncertainty around how this would form the new landscape. A further update would be provided in the next agenda item and at the Board of Governors Strategic Event.
2817	<p>The Board received and noted the update on the OfS Consultation: background to the proposals and our response BG/124/03, introduced by the Pro Vice Chancellor – Education. It was noted that the OfS had on 20 Jan 2022 launched three interrelated consultations setting out new proposals on how it intended to regulate quality and standards in English higher education. The paper focused on the consultation on a new approach to regulating student outcomes and provided a summary of the consultation together with our response. The final response submitted by the University was attached (this was largely in line with the sector responses of UUK and Million Plus).</p> <p>Members and attendees commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Vice Chancellor highlighted the recent correspondence from Government to OfS regarding the B3 conditions and the investigation of universities who may fall below the performance expectations. Reference was also made to the deliberate move away from contextualising poor student performance and prior academic attainment. • The Chair of the Board of Governors noted that the response to the consultation was solid.
2818	<p>The Board received for approval a paper on the Strategic Plan 2022-2027 BG/124/04, introduced by the Vice Chancellor, who noted the following main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work had commenced on the development and content of the University’s new Strategic Plan in Autumn/Winter 2021-22. It had been agreed that the new Strategic Plan would reflect a significant continuity with the previous Connected University Strategy and would also be built around the ambitions and priorities of the new Vice Chancellor, with the Board of Governors informed of its development through the subcommittee structure. • The new Strategic Plan (Visual Image and Catalyst for Change Narrative (including culmination statement)) was now presented for Board of Governor approval. • First reflections were requested on the following (with approval at the Board of Governors Strategic Event on 28th April 2022) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The ‘Size and Shape’ of the University during the life of the Strategic Plan ○ University Level Key Performance Indicators • Additionally, the paper outlined the developmental work being undertaken regarding the School Five-Year Business Plans and Enabling Strategies, which would underpin the delivery of the new Strategic Plan. The further unpacking of these would also be a key focus of the forthcoming Board of Governors Strategic Event in April. <p>Members and attendees commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was highlighted that it would be helpful to accentuate the theme of ‘Proud to be Staffs’ as part of the visual imagery. • Discussion continued around how these messages would translate for a student audience. It was agreed that the nature and purpose of this presentation had been for internal and external stakeholders in terms of regional

	<p>engagement. For students, a very different pitch would be made that built upon the strategic plan but presented it through the lens of the student audience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kevin Gould highlighted the size, shape and scale of ambition, which led to a more generalised conversation. It was noted that the size and shape, KPIs, and risk appetite would all be explored further at the strategic event. Discussions would also take place regarding investment and the reprofiling of our expenditure to support the re-pivoting of the student recruitment activity away from the mature market, towards the 18-year-old demographic. • Colin Hughes highlighted that some modelling would need to be undertaken for certain 'what ifs' such as minimum entry requirements. • It was agreed at the Strategic Event would focus on the above for deliberation together with a priority grouping of interventions. <p>The Board approved the Strategic Plan 2022-27 flywheel concept and the supporting video narrative. The size and shape and KPIs would be further reflected upon at the forthcoming Board of Governors Strategic Event.</p>
3 SUB-COMMITTEE BRIEFING SHEETS AND REFERRED ITEMS	
2819	<p>The BRIEFING SHEETS - Audit and Risk Committee, 25 Jan 2022 and 15 March 2022 BG/124/05 and BG/124/06 were introduced by the Committee Chair.</p> <p>Approval</p> <p>a. Minute 1841 – Internal audit plan 2021-22 BG/124/07 The internal audit plan was introduced, with the Chief Operating Officer noting the amends made since its presentation to the Committee in January, and approved by the Board.</p> <p>b. Minutes 1843 and 1863 - University-level risk registers BG/124/08 (<i>HLRRs on SharePoint</i>) The University-level risk registers (the high-level risk registers – the HLRRs) were approved, with the Board noting the amends made and the creation of three new registers. A meeting would be organised for Peter Baines if he wished to understand more regarding these.</p>
2820	<p>The BRIEFING SHEET - Strategy and Performance Committee, 15 Feb 2022 BG/124/09 was introduced by the Committee Chair.</p> <p>Approval</p> <p>a. Minute 260 – International Strategy BG/124/10 (<i>AppxB on SharePoint</i>) The International Strategy, which provided recommended strategic aims to support a sustainable and successful international recruitment strategy, was approved.</p> <p>Information</p> <p>b. Minute 259 - Student Recruitment Report: End-of-Cycle Report (Sept 2021 enrolment) BG/124/11 The Student Recruitment End-of-cycle Report (Sept 2021 enrolment) was received for information, with the paper outlining key headlines and lessons learnt from the full End-of-Cycle Report for 2021.</p> <p>c. *Minute 261 – Evaluating Delivery of the Strategic Plan – Connecting Communities BG/124/12* This fourth annual progress report on the delivery of the Connecting Communities strategic pillar was received for information, outlining developments, presenting a framework designed to embed the Connected Communities strategy 'into the everyday', and pointing to examples of key activities and future plans.</p> <p>d. *Minute 265 - Access and Participation Plan 2020-25 update BG/124/13* The report provided an update on the Access priority areas of our APP, detailing key changes to our APP approach and highlighting APP activity to date, and was received for information.</p> <p>e. *Minute 266 - Apprenticeships performance and monitoring BG/124/14* The Apprenticeships performance and monitoring report was received for information, giving updates on context, finance, performance data and analysis, Covid-10 impact, Ofsted & ESFA audit, future developments, and degree apprenticeship consultation.</p>
2821	<p>The BRIEFING SHEET - Sustainability and Resources Committee, 8 Mar 2022 BG/124/15 was introduced by the Committee Chair.</p> <p>Approval</p> <p>a. Minute 434 – Update on the Strategic Plan (<i>see minute 2818</i>)</p> <p>b. Minute 436 – Estates masterplan – business case: car park at Squires View BG/124/16 The business case was received and considered, with the Board approving proposed option two (a surface car park).</p>

	<p>c. Minute 437 - Estates masterplan – business case: refurbishment of former Cadman Library space for office accommodation BG/124/17 The business case was considered and discussed, with the Board of Governors approving the proposal.</p> <p>d. Minute 440 – Cotes Heath – Disposal of Land BG/124/18 The paper proposing the disposal of the University’s land at Cotes Heath, or retaining this with a view to future review, was considered and approved, with the Board of Governors agreeing to the former.</p> <p>e. Minute 447 – Bad Debt Write-Offs BG/124/19 A paper seeking authorisation of the write-off of bad debt, which had been approved by Sustainability & Resources Committee, was approved.</p> <p>Information</p> <p>f. Minute 441 – Accommodation Strategy BG/124/20 The paper setting out a proposed approach to residential accommodation at each of the University’s key locations, which had been approved by Sustainability & Resources Committee, was received for information.</p> <p>g. Minute 448 - Management accounts to 31 Jan 2022 BG/124/21 The Management Accounts to 31 January 2022 were received for information.</p> <p>h. *Minute 450 – Human Resources and Organisational Development Annual Report* BG/124/22 <i>available on SharePoint</i> The report, setting out the main headlines in this area and signposting future areas for development, was noted.</p> <p>i. *Minute 451 – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report* BG/124/23 <i>available on SharePoint</i> The report, setting out the main headlines in this area and signposting future areas for development, was noted.</p> <p>j. Minute 453 – Pensions update BG/124/24 (including verbal update on position with unions) The report, providing an update on the background and current position with the unions and their most recent activities, was received for information, with the Chief Operating Officer providing a verbal update on the participation in industrial action on 28 March 2022 and 30 March 2022 and the action short of a strike that was being planned.</p>
2822	<p>Nominations & Governance Committee referrals (by email and by extraordinary meeting on 24 March 2022):</p> <p>Approval</p> <p>a. Independent Governor appointment BG/124/25 The paper, noting that Nominations & Governance Committee proposed the appointment to the Board (with immediate effect) of two new Independent Governors, was approved.</p> <p>b. [REDACTED]</p>
4 FOR DISCUSSION AND/OR APPROVAL (marked below accordingly)	
2823	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>

2824	<p>The Board of Governors received for approval the paper regarding the First Star programme BG/124/28, presented by the Chief Operating Officer, who noted the following main points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In November 2021, the 'Made in Stoke' diaspora group approached the University with a proposal to run the First Star programme, which aimed to support young people to reach their full potential including potentially accessing Higher Education (complementary to other initiatives run by the University to support access and participation in HE). The programme costs around £1m to run (covering the four years). The proposal outline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aim for a September 2022 start Recruit the Director once 25% of the money was secure (approx. £250k) Start the programme once we had 50% secure Proposed contingency – if no or reduced funding available beyond 50%, Director continued to work for years 3 and 4 delivering a reduced programme. All students would be supported to the end of the fourth year, but at a lower level. The Board was asked to approve the University's commitment in principle (only) to the programme, in order to secure donations. <p>The Board of Governors approved the proposal to commit in principle to the First Star programme in order to secure donations.</p>
5 FOR INFORMATION	
2825	The Board of Governors received for information the Students' Union Report BG/124/29, introduced by the President of the Students' Union. The report included updates on the Union's 3–5-year strategy development plans, student voice and welfare, trends, activities and sustainability. It also noted that nominations for the Leadership Race, to elect new full-time officers (two of whom would become student governors) ended on 8 April, with elections taking place in early May.
2826	
2827	The Board of Governors received for information the Ofsted final inspection report BG/124/31, which noted that following the University's confirmed rating of Good for apprenticeship provision, the next inspection would normally be within 7 years.
2828	The Board of Governors received for information the *Academic Board minutes (unconfirmed): 09 March 2022* BG/124/32.
2829	The Board of Governors received for information the OfS letter: roll-over approval of Access and Participation Plan 2022-23 & publication of annual fee information for 2022-23 BG/124/33, introduced by the Pro Vice Chancellor – Education, with the report outlining the position and noting the monitoring arrangements for the University's Access and Participation Plan.
6 ADDITIONAL MATTERS	
2830	<p>How have we made a positive impact on our students today?</p> <p>It was agreed that a range of matters on the agenda supported this, including the approval of the strategic plan, the access and participation plan update, [REDACTED] and the reflections on the London student experience.</p>
2831	There were no additional matters .
2832	Next meeting: Wednesday 29 June 2022 (Catalyst building, Leek Road)