

the
GOVERNING BODY

**MINUTES of the meeting of the Governing Body held on Wednesday,
24 November 2021 in Room 039, Queen Anne Court, Greenwich Campus, Park Row, Greenwich
SE10 9LS / by Microsoft Teams commencing at 5:00 pm**

Present:

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

In attendance :

Professor J Bonet (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise))
Mrs T Brighton (SEO Governing Body) (minutes)
Mr P Garrod (University Secretary)
Ms N Leitolf (GSU Officer)(item 21/23)
Professor J Roscoe (Deputy Vice-Chancellor)
Mr P Taylor (Chief Operating Officer)
Ms L Watson (Chief Financial Officer)
Ms V Wood (Head of Health & Safety)(item 21/21)

Apologies for Absence: Ms A Ayoub, Mrs D Khanna, Ms S Ragab

GB 21/17 WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Nele Leitolf, Greenwich Students' Union Sabbatical Officer, who was attending the meeting in place of the Student Governor, Aatika Ayoub.

GB 21/18 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of conflicts of interest.

GB 21/19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND ACTION LIST (GB 21/P28)


The minutes of the Governing Body strategy session and business meeting held on 19 October 2021 were approved as a correct record. The actions list was received.

GB 21/21 HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21 (GB 21/P33)

The Head of Health & Safety, Victoria Wood, presented the annual report on health and safety activities during 2020/21. The period had been dominated by the University's response to the Covid-19 pandemic but, nevertheless, from an overall health and safety perspective, the University had performed satisfactorily.

By the end of the 2020/21 year, six of the 22 key performance indicators (KPIs) had been rated as red, six as amber and 10 as green. The KPIs which had not been achieved had been affected by Covid-19 but good progress was now being made. Some activities had been paused due to covid-19, and subject to the pandemic, the normal programme of work was planned to be back on track by the end of the year. One permanent and three additional temporary staff members had been employed to provide additional resourcing. The need for additional resources would be kept under review as the pandemic continued. A planned review of health and safety management arrangements across the University would examine different models of centrally and locally managed operations.

The following points were noted in discussion:

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- There had been a significant increase in 'unacceptable behaviour' incidents in 2020/21 which was believed to be linked to the reporting of Covid rule breaches under this category. Ms Wood would carry out a further analysis of reports for 2020/21 to verify this;
- The University's responsibility for ensuring a safe working environment extended to home working. IT and other equipment had been provided for staff to use at home and guidance had been provided on safe home working. There had been bulk purchasing of IT equipment and the provision of socially-distanced work spaces to support students.

The Chair thanked Ms Wood for the clear, comprehensive, report.

GB 21/22 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT (GB 21/P29)

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

- Greenwich had been ranked as fourth among UK universities in the Guardian's League Table of Social Mobility;
- In an announcement earlier in the day, the Minister of State for Higher and Further Education had directed HE providers to rewrite their access and participation plans to focus on outcomes;
- In support of the arts, the University Alliance had written to The Times during the week to highlight the importance of creative industries;
- Governors had been invited to participate in workshops in December 2021 and January 2022 to enable them to contribute to the development of the sub-strategies and enabling strategies under the strategic plan;

- Following the Governing Body meetings on 19 October, KPI #6 on Staff Engagement was being reworked;
- Following discussions with staff, trade unions and GSU, the consultation on whether to adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism had been extended to allow all relevant stakeholders to engage.
- The UCU had confirmed that its members would be taking strike action on 1-3 December. Action Short of a Strike would start on 1 December until the industrial action was concluded. Arrangements to limit the impact on students were in hand. A message to students about the strike was planned. Unison had announced plans to ballot several HE providers, including Greenwich, for strike action. The results of Unison's ballot would not be known until the middle of January 2022;
- The Governing Body congratulated the University on its successful bid for capital funding from the OfS for 2021/22.

GB 21/23 STUDENT GOVERNOR'S REPORT (GB 21/P30)

Nele Leitolf, GSU Sabbatical Officer, presented a report summarising GSU activities in Term 1 relating to student experience and Welcome. Following the transfer of Medway staff from Kent Union to GSU and a subsequent restructuring, the membership team had been divided into three areas covering Engagement & Opportunities, Advocacy & Policy and Student Voice & Representation. Students' engagement with the GSU's clubs and societies had been affected by Covid-19. New initiatives, such as the 'Give It A Go' programme of activities encouraging students to try something new and potentially stimulate new student societies had had a positive uptake. There were various reasons for the lower student engagement but some sporting facilities had been temporarily withdrawn because of the pandemic.

The 2020/21 Retention & Wellbeing Project had continued into Term 1 of 2021/22 with clear target audiences. Over the course of the last six weeks, c9975 students had received a wellbeing call. The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the work was invaluable and the University would continue to fund it.

The Global Greenwich initiative launched at the start of term to support international students and enhance their student experience was proceeding well. Through its Global Centre, GSU offered a point of contact for international students and provided a variety of services such as English classes. The Governing Body noted that the global offer for the incoming cohort of international students in Term 2 would continue to be developed. Governors noted, in response to questioning about the range of pastoral and cultural support, that GSU and Student & Academic Services worked in partnership to deliver the service and were committed to ensuring that it delivered the types of support and activities which would most benefit all international students.

GB 21/24 REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2021 (GB 21/P31)

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Louise Watson, presented the draft report and financial statements for the University of Greenwich for the year ended 31 July 2021. An operating surplus of £9.3m was being posted, representing a 4% return of total revenues. This was broadly in line with the June 2021 projections and reflected higher tuition income following a buoyant recruitment round. The balance sheet remained strong and all Bond covenants had been met throughout the 2020/21 period and to date.

Some changes had been made to the draft report and financial statements since their review by the Finance and Audit & Risk Committees. The value of pension assets had been amended to £3.7m and, as this was a material change, the impact had increased the actual total comprehensive income by £3.7m to £27m. There had been no consequential impact on cashflow. Updates to the Streamlined Energy and Carbon Report (SECR) and the PwC Audit Opinion had also been made and comments from the chair of the Audit & Risk Committee incorporated.



The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee (ARC) summarised the Committee's consideration of the External Auditors' audit results report and the report on Going Concern. The ARC had discussed some of the assumptions underpinning the year-end performance in order to satisfy itself that they were not overly optimistic. There had been some historic reporting of uncorrected mis-statements and Ms Watson would be providing an update on solutions to the March 2022 meeting of the ARC. The External Auditors had questioned the level of the provision for bad debt and the ARC had been advised by Ms Watson that a project to improve management of bad debt had been initiated.

Ms Watson reported that the External Auditors had made late changes to the Letter of Representation. The External Auditors were taking a cautious approach regarding the previous use of Devonport House as a hotel and conference centre until further documentation confirming approval of this use by the superior landlord could be provided. The Chief Financial Officer would continue to work with the External Auditors to agree a final text.

The Governing Body agreed that the financial results were excellent and that the report read well. The Governing Body:

- (i) **received:**
 - (a) the presentation from the CFO on the 2020-21 financial statements
 - (b) the report on Going Concern by the CFO

- (c) the External Auditors' Audit Results Report, including the management response, and the draft Letter of Representation
- (ii) **approved** a letter of support from the University of Greenwich to Greenwich Property Limited
- (iii) **received and noted** the draft report and financial statements for Greenwich Property Limited for the year ended 31 July 2021
- (iv) **approved** a letter of support from the University of Greenwich to Greenwich University Enterprises Limited
- (v) **received and noted** the draft report and financial statements for Greenwich University Enterprises Limited for the year ended 31 July 2021
- (vi) **approved** the draft report and consolidated financial statements for 2020/21 for the University of Greenwich for signature by the Chair of the Governing Body and Vice-Chancellor prior to submission to the Office for Students
- (vii) subject to further amendment, **authorised** the Chair of the Governing Body and the Vice-Chancellor to sign the Letter of Representation.

GB 21/25 FIVE-YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN REFRESH (GB 21/P32)

Ms Watson presented the Five-Year Plan which had been refreshed since the Governing Body's approval in June 2021.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The Governing Body thanked Ms Watson for the clear analysis and **approved** the changes to the Five-Year Plan covering the period 2021/22 to 2025/26 (subject to any further changes to reflect the Government's response to the Augar Review's recommendations), for submission to the Office for Students before the end of February 2022.

The Chair invited the Committee Chairs to highlight any items from recent committee meetings not previously covered in the meeting.

The Chair of the Finance Committee stated that the Committee had advocated early development of the estate sub-strategy to avoid the University over-extending itself financially. The Vice-Chancellor said that one or two estate projects would need to be progressed before the masterplans were agreed. The University's Treasury Management Policies had been updated and developed in collaboration with Barclays Bank.

The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee reported that the Committee continued to monitor the performance of the IT security metrics and staff completion of mandatory IT training. The Committee was supportive of the project to improve asset management. The Internal Auditors had completed their programme of audits for 2020/21 and had conducted an additional piece of investigatory work arising from a whistleblowing case. The Audit Committee's Annual Report (included in the information pack) had been approved for publication on the University's website.

FORMAL AGENDA

GB 21/27 GOVERNING BODY COMMITTEES: MATTERS REQUIRING APPROVAL (GB 21/P34)

The Governing Body received a summary of decisions by its committees requiring the Governing Body's approval. The following matters were approved:

- (i) *From the NSR (Remuneration) Committee held on 26 October 2021:*
 - Remuneration Annual Report and Statement 2020-21 for publication (Information Pack)
- (ii) *From the Finance Committee held on 5 October 2021:*
 - Revised Financial Regulations (Information Pack)
 - Revised Treasury Management Policy (Information Pack)
 - Revised Long-Term Investment Policy (Information Pack)
 - Revision to the Committee Terms of Reference where the quorum was reduced from five members to four members
- (iii) *From the Audit & Risk Committee held on 20 September 2021:*
 - PwC Letter of Engagement dated 22 September 2021 for signature by the Chief Financial Officer
- (iv) *From the Audit & Risk Committee held on 15 November 2021:*
 - Prevent Duty Return to OfS and Annual Report on Prevent Compliance for submission to the OfS (Information Pack)
 - Modern Slavery Act 2020-21 Statement for publication (Information Pack)
 - Revised Counter-Fraud Policy (Information Pack)

- Anti-Money Laundering Policy (Information Pack)
- Anti-Bribery Policy (Information Pack)
- Whistleblowing Policy (Information Pack).

GB 21/28 INFORMATION PACK

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

- (i) Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report 2020/21 to which the 2020/21 Internal Audit Annual Report was appended (GB 21/P35)
- (ii) Quarterly Strategic Risk Report (GB 21/P36)
- (iii) Modern Slavery Act Statement 2020/21 (GB 21/P37)
- (iv) Prevent Duty Annual Report to the Governing Body and Prevent Duty Return to OfS (GB 21/P38)
- (v) the following updated policies following periodic review:
 - Revised Counter Fraud Policy (GB 21/P39A)
 - Revised Anti-Money Laundering Policy and Counter Terrorist Financing (GB 21/P38B)
 - Revised Anti-Bribery Policy (GB 21/P39C)
 - Revised Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy (GB 21/P39D)
- (vi) Revised Financial Regulations (GB 21/P40)
- (vii) Revised Long-Term Investment Policy (GB 21/P41A) and Treasury Management Policy (GB 21/P41B)
- (viii) The draft Remuneration Annual Report and Statement 2020-21 (GB 21/P42)
- (ix) Governing Body Cycle of Business 2021-22 (GB 21/P43)
- (x) The minutes of the following Governing Body committees:
 - Nominations, Staffing & Remuneration held on 5 October 2021 (GB 21/P44)
 - Finance Committee held on 8 November 2021 (GB 21/P45)
 - Academic Council held on 13 October 2021 (GB 21/P46)
 - University Health & Safety (H&S) Committee held on 6 October 2021 (GB 21/P47).

The meeting ended at 18:35.

T.A.Brighton / Peter Garrod
14 December 2021