

HARPER ADAMS UNIVERSITY

Board of Governors

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Governors held on 6^h July 2017 in the Boardroom

Present:	Mr Mike Lewis	Chairman
	Dr David Llewellyn	Vice-Chancellor
	Mr Tim Burnhope	
	Mr Peter Cowdy	
	Dr John Donaldson	Staff Governor
	Mrs Emma Folkes	
	Miss Charlotte Garbutt	President of the Students' Union
	Mr Richard Hambleton	
	Mrs Lavinia Moroz-Hale	Staff Governor
	Dr Julia Pointon	
	Mr Peter Nixon	
	Mr Mark Roach	
	Mrs Christine Snell	
	Dr Martin Thomas	
	Mr Campbell Tweed	
Mr Stephen Vickers	Vice-Chairman	
Mr Dominic Wong		

Apologies:	Mr Colin Bailey
	Mrs Heather Jenkins
	Dr Moira Harris
	Professor Mark Ormerod

In attendance:	Dr Catherine Baxter	University Secretary & Clerk to the Board
	Mrs Liz Furey	Director of Finance
	Professor P Mills	Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Register of Interests

Members were reminded to complete or update their entry in the Register of Interests as necessary.

16/58 New Members/Staff Observers

Welcomed: Miss Charlotte Garbutt, the newly appointed President of the Student's Union into her first meeting and Mrs Samantha Vinall, newly appointed PA to the University Secretary as staff observer.

16/59 Pre-meeting visit to the farm

The Chairman thanked the farm manager for a very interesting pre-meeting visit to the farm. Members commented that they had found the visit very useful and were particularly grateful to the farm manager for making the necessary arrangements.

16/60 Chairman's introductory remarks

- (i) the Chairman expressed congratulations to the University on behalf of the Board on achieving a gold award in the recent Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).

- ii) the Chairman highlighted the new format for the agenda which was being piloted during the meeting. The aim of the revised format was to try and ensure that there was sufficient time for Members to discuss strategic issues in particular and items to report would be taken as read/noted unless Members particularly wished to particularly un-star the items or to comment upon them. Members indicated that they were content with the new format and would provide any feedback as necessary following the meeting.

16/61 **Minutes**

Approved: the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held on 7th April 2017 (16/39 to 16/57)

Received: a matters arising report prepared by the University Secretary.

- Noted:
- i) that Martin Thomas had arranged to visit the Animals Department livestock units following informal discussion over lunch with members of the Animal Department technicians after the Board meeting in April 2017. His visit to the Pig Unit alone had, in fact, taken 2 hours as there was so much to see and discuss. Mr Thomas noted that the visit had been excellent with clear evidence of engagement, and enthusiastic staff who were able to communicate their expertise and knowledge including their active involvement with external influences and contacts in the pig industry sector. Discussion had also focused on the need to balance teaching, research and commercial drivers carefully and the team had spoken confidently about actions they had taken to reduce the use of antibiotics and antimicrobials and also efforts to improve environmental, welfare, and other aspects of the unit. Mr Thomas noted in particular that the Pig Unit staff has been very pleased that a Member of the Board had been able to find the time to visit their area and the Unit Manager had confirmed that he would be delighted to offer visits to the Pig Unit and other areas of the Animals Department to any other members of the Board who might be interested.
- ii) The Chairman thanked Mr Thomas for his report and emphasised that the University Secretary would be happy to arrange for any members to spend time with any particular unit or any particular staff or group of staff or students or to spend time engaging with any particular aspect of University work. **ALL**
- iii) that the Chairman noted that arising from the visit to the farm immediately preceding the meeting, Mrs Christine Snell had expressed an interest in joining the Farm Strategy Committee. Members of the Board were supportive of this proposal and asked the University Secretary to review the terms of reference for the committee and seek Chair's approval if necessary to extend the membership so that Mrs Snell could be invited to the next meeting the Committee. **CEB**

16/62 **Vice-Chancellor's Report**

Received: a report by the Vice-Chancellor on recent developments of note

- Noted:
- i) that the University had been very pleased with the positive outcome of its engagement with TEF 2. It was now preparing for TEF 3 and in due course Subject Level TEF;

- ii) that the Minister for Universities had been re-appointed. As he was particularly keen on the introduction and implementation of the Teaching Excellence Framework it was likely that this process would continue for the foreseeable future;
- iii) that the DHLE survey outcomes had been received earlier in the day and had indicated that Harper Adams graduates in 2015/16 had achieved an employability rate of 98% of graduates in employment or further study within six months of graduation.
This performance placed the University third in the Universities sector if small conservatoires and similar very small institutions were excluded. It also appeared that the response rate from Harper Adams students was one of the very highest across the sector;
- iv) that the Vice-Chancellor's team have been focusing on identifying key strategic issues to ensure that the University is as well prepared as possible for ongoing and anticipated further change within the university sector. A number of these items were highlighted later on the agenda under the strategic discussion item;
- v) that student recruitment and retention, the implementation of the improvements to learning and teaching spaces (Delta project) entrepreneurial education for students and a doctoral training centre were a few of the key areas being looked at. However, the most important opportunity and one that also had a number of risks that needed to be managed was the confidential item later on in the agenda describing how a potential partnership with another university might lead to an opportunity to create a joint veterinary school;
- vi) that in addition to the proposed veterinary school project there were opportunities to collaborate with other international partners- both industry and university. The Vice-Chancellor had met recently with possible Indian partners and the Indian High Commissioner;
- vii) that it was hoped that a number of the key strategic items would, in due course, be reflected in the interim review of the strategic plan which was due to take place during 2018. However, it was suggested that it may be more appropriate to finalise the interim review during 2019 when further information was available on the impact of Brexit. Members endorsed this proposal; **DGL**
- viii) that the Vice-Chancellor had been invited to address the HEFCE Catalyst Panel about the use that the University had made of Catalyst funding for the AEIC and the partnership with Dairy Crest. The panel had been very pleased with the way in which the University had used the funding available and had been able to lever other funds to support wider investments. It was suggested that further bids from the University would be welcome. Although it would not be possible for the Catalyst Fund to be used to directly fund a veterinary school it may be possible for the fund to support something that would be supportive of this project in a wider sense. This would be considered carefully by the Vice-Chancellor and his team.

- ix) that development of level 4/5 skills continues to be a key area that Landex and the Landex HE committee are focusing on. There are particular uncertainties about whether or not employers may be expected to lead developments for levels 4/5 in the future. The work to introduce apprenticeships is continuing although this has proved to be problematic and the University's experience of the project to develop a standard for food engineering had not been straightforward and the employer group has still not been successful in achieving approval for the proposed standard. At the current time it had been suggested that the general engineering standard might be sufficient and, therefore, the employer group and HE partners were currently reviewing this feedback;
- x) that the University had suggested to a number of policy makers that joint working between universities and business may be more appropriate to develop apprenticeships but to date no changes had been introduced. In recent weeks the Vice-Chancellor had received a visit from three Treasury officials including a key person responsible for HEIF funding. Feedback from the visit had been very positive. During the visit the Treasury team had asked whether or not the University had any comments or proposals to make in relation to HE policy. A number of areas had been discussed during their visit including the emerging regulatory framework changes, the changes to HEIF funding which continued to exclude Harper Adams from being able to bid for these funds due to the emphasis on funds being used for universities to generate inward facing activities rather than to reach out to business. These comments appear to be taken on board by the Treasury team especially as they had been able to witness the University's very positive engagement with industry during their visit and they appear to understand the disappointment arising from the fact that Harper Adams continue to be excluded from the HEIF funding streams. The Vice-Chancellor had been asked to follow up the visit with a letter to officials and this was currently in hand;
- xi) that it had been announced that the Office for Students had appointed its new Chief Executive, Nicola Dandridge, (who is currently Chief Executive of Universities UK). As previously announced, the chairman of OFS would be Michael Barber and the office would be created with effect from March 2018;
- xii) that a very important HESA project is currently under way called "HESA Data Futures". This emphasises a growing emphasis on analytics and benchmarking data. The Vice-Chancellor had been invited to be a member of the UK Student Advisory Group and this may allow opportunities to represent small specialist and other Guild HE institutions effectively as the policy on these matters is developed;
- xiii) that the longitudinal study of occupations (LEO) had recently been published. This does not currently include self-assessed incomes but focuses on graduates' salary levels at 1/3/5 years after graduation. Agriculture related subjects were reported as being lowest in the table, however, when this group is analysed Harper Adams' graduates were performing more strongly than graduates from other agriculture degree providers. It was also recognised that in agriculture in

particular, graduates may be receiving other forms of remuneration such as housing/transport etc. and that this is not fully reflected in the current data. It remains a concern that in future, Government may expect institutions whose graduates are not being paid above the repayment level for student loans to make up the shortfall so that loans are paid back on behalf of a particular university's graduates in due course;

- vi) that recruitment of students to the agri-food industry and graduates remains challenging. This will continue to be increasingly challenging giving changes to the demographic and proactive recruitment from countries such as New Zealand and Canada. The Vice-Chancellor had been talking to industry leaders about this challenge and the fact that the sector needs to be clearer about the remuneration that is available to graduates and to make sure the careers were as attractive as possible;
- vii) that the Vice-Chancellor had invited Michael Gove to visit the University and it was understood he was currently interested in understanding more about the agri-food sector;
- vii) that the new Education Act included expectations around student protection. This appears to signal an understanding that some HEIs may need to merge or close their provision and there may, therefore, be both opportunities and challenges within the sector. It was noted that, with the exception of Hartbury Further Education College which achieved a gold rating, no other specialist provider of agri-food courses had been awarded a gold.

16/63 **Finance**

Received:

- i) a report on the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 15 June 2017;
- ii) management accounts for the period to 30 April 2017 *
- iii) the draft budget 2017/18, including the Financial Forecast 2018/21 [Booklet 2];
- iv) the financial forecast and financial commentary for submission to HEFCE on or before 31 July 2017- including Tuition Fees and Accommodation Fees for 2018/19. [Booklet 2];
- v) the updated Financial Strategy

Noted:

- i) that the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting of 15th June had led to a number of recommendations which were reflected in the budget paper and in the financial forecast included on the agenda;
- ii) that the Committee had also had a discussion about how the Board might find time within the agenda to focus on strategic topics. An initial list of strategic topics had also been discussed and this was included on the agenda for Board members to comment on as appropriate. The Committee had also agreed that it would be helpful for the first strategic topic to be a detailed briefing and discussion around the proposal to develop

a joint veterinary school with Keele University and this was an item later on the agenda.

- iii) that with respect to the strategic issues proposed members suggested that a focus on how the university might ensure that it remains abreast of how data which can be used in the agri-food chain could provide an important competitive edge and the appointment of the professors in applied agri-tech Economics would assist in this particular area;
- iv) that members also felt discussion focusing on access to the farm as a strategic tool would remain important together with the University's focus on putting analytical tools into practical use through the engagement of the ESIF funded team who would be supporting agri-epi with technology transfer activities;
- v) that the strategic issues included a focus on staff experience where it was intended that the University could usefully take a stock take of current ways in which the staff experience was supported to ensure staff well-being and a supportive working environment was in place. There may also be opportunities to discuss with staff ideas for freeing up time by introducing more efficient systems or ceasing to undertake activities where these were no longer required. Members agreed that it was important that staff were positive about their working environment and that the "Harper Spirit" is alive and well amongst staff as well as amongst students. Members also noted that positive staff remain important to underpin the University's performance in TEF, REF and other measures;
- vi) that the Vice-Chancellor's team were continuing to review and refine the list and had undertaken a mapping exercise to consider how the strategic issues together with a few other key items mapped against a range of factors such as resources, game changes etc. The Vice-Chancellor's team would continue to work on this list over the summer and any further thoughts or comments from members of the Board were welcomed; **ALL**
- vii) that F & G P Committee members suggested that the 2017 Planning Day might focus on the student experience and the opportunities and threats that surrounded this topic. Members indicated that they were content with this proposal; **CEB/MJL**
- viii) that Members would welcome sight of the final strategic topics list developed by the Senior Management Team. The Vice-Chancellor agreed to circulate the list and to seek feedback from members as part of the September Governors: University Executive Planning Day. **DGL**
- ix) that the Finances and General Purposes Committee had asked that the financial forecast be drawn up on the basis of 630 undergraduate intake from both September 2017 and September 2018 as it was felt that this was an appropriate and prudent approach to take;
- x) that the forecast also put forward a prudent estimate of grant income as it was not certain at this point how the introduction of the Office for Students may change grants. Overall a reduction of 3.3 million had been included over the financial forecast as it was recognised that there may be changes to higher level band B funding. It was possible that ISF allocations may reduce and these had currently been included at 50% of the current level as a prudent estimate;

- xi) that pay costs had also proved to be higher than the 1% included in previous forecasts , e.g. for 2017 the current National Pay Award was likely to be in the range 1.7- 2.0% with an overall average of approximately 2.0%. The forecast therefore included an estimate of 1.5% across the period plus incremental increases as a best estimate;
- xii) that the forecast also included an assessment of likely pension changes and that pension levels may change at the next triennial review for Local Government Pension Schemes and the Teachers' Pension Scheme. At the current time the forecast included current rates only;
- xiii) that the sector as a whole continues to focus on pensions and changes to the University Superannuation scheme which was now currently worth 20% less. The issues associated with LGPS may in due course start to influence potential changes to TPS although no indication of this had currently emerged;
- xiv) that the performance of the Shropshire Local Government Pension scheme continued to be reasonably positive when compared to that of the performance of other LGPS schemes where universities were members. The current employer contribution rate for the Shropshire scheme was 14.3% whereas some university members were paying 24% employer contributions to their particular schemes. This scheme would continue to be kept under careful review. In general terms it was recognised that there continued to be pressure among public sector funding and affordability of pension schemes and therefore further changes may be introduced in due course;
- xv) that the forecast had assumed retirements at reasonable levels as well as possible natural wastage where efficiencies might be achieved. Nevertheless it was important to maintain high quality student experience facing resources in place;
- xvi) that reductions to the capital budget had been forecast. However, it continued to be important to maintain the student experience and, therefore, the reduced budget would need careful management;
- xvii) that in terms of strategic investment the forecast had assumed an underlying budget of 3 million which would help generate cash for investment in new ventures such as the veterinary school. Should the veterinary school come on stream there would be a need to review the forecast again when further information is available. The current forecast does include assumptions around potential agricultural land purchases of 2.5 million with 100k contingency;
- xviii) that the University was exploring ways in which new halls of residence and or refurbishment of existing halls might be achieved and there were opportunities to discuss this with partners. The F & GP Committee would be kept informed;
- xix) that across the sector the KPIs arising from the new FRS 102 accounting standards had started to become imbedded. In particular cash generation had been confirmed as a key issue and had largely replaced surplus. Members were reminded that the University had revalued its' buildings at the point of

introduction of FRS102 which had increased the balance sheet but also increased depreciation by 600 k per year. It followed, therefore, that the University no longer has an easy measure of historic cost;

- xx) that it was recognised that budgets would continue to be challenging for at least the next three years due to demographic changes and other risks. However, if student numbers were to recover more quickly and the estimated in HEFCE grants were to be less than currently estimated then the forecast would improve. In the meantime the forecast proposed had been set at a very prudent level;
- xxi) that the budget for 2017/18 had been set on the basis of recruitment of 630 undergraduates and in accordance with the forecast prudent estimates of grants and other income had also been included;
- xxii) that the forecast included the tuition fees and accommodation fees for 2018/19 which need to be approved by the Board so these could be included in the relevant student information source. It was proposed that undergraduate fees would rise to £9350 in accordance with the outcome of the TEF assessment and the recommended government level of fee;
- xxiii) that the capital budget included a proposal to provide working capital in cash for Cedar Energy due to the ongoing delays with the STEP project and changes related to VAT advice which had in turn led to a decision not to sell the slurry tanks to the University. The capital would be loaned to Cedar at 5% interest so that the appropriate arrangements were in place;
- xxiv) that the changes to residence fees reflected a review of practice at other universities where many were currently charging for 38/40 weeks whereas Harper Adams currently charge for 36 weeks. As the University did not always make the use of non-ensuite rooms during the Easter vacation it was likely that students would welcome not having to move out of these rooms and it was discussed possibly in some cases students being able to remain in their accommodation so that they could revise for examinations etc. The proposal was to offer a reduced servicing level during this period and to consider whether or not students needed to continue to pay for the final week of term when many had already left the institution. The Director of Finance would keep this under review; **LF**
- xxv) that the current proposal was to increase the letting for non-ensuite rooms by 3 weeks which would help the University to maintain investment in residential facilities. An overall uplift of 2 % in residence fees had also been proposed;
- xxvi) that with regard to the financial strategy the document had been refreshed to better reflect recent discussion over the past 6-12 months. It was recognised across the sector that income remained particularly important and that across the university sector a number of universities were relying on increases in international student recruitment and that this may not always be achievable. It was noted that Harper Adams had not to date based its forecast on anticipated large increases in international student numbers.

xxvii) that the management accounts to the period to 30th April 2017 had been reviewed in detail by the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

- Approved:
- i) the draft budget 2017/18,(including the Capital budget) and the financial forecast 2018/21;
 - ii) the financial forecast and financial commentary for submission to HEFCE on or before 31st July 2017;
 - iii) the tuition fees and accommodation fees for 2018/19;
 - iv) the updated financial strategy;

16/64 **Members Discussion (CONFIDENTIAL ITEM)**

Received:

- i) a briefing on a confidential proposal to explore the development of a new veterinary school in partnership with Keele University;

- Noted:
- i) that detailed background information on the proposal had been included in the agenda papers;
 - ii) that although discussions between Harper Adams and Keele staff had been ongoing during recent months proposals were still at an early stage and engagement and comment from members of the Board would be particularly useful and welcome;
 - iii) that the background to the proposal was that veterinary science continues to attract a very strong market with highly qualified students actively competing for places. It was also the case that there were risks arising from Brexit in the future supply of vets in the UK as almost 50% of all new vets are EU nationals. The UK government was concerned that EU vets may not all wish to stay in the UK and the supply of vets from this source may not be as great in the future;
 - iv) that the RCVS had indicated support for the proposal;
 - v) that a number of very good students are unable to secure a place in a vet school each year and a number of those students opt for related courses such as Bio Veterinary Science at the same or a similar university with a vet school in the hope that in due course they may be able to transfer course to their first choice of Veterinary Medicine;
 - vi) that it was important to recognise in the agri-food chain a large number of vets that are employed in industry such as abattoirs, TB testing etc;

- vii) that while Harper Adams has strong links to agri-food industry and large animal aspects of veterinary science Keele has strong links to medicine through its medical school and a number of the subjects covered in the preliminary years of Veterinary Science were similar to those taught in the medical school;
- viii) that it was recognised that the supply of vets can be subject to ups and downs and in certain years there may be a surplus of candidates and that possible changes to legislation around TB testing etc. and the introduction of higher level technicians may in due course change employability. Notwithstanding this members felt that the demand for Veterinary Medicine remained strong and that the current UK food chain continues to require formal recognition from a qualified veterinary surgeon in relation to QA systems for example;
- ix) that large animal vets continue to be in relatively short supply with a high number of female graduates dominating in Veterinary Medicine and the tendency to move into small animal practice. It was also the case that there is a disproportionate number of veterinary students whose parents have both been to university and, therefore, there were opportunities to try and widen participation into the profession through the joint veterinary project that was being proposed;
- x) that the curriculum for veterinary schools is prescribed by the RCVS and it was possible to purchase a curriculum as a starting point for a new veterinary school. It would also be important to ensure that a wide range of good quality work experience opportunities were in place and that prior to application prospective students had the opportunity to gain relevant experience. Harper Adams had for many years offered such experience to students aspiring to apply for Veterinary Medicine at other universities;
- xi) that the RCVS was very positive about Harper Adams' provision on Veterinary Nursing and were aware of its' strengths in large animal practice and its integration with the agri-food sector and livestock enterprises. If the veterinary school were to come to fruition the RCVS would visit in the initial years and would not provide formal accreditation until a later stage. It would, therefore, be very important for the accreditation position to be made clear to applicants. The veterinary school at Nottingham University had managed this process effectively and the position had not affected recruitment. Both universities were also used to managing the accreditation by professional bodies and it was understood that detailed feedback would be provided by the RCVS at all stages so that any potential issues could be addressed immediately as the course was being rolled out;
- xii) that while there would be challenges to working jointly there were also a number of positive reasons to collaborate. These included the fact the Universities were located relatively close and offered complimentary expertise. Keele's medical school had become a strong part of its' offering while Harper Adams had large animal facilities. It was also hoped that there could be future synergies with the University's agri-tech work;
- xiii) that it was noted that Keele currently has 10,000 students. While it is 3 times the size of Harper Adams, it is not an extremely large university compared to many in the sector. It was also noted that

Professor Ormerod has declared an interest as he is both a member of the Board of Governors at Harper Adams and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Keele University. He was not present at the meeting as the council at Keele University were also discussing the issue the same day;

- xiv) that it would be important to ensure that the financial proposals were discussed in more detail and other practical points such as where staff including the Head of School would be located;
- xv) that there would also be a need to agree formal arrangements around the regulations for a joint degree and how student number returns would be managed and other measures including National Student Survey, DHLE etc. In addition to this the accommodation of students as well as staff would need to be thought through carefully so as to ensure that the student and staff experience was positive. Although the proposal for students was currently focused on daily commuting it was felt that this needed a further review; **PRM**
- xvii) it was recognised that student/staff contact in medical and veterinary schools is high. It was also noted that there may be opportunities to deliver different subjects at two universities using , “ block” delivery methods where students attend one University’s campus for a range of subjects over a certain period and then attend lectures in other subjects at the other University’s campus for another period of time;
- xvii) it would also be important for the Student Union at Keele and the Student Union at Harper Adams to consider how they might ensure Veterinary students have access to the Student Union activities;
- xviii) that with regard to capital investment it would be necessary to expand some of the University’s’ current facilities in the short term e.g. the Companion Animal House. It was noted that Keele University were already expanding their laboratories and in due course there may be a need for further capital build at both institutions. Keele University had secured an expression of interest from an industry partner who may be willing to help facilitate developments at Keele and it was possible that Harper Adams may also be able to identify some support for capital developments on its’ campus. Overall the proposed capital investment was £700,000 to extend animal facilities with a new build in due course estimated at 5 million but assumed at a figure of £10 million for depreciation. Such capital development was estimated to be needed by September 2020 although a first year intake could be accommodated in 2019/20 within existing facilities;
- xix) that the overall student numbers were anticipated at 110 students a year with an overall school of 500 in total. It was recognised that there may be opportunities to explore some joint curriculum delivery with Bio-Vet and Veterinary Nursing students;
- xx) that feedback from Improve International (a very large provider of veterinary CPD post-qualification) was positive and it was stressed that the quality of pre-clinical work would be very important;

- xxi) it was further recognised that it would be important for Harper Adams to ensure that staff, students and alumni were clear about the reason for introduction or exploring a veterinary school opportunity and that this would be complimentary to the existing portfolio of programmes and was not intended to replace or displace these programmes. With regard to this members asked that Professor Mills ensure that a detailed communication strategy is put in place prior to any public announcement being made; **PRM**
- xxii) that there was a considerable amount of detail to be worked through including identification of risks, exit strategies should discussions not prove positive, detailed issues such as bank covenants, legal arrangements and management of reputational risks. There would also be a need to ensure any contractual obligations were carefully considered;
- xxiii) that members were also supportive of proposals to explore the development of a Foundation Year that might allow applicants with strong academic performance but whose scientific expertise needed further development to be able to complete an intensive foundation that would qualify them for entry into the veterinary programme subject to successful completion;
- xxiv) that with regard to capital investment the Director of Finance had been looking carefully at ways to structure such an investment. The proposed agricultural land purchase could be met from reserves rather than on a loan basis. The University currently had loan capacity for up to £22 million under its bank covenants and in the meantime the aim was to create more cash reserves to help support the development of the first phase of the veterinary school. Although borrowing would be possible there may also be an opportunity to secure some HEFCE catalyst funding as discussed earlier in the meeting which would support the development of the vet school while not funding it directly;
- xxv) discussions were also under way with possible partners to progress residences which might include a package to refurbish existing residences. Initial discussions had taken place with the local authority who were seeking to extend their residential activities into student accommodation. It was understood that the local authority cabinet will be discussing this shortly;
- xxvi) that any draft public statement would be discussed first of all with the RCVS and would not be released until students, alumni and staff were aware of the proposals internally. Members also suggested that careful discussions with Keele and publications such as Farmers' Weekly and Farmers' Guardian would be useful to ensure that they were briefed under embargo with an emphasis on the proposal being aimed at supporting the agri-food industry;
- xxvii) that with regard to the specific points raised in Professor Mills' briefing paper outlined on pages 52 -53 of the agenda Members agreed that the joint veterinary school is strategically relevant and important for the University's future; Members were also content that the financial model developed so far appeared appropriate but that further work was required. Similarly the

Board felt that the capital investment proposal that was drafted to date appeared appropriate but again it would require further detailed discussion.

- xxviii) that the opportunities and challenges outlined and discussed in the meeting were wide ranging and again these should continue to be an important focus of ongoing discussion;
- xxix) that the timeline for delivery appeared ambitious and it was recognised that the aim for a first intake in 2019 with a Head of School appointed by June 2018 would need considerable focus and a detailed programme for delivery although it was not unachievable. It was further noted that capital developments could be more gradual with the building programme not needing to be fully complete by 2019;
- xxx) that with regard to next steps the communication plan needed further discussion as suggested and while the Board were content that a joint statement could be released subject to the points raised during the meeting it was also recognised that to achieve a final sign off in November 2017 would require a considerable amount of work. After a detailed discussion members agreed that a working party would be created made up of Emma Folkes, Peter Cowdy and Richard Hambleton who would be kept informed by Professor Mills of the detailed discussions as they emerge over the coming weeks and months. It was further agreed that Finance and General Purpose Committee would be kept informed at each of its' meetings.

PRM

16/64 Corporate Planning Statement

- Received:
- i) a summary of progress made to achieve objectives set for the Corporate Planning Statement 2016/17;
 - ii) the Corporate Planning Statement for 2017/18
- Noted:
- i) that the update on the Corporate Planning Statement 2016/17 and the proposed Corporate Planning Statement 2017/18 had been drafted in consultation with members of the Vice-Chancellor's team leading on the various action points;
 - ii) that securing funding for the refurbishment of the existing Princess Margaret Laboratories was still under review and was proving challenging. In the meantime the new laboratories had made a significant difference to the University's science teaching and represented a very positive step forward.
- Agreed:
- i) that the summary of progress made to achieve objectives set for the CPS 2016/17 was appropriate;
 - ii) that the Corporate Planning Statement 2017/18 should be approved;

CEB

16/65 HEFCE Annual Provider Review 2016/17 (APR) and the Higher Education Assurance Review (HAR)

- Received:
- i) a letter from HEFCE setting out the outcomes of the APR

process for Harper Adams University 2016/17;

- ii) an oral report on informal feedback arising from the HAR visit held on 22 June 2017.

Noted:

- i) that the University had satisfied the APR 2016/17 and the letter been reviewed in detail at the recent Audit and Risk Management Committee;
- ii) that the Vice-Chancellor had received earlier in the day a letter from the HEFCE Assurance consultant setting out feedback from the HAR visit held on 22 June 2017. The letter confirmed that no recommendations had arisen and the report was overall positive;
- iii) that formal feedback had been provided at the end of the visit which indicated the assurance team were particularly pleased to note the very strong attendance by members at the Audit and Risk Management Committee, the positive engagement between the Board of Governors and the University Executive, and the quality of the minutes presented to the Assurance Team.

Agreed:

that thanks were due to all members of the Board for their engagement with the recent HAR and those members of the Vice-Chancellor's team who had also contributed to the success of this engagement;

16/66 Report of the President of the Students Union

Received:

- i) a report by the Student's Union President 2016/17 on the recent activities of the Students Union.

Noted:

- i) that the report had been drafted by the outgoing President Fred Hammond and the Board wished to express its thanks to Fred for all his hard work during the year. It was hoped that there would be an opportunity over the coming weeks to thank Fred more formally and it was understood that he may be continuing to work with the Students Union for a period during the forthcoming year;
- ii) that there were currently some issues relating to the role of trustees within the SU and their engagement with staffing matters. The Vice-Chancellor had discussed these with the incoming President and it had been agreed that a meeting would take place with the Students Union to discuss this in more detail. Members noted that under the 1994 Education Act the Board has a responsibility to oversee the work of the Students Union and that if serious issues were to arise it may be necessary for the Board to raise any concerns more formally with the Board of Trustees of the Students Union. Members agreed that the Chairman could act on behalf of the Board as necessary and that the Vice-Chancellor would keep the Chairman informed of discussions.

DGL

16/67 Committees

Received:

a confidential report of the meeting of the Remuneration Committee held on 15 June 2017.

Noted: that the recommended changes to senior post remuneration proposed by the committee fell within the delegated authority the Board had conferred on the Remuneration Committee.

Agreed: to endorse the recommendations of the Remuneration Committee as set out in the report.

16/68 **Academic Board- terms of reference**

Noted: i) that following the Boards' agreement since April 2017, that a new Learning and Teaching and Student Experience Committee might be established. A number of minor changes to the terms of reference to Academic Board and its sub-committee were required together with a presentation of the new terms of reference for the Learning and Teaching and Student Experience Committee itself.

Agreed: ii) the proposed changes to the terms of reference for Academic Board, sub-committees and the new terms of reference for the new Learning and Teaching and Student Experience Committee.

16/69 **Retiring Members**

Thanked: Mr Fred Hammond, outgoing President, for his contribution to the work of the Board and his work as President during 2016/17

16/70 **Data Protection/General Data Protection Regulations**

Agreed: that the Chair should act on the delegated authority of the Board to approve any changes to the University's Data Protection Policy that arise from the GDPR and require approval over the summer period. **MJL**

16/71 **Date of Next Meeting**

Noted: the date of the next meeting is 28th September 2017 and not 29th September 2017 as indicated on the agenda.

Part 2 – starred items

The Board also received and noted the following items;

16/72 **Risk Management**

Received: an updated report from the University Secretary on the key risk Areas monitored by the Board of Governors.

Agreed: that the report confirmed that appropriate management of Risks was continuing and there were no matters arising that Members of the Board wished to raise.

16/73 **CUC Higher Education Code of Governance – Illustrative Practice Notes**

Received: A report from the University Secretary on how the University's governance arrangements met the recently published IPN on Academic Governance.

- Agreed:
- i) that members were content that the report confirmed that the University was meeting the guidance set out in the IPN on Academic Governance
 - ii) that it was helpful for members to have a copy of two reports from the LFHE on recent governors round table discussions on Academic Governance had been made available via the Governors' Document Library;
 - iii) that Members of the Board would read the recently published illustrative practice note on Sustainability in Universities and that this would form an agenda item at the September Board meeting where Members would comment on and ask any questions in relation to the IPN. **ALL**

16/74 **Marketing and Communications**

Received: a report from the Director of Marketing and Communications.

Agreed: that the report was helpful and Members did not wish to raise any further points in relation to the report'

16/75 **Academic Board and Academic Developments**

Received: a report on the meeting of the Academic Board hold on 20 June 2017

16/76 **OIA Annual Statement for 2016**

Received: a copy of the annual statement published by the OIA confirming the number of student complaints that have been dealt with during the year which relate to Harper Adams University.

Noted: that the report was found to be very positive and confirmed that no complaints had been submitted to the OIA during the year relating to Harper Adams University.

16/77 **Committees**

- Received:
- i) a report on the meeting of Health & Safety Committee held on 1 June 2017 and the Annual accidents and Near Misses Report 2016/17;
 - ii) a report on the meeting of Audit and Risk Management Committee held on 18th May 2016. The report on the meeting held on 29 June 2017 will follow;
 - iii) a report on the meeting of Farm Strategy Committee held on 24 May 2017;
 - iv) a report on the meeting of Staffing Committee held on 15 June 2017
 - v) an annual report on the work of the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Committee;

Agreed: that there were no items arising from the above reports that any member of the Board wished to raise.

16/78 **HEFCE and Other Circulars**

Received: a list of HEFCE and other circulars received by the University since the last meeting of the Board.