

HARPER ADAMS UNIVERSITY

Board of Governors

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Governors held on 26 April 2018 in the Boardroom

Present:

Mr Colin Bailey	
Mr Peter Cowdy	
Dr John Donaldson	Staff Governor
Mrs Emma Foulkes	
Miss Charlotte Garbutt	SU President
Mr Richard Hambleton	
Dr Moira Harris	Staff Governor
Mrs Heather Jenkins	
Mr Mike Lewis	Chairman
Dr David Llewellyn	Vice-Chancellor
Mrs Lavinia Moroz-Hale	Staff Governor
Mr Peter Nixon	
Prof Mark Ormerod	
Mr Mark Roach	
Mr Martin Thomas	
Mr Campbell Tweed	
Mr Stephen Vickers	Vice-Chairman

Apologies: Mrs Emma Foulkes
Dr Julia Pointon
Mrs Christine Snell
Mr Campbell Tweed
Mr Dominic Wong

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

Register of Interests

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

17/46 Staff Observers/staff in attendance for specific items

Welcome: Members welcomed Mr Llewellyn-Smith and Zorka Besevic. The Chair noted that Richard Heath, Kate Baker and Helen Armishaw would be in attendance for Item 5 (8).

17/47 **Minutes approved** the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held on 28 November 2017 (17/22-17/45).

17/48 Matters Arising

Received: a report from the University Secretary

Agreed: that all Matters Arising from the minutes of the meeting held on the 28 November 2017 were either included later on the agenda or had been addressed satisfactorily.

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

- Noted:
- i) that there were five key documents which needed to be submitted to the Office for Students as they set out in Item 43. These included an application form, a Student Protection Plan, a self-assessment of the University's Governance and Management arrangements, a self-assessment of the University's compliance with the competition and markets authority regulations and a revised Access and Participation Plan, which needs to be prepared according to new requirements. As the final documentation requirements had only been published in early April following a series of workshop briefing universities on the information they needed to include in their application for registration with OfS, during the previous week it had not been possible for these papers to be prepared in time to be presented at the Board meeting. Nevertheless, it was important that the Board reviewed and agreed the submission. The OfS required the documentation to be submitted by the University on behalf of the Board of Governors;
 - ii) that in light of this, it was proposed that the documentation be submitted to the Audit and Risk Management Committee at its meeting on 14 May and that the Chairman of the Board would also receive a copy of the documentation for his review, comment/approval. Members were asked therefore to consider giving delegated authority to the Audit and Risk Management Committee and to the Chair, for approving the OfS documentation on behalf of the Board. Members also noted the summary requirements set out in the publication by the OfS, together with the template for the new Student Protection Plan;
 - iii) that while the Access and Participation Plan would have similarities to previous plans, it would need to address new requirements. Rules around financial support had changed and it would therefore be necessary for the Development Trust to undertake further measurement of how its scholarships directly benefitted students who were eligible to be counted in the metrics for the Access and Participation Plan. A very large percentage of those students successfully securing Development Trust Scholarships did in fact meet the OfS criteria and were the overwhelming majority of this particular group of students. Therefore, it was hoped that the University would still be able to count this important source of support for students from relevant backgrounds. With regard to the new Student Protection Plan, the key element was a refund policy, all universities were required to put in place financial compensation plans to address a situation where, despite best efforts, the University was unable to facilitate students to continue with their chosen course of study;
 - iv) that it had been recognised at the workshops that in the case of many institutions, such refunds were only likely to occur in extremely difficult circumstances. For many years HEFCE funded institutions had put in place arrangements to ensure that a course being withdrawn was continued for existing students, until they had completed their programmes. However, the OfS required all universities to now consider what they would do in practical terms. If the University were to cease to exist for a particularly catastrophic reason or some of its courses were withdrawn without a phased withdrawal period to enable all students to complete their studies. The University was drafting this section with advice from its legal adviser;

- v) that the University would also continue to hold cash reserves, as well as land holdings which would be available to draw on if circumstances required this subject to Charity Commission approval. It was likely that once all universities had published their Student Protection Plan, there would be an opportunity to learn from best practice and refine plans for future years as necessary;
- vi) that the governance and management self-assessment would reflect the arrangements which governors were already familiar with and which were set out in documentation, such as the Governance Handbook and discussed on a regular basis at Effectiveness Reviews, as well as in the Statement of Corporate Governance, included in the Annual Report and Financial Statements;
- vii) that existing sources of information would therefore be referenced in the Governance and Management self-evaluation. Similarly, the self-evaluation of compliance with the Competitions and Markets Authority requirements would reflect the reports which were made on an annual basis to the Board, following consideration of a detailed progress report on compliance with the CMA, which was presented each year to the Academic Board. This process was part of the Governors' documentation for consideration of assurance around academic quality matters. The OfS application form also contained new requirements which had not previously been requested by HEFCE. In particular members were asked to give their permission for their personal data to be shared with the OfS and this included details about whether or not they met the criteria for a 'fit and proper person' as described by the OfS in its registration requirements;
- viii) that the OfS also required a declaration by each member about any other charity trusteeships or directorships of companies that they held. Members had been asked to complete a declaration setting out this information and to sign it to confirm they were content that their personal data would be shared with the Office for Students;
- ix) that since the last meeting of the Board, the Vice Chancellor had visited partners in China. He had had a positive visit to Huazhong, where discussions had focused on improving the progression of students from Huazhong to Harper Adams and a more equitable way of sharing fee income from this programme. Andy Jones would be following up on this matter during his forthcoming visit to China later in May. The Vice-Chancellor had also visited China Agricultural University and attended a meeting with senior staff. The meeting had included a number of students recently returned from Harper Adams, who had been extremely positive about their experience. This had been very helpful in progressing discussions with CAU;
- x) that the Vice Chancellor had also visited Shandong University of Technology to launch a new Sino British agri-tech research centre based at the University, which was being funded by a \$5 million regional government investment fund. Harper Adams had agreed to be the UK partner, as the project fitted well with the UK industrial strategy aims to further link UK links with Chinese partners;
- xi) that as members would recall the University had not been eligible to continue to receive HEIF funding. However the rules around HEIF were starting to change and in light of the industrial strategy, there had been further support for small Universities such as Harper Adams and other GuildHE members, to be able to apply for HEIF again. The University

had worked hard to review its metrics and to ensure that they were including all aspects of the University's engagement with industry in line with the changing criteria emerging from these discussions. The University would continue to press as would GuildHE for HEIF reforms;

- xii) that Treasury and Research England staff had indicated that the arguments being put forward in relation to HEIF had some traction, however they were not able to make changes immediately. It was possible that should Harper Adams be able to demonstrate that it meets the threshold requirements, then an application might be considered in due course. A new funding stream would also be available that would have slightly different criteria. Harper Adams would be able to apply for these funds in due course;
- xiii) that the University had recently been nominated/awarded a number of important awards. These include nominations in the Times Higher Leadership and Management Awards; the BBC Food and Farming Awards; and the recent success in the Whatuni Student Choice Awards where Harper Adams had come second in the top category to Loughborough by a slim margin of five decimal places. Harper Adams had however won gold in three categories. Courses/Lecturers, Job Prospects and Student Support. The University had also had an extremely good performance in the Times Higher Student Experience Awards reflecting the outcomes in the 'Whatuni' awards. It was also pleasing that the Hands-free Hectare continue to attract a significant amount of interest and had most recently been featured in a Savills publication during the current week;
- xiv) that the University needed to improve its performance in two important areas. These were; the Gender Pay Gap, where its statistics showed that it was performing at the lower end of the HEI sector. The University had published its Gender Pay Gap action plan and had discussed this further with staff at a recent staff meeting. Further activities were in place led by the new Head of HR, Dawn Crowther. There were two particular issues that were challenging to the University. These were; the direct employment of all staff, including a large number of part-time staff (who tended to be female) together with the fact that to date, there had been no female applications for professorial roles and there was further work to do to encourage female academic staff to apply for Principal Lecturer roles and leadership roles;
- xv) that there had been more appointments in the recent academic staff and promotion round for female staff to Principal Lecturer and Leadership roles, however these had been counterbalanced by successful applications to such roles, by male colleagues. The University had also recently engaged with a project led by Welsh universities (WAVE project) and the researcher leading this project at Cardiff University had offered to help support the University through its action plan. She had also emphasised that it was not an easy process to address the gender pay gap, given the tendency for female staff to work in areas such as catering and domestic services. In some other universities, these roles were all outsourced and therefore not included in their gender pay gap statistics;
- xvi) that the Staffing Committee continue to receive a report on equal pay every year and there were no issues identified in this report. Gender Pay Gap reporting therefore focused solely on the relative levels of pay paid to female and male staff across all job roles in the University and in the case of Harper Adams, there were a larger number of female staff undertaking roles paid at the lower levels of the pay scale compared to the number of males receiving higher level pay. At Harper Adams the

Senior Management Team was very well gender balanced but unfortunately this did not outweigh the other statistics across the University. It was also possible that some other universities may not have interpreted the requirements accurately. However, the University had scrupulously interpreted the regulations to the letter and had included everybody who was on the payroll including student ambassadors who tended to be overwhelmingly female, as more female students had chosen to undertake this role than male students. Audits of Gender Pay Gap statistics were to be conducted and therefore it was very important that the University that included all relevant data;

- xvii) that student recruitment in relation to the number of applications received had been running at 101% of the previous year up to 13 April 2018. More recently this number had fallen into the 90% range and therefore it was clear that further work needed to be done to try and ensure that applicants were retained. A detailed campaign was in place including specific newsletters which were course based; social media contact; securing UCAS space in clearing, under the headings of the West Midlands and 'Agriculture' and engaging with the 'Farmers Guardian Young Farmers convention in May and their campaign 'This is Agriculture.' There would also be active engagement with clearing, starting in June;
- xviii) that as part of this work, the University continued to try and understand why students were declining offers. Information received so far suggested location, accommodation and some students unsure if they would 'fit in'. However, none of these were overwhelmingly consistent reasons. Other reasons had included the ability to meet work experience requirements and not being able to attend an interview, although interviews had been offered via Skype and telephone. Also a number of students simply indicated that they preferred another college or university. Further analysis was underway to see if any trends or action points could be identified. Notwithstanding this, the number of engagements at UCAS and other events such as agricultural and related events was up by 73% compared to the previous year and the 'Farmers Apprenticeship' would also be taking place at the University in the next few months, which again would draw attention to the work of the University and the opportunities it offers to those wishing to enter careers in the agri-food chain;
- xix) that it was recognised that turnaround times were a key issue and these needed to be improved together with further consideration of whether interviews remained critical or not. In a number of cases there was also a need to recognise that other universities were continuing to issue unconditional offers and that it may be useful to review the University stance on this again. The Marketing Team also carefully looking at where spend was most effective to address competition in a difficult market;
- xx) that with regard to polar measures, the institution was up from 16% of students coming from polar one/two categories to 22% so far in 2018 with regard to applications. This would be helpful in regard to the Access and Participation Plan and would help to convince the OfS that there is a need to continue to review and understand in more detail the polar data as it affects rural-based students;
- xxi) that with regard to work experience requirements, this remained challenging. Foundation degree students need to be able to secure a work placement within a year of their coming to the University and Honorary Degree candidates within two years. The Access to Agriculture programme had been offered which would support students

without sufficient work experience, to gain it during their first year at the University. Academic staff would continue to look at this aspect carefully. However, the University would wish to continue to emphasise the importance of placement and to support students to be in a good position to secure a work placement at the appropriate time during their course and to be successful at undertaking their placement, given its importance within the overall degree and within the University's employment rates. In discussion members suggested that a slight reduction of employment rates might be acceptable if students were still able to have sufficient work experience to secure placement. These aspects would be considered further;

- xxii) that HEPI had recently published a paper suggesting that the demographic downturn would level out in 2019, then would remain static before improving on a fairly steep curve thereafter. However the improvement in rural areas was slower and there was a need to review this data in more detail. The Vice Chancellor had recently met HEPI staff, who had agreed that further work was needed. Their work also continued to confirm that the current likely pool of applicants was relatively small and therefore securing market share was a critical issue.
- xxiii) that it had recently been announced that Writtle University College were making 40 staff redundant in subjects ancillary to agriculture, such as an floral art/horticulture related programs;
- xxiv) that the University's clearing programme would be carefully targeted using data analytics and social media platforms;
- xxv) that the Vice Chancellor had invited Nicola Dandridge the CEO of OfS to visit the University on 14 May 2018. It was hoped this would provide an opportunity to discuss some of the rural aspects affecting data metrics and demographics that were critical to the work of Harper Adams. In this regard it was helpful that the Lords Committee reviewing DEFRA had suggested that rural affairs needed to be reviewed as the government's commitment to 'rural proofing' had not really been played out effectively in all government departments. The Committee had urged that something had to be done to improve the situation. The Vice- Chancellor is currently writing a paper relating to the review of HE Funding that would draw on these comments;
- xxvi) that members recognise that although the situation remains extremely challenging for all universities. Harper Adams had a number of important challenges which needed to be addressed, nevertheless the University continued to perform extremely well and members wish to express their thanks to all staff for their hard work in this regard;

Agreed: that the Chair of the Board and the Audit and Risk Management Committee should act on the delegated authority of the Board to approve the submission to the OfS by the due date in May 2018.

PC/CB/MJL

17/49 **Governor Discussion Topics**

- Received:
- i) oral feedback from Mr Vickers on his recent attendance at a Governor Development seminar offered by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education;
 - ii) oral feedback from Mr Hamilton on his attendance at the Working Group on the Staff Survey outcomes for 2017;
 - iii) the draft Business C-case and recommendations for next steps with respect to the Joint Veterinary School with Keele University;

- iv) a proposal that three illustrative practice notes recently published by the CUC should be included as discussion topics at the next meeting of the Board in September. In the meantime, the Nominations Committee would be considering two of these notes at its forthcoming meeting in July 2018;
- v) that Mr Vickers had found the LFHE session on leading the governing body and chairing the Board very useful;
- vi) there had been a good range of governors attending the session and it had also been useful to network. Alistair Jarvis of UUK had emphasised key challenges around student interest, staff interest and public interest and the role of governors at the centre of the University. He proposed that universities were still seen as elite and were not really private or public and therefore they sat in a difficult and challenging place within the U.K.'s overall structures. He also indicated his view that the review of funding would not necessarily link cost and fee, as the overall aim was for the review to be cost neutral and given the political environment this was unlikely to change. Prof Quentin McKellar, Vice Chancellor of the University of Hertfordshire, then talked about overseas partnerships and the rise of Chinese universities as a potential threat to international student recruitment however he had indicated his view that there were opportunities in Africa. It was noteworthy that Harper Adams was already working with partners in Africa;
- vii) that speakers had also talked about the OfS being critically focused on metrics, which were likely to drive behaviour and limit diversity and that this was particularly important for small specialist institutions. Professor McKellar had also mentioned opportunities for electronic delivery, videoing of lecturers and the fact that in Hertfordshire this had significantly improved student engagement, as students were able to revisit lectures as often as necessary. He also talked about the importance of retention and being careful about grade inflation. At Hertfordshire electronic monitoring of attendance was found to be helpful, to avoid dropout;
- viii) that Alison John CEO of Advanced HE and CEO of the Leadership Foundation had talked about the new merger of the Equality Challenge Unit, HEA and LFHE. She had emphasised the importance of universities continuing to demonstrate public benefit;
- viii) that Smita Jamdar of Martineau and a staff member from WonkHE and the Chair of the School of Oriental and African Studies had also spoken at the event. Their presentations had focused on gender pay gap, which was acknowledged as particularly tricky for universities to address effectively. One speaker had noted the generally poor view of the University sector at the current time and that if part-time workers were removed from university statistics then the gender pay gap picture was very different. Their presentations had also talked about the importance of ensuring that governance structures were fit for modern purposes. There had also been a discussion about the extent to which the voluntary role of governors might continue into the future given the wide range of work that they were expected to engage with;
- x) that overall, the advice to members of the Board had been to consider after each meeting, what value had been added by the discussion. It was suggested that such regular self-evaluation would be useful and would feed into the major effectiveness reviews which Boards need to undertake every four years as a minimum;

- xi) that Mr Hamilton had attended the working group on the staff survey. This had been made up of a wide range of staff from across the Institution undertaking a wide number of roles. Overall, the results of the staff survey were good and the University had been placed sixth out of 48 HEI's, as an employer of choice and when compared to all employers that Capita had engaged with in 2017, the University was 16th out of 403. This compared to being 10th amongst HEI's in 2015 and 18th overall against all employers. Nevertheless, there were a number of areas which the University recognise could be improved these included communications and ensuring that issues identified within particular departments were understood and addressed wherever possible. During the working group meeting, each Head of Department had made a presentation on ideas for addressing points arising from their department engagement in the survey. In most cases a Chair had already been discussed and agreed. The Working Group had emphasised that Heads must all share their proposals with their staff, to ensure that everybody was engaged with improving and addressing issues wherever possible. Heads of Departments would need to return to meet the Working Group in September, with an update on progress. In the meantime, an interim check on progress would be undertaken by the HR team. Communications had also been issued to all staff via the weekly diary, to provide an update on progress. **DC/NGH**

Staff observers and Prof Mark Ormerod left the room for discussion of the next Commercial in Confidence item.

Mrs Kate Baker Mr Richard Heath and Mrs Helen Armishaw joined the meeting at this point.

17/50 **Joint Veterinary School with Keele University**

The minutes of this part of the meeting are recorded in a separate Commercial in Confidence document.

Prof Mark Ormerod was invited to re-join the meeting after the JVS item was concluded.

CUC Illustrative Practice Notes

Agreed: that three new CUC IPNs would be considered at the Board meeting in September 2018 and that the Nominations Committee would also consider the first and third notes at its meeting in 2018 and report to the Board in due course.

CEB

17/50 Harper Adams University Development Trust

Received: a report on the meeting of the Development Trust held on 20 March 2018 including a recommendation relating to returning a donation.

Noted: i) that as previously discussed at the Board the Taylor McNally Foundation had indicated that they did not feel able to agree criteria for the use of its funds to create new scholarship opportunities for students at the University. The Board had previously discussed this in light of Charity Commission advice and had asked the Development Trust to continue dialogue to see whether a compromise solution could be found that would suit both the Trust and the Taylor McNally Foundation.

ii) that unfortunately, Taylor McNally had confirmed recently that despite the detailed discussions that had taken place, they remain concerned that their criteria and objects for their own charity was such that it will be difficult for any

institution including Harper Adams to use funds they have donated to meet the objects of the charity itself. In light of this, the Foundation had once again asked that their donation might be returned;

- iii) that a preliminary discussion with the Charity Commission had once again taken place. The University was advised that it would be possible for it to apply to return the gift should it wish to do so, although it was under no obligation to make such an application. The Taylor McNally Foundation had been advised that their request would be put forward to the Board of Governors for its consideration. The Development Trust had also noted the request made by the Foundation;
- iv) that pending the Board's consideration of this matter, the Foundation had also been asked to provide details of its legal adviser so that if the Board were minded to proceed to make an application to the Charity Commission to return the gift, the University's and the Foundation's legal advisers could work on putting a proposal together .A response from the Foundation was awaited.

Agreed: that the University should proceed, subject to legal advice, to make a formal application to the Charity Commission to return the gift donated by the Taylor McNally Foundation. **CEB/DGL**

Staff observers rejoined the meeting at this point.

17/51 Finance

- Received:
- i) a report on the meetings of the Finance and General Purpose Committee held on 18th January and 14th of March 2018;
 - ii) a paper on Cedar Energy Ltd funding requirements;
 - iii) proposed changes to the Financial Regulations;
 - iv) a copy of the Annual Efficiency Return (AER) and EMM (procurement return) approved by the F and GP committee on 18 January 2018 for submission to HEFCE by 31st of January 2018;
 - v) an oral report from the Director of Finance on budget planning to date for 2018/19.

- Noted:
- i) that F and G P committee had considered changes to the Financial Strategy in detail and wished to recommend the changes to the Board for its approval;
 - ii) that the Committee had considered the AER and EMM returns and wished to recommend these to the Board to be endorsed;
 - iii) that in light of changes to the Financial Strategy, particularly the definition of surplus, it had been agreed that a new metric need to be updated to form part of the staff bonus scheme where a metric of 5% surplus had previously been in place. This would be discussed by the University and a formal proposal be put forward to F and GP in June and then to the Board in July prior to wider communication with staff; **LF/DGL**
 - iv) that minor changes to the Financial Regulations were set out in the agenda paper. The F and GP committee wished to recommend these to the Board;
 - v) that the Committee had received an update on progress with the Carbon Management Plan and Environmental Sustainability Strategy and noted that good progress was being made on both;
 - vi) that due to the delays in commencement of the STEP project in terms of full production, the University wish to propose a further loan of working capital to

Cedar Energy Ltd as set out in the agenda papers;

- vii) that budget setting for 2018/19 was in hand and further details will be presented on the outcomes of this process to the F and GP committee in June and the Board of Governors at its July meeting.

Agreed:

- i) to endorse the AER and EMM returns as set out in the agenda papers;
- ii) to approve the updated Financial Strategy; **LF**
- iii) that the Vice-Chancellor and Director of Finance would put forward a new metric in place of 5% surplus as part of the staff bonus scheme KPI set in due course; **DGL/LF**
- iv) that the changes to the financial regulations should be approved for that the extension of further working capital to Cedar Energy as proposed in the agenda papers should be approved; **LF**

17/52 Planning

Received:

an update on progress with the Corporate Planning Statement 2017/18.

Noted:

that good progress was being made with the majority of the action points. It was further noted that Prof Mills would make arrangements to share the KPMG report on workloads with members of the JCNC; **PRM**

17/53 Remuneration Committee

Considered:

a report of the Remuneration Committee held on 18 January 2018 including recommended actions to address the draft Higher Education Remuneration Code on setting senior pay published by the CUC on 9 January 2018.

Noted:

- i) that significant attention had been paid in recent months to how remuneration arrangements were being managed within HEI's. This had led to the CUC publishing a new draft set of guidelines and it was anticipated that the final version following consultation would be available during May. Overall HEI's appeared to be supportive in general terms of the proposals put forward by the CUC;
- ii) that anticipating that the final code would be similar to the draft code, the Remuneration Committee had met in January ahead of the final publication to consider which initial steps should be taken for the 2017/18 Remuneration Committee. The proposed changes were set out in detail in the agenda papers;

Agreed:

that all of the changes proposed in the agenda papers to the work of the Remuneration Committee and to the University's arrangements for the consideration of senior staff pay should be approved for 2017/18 and that should further changes be necessary once the CUC code were published, the Remuneration Committee should take action to put such changes as were necessary in place and report to the Board on any further changes at its July meeting. **MJL/CEB**

17/54 Report of the President of the Students' Union

Received:

a report by the President on the recent activities of the Students' Union.

Noted:

- i) that the Board had received and agreed the audited Annual Report and Financial Statements of the Students' Union for the year ended 31st of July 2017 by circulation following its last meeting;

- ii) that a governance review of the Students' Union had taken place led by a consultant, Mr Blackshaw, who was extremely experienced and had advised a significant number of Student Unions across the UK. An action plan had been developed to take the recommendations forward;
- iii) that the Student Union General Manager had resigned early in the New Year and plans were in place to try and secure an interim pending a permanent appointment;
- iv) that elections for the new Student Union Executive would take place during the week with votes closing the following week;
- v) that actions were in place to appoint new Student Trustees to the Trustee Board of the Student Union;
- vi) that the Student Union remained alert to new demands from students in terms of the social activities that they wish to engage with and the SU were keen to make changes in their provision to try and meet as much of this demand as possible.

Agreed: i) that thanks were due to the President and her team for their hard work over recent months.

17/55 Health and Safety

Received:

- i) summary of the meeting of the Health and Safety Committee held on 1 March 2018;
- ii) the Annual Report on Health and Safety matters;
- iii) the Governor's Health and Safety Policy Statement for 2017/18.

Noted:

- i) that the lead Governor on Health and Safety had no major issues to put forward to the Board. He noted that the policies had been subject to the usual annual review and no major changes have been proposed;
- ii) that he also drew members' attention to the fact that more accidents have been reported which confirmed that staff were engaging positively with Health and Safety reporting. In particular, minor bites in the Small Animals Unit were now being reported on a much more regular basis and accounted for the larger number of accidents in the statistics as presented in the Board paper.

Approved: the Governor's Health and Safety Policy Statement for 2017/18 and that the Chair would sign the Policy Statement following the meeting; **MJL**

Agreed: that the Terms of Reference for the Health and Safety Committee as proposed where appropriate subject to the inclusion of the member of staff responsible for insurance and Dr Harris as a Governor representative. **CEB**

17/56 Student Regulations/Policies

Received:

- i) proposals for updating the Student Disciplinary Policy and Terms of Reference for the Governor's Disciplinary Advisory Committee/Governor's Disciplinary Appeals Committee with effect from first of August 2018;
- ii) the new Student Sexual Violence, Violent Behaviour, Harassment, Racism and Bullying Policy

Noted: i) that in addition to the proposals set out in the Disciplinary Policy, there was a need to ensure that the document included clarification of how disciplinary

records would be retained under GDPR. The proposed phrase was 'that records of student disciplinary matters would be retained for a period of 18 months following the conclusion of study for the purposes of answering any complaints appeals'. This would allow the University to align itself with the current Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) complaints process. For students in ongoing dispute there is a statutory limitation period, the records relating to the issue in dispute would be kept for the relevant statutory limitation period;

- ii) that members felt that the descriptions on page 129 should be amended to read a person who has 'experienced' rather than the words 'survivor'. Members also felt that on page 130 of the draft document the point should be clarified to confirm that sexual consent cannot be retrospectively withdrawn. Members asked that these proposed changes be discussed with Mrs Hayhurst and the University's legal adviser; **CEB**

Approved:

- i) proposed changes to the Student Disciplinary Policy and Terms of Reference for the Governor's Disciplinary Advisory Committee/Governor's Disciplinary Appeals Committee with effect from 1 August 2018; **CEB**
- ii) the new Student Sexual Violence, Violent Behaviour, Harassment, Racism and Bullying Policy subject to inclusion of the proposed changes discussed in the meeting. **RH/CEB**

17/57 Academic Board

Received:

- i) a report of the meeting of the Academic Board held on 7 March 2018 including the Annual Report on Student Complaints and Appeals;
- ii) the Academic Overview Report for 2016/17;
- iii) an update on feedback arising from the remaining External Examiner reports for 2016/17 that had not been received in time for the report provided to the November 2017 Board meeting;

Noted:

- i) that in addition to the documentation presented in the agenda papers, the Course Action Plans and Course monitoring documentation for 2016/17 would be provided on the Governance Document Library;
- ii) that the University had made its submission to the latest TEF round. This was optional and had been based on very strong metrics with the intention that the University should be able to be re-awarded a gold award for a further year;
- iii) that the Annual Report on Appeals and Complaints continue to demonstrate that the University manage these effectively and that numbers remained relatively small;
- iv) that the Academic Overview Report together with Annual Course Monitoring Course Action Plans were an important part of the Boards' arrangements for assuring itself on academic quality matters. It was further noted that the Office for Students was particularly interested in attainment for all students and that the Academic Board had noted a current disparity of performance between male and female students and that this would continue to be an area of focus;
- v) that the remaining External Examiners reports were positive overall. One examiner had still not presented his report and action would be taken to terminate his appointment while every effort to obtain his report would continue.

Agreed:

that members of the Board were satisfied that the content of the Academic Overview Report and the remaining update on outcomes from External Examiner reports were satisfactory and that the Board did not require further information

on this aspect prior to making its academic quality assurance judgement later in the year.

17/58 Any Other Business

Expenses

Noted: that members were reminded that they must submit their expenses as soon as possible after they were incurred and that expenses may not be paid if they are submitted more than six months after the expense has been incurred;

Governors Document Library

Noted: that the IT team had now recreated the document library on the University's portal. It had been hoped that documentation to assist governors in accessing the new library would be in place for the meeting. Unfortunately this had not been possible due to the team's other work priorities however, it was hoped that this would be issued over the forthcoming weeks and that members would have an opportunity to engage with the new library prior to the Board meeting in July and to highlight any issues to the University Secretary or to her PA. In the meantime, should it be necessary, a member of the IT team would attend the Board meeting in July to help members with any issues they might have in accessing the library;

ALL/CEB

17/59 Date of Next Meeting

5 July 2018

Part 2

17/60 Risk Management

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

Agreed: that the report confirmed that appropriate actions were in place to manage the risks set out in the report.

17/61 HEFCE Annual Review of Institutional Risks

Received: a copy of HEFCE's feedback to the University arising from the annual returns presented in December 2017;

Noted: that HEFCE had advised that the University was not at higher risk and that this remained a positive report;.

17/62 Finance

Received: i) the Management Accounts for the period 31 March 2018;

ii) a copy of the Executive Summary of Financial Performance of the HEFCE funded sector published in late March 2018 by HEFCE and a summary of benchmarking of client financial performance provided by KPMG to the HE clients including Harper Adams.

17/63 Planning

Received: a draft institutional monitoring statement 2016/17.

Agreed: to approve the Institutional Monitoring Statement 2016/17 for publication on the University's webpages.

17/64 Academic Governance

Noted: a briefing note from the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education on a recent roundtable on the Role of Governing Bodies and Academic Governance.

17/65 Learning and Teaching Strategy 2015/16

Received: a report from the Director of Learning and Teaching setting out progress with the Learning and Teaching Strategy.

17/66 International Strategy- Progress Report

Received: a report from the Director of Learning and Teaching setting out progress with the International Strategy.

17/67 Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy – Progress Report

Received: a report conducted by the Vice-Chancellor setting out progress to date with achieving the action set out in the Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy.

17/68 Marketing and Communications

Received: a report from the Director of Marketing and Communications updating members on recent marketing and communications activities.

17/69 Committees

Received:

- i) a confidential report provided to Board members only on the meeting of Honorary Degrees Committee held on 28th of November 2017;
- ii) a report on the meeting of the Staffing Committee held on 18 January 2018;
- iii) a report on the meeting of the Farm Strategy Committee held on 1 February 2018;
- iv) a report on the meeting of the Audit & Risk Management Committee held on 15 February 2018.

Noted:

- i) that the Nominations Committee would meet after the meeting of the Board in July 2018;
- ii) that members had endorsed the recommendations of the Honorary Awards Committee by circulation during December 2017.

17/70 HEFCE and other circulars

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