



St Mary's University Twickenham London

Board of Governors

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Governors held on 21 March 2018 in the Waldegrave Room, St Mary's University, Twickenham.

Present:

Professor Edward Acton
Mr Conal Baxter (SU President)
Professor Francis Campbell (Vice-Chancellor)
Ms Noreen Doyle (from item 5 onwards)
Fr Richard Finn
Mrs Sue Handley Jones
Mr Dave Hartnett
Professor Anne Moran
Rt. Rev. Richard Moth
Mrs June Mulroy
Mrs Kristen Pilbrow (Staff Governor)
Professor Anthony Towey (Staff Governor)

In attendance:

Mrs Jo Blunden – Senior Director of People
Professor John Brewer – Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement)
Mr Andrew Browning – Clerk to the Board and Company Secretary (Minute taker)
Professor John Charmley – Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Strategy)
Rt. Hon. Ruth Kelly – Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & Enterprise)
Mr John Unsworth – Chief Operating Officer

The meeting commenced with a prayer by the Chair.

1. WELCOMES AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies for absence from Jeff Cottle and Claire McDonnell.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair declared an interest as a Trustee of St John's Seminary Womersh.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of 15 February 2018 were approved by the Board.

4. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION OR APPROVAL

5. ACADEMIC FACULTY STRUCTURES

Paper 1 refers

5.1 This was presented by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Strategy) ("PVC (AS)"). The Board were being asked to decide which one of the three options for faculty structures detailed at 2.0 of the paper should be adopted by the University. The three options were:-

- (i) The Three-Faculty Model
- (ii) The Two Faculty + Two Institute Model (Education a freestanding institute with no enterprise)
- (iii) The Two Faculty + Two Institute Model (Education embedded, with Enterprise)

The Board were also being asked to approve the delegation of the final decision on the departmental structures within the chosen faculty model to Academic Board.

5.2 The PVC (AS) informed the Board that this was the fourth version of the paper. He said that in order to get to this stage there had been 13 consultation meetings with the Schools together with discussions at SMT and Academic Board.

5.3 The PVC (AS) said that following the representations made by Board members at the previous meeting on 15 February the decision had been taken to allow Programme Directors to remain for one more year.

5.4 The PVC (AS) told the Board that the movement to Faculties would give economies of scale and there would be nimbleness within departments. Some departments within faculties would be able to grow into new areas which would allow other departments to manage decline with such a decline being offset by the growth elsewhere in the faculty. The movement to the faculty structure as detailed at 2.2.3 of the paper (Two Faculty + Two Institute Model (Education embedded with Enterprise) would produce approximately £1.4 million in savings and the staff costs as a percentage of turnover would be reduced to 65%. The PVC (AS) believed that the faculty structure would preserve the

student experience and also maintain the maximum possible number of front line academics.

- 5.5 Professor Anne Moran briefed the Board regarding the discussion and outcomes of the “hothouse” meeting that took place on 1 March 2018 regarding the future of Education. Prof Moran said that there were two key outcomes. The first outcome was that structure had been agreed for an Institute of Education including an organogram. The second outcome was that there was agreed approach as to how enterprise would be managed within the Institute. The Senior Director of People said that the view of those in attendance from Education was that an Institute for Education should be embedded within a faculty.
- 5.6 Prof Moran said that in relation to enterprise helpful contributions had been made by the Director of Enterprise & Innovation and both Enterprise and Education understood the need to work closely together. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) said that it had been a useful and productive day and the enterprise team have been able to set out a strategy and targets. As well as the enterprise function within an Institute of Education, Enterprise would also be delivering separate programs in conjunction with the Institute.
- 5.7 The PVC (AS) addressed the issue of student experience. He said that the staff to student ratio has improved from 17.9:1 to 16.5:1 and that the University was looking to maintain this. It was expected that the staff to student ratio would still be better than five years ago. The PVC (AS) also said that the retention of Programme Directors for a further year would ensure continuity.
- 5.8 The Board was informed there would be eight departments across the faculties with between 400 and 700 students in each department. The final structures for the departments would be agreed by Academic Board subject to the Board of Governors approving the delegation of this decision.
- 5.7 The Board were told that the development of new IT systems would enable a reduction in the amount of low-level work that needed to be done by administrative staff. The PVC (AS) said that the Chief Information Officer was currently working on having an electronic attendance monitoring system in place by September. It was also expected that there would be a movement from paper based module evaluation to online module evaluation by students and that the workflow could be put online for validation and revalidation.
- 5.8 It was asked by the Board what would happen if the necessary IT systems were not implemented in time. The Senior Director of People said that potentially the leave dates of administrative staff could be staggered however this would have a financial impact with the required savings not being met.

- 5.9 The Board asked how confident the Senior Leadership Team were about the attendance monitoring system being in place by September 2018. The Chief Operating Officer said that this was very much the intention of the University to have this implemented by then. If for some reason this was not achieved then attendance monitoring would continue with the paper-based system. The main issue with attendance monitoring related to integrating the systems and it would cost between £20K and £30K to remedy this.
- 5.10 The Board considered the job descriptions of the Deans. It was asked why the Deans were permanent positions whereas the Associate Deans were for a term of five years. The Senior Director of people explained that the current Dean of SHAS had been engaged on a permanent contract and therefore it was not appropriate to have one Dean on a permanent Contract and the other Dean on a fixed term contract.
- 5.11 The Board were told that currently it was not envisaged that the present Heads of School would assimilate under the “80:20 rule” into either the new Dean of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences role or the Head of the Institute of Education roles. They would be asked to act up on a temporary basis until the posts were advertised externally as well as internally. This was however subject to consultation
- 5.12 The Board commented that the Programme Leader role seemed particularly extensive. The PVC (AS) said that the year-long transition period during which the Programme Directors posts would still be in existence would assist in making decisions as to what the Program Leader role would entail.
- 5.13 The Board commented that quality assurance and standards must be integrated into all of the roles that were contained in the paper. The PVC (AS) said that is what is planned and the Senior Director of People confirmed that she would look at this.
- 5.14 The Board commented that the works that had been carried out on this paper was impressive and it was pleasing to see that savings have been made. The Board also commented that the structures contained within the paper reflected those at other HEI’s.
- 5.15 The Board referred to the model at 2.2.3 and the dotted reported line from the Head of Theology to the Vice-Chancellor. The Board sought clarification as to how this reporting line would work. The Vice-Chancellor said that the “dotted line” would only come into play if the ecclesiastical faculty comes to the University. For all non-ecclesiastical faculty matters the reporting line for the head of theology would be through the PVC (AS). It was suggested by the Board that the “dotted line” be removed and if and when the ecclesiastical faculty comes to the University it could be re-added. In the meantime asterisk

could instead be inserted explaining what the reporting line would be if the ecclesiastical faculty comes into being.

- 5.16 The Board asked who was accountable for quality within the faculties. The PVC (AS) said that quality has to go through the Head of Department and the Dean but there should be accountability for quality at all levels.
- 5.17 It was asked whether the faculty containing the Institute for Education should have a Dean with experience of education. The Vice-Chancellor said that the model had been configured so that the Dean of this faculty does not have to come from an education background. He said that the head of an Institute of Education would be expected to come from an education background.
- 5.18 The Board asked what recourse there would be if the reduction in administrative staff affected the student experience. The Chief Operating Officer said that if administrative staff were to remain at their current levels then it would be necessary to reduce the number of academic staff and this would have a more damaging effect on the student experience.
- 5.19 Concerns were raised by the Board as to what would happen if the University lost its OFSTED outstanding rating for Education and whether a reduction in administrative staff would be a potential cause of this. The Senior Director of People said that within the administration of the Institute of Education there would be a Faculty Business Manager and compared to other departments an Institute of Education would receive more administrative support than other departments within the University. It was also noted by the Board that OFSTED is now more data driven and therefore administrative support levels would have limited effect on the outcome of an OFSTED inspection.
- 5.20 The Vice Chancellor advised the Board that a vote was taken at SMT regarding which option was preferred. He said that he did not vote as he did not want to prejudice the outcome but he would have had the casting vote had the vote been split. The Vice Chancellor informed the Board that SMT had unanimously voted for the Two faculty + Two Institute model with Enterprise embedded in Education. He advised the Board that had he been required to cast his vote he would also have voted for this option.
- 5.21 The Board were advised that no vote was taken at Academic Board due to a view that there was a conflict of interest. Academic Board had been given an opportunity to put forward its views on the proposals and had given a number of suggestions as to how to strengthen the structures.
- 5.22 The Board voted on the proposed models. The votes for each model were as follows:-

Option1 The Three-Faculty Model: **0 votes**

- Option 2 The Two Faculty + Two Institute Model (Education a freestanding institute with no enterprise): **0 Votes**
- Option 3 The Two Faculty + Two Institute Model (Education embedded, with Enterprise): **12 Votes**

Abstentions: **0**

Option 3 was therefore unanimously **approved** by the Board.

5.23 The Board unanimously **agreed** that the decision on the final departmental structures and their composition (with the exception of any ecclesiastical faculty/institute) should be devolved to Academic Board.

5.24 The Board thanked all members of staff and in particular the PVC (AS) for all their hard work in putting the paper together.

6. APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS FOR 2018/2019

Paper 2 refers

6.1 This was presented by the Clerk. The Clerk informed the Board that it was required to approve the appointment of external auditors for 2018/2019. He told the Board that there was due to be a tendering exercise this year for external auditors however it has not been possible to carry this out due to other issues that have been ongoing at the University. It is therefore recommended that the current external auditors, BDO be appointed for a further year and that during 2018/2019 a new tendering exercise could be carried out.

6.2 The Board unanimously **approved** the appointment of BDO as External Auditors for 2018/2019.

7. SCHEDULE OF BOARD MEETINGS AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2018/2019

Paper 3 refers

7.1 The Board noted the schedule of Board meetings and Committee Meetings for 2018/2019.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Summer graduations ceremonies will be taking place on 18 and 19 July. The Chair encouraged all governors to try and attend one or more of the ceremonies.

8.2 The next meeting of the Board of Governors will be taking place on 26 April 2018.

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