

**Leeds Trinity University  
Board of Governors**

**Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 18 October 2023 at 8.30am on campus.**

**Minutes 7904 – 7997**

**Present:** Mr J Hanley (Chair), Mr L Bentley, Professor C Egbu (Vice-Chancellor), Ms T Ford-Escobar, Mr M Holden, Ms K Howard-Matthews, Fr P Grogan, Prof D Kobzev, Ms S Milnes, Mr K O'Connor, Ms E Reed, Mrs S Rix, Mr V Sharma, Ms T Smith, Mr D Oldroyd, Ms S Hogston and Ms A Wilson.

**In attendance:** Professor M Arif (Pro Vice-Chancellor for Enterprise & External Engagement), Mr D Butcher (Director of Finance & University Secretary), Ms J Hynes (Chief Operating Officer and Executive Director of Operations and Sustainability), Professor M Todd (Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor), Mr C Williams (Clerk to the Board of Governors and Company Secretary), Ms C Fieldhouse (SU Observer), Mr J Potter (UCU Representative) and Mrs S Clarkson (Executive Director of People and Culture – for staff survey item only)

**Apologies:** Mr B McCarthy, Bishop M Stock, Ms C O'Connor (Pro Vice-Chancellor for Education & Experience), Dr L Shand (Unison Rep), Mr. R Maposa and Ms C Nursaw,

**Welcome & Opening Prayer**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, welcomed Mr D Oldroyd, Ms S Hogston, Ms C Fieldhouse and Mr J Potter to their first meeting, advised members that he would running the meeting on the basis that papers have been read, noted the size of the Board papers pack and requested that drill down information is posted up on BoardEffect for members information, briefed members that Mrs S Clarkson would be joining the Board for the item on the staff survey and would be attending the Board going forward and invited Ms S Rix to open the meeting with a prayer.

**Declaration of Interest**

7904 There were no declarations of interest.

**Noted**

**Minutes of Last Meeting**

7905 The minutes of the meeting held on 5 July 2023 were confirmed as an accurate record.

**Approved**

**Matters arising, including progress on action log from previous meetings**

7906 **Received** the Board action log (paper G 23/60) and noted the progress made against the actions identified in the log.

7907 The Board reviewed and noted the table of actions.

**Noted**

**Chair's Report (incl. actions from Chairs & Exec Meeting)**

7908 **Received** a report from the Chair of the Board of Governors which provided an update on key activity undertaken by the Chair since the last meeting (paper G 23/61)

7909 The Chair made reference to his outlined work since the last meeting and the Chairs and Executive meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> October which covered NSS Updates, Audit Committee

updates, teaching excellence framework, student recruitment through clearing- 2023, employee/staff survey 2023, business case (Estates Development; City Centre) the notes from which were attached to the report.

7910 The Chair reported that Ms S Rix had given notice that she was standing down and that the 'Congregation' (the Sisters and the Cross and Passion) are in the process of identifying her replacement, commented on the recent successful Net Zero event hosted by the university and thanked Mr L Bentley for his support with the recent Ofsted inspection of apprenticeship provision at LTU.

7911 The Board noted the Chair's report.

**Noted**

## **STRATEGY**

### **Business Cases update**

7912 **Received** a report on the progress of the strategic business cases from the Director of Finance & University Secretary (DFUS) and the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Education & Experience (PVCEE) (paper G 23/62).

7913 The DFUS reported on the progress of the work linked to business development cases – the city centre, Nursing, Biomedical Science and Construction and Built Environment.

7914 The DFUS reported on programme highlights, progress against plan, top programme risks – city and top programme risks – academic programmes.

7915 The COO delivered a presentation giving members an update on the nature of and progress with the city centre development (which made reference to risks and mitigations and which would be shared with members after the meeting) and confirmed that the agreement with Unite for student accommodation had been agreed.

7916 The Board discussed a possible blessing for the new facility with the Bishop and Ed Anderson, Lord Lieutenant of West Yorkshire.

7917 The COO proposed that a monthly report be given to F&R members so as to provide milestone oversight between Committee and Board meetings, that a compliance report to Audit Committee be given at the next Audit Committee meeting in November.

**COO  
COO**

7918 The F&R Chair welcomed the presentation and conversation and reflected on discussions at F&R with regard to focussing on what is within LTU's gift (such as AV & IT) and management commented reported on internal planning to drive AV & IT developments on a timely basis.

7919 The Board queried whether there had been any consideration of a worse-worse case scenario and management commented on their consideration of possible force majeure issues.

7920 The Board reflected on lessons from Covid in terms of mitigating risks to teaching and learning for students, the VC commented on the impact risks involved with any change in the offer (be it short term) to students and management expanded on the internal work to minimise such experiential risks.

7921 The Board discussed the 1,200 students referred to in the presentation and management clarified that that was an anticipated student occupation number (which included a large number of apprenticeship students with a lower attendance pattern),

the Board queried teaching mitigation plans given the risk implications to the student experience and knock on impact with NSS.

7922 The Board discussed the range of facilities at Horsforth and how these would be replicated in the city centre to try and ensure that the offer was equitable and discussed the initial focus on extra curricula and social activities in order to encourage work across courses and create a sense of community.

7923 The Board queried contingency plans to plan for the actual space that might be available at the time, where the library was to be based and its' opening times and transport travel plans for students and staff.

7924 The Board discussed the safety of students with late hours opening and the COO reported on plans to address late night 'stay safe' issues with students.

7925 The Board noted the Business Cases Update report.

**Noted**

### **Capital Approval Trevelyan Square**

7926 **Received** a report on the proposed £17.3M capital investment for Trevelyan Square from the Chief Operating Officer (COO) (paper G 23/63) which was recommended by the Extraordinary Finance and Resources Committee meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup> of October.

7927 The Chair of F&R Committee introduced the paper, reported on F&R discussions, reported that the recommendations were supported by the Committee and the DFUS expanded on costs and the anticipated head room.

7928 The COO reported on the background, procurement approach (direct award via a framework to the same contractor doing the landlord's CAT A refurbishment), the benefits of the proposed procurement approach (a compressed construction phase and a cost saving), the projected timeline which currently shows completion in mid-September 2024 and the IT/AV approach.

7929 The COO also reported on the key project risks, including risks to the timeline, mitigations and continuity planning. As the initial student numbers mean that the building would only be partly occupied at first, the primary mitigation is a staged approach to completion of the building so that some floors can be released for use whilst others are being finished.

7930 The DFUS commented on the current cost plan of £14.2m building cost and £3.1m IT/AV cost. THE DFUS outlined that the £14.2m was the RIBA Stage 4 cost plan from the University's quantity surveyors Turner and Townsend (T&T) and that this included £0.9m of risk allowance. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

7931 The DFUS confirmed that the Board were being asked to approve an overall maximum cost envelope of £17.3m (£14.2m plus £3.1m) as recommended by the Finance and Resources Committee. The Board were also being asked to delegate back to the Finance and Resources Committee the approval of a split of this amount between an approved lower sum and a balance to be retained as a contingency allowance and subject to further approval via Chairs Action. The Stage 4 cost plan from Graham would be available to inform this discussion at the November meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee.

- 7932 The Board queried the contingency and possible consideration of budget risks and controls with Audit Committee (post detailed costing from Graham's) as well as F&R in November and the DFUS commented that he would report to Audit Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> November following F&R Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> November. **DFUS**
- 7933 The Board approved:
- A maximum cost envelope of £17.3m (£14.2m build cost and £3.1m IT/AV cost) **Approved**
  - The delegation back to the Finance and Resources Committee of the approval of a split of this amount between an approved lower sum and a balance to be retained as a contingency allowance and subject to further approval via Chairs Action **Approved**
  - Approval to directly award the CAT B construction contract via a framework **Approved**

## PERFORMANCE

### Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Prevent – by exception.

- 7934 **Received** a verbal update from the Chief Operating Officer (COO) **Noted**
- 7935 The COO reported on a recent successful health and safety visit, that a new H&S management appointment had been made (who also had a biomedical background) and reported that the court case involving an ex-student was pending and that she would ensure that the Board Chair was kept informed of any developments.
- 7936 The Board noted the verbal report. **Noted**

### NSS Action Plan

- 7937 **Received** a joint report on the NSS Action Plan from the PDVC and PVCEE (paper G 23/64), which provided the University's response to the 2023 survey (NSS), performance data and analysis of results. The report also covered the university's institutional review of matters which have underpinned the 2023 results and planned mitigation strategies and enhancements to support improved positivity scores in its NSS 2024 performance was also discussed.
- 7938 The PDVC reported on influences on NSS 2023 performance, action at the faculty level, action at the institutional level, collaborative provision and accountability, monitoring and governance.
- 7939 The PDVC reported on the successes from the results and on the significant matters that arose in specific academic areas during 2022-23 that profoundly impacted on the overall institutional results, including a summary of actions taken at university and local level during the academic year.
- 7940 The PDVC reported on discussions with the Chair of AASEC on key issues, the complex matrix involved with other measures involved with the student experience such as measures involved with the section B3 in the APP.
- 7941 The Chair requested that an NSS progress report is a Standing item at Board for 2023-24 covering progress made since the previous Board meeting.
- 7942 The VC acknowledged that the NSS result was not good, that he is taking lead responsibility for this key measure of the student experience, that he was meeting with the ten teams requiring support to address issues and that action would be taken to address the issues following management's 'deep dive' work on the data.

- 7943 The Board reflected on the stark comparison between partner scores and LTU core performance and the VC commented on his communication with Chairs of Committee's on his reflections following his analysis of the inconsistent NSS results.
- 7944 The Board recognised the seriousness of the issue, reflected on results from other national HE league tables, the perceptions of some staff on the results, reflected on the recent success with TEF and discussed the need for consistent high performance on student experience.
- 7945 The Board discussed the need for a balanced approach, the professional development of staff, the need to include NSS in appraisals and the learning from partners successful and flexible practice.
- 7946 The Board discussed the demographic nature of students with partners and the small and intimate nature of the learning experience that is delivering the required flexibility in line with students needs by partners.
- 7947 The Board queried and management clarified the difference between NSS and TEF and queried as to how much of a surprise the NSS outcomes were and the VC commented on his anticipated expectations with the NSS outcome following the known accommodation and accreditation issues with final year students in 2023 and the questionable 'wrap around' support for the students involved (agency at the programme level).
- 7948 The Board noted the report and requested that AASEC take lead responsibility for monitoring the Action Plan and that NSS be a Standing item at Board for 2023-24.

**Noted  
AASEC &  
Clerk**

The Executive Director of People and Culture (EDPC) joined the meeting.

### **Staff Survey 2023**

- 7949 **Received** a report on the 2023 Staff Survey from the EDPC (paper G 23/65) which provided details on feedback from the survey with further detail outlined in the presentation posted up to BoardEffect.
- 7950 The EDPC reported on background, context, survey themes overview, change management, leadership, fairness & equity and health and wellbeing and listening into action (with change management, leadership, fairness and equity and health and wellbeing being the four key areas of development to strengthen culture and support).
- 7951 The Board discussed working culture and differences between different programmes such as mainstream HE and apprenticeship as outlined in the survey responses, reflected on how there are common finding across sectors, discussed the need to engage and involve all staff in being bought into the change story, the need to listen to all staff along the way (the communication, communication and communication issue) and the need to consider progress with staff voice issue before the next survey (due in 2025).
- 7952 The VC commented on the usefulness of the survey feedback in order to generate a co-create culture to the change agenda in a meaningful and engaging manner with staff and the Board discussed the need to engage more progressively with longer term staff.
- 7953 The Board reflected on previous discussions on NSS and the size of the change agenda (stretch and growth pressures) and questioned as to how the Board may support organisational development to deliver the change agenda and the VC

commented on some benchmark intelligence with other HEIs on staff survey and financial pressures across the sector.

7954 The Board discussed the challenges within the sector and requested that support needs be considered at the next Chairs and Executive meeting in light of current pressures, the elements within LTU's control, the size of the change agenda, what can be let go and the need to develop effective leadership across the management structure. **VC**

7955 The VC and EDPC reported on leadership investment and programmes available to management, the Board discussed staff well-being and need for empathetic leadership to engender a sense of belonging and discussed links with LTU's work on values.

7956 The Board questioned engagement with staff consultation sessions over the summer, the EDPC commented on the on-going work to engage staff (especially academic staff) and management comment on links with the recent appointment of the Director of Programme Management Office and Strategic Change.

7957 The Board noted the Staff Survey 2023 report. **Noted**

The EDPC left the meeting.

## **VICE-CHANCELLOR AND STRATEGIC**

### **VCs Report**

7958 **Received** a report from the Vice-Chancellor (VC) (paper G 23/66) covering 2023 summer graduation, 2023-24 main cycle student recruitment and clearing activities; preparing for and commencing teaching for the new (2023/24) academic year; addressing and responding to B3 regulatory conditions; preparing for Ofsted (Apprenticeship) visits; and the implementation of Business Cases.

7959 The VC reported on the Lifelong Learning (LLE) Bill, resources on UK higher education regulation and approaches to quality, Home Office and Immigration and Visa Fees, UCAS and Student Numbers through Clearing, The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), a government consultation on minimum service levels during industrial action at universities, the DfE publication of Office for Students B3 investigations, Freedom of Speech – A briefing from Universities UK, policy priorities from the Council of Deans of Health, minimum service levels in Universities, business cases progress and research.

7960 The VC flagged the impact on students on the conflict in the middle east with regard to freedom of speech and support for those impacted and affected, the key learning from the recent political party conferences, financial pressures on the student fee for foundation courses, the successful Ofsted inspection on Apprenticeships (the Board thank all parties concerned for a successful inspection) and on the outcome from the recent TEF (which compared well with local competitors).

7961 The Board discussed the recent launch event on health and nursing, considered possible announcements on health training as part of the autumn statement and queried whether LTU had any issue with RAAC and management reported that there was no RAAC issue at LTU.

7962 The Board noted the Vice-Chancellor's Report **Noted**

## Student Recruitment Update 2023/24

7963 **Received** a report on the 2023-24 Student Recruitment from the Pro Vice-Chancellor - Enterprise and External Engagement (PVCEEE) (paper G 23/67), which provided details on undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, marketing campaign effectiveness, clearing firm acceptances and program-specific increases.

7964 The PVCEEE reported on the 2023-24 details of main cycle student recruitment (up 6%), late cycle student recruitment (+14% nationally), overall UG 2023-24 (+7% anticipated), PG and international recruitment (Masters up 28%, PGCE firm accepts up 10% and international up 40%).

7965 The Board queried whether increase in numbers was consistent with budget plans (the DFUS confirmed it broadly was) and requested a break down by programme against target (or as at granular level as the targets were set at) could be made available and posted to BoardEffect.

**DFUS**

7966 The Board reflected back on positive anecdotal evidence on the quality of the marketing during clearing call, on the need for accountability on numbers at the programme level and discussed progression issues between level 3 to level 4.

7967 The Board noted the Student Recruitment Update Report.

**Noted**

## Campus Masterplan Developments

7968 **Received** a report on the latest position with the Campus Masterplan from the Chief Operating Officer (COO) (paper G 23/68), which provided a summary of various projects across the University.

7969 The COO reported on Project 2 - Atrium and Space Transformation, Project 03: Health and Life Sciences Modular and Biomedical Laboratory, Project 03: Trinity Building Laboratories T11 and T130, Project 04: Concorde Demolition and Project 05: SHS 01 (formerly SSSS 01).

7970 The COO also reported on on-going feasibility works (including two options being considered) to develop the spaces required to accommodate student growth and on the current position with funding against budget.

7971 The Board noted the Campus Masterplan Developments Report.

**Noted**

## Catholic Mission Sub-Strategy Development Report

7972 Received a report on the development of the Catholic Mission Sub-Strategy from the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (PDVC) (paper G 23/69) which provided details on the University's consultation exercise to co-create the university's first Catholic Mission Strategy (CMS), set to conclude in December 2023, followed by a presentation to the Board in 2024.

7973 The PDVC reported that the strategy would be developed around the message of 'Education for Hope', that the external stakeholder consultation concludes in December and that the Director of Catholic Mission (DCM) had also undertaken significant internal consultation across the university (including the Student Union).

7974 The Board welcomed the update and focus on how the strategy will talk to all students, staff and stakeholders.

7975 The Board noted the Catholic Mission Sub-Strategy Development Report. **Noted**

## **FINANCE AND RESOURCES**

### **Finance & Resources Committee: to receive the unconfirmed minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023.**

7976 **Received** a report from Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee (F&R) covering items considered at the Extraordinary F&R Committee meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> October (G 23/70). The capital approval of Trevelyan square, revolving credit facility and the written resolution regarding letters of intent were recommended to Board along with the significant development underpinning the 2022-26 Strategic Plan (see item on agenda).

7977 The DFUS updated the Board on discussions for a revolving credit facility to assist with managing cashflow over the next few years following the significant capital investment of the next 12 months. The DFUS reported that Barclays had confirmed credit approval for the revolving credit facility in the full amount requested of £25m, proposed terms and conditions had been received for discussion and pricing was expected in the next week or so.

7978 The DFUS highlighted that Barclays wanted security which will be via a charge over property of a certain value. This will mean that the timeline is a bit longer as the valuation process adds a few weeks on. A report would be taken to the Finance and Resources Committee in November and then to Board, with completion now likely to be in December.

7979 The Board noted the minutes from the Extraordinary F&R Committee meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> October. **Noted**

### **Student Finance Support Update Report**

7980 Received a report on Student Financial Support from the Pro Vice Chancellor for Education and Experience (paper G 23/71) which covered the allocation of funding in 2023-24 and an outline of support provided to students through various channels such as the 2022-23 Main hardship fund, 'Helping You With the Cost' campaign and additional funding from the Office for Students.

7981 The PDVC spoke to the report in the PVCEE's absence and reported on main hardship fund 2022-23, additional funding from the OfS, the Helping You with the Cost Campaign and the Allocation for 2023-24.

7982 The PDVC reported on the latest position with applications in 2023 (significantly increased) and on work to address student's needs on a timely basis.

7983 The Board queried whether sufficient provision had been made and management reported on internal plans to track needs and monitor accordingly, and the Board welcomed the support for students whilst understanding that there would be pressures with sustaining such support.

7984 The Board queried the differential of OfS resources between LTU and partners, which been had distributed on a proportional basis in line with guidance.

7985 The Board noted the report on Student Financial Support. **Noted**



## GOVERNANCE AND NOMINATIONS

### 2023-24 Committee Membership Report

- 7986 **Received** a report on 2023-24 Committee Membership from the Clerk to the Board and Company Secretary (paper G 23/72).
- 7987 The Clerk reported on recent changes to Committee membership in light of Board and Co-opted Committee Member appointments.
- 7988 The Board considered the skills requirements for the current Board vacancy and pending consideration of recruitment of a Board member with sustainability skills to assist with LTU's strategic planning. **G&N**
- 7989 The Board approved the 2023-24 Committee Membership. **Approved**

## AUDIT COMMITTEE

### Audit Board: to receive the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023

- 7990 **Received** a report from Chair of the Audit Committee covering key items considered at the Audit Committee meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September (G 23/73).
- 7991 The Chair of Audit Committee expanded on considerations of on-going work covering a number of internal audit reports, monitoring reports, 2022-23 evaluative reports, 2023-24 plans and that the meeting involved an in-depth discussion with management and auditors on the governance of data, risk (including the development of a risk dashboard) and partnerships.
- 7992 The Board noted the report. **Noted**

## ITEMS FOR INFORMATION OR NOTING ONLY

### Any Other Business

- 7993 The Chair of RemCo reported on the interview of Mr A Sumner (on 4<sup>th</sup> September) for a Co-opted Committee Member role for RemCo Committee who was recommended to and approved by Board. **Approved**
- 7994 The Board noted the Written Resolution report on the appointment of Mr D Oldroyd and Ms S Hogston. **Noted**
- 7995 **Received** a report from the PVCEEE (paper G 23/75) which sought to inform the Board of gaps between current provision versus students' expectations and competitor provision(s) with regard to International Student Support (as requested by Board – minute 7771 from May applies). **Noted**
- 7996 The PVCEEE discussed recommendations and suggestions for international support mechanisms, with respect to the sudden growth of global engagement activities and student recruitment. An extensive report was to follow later in the academic year pending consultation with the directorate, who were unable to contribute before the meeting. **PVCEEE**
- 7997 In closing the meeting the Chair reminded members that the next Board meeting would be followed by a dinner with speaker, that refreshments were being served and that

the opportunity for informal conversations between members after meeting contributed to addressing priority recommendation 5 from the governance effectiveness review: “The Board reviews whether it can provide more opportunities for informal interaction between Board members.”

**Date of the Next Meeting:** Wednesday 29 November 2023 on campus.