



**Minutes
Board of Governors
29 September 2022**

The meeting was held in the Waldegrave Room and Online

Present: Mr Paul Barber
Mr David Brambell
Dr Chris Campbell – Staff Governor
Ms Caitlyn Finn – Student Governor
Dr Fiona Gatty
Mr Dave Hartnett
Mr George Jenkin – Staff Governor
Mr Anthony McClaran – Vice-Chancellor
Ms Claire McDonnell
Rt Rev Richard Moth (Chair)
Ms June Mulroy
Mrs Deborah Streatfield

In Attendance: Mrs Elizabeth Bell – Director of Strategic Planning
Mrs Jo Blunden – Chief Operating Officer (“COO”)
Mr Andrew Browning – University Secretary (Minutes)
Professor Symeon Dagkas - Provost
Mr Richard Solomon – Chief Financial Officer (“CFO”)
Mr Andrew Whateley – Head of Data Analytics & Reporting
Mr Ben Williamson – Financial Controller

Apologies: Professor Dominic Tildesley, Mr Pietro Palladino, Mr Jeff Cottle

22/01	WELCOMES The meeting opened with a prayer.		
22/02	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST There were no declarations of interest.		

22/03	<p>PRESENTATION ON PROPOSED MEDICAL SCHOOL</p> <p>There was a presentation from Mike Bewick and Giles Peel (GP) who are consultants engaged by the University to consider the feasibility of setting up a medical school at the University.</p> <p>MB said that this would be a long-term project taking at least 3 years until the first students would arrive at the University and 8 years until the project had been completed.</p> <p>There is a national and international shortfall of student with the RCP and MSC requesting that a further 9000 new medical school places are created. It was however unlikely that there would be any publicly funded places and therefore the proposal would be that the medical school would be set up on a non-fee capped basis.</p> <p>GP said that the governance regime for a medical school would be different to that of the rest of the University as there were additional requirements for regulatory compliance. It was proposed that the medical school would be contained within a wholly owned subsidiary with degrees validated by the University.</p> <p>MB said that as a catholic institution moral and ethical issues needed to be discussed and it would be necessary to make clear to the GMC that these had been addressed.</p> <p>There would be a need for there to be an agreement with a contingency medical school from whom a curriculum would be purchased. Clinical placements would need to be found as well foundation posts for newly qualified medics.</p> <p>Scenario for cohorts of 50, 75, and 100 students had been modelled. It was felt that the University would be most likely to recruit around 75 students which would make it financially viable.</p> <p>GP set out the principal risks these included those centred around governance, quality, infrastructure, financial, partnerships, ethical framework, and clinical placements.</p>		
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	<p>MB explained the application process which consisted of 8 stages. The University would start by entering into the initial application process sending an initial statement of interest and with a summary of the business case to the GMC. A full project plan would then be developed for stages 1-2 of the GMC process.</p> <p>MB and GP said that they were asking for a decision from the Board to commit resources to support the provisional application process.</p> <p>The Board asked about the financial risk to the University were it to undertake the project. The CFO said that the University's financial position was currently stable and that the financial risks from undertaking this project were of a level that he felt the University would be able to take. There were also exit points along the way that would allow the University to cease the project should the risk profile change. The CFO said that it was also a project which would enable the University to grow.</p> <p>The Board asked what facilities would be needed for the medical school. MB said that in terms of practical type areas, use of technology meant that "dry" rather than "wet" facilities were becoming more common. Much of the teaching would be offsite and much of the need on campus would be for technological infrastructure.</p> <p>The Board asked what impact the project would have on the existing leadership team's workload. The Vice-Chancellor said that a new group structure would be established including the need to be an early appointment of the Foundation Dean which would relieve the workload. The Vice-Chancellor said that while there would be new structures in place, the University would still remain a single entity with the senior leadership team and Board or Governors remaining at the apex of the institution.</p> <p>The Board asked what effect there would be on other projects for growth if a medical school was pursued. The CFO said that much of the money for the medical school would come from capital expenditure and in particular on the re-build of the refectory. He believed that opening up the medical school would increase the University's ability to invest in other things. The Vice-Chancellor said that</p>		
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	<p>there were a number of points at which the University could exit the process if it wished. He also said that the University would not want to sacrifice other developments at the expense of the medical school.</p> <p>The Board asked about how setting up a private medical school would sit with the University's ethos and values. GP said that there was not a lot of choice other than to set up a private medical school as there was no government funding available.</p> <p>The Board asked if the lack of previous history in having medical type courses was an issue for the University. MB said that while this would be a leap for the University it was one that was possible if properly resourced particularly from a technological point of view. The Board advised that a carefully worked up communications plan would be needed to explain this.</p> <p>The Board asked what the rate of attrition was for medical schools was. MB said that the rates were relatively low and that in a cohort of 75 attrition was likely to be around 2-3 students. He said that there was a need to have a plan as to what to provide for those students. There was also an issue of students not actually using their medical degree at the end of their studies.</p> <p>The Chair asked about issues relating to ethos. MB said that the curriculum was intended to teach students the breadth of medicine. Medical students would however not be required to do anything they did not want to do and in any event they would not be able to carry out procedures. The curriculum was about learning about the procedures rather than the carrying out of procedures.</p> <p><i>MB, GP, and TE left the meeting</i></p> <p>The Board considered whether the University should continue to the next stage of setting up a medical school.</p> <p>It agreed that there was a need to develop a communications plan to cover matters relating to ethical issues. The Vice-Chancellor said that there would continue to be discussions with the Catholic Church and other organisations regarding these.</p>		
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	<p>The University Secretary said that legal advice had been taken on the creation of a subsidiary for the medical school. He said that while it was believed that it was possible to do this there were a number of administrative hurdles to implement it. The CFO confirmed that financial modelling had been carried on both governance models.</p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor said that the medical school was not the only area that the University was looking to expand into. It was looking at Allied Health and Computer Science. He said however that the medical school would be a step change in growth and how the University would be perceived.</p> <p>The Board voted on whether the University should begin the process of setting up a medical school. The voting was as follows:-</p> <p>In favour: 9 votes Against: 1 vote Abstentions: 1</p> <p>The Board therefore approved beginning the process of setting up a medical school. It asked that regular updates on this come to every Board meeting and further approvals would be needed from the Board to continue the project after the initial application to the GMC had been submitted.</p>		
22/04	<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of the Board which took place on 09 June 2022 were approved by the Board.</p>		
22/05	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>		
22/06	<p>TRANSFER OF ACTIVITIES FROM MARYVALE TO ST MARY'S <i>Paper 6 refers</i></p> <p>The Board were asked to consider whether some of the work of the Maryvale Institute could be brought into the University. The Provost said that a business case had been put together and he was asking for the Board of Governors to approve the University moving this onto the next stage of further due</p>		

	<p>diligence and discussions with the Birmingham archdiocese.</p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor said that from a strategic point of view the proposal would go some way to making the University a natural base for the Church to come to where it has a higher education issue. The request for St Mary's to take on Maryvale had come from the Birmingham Archdiocese and this was a significant geographical development for the University.</p> <p>The Board voted on whether the University should move onto the next stage of due diligence:-</p> <p>In favour: 12 votes Against: 0 votes Abstentions: 0</p> <p>The Board therefore approved moving on to the due diligence stage with the matter likely coming back to the Board of Governors for further approval at a future meeting.</p>		
22/07	<p>VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT <i>Paper 1 refers</i></p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor's report was taken as read; however, the Vice-Chancellor wanted to highlight that the University had recorded it's highest ever position in the three major league tables and that the collective effort of the University should be acknowledged in getting it to that position.</p> <p>In the area of policy it was expected that the OfS would announce the B3 outcomes. There would also soon be an announcement that the name of Newman University would be changed to Birmingham Newman University.</p> <p>A further announcement that was expected was the merger of HESA and JISC. On 6 October an announcement is expected regarding the Teaching Excellence Framework ("TEF").</p> <p>There was also expected to be a decision on the questions and format of the National Students Survey which was an important issue for the University as student satisfaction was one of its main drivers for success.</p>		

	<p>Following the change of Prime Minister, Kit Malthouse was now Secretary of State for Education. There was no longer a Universities Minister but Andrea Jenkyns, the minister for skills, would have the HE portfolio.</p> <p>At the level of governance of Universities in Rome the Congregation for Education has been merged with the Pontifical Council for Culture to create new dicastery for Education and Culture.</p> <p>The Board asked that their thanks be minuted for the hard work of Chaplaincy in making the visit of the relics of St Bernadette a success.</p> <p>The Board noted the Vice Chancellor's report.</p>		
22/8	<p>LEAGUE TABLE/SURVEY UPDATE <i>Paper 3i – 3iii refers</i></p> <p>The Director of Strategic Planning said the University had risen by 16 places to 51 in the Times/GUG league table and was now in the top 10 in London. In terms of the metrics there had been a rise in four of the metrics (including in research following the REF results) and a drop in the other four.</p> <p>In the Times/CUG league there was a slight difference between the subject level results and the overall level results. This was because the metric for subject level results were refined meaning that there appeared to be a disconnect between the two. Overall three subjects had risen including Sports Science which had risen significantly all the other subjects had fallen slightly. At University level St Mary's were ahead of its UCAS competitor group.</p> <p>The Director of Strategic Planning said that there was a need for a further look at degree completion and employability was starting to lag behind.</p> <p>In the Guardian League Table which had come out the previous day the University had risen by 34 places. This league table rise had been primarily fuelled by the good NSS results and the improved staff student ratio. At a subject level five subjects had improved with Education being the strongest performer.</p>		

	<p>The Vice-Chancellor said that the league table results had been very positive with the University being on course to break into the top 50. Further work was needed to see what could be done to improve learning resources expenditure. This was not a metric in the Times League Table but was in the other league tables and was holding the university back to a certain extent.</p> <p>The Board noted that more work needed to be done to improve retention of students. The Provost explained that there was currently consultation being undertaken in preparing a retention strategy.</p> <p>The Director of Strategic Planning said that the graduate outcomes survey said that on the general employment metric the University had done well with 93% of students entering employment following university. The area which needed focus was graduate level employment as this had remained steady for the University but its competitors had started to pull ahead.</p> <p>The Board noted the league table update and congratulated everyone at the University for the improvement in its position.</p>		
22/09	<p>STUDENT RECRUITMENT <i>Paper 4 refers</i></p> <p>The Provost said that the University was on a positive trajectory in terms of student recruitment with a projection of 1265 UG students predicated to enrol which is slightly better than the 1252 total enrolled last year this was below target but ahead of the planning forecast of 1257.</p> <p>PGT was predicated to be 691. So far 664 students had enrolled which exceeded the target of 594 and the planning scenario of 618.</p> <p>International students had exceeded target with 411 being enrolled against a target of 250. This reflected the rise in international students across the sector was also a consequence of a change in strategy by the international recruitment team.</p> <p>PGCE student numbers, like the rest of the sector, had fallen with 319 being recruited in this cycle</p>		

	<p>which was below last years numbers and below the target of 462.</p> <p>The Board noted the student recruitment update.</p>		
22/10	<p>MANGEMENT ACCOUNTS <i>Paper 5 refers</i></p> <p>The CFO presented the management accounts for the full year 2021/2022. He said that the finance team were still awaiting finalisation of the pension numbers from the actuaries; however, the University had a solid financial performance over the last year and was looking at being able to report a small surplus for the first time in six years. The cash position of the University also remained strong.</p> <p>The Board noted the management accounts.</p>		
22/11	<p>STUDENTS' UNION REPORT <i>Paper 5 refers</i></p> <p>The Student Life President said that the Welcome Fest for new students had been a great success with 24 events taking place. The funeral of HM Queen had meant that some events had been postponed or curtailed but this had caused any significant issues. It had also been better value for money this year with wristbands being cheaper and 8 more events being put on. The COO said that the level of organisation and planning for welcome fest had been very good.</p> <p>The main campaigns for this semester were Black History Month, Dyslexia Awareness, and Wear it Pink. "Wobble" week was also taking place again this year together with sustainability week, inter-faith awareness week and student safety week.</p> <p>A new branding strategy had been adopted. The number of societies had increased from last year by 23.</p> <p>Claire McDonnell had on behalf of the Board been working with the University on how to tackle the issue of harassment and sexual violence.</p> <p>The Board noted the Students' Union report.</p>		

22/12	<p>ATHENA SWAN SUBMISSION <i>Paper 6 refers</i></p> <p>The Provost presented the Athena Swan submission. This had been considered by Academic Board, UEC, and the Finance and Resources Committee and had been endorsed by the them. The Board was being asked to provide its approval for ahead of the submission which was due in November.</p> <p>The Board unanimously approved the Athena Swan submission.</p>		
22/13	<p>GOVERNANCE – COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE <i>Papers 8i -8v and Paper 9 refers</i></p> <p>The Board unanimously approved the terms of reference of the following committees:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Finance and Resources Committee ii) Audit Committee iii) Academic Scrutiny Committee iv) Remuneration Committee v) Nominations Committee <p>The Board noted the cycle of business for 2022/2023.</p>		
22/14	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>Parent Company Guarantee</p> <p>The University Secretary told the Board that the University is entering into a partnership arrangement with Accent Language Limited which trades as The Language Gallery (“Language Gallery”). The partnership is for the delivery of education to students recruited by Language Gallery.</p> <p>Language Gallery is wholly owned by Global University Systems. One of the conditions of entering into the partnership arrangement was that Global University Systems agreed to provide a parent company guarantee guaranteeing performance of the contract by Language Gallery. This parent company guarantee has been signed by Global University Systems.</p>		

	The Board unanimously approved the signing of the Parent Company Guarantee.		
22/15	Dates of Next Meetings 03 November 2022 (Mini Away Day) 29 November 2022 19 January 2023 23 March 2023 (Away Day) 20 April 2023 20 June 2023		

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