

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Munster Technological University held on Wednesday, 6 January 2021 at 3.30pm via video conference

Members: Mr Bob Savage, Chair
Prof. Maggie Cusack
Mr Denis Leamy
Mr Jerry Moloney

In Attendance: Mr Barry Coughlan, MTU Cork Campus
Mr Paul Gallagher, MTU Cork Campus
Ms Ciara Looney, MTU Kerry Campus
Ms Geraldine Faherty, Minute Taker

The Chair welcomed all to the second meeting of Munster Technological University Governing Body. Apologies were noted from Prof. Sigbritt Karlsson.

1. Conflict of Interest

Conflict of Interest and the importance of declaring any conflict or perceived conflict was addressed, no conflicts were declared.

2. Draft Minutes of the first Governing Body Meeting held on 1 January 2021

The minutes of the first meeting of the MTU Governing Body held on Friday 1 January 2021 were approved for signature.

2.1 Previous Minutes from the last Governing Body Meetings of CIT and IT Tralee:

The minutes of the last Governing Body meeting of CIT and IT Tralee were presented to the Governing Body for information. This was done to ensure that there was a level of continuity from one Governing Body to the next.

2.1.1 Minutes of the IT Tralee Governing Body Meeting held on 9 December 2020

The Governing Body noted the minutes of IT Tralee's Governing Body meeting held on 9 December 2020.

2.1.2 Minutes of the IT Tralee Governing Body Meeting held on 10 December 2020

The Governing Body noted the minutes of IT Tralee's Governing Body meeting held on 10 December 2020.

2.1.3 Minutes of the CIT Governing Body Meeting held on 3 December 2020

The Governing Body noted the minutes of CIT's Governing Body meeting held on 3 December and further noted the staff and student representation on Governing Body and the financial investment priorities identified in the minutes for their attention.

2.1.4 Minutes of the CIT Staff Appointments Sub-Committee Meeting held on 18 December 2020

The Governing Body noted the minutes of CIT's Staff Appointments Sub-Committee Meeting held on 18 December 2020.

3. Correspondence

3.1 Emails dated 22 December 2020 and 4 January 2021 from Ms A Hession, Higher Education Authority (HEA) re: MTU Chair Campaign

The Governing Body noted the emails in relation to the filling of the role of Chair of MTU. Members were of the understanding that the Chair of the Governing Body had been appointed as outlined in the letter dated 14 December 2020 from the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, and requested clarity on these emails. The Vice Presidents (Corporate) to engage with the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS) in relation to the process.

ACTION: *The Vice Presidents (Corporate) to engage with the DFHERIS re: MTU Chair Campaign.*

4. Governing Body Committees:

4.1 Prioritisation of other Governing Body Committees to be established

The Chair invited the Vice Presidents to discuss the circulated document.

Ms Looney outlined the Committees established by the previous Governing Bodies of both institutions and discussed the Committees in place in other Universities around the country.

Whilst cognisant of expanding the Governing Body committees, it was agreed that until the Governing Body is fully constituted, the following are the committees to be set-up:

- (i) Nominations Committee (under s.12(1)(h) of the TU Act)
- (ii) Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee

The Audit & Risk Committee was established at the Day 1 Governing Body meeting on 1 January. The Governing Body agreed that Finance would be dealt with as part of the Audit & Risk Committee meetings until such time as a Finance Committee was established.

4.2 External Membership of the Audit & Risk Committee

The Governing Body agreed to proceed with the process of appointing an external member who has the competence and expertise in Finance to the Audit & Risk Committee. The Vice Presidents to draft the appropriate documentation in order to commence the process and to liaise with the DFHERIS in relation to approvals that may be required including any fees payable to the appointee.

ACTION: *Draft advertisement to be prepared for the next Governing Body meeting.*

4.3 Set-up of the s.12(1)(h) Nominations Committee

Mr Coughlan briefed the Governing Body on the legal requirements in terms of the specific and distinct membership and purpose of this Committee under s.12(1)(h) of the TU Act, with membership limited to the Chair and two other external members of Governing Body.

Whilst mindful of their obligation to have regard to the principle of gender balance, the Governing Body noted the requirements in terms of section 12(1)(h) and the fact that a three-person committee could not achieve the gender balance objective as set out (i.e. 40 percent) in any event.

Governing Body approved the appointment of Mr Bob Savage as Chair of this Nominations Committee and both Mr Denis Leamy and Mr Jerry Moloney as external members of the Committee with immediate effect.

The Committee will carry out the task of appointing the external members of Governing Body under s.12(1)(h) of the TU Act.

Before proceeding, there must be engagement with the HEA re: the competencies which will be required of such members.

5. Deputy Chair and use of the University Seal

The Governing Body agreed that they would not appoint a Deputy Chair at present.

In accordance with the TU Act, the use of the TU Seal must be authenticated by 2 signatures, and the TU Act already specifically authorises both the Chair and the President for that purpose. It also provides for further authorised signatories as determined, respectively, by Governing Body and the President.

Given the geographical locations of the two campuses, Governing Body authorised Mr Denis Leamy and Mr Jerry Moloney as further members of Governing Body who may authenticate the use of the seal. The President also took the opportunity to authorise that Ms Geraldine Faherty (Cork Campus) and Ms Mary Dennehy (Kerry Campus) to authenticate the use of the seal.

6. Academic Council

The President confirmed that Academic Council held its first meeting on Monday 4 January. The two policies circulated for approval set out the regulations for the roll over to the end of this academic year of the pre-existing Academic QA Policies and Procedures from both CIT and IT Tralee.

The Governing Body approved the policies as presented.

7. Induction for Governing Body

The Governing Body agreed to the proposal for an induction session for Governors, both the current members and for the Governing Body when it has been fully constituted. The Vice Presidents (Corporate) to prepare a proposal outlining the structure and content for the Governing Body Meeting on 22 January.

The Governing Body further agreed that meetings to take place at the various campuses when appropriate after Covid-19. It would give the Governing Body exposure to the breadth of MTU and an understanding of what is going on in the University.

ACTION: *Draft proposal re: induction to be prepared for the Governing Body meeting on 22 January.*

8. Membership of Governing Body:

- 8.1 Staff Elections to MTU Governing Body – Outline of Process
- 8.2 Notice of Election to Academic Staff Members
- 8.3 Notice of Election to Non-Academic Staff members
- 8.4 Draft Letter to the Students' Union Presidents

The Chair invited Mr Coughlan to give a presentation containing an overview of the legislation under the TU Act as it relates to the process of expanding the membership of Governing Body.

Mr. Gallagher, Ms. Looney and Mr. Coughlan also went through the draft documentation as listed above.

The Governing Body agreed that gender balance must be reflected in the fully constituted Governing Body. They discussed the nomination and election process for the appointment of the academic and non-academic staff and agreed that the draft notice of election be circulated to all staff for consultation re: the number of academic staff members to be elected, gender balance and constituencies.

Consultation will also be sought on how to proceed with the new category of staff to be elected.

In relation to the student membership, the Governing Body noted that the Act was clear in that student members of Governing Body shall be nominated by “*the student union*”, and in order to receive nominations from the Students’ Union, the Governing Body must first recognise a single student union. The Governing Body understand that at present, the Students’ Unions of Cork and Tralee are separate and distinct and, on that basis, they agreed that the Chair would write to the two Students’ Union Presidents outlining the Governing Body position. The President agreed to be the point of contact for assistance should this be required.

ACTION: *Draft notices of Election of Staff to be circulated to MTU Academic and Non-Academic Staff for their comments/consultation.*

The Chair to write to the two Students’ Union Presidents.


9. Schedule of Meetings

The Governing Body noted that a doodle poll would be organised to ascertain dates for the next two Governing Body Meetings.

The following dates were subsequently agreed:

- *Friday 15 January at 2.30pm*
- *Friday 22 January at 3.00pm*

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their participation and valuable contributions. The meeting closed at 5.35pm.

Signed: 
Chair of MTU Governing Body

Date: 15 January 2021