

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Munster Technological University held on Friday, 12 March 2021 at 2.30pm via video conference.

Members: Mr Bob Savage, Chair
Prof. Maggie Cusack
Prof. Sigbritt Karlsson
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 meeting of Munster Technological University Governing Body. There were no apologies. Conflict of Interest and the importance of declaring any conflict or perceived conflict was addressed, no conflicts were declared.

1. Draft Minutes

a. Governing Body Meeting held on Friday 19 February 2021

The minutes of the meeting of the MTU Governing Body held on Friday 19 February 2021 were approved for signature.

2. Correspondence

a. Email from MTU Kerry Students' Union President

Governors noted the email from the President of MTU Kerry Students' Union.

The Governing Body reiterated the position under the Act in relation to recognition of a single student union. They discussed the draft proposed letters to both Presidents and agreed that it should be made clear to both unions that MTU will not fund the two existing student union entities for the next academic year unless there is a clear and unequivocal acceptable path in place for a single MTU student union. Once again, they urged both unions to engage to work towards finding a solution.

Mr Gallagher and Ms Looney to contact the existing Presidents at their respective campus to let them know that the formal communications will be circulated early next week. The President and the Chair will then meet with both Presidents in the coming weeks.

b. Meeting with Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS)

The President referred to the main items discussed at the meeting with the DFHERIS and gave the following update on progress since this meeting:

- work was ongoing in relation to the completion of the templates for submission to the DFHERIS
- awaiting the outcome of the process re: Chair of Governing Body
- further engagement to take place with the HEA re: the moderator

The Governing Body conveyed their thanks for the briefing, they noted that the President had raised the issue in relation to the borrowing framework and agreed that in order for MTU to deliver on strategic intent, there must be investment.

c. Letter dated 8 March from the Chair of the Cork Academic Legacy Committee of Academic Council (CALCAC).

The Governing Body agreed to discuss the letter from the Chair of the Cork Academic Legacy Committee under agenda item 4, Academic Council.

3. Communications & Branding

a. 3 Month Marketing & Communication Plan

The Chair welcomed Ms Brid McElligott Vice President for Research, Development and External Engagement and Mr Michael Loftus, Vice President for External Affairs to meeting to present their jointly developed 3-month marketing and communications plan.

Ms McElligott and Mr Loftus gave an overview of the interim plan which has been put in place to ensure that MTU's current marketing and communication functions will continue to work together to achieve the required outcomes for MTU until such time as a new organisational structure is established. They discussed the five goals set, the degree of prioritisation in terms of the programme of work being undertaken and the current levels of target achievement. Internal communications and branding to be addressed in the short-term whilst other activities such as the development of the MTU website was highlighted as requiring a dedicated effort over a longer-term.

Governors commended Ms McElligott and Mr Loftus and their teams for the comprehensive plan, they discussed the success of the approach whilst acknowledging the challenges of setting this up in such a short period of time. They further agreed to invite them back at another time to discuss the work packages further.

Ms McElligott and Mr Loftus left the meeting at 3.35pm.

4. Academic Council

a. Expansion of Academic Council

The Chair welcomed Dr Brendan O'Donnell to the meeting and invited him to discuss the circulated documentation.

Dr O'Donnell discussed the proposed minor amendments to the Regulations for the transitional MTU Academic Council as per the tracked changes in the circulated document.

Governing Body approved the amendments as outlined.

The Governing Body agreed to discuss the letter received from the Chair of the Cork Academic Legacy Committee of Academic Council under this agenda item.

2(c) Letter dated 8 March from the Chair of the Cork Academic Legacy Committee of Academic Council (CALCAC)

Dr O'Donnell discussed the letter received from the Chair of the Cork Academic Legacy Committee in relation to the outcome of their meeting held on Friday 5 March.

Dr O'Donnell outlined the lengthy process which was followed in arriving at the composition of preferred models presented to the MTU Governing Body at its inaugural meeting on 1 January.

The Governing Body acknowledged the huge amount of work that had been undertaken and were satisfied that the process was conducted in a fair, engaging and inclusive manner.

Governing Body confirmed that it was satisfied with its decisions taken to date in relation to regulating MTU Academic Council under the TU Act, and requested the executive to respond to the letter.

The Governing Body conveyed their thanks to Dr O'Donnell and he left the meeting at 4.00pm.

b. Communications of decision from MTU Governing Body

This item was dealt with in discussions under 2(c).

c. Cork Postgraduate Regulations

This item was not discussed at the meeting.

d. Honorary University Fellowship recommendation

The MTU Academic Council recommended the bestowment of the title Honorary University Fellow MTU and sought the approval of the Governing Body.

The Governing Body approved the recommendation of the Academic Council as outlined. The Governing Body noted the intention of Academic Council to delegate part of its work in considering recommendations of this nature to a committee of Academic Council in order to maintain the confidentiality required in processing individual cases.

The Governing Body agreed to taking item 6 before agenda item 5.

6. Collaboration Agreement between MTU / National Parks and Wildlife Service / Leave no Trace Ireland

The Chair welcomed Ms Mary Rose Stafford to the meeting at 4pm and invited her to brief Governors on the Collaboration Agreement presented.

Ms Stafford informed Governing Body that the collaboration is between MTU, the National Parks and Wildlife Service and Leave no Trace Ireland. She confirmed that the quality assurance process is complete and the programme has been advertised with 317 applications for 25 places.

The Governing Body welcomed the positive collaboration and agreed to its formal approval of the collaboration. They thanked Ms Stafford for attending the meeting. Ms Stafford left the meeting at 4.10pm.

5. President's Report:

The Chair invited the President to discuss her report.

The President highlighted the following activities since the last meeting of the Governing Body:

- The Chair and the President attended an information seminar on the consultation on the Reform of the HEA legislation on 24 February.
- The President attended an RIA webinar on 24 February on research for public policy and the vital role of leadership to make it happen.
- The President, Mr P Gallagher and Ms C Looney attended a meeting at the DFHERIS on 26 February.
- On 4 March, the President attended a meeting of Cork Chamber at which An Taoiseach attended.
- The President was a member of selection committee for VP Research & Innovation at TUD on 5 March.

- The President attended a briefing session on the three-year strategy of Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, presented by Mr Simon Harris TD, Minister of State for Skills Mr Niall Collins TD and Secretary General Mr Jim Breslin on 8 March.
- The President participated in MTU's Empowering Women seminar to celebrate International Women's Day on 8 March. This was an outstanding event with extensive, enthusiastic participation from students and staff across MTU as well as key input from alumni and support from our stakeholders. The President was most grateful to everyone who supported, organised or participated in the event.
- Over the last few weeks, the President has held a series of meetings with small groups of staff to meet and greet and hear of staff hopes, aspirations and concerns.
- The President is preparing the Equality Statement for consultation.

The Governing Body thanked the President for her report.

7. Governing Body Committees

a. Nominations Committee Meeting Minutes

i. 26 February 2021

ii. 5 March 2021

The Governing Body noted the minutes of Nominations Committee Meetings held on 26 February and 5 March for their information. The next meeting will take place on 19 March at 10.30am. The Chair agreed to give a detailed account of the work of the Nominations Committee at the next Governing Body Meeting on 26 March.

8. Membership of Governing Body:

a. Staff Nomination & Election Process Update

b. Election Process Regulations

The Vice Presidents (VPs) Corporate discussed the circulated documentation, outlining the key points requiring approval. The Governing Body agreed to the approval of the following:

- the appointment of Ms Ciara Looney and Mr Paul Gallagher as Returning Officers (joint role)
- time allowance of a half-day per week to be given to PMSS staff
- Electoral Panel E "All Staff" to be run as a separate election and include the possible parameter of a gender specific election should the need arise.

The Governing Body noted the revised timetable, the use of MiVoice in the online election process and that consultation would remain ongoing throughout the process.

Governors further noted the volume of work undertaken and conveyed their thanks to the VPs Corporate and Mr Coughlan.

9. Policies & Procedures

- MTU Safety Statement
- MTU Opening Hours Policy

The Governing Body agreed to the approval of MTU Safety Statement and the MTU Opening Hours Policy as presented.

10. Staff Appointments

The Governing Body noted that there were no appointments presented for approval at today's meeting.

The Governing Body thanked the VPs Corporate and Mr Coughlan for their work and they left the meeting at 4.30pm.

11. Engagement with DFHERIS

The President discussed the meeting with the DFHERIS and outlined her proposed approach on how to move forward with the mission critical work.

Governors were fully supportive of the President's approach and agreed that this was necessary for the success of MTU.

12. AOB

Not further items were discussed.

The Chair thanked Governors for their participation at the meeting this afternoon. The meeting closed at 4.45pm.

Signed: 
Chair of MTU Governing Body

Date: 26 March 2021