

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Munster Technological University held on Friday, 22 January 2021 at 2.30pm 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
Mr Michael Loftus, Vice President External Affairs for agenda item 3 only
Ms Geraldine Faherty, Minute Taker

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting of Munster Technological University Governing Body. Apologies were noted from Prof. Sigbritt Karlsson. Conflicts of Interest and the importance of declaring any conflict or perceived conflict was addressed, the Vice Presidents (VPs) Corporate declared a potential conflict in relation to agenda 5 and the Governing Body agreed that this item would be moved to the last item on the agenda.

1. Draft Minutes

a. Governing Body Meeting held on Friday 15 January 2021

The minutes of the meeting of the MTU Governing Body held on Friday 15 January 2021 were approved for signature.

2. Correspondence

The VPs Corporate referred to correspondence received this morning from the TASS Unions (Forsa, SIPTU and UNITE) and tabled for the meeting. As this correspondence related to agenda item 7, Governors agreed to discuss under this item.

3. Academic Council

a. Standing Orders of MTU Academic Council

The Governing Body noted the Standing Orders of the MTU Academic Council as presented by the President.

The President informed Governing Body that she will Chair the Academic legacy committee meetings of both IT Tralee and CIT to ratify examination results and to ensure that all student legacy business is dealt with. The President also discussed that there was recognition that the current small Academic Council cannot deal with everything that is required to have uniform MTU policies and procedures in place by mid-June. Discussions have taken place in relation to reviving some of the key working groups with clear terms of reference to focus on what is required in order to have regulations in place for students in September.

4. MTU Emeritus

a. Emeritus Proposal

The Chair welcomed Mr Michael Loftus, Vice President for External Affairs, Cork to the meeting.

In order to give context to the circulated Emeritus proposal, Mr Loftus referred to the distinguished contribution of a graduate to CIT over a very significant number of years as well as contributing significantly to the realisation of the aspirations of CIT/MTU.

The graduate was previously awarded a STEM Graduate Achievement Award and an Alumni Excellence Award for these significant contributions.

The proposal to award the title Emeritus Fellow on the graduate was made to the CIT Governing Body in December 2020 and Mr Loftus confirmed that they were fully supportive of this. Given the fact that the establishment of MTU was imminent at that time, he had sought the support of the CIT Governing Body to request the MTU Governing Body to perform the awarding of the title Emeritus Fellow MTU rather than Emeritus Fellow CIT to the recipient.

The Governing Body agreed that the recipient was clearly a worthy candidate and supported the proposal in principle. From a procedural process, they requested that the CIT Emeritus Fellow Policy be reviewed in the context of MTU and that this be presented for approval to the Governing Body at their next meeting.

The President referred to Emeritus being honorary and ensuring that we award correctly.

Mr Loftus thanked Governors and left the meeting.

6. Governing Body Committees:

a. Audit & Risk Committee – updated Terms of Reference

The Chair invited the VPs Corporate to discuss the circulated documentation.

Mr Gallagher confirmed that the terms of reference had been updated to reflect the amendments as discussed in relation to the increase in membership and the inclusion of the responsibilities of financial management.

The Governing Body approved the draft update as presented.

b. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion – updated Terms of Reference

Ms Looney confirmed that these terms of reference were a work in progress with a view to being finalised for the Governing Body meeting next week.

7. Membership of Governing Body

a. Governing Body Project Plan

Mr Coughlan discussed the project plan in terms of the actions to be completed by Governing Body under the TU Act and the status of the work in progress.

Governors thanked Mr Coughlan for the detail outlined in the plan.

b. Staff Nomination and Election Process Update

Mr Gallagher referred to correspondence from the TASS Unions received this morning and discussed their feedback.

In relation to Staff membership and the filling of sections 12(1)(c), (d) and (e), the union proposed that the process be undertaken for sections 12(1)(c) and (d) ahead of section 12(1)(e). They also had a concern that there would be an imbalance in the voting ratio between academic and non-academic staff which could result in an outcome of a ratio of 4:1.

The Governing Body acknowledged receipt of the tabled letter and welcomed the feedback. The correspondence to be included as an agenda item for the next Governing Body meeting.

ACTION: *The VPs Corporate to circulate the correspondence to Governors and to engage with the TUI next week as they are now the only union who have not submitted their feedback.*

The President informed the Governing Body that she will be circulating a video to all staff on Monday which will refer to expanding the first Governing Body to bring our staff and students on board. Governors conveyed their full support to the President.

c. Competencies for External Members

Ms Looney discussed the circulated updated document which incorporated the feedback given by Governors at the meeting last week.

Governors welcomed the updated document and suggested incorporating social and community enterprise and the knowledge of this eco-system across the region; a competence and understanding of the life-long learning process and its importance in terms of communities, and the inclusion of a disabilities dimension under the individual requirements. There was also a requirement to capture the essence of the South West Region in the opening document which would assist in engaging the reader from the outset. Marketing to be invited to provide their expertise.

In relation to the competencies, Governors agreed to reflect further on the core expertise required/ deemed to be essential as opposed to the competencies that would be good to have. The term of office to be discussed further, there needs to be balance to ensure that there is a support for the President.

The updated document to be discussed further at the next Governing Body meeting on 29 January.

8. Policies and Procedures

- a. **Budget Policy**
- b. **Fixed Asset Policy**
- c. **Heritage Assets Policy**
- d. **Travel & Expenses Policy**
- e. **Hospitality Policy**
- f. **Mobile Phone Policy**
- g. **Flag Policy**
- h. **Protocol for Inviting Dignitaries**
- i. **Protocol for Ambassadorial Visit to MTU**

Mr Gallagher referred to the policies and procedures for approval, these MTU policies are based on pre-existing policies and have been through a consultation phase between the two Finance Offices. It was important that these policies and the procedures were aligned.

The Governing Body agreed to the approval of all of the policies and procedures as presented.

In relation to the potential for borrowing, Mr Gallagher confirmed that the position has not changed under the TU Act, it still remains that “a TU could borrow subject to a Framework being developed by the HEA”. This is something that will become a necessity for MTU going forward.

9. AOB

a. Schedule of Meetings

The Governing Body agreed to hold the following weekly meetings for the month of February:

- Friday 29 January at 4.00pm
- Friday 5 February at 2.30pm
- Friday 12 February at 2.30pm
- Friday 19 February at 2.30pm
- Friday 26 February at 2.30pm

b. Approval of the Appointment of a Senior Manager Role

Ms Looney sought the approval of Governing Body in relation to the back-filling of the post of Assistant Registrar up to 20 May 2021 at MTU Kerry. The Governing Body approved the appointment as outlined.

Before opening the discussion in relation to agenda item 5, the Chair noted the conflicts of interest declared by the VPs Corporate and thanked them both for their work before they left the meeting. Mr Coughlan also left the meeting.

5. Organisational Structure

The President outlined a proposal in relation to addressing the legacy post of Interim President at IT Tralee. The President sought Governing Body approval in principle to assign the interim role of MTU Vice President Campus Integration and Senior Registrar to the former Interim President until 20 May 2021.

The Governing Body were fully supportive and approved the proposal in principle. The President will engage with the DFHERIS in relation to same.

The President discussed her proposal in relation to the MTU Executive and the alignment of the support structures beneath to support the Executive.

The Governing Body welcomed the comprehensive proposal, they agreed that there was a strong balance to it and were fully supportive of the President engaging with the DFHERIS/HEA in relation to it. They also agreed that it would be beneficial to map this structure by way of an Organisation Chart. In terms of engagement with the DFHERIS/HEA, Governors were mindful that this may be a lengthy process.

The President confirmed that she will be meeting the President of TU Dublin next week and will update the Governors further at the next meeting.

The Chair thanked Governors for their participation and the good discussions at the meeting. The meeting closed at 4.20pm.

Signed: 
Chair of MTU Governing Body

Date: 29 January 2021