

Draft Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Munster Technological University held on Thursday, 22 July 2021 at 3.00pm via video conference.

Members: Mr Jimmy Deenihan, Chair
Prof. Maggie Cusack
Ms Ursula Barrett
Dr Joan Cleary
Mr Chris Clifford
Ms Mary Cooney
Mr Martin Dineen
Mr Thomas Doyle
Ms Mary Hegarty
Mr Denis Leamy
Ms Christina Mandrusiak
Mr Alan Murphy
Ms Aoife O'Brien
Ms Aisling O'Mahony
Ms Ingrid O'Riordan
Mr Peter Somers

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

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting of the Munster Technological University Governing Body with a particular warm welcome to Mr Chris Clifford on this his first meeting. Apologies were received from Ms P Cogan, Mr J Finucane, Prof S Karlsson, Mr J Moloney, Mr C O'Flynn and it was noted that Ms M Cooney would be late joining the meeting.

Prior to dealing with the agenda, the Chair outlined the procedures for the meeting in relation to confidentiality of the proceedings and all documentation circulated, no recordings of the meeting were permitted and how the Teams chat may be enabled to record votes as and when necessary and that the only record of the meeting will be the agreed minutes, which will then be published in due course. Conflict of interest was addressed and no conflicts were declared.

1. Matters Arising

a. Adoption of agenda

The Chair sought Governing Body approval of the agenda before proceeding with the meeting. The Governing Body agreed to the adoption of the agenda as outlined. This was proposed by Ms M Hegarty and seconded by Ms A O'Brien.

b. Draft minutes from the meeting of Governing Body on Wednesday 30 June 2021

The minutes of the meeting of the MTU Governing Body held on Wednesday 30 June 2021 were approved. This was proposed by Ms M Hegarty and seconded by Ms C Mandrusiak.

A query in relation to matters arising from the minutes of the Governing Body meeting on 28 June was discussed and the Chair agreed that matters arising from this meeting would be an agenda for the next Governing Body meeting on 16 September.

In relation to the matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 30 June, the following was discussed:

- Agenda item 5, a point of clarification was raised in relation to the information sessions/briefings for Governors, it was noted that these would not replace the outlined induction sessions. The tour of the various facilities will take place prior to the scheduled Governing Body meeting with Governors invited to come in earlier to participate in the tour.
- A request for the minutes of the previous meetings of the Committees of Governing Body to be shared was discussed. Governors noted that the following three Committees were formed:
 - Audit & Risk Committee (with responsibility for Finance)
 - Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee (EDI)
 - Nominations Committee

The minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee meetings to be circulated to Governors. The EDI Committee has not yet been formed or met and it was noted that due to the sensitive nature of the work of the Nominations Committee, these minutes will not be shared.

2. Correspondence

a. Letter of thanks to Ms P Comerford, SU President, Kerry Campus

The Governing Body noted with thanks the correspondence sent to Ms P Comerford, former President of the Students' Union at the Kerry Campus.

3. President's Report

The Chair invited the President to discuss her circulated report.

The President referred to her report and to the activities that she has been involved in across the university since the last meeting. She highlighted the following points for the information of Governors:

- The first MTU Conferring Ceremony took place on 30 June, while the ceremony was virtual, it was an important first milestone for MTU. Governors noted that the Autumn 2021 Conferring ceremonies will take place from 6 to 14 January 2022 in the hope that it will be possible to hold in-person ceremonies at that time.
- Commencement of individual meetings with Governors and the President looked forward to meeting with all members in due course.
- Three MTU students are competing in the forthcoming Olympic/Paralympic Games in Tokyo. Governors formally conveyed their congratulations and best wishes to the following:
 - 3rd year Mechanical Engineering student, David Kenny who will be participating in the 20km racewalk
 - PhD researcher, Monika Dukarska, who will be participating in the Rowing (Womens Pair)
 - 1st year Health & Leisure student, Jordan Lee who will be participating in the High Jump at the Paralympics.
- The National Flag was flying at half-mast today in memory of staff member Mr Robert (Rob) Craig, Lecturer, Cork School of Music. Sincere condolences to colleagues, family and friends.

- In relation to Springboard funding, the President welcomed the award, she highlighted the error in the figure in her report and confirmed that the figure received was €2,210,282.
- Sincere thanks to Mr P Gallagher and his Team in Buildings & Estates on the recent grant award of €9.225m from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media through its Large-Scale Sports Infrastructure Fund (LSSIF) to Athletics Ireland and Cork Institute of Technology/MTU Community Sport Project in relation to the development of Phase 2 of the Sports Arena. Governors conveyed their congratulations and thanked all involved in securing the funding, it was most welcome.
- The President referred to the overall positive upward trend in preferences for MTU in CAO 2021 and conveyed her thanks to all staff involved in promoting courses.
- The President updated Governors on the bringing together of the Operational Executive and the Planning Group to form the University Executive. A first meeting will take place on 27 July with fortnightly meetings commencing from September.

Governing Body thanked the President for her report and were pleased to note the increase in preferences in CAO. They requested a further analysis to be presented at a future meeting in relation to the breakdown in growth/decline of numbers in particular areas.

The President agreed to include two additional achievements in relation to Cork School of Music students in her report. The updated document to be circulated to Governors' for their information.

In relation to Governors' Bios and photos for uploading under "Membership Profiles" on the MTU website, the President reminded Governors that the version tabled at the Governing Body Meeting on 30 June will be uploaded to the MTU website. If a Governor wishes to amend their particular details, please contact the President's Office by Thursday 5 August.

a. OECD consultation

The President referred to the recent OECD consultation document and MTU's response circulated with the agenda. In response to queries from Governors, the President confirmed that the HEA were leading on the OECD consultation and that the response submitted was from the Executive following MTU's participation in a series of consultation meetings.

4. Staff Appointments

The President outlined the detail of the Staff Appointments for approval for the post of Head of MTU Crawford College of Art & Design. She informed the Governing Body that this post required approval as it was a Senior Manager appointment (Senior Lecturer 3 or Senior Manager or a salary scale of €100k).

The Governing Body approved the appointment as presented. This was proposed by Ms M Hegarty and seconded by Mr D Leamy.

In terms of the rate of appointments, a suggestion that a summary of other appointments be circulated to Governors' for their information.

5. MTU Advocacy

The President referred to the circulated document indicating that the paper sets out the position with THEA, the clarifications and criteria for IUA and a summary of the European Networks that would offer the most benefit to MTU.

The President acknowledged the concerns raised by some Governors in relation to MTU's advocacy. She reassured the Governing Body of MTU's ambition and how it was necessary to have strong advocacy as well as the importance of having one body representing and promoting the University sector be they a traditional university or a Technological university.

The importance of ensuring consistency in relation to the terminology used when referring to MTU on all formal documents was agreed and noted.

MTU Advocacy to remain an agenda item for the next Governing Body meeting. The President to draft a paper outlining the principles of both bodies including membership costs and a rationale for MTU's advocacy going forward.

6. Risk Register

The President confirmed that the circulated document was the most recent risk register. It was a live document which is reviewed on an ongoing basis. The Register includes the current risks to the organisation as well as looking ahead to take into account what may impact on MTU, the likelihood of this, what the impact would be and how to mitigate each risk.

Governors noted the document is reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee on a regular basis and that this is then reported back to Governing Body. They agreed that in terms of cyber security it was essential to be proactive rather than reactive and suggested that the register be more explicit in terms of proactive measures already in place. Clarification of risk reduction is required in some instances.

A copy of the Programmes & Budgets 2021/22 – 2024/25 to be circulated to Governors' for their information.

The Chair thanked Governors for their comments on this important document.

7. MTU Covid-19 Responses 2021/2022

The Chair invited Mr Gallagher to commence his presentation on MTU Covid-19 Responses 2021/2022. In his presentation, Mr Gallagher gave an account of the work undertaken at both institutions' pre-merger, how the issues facing staff and students were dealt with, close-out for 2020-2021 academic year and looking ahead to 2021-2022 including outline plans for a possible safe return to Campus in September.

He referred to the SFI Research Image of the Year 2020 which was won by a multidisciplinary team of researchers from CAPP and BioExplore research centres, MeSSO research group and MTU Blackrock Castle Observatory. The impact of the image resulted in significant press coverage and it was used as an early adopter strategy on the significance of mandatory mask wearing in the battle against Covid-19.

The Governing Body discussed the focus on the return of students to the campus in a safe and measured approach. They were appreciative of the initiatives/funding available in terms of providing supports to students including addressing further counselling supports for those in need. They conveyed their thanks to Mr Gallagher for his comprehensive presentation and agreed that a note of thanks be communicated to the MTU Community from Governing Body at the beginning of the new academic year.

8. Governing Body Committees

The President outlined the current position in relation to Committees of the MTU Governing Body and a discussion took place in relation to moving to the establishment of further Committees at the next meeting. The current Committees of Governing Body are:

- Audit & Risk Committee (with responsibility for Finance)
- Nominations Committee
- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Committee

The following Committees were proposed for consideration at the meeting:

- Finance & Capital/Property Committee
- Arts Committee
- NMCI Committee

The Governing Body noted that as per the TU Act some of the Committees listed in the circulated document were not reserved for the Governing Bodies of Technological Universities. They agreed to submit their suggestions for possible committees including a brief description by Thursday 5 August 2021. This will allow the Executive to work to support Governing Body by way of drafting proposed Terms of Reference for the Committees and to draft a workplan for the Governing Body for the new academic year.

9. TU Act 2018:

a. Governing Body Project Plan

Mr Gallagher confirmed that the Governing Body Project Plan detailed the matters which required addressing under the Act. The Governing Body noted the items completed within the first six months and conveyed their thanks to Mr Coughlan for the drafting of the document.

b. Delegations to date

The Governing Body noted the approved record of delegations to date. They further noted that the Code of Governance is still based on the reserved functions contained in the Institutes of Technology Acts with the noted change in relation to staff appointments.

c. MTU Standing Orders

The Governing Body noted the changes shown in track to the Standing Orders as approved at the Governing Body meeting on 4 June.

In response to a query in relation to appointing a Deputy Chair, the Chair confirmed that Mr D Leamy is the Deputy Chair.

10. Academic Council

a. Minutes of the MTU Academic Council meeting held on 31 May 2021

The Governing Body noted the circulated minutes of the MTU Academic Council meeting held on 31 May 2021 for their information.

b. Membership of the MTU Academic Council effective from 1 July 2021

The Governing Body noted the membership of the MTU Academic Council as outlined in the circulated document.

11. Schedule of Meetings

The Governing Body approved the schedule of meetings for the forthcoming academic year.

12. Proposals for Agenda at the next meeting

Governors proposed the following items for inclusion on the agenda for the next Governing Body meeting on 16 September:

- Matters arising from the minutes of the Governing Body meeting held on 28 June
- Advocacy
- Financial Update
- Covid-19 Update
- Review of Code of Governance including Standing Orders

They further agreed to the process that submissions for proposals to the agenda could be made two weeks prior to a Governing Body meeting and noted that the agenda will be set by the President in consultation with the Chair thereafter.

The Chair thanked Governors for their contributions and their work this afternoon. He also conveyed his thanks to the President and the Executive Team for their work. He reminded Governors of the importance of reading the Code of Governance, Standing Orders and the TU Act 2018 and being familiar with the detail in these documents. He wished everyone a good break in the coming weeks.

The meeting closed at 6.00pm.

Signed: Jimmy Deenihan
Chair of MTU Governing Body

Date: 16 September 2021