

**Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Munster Technological University held on Thursday, 2 December 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 Paula Cogan  
Ms Mary Cooney  
Mr Martin Dineen  
Mr Thomas Doyle  
Mr Jim Finucane  
Ms Mary Hegarty  
Mr Denis Leamy  
Ms Christina Mandrusiak  
Mr Jerry Moloney  
Mr Alan Murphy  
Ms Aoife O'Brien  
Mr Colman O'Flynn  
Ms Aisling O'Mahony  
Ms Ingrid O'Riordan  
Mr Peter Somers

**In Attendance:** Ms Ciara Looney, MTU Kerry Campus  
Mr Paul Gallagher, MTU Cork Campus  
Ms Geraldine Faherty, Minute Taker  
Mr Cormac Gebruers for agenda item 3 only  
Dr Áine Ní Shé and Dr B O'Donnell for agenda item 9 only  
Dr Matt Cotterell for agenda item 11(c) only

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting of Munster Technological University Governing Body. Apologies were received from Prof. S Karlsson.

Prior to dealing with the agenda, the Chair outlined the procedures for the meeting in relation to confidentiality of the proceedings, all documentation relating to the meeting were confidential and any breach was a criminal offence under the Act. No recordings of the meeting were permitted, the Teams chat may be enabled to record votes as and when necessary and the only record of the meeting will be the agreed minutes, which will be published in due course. Conflict of interest was addressed; 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.

A proposal to move the presentation to the end of the meeting was discussed, however, as the item was scheduled as part of the agenda, it would go ahead as outlined. Governors noted that in future presentations would be scheduled to take place prior to the meeting, commencing at 2.15pm.

The Governing Body agreed to the adoption of the agenda, proposed by Ms U Barrett, and seconded by Ms M Hegarty.

**b. Draft minutes from the meeting of Governing Body held on Thursday 4 November 2021**

The minutes of the meeting of the MTU Governing Body held on Thursday 4 November 2021 were approved subject to an amendment to agenda item 4(b). The minutes to be updated to reflect that the MTU Recruitment Policy is not finalised, it has gone through consultation and will be presented for approval to Governing Body in due course.

The amended sentence to read as follows:

*“In response to a query in relation to a recruitment policy, Ms Looney confirmed that the MTU Recruitment Policy is not finalised, it has gone through consultation and will be presented for approval to Governing Body in due course”.*

In relation to the final Ministerial appointment to Governing Body, the Chair agreed to contact the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science on this matter.

**ACTION:** The Chair to contact the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science in relation to the final Ministerial appointment to MTU Governing Body.

Updates on Actions arising from the previous meeting, the following was noted:

- Following consultation between the Chair and the President, it was agreed that Mr Barry Coughlan would fill the position of Secretary to the Governing Body. Governors noted that the Vice Presidents for Finance & Administration and Corporate would continue to provide their expertise on specific aspects of the agenda when required.
- Work was ongoing on developing the HR template to coincide with the alignment of the recruitment policy and procedures.
- Meeting dates have been organised for the Audit & Risk Committee and the Finance Committee. Follow-up will take place on organising the remaining outstanding Committee meetings. Reports from all these Committee meetings will be circulated to the next meeting of Governing Body.

The approval of the minutes was proposed by Mr D Leamy and seconded by Mr J Finucane.

**2. Correspondence**

**a. Letter to the National Transport Authority (NTA) re: Local Bus Services at Cork**

The President referred to the circulated letter and confirmed that a meeting will take place tomorrow to discuss the draft proposals for changes to the bus network and the effects on access for students and staff at the Bishopstown Campus. Consultation was open with proposals to be submitted by 10 December.

**b. Email dated 19 November 2021 from the HEA re: correspondence received from the Public Accounts Committee**

The President referred to the HEA correspondence in relation to partnerships, grants, or funding between MTU and third parties, and to the assurances being sought. The request was received in July and at that time it was not possible for a response to be processed through Governing Body. Therefore, the response was issued by the Executive on behalf of MTU. The HEA have now sought these assurances from Governing Body.

Governors discussed green technology and the proactive work being undertaken across the University in terms of sustainability and minimising the carbon footprint. They requested that this be detailed in the response as well as details on any third-party funding in terms of courses.

**ACTION:** The initial response to be sent to the HEA on behalf of Governing Body with the addition of details on the University's proactive approach in terms of sustainability and minimising the carbon footprint as well as a commitment that MTU will continue to be proactive in this space. Details on third-party funding of courses to be included, if applicable.

**c. Congratulatory correspondence received in relation to the Raising of the MTU Flag on 8 November 2021**

The President referred to the positive feedback received and took the opportunity to thank Governors for their support. She also thanked staff and students for making the day such a great celebration.

The Chair conveyed his thanks to the President for all her work in ensuring the success of the simultaneous flag raising ceremony, it was an important day for MTU.

**3. Presentation on the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI) by Mr Cormac Gebruers, Head of College.**

The Chair welcomed Mr Gebruers to the meeting and referred to his recent visit to the NMCI and its importance in MTU's footprint in the South-West Region. A Governing Body meeting will be held at the NMCI when guidelines permit in 2022.

In his presentation, Mr Gebruers gave an overview of the NMCI, why it exists, where it fits in, its uniqueness, the activities undertaken and its relationship with the Naval Service. He outlined the importance of support and investment to ensure it is fit for purpose and it continues to deliver on its current missions, and to take on new missions into the future. He provided an update on the National Sail Training Vessel for Ireland and its critical importance to a viable intake of students into NMCI's maritime programmes.

Governors thanked Mr Gebruers for his comprehensive overview of the activities. They discussed the importance of the NMCI, how it operates globally in a specialist sector and the many opportunities to optimise and enable growth into the future. Governors noted that preparations will commence in relation to the ending of the Public Private Partnership (PPP) in 2029. Mr Gebruers left the meeting at 4.35pm.

**4. 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. As well as the highlights on page 6, the President referred to the following:

- The University's involvement in National Science week and conveyed her thanks to all involved in the events that took place.
- MTU being the first University to have White Ribbon Status.
- Visit from the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Education and conveyed her thanks to students and staff for their participation in ensuring a successful visit.
- The announcement of MTU becoming "UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR FOR COVID IMPACT" and being Ireland's Top-ranked Technological University in the Sunday Times Irish Good University Guide 2022.

- Conferring 2021 update.

The President closed by thanking Governing Body for all their work and support since January with particular thanks to the two Chairs, Mr Bob Savage and Mr Jimmy Deenihan. She took the opportunity to wish Governors a Merry Christmas.

Governors discussed the positive collaboration between the University and the Sacred Heart University. In response to a query in relation to a register of MOUs for the University, the President confirmed that there is a register held and that MOUs are presented to Governing Body if the value over the lifetime of the collaboration is over €1m or if the collaboration is deemed high profile or exceptional or associated risk to the University. The President provided an update in relation to the Change Management Project and the tender process in relation to strategy development, she confirmed that all staff will have an opportunity to contribute to the development of the strategy and this will, in due course, be presented to Governing Body.

Governors thanked the President for her report. They noted the reports from the University Executive meetings held on 19 October and 2 November. They further noted that a letter from the Chair of the Oireachtas Joint Committee will be included under Correspondence for the next Governing Body Meeting.

## **5. Academic Council:**

### **a. Signed minutes of the MTU Academic Council meeting held on 17 September 2021**

Governors noted with thanks the circulated minutes. In relation to the reference to Gender Identity & Gender Express Policy on page 9 of the minutes, a Governor proposed that the EDI Sub-Committee give consideration as to how this policy might be adopted across the University.

### **b. MTU Academic Council membership list**

Governors noted with thanks the circulated membership list. The list to be updated to include roles.

In response to a query in relation to Academic Council compliance with the TU Act, the President confirmed that this was the case.

**ACTION:** The Membership list of MTU Academic Council to be updated to include roles.

## **6. Human Resources Reports**

The Chair invited Ms Looney to present the reports.

### **a. Staff Appointments Report**

Ms Looney outlined the detail in relation to the approval for the following two posts:

- Research Integrity & Compliance Officer (3 year fixed-term contract)
- Head of Department, STEM – REEdI (Rethinking Engineering Education in Ireland) (Maternity Cover)

The Governing Body approved the appointments as presented, proposed by Mr D Leamy and seconded by Ms M Hegarty. In relation to the two reports presented, they requested that there be consistency in relation to the format of reports going forward.

**b. MTU Quarterly Public Sector Numbers (PSN) as at 30 September 2021**

Governors noted the circulated PSN figures as at 30 September 2021. Ms Looney confirmed that work is ongoing in relation to developing the HR template to coincide with the alignment of the recruitment policy and procedures.

**7. Risk Register**

The Chair invited Ms Looney to discuss the circulated document.

Ms Looney confirmed that there was no change to the Risk Register since the last meeting and informed Governors that the Register had been discussed at the Audit & Risk Sub-Committee Meeting on 29 November.

Governors requested an update on what actions, if any, have been taken in relation to certain risks and that a revision of dates be included where necessary.

**8. International Student Fee Structure**

The President referred to the circulated report, confirming that this was the proposal from the University Executive in relation to a consistent approach across the University.

Following a lengthy discussion, Governors agreed to defer approval and requested that further details in terms of unit cost be included so that the report can be referred to the Finance Committee of Governing Body.

*As this point in the meeting, Governors agreed to a short break, to return for the remainder of the agenda at 6.00pm.*

**9. CAO Update: Student Numbers**

The Chair welcomed Dr Á Ní Shé and Dr B O'Donnell to the meeting to discuss their circulated report.

The Registrars discussed the reports presented highlighting the summary of student numbers across the six campuses.

Governors welcomed the breakdown of the figures by campus and discussed the factors that impact on their increase/decrease and how the University responds to these challenges.

In responding to a query in relation to the Performance Compact, the President confirmed that the HEA are mindful of MTU's transition, and all meetings focus on MTU as a single entity.

The Chair thanked Dr Ní Shé and Dr O'Donnell for their comprehensive update, they left the meeting at 6.35pm.

**10. Return to Campus and MTU Covid-19 Update**

The Chair invited Mr Gallagher to give a verbal update.

Mr Gallagher discussed the recent communication to all staff and students in relation to recent Government measures aimed at interrupting the spread of Covid-19.

He discussed everyone's responsibility to adhere to Public Health Guidelines, the importance of being careful in terms of planned social gatherings especially in the lead up to Christmas and the New Year given the lack of knowledge in relation to the Omicron variant.

Governors discussed the forthcoming Semester 1 examinations and agreed the importance of balancing guidelines with the health and safety of the student and staff body. They noted that work was underway in relation to increased activity for Semester 2 and that the Academic Delivery Committee were reviewing the situation and will engage with the Students' Union in terms of issuing an advisory.

The Chair thanked Mr Gallagher for his update and conveyed his appreciation to all staff and students for the work being done to keep the MTU community as safe as possible at this time.

#### **11. TU Act 2018:**

The Chair invited Mr Gallagher to discuss this item.

##### **a. Section 9(2) – Gifts – Proposed Delegated Authority**

Mr Gallagher discussed the circulated document. In accordance with Section 9(2) of the TU Act 2018, Governing Body approval must be sought for all gifts received by the University.

Governing Body agreed to delegate authority to the President, and such other members of staff as the President may authorise, to accept gifts on behalf of MTU as set out in section 9(2), subject to:

1. Governing Body approval being required for any gift, or combination of gifts from the same donor in any 12-month period, over €30,000 in value;
2. Governing Body approval being required for any gift which the President otherwise determines should be put to it for approval due to considerations in relation to the particular gift, such as its high profile or any exceptional associated risks.

The Governing Body also requested that a Register of Gifts (receiving and granting) be maintained, and that Governing Body would have oversight of this register. A review of the policy framework in relation to gifts including Code of Governance, Code of Conduct, Hospitality and certain finance policies to be undertaken. A Governor suggested that a review of charity transparency regulation be undertaken and that any changes be incorporated where necessary.

##### **b. Deed of Transfer from Kerry County Council to MTU**

Mr Gallagher referred to the circulated document and sought Governing Body approval for the Deed of Transfer from Kerry County Council to MTU.

A proposal to accept the resolution and seek ministerial approval of same was agreed by Governing Body, proposed by Mr J Moloney and seconded by Ms U Barrett.

##### **c. Collaboration Agreement between MTU and UCC re: Human Capital Initiative (HCI) Pillar 3 Project: iEd Hub**

The Chair welcomed Dr Matt Cotterell, Head of School of Mechanical & Process Engineering to discuss this item.

Dr Cotterell gave an overview on the iEd Hub collaboration between UCC and MTU, discussing the funding, strategic ambitions, and the expected outcomes of the collaboration.

Governors conveyed their congratulations on the positive collaboration and approved the agreement, proposed by Mr T Doyle and seconded by Mr J Moloney.

Certain documentation related to the agreement to be included in the papers for the next meeting of Governing Body for information.

**d. Renewal of Lease for Crawford College of Art & Design (CCAD)**

Mr Gallagher discussed the circulated document.

The proposal to renew the Lease for a facility at Sober Lane which accommodates students from MTU CCAD for a further five years was approved, proposed by Ms A O'Mahony and seconded by Ms M Hegarty.

In response to a query on the future plans to replace this lease, Mr Gallagher confirmed that this has been taken into account under the ADAM Project, the long-term plan for MTU CCAD.

**12. Further Governing Body Committees**

**a. Proposal in relation to membership of the Committees**

The Governing Body agreed to the updated proposed membership of the Committees and noted that the Audit & Risk Committee have met and that the Finance Committee will meet on 6 December.

Governors agreed that a doodle poll with proposed dates for those Committees who have not yet met be circulated to members prior to the Christmas break.

In response to a query in relation to the timeline on strategy, the President confirmed that the outcome of the tender process will be known in the next two weeks, preparations will commence after this.

**ACTION:** A doodle poll of proposed dates for the first meeting of the Arts, Sport & Culture Committee, the Equity Diversity & Inclusion Committee, and the Strategic Development Committee be circulated to Governors.

**13. Policies for Approval:**

The Chair invited Mr Gallagher to discuss this item.

**a. Child Protection Policy and Code of Behaviour for Working with Children and Vulnerable Persons**

Mr Gallagher referred to the Policy, confirming that it was based on legal requirements with the important addition of Section 5.6.3 in relation to online interactions.

A discussion took place in relation to the consultation process undertaken in relation to the policy. Three Governors requested that the approval of the policy be postponed until such time as further consultation had taken place.

Two proposals were put forward to a vote:

- (i) Accept the policy, any revisions/amendments to come back to another meeting for approval, proposed by Mr P Somers, seconded by Mr C O'Flynn.
- (ii) Postpone until further consultation had taken place, proposed by Ms M Cooney, seconded by Dr J Cleary.

Governors voted by a majority of 9 votes to 6 in favour of adopting the policy and that any amendments required would be presented at a future Governing Body meeting.

A Governor requested that their concern be noted in relation to policies coming to Governing Body that have not gone through what they considered to be a full consultation process.

**b. IT Acceptable Usage Policy**

Mr Gallagher referred to the circulated policy, confirming that this policy was an alignment of the existing policies.

In response to a query from a Governor in relation to the exclusion of retired staff from the email system going forward, Mr Gallagher confirmed that this policy does not impact on retired staff, it relates to how staff have access to systems and how they use these. Inappropriate use exposes the University to serious risk, including virus attack, comprise of network systems/services, and to data protection/legal issues.

A further point was raised in relation to a Remote Work Policy and Mr Gallagher confirmed that the University intends to draft a separate Remote Work Policy. There was an expectation that new legislation will be enacted in 2022 and that the University will base their new policy on this.

Governing Body approved the IT Acceptable Usage Policy as presented.

**14. Proposals for Agenda at the next meeting**

Governors proposed the following items for inclusion on the agenda for the next Governing Body meeting on 3 February 2022:

- Philanthropic Funding
- Governance of NMCI
- Unit Costing on MTU Programmes

Governors expressed a preference that their next Governing Body Meeting on 3 February will be a hybrid meeting, guidelines permitting. A Governor suggested the possible use of RDI Hub which would facilitate a high-tech interaction in a hybrid environment should this be required.

The Chair agreed that a presentation on the UNESCO Chair will take place before the next meeting, commencing at 2.15pm. Governors noted that the UNESCO Chair will launch the outcomes of its Council of Europe/EU funded TRUST Project on 10 December. An invitation will be circulated to Governors for their information.

The Chair thanked Governors for their commitment and valuable contributions this afternoon. The President echoed the Chair's thanks and appreciation for all of the contributions.

The meeting closed at 7.50pm.

Signed: *Jimmy Deenihan*  
Chair of MTU Governing Body

Date: 3 February 2022