

GOVERNING AUTHORITY MEETING

Report of meeting of Tuesday, September 13th 2022
2.00pm, AG01, Albert College, DCU Glasnevin Campus

PRESENT:

Ms. Brid Horan (Chair)
Prof Daire Keogh
Dr Audrey Bryan
Prof Yvonne Daly
Mr John Darby
Mr Justin Doyle
Cllr Jimmy Guerin
Ms Carol Hanney
Ms Rachel Hussey
Prof Lisa Looney
Mr Cathal Marley (via zoom)

Mr. Muhammad Mubashar Saeed
Ms Colette Murphy
Ms Fiona Naughton
Ms Deirdre O'Connor
Mr Thomas O'Dowd
Prof James O'Higgins Norman
Dr Aisling de Paor
Ms Michele Pringle
Dr Declan Raftery (DR)
Mr Brian J. Smyth
Prof Ray Walshe

APOLOGIES:

Ms Marian Corcoran
Mr Seamus Walsh
Ms Zainab Boladale
Dr Kara McGann

Mr David Harney
Prof Anne Sinnott
Ms Marie Sinnott

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Ciaran McGivern
Ms Marie Mellett (recording secretary)

Ms Marian Burns

WELCOME

The Chancellor welcomed members. She thanked everyone for their participation and noted the apologies.

The agenda was adopted.

The Chancellor enquired if there were any conflicts of interest in relation to any item on today's agenda that required a declaration on the part of a member(s) – None were declared.

- 1. MINUTES OF GOVERNING AUTHORITY MEETING OF 29TH JUNE 2022**
Approved by the Authority.
- 2. REPORT OF MEETING OF 29TH JUNE 2022 FOR WEB PUBLICATION**
Approved by the Authority.
Going forward, given that the Senior Officers' reports are taken as read during the meeting, it was agreed that Senior Officers may contact MM if they would like more detail included in relation to their respective section for the minutes.
- 3 REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS**

Action 1: Ongoing

Action 2: Ongoing

Action 3: Ongoing

Action 4: Complete

Action 5: October meeting

Actions to be tracked:

Action 1: On agenda

Action 2: When possible

Action 3: Ongoing

Action 4: Ongoing

Action 5: October meeting

FOR DISCUSSION

4 GOVERNANCE

The Honorary Degree Committee are recommending three people to receive an Honorary Degree.

The Authority **approved** the three names recommended.

The Chancellor advised that Kathy Quinn has stepped down from the Governing Authority and from her Committee roles with immediate effect, due to work commitments. It was noted that a meeting of the Governance and Nominations Committee will take place to consider whether to nominate a replacement.

The Chancellor expressed the Authority's condolences to the President on the passing of his mother, Cora.

5 MATTERS ARISING

None

6. MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATE

The Chief Operations Officer gave a presentation to the Authority. He informed the Authority that the University is at capacity in terms of space. In 2017 formal approval was received to build the Future Tech Building. This building is 9,550m² and will house the School of Health and Human Performance, currently spread across three locations on the Glasnevin campus, additional facilities for the Faculty of Computing and Engineering and general teaching spaces/lecture rooms. Collaboration from faculties was sought when designing the internal layout.

Construction commenced in June 2022 and the completion date is Quarter 1 2024. Current cost projection is that the building will cost in excess of €73 million.

There is significant risk to this projection due to inflation and supply chain issues. The COO noted that, to mitigate these risks a number of measures have been taken, including all steel required for the build has been now been purchased and is in storage in Ireland. There has been agreement to enter the Inflation and Supply Chain Delay Co-operation Framework Agreement issued by the OGP in May 2022. A Framework Agreement Letter will be put in place and ex-gratia payments in line with Government instructions will be made in relation to inflation and supply chain delay costs under the framework. It was clarified that the framework does not waive penalties for delay under the contract, however, under the framework, extensions of time may be granted for compensation events related to supply chain delays. It was also noted that the framework envisages a shared approach where DCU will bear 70% of additional costs.

The Authority agreed that the building will be a significant addition to DCU and will occupy a commanding location on Collins Avenue. It will be DCU's flagship building.

The Chief Operations Officer informed the Authority that DCU have planning permission for 1,243 additional student accommodation beds. This project which was about to be sent out to tender for construction was put on hold during the pandemic and now, due to construction inflation, this project is not economically viable. The significant cost of the build would have to be reflected in rent prices and this would make it unaffordable for students. Significant capital subvention is needed from the Government to address the issue and there has been a significant level of engagement between DCU and Government departments and Ministers in this regard over the past year.

The Chief Operations Officer noted that the Authority had previously agreed that the 9.6 acres on Griffith Ave in DCU ownership was no longer strategically advantageous to DCU. In 2019, DCU put the land on the market. On the 10th December 2019 a sale for €37.6 million was agreed. There had been a delay in closing the sale due to the pandemic and a time extension was given to the buyers. Following the extension, the intended buyers of the site failed to complete the contract following the issuing of the appropriate notices by DCU. In line with the terms of sale, they forfeited their 10% deposit. A Commercial Court case has been taken by the intended buyers to seek to recover their deposit. This is being defended by DCU.

To maximise the value of this land, whether for sale or retention, it was agreed that an access road should be built. An application for planning permission for this access road is currently being prepared.

As previously reported to the Authority, the Chief Operations Officer noted that operational control of Morton Stadium was transferred to DCU on 15th April from Sport Ireland. The laying of a new track and ancillary works are taking place, with a target completion date of second week of November (weather dependent).

The Chancellor commended Senior Management on their proactive approach, effective oversight and expertise in relation to the delivery of capital projects.

FOR APPROVAL

7. DRAFT UNIVERSITY BUDGET 2022/23

Anthony Feighan, Head of Financial Planning, was welcomed to the meeting. Planning for this budget was difficult with significant increases in budget demands coming from faculties and professional support units. The Director of Finance noted that any approved pay increase will be fully funded by the Government therefore it will have no impact on the 2022/2023 budget.

The forecast 2021/22 outcome for the University shows a marginal surplus of €128k compared to a budgeted result of breakeven, after allowing for depreciation and the transfer to capital. The proposed budget for 2022/23 for the University is again prepared to deliver a breakeven result.

The Director of Finance informed the Committee that DCU has €95m in borrowings, with the interest terms largely fixed for the full duration of the loans. As a result, DCU is protected from the current increasing interest rate environment.

DCU will still be in a strong cash position at 30 September 2023.

The Authority **approved** a breakeven budget for 2022/2023, as presented to the meeting.

FOR DISCUSSION/NOTING

8. RISK COMMITTEE

8.1 Report of meeting of 7th September 2022

Declan Raftery gave an update to the Authority in the absence of the Risk Committee Chair. The following items were noted:

- In relation to COVID 19, it was agreed to continue to update the Risk Committee.
- The electrical infrastructure on campus was damaged during substructure works on the Future Tech building and this was discussed in detail by the Committee.
- A presentation was received from the Procurement Manager. The Committee were satisfied with the processes in place.
- Detailed discussions on FOI, KPIs and essential e-learning took place. Essential e-learning will be a standing item on the Risk Committee's agenda going forward.

8.2 Minutes of meeting of 22nd June 2022

Noted by the Authority

8.3 Strategic Risk Register 2023

It was noted that a thorough process was conducted throughout the University that fed into the development of this document, which included nine key institutional risks.

The Chancellor asked that the President and Officers be mindful of these nine risks when reporting to Governing Authority.

FOR DISCUSSION / NOTING

9. PRESIDENT'S AND UNIVERSITY OFFICERS' REPORT

DCU President

The President gave an overview of his report which had been circulated to GA and highlighted the following:

- The President mentioned the sad passing of our colleague, Dr Vicky Conway. The Chancellor noted that she will send a letter of condolence to Vicky's family on behalf of the Authority.
- The President thanked the DCU Commercial Group for all their hard work and dedication.
- 2022 saw DCU receive their highest percentage of first choice CAO preferences.
- The Athena Swan awards presented to DCU underline our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and, critically, they are not merely a benchmark but a high bar, and recognition of a culture which should characterise all of our activities at DCU.
- 'MyDCU', orientation programme has been shortlisted for a Times Higher Education Award in the 'Outstanding Support for Students' category.

The Chancellor welcomed the appointment of Prof John Doyle as Vice President for Research.

Vice President of Academic Affairs

The Vice-President of Academic Affairs noted that students, except first years, are back on campus. First years will begin on September 26th. This has been a very hard semester to prepare for. We will be predominantly delivering programmes on campus, however we do allow for some student absences as they observe HSE isolation guidelines. The housing crisis has also escalated the challenge of planning for this semester. Systems for ITS are currently being reviewed.

The next phase of DCU Futures will be supported by ECIU. This is a four year agreement with the possibility of a two year extension. The Authority asked for a presentation on ECIU at a future meeting.

Chief Operations Officer

The Chief Operations Officer informed the Authority that the cleaning services contract went to tender. There were five submissions and following an assessment, it was deemed Grosvenor should be appointed.

Approved by the Authority.

Director of Finance

Nothing further to report

Director of Human Resources

The Director of Human Resources noted that the Review of Incorporation has begun. Fuse, an extensive staff engagement process, will be taking place over the coming months with issues including EDI and Remote Working to be addressed.

FOR APPROVAL

10. PERSONNEL MATTERS

The Chancellor noted that Kara McGann met with the Director of Human Resources to discuss the process of selecting the candidates being submitted for approval by the Authority. Kara confirmed to the Chancellor that she is satisfied that the process followed was appropriate.

The Director of Human Resources submitted the following candidates for approval:

- Dr John Connolly for appointment as Professor in Marketing, DCU Business School.
- Prof Craig Crossley for appointment as Adjunct Professor, DCU Business School.
- Prof Martin Clynes for appointment as Emeritus Professor, Faculty of Science and Health.
- Mr John Joyce for appointment as Adjunct Professor, DCU Water Institute.
- Dr Harry Kolar for appointment as Adjunct Professor, DCU Water Institute.

Approved by the Authority

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chancellor informed the Authority that she had visited ASU and noted they are very enthusiastic about their long-standing relationship with DCU.

The Chancellor noted that she met with the Chair of the HEA appointed Review Group examining progress on EDI in higher education on behalf of the Authority.

Chancellor

Date

Action Items:

Action		Person responsible	Deadline
1.	Presentation from the Director of Student, Support and Development. The presentation should include Critical Incident Response and Lessons Learned on the sudden passing of a student.	Director of SS&D	2022/2023
2	Circulate Organisation Diagram	Deputy President	When complete
3.	Report on DCU Educational Support Services, Educational Trust and Office of Student Life.	Marie Sinnott, Marian Corcoran, Cathal Marley	end 2022
4.	EICU Presentation	VP of Academic Affairs	2023
5.	Presentation on the pilot Remote Working Policy incl feedback from staff.	Director of HR	October meeting

Items to be tracked:

Action		Person responsible	Deadline
1.	Quarterly progress reports on each risk in the Strategic Risk Register.	President	On-going
2.	Meetings of GA to be held at different locations.	COO	Future meetings to be held on other DCU campuses and occasionally meetings will be held off campus subject to public health guidelines
3	New Executive Director of Engagement to present on International Affairs	COO	Quarter 4, 2022

4.	The President and Senior Management will withdraw from the April meeting each year to allow for a discussion in their absence.	President and SMG	April 2023
5.	Comprehensive presentation on progress of the SIS Project.	VPAA	April and December meetings in 2022/2023