

## GOVERNING AUTHORITY MEETING

Report of meeting of Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup> 2023  
2.00pm, AG01, Albert College, DCU Glasnevin Campus

### **PRESENT:**

Ms. Brid Horan (Chair)  
Prof Daire Keogh  
Ms Marian Corcoran  
Prof Yvonne Daly  
Mr John Darby  
Mr Justin Doyle  
Ms Carol Hanney (on line)  
Ms Rachel Hussey (on line)  
Prof Lisa Looney  
Dr Kara McGann

Mr. Muhammad Mubashar Saeed  
Ms Colette Murphy  
Ms Fiona Naughton (on line)  
Ms Deirdre O'Connor  
Mr Thomas O'Dowd  
Dr Aisling de Paor (on line)  
Ms Michele Pringle  
Dr Declan Raftery (DR)  
Mr Brian J. Smyth  
Mr Seamus Walsh (on line)

### **APOLOGIES:**

Mr David Harney  
Cllr Jimmy Guerin  
Ms Zainab Boladale  
Prof James O'Higgins Norman

Dr Audrey Bryan  
Mr Cathal Marley  
Ms Marie Sinnott  
Prof Ray Walshe

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr John Kilcoyne  
Prof Anne Sinnott

Mr Gareth Yore  
Ms Marie Mellett

### **WELCOME**

The Chancellor welcomed members. She thanked everyone for their participation and noted the apologies. The Chancellor informed the Authority of the passing of Audrey Bryan's father and will send condolences to the family on behalf of Governing Authority.

The Chancellor congratulated the Director of Finance and the Director of HR on their appointments, welcomed them to their first meeting of Governing Authority and wished them well in their new roles.

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 09<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2022**  
**Approved** by the Authority.
- 2. REPORT OF MEETING OF 09<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2022 FOR WEB PUBLICATION**  
**Approved** by the Authority.

### **3 REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS**

Action 1: Ongoing

Action 2: Ongoing

Action 3: This is underway, a briefing note has been circulated to the three chairs.

Action 4: Ongoing

#### **Actions to be tracked:**

Action 1: Ongoing

Action 2: When possible

Action 3: Ongoing

Action 4: April or June

### **4 MATTERS ARISING**

None

### **5 GOVERNANCE**

The Chancellor informed the Authority that the Governance and Nominations Committee are due to meet next week to discuss the reconstitution of Governing Authority in line with the new legislation. Following this, a proposal will be developed on how to reduce the membership of Governing Authority from 29 to 19 and will be brought to the Authority for consideration. A separate approach for external and internal members will be required. The approach agreed by GA will be subject to approval by the Minister for Further and Higher Education and Research.

#### **5.1 Self-assessment questionnaire report**

The Chancellor thanked all who completed the questionnaire. Some further analysis is needed and suggested action points will be tabled to a future meeting. Overall the evaluation reflected broadly positive views from members regarding the effectiveness of the Authority's working, however there is always room for improvement.

#### **FOR DISCUSSION / NOTING**

### **6. CYBERSECURITY UPDATE**

Peter McGorman, Director Information Services Systems, was welcomed to the meeting. PMcG gave a very detailed presentation on Cybersecurity.

### **7. UPDATE ON STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS**

The Deputy President gave an update to the Authority noting that twelve Staff Town Hall meetings have taken place with staff consultations now nearing completion and that the new Strategic Plan will be brought to Governing Authority for approval at the April meeting.

There has been significant engagement from staff throughout the process and staff are able to see the progress that has been made since the start of the planning process. A presentation will also be given to Campus Company Managers and to Class Representatives by the Students Union.

Implementation of the Strategic Plan will involve the development of KPIs and identifying resource requirements and mapping against existing resources and structures.

A Strategic Plan Launch was discussed and it was agreed further discussion was needed. The Authority suggested that a launch event involving engagement with key stakeholders would be preferable to just a formal launch event.

## **8. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE**

### **8.1 Report of meeting of 02<sup>nd</sup> February 2023**

Rachel Hussey gave an update to the Authority. The following items were noted:

- The Chair thanked the Chancellor for attending the most recent committee meeting.
- The Deputy COO gave a presentation to the Committee on Public Sector Duty. This will become a standing item on the EDI agenda.
- The application for an Athena Swan Silver Award is due in fourteen months. Joanne Mulligan gave a presentation on what needs to take place in the coming months to achieve this award.
- The EDI Annual Report is being drafted and will be presented to Governing Authority in April or June.
- Actions arising from recommendations of the National Review on Gender Equality are in motion.
- International Women's Day takes place on March 06<sup>th</sup>. Rosaleen Blair will be in conversation with the Chancellor as part of the Mary McAleese Women in Leadership Lecture Series.

### **8.2 Minutes of meeting of 01<sup>st</sup> December 2022**

**Noted** by the Authority

## FOR APPROVAL

### **9. UPDATE BANK MANDATE**

The Director of Finance sought approval to update the mandate (details were outlined). There is no change in thresholds; changes in personnel are to reflect new appointments in the finance area.

**Approved** by the Authority

## **10. QUALITY REVIEWS**

### **10.1 Estates Office**

Deirdre O'Connor (DOC) provided an update to the Authority. DOC noted the following:

- The review focused on future plans.
- The PRG commended the Estates Team on the learnings they took from the previous Quality Review.

- The Campus Company Managers did note how onerous the rebilling system is.
- The main recommendations were:
  - Put in place a training plan for each team member
  - Update the Online Helpdesk System and
  - Build on financial expertise.
- The walk-in Helpdesk was commended by staff across the university.
- The PRG noted the great service the Estates Team deliver to the DCU community and their effective response to the pandemic.
- Overall this was a very positive report, with challenging targets and plans to help the unit grow.

The Authority recognise the complex portfolio that the Estates Team manage, and thanked them for all their hard work and congratulated them on their achievements and awards to date.

**Approved** by the Authority

## **10.2 Dundalk Institute of Technology Graduate School**

Deirdre O'Connor informed the Authority that this is a strategic alliance between Dundalk IT (DkIT) and DCU. Due to the unique nature of this arrangement, the standard quality review process didn't suit so the review was conducted as part of academic governance, ensuring that DkIT processes align with DCU's.

The DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board were commended by the PRG on their engagement with the process. The DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board are currently putting the recommendations in place.

**Approved** by the Authority

### FOR APPROVAL

## **11. PRESIDENT'S REPORT AND UNIVERSITY OFFICERS' REPORTS**

### **DCU President**

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

- The President expressed the Authority's condolences to the family, friends and colleagues on the passing of Prof. Greg Foley from the School of Biotechnology. The President noted Greg was a great colleague and friend.
- As part of the new Strategic Plan, the University submitted two proposals to the HEA, for additional graduate entry into nursing, and for the creation of a new School of Pharmacy, and these have proceeded to the final stage in the process.
- The School of Physical Sciences received the Athena Bronze Award.
- All awards listed on the President's written report were noted by the Authority.
- The President, the Estates and Finance Teams are continuing to engage with the Minister and his officials regarding on-campus student accommodation funding.

### **Vice President of Academic Affairs**

The Vice-President of Academic Affairs noted that we are midway in our Human Capital Initiative (HCI) Projects; all projects are fulfilling their requirements and focus is beginning to move beyond the end of 2024, and defining priority areas to deliver excellent flexible

education. It will be important that the National Training Fund continues to be used to support this. However we are uncertain of what format a call for new investment will take.

LL further noted that students' results are returning to pre-Covid norms. Across the sector, there has been an increase in students receiving 1<sup>st</sup> Class Honours, however, in relation to DCU we believe this is due to the investments made in teaching and learning. Students are aware of what needs to be done to achieve this grade. Work will continue in this area to get a better understanding.

LL informed the Authority that guidance in relation to the use of and potential threats from AI Tools has been developed by the Dean of Teaching and Learning in consultation with the Associate Deans for Teaching and Learning and DCU's Chair of Digital Learning. This guidance has been circulated to staff.

#### **Chief Operations Officer**

His written report was Noted.

#### **Director of Finance**

The Director of Finance noted that the accounts presented are for the three months up to 31 December 2022, with a small operating surplus noted. The outlook for 2023 for the University will become clearer when the annual HEA Core Grant is determined. The Commercial Group made a €2.1m profit which was ahead of budget. The overall financial position of the DCU group remains strong with significant cash reserves on hand.

Post graduate taught numbers are down due to students deferring and cost of living pressures. This will feed into faculties' future planning.

Engagement with our insurers is ongoing regarding our Covid 19 business interruption claim.

#### **Director of Human Resources**

The Director of Human Resources noted that his first focus is to implement a new HR Service Model, which will include restructuring the HR function and the roles within it. The new model will take into consideration how HR's values and approach align with the new Strategic Plan.

## **12. 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:

- Prof James Murphy for appointment as Adjunct Professor in Marketing, School of History and Geography and the School of English.

**Approved** by the Authority

**13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The President invited all members of Governing Authority to attend the Honorary Conferring ceremony scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> March.

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Chancellor

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Date

**Action Items:**

<b>Action</b>		<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
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	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	2023
4.	EICU Presentation	VP of Academic Affairs	2023
5.	Presentation on Athena Swan	Director of HR	April/June Meeting

**Items to be tracked:**

<b>Action</b>		<b>Person responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
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	2023

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
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