

GOVERNING AUTHORITY MEETING

Report of meeting of Wednesday, June 29th 2022
2.00pm, John Hand Room, DCU All Hallows Campus

PRESENT:

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

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
Ms Kathy Quinn
Dr Declan Raftery (DR)
Ms Marie Sinnott
Mr Brian J. Smyth
Prof Ray Walshe

APOLOGIES:

Ms Marian Corcoran
Mr Seamus Walsh

Mr David Harney

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 07TH APRIL 2022**
Approved by the Authority.
2. **REPORT OF MEETING OF 07TH APRIL 2022 FOR WEB PUBLICATION**
Approved by the Authority subject to 3 minor amendments.
3. **REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS**
Action 1: Ongoing

Action 2: Complete

Action 3: Ongoing

Action 4: Complete

Action 5: On agenda

Action 6: On agenda

Actions to be tracked:

Action 1: Ongoing

Action 2: When possible

Action 3: This will take place at Septembers meeting.

Action 4: On agenda

Action 5: On agenda

FOR DISCUSSION

4 GOVERNANCE

Suggested dates for 2022 / 2023 Governing Authority meetings were circulated prior to the meeting. These dates were **approved** by Authority members.

5 MATTERS ARISING

None

6. DCU FUTURES

Blanaid White, Dean of Strategic Learning Innovation was welcomed to the meeting. BW informed the Authority that there are five projects being funded by the HEA's Human capital Initiative (HCI) with DCU Futures being the most comprehensive with a total budget of €20m. It is also the only project with no other HEI partners. DCU Futures is a radical re-imagination of the curriculum. DCU Futures involves:

- Transforming how students learn – using an evidence-based model to change learning through pedagogy and assessment.
- Embedding and evidencing the transversal skills for students to thrive – Providing students with the ability to not only change jobs but to also change sectors.

New areas of study within DCU Futures are being developed considering global trends towards:

- Data/Technology Infused World
- Zero Carbon Economy
- Sustainable Society
- Employable graduates with human-centric discipline skills

Ten new programmes are spread across four of our five faculties. The IOE is excluded as HEA funding terms didn't allow for the inclusion of nursing or education programmes. Evaluation of DCU Futures is being carried out by the IOE. The IOE are being involved where possible. Scalability of the programme will be determined from the outcome of the IOE's evaluation. It is a requirement that 15% of Futures programmes will be delivered online, for three reasons: to enable students to develop their skills in online learning (to help them develop as lifelong learners), to support academic colleagues in designing modules for both online and on-campus learning, and due to campus constraints (over 1,000 additional students will come to DCU via Futures programmes).

The HCI programme governance sits within DCU's governance structures, with the Strategic Learning Innovation Projects Steering Group, which has oversight of all 5 HCI projects, reporting to the University's Education Committee. Risk is actively managed by the relevant Governance Committees and the Risk Register is maintained by a Senior Programme Officer in DCU Futures using a traffic light system.

The Authority asked how visible DCU Futures is to students. BW noted that students are aware of DCU Futures from orientation. They also ask students for feedback in a dedicated Futures Student Summit, which has representatives from all Futures programmes, and involve students in design. BW and her team are meeting with the new SU team to discuss how to further engage with students. From this the number of students partaking in DCU Futures shall increase.

BW further noted that very senior management representatives from HCI strategic industry partners form part of our external stakeholder engagement forum. Additionally the International Pedagogy Advisory Panel meets twice a year. In their spring meeting they engage with the programmes to advise and shape future direction and in their autumn meeting to reflect on the previous year and address any challenges.

The Chancellor noted that it is really positive to see DCU advancing this, innovating and leading the way. The Chancellor thanked BW and her team and welcomed the effective collaboration from staff, students and employers.

7. STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM PROJECT UPDATE

Helen Mahon, SIS Programme Director was welcomed to the meeting. In her presentation, HM emphasised that the programme is a transformation and not just a new system. We are building a future proofed, sustainable platform, based in the cloud. Ellucian is our vendor and we work within the capabilities of their suite of products. This system will support delivery of the university strategy and is focused on meeting future requirements.

There is a strong governance structure in place, with members of SMG on the SIS Steering Group, and a delivery forum involving key internal stakeholders. There are two Design Panels (technical and functional), which sign off on design decisions. There are 50 staff in total currently working on this project, including subject matter experts (SMEs) mostly from Registry and Faculties

Phase one of this project is due to go live in August 2023 (when we will open for applications on the new system) and phase two in August 2024 (when we will become a 'Banner university', and all student records and processes from admission to graduation are facilitated by the new system).

The Authority asked what would be different for a student when the system is live? HM noted that the application process will be more responsive, quicker and streamlined for the student.

Regarding risks HM noted that a detailed risk register is maintained and actively managed. Retaining key staff with essential skills is a significant risk; however she and others are working with HR on this matter. HM also noted that there are a lot of unknowns relating to the specifics of the Ellucian suite for DCU and it is taking time to fully understand its capabilities and assess related risks to delivering on the transformation. Overall, however, introduction of the new system is a substantial risk mitigation exercise, given the age of our current system. The Director of Finance commented that the project is currently tracking on budget, but that a comprehensive update regarding possible extra costs would come to GA in the autumn.

The Authority acknowledged the scale of the project, especially with the constraints from Covid and thanked HM and her team.

FOR DISCUSSION/NOTING

8. RISK COMMITTEE

8.1 Report of meeting of 22nd June 2022

Marie Sinnott, Chair of Governing Authority Risk Committee, gave an update to the Authority. The following items were discussed:

- In relation to COVID 19, it was agreed to continue to update the Risk Committee.
- There were no significant new risks since the last meeting.
- Accommodating Ukrainian Refugees was seen as an emerging risk. Where these refugees are housed could impact incoming first year students.
- The Chair thanked all those who participated in the GA Risk Blank Paper Exercise. It was very helpful and will form part of the bottom up exercise by SMG. The final draft SRR will be presented to Governing Authority in September. The Chair thanked the Risk and Compliance Officer, Noel Prior, for all his hard work and comprehensive report.
- It was agreed that an external review of the Committee was not needed at this time.

8.2 Minutes of meeting of 30th March 2022

Noted by the Authority

8.3 GARC Annual Report

It was noted that lessons learned from the pandemic will be considered in future planning. Currently there are adequate measures in place in relation to COVID 19.

Noted by the Authority

8.4 Unlimited Liability Contracts

Noted by the Authority

FOR APPROVAL

8.5 Risk Management Policy

Approved by the Authority.

9. AUDIT COMMITTEE

9.1 Report of meeting of 16th June 2022

Cathal Marley, Chair of Audit Committee, gave an update to the Authority. The following items were discussed:

- Mazars concluded their first audit. The Committee reviewed the financial statements 2020 / 2021 and the Letter of Representation.
- Three draft internal audit reports were reviewed. These will be brought to Governing Authority in more detail when the final reports are submitted.

There has been great progress around governance and processes in relation to the provision of Scholarships. It will continue to be monitored.

9.2 Minutes of meeting of 24th November 2021

Noted by the Authority

9.3 Minutes of meeting of 13th April 2022

Noted by the Authority

9.4 Financial Statements 2020 / 2021

The Director of Finance noted that the auditors gave a clean audit opinion with a technical qualification in relation to pensions (in line with previous years and practice across the HE sector).

Noted by the Committee

The Authority **approved** delegated authority for signing of the Financial statements and Letter of Representation to the Chancellor and President.

10. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

10.1 Report of meeting 09th June 2022

Rachel Hussey, Chair of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, gave an update to the Authority. The following items were discussed:

- The analysis of the staff survey was conducted, results and an infographic were circulated to all staff.
- 'Inclusive to all' will be an ongoing agenda item for the Committee.
- DCU Committees met the minimum gender requirement for both genders.
- There is a big focus on celebrating Pride for the month of June.
- The gender pay gap audit is to be finalised. It will be brought to the Authority once concluded.

10.2 Minutes of meeting of 03rd February 2022

Noted by the Authority

FOR DISCUSSION / NOTING

11. CHURCH OF IRELAND CENTRE ANNUAL REPORT 2022

The Church of Ireland Centre Annual Report 2022 was circulated to the Authority prior to the meeting. The Director will present later in the year.

Noted by the Authority

12. PRESIDENT'S REPORT AND UNIVERSITY OFFICERS' REPORT

DCU President

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

- Sue Miller, an Education Librarian in the IOE, passed away. All DCU Libraries will be closed for the funeral. The Chancellor noted that she will send a letter of condolence to the family on behalf of the Authority.
- The Lord Mayor of Dublin stepped down and her successor is a graduate of DCU. The Authority discussed how to best promote these types of achievements. LL noted that DCU is number one for social mobility and will circulate the statistics to Authority members.
- DCU's achievements in the published rankings included in the report are to be commended.
- The Boeing Newton Room was a great achievement and a great success.
- The Ukrainian Refugees' stay has been extended by two weeks. This is as a result of the delay in the leaving cert results.
- The Director of Finance and the Director of HR are both stepping down at the end of the year. The process to find their replacements will begin in September. The Chancellor noted that their departures represent a great loss to DCU given their significant contribution to the university over many years and that we will address this further on a future occasion.

Vice President of Academic Affairs

The Vice-President of Academic Affairs expressed concern regarding the summer exam results. There are more students facing resits this summer. LL noted that this is a trend across the sector. Those students who did pass their exams, did so at higher levels than in previous years. It is believed that the value of 'engagement' needs to be further communicated with students, to reinforce that it is essential.

Incoming first year students will start two weeks later than other students. Courses will be managed to have them in line with the academic calendar by December.

Chief Operations Officer

The Chief Operations Officer informed the Authority that construction cost inflation continues to be a very real challenge. We continue to monitor and manage this in relation to the Future Tech building. Work on the new running track in Morton Stadium will begin next Monday and completion is set for late October or early November depending on weather conditions.

Regarding the access route for the Griffith Avenue Land, we are waiting further advice. Engagement with our legal team is on-going regarding the Marlet High Court case. We are currently in the Discovery Phase of the legal case where all documents from both sides need to be submitted. It will be September before this phase is finalised.

The Chief Operations Officer gave an update to the Authority on liquidation of the remaining assets of the former National Digital Research Centre (NDRC). The NDRC did not win the renewal tender in 2021 for the provision of digital innovation and enterprise support activities that it has managed since 2007 – the tender was awarded to Dogpatch Labs.

Therefore, as a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee, the assets have to be liquidated in accordance with the Charities Act and the members (DCU, TCD, NCAD, IADT) of the company are responsible for the liquidation process. A process has been agreed in which the remaining funds in the NDRC of €5m will be distributed to organisations that support similar objectives of the NDRC following a public tender for submissions.

The Chief Operations Officer noted that three separate but linked fire alarms systems on the St Pats Campus need to be replaced. We have gone to tender for the works and we expect the project to cost ca €2m. There is an urgency with this project as we need to get the works substantially completed before the start of term, therefore the Chief Operations Officer requested delegated authority for approval to the Governing Authority Special Committee if the tender comes back in advance of the next Governing Authority meeting.

Approved by the Authority.

Director of Finance

Nothing further to report

Director of Human Resources

The Director of Human Resources circulated two handouts in relation to the staff survey. In September there will be focus groups based on the summary of findings. A Fuse-based engagement with staff will take place in October. This will drive the focus for EDI, Engagement, and Athena Swan. Outputs from Fuse will also be analysed for the Strategic Plan.

The new Remote Working Policy is drafted and has been sent to the Unions. We are waiting on feedback. The University believes that given that we are a student focused university, staff need to be on campus at least four days a week. This is a pilot policy and will run from September for one year.

The Authority requested a presentation on how the pilot is performing at the October meeting.

Deputy President

The Deputy President gave an update on the development of the new Strategic Plan. SMG have had three away-days, with another planned for the 12th July. They will meet with stakeholders in September, with a first draft available in December. The new Strategic Plan will then be presented to Governing Authority at their April 2023 meeting. In the meantime, Governing Authority will be kept up to date on progress.

FOR APPROVAL

13. PERSONNEL MATTERS

The Chancellor noted that Kara McGann met with the Director of Human Resources to discuss the process of selecting the below candidates. Kara confirmed to the Chancellor that she is satisfied that the process was appropriate.

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

- Dr Dominic Elliot for appointment as Executive Dean, DCU Business School.
- Mr Gerard McEvoy for appointment as Director of Estates, Office of the Chief Operations Officer.

- Prof Turlough Downes for appointment as Full Professor, Faculty of Science and Health.
- Dr Piyush Sharma for appointment as Full Professor, DCU Business School.
- Dr Robbie Roulston for appointment as Deputy Chief Operations Officer, Office of the Chief Operations Officer
- Robert Schmuhl for appointment as Adjunct Professor, School of Law and Government.

Approved by the Authority

The Authority requested that an Organisational Diagram be circulated to include the new appointments.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Authority thanked the many staff who participated in the June graduation ceremonies which had taken place for those graduates whose ceremonies had been impacted by Covid-19. There was great appreciation from both students and parents.

15. SENIOR MANAGEMENT WITHDREW FROM THE FINAL PART OF THE MEETING.

The Authority met without any members of Senior Management present to facilitate discussion by GA members of the operation of the GA and related matters. GA members expressed their appreciation for the timely and comprehensive nature of information provided to them by Management and for the open discussions which took place. The Chancellor took note of the issues raised and these will be actioned as appropriate.

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
2	Circulate Organisation Diagram	Director of HR	When complete
3.	Report on DCU Educational Support Services, Educational Trust and Office of Student Life.	Marian Corcoran, Cathal Marley and Marie Sinnott	end 2022
4.	Circulate Social Mobility Results	VP of Academic Affairs	ASAP
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 - within 3 months of appointment.	COO	September 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 November meetings in 2022/2023