



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

Minutes of Board Meeting 29 January 2020

- Present* Provost (Dr P J Prendergast), Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (Professor J Barkhoff), Registrar (Professor P Murphy), Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies (Professor K Mitchell), Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation (Professor V Campbell), Professor D Ahern, Professor S Alyn Stacey, Ms L Beston, Professor L Brennan, Professor A Burke, Ms S Farrell, Professor D Faas, Dr D Fayne, Mr D Grouse, Ms A Leen, Ms N McCay, Professor K McTiernan, Professor R Moss, Professor B O'Connell, Professor E O'Halpin, Ms S Oye, Professor D R Phelan, Professor A Seery, Professor F Sheerin.
- Apologies* Ms J Donoghue.
- In attendance* Assistant Secretary to the College (Ms V Butler).
- (ex officio)* Secretary to the College (Mr J Coman), Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer (Mr P Reynolds).
- (by invitation)* Chief Operating Officer (Ms G Ruane), Vice-President for Global Relations (Professor J Hussey).

SECTION A

BD/19-20/127 Statement of Interest

The Secretary to the College advised that he had received a statement of potential conflict of interest from Professor Alyn Stacey in relation to Agenda item C.13 Visual and Performing Arts Fund. The Secretary to the College, having discussed the matter with Professor Alyn Stacey, suggested, and it was agreed, that Professor Alyn Stacey would leave the meeting for the discussion on this item.

BD/19-20/128 Minutes

The draft minutes of the meeting of Board of 18 December 2019 were approved and signed subject to the proposed amendments to minute BD/19-20/108(i) Senior Academic Promotions Call 2018 which had been circulated in advanced.

BD/19-20/129 Matters Arising

BD/19-20/108 (ii) Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer

The Secretary to the College advised that Mr Peter Reynolds had accepted the position of Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer with effect from 21 January 2020.

BD/19-20/130 Provost's Report

The Provost, provided an update to Board members under the following headings:

(i) Philanthropic Campaign - Inspiring Generations

The Provost advised that the philanthropic campaign was proceeding well and as part of this it was noted that work on the following capital projects was progressing well:

- **Trinity St James's Cancer Institute**

It was noted that the development group, which is co-chaired by the Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation and the Deputy Chief Executive Officer of St James's Hospital, was making progress on assessing the capital and current funding needs involved

- **Refurbishment of the Old Library**

It was noted that this project was divided in to 2 pillars. Pillar A focuses on the structure of the building; the redevelopment of the exhibition and an enhanced research collections study

centre. Pillar B has the primary focus of digitising the catalogue and collection.

- **E3 Learning Foundry**

It was noted that this project would facilitate an expansion of E3 programmes and also the development of an E3 Research Institute. The Provost advised that the Project Sponsor for E3 is the Dean of Engineering, Mathematics and Science, Professor Sylvia Draper, and that Ms Edwina Hegarty is the Project Manager with the Dean of Research, Professor Linda Doyle, leading the design brief for the E3 Research Institute.

The Provost also advised that a meeting of the Campaign Cabinet had been held on 17 January 2020.

(ii) Philanthropic activity and Campus visits

The Provost advised that he had recently travelled to New York where he had several meetings with potential philanthropic campaign supporters. He had also visited Philadelphia where he viewed innovation districts. The Provost had also attended a lecture delivered by Harvard University President Professor Lawrence Bacow which focused on the provision of safe student spaces.

(iii) Projects

The Provost provided brief updates on each of the following on-going strategic projects:

(i) Board Review Working Group

It was noted that this item was on the agenda for discussion later in the meeting.

(ii) Research Funding

The Provost emphasised the importance of investigator-led research in developing the Innovation Economy. He noted the impact that a lack of research funding can have on researchers' ability to publish, to be cited and to set up spin-out companies and start-up companies.

(iii) TTEC and the Grand Canal Innovation District

It was noted that work on the pre-development phase was continuing and that the Provost chairs the workstream on innovation.

(iv) The Trinity Education Project (TEP)

Noting that this project is due to complete in September 2020 with all features mainstreamed in to existing or new structures, the Provost advised the Board that he continues to chair the Communications workstream while the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer chairs the Steering Committee.

(iv) Strategic Plan 2020-2025

The Provost advised that it is proposed to launch the new Strategic Plan in early March 2020. The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer clarified that although the formal launch had not yet taken place, the Strategic Plan 2020-2025 came in to effect on 1 January 2020 and that copies could be shared, as required, with those schools wishing to begin to engage with the new plan as they prepare their own strategic plans.

(v) Celebration of Science Gallery International

The Provost reported that Science Gallery International recently achieved its ambition by announcing plans for the eighth Science Gallery in cities around the world. It was noted that Science Gallery Dublin had recently launched an exhibition entitled: 'Plastic-Can't live with it, Can't live without it'. The exhibition is the Science Gallery Dublin's first national touring exhibition.

(vi) Future of Higher Education Debate

The Provost had attended a debate, hosted by Trinity and the Irish Universities' Association in the Trinity Business School, where the education spokespersons or their representatives from the seven main political parties were present to debate the future of funding for Higher Education and Research. The Provost advised that while the debate was beneficial it would be preferable to see Higher Education matters being given a greater priority in the discussions on the run-up to the general election.

The Provost concluded his report and opened the item for questions and comments.

In response to comments from a Board member in relation to the refurbishment of the Old Library, the Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation advised that she and the Librarian/College Archivist are scheduled to meet and discuss the project with the Fellows in the coming weeks. She also advised that there would be no long-term visual disruption to Fellows Square on completion of the project and that she would be happy to make the project plans available for viewing once they were finalised.

Responding to a query from a Board member, the Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation advised that discussions regarding potential collaborations with other universities in respect of the Trinity St James's Cancer Institute were underway and that learnings from similar projects in New York and the United Kingdom were also being taken in to consideration.

In response to comments from a Board member regarding the recent Future of Higher Education debate, the Secretary to the College advised that it is proposed to collate the sections relating to higher education as taken from the manifestos of the seven main political parties and to circulate this information to all staff members and students in the college. The Provost concluded the discussion by summarising some of the main differences in the stances of some of the political parties in respect to higher education.

BD/19-20/131 Board Review Working Group - Update

The Chair of the Working Group, Mr Dermot McCarthy and Project Advisor, Ms Sinéad Ryan joined the meeting for this item.

The Provost welcomed Mr McCarthy and Ms Ryan to the meeting. The Secretary to the College with reference to the memorandum prepared by himself and Mr McCarthy, dated 22 January 2020, which had been circulated in advance, invited the Board's attention to the presentation, dated 29 January 2020. He provided Board members with a summary of the rationale for the establishment and remit of the Board Review Working Group. The Secretary to the College, noting that the Group had four meetings to date, advised that the Group's approach was to first consider the values and principles which should underpin Trinity's overall governance and then move to look at the particular role to be played by the Board in that context. The Group would then consider the competencies required for Board members and then develop recommendations on the optimal future composition of the Board. He also informed Board members that a draft set of Governance Values and Principles were before them for approval and summarised the next steps for the work of the Group.

Mr McCarthy, commending the support being provided by the Secretary to the College and by Ms Ryan, advised the Board that the fact that the establishment of the group was as a result of a self-evaluation strengthened the process. He also noted that by the time any legislative changes proposed by the Government are finalised, Trinity will have robustly examined its governance structures and made comprehensive recommendations.

In response to comments from a Board member welcoming the 'Values and Principles Underpinning our Governance' document, Mr McCarthy clarified that the initial focus of the work of the Group was on the underpinning principles and values and the importance of collegiality and internal stakeholders was acknowledged.

Responding to a query from a Board member, Mr McCarthy suggested that the Government's focus may not be related to Trinity in particular but may arise from a greater emphasis on governance and oversight across the public sector as a whole in addition to 3rd level institutions.

Following comments from Board members on the text, it was noted that consideration could be given to including appropriate reference to the unique legal structure and ownership model in place in Trinity. It was suggested that the text should include Academic Freedom in the list of principles as well as in the list of values. The importance of autonomy in setting and advancing Trinity's strategic objectives while taking account of the wider environment and national policies was also acknowledged. A greater focus on the value of internal stakeholder engagement is also to be included in the text.

In response to a query from a Board member, Ms Ryan advised that the Group had reviewed governance best practice in Universities nationally and internationally and it had been observed that, in general, the majority of the boards have in the region of 20 - 22 members, the majority of which are external members in some cases.

The Provost thanked Mr McCarthy and Ms Ryan who left the meeting at this point.

Action/Decision

131.01 The Board considered and approved the memorandum from Chair of the Board Review Working Group and the Secretary to the College, dated 22 January 2020, and the attached Governance "Values and Principles" document subject to some amendments.

BD/19-20/132 External IT Services Quality Review

The Director of IT Services Mr Patrick Magee joined the meeting for this item.

The Chief Operating Officer introduced this item with reference to her memorandum and presentation, both dated 29 January 2020, which had been circulated in advance. She provided Board members with an overview of the review process to date and summarised her and the Director of IT Services' response to the review. Summarising the recommendations relating to IT Services alone, the Chief Operating Officer noted that they had been categorised in to six themes, and some of which could be actioned by IT Services immediately. She gave an overview of the proposed plan of action and associated timeline for each recommendation and concluded by summarising the three specific requests before the Board for approval.

Responding to comments from a Board member, the Chief Operating Officer advised that further consideration is to be given to whether to establish the roles of a Chief Information Officer and Chief Digital Officer in the context of the new Strategic Plan 2020-2025

In response to comments from a Board member, the Chief Operating Officer, noting the current financial position of the university, advised that additional resource opportunities may arise from the implementation of the new Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and the review of the Baseline Budgeting Model. Mr Magee advised that there were sufficient resources maintained at the IT Services Helpdesk. Approximately 70% of items are resolved on the first call and that additional expertise is engaged if an issue could not be resolved in the first ten minutes of support. He also advised that with all teaching spaces now recorded in the University space management and booking systems, service arrangements and standards could be consolidated.

Following comments from a Board member, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer advised Board members that as Chair of the Quality Committee he is very aware of the importance of ensuring that external reviewers understand the Trinity structures and that the Committee learns from the experience and feedback provided by quality reviews.

Action/Decision

132.01 The Board considered and approved the memorandum from the Chief Operating Officer dated 29 January 2020 and the three requests contained within as follows:

1. Approve those recommendations from the External Quality Review report relating to the IT Services directorate.
2. Direct that IT Services proceed with addressing the Quality Review recommendations and comments relating to the IT Services unit, where possible.
3. Recommend that the remaining elements of the External Quality Review of IT Services should be returned to Executive Officers for examination in the context of the new University Strategic Plan and consideration of a proposed future Digital Trinity program of work.

Mr Magee left the meeting at this point.

BD/19-20/133 Proposed Acquisition of a Property

The Director of Campus Infrastructure, Mr Mike Clark attended for this item.

Mr Clark introduced the item with reference to his presentation dated 29 January 2020 and his memorandum, dated 21 January 2020, which had been circulated in advance. He provided Board members with a summary of the rationale behind this proposed acquisition and gave an overview of the financial business case supporting the proposal. He noted that the lease on the building in question was due to terminate and so an opportunity to purchase the property had now arisen. Mr Clark advised the Board that the acquisition had been approved by the Executive Officer Group on 12 November 2019 and Finance Committee on 18 November 2019.

The Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer advised the Board that consideration had been given to the financial aspects of this proposal and that two independent valuations had been received and were supportive of this acquisition.

Responding to queries from Board members, the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer clarified that appropriate consultation had been held with the Higher Education Authority. He also commented on the favourable interest rate and confirmed that this proposal is self-financing in nature. He also advised that it is possible to include a provision to re-finance the acquisition to allow for flexibility in future years.

In response to queries from Board members, Mr Clark advised that it is not known at this stage whether re-zoning of the area could result in the possibility to utilise the space for accommodation. He also informed the Board that there is no alternative space on campus to accommodate staff members who currently have space assigned to them in the building currently being leased.

In response to comments from a Board member, it was agreed that further consideration is to be given to developing a strategy in respect of safe-guarding College property from potential future flooding and the Director of Campus Infrastructure is to seek advice as appropriate.

Action/Decision

133.01 The Board considered and approved the memorandum from the Director of Campus Infrastructure, dated 21 January 2020 and the acquisition of the property as outlined within.

133.02 It was agreed that further consideration is to be given to developing a strategy in respect of safe-guarding College property from potential future flooding and the Director of Campus Infrastructure is to seek advice as appropriate.

Mr Clark left the meeting at this point.

BD/19-20/134 Annual Officer

The Provost introduced this item with reference to his memorandum dated 29 January 2020 which had been tabled.

He advised the Board that he wished to nominate Professor Denis Brendan Tangney as Registrar with effect from 1 June 2020 noting that Professor Paula Murphy will finish her term as Registrar at the end of May 2020.

Action/Decision

135.01 The Board approved the memorandum from the Provost dated 29 January 2020 and the nomination for the Annual Officer as contained within.

BD/19-20/135 Honorary Degrees

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Registrar dated 29 January 2020, which had been tabled, and approved the nominations as contained within.

BD/19-20/136 Any Other Urgent Business

There were no other items of urgent business.

SECTION B

BD/19-20/137 Board Business

(i) Callover

The Board noted the callover updated to 18 December 2019.

(ii) Outcomes

The Board noted the Board outcomes from the meeting of 18 December 2019.

BD/19-20/138 University Safety Committee

The Board noted and approved the draft minutes of the meeting of 31 October 2019 and the accompanying appendix: Tobacco and E-Cigarette Policy.

SECTION C

BD/19-20/139 Membership of Principal Committees of Board

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Registrar dated 22 January 2020.

BD/19-20/140 Visual and Performing Arts Fund

Professor Alyn Stacey left the meeting for this item.

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Provost dated 15 January 2020.

BD/19-20/141 Studentships 2019/2020

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the School of Medicine dated 12 December 2019.

BD/19-20/142 Higher Degrees

The Board noted Higher Degrees, approved by the sub-committee of Board and Council on 4 December 2019 and 15 January 2020.

BD/19-20/143 Sealings

The Board noted the sealings, as circulated, and attached as Appendix 1 to this Minute.

This information is restricted due to commercial sensitivity.

BD/19-20/144 Scholarship - Intermission

The Board noted and approved the Memorandum from the Dean of Graduate Studies dated 9 January 2020.

SECTION D

In compliance with the Data Protection Acts this information is restricted.