

GOVERNING AUTHORITY MEETING

Report of meeting of Thursday, June 25th 2021
3.00pm, via Video Conference.

PRESENT:

Dr Martin McAleese, Chancellor (Chair)
Ms Zainab Boladale
Mr James Corcoran
Mr Pat Gilroy
Ms Bernie Gray
Cllr Jimmy Guerin
Ms Brid Horan
Ms Rachel Hussey
Prof Dorothy Kenny
Prof Daire Keogh
Mr Terence Rooney
Prof Lisa Looney
Ms Sharon McCooey

Dr Kara McGann
Ms Kate Goodman
Prof Caroline McMullan
Dr Jean-Paul Mosnier
Prof Gary Murphy
Dr Noel Murphy
Ms Orla Nic Aodha
Ms Deirdre O'Connor
Mr Terence O'Rourke
Mr John Power
Ms Kathy Quinn
Dr Declan Raftery
Dr Mary Shine Thompson

APOLOGIES:

Mr Michael Burke

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms Marian Burns
Mr Ciaran McGivern

Prof Anne Sinnott
Ms Marie Mellett (recording secretary)

WELCOME

The Chancellor welcomed members to this the last meeting of the current Governing Authority and extended a special welcome to the President of DCUSU, Terence Rooney and VP Academic Life, Kate Goodman who were attending their first GA meeting as representatives of the university's students union.

The Chancellor noted the apologies.

The agenda was adopted. It was noted that the format of the agenda has changed to reflect some of the suggestions expressed at the private session of members at the end of the April meeting. All suggestions have been passed to the President for consideration at the first meeting of the incoming Governing Authority in September.

The Chancellor enquired if there were any interests/conflicts 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 15th April 2021**

Approved by the Authority subject to a minor corrections.

2 REPORT OF THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY MEETING OF 15th April 2021 FOR WEB PUBLICATION

Approved by the Authority subject to minor revisions.

3 REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS

Action 1: Complete

Action 2: October meeting

Action 3: Agenda item 10

Action 4: Complete

Actions to be tracked:

Action 1: Ongoing

Action 2: Postponed until permitted by public health guidelines.

Action 3: Ongoing

Action 4: Ongoing

4 MATTERS ARISING

None

FOR DECISION

5 GOVERNANCE

5.1 New Governing Authority – membership and duration of term

The Chancellor informed members that at this meeting they had to decide on the number of members from each of the categories from which the composition of the next GA would be drawn together with its term of office. The usual term of each GA was in the past five years but this was likely to change as a result of the reform of the 1971 HEA Act that was currently under way. The next GA would be constituted under legislation as it currently exists but would be subject to transitional arrangements outlined in new legislation due to be enacted early next year.

The Chief Operations Officer presented on the timeline for appointing a new Governing Authority. This Governing Authority's term ends on July 28th. Prior to this date online elections will take place to appoint members to the three staff constituencies to Governing Authority. Their term will begin on July 29th. These appointments will constitute a quorum if any urgent matters arise before the full Authority is in place. The Chancellor noted that there has been a number of applicants for ministerial nominees. A panel will meet on July 13th to go through the applications and decide on the number that are appointable. From this list up to a maximum of four members will be appointed by the Minister.

The current membership of Governing Authority is 28. However, a membership of 29 is proposed for the next Governing Authority, the additional member being nominated by DCUET. Nominations from the other categories will remain at existing numbers.

At the September meeting the President will bring the name of his nominee for the position of Chancellor to GA for approval.

A five year term with 29 members was **approved** by the Authority.

5.2 Honorary Degree Nomination

The Honorary Degree Committee recommended a name to Governing Authority for approval to receive an honorary degree.

Approved by the Authority.

6 PERSONNEL MATTERS

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

- Prof Jan vom Brocke for appointment as Executive Dean, DCU Business School.
- Prof Boualem Benatallah for appointment as Professor, School of Computing.
- Dr Mairéad Nic Giolla Mhichíl for appointment as Director, Micro-Credentials Strategy and Innovation.

Approved by the Authority

It was agreed to recommend to the next Governing Authority that it consider appointing an external member to engage with the Director of Human Resources to review in detail all appointments prior to their presentation to Governing Authority for approval.

7 QUALITY PROMOTIONS OFFICE

7.1 Annual update on progress on quality improvement plans

Noted by the Authority

7.2 Summary Review Report for Human Resources

Deirdre O'Connor reported that she had engaged with the Director of the Quality Promotions Office, received the Self-Assessment Report, the Peer Review Report and the Quality Improvement Plan to assist her prepare an overview of this summary review report for GA. The Peer Review Group (PRG) element was carried out online whilst the self-assessment was completed prior to the onset of the pandemic. The PRG felt that while the online process was adequate it was not as effective as a face to face engagement. She further reported that in her view the quality review process was fully complied with despite adjustments introduced as a result of the pandemic and she recommended the Summary Quality Review Report to Governing Authority for approval.

Approved by the Authority

A discussion on student / staff ratio followed and it was noted that rankings are problematic for the university. The Employment Control Framework plays a huge role in determining staff levels and consequently DCU employs its staff headcount wisely to achieve its strategic objectives and meet the growth in student numbers. This is a constant challenge and it is hoped that the HEA will move to a devolved authority model where the university can exercise discretion over staff utilisation.

7.3 Summary Review Report for Registry

Deirdre O'Connor reported that she had engaged with the Director of the Quality Promotions Office, received the Self-Assessment Report, the Peer Review Report and the Quality Improvement Plan to assist her prepare an overview of this summary review report for GA. As was the case for the Review Report for Human Resources the Peer Review Group (PRG) element was carried out online whilst the self-assessment was completed prior to the onset of the pandemic. Again, as was the case for HR the PRG felt that while the online process was adequate it was not as effective as a face to face engagement. She further reported that in her view the quality review process was fully complied with despite adjustments introduced as a result of the pandemic and she recommended the Summary Quality Review Report to Governing Authority for approval.

Approved by the Authority

8 RISK COMMITTEE

FOR NOTING

8.1 Minutes of meeting 26th March 2021

Noted by the Authority

FOR DISCUSSION

8.2 Report of meeting of 11th June 2021

Bernie Gray, Chair of the Risk Committee provided a summary of what took place at the meeting of 11th June 2021:

- A detailed COVID 19 update was given and it was positive in terms of steps taken.
- Internal Audit provided an update on the Risk and Resilience Review. Overall it was given a level 3 category which provides reasonable assurances. This review was the first step in determining if an external review was required. It had been deemed that an external review at this time would not add value. This item will be included on the transitional agenda for the new Risk Committee.
- An update on cybersecurity. A Cybersecurity Desktop Exercise was conducted. This exercise was planned prior to the HSE attack and proved very beneficial for all participants. A substantial lessons learned document is being drafted and will be presented to the Risk Committee in due course.
- The outgoing President of the Student Union met with the Committee and noted some positive outcomes from the pandemic that the University should exploit:
 - Hybrid approach to teaching
 - Optimising Online exams
 - Flexibility in accommodation
 - Greater scope for Alumni events.

The Chancellor and President thanked the GARC for all its work in developing a strong awareness of risk across the university.

FOR DECISION

8.3 New Strategic Risk Register

The first draft of the SRR that was presented to the Risk Committee was very inward focused. That draft has been refined to include changes such as a larger focus on Health and Wellbeing and additionally reflects the outcome of the 'top down' risk exercise recently conducted by members of GA. The refined version of the SRR is now being presented to GA for approval .

Approved by the Authority

9 AUDIT COMMITTEE

FOR NOTING

9.1 Minutes of meeting of 14TH April 2021

Noted by the Authority

FOR DISCUSSION

9.2 Report of meeting of 17th June 2021

Brid Horan, Chair of Audit Committee noted the following:

- The DCU Consolidated accounts 2019 / 2020 are not being presented today for approval. They will be brought to Governing Authority when audited by the C&AG.
- KPMG gave a presentation and noted that their audit is substantially complete and have no significant issues to report.
- Audit Committee met with KPMG independent of management and were informed that the external auditors are extremely happy with the controls and the finance team in place in DCU.
- Final report on the Student Information System Governance Framework Audit was presented. Lessons learned from the CRM Recruit phase and action plans have been put in place. Internal Audit will follow up later in the year to ensure these controls are in place and that they are working well.
- Internal Audit provided an update on the Risk and Resilience Framework Audit.
- Work is proceeding on a number of audits including work from Deloitte on IT audits.
- It was noted that audits are adding value to areas being audited.
- The Director of ISS gave a very informative presentation on Cybersecurity. Significant investment has been made and processes are in place to monitor any threats. Training programmes are in place for staff which will have a significant impact.
- The Chair noted her thanks to the Audit Committee members, the Internal Audit Team and the Director and Deputy Director of Finance.

The Chancellor and President thanked Audit Committee members for all their work during the previous five years

FOR DECISION

9.3 Appointment of External Auditors for the DCU Group

The Chair of the Audit Committee, Cathal Marley (external independent member of the Audit Committee) and the Director of Finance were involved in this process. As there was only one response, Mazars automatically received the maximum score under the pricing heading. The key focus of the assessment was to ensure that the proposal from Mazars at least met the minimum score required in the other criteria of Service Delivery Methodology, Understanding of the Brief and Technical Merits of the Proposed resources. A very strong proposal, along with a very strong team, was submitted by Mazars. If approved this will lead to a very smooth transition.

The Audit Committee are recommending the appointment of Mazars for a 3 year term with the possibility of a one year extension.

Approved by the Authority

10 EQUILITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

FOR NOTING

10.1 Minutes of meetings 19th January, 03rd February and 31st March 2021

Noted by the Authority

FOR DISCUSSION

10.2 Report of the meeting of 11th June 2021

Rachel Hussey, Chair of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee noted the following:

- An EDI and Higher Education Training module will be rolled out which all staff will be required to complete.
- The DCU for Consent Action Plan has been submitted to the HEA. The EDI Unit will work to create awareness of this throughout the summer.
- The EDI Unit has established a Twitter account and would encourage people to follow.
- The Pride Flag is being flown on all campuses for the month of June.
- The Steering Committee for Women in Leadership is meeting to discuss their Annual Report. The title will be reviewed, to include all areas in the EDI space, not just gender.
- The DCU Gender Action plan has a requirement that Governing Authority receive a report on Committee Structures. 75% of the University Committees have at least 40% of each gender.
- The EDI unit are aware of the potential impacts the Return to Campus can have on staff.
- The chair thanked the members of the EDI Committee for their time and input and noted it was a pleasure to be a part of this sub committee.

The Chancellor thanked Rachel Hussey for her role in setting up this Committee which is now an important sub-committee of Governing Authority.

11 STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

No further update

FOR DISCUSSION

12 PRESIDENTS REPORT AND UNIVERSITY OFFICERS REPORTS

DCU President

The President report was taken as read.

Vice President of Academic Affairs

It was noted that there was no further update to the circulated report of The Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA).

Chief Operations Officer

It was noted that there was no further update to the circulated report of The Chief Operations Officer.

Director of Finance

It was noted that there was no further update to the circulated report of The Director of Finance.

Director of Human Resources

It was noted that there was no further update to the circulated report of The Director of Human Resources.

13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The President thanked all members for their huge commitment to DCU governance over the previous five years. The Chancellor echoed this and expressed his gratitude to all members for the selfless, yet voluntary, way in which they had all worked in the interests of DCU. He continued that it had been a great privilege for him to work with members for whom, without exception, he had huge regard and respect and from whom he had learnt so much as they expressed all their varying talents and skillsets to the sometimes very difficult issues that collectively members had to deal with during the term of the Authority. He wished everyone of them every success and fulfilment in whatever they do in the years ahead.

The Chair

Date

Action Items:

| Action | | Person responsible | Deadline |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Update on the Renew aspect of the Strategy. | Deputy President | 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 | Every 2 nd meeting will be held off campus subject to public health guidelines |
| 3 | New VPEA to present on International Affairs - within 3 months of appointment. | COO | Ongoing |
| 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 | Ongoing |