

NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
HELD ON 5 JULY 2022

Present

N Goulden, Pro-Chancellor (Chair)	S V Murcott
A Brown	Professor E W Peck
S Denton	Baroness D Warwick
N Ebbs	C Wayman
I Ellis	B Wills
Dr A Emuwa	Dr D Wilson
L Holder	O Woodley
G Love	

In Attendance

Professor S Huttly, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Development and Performance)
R C Jenkyn, Clerk to the Board of Governors
J A Clews, Governance Services Manager (Minute Secretary)
J A Lacey, Director of Finance, for minute references 22.31 to 22.32
M Carr, Interim Pro Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise and Knowledge Exchange), for minute reference 22.34 (c)

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from D Dayal, J Nelson, S Walker-Smith and D Williams.

22.21 Welcomes

The Pro-Chancellor welcomed members to this meeting of the Board of Governors.

The Board welcomed Benedict Wills who had taken office as the President of Nottingham Trent Students' Union (NTSU) on 1 July 2022 and was thereby appointed as the Student Member of the Board of Governors.

22.22 Declarations of Conflicts of Interest Relating to Items on the Agenda

Members present were asked to declare any potential conflicts of interest they held in the agenda items to be considered. Benedict Wills noted that as President of the NTSU he was also a Trustee of the NTSU; the Clerk to the Board confirmed that this would not represent a conflict in relation to the Board's consideration of the NTSU Budget and Block Grant (minute reference 22.30 (b)).

22.23 Minutes

(a) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held on 22 March 2022 (Document A) were approved as a true record, subject to an amendment in relation to minute reference 22.14 (a).

The Board requested that the University review its approach to monitoring compliance of essential/mandatory training. A further report in this regard would be targeted for consideration by the Audit and Risk Management Committee at its meeting in September 2022.

The minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held on 12 May 2022 (Document B) were approved as a true record.

(b) Matters Arising

Members received a report (Document C) in relation to matters arising from the previous meetings. All action points had been progressed.

22.24 Report from the Pro-Chancellor

The Pro-Chancellor presented a report (Document D) updating the Board on a number of matters. The following matters were highlighted during discussion:

[Some of the detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

Membership Matters

- Following the discussion held at the previous meeting of the Board of Governors, Sarah Gregory's appointment as a Co-opted Governor had been confirmed. Sarah would join the Board on 1 September 2022, with a view to assuming the roles of Chair of the Employment Policy Committee and Chair of the Remuneration Committee in due course;
- It was proposed that Jennie Nelson be appointed as Chair of the Audit and Risk Management Committee with effect from 1 September 2022. Ian Ellis would assume the role of Deputy Chair to support a phased handover prior to the end of his tenure on the Board;
- In accordance with its delegated authority, the Membership and Nominations Committee had approved the appointment of James Thornton as a Co-opted Member of the Investment Committee for an initial term of three years effective from 1 August 2022;

Governance Effectiveness Review

- A survey had been issued to all members of the Board of Governors by email for completion in relation to the external governance effectiveness review. The Pro-Chancellor encouraged all members to complete the questionnaire;
- The Board of Governors' meeting on 27 September 2022 would be observed by an external consultant from Advance HE. The September meetings of the Audit and Risk Management Committee, the Strategy, Policy, Finance and Resources Committee, and the Academic Assurance and Regulation Committee would also be observed;
- The final report from the external consultants was targeted for presentation to the Board at its meeting in November 2022;

Confetti London

- A meeting of the NTU London sub-group of the Board of Governors had been convened on 11 May 2022 to receive a progress update in relation to the

Confetti London project. The sub-group also considered a revised proposal regarding the financial and property aspects of the project due to the original site being lost to a higher bidder;

- The alternative property identified in Whitechapel had been considered to be a good proposition, with good travel links and situated in a vibrant and diverse area attractive to students; and
- In accordance with its delegated authority, the sub-group had approved the revised proposal for Confetti London. Detailed negotiations were now underway with a view to finalising the Agreement for Lease by the end of July. It was noted that the project remained on target to open in September 2023.

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be received and endorsed; and
- (ii) that the recommendations in relation to membership matters as set out above be approved and endorsed.

22.25 NTU's Approach to Tackling Sexual Misconduct and Harassment

The Board received a report (Document E) from the Pro-Chancellor and the Chief Operating Officer and Registrar in relation to the University's approach to tackling sexual misconduct and harassment. This incorporated the guidance for Chairs and Governing Bodies issued by the Committee of University Chairs (CUC). The following matters were highlighted during discussion:

- A detailed presentation and discussion in relation to tackling sexual misconduct and harassment had been held at the Board of Governors' evening session on 4 July 2022. This had included an overview of those data used to inform the University's ongoing improvements to incident reporting and prevention;
- Governors encouraged the University to ensure that men did not feel excluded from the reporting processes, noting that it was possible that these measures could appear to focus more heavily on the female experience;
- Mandatory consent training for all first-year undergraduate students had been introduced in 2021/22. Whilst this was currently limited to first-year students due to the volumes involved, it was anticipated that provision could be scaled up and refresher training also introduced in due course;
- The Office for Students' Statement of Expectations for Preventing and Addressing Harassment and Sexual Misconduct had been published in spring 2021. The University was making good progress on actions identified to improve the support provided to those who experience such issues;
- In February 2022, Universities UK (UUK) had published its guidance on Tackling Staff to Student Sexual Misconduct. The University had reviewed its practice against the nine recommendations outlined in the guidance in order to identify potential areas for improvement;
- In May 2022, the CUC had produced its Guidance for Chairs and Governing Bodies on Tackling Harassment and Sexual Misconduct. NTU featured as a case study within the guidance, showcasing the University's work in this area; and

- The Vice-Chancellor advised the Board that the University had been approached to sign a pledge to commit to not using Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) to silence colleagues or students making allegations of sexual harassment. It was confirmed that this practice was not used at NTU. However, the scope of the 'Can't Buy My Silence' campaign had been broadened subsequently to include all NDAs. Given that there were occasions when the use of NDAs was beneficial to both parties, the University had declined to sign the pledge.

The Pro-Chancellor noted that Governors had welcomed the reports provided, together with the in-depth discussion held at its evening session. The Board endorsed the approach being taken by the University in relation to tackling sexual misconduct and harassment, and the processes in place to support those who experience such issues.

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be received and noted; and
- (ii) that the approach adopted by the University in relation to tackling sexual misconduct and harassment be endorsed by the Board of Governors.

22.26 Report from the Senior Independent Governor: Pro-Chancellor Search Committee

The Board received a report (Document F) from the Senior Independent Governor (SIG) in relation to progress with the search process for a successor for the Pro-Chancellor and Chair of the Board of Governors.

[The detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

22.27 Standing Orders and Committee Terms of Reference

The Board received a report (Composite Document G) in relation to the proposed revisions to the University's Standing Orders and Committee Terms of Reference.

The Clerk to the Board of Governors advised that minor amendments were proposed to the Standing Orders (Document G1) to ensure these reflected best practice. Minor amendments were also proposed to the Terms of Reference for the Investment Committee (Document G2) and the Academic Assurance and Regulation Committee (Document G3), following discussion of the same by the respective committee.

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be received and noted; and
- (ii) that the revised Standing Orders and Committee Terms of Reference (as set out in Composite Document G) be approved and endorsed.

22.28 Board of Governors' Away Day: 26 September 2022

The Board of Governors received a report (Document H) from the Pro-Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor in relation to the proposed design for the Board of Governors' away day scheduled for 26 September 2022.

[The detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be received and noted; and
- (ii) that the agenda for the Board of Governors' away day on 26 September 2022 be approved and endorsed.

22.29 Vice-Chancellor's Update

The Vice-Chancellor presented a report (Document I) updating the Board on a number of matters. The following matters were highlighted during discussion:

[Some of the detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

Farewells

- Mike Carr, Interim Pro Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise and Knowledge Exchange) and Barbara Matthews, Executive Dean for Culture, would both be retiring from the University on 31 July 2022;

Pay Negotiations

- The University had achieved a local pay settlement for 2022/23. The outcome of the related colleague survey had indicated that the majority of colleagues affected by the proposals had welcomed the pay offer. This had also been reflected in the local Trades Unions' ballots;
- It was considered that this had been a positive outcome for the University and provided a strong platform for agreeing local pay settlements in future years. The University would continue to monitor the sector position. The decision to opt-out of or take part in national collective pay bargaining was taken on an annual basis;
- The University continued to seek opportunities to support colleagues, particularly those in roles at the lower end of the pay scales. A review of pension schemes was being progressed to determine whether a more flexible pensions offer could be introduced;

Student Recruitment

- The University continued to focus its efforts on activities to achieve the recruitment targets and preparations were in place to manage the busy Confirmation and Clearing period;
- An update in relation to the student recruitment position would be provided at the September meeting of the Board;

Student Surveys

- The headline results from the Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) for the class of 2020 demonstrated that positive progress was being made in relation to graduate employment. The University had action plans in place to continue to progress improvements in this regard;
- The results of the 2022 National Student Survey (NSS) were due to be released on 6 July;
- The initial results of the 2022 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) indicated that NTU's satisfaction score had increased from 82% in 2021 to 84% this year. The sector-wide results had not yet been published; and

Response to Consultations

- Responses to the consultations from the Office for Students in relation to the B3 registration condition (student outcomes) and the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) were expected before the summer break.

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be received and endorsed;
- (ii) that an updating report in relation to the student recruitment position for 2022/23 entry be presented to the Board of Governors at its meeting on 27 September 2022; and
- (iii) that a presentation in relation to student recruitment and future projections be targeted for the evening session of the Board of Governors on 21 November 2022.

22.30 Nottingham Trent Students' Union

(a) NTSU President's Update

The Board received a report (Document J) from the President of Nottingham Trent Students' Union (NTSU) in relation to NTSU activities. The following matters were highlighted during discussion:

- The new Executive Team was keen to continue to build on the positive work of the previous team. The main areas of focus for the coming months would be: the student culture; driving academic standards and increasing the quality of extra-curricular activities; and working proactively and collaboratively with NTU;
- Following a rigorous recruitment process, Phil Kynaston had been appointed as NTSU Chief Executive Officer. Phil had previously been the Deputy CEO. Two new director roles had also been created to bolster the senior management team;
- NTSU would continue to encourage the University to provide free graduation gowns and caps to graduands. This had been introduced during the pandemic and had resonated well with students;

- In order to increase the level of student involvement on the NTSU Board, two new student trustees had been appointed; and
- NTSU was monitoring closely the impact of the cost-of-living pressures on students and the support available to them. The Vice-Chancellor advised the Board that the University had increased the financial threshold for accessing bursaries and the University Executive Team was also exploring potential options to freeze costs to help alleviate pressure on the cost of living. The University continued to encourage UPP and third-party private accommodation providers to ensure rental prices were affordable to students. It was noted that the development of the Student Living Strategy, in partnership with the University of Nottingham and Nottingham City Council, aimed to ensure that there was sufficient availability of good quality accommodation in appropriate locations across the City.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

(b) NTSU Budget 2022/23

The Board received a report (Document K1) in relation to the 2022/23 budget for Nottingham Trent Students' Union, together with the 2022 Block Grant Application (Document K2). The budget had been approved by the NTSU Board of Trustees. A report had also been presented to the Strategy, Policy, Finance and Resources Committee at its meeting on 21 June 2022.

The University Executive Team had approved an uplift in the block grant for 2022. This would enable the NTSU to increase its support services for students. The NTSU was also seeking to reinvest surplus funds to progress its capital programme.

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report in relation to the budget for Nottingham Trent Students' Union for 2022/23 be received and noted; and
- (ii) that the block grant for Nottingham Trent Students' Union for 2022/23 be endorsed.

22.31 Budget 2022/23

The Board received a report (Document L) from the Director of Finance which presented the budget for the University for the 2022/23 academic year and forward projections to 2026/27. Governors were advised that the Strategy, Policy, Finance and Resources Committee had reviewed the budget and forward projections in detail and recommended these to the Board for approval. The Audit and Risk Management Committee had reviewed the financial and risk assumptions included in the budget and had considered these to be robust.

[Some of the detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

The following matters were highlighted during discussion:

- The University had achieved a strong financial performance during the current year;

- The Strategy, Policy, Finance and Resources Committee had reviewed the budget in detail and had considered that the level of the contingency was sufficient to offset any short-term challenges; and
- The Audit and Risk Management Committee had reviewed in detail the stress testing undertaken on the proposed budget. The Board was advised that this work had been considered to be sector-leading by the external auditors and the Director of Finance was congratulated on this achievement.

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be received and noted;
- (ii) that the Budget for 2022/23 and the financial projections to 2026/27 be approved for submission to the Office for Students.

22.32 Design and Digital Arts Building (DaDA) – 42 Shakespeare Street

The Board received a report (Document M) from the Chief Operating Officer and Registrar in relation to the revised budget for the development of the Design and Digital Arts (DaDA) building at 42 Shakespeare Street. This was presented to the Board with the endorsement of the Strategy, Policy, Finance and Resources Committee and the University Executive Team.

[The detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

The Board agreed with the recommendation of the Strategy, Policy, Finance and Resources Committee to proceed with the development as planned. It was noted that this landmark building would benefit both the University and the City.

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be received and noted; and
- (ii) that the revised budget for the development of the Design and Digital Arts building (DaDA) at 42 Shakespeare Street be approved and endorsed.

22.33 Race Equality Charter Submission

The Board received a report (Document N) from the Vice-Chancellor in relation to the approach taken to the development of the University's Race Equality Charter submission. The following matters were highlighted during discussion:

- The University had developed its Race Equality Action Plan (REAP1) in 2020, and progress reports on this and REAP2 had been presented to the Board of Governors during 2021. An updated action plan (REAP3) was targeted for presentation to the Board in November 2022;
- Recent guidance received from the University Shadow Executive Team (USET) had helped to inform the latest version of the submission. A clear steer had been provided that the submission document should be reframed to represent better the NTU voice throughout. The document was therefore being redrafted in readiness for submission to Advance HE by 29 July 2022; and
- The Minister of State for Further and Higher Education had written to all Vice-Chancellors, advising that they consider carefully whether participation in

Advance HE's Race Equality Charter and similar initiatives were compatible with free speech and academic freedom principles. This matter had been discussed with the Employment Policy Committee at its recent meeting and it had concurred with the University's decision to proceed with the submission. It was considered that the development of the Race Equality Action Plan should be the primary focus for the University to ensure that race equality was enshrined throughout the institution, with less importance placed on achieving the accreditation. The Board noted however that an external kitemark provided a useful indicator for external organisations and individuals on the University's position in relation to race equality matters.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

22.34 University, reimagined

[Some of the detail of this minute has been withdrawn due to its confidential nature.]

(a) Deep Dive: Valuing Ideas

The Board received a report (Document O) from the Vice-Chancellor in relation to an update on progress with strategic initiatives for the Valuing Ideas theme of the Strategic Plan, also issued to the Board of Governors for detailed discussion at its evening session on 4 July 2022.

The Board noted that the presentation from the Senior Research Fellow, Richard Arm, which outlined his development and progression at NTU had been particularly inspiring. Governors would welcome hearing more about such success stories in future presentations.

IT WAS RESOLVED

- (i) that the report be received and endorsed; and
- (ii) that a report in relation to the future ambitions for research at NTU be targeted for presentation to the Board during 2023.

(b) Research Excellence Framework 2021

The Board received a report (Document P) from the Vice-Chancellor in relation to the results of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021. It was noted that the report provided a formal record of the outcomes of the REF 2021 exercise, which had been presented to the Board at the briefing session held on 12 May 2022 (Document B cross-refers).

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

(c) Citizen and Stakeholder Advocacy Surveys

The Board received a report (Document Q) from the Interim Pro Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise and Knowledge Exchange) in relation to the initial headline findings of the University's inaugural citizen and stakeholder advocacy surveys. These were undertaken in April and May 2022 and aimed to measure the perceived value of the University's engagement across

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, which formed part of the *University, reimagined* Enriching Society theme. The following matters were highlighted during discussion:

- The outcomes of the citizen advocacy survey were positive, with 81% of responders indicating that the 'Universities in Nottingham' were important to enhancing the area. Over half of respondents also confirmed that they were proud of NTU, although a large proportion were indifferent in this regard which demonstrated that there remained work to do to raise awareness of NTU's brand, activities, and impact on the wider community;
- A high percentage of responses had been achieved for the stakeholder advocacy survey, with positive feedback received;
- The surveys provided benchmarks for future comparison and supported further activity planning; and
- The University worked closely with local communities in relation to outreach activities, in part to address any concerns raised regarding student behaviour. It was noted that the University was also a major employer in the City.

Noting that the Interim Pro Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise and Knowledge Exchange) would be retiring from the University at the end of July, the Board expressed its thanks to him for his valued contributions to the University and wished him well for the future.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

(d) Key Performance Indicators

The Board received a report (Document R) from the Vice-Chancellor in relation to the KPI balanced scorecard for *University, reimagined*. This summarised progress against the KPIs for Students and Stakeholders, the three Financial indicators, and Organisational Capability since these were last reported to the Board.

IT WAS RESOLVED

(i) that the report be received and endorsed.

22.35 Academic Board

The Board received the unconfirmed minutes from the meeting of the Academic Board held on 15 June 2022 (Document S).

Academic Board had discussed in detail a range of matters relating to student-related policies and the support provided to students. The Board was advised that the work undertaken with NTSU in relation to revising the Student Code of Behaviour had been a positive achievement.

IT WAS RESOLVED

that the report be received and endorsed.

22.36 Business from Standing Committees

(a) Investment Committee and Board of Trustees

The Board noted the minutes of the meeting of the Investment Committee held on 20 May 2022 (Document T1), together with the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Trustees of the NTU Success Fund held on 20 May 2022 (Document T2) and 9 June 2022 (Document T3).

(b) Audit and Risk Management Committee

The Board noted the draft minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Committee held on 21 June 2022 (Document U).

The Board recorded its thanks to Ian Ellis for his work during his tenure as Chair of the Committee.

(c) Strategy, Policy, Finance and Resources Committee

The Board noted the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Strategy, Policy, Finance and Resources Committee held on 21 June 2022 (Document V).

Congratulations were recorded to the University for its financial outturn for the current year, and also on its receipt of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) East Midlands Award for the Lyth building at the Brackenhurst campus.

(d) Academic Assurance and Regulation Committee

The Chair of the Committee updated the Board on discussions at the meeting of the Academic Assurance and Regulation Committee held on 24 June 2022.

The Board also received and noted the minutes of the meeting of the Academic Assurance and Regulation Committee held on 10 March 2022 (Document W), a verbal report having been given at the previous meeting of the Board.

(e) Employment Policy Committee

The Chair of the Committee updated the Board on discussions at the meeting of the Employment Policy Committee held on 4 July 2022.

22.37 Application of the Corporation Seal

Members received and noted a report (Document X) summarising the documentation to which the University's Corporation Seal had been applied since the previous meeting of the Board.

22.38 Any Other Business

(a) Graduation

The Vice-Chancellor advised the Board that 60 graduation ceremonies were scheduled during the period 11-27 July 2022 for the 2022 graduating cohort. Governors were welcome to attend any of the ceremonies and were

invited to contact the Vice-Chancellor directly if they wished to attend. Details of the Honorary Awards being conferred in July were included within the Vice-Chancellor's Update (Document I).

(b) Closing Remarks

The Pro-Chancellor thanked colleagues for their attendance. It was noted that the key areas of focus for forthcoming meetings would be student recruitment, costs, capital expenditure phasing and the five-year plan.

22.39 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Governors was scheduled for Tuesday 27 September 2022 at 9.30 am. This would be preceded by the Away Day, and the evening presentation and dinner, on Monday 26 September 2022.

It was noted that future meetings of the Board had been scheduled as follows:

- 22 November 2022;
- 21 March 2023;
- 4 July 2023; and
- 26 September 2023.