

**GBS1 1908**

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Governing Body of Cork Institute of Technology held on Thursday 8 August 2019 in the Council Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Administration Building at 4.00 pm.**

**Present:** Mr Bob Savage (Chair)  
Dr Barry O'Connor  
Mr Bernard Allen  
Ms Mary Cooney  
Mr Eoin Deane  
Ms Maura Fitzgibbon  
Ms Mary Hegarty  
Cllr Michael Hegarty  
Capt Dave Hopkins  
Cllr Patrick Gerard Murphy  
Mr Declan O'Leary  
Mr Cilian Ó Súilleabháin  
Ms Ann Piggott

**Apologies:** Mr John Higgins, Mr Paul Gallagher, Mr Denis Leamy, Ms Katherine Walshe, Mr Aaron Buckley, Ms Aisling O'Mahony, Ms Emilie Fitzgibbon, Dr Áine Ní Shé

**In Attendance:** Dr Orla Flynn, and Prof Hugh McGlynn  
Ms Sinéad Rodgers, Recording Secretary.

The Chairman opened the meeting by thanking Governors for making the time to attend today's Special Meeting. Apologies were noted from Mr John Higgins, Mr Paul Gallagher, Mr Denis Leamy, Ms Katherine Walshe, Mr Aaron Buckley, Ms Aisling O'Mahony, Dr Áine Ní Shé.

- 1. MTU Briefing**
  - (i) Advisory Panel Report MTU.pdf**
  - (ii) HEA Board to DES MTU.pdf**
  - (iii) Minister DES to MTU Bob Savage & Lionel Alexander.pdf**

The Chair thanked the President for his regular updates on MTU to date and invited him to brief Governors on the three documents which were circulated via email on 22 July 2019.

The President began by clarifying that the objective of this meeting was to bring Governors up to date on the MTU application process. He referred to the letter sent from the Minister for Education & Skills to the Chairpersons of CIT and ITT on 22 July, to inform them of his decision to postpone the granting of the application under the TU Act 2018. The Minister confirmed that the establishment of MTU will be subject to compliance with conditions to address the issues set out in the Advisory Panel Report. The President quoted the last line of the Minister's letter which states that the Minister is confident that the two Institutes will rise to the challenge of making MTU a reality in the coming months.

In the Advisory Panel Report, the President referred to the two areas which had been highlighted as needing clarification: the definition of research (research-active students and staff) and the differentiation of Masters' degrees as taught or research degrees, based on the importance of the research component. Those matters are not clearly defined in the TU Act.

The President also referred to the letter sent from the Chairman of the HEA Board to the Minister on 9 July 2019. The HEA Board is recommending that an Institutional Review should be carried out on the two Institutions. However, an MoU with QQI has been negotiated that within 18 months of Designation Day an Institutional Review of MTU will take place. The HEA Board also recommended that a full review of Landscape Funding should be carried out since TU Dublin has now been designated.

The MTU Consortium must send a response to the Minister by 20 August. Work is underway in drafting this response which will address the issues raised in the Advisory Panel Report. Answers in relation to the following queries will be provided: definition of a research/taught Masters, proof of capacity to increase the percentage of research students from 4.0 to 7.0 per cent and to increase the percentage of academic staff with doctoral degrees. Evidence following international standards will be provided. Communication with the Department of Education & Skills in the preparation of the response is ongoing.

The President updated Governors on the TURN working group which will set out the strategy for Technological Universities and the TU Sector. The draft report from that network which will inform part of the response to the Minister is almost finalised. The report will also address the differentiators between TUs and traditional universities.

Governors agreed that the Consortium can provide a positive response to the Minister and meet all the criteria required for MTU approval. Governors discussed some of the findings in the Advisory Panel Report. Mr Ó Súilleabháin requested that a copy of the Deloitte Audit Report be given to Governors. He expressed his disappointment that Governors were told that there were no 'deal breakers' for MTU even though the Minister has now decided to postpone MTU. Prof McGlynn explained how the Consortium was surprised by the Advisory Panel's focus on the definitions of research. The Advisory Panel Report referred to the Deloitte Audit process during which the definition of research and the TU Act were debated. The lack of clarity in the TU Act had been pointed out to the Advisory Panel during the Panel Visit. The Department of Education & Skills was made aware of this lack of clarity. At all times the MTU application followed the TU Act. Mr Ó Súilleabháin stated that he would like to see concrete plans for increasing the number of students involved in research. This will be part of the remit of the Strategic Development Committee.

**Action:** Prof McGlynn will request permission from the HEA Board to share the Deloitte Audit Report with Governors.

Governors discussed the details of the response to the Minister. Mr Ó Súilleabháin requested that the Department of Education & Skills should be asked to confirm in writing the criteria for MTU in order to avoid the criteria being changed. Prof McGlynn confirmed that all the criteria were met as per the TU Act. The President suggested that academics in the Arts and Music departments may need to emphasise that they are creating new knowledge in Arts and Music, of equal value to traditional laboratory research.

Mr Deane sought clarity on whether we can provide satisfactory definitions on research that the Department will be happy with. The President confirmed that definitions of research in use for TU Dublin must also apply to MTU. Governors agreed that the response to the Minister should focus on the questions raised in the Advisory Panel Report. In the response back to the Minister, the ITT financial situation will be referred to as a condition for MTU.

Ms M Fitzgibbon sought clarity on the reference in the Advisory Panel Report of a strained relationship between senior management and the academic staff union. Prof McGlynn confirmed

that academic staff had concerns in relation to structures and programmes. The MTU submission at the time of the Advisory Panel Visit did not have that level of detail. This has since been addressed. A Memo of Understanding has previously been agreed with TUI. The WRC are involved in ensuring that the MoU will be put into action.

Ms Cooney sought clarity on why the Panel suggested a Graduate School should be set up when a School of Graduate Studies already exists. A discussion took place and it was explained that the Advisory Panel had queried whether modules under the five 25W (Taught Masters Programmes) were appropriately classified as research credit eligible. Ms Cooney also referenced the Advisory Panel Report which stated that there is a lack of clear vision and strategy for MTU. She queried how the specifics in the Strategy Plan will be addressed. The President explained that once TU Dublin was setup, the Technological University Research Network (TURN) was created. TURN will produce a final report which will act as a template for the strategy of a TU and will align with the Budget in October. In relation to her query on data collection and analysis, the President confirmed that a Business Analyst has been hired and is in place.

The President discussed the setting up of Joint Meetings of the Governing Body MTU Sub-Committees to deal with MTU matters, subject to Governing Body approval. This would show the two institutions 'acting as one'. The ITT Governing Body will meet on 11 August and will be requested to approve the setting up of an MTU Sub-Committee. The CIT GB MTU Sub-Committee's Terms of Reference have been shared with ITT.

The President proposed that our MTU Sub-Committee could then hold joint meetings with ITT Sub-Committee. Governors agreed in principle to this, subject to finalising the Terms of Reference for the Joint Meetings of the respective Governing Body MTU Sub-Committees. Governors agreed that at the ITT GB meeting on 11 August the Governing Body should be asked to agree in principle to the setting up of Joint Meetings of the respective Governing Body MTU Sub-Committees, subject to finalising the Terms of Reference for such meetings.

The Department for Education & Skills had suggested TU Dublin's Shadow GB Terms of Reference could be used by MTU. Prof McGlynn reviewed it and updated it for MTU. The President tabled that draft and apologised for not circulating it in advance of the meeting, as it had only been received from TU Dublin on Tuesday 6 August. Governors agreed that this draft was not relevant to the stage that MTU is now at. Governors agreed that the term Shadow Governing Body which TU Dublin had used previously is not to be used for MTU.

**Action:** Prof McGlynn to use the CIT GB MTU Sub-Committee Terms of Reference as a starting point when drafting the ToR for the Joint Meetings of the respective Governing Body MTU Sub-Committees.

**Action:** The Minister will be informed that the Consortium has agreed to set up Joint Meetings of the respective Governing Body MTU Sub-Committees, subject to finalisation of the Terms of Reference.

**Action:** An invitation will be sent to the ITT MTU Sub-Committee to attend our first MTU Sub-Committee meeting on 12 September.

The President stated that the term of the current Governing Body will expire on 31 March 2020. Legally there is no provision to extend the term of a Governing Body. The Minister will have to commence the formation of a new Governing Body in January 2020 or form a Governing Body for MTU.

The financial situation in ITT was briefly discussed. Mr O’Leary suggested that it would be useful to have sight of all the management accounts in ITT from now until MTU Designation. This hands-on approach would help to build on the partnership with ITT.

Mr O’Leary sought clarification on the funding for the MTU Office. Prof McGlynn confirmed that an application for €6.2M has been submitted through the Landscape Funding call. However, the HEA have stated that a reduction in that Funding call should be expected. Sufficient funds are available for the short-term.

Mr Allen thanked the Chair for the opportunity for consultation on the documentation. He was disappointed to see some negative comments from two stakeholder groups referenced in the Advisory Panel Report and asked the Institute Executive to deal with those groups’ reservations.

The meeting concluded at 6.10pm. The Chair thanked the Governors for their attendance today at short notice. The President thanked the Governors for their analysis and questions on the documentation.

Mr Allen congratulated Mr Keith Ricken, GAA Development Officer and Manager of the Cork Under 20 Football team, on his team’s All-Ireland Final win on 3 August and on his performance during media interviews. Congratulations were passed onto the whole squad.

The President and Vice President left the room.

Mr Ó Súilleabháin asked the Chair if a response had been received from the Department of Education & Skills in relation to the proposed extension of the President’s contract. The Chair confirmed that no response has yet been received. If a response is not received by Thursday 15 August, the Chair and the HR Manager, Ms Deirdre Casey will formally contact the Department.

The next ordinary meeting of the Governing Body will take place on Thursday 3 October 2019 commencing at 3.00pm in the Council Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Administration Building.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **ADDENDUM 1**

### **Requests from Governing Body at their meeting on 8 August 2019**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Minute Page No.</b>	<b>Request</b>	<b>Actioned by</b>	<b>Date Actioned</b>
1.	2	Prof H McGlynn to request permission from the HEA Board to share the Deloitte Audit Report with Governors	Prof McGlynn	
2.	3	Prof H McGlynn to use the CIT GB MTU Sub-Committee Terms of Reference as a starting point when drafting the ToR for the Joint Meetings of the respective Governing Body MTU Sub-Committees.	Prof McGlynn	
3.	3	The President to inform the Minister for Education & Skills that Joint Meetings of the respective Governing Body MTU Sub-Committee will be setup.	The President	
4.	3	An invitation to be sent to the IT Tralee MTU Sub-Committee to attend the first meeting of the CIT MTU Sub-Committee at their meeting on 12 September.	The President	