

GB2003.2

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Cork Institute of Technology held on Friday 27 March 2020 in the Council Room, 2nd Floor, Administration Building at 3.00 pm.

Present: Mr Bob Savage (Chair)
Dr Barry O'Connor
Ms Maura Fitzgibbon
Ms Mary Hegarty
Cllr Michael Hegarty
Mr Denis Leamy
Dr Cilian Ó Súilleabháin

By Video Link: Mr Bernard Allen
Mr Aaron Buckley
Ms Mary Cooney
Mr Eoin Deane
Mr John Higgins
Capt Dave Hopkins
Cllr Patrick Gerard Murphy
Ms Aisling O'Mahony
Ms Ann Piggott
Ms Katherine Walshe

In Attendance: Mr Paul Gallagher and Ms Geraldine Faherty, Minute Taker
By Video Link: Dr Áine Ní Shé and Mr Michael Loftus.

The Chairman commenced the meeting by welcoming Governors both those present in the Council Room and those by video link. Apologies were noted from Ms Emelie Fitzgibbon and Mr Declan O'Leary. Whilst agenda item 1 was dedicated to items requiring approval, Governors agreed that these items would be discussed as their related agenda items arose. There was agreement that today's meeting would focus on approvals, highlights from reports would be brief and feedback/comments from Governors would be as required.

On behalf of the Governing Body, the Chairman extended sympathies to:

1. Ms Norma Welch, Faculty Administrator, Faculty of Engineering & Science and to Mr Adrian McAuliffe, Lecturer, Centre of Craft Studies on the death of her father and his father-in-law, respectively.
2. Mr Fergal Goulding, Lecturer, Centre of Craft Studies on the death of his wife.
3. Ms Catherine Elwood, Lecturer, Department of Media Communications on the death of her mother.

The Chairman asked the meeting to stand for one minute's silence.

1. Items for Approval:

1.1 MTU: Draft Response Document to the Minister for Education & Skills

Discussed under agenda item 4 – Governing Body MTU Sub-Committee.

1.2 Finance: Operational Programmes & Budgets 2020/21 – 2023/24

Discussed under agenda item 5 – Report from the Vice President for Finance & Administration.

1.3 Governance: Annual Governance Statement 2018/19

Discussed under agenda item 5 – Report from the Vice President for Finance & Administration.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 5 March 2020.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 5 March 2020 were circulated with the Agenda and were approved and signed.

There was agreement that the Addendum would be discussed ahead of matters arising and that any tabled items would be dealt with as they arose.

Update on Addendum 1:

The President gave the following update in terms of the Addendum:

Item No. 1 (Page 2): The report re: the constitution of a new Governing Body to be discussed under agenda item 3 this afternoon.

Item No. 2: The tour of the classrooms in the 1974 Building did not go ahead prior to the last Governing Body Meeting, as both members of the Students' Union were not present due to illness, this will be rescheduled for another date.

Item No. 3: The President confirmed that no progress has been made on exploring the possibility of bestowing Fellowship Awards due to the current Covid-19 crisis. This will be looked at in the near future.

Item No. 4: Work is ongoing in relation to the Deloitte Summary.

Item No. 5 and Item No. 6: The President confirmed that work is ongoing on both of these items. Both items to remain as standing items on the Addendum. The Vice President for External Affairs to progress the marketing element of these items and will report on this progress at the next Governing Body Meeting.

Matters Arising

A Governor referred to the drop in the Institute's direct entry CAO figures for 2019/20 and asked that this be referred to the Strategic Development Sub-Committee meeting in June.

ACTION: CAO intake 2019/20 to be an Agenda item at the Strategic Development Sub-Committee meeting on Monday 8 June 2020.

The President updated Governors on the plans being put in place in relation to Campus-based Teaching, Learning and Assessment for the remainder of the current Semester. He also outlined the possibility of a later start-up to the new academic year.

3. Reports from the President

The Chairman invited the President to discuss his reports.

3.1 Update in relation to the constitution of a new Governing Body.

The President referred to the documents circulated with the Agenda in relation to the constitution of a new Governing Body.

He discussed the process undertaken, the legal advice received and the reasoning why this email had not been brought to the attention of Governing Body. There was no means of avoiding the clear legal requirements as per the Act which was well underway on 28 January and that coupled with the clear instruction from Governing Body that the process be impartial and take place without the involvement of the Executive was the reason that the document was not presented at the Governing Body Meeting on 6 February. There was no intention to withhold the email received on 28 January and the President conveyed his apologies to Governors if this was construed in any way.

Governors agreed to the President's suggestion that consideration should be given to what should be communicated to Governors and that this may warrant an update to the Standing Orders.

To close the loop on the process, it was confirmed that the Cork Education and Training Board (CETB) had at its Board Meeting the previous day signed off on nominations for the 17 ordinary members of the Governing Body and that this was now sent by the CETB to the Minister for Education and Skills for approval.

The President also confirmed that he had communicated this to Mr Beausang in the DES and he conveyed his thanks to both Mr Leamy and Cllr Murphy for their involvement in the process.

3.2 President's Report – 27 March 2020.

The President's Report was circulated with the Agenda and Governors noted the activities which took place as highlighted in the report.

The President wished Governors to be aware of the extraordinary goodwill and hard work of staff with particular mention to the Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) Department who are facilitating remote learning and to the huge number of lecturers engaging so willingly in this restructured format. He referred to the enormous work being done by the Academic Council Executive in order to ensure remote teaching and learning is facilitated whilst maintaining the integrity of the academic quality and the professional recognition and standing of our degree programmes. He confirmed that a statement will be issued to staff and students to give certainty to all that the Institute will not be opening for on-campus lectures for the remainder of this semester.

He referred to the Emergency Management Team and the importance of putting the Institute's Business Continuity Plan in place for this crisis, the important role played by the CIT Health & Safety Officer, by IT Services and the Marketing Team. Mr Gallagher discussed the importance of keeping the communications going to our students and staff and referred to the dedicated portal covid-19.cit.ie and the email covid-19@cit.ie which is proving to be very effective. The President concluded by offering his thanks to all staff for putting so much effort into keeping the Institute's mission on track and he wished to acknowledge every staff member for their hard work and effort in these unprecedented and challenging times.

Governors conveyed a sincere "thank you" to all staff for their great work and wished them well during this very difficult time. The President to email staff to convey this message.

ACTION: The President to send an email of thanks to staff for all their hard work and effort during this very difficult time.

4. Governing Body MTU Sub-Committee:

The Chairman invited Mr Allen as Chair of the GB MTU Sub-Committee to discuss this item.

4.1 Signed Minutes of the MTU Sub-Committee Meeting held on Thursday 6 February 2020.

Mr Allen confirmed that the minutes of the meeting of 6 February had been considered at the Governing Body meeting on 5 March and they were being presented to Governors today as the final minute of this meeting. They were not signed ahead of today's meeting due the close-out meeting scheduled for earlier today not going ahead but he would sign these at the next available opportunity. Mr Allen requested approval of these minutes.

Governing Body APPROVED the Minutes of 6 February as presented.

4.2 Draft Minutes of the MTU Sub-Committee Meeting held on Friday 27 March 2020.

This meeting did not take place due to the current circumstances surrounding the Covid-19 crisis.

Mr Allen conveyed his thanks to the members of this Governing Body MTU Sub-Committee, they have all worked very hard and a lot had been achieved over the last two years. The cooperation of the Executive had been excellent and he wished to convey the thanks of the Sub-Committee to them all and their particular thanks to Sinéad Rodgers for all her hard work.

1.1 Draft Response document to the Minister for Education & Skills

The President referred to the three documents circulated with the Agenda and confirmed that in accordance with the legislative requirements of the Technological University (TU) Act 2018, the response to the Minister's letter dated 30 September 2019 must be submitted to the Minister for Education & Skills by Monday, 30 March 2020 in order to satisfy the statutory time limit set by the Minister in this letter.

He confirmed that these response documents were presented to IT Tralee's Governing Body on Wednesday at which they were unanimously approved and that they were being presented today for CIT Governors' approval.

The main document addresses the six particular issues raised by the Minister for Education & Skills in his letter dated 30 September 2019 with supporting evidence to clarify these points.

The Chairman invited Governors for comments and to convey their intention in relation to approval and submission.

Governors discussed their concerns in terms of the finances at IT Tralee and how there was still no formal update in relation to the Sustainability Plan; how the financial landscape of the country had suddenly changed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact of this in terms of expectations for future funding. They also discussed the IR issues and how essential it was to ensure that the ongoing engagement continued in order to resolve these issues. There was consensus that they must accept and trust the Minister's letter dated 30 September 2019 whereby the Minister had given a commitment that MTU would not be left with any financial legacy; they understood the legislative requirement in submitting the document by 30 March and agreed that the process must continue otherwise the MTU journey was over.

Overall, Governors agreed to the submission of the documentation (response to the Minister's letter of 30 September 2019) by a majority of 17 to 2 in favour.

A Governor urged that the MTU Management engage further with the Unions, to reach a compromise as it was essential that staff were on board. In relation to the Risk Register, there were items that could be dealt with now and in the coming months. There was also a request that the MTU Steering Group revisit the consideration of the two Senior Vice Presidents, one at each campus.

The President and Chair were appreciative of the concerns that Governors had raised and thanked them for their valuable contribution this afternoon and for their ongoing engagement in this MTU process.

For the information of Governors, the President confirmed that Dr Oliver Murphy retired as President of IT Tralee this week and he wished Dr Murphy well in his retirement.

5. Report from the Vice President for Finance and Administration:

5.1 Human Resources Report was circulated with the Agenda.

The Chairman invited Mr Gallagher to discuss his report.

Mr Gallagher referred to the 8 tabled progression reports as presented and requested Governors' approval of these.

Governors AGREED to all approvals as presented.

Mr Gallagher conveyed his thanks to all Governors who over the last five years were involved in the recruitment process with particular thanks to Mr Bernard Allen and Ms Mary Hegarty as without them, it would not have been possible to process the sheer volume of interviews that took place.

1.2 Operational Programmes & Budgets 2020/21 – 2023/24

Mr Gallagher referred to the Programmes & Budgets documentation which had been circulated with the agenda. He confirmed that the documentation had been presented to the Finance Sub-Committee at their meeting on 9 March and at the request of the HEA, the draft budget had been sent to them on 16 March. However, as a result of Covid-19, a full review of the Programmes & Budgets will be undertaken in May. He referred Governors to page 10 of the documentation which outlined the summary income and expenditure. He discussed the impact of the current crisis including increased costs, reductions in income streams and also the possible opportunities for the Institute to secure some additional funds.

He referred to Capital funding and in particular to the item from the Strategic Development Sub-Committee requiring Governing Body approval today.

Mr Gallagher informed Governors that a decision was required in relation to the development of Phase 2 of the CIT Arena project (High-Performance Athletics Centre). He reminded Governors that the Institute together with Athletics Ireland were approved for a grant of €9.2m from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport under the Large-Scale Strategic Infrastructure Fund for Sport (LSSIP) for this project prior to Christmas. There will be a shortfall in funding of approximately €3.5m and Mr Gallagher proposed that this shortfall be transferred from the Institute's Capital Development Reserve to the Strategic Reserve in order to proceed with work on Phase 1 of the project.

Governing Body APPROVED the transfer of €3.5m to the Strategic Reserve to support the development of Phase 2 as outline by Mr Gallagher.

Finally, Mr Gallagher sought Governing Body approval for the Programmes & Budgets 2020/21 – 2023/24.

Governors APPROVED the Programmes & Budgets as presented and noted that this will be revisited again after the review in May.

1.3 Annual Governance Statement 2018/19

Mr Gallagher referred to the Annual Governance Statement 2018/19 which was circulated with the Agenda and as there were no issues to report, he was therefore seeking Governing Body approval of same.

Governing Body approved the Annual Governance Statement 2018/19 as circulated.

6. Report from the Vice President for External Affairs:

6.1 Report on Research, Innovation and Enterprise, Engagement, Alumni and Internationalisation.

The Chairman invited Mr Loftus to discuss his report.

Mr Loftus gave an update in terms of how External Affairs were managing as result of the Covid-19 crisis confirming that there was a lot of work being done to support our International students who have stayed in Ireland with a group of volunteers providing support on a continuous basis. In relation to the Rubicon Centre, work was being done in order to support the start-up companies so that they will be able to continue with their work going forward. He also briefed Governors in relation to industry placements for students.

In relation to the report itself, Mr Loftus referred to the Institute's commitment to Innovation and highlighted the IPD students as an example of a multidisciplinary effort involving both business and engineering students who continue to win awards nationally and internationally. He commended the staff in the Innovation Office and all staff involved for their work.

In relation to Research, Mr Loftus referred to how well the Institute is doing on the research front as highlighted in the Research Office update. Finally, he drew Governors' attention to the Erasmus update on page 3 and to the positive development in relation to mobilisation of our students which currently stands at 58% (incoming) to 42% (outgoing) whereby students are taking advantage of international placement opportunities. He indicated that, historically, the ratio between incoming and outgoing international students in English-speaking countries was typically in the region of 4:1, and it was a very good achievement for CIT to have a more balanced performance in this context.

A discussion took place in relation to the importance of technology, how online learning possibilities will become the new normal and the option of going after global markets in this space.

Governors thanked Mr Loftus and his team for all their hard work with particular thanks to all the volunteers for their support to our international students.

7. Report from the Registrar & Vice President for Academic Affairs:

7.1 Report of the Academic Council meeting held on Wednesday 11 March 2020.

The Chairman invited Dr Ní Shé to discuss her report.

Dr Ní Shé highlighted the following as being the most pertinent points from the Academic Council meeting held on 11 March:

Item 1 referred to Academic Council delegating appropriate authority to the Academic Council Executive to make decisions in relation to academic contingency planning for the Institute. She wished to thank the Students' Union for their involvement in this decision making.

In relation to item 6, Dr Ní Shé confirmed that Academic Council agreed to extend the current academic calendar by one further year.

No approvals were sought in this report and Governors thanked Dr Ní Shé for her update.

8. Arts Sub-Committee Meeting:

As Ms Fitzgibbon was an apology for today's meeting, the Chairman invited Dr Ní Shé to discuss the Arts Sub-Committee reports.

8.1 Signed Minutes of the Arts Sub-Committee meeting held on Wednesday 5 February 2020.

Dr Ní Shé confirmed that the draft minutes which had been considered at the Governing Body meeting on 5 March had been circulated to the Arts Sub-Committee for their final approval. The Sub-Committee approved the minutes by email and these were presented to Governors today as the final minute of this meeting. One point to note from the minutes was that changes to the Terms of Reference of this Sub-Committee will be a task for the new Arts Sub-Committee in due course. She requested Governing Body approval of the minutes as circulated.

Governing Body APPROVED the Minutes as presented.

8.2 Draft Minutes of the Arts Sub-Committee meeting held on Wednesday 25 March 2020.

Dr Ní Shé confirmed that due to the current circumstances surrounding the Covid-19 crisis, this meeting did not go ahead.

9. Strategic Development Sub-Committee Meeting:

9.1 Signed Minutes of the Strategic Development Sub-Committee Meeting held on Monday 6 January 2020.

The Chairman referred to the unsigned final minutes of the Strategic Development Sub-Committee meeting held on 6 January 2020 which were circulated with the Agenda. The Sub-Committee agreed at their meeting on 25 March that these minutes were an accurate reflection of this meeting and on that basis the Chairman sought Governing Body approval of same.

Governing Body APPROVED the Minutes as presented.

9.2 Signed Minutes of the Strategic Development Sub-Committee Meeting held on Thursday 19 March 2020.

The Chairman confirmed that this meeting did not go ahead as there was not a quorum on the day, however, the meeting took place by video link on Wednesday 25 March.

As a result of this meeting, one item required approval and this was discussed under item 5 on today's agenda. The Chairman sought Governing Body approval of the draft minutes of 25 March.

Governing Body APPROVED the Minutes as presented.

9.3 Signed Minutes of the Strategic Development Sub-Committee Meeting held on Friday 27 March 2020 (Tabled).

Governors noted that this meeting did not take place.

On behalf of the Strategic Development Sub-Committee, the Chairman conveyed the thanks of the Sub-Committee to Karen O'Connor Desmond for all her hard work over the last year.

10. Audit & Risk Sub-Committee Meeting:

The Chairman invited Mr Allen as Chair of the Audit & Risk Sub-Committee Meeting to report on this item.

10.1 Signed Minutes of the Audit & Risk Sub-Committee meeting held on Thursday 21 November 2019.

Mr Allen referred to the Signed Minutes of the Audit & Risk Sub-Committee meeting held on 21 November 2019 which had been considered at the Governing Body meeting on 5 December and he sought Governing Body approval of these.

Governing Body APPROVED the Minutes as presented.

10.2 Signed Minutes of the Audit & Risk Sub-Committee meeting held on Thursday 27 February 2020 (Tabled).

A final unsigned minute was circulated with the agenda. The Audit & Risk Sub-Committee members had agreed that this minute reflected an accurate account of the meeting and Mr Allen as Chairman of the Sub-Committee agreed that he would sign these minutes at a later date and sought Governing Body approval of same.

Governing Body APPROVED the minutes as presented.

10.3 Signed Minutes of the Audit & Risk Sub-Committee meeting held on Friday 27 March 2020 (Tabled).

Mr Allen confirmed that due to the current circumstances surrounding the Covid-19 crisis, this meeting did not go ahead. He conveyed the thanks of the Sub-Committee to Ms Carmel Hayes for all her hard work and support over the last five years.

11. Finance Sub-Committee Meeting:

The Chairman invited Capt Hopkins as Chair of the Finance Sub-Committee Meeting to report on this item.

11.1 Signed Minutes of the Finance Sub-Committee Meeting held on Monday 10 February 2020.

Capt Hopkins referred to the Signed Minutes of the GB MTU Sub-Committee meeting held on 10 February 2020 which had been considered at the 5 March Governing Body meeting and sought Governing Body approval of same.

Governing Body APPROVED the signed Minutes as presented.

11.2 Signed Minutes of the Finance Sub-Committee Meeting held on Monday 9 March 2020.

A final unsigned minute was circulated with the agenda. The Finance Sub-Committee members agreed that this minute reflected an accurate account of the meeting and the Capt Hopkins sought Governing Body approval of same.

Governing Body APPROVED the Minutes as presented.

11.3 Signed Minutes of the Finance Sub-Committee Meeting held on Friday 27 March 2020.

Governors noted that this meeting did not take place due to the circumstances surrounding the Covid-19 crisis.

12. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Sub-Committee:

12.1 Signed Minutes of the EDI Sub-Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 26 February 2020.

An unsigned final minute was circulated with the agenda. The EDI Sub-Committee members agreed that this minute reflected an accurate account of the meeting and on that basis, the Chair of the Sub-Committee sought Governing Body approval of same.

Governing Body APPROVED the minutes as presented.

12.2 Signed Minutes of the EDI Sub-Committee Meeting held on Friday 27 March 2020.

Governors noted that this meeting did not take place due to the circumstances surrounding the Covid-19 crisis.

The Chairman closed the meeting by thanking Governors for their attendance both virtually and in person this afternoon. As this was the last meeting of the current Governing Body, the Chair conveyed his sincere thanks to Governors for their valued contributions at Governing Body meetings and at the various sub-committee meetings over the last five years, this has significantly added and indeed driven the development of the Institute. On behalf of Governors, he conveyed his sincere thanks to the President and to the Vice Presidents for their continued dedication to the Institute and to Geraldine, Sinéad and Karen from the President’s Office who provide valuable support to the Governing Body.

The President also conveyed his thanks to Governors, their commitment has and will continue to play a vital role in the development of CIT and he was most appreciative of the support received from the Governing Body since he became President. He wished Governors well and hoped that everyone will remain safe and well in this unique time of uncertainty for us all.

The meeting concluded at 5.00pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

ADDENDUM 1

Requests from Governing Body at their meeting on 27 March 2020

No.	Minute Page No.	Request	Actioned by	Date Actioned
1.	3	CAO 2019/20 intake to be an Agenda item at the Strategic Development Sub-Committee meeting on Monday 8 June 2020.	The President	
2.	4	The President to send an email of thanks to staff for all their hard work and effort during this very difficult time	The President	2 & 3 April 2020
3.		The President of the Students' Union to organise a tour of the classrooms in the 1974 Building at another date.	The President of the Students' Union	
4.		The President to explore the possibility of bestowing Fellowship Awards at a future date.	The President	Ongoing
5.		The President to give an update in relation to the Executive submitting plans on the proposed activity to include the investment/re-organisation that will be required for each of the areas listed in the Deloitte Executive summary.	The President	Ongoing
6.		The President to discuss with the Head of Faculty of Business & Humanities and the Executive the opportunities in terms of getting these and other newsworthy items into the public domain.	The President	Ongoing
7.		Marketing to remain as a standing item on the Addendum.	The President	Ongoing