Coventry University

Board of Governors
Wednesday, 26 November 2014
1600hrs in the Board Room (ABG20), Alan Berry Building, Coventry University

Document GM155

Minutes

155/1
Present:
Prof A Richardson (Chair), Mr S Parker (Deputy Chair), Mr G Berry, Mr K Bissett, Mr A Majithia, Mr D Clarke, Dr B Dhadda, Mr S Rogers, Mr R Stockdale, Ms J Cox, Mr P Ashdown, Mr T Matthews, Mr S Calvin, Mr M Reeves, Dr J Hully, Mr E Enoidem, Ms J Smith, Mr J Latham (Vice-Chancellor)

Apologies for Absence:
Prof J Norton, Mr N Crockett, Prof V Cox, Dr M Short, L Noble

In Attendance:
Mr DGMS Soutter (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Planning and Resources)), Mr M Challoner (Clerk)

155/2
Declarations of Interests

None

155/3
Items from the Chair

.1
The Chair welcomed all Governors for first meeting of academic year particularly those new Governors who had recently joined the Board of Governors.

.2
The Chair reminded the Board of those agendas currently being pursued by the University and the important role that Committees played in supporting the executive. It was also important for the Board to be provided with updates on developments taking place across the University Group outside of formal Board meetings.

.3
The Chair also referred to the importance of horizon scanning and to examine future opportunities and risks.
155/4
Appointment of Governors – Recommendation from Human Resources Committee

.1 Consideration was given to recommendations referred from the Human Resources Committee (as Nominations Committee) in respect of the appointment of new Governors and changes to the membership of Committees.

.2 Resolved that approval be given to:

(A) The appointment of Jane Cox as an Independent Member of the Board of Governors for one term of office of 3 years until 31 August 2017.

(B) The appointment of Jenny Hully as a Co-opted Member of the Board of Governors for one term of office of 3 years until 31 August 2017.

(C) The appointment of Susan Morton as an External Co-opted Member of the Human Resources Committee for one term of office of 3 years until 31 August 2017.

(D) Amendments to the membership of Committees of the Board of Governors for 2014/15:

(i) The appointment of Jane Cox and Jenny Hully as members of the Academic Affairs Committee;

(ii) The appointment of Robert Stockdale to the Audit and Risk Committee (removing him from the Academic Affairs Committee).

155/5
Final Accounts for Year Ending 31 July 2014

.1 Consideration was given to the audited statement of accounts for the University Group and for the University, presented by Mr David Hall of Deloitte LLP (Document G155/2).

.2 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Planning and Resources) reported that there had been minor amendments to the accounts previously circulated.

.3 The Board noted that members of both the Strategy and Resources Committee and the Audit and Risk Committee have considered the Accounts (which had been updated as a result of their comments), and were recommend approval to the Board of Governors.

.4 Following consideration of the accounts the Board noted that the University’s group structure was more complex when compared to other HEIs in the sector and that the educational subsidiaries had had a successful year.
A copy of the Annual Report and Accounts for the following University subsidiaries as approved by their Boards was available at the meeting:

(i) CU Services Ltd  
(ii) Coventry University Enterprises Ltd  
(iii) ACUA Ltd  
(iv) ACUA Solutions Ltd  
(v) Serious Games International Ltd  
(vi) Coventry University London Campus Ltd  
(vii) Coventry University College Ltd  
(viii) Coventry University Social Enterprise CIC

A copy of the Annual Report and Accounts for Coventry University Charitable Trust as approved by the Trustees was also made available at the meeting.

Resolved that the University Group accounts for the year ending 31 July 2014 be approved.

155/6  
Annual Report from the Audit Committee

1  
Consideration was given to the Audit Committee’s annual report to the Board of Governors presented by the Chair of the Audit Committee, Mr G Berry (Documents G155/3).

.2  
The report included the following annexes:

Annex A - Audit Committee Constitution and Terms of Reference  
Annex B - Internal Audit Annual Report 2013/14 from the Internal Auditors  
Annex C - External Audit Annual Report 2013/14 from the External Auditors  
Annex D - Value for Money Report 2013/14

.3  
Resolved that the annual report of the Audit Committee be approved for submission to HEFCE.

155/7  
Confirmation of Minutes and Matters Arising

The Minutes of the 154th meeting held on 21 July 2014 were approved and signed as a correct record (Document GM154).
155/8  
Vice-Chancellor’s Report

.1 The Vice-Chancellor provided the Board with an update in respect of the external political environment and the increased competition in the market with the anticipation of the SNC cap being lifted by HEFCE in 2015/16. It was reported that there had been a decline in applications for 2015 entry by 6% compared to the same point in the cycle last year although the international recruitment pipeline continued to be healthy.

.2 The Board was provided with an update in respect of the development of the estate together with a number of other strategic initiatives, which had been the subject of significant investment.

.3 The Vice-Chancellor reported that the University had for the first time featured in the QS World University Rankings 2013/14, which represented the world’s top 4% of higher education institutions, and took into account the subject range, research output and academic reputation of over 3,000 universities from across all continents. It was also reported that the University had also revised its comparator benchmark group as a result of its recent success in the UK and international league tables.

.4 The Board referred to the risks associated with the loss of key staff as a result of the University’s success and sought assurances that appropriate measures were in place. The Vice-Chancellor reported that through the investment in research the University was building additional research capacity. Progress was also being made to introduce development programmes for early and mid career researchers. In addition, there had been investment to increase the resilience and capacity of the senior executive team through the appointment of a number of Associate Deputy/Pro Vice-Chancellors. Additional staff were also being recruited to support the growth in student numbers.

155/9  
Update from Student Governors

.1 The Board received an update on matters of interest and recent activities within CUSU Ltd from the Student Governors. Of particular importance was the fact that the Union was currently in the process of developing its strategy to 2020.

.2 The Board also noted that:

(i) Plans were in place to increase the number of course representatives and volunteers;
(ii) Over 50 candidates had stood for a recent bye-election of a sabbatical officer;
(iii) Over 500 students had recently attended the Students’ Union AGM making it the highest attended in the UK;
(iv) A representative of Coventry University College had been appointed to the Sabbatical Team;
(v) The Union were supporting the University in its review of postgraduate provision;
(vi) Work was progressing to improve the Students’ Union website;
(vii) A total of £200 had been raised for the BBC’s Children in Need Appeal, with the BBC filming in the City.

.3 It was also reported that the University was working with the University to review the viability of the Union’s HUSH operation.

155/10
Updates from Committee Chairs

The Board received an update on matters of interest from the Chairs of Committees in respect of those Committee meetings that had taken place since the last meeting of the Board.

155/11
Presentation: UKVI Compliance Regime

.1 The Board received a joint presentation from the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor (International) and the Registrar and Secretary in respect of UKVI Compliance. The Board also received for information a presentation prepared by Penningtons Manches (Document G155/4).

.2 Following the presentation the Vice-Chancellor highlighted the importance of the University maintaining its Tier 4 license given the income from international recruitment and the risks associated with the fact that the University, its subsidiaries and CEG operated from a single license.

.3 The Board sought clarification as to the arrangements for attendance monitoring of students. The Registrar and Secretary reported that currently staff were required to take registers in class in order to ensure student engagement, but that the University was currently looking to automate attendance monitoring of students. The Registrar and Secretary provided the Board with an update on the arrangements for auditing CEG.

.4 The Board noted that UKVI compliance was included as part of the work programme for the Audit and Risk Committee. It was suggested that the report from Pennington’s be submitted to the Audit Committee.

.5 Reference was made to a new legal requirement for Universities and other public bodies to prevent people being drawn into terrorism and to comply with directives issued by the Home Office.

.6 Resolved that consideration of the new legal requirement regarding extremism be considered at a future meeting of the Board.
Consideration was given to a presentation by the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor (International) in respect of progress against the International Strategy to 2020 (Document G155/5).

Following the presentation reference was made to the current and projected growth in international students numbers and the potential impact on the UK student experience. The Deputy-Vice-Chancellor reported that there was no evidence to suggest that there had been an adverse impact and that despite the growth in numbers international students made up the minority of the student population.

The Board recognised that the strategy was one of internationalisation rather than simply international recruitment and provided a balance between attracting students and providing an excellent UK education experience. The Board sought confirmation that there was sufficient investment in infrastructure to support the growth in student numbers. The Deputy-Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the University had made significant investment to support the delivery of the strategy and that further investment was planned.

The Board noted the University’s performance in achieving the 2013/14 Corporate Plan objectives presented by the Vice-Chancellor (Document G155/6).

Consideration was given to the Corporate Plan 2014/15 presented by the Vice-Chancellor (Document G155/7).

Resolved that the Corporate Plan 2014/15 be approved.

Resolved that amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Strategy and Resources Committee be approved (Document G155/8).
155/16
Confirmation of Chairs Action – Coventry University General Regulations

The Board endorsed the action taken by the Chair to approve amendments to Appendix 1, Examinations and other Assessments: responsibilities of students, of the General Regulations, enclosed (Document G155/9).

155/17
HEFCE Annual Assessment of Institutional Risk

The Board noted correspondence from HEFCE in respect of the annual assessment of institutional risk (Document G155/10).

155/18
Any Other Business

Noted

155/19
Schedule of Meetings 2014-15

The Board is asked to note the schedule of meetings for 2014/15. All meetings start at 1600 hrs in the Board Room (ABG20), Alan Berry building unless otherwise stated.

11 December 2015 from 0900 – 1300hrs (Board Away Event)
27 January 2015
19 May 2015
11 June 2015 0900 – 1300hrs (Board Away Event)
21 July 2015 (followed by annual dinner)

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