



HARTPURY

Minutes of the Meetings of Hartpury University and Hartpury College Boards 10 am Wednesday 10th July 2024 Equine, Hartpury

Members

Edward Keene
Alison Blackburn
Patrick Brooke
Robert Brooks
Sascha Bruce
Barbara Buck -
Andy Collop (Professor)
Alastair Grizzell
Amy Tranter
Mary Heslop
Henry Hodgkins
Thomas Legge
Melissa Orritt
William Marshall
Chris Moody
Lucie Hammond
Ian Robinson (Professor)
Nick Oldham
Rose Stephenson
Helen Wilkinson

In Attendance

Mick Axtell
Rosie Scott-Ward
Gillian Steels
Claire Whitworth

Lesley Worsfold

University Board

Present (Chair)
Present (Co-opted Governor)
-
Present
Present (HE Student Governor)
-
Present (Vice-Chancellor)
-
-
Present
Present (HE Staff Governor) (from 10.50am)
-
Present
Present (from 10.20am)
Present
Present
Present
-
Present
-
Present

Present (Chief Operating Officer)
Present (Deputy-Vice-Chancellor)
Present (Clerk to the Board)
-
Apologies (Deputy-Principal Resources)
-

College Board

Present (Chair)
-
Present
-
Present (Vice-Chair)
Present (Principal)
Apologies
Apologies (FE Student Governor)
Present
-
-
Present (FE Staff Governor)
-
Present (from 10.20am)
-
-
Resigned
-
Apologies
Present (Chief Operating Officer)
-
Present (Clerk to the Board)
Present (Deputy-Principal Further Education)
Apologies (Deputy-Principal Resources)

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
01/07/24	<p>Welcome</p> <p>The Chair welcomed governors to the meeting. It was noted that Nick Oldham, College Governor had resigned due to work commitments. Thanks were recorded for his contribution.</p> <p>Apologies and Confirmation of Quoracy</p> <p>Apologies as detailed above.</p> <p>It was confirmed the meetings of the University Board and the College Board were quorate.</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
02/07/24	<p>Declaration of Interest</p> <p>The Clerk advised that members' interests would be taken as those disclosed in the Register of Members Interests.</p> <p>Standing Interests – Chair, Vice-Chancellor/Principal and Chris Moody members of both University and College Boards</p>	
03/07/24	<p>Minutes of the meetings</p> <p>The Minutes of the University Board and the College Board meetings held on the 15th May 2024 were agreed by the respective Boards to be true and accurate records.</p> <p>The Electronic Approval of the Outsourcing of the Catering Provision was NOTED.</p>	
04/07/24	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>An action log had been provided updating on issues raised at previous meetings.</p> <p>Recognition of Hartpury University – it was noted that there were still some old signs external to the Campus which referred only to Hartpury College and it was agreed it would be helpful if the Council would update these. It was confirmed this had been raised with them.</p> <p>Confidential Item – Commercial Sensitivity – 3 years.</p> <p>The update was NOTED.</p>	24
	Part 1 Priority Agenda Items	
05/07/24	<p>Vice-Chancellor and Principal's Update</p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor and Principal provided a presentation.</p> <p>The presentation covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External environment • Hartpury Highlights • ULH update • Hartpury Celebration of Eventing Update • Budget update <p>External Environment</p> <p>Key positions in the labour government for colleges, universities, skills and innovation were highlighted. It was confirmed Hartpury would be inviting the appropriate Ministers to Hartpury to help them understand our unique model, which would link to their interest in potential greater integration of colleges and universities.</p> <p>College Sector – Government "Plans"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Comprehensive strategy to better integrate" FE & HE & strengthen regulation • "Skills England" bringing together businesses, training providers & unions with regional & national government • More devolved skills powers to local areas • "Specialist" technical excellence colleges • Single headline Ofsted grade replaced with report card system <p>At this stage the new government view on defunding B'tecs and the future of the ABS was not known.</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>University Sector – Government “Plans”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Every person who meets the requirements & wants to go to university should have their aspiration supported” • Work on “teaching standards” – rather than previous government focus on “poor quality courses”. • Create a secure future for HE – fees, review? • Apprenticeship Levy replaced by - Growth & Skills Levy • New statutory role in Local Growth Plans (LSIP+) – recognised that whilst colleges had been actively involved universities had not been included. <p>At this stage government view on International Students and Maintenance for students had not been set out. These would be key areas for the sector. The labour government’s recognition of the UK’s HE sector as world leading was encouraging.</p>	
	<p>Hartpury Highlights</p> <p>Graduate Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relates to 2021/22 graduating year • Based on survey 15 months after graduating • 97% in employment, further study or other purposeful activity (compared to 83% nationally) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ 100% agriculture ➢ 98% equine & sports ➢ 97% animal ➢ 93% vet nursing • Top 10% in UK and #1(=) in South-West <p>Whilst this was very positive it was recognised that the categorisation of “highly skilled” employment at 52% (national average 78%) was below where Hartpury wanted to be. Governors explored the background to this, noting that landbased provision generally was lower than the 78%, but that it was difficult to find a provider which mapped exactly to Hartpury’s subject mix for a direct comparator. Hartpury subject areas which had scored lower were undergraduate animal and agriculture, and equine. It was noted this was a key metric as it was used by OfS within the B3 metrics, TEF and Access and Participation Plan review. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor commented that a task force and action plan would be set in place. This would include building confidence in students to aim high when applying for posts, and ensuring the survey questions were clearly understood. Governors queried if the outcome meant there was a risk that some of our provision would be defunded in the longer term. The Vice-Chancellor commented that Hartpury should be able to raise its performance, whilst not to the average, as this was accepted as being above the level for landbased provision. Governors were supportive of the planned work in this area.</p>	<p>Dep VC Nov 24 HE Quest</p>
	<p>International Agent Familiarisation Visit</p> <p>This had been organised jointly with the University of Gloucestershire and the Royal Agriculture University. This had shared costs and jointly highlighted Gloucestershire as a destination for international students. The event had received very positive feedback. Assessment of its impact would be longer term. Governors queried the level of fee and were advised this varied depending on the type of agent, and that the costs were built into the course costs.</p>	
	<p>National Schools Week Championing School Sport - Hartpury’s role in this was set out. It had been a very positive engagement.</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	Summer Ball – this had been a successful event.	
	College Prize Day – This had again been a very successful and well organised event. It was noted it had included Martin Clunes inauguration as College Chancellor. Martin Clunes and Farmer Will had both been very well received by attendees. It was noted Martin was also attending the horse trials and University Graduation. His contribution to Hartpury was recognised.	
	Gloucester Hartpury – the team's success in retaining the title for a second year was highlighted.	
	10.50am Tom Legge joined the meeting	
	Confidential Item Commercially Confidential – 5 years	
	Hartpury Celebration of Eventing – August The scale and expected activity were noted. The Board noted the Update.	
	Confidential Item– Commercially Confidential – 2 Years	
	The University Board and the College Boards Approved the 2024/25 Budget, noting that the timing of expenditure would be managed against the profile of income and the planned increase the overdraft facility.	
06/07/24	Confidential Item - Commercial Sensitivity 3 years	
07/07/24	Management Accounts - April The report updated on the financial position of the University Group, enabling the Boards to monitor financial performance and gain assurance on any areas of potential concern. The operating result for the nine months ending April 2024 was a surplus of £1,339k compared to a budgeted surplus of £1,206K. The favourable variance was mostly relating to a favourable in year review of funding from the ESFA for our FE provision in addition to an increase in the funding received from them to support Employers contributions to the Teachers' Pension Scheme. A full reforecast was carried out in early 2024 and was updated for the May management accounts. Although there would be changes from the previous reforecast there was nothing to indicate that the reforecast will not be achieved. Cash balances at the month end were £6,592k. The University had an overdraft facility of £1m. The University complies with its bank covenants and was forecast to continue to do so. A governor queried the performance ratio. The Chief Operating Officer confirmed he would check this, and advised that the metrics used would be reviewed with SFR.	COO Nov 24

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	The University Board and the College Board NOTED the April Management Accounts. It was NOTED the May Accounts had also been circulated.	
08/07/24	FE Report	
	POLICY / EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT: the external environment continued to evolve and the new key areas of focus for us since the last report included:	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The General Election – covered above. There was a pause in the defunding of qualifications – the outcome of this was awaited. At this stage Hartpury continued to plan for T'levels delivery, where these were in place, as previously planned. 2. Opportunity England <p>RECRUITMENT: applications and acceptances remained strong although work would continue to convert through to application, continuing to focus on the local market, given that a large number of those accepted do require our onsite accommodation. Next year is the first year of T-Level delivery and applications were currently strong. It was recognised that Hartpury did not have a history of conversion yet. Where students did not meet the entry criteria for the T'level they would be able to move to the Foundation Programme. Apprenticeships were growing and would be c 80 in 2024/25. Governors queried if this was an area the new government was likely to support. It was understood this was the case. It was noted Hartpury was engaging with more employers and bringing them on to campus which was considered positive.</p> <p>It was noted the Accountability Statement had been signed off by FE Quest and issued to DfE and uploaded to the website as required.</p> <p>Hartpury had had its termly conversation with the ESFA and raised issues around transport and exams.</p> <p>CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT: Hartpury continued to drive forward further improvements, focusing on Quality Improvement Plan actions. We still have plenty of areas for continued focus to support further developments and consolidation next year.</p> <p>The FE Report was NOTED.</p>	
09/07/24	HE Report	
	<p>Student recruitment had improved slightly, with firm choices slightly behind the same point last year (home UG first years). Sport, Agriculture and Veterinary Nursing were recruiting more strongly.</p> <p>Postgraduate was the area which was currently performing behind predictions (home). This was impacting all subject areas. The Cost of Living and reduced company sponsorship was an issue. Options of using the Apprenticeship Levy were being explored.</p> <p>International continued to be positive and was on target for the expected growth.</p> <p>The Foundation Year applications were down.</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>Recruitment was being carefully monitored, and alternative sources of information such as accommodation were being used to triangulate.</p> <p>Student retention had improved on the last two years, although we will continue to be vigilant with failed to enrols in September. Non-submissions and extenuating circumstances were down. Governors requested more information on this and were advised that post-covid there had been an increased use of extenuating circumstances, this year this had reduced following an increased focus on wellbeing support. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal advised that use of these could help indicate potential future withdrawals and were a helpful indicator. The focus now was on proving support as soon as possible. It was confirmed that academic support was graded highly within the NSS survey, and it was important now to develop students' resilience.</p> <p>Curriculum developments included proposals being considered by SMT regarding UG veterinary physiotherapy and Sport Psychology / Psychology. Capital investment was required and this would not currently be taken forward, although the academic preparations would be put in place. A governor queried how the potential new curriculum would reflect on issues such as resources, recruitment, APP and graduate outcomes. It was noted that Veterinary Physiology would improve highly skilled outcomes. Sports Psychology and psychology would potentially improve diversity. Physical resources and academic fit were the first consideration.</p> <p>Research and knowledge exchange continued to progress. A recently commissioned external review of knowledge exchange activity had proved valuable. The RKE conference would take place on 11th July.</p> <p>Governors were updated on the sad death of a student. They were advised that the student's parents had visited and commented that the student had been very happy at Hartpury. Support was in place for students and staff.</p>	
	The HE Report was NOTED.	
10/07/24	<p>Student & Staff Voice</p> <p>Student Governor <i>University Student Governor</i> – the SU had been strengthened with an additional post of activities co-ordinator.</p> <p>Staff Governors <i>University Staff Governor</i> – staff busy with planning for next year. ULH and likely opening timescale was an area of interest. Staff recognition of the challenges to the university sector, Teaching and Learning Conference very helpful.</p> <p><i>College Staff Governor</i> – very positive feedback on prize day and Martin Clunes as Chancellor.</p> <p>Governor Link Feedback The following link governor visits were noted: Safeguarding – Barbara Buck – Monthly meetings Health & Safety – Ian Robinson Agriculture – Patrick Brooke EDI – Alison Blackburn</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>Equine – Helen Wilkinson</p> <p>Overall Department Visit Feedback Key points: morale and pride reported to be high following the Ofsted inspection outcome, Industry Links – The applied nature of most research activity at Hartpury ensures its industry relevance. Students Feel Safe - Yes. Agriculture - There is now a Well-being Centre based in the Malcolm Wharton building. Anecdotally confirmed in H&S visit. New hazard signage to encourage careful driving. Any Strategic Issues Raised: EDI - Access and Participation Plan Development – Approved by HE Quest & Reported in the June Minutes H&S Manager reported that he feels that H&S advice is taken seriously, and given due consideration and priority in decision making.</p> <p>Other Visits Attendance at Prize Day noted.</p> <p>The Updates were NOTED.</p> <p>The Chair thanked governors for their involvement in the link governor scheme which helped to triangulate the information provided at the meetings.</p>	
11/07/24	<p>Strategy Finance and Resources Committee</p>	
11.1	<p>Minutes of the meeting 19th June 24 The minutes were NOTED.</p> <p>The Chair advised that the Committees had discussed the Budget, ULH and Management Accounts, with feedback on these already provided in the meeting. Other areas covered had been the capital projects and the HE Fees Policy. Governors queried the plans for facility projects noting these were not included in the budget. The Chief Operating Officer advised that a conditions survey was being undertaken to identify priority areas. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal confirmed that there were no dangerous issues. It was confirmed that philanthropic grants would continue to be sought, but any potential grants were not included in the budget. It was confirmed a prudent approach had been taken to the budget.</p>	
11.2	<p><u>Recommendations to the Boards:</u> College & University SFR recommend APPROVAL of: Budget 2023/24 - Approved as above within Vice-Chancellor Report.</p>	
11.3	<p><u>Recommendations to the College Board:</u> College SFR Recommends the Approval of the ESFA Finance Return The College Board APPROVED the ESFA Finance Return.</p>	
11.4	<p>Matters to Note (i) The University Finance Plan had been updated and would be finalised in November.</p>	
11.5	<p>Committee Terms of Reference & Agenda Cycle – minor change to refer to</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>sustainability rather than sustainability (environment) APPROVED.</p> <p>Agenda Cycle – no changes – NOTED.</p>	
11.6	<p>It was noted that the following had been Approved under delegated authority: HE Tuition Fees Policy 2025 HE Fee Proposal 2025 Entry</p>	
12/07/24	<p>Audit and Risk Management Committee Recommendations: Minutes of the meeting 25th June 2024 The Chairs updated on key points for the meetings. It was noted that a new partner, Jon Marchant, was in place for Mazars, External Auditors, following the retirement of Richard Bott. The Internal Audit Plan for 2024/25 was being finalised. The outsourcing of catering meant that some issues relating to stock controls would be moved externally.</p> <p>The Minutes were NOTED.</p> <p>Risks Update - NOTED</p> <p>Regularity Self-Assessment – APPROVED by the College Board.</p> <p>Terms of Reference & Agenda Cycle – no changes – NOTED.</p>	
13/07/24	<p>Quest Committee Recommendations Minutes of the Meetings 27th June 2024 HE – The Chair highlighted key points: Access and Participation Plan – updated as required by Office for Students (OfS). It had been considered a thorough and ambitious plan by the Committee. Graduate Outcomes – Highly Skilled Outcome Issue – particularly in animal and agriculture and equine at undergraduate level. Students Union (SU) - very active and dynamic Degrees Outcome Statement – approved under delegated authority. No sign of grade inflation at Hartpury. Some benchmarking work ongoing. Student Protection Plan – OFS Requirement – updated. Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) – Research Excellence Framework (REF) delayed until 2028 which would delay Hartpury's plans to apply for Research Degree Awarding Powers) RDAP to 2030.</p> <p>A governor asked if there had been an outcome to the appeal to the Office of Independent Adjudicator HE and was advised it had been partially upheld with a small amount paid to a student.</p> <p>The Minutes were NOTED.</p>	
	<p>FE - The Chair highlighted key points: Animal Level 1 – in place Maths GCSE below National Rate, results awaited Accountability Statement approved and submitted to DfE</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>Skills Review – completed as required QuIP – encouraging progress Agriculture staff – in place and performing well Landex – positive review – used to supplement Ofsted Teaching Learning and Assessment – CPD comprehensive Career and Skills – new staff in place</p>	
	<p>SU Report - Constitution & Statutes and Strategy on a Page This was recommended by both Committees. It was noted some changes had been made relating to Freedom of Speech and to clarify that it was not an independent SU following feedback from the Committees.</p> <p>The University and College Boards APPROVED the revised SU Constitution & Statutes and NOTED the Strategy on a Page</p> <p>Terms of Reference & Agenda Cycle FE Quest – No Changes - NOTED HE Quest – revised to align with OfS Conditions of Registration more transparently– APPROVED.</p>	
	<p>Noted Approved under delegated authority: HE Quest: Access and Participation Plan Degree Outcome Statement Student Protection Plan</p>	
14/07/24	<p>Search & Governance Committee Recommendations Minutes of the Meetings 27th June The Chair Updated on key points. Clarity on use of Closed Session had been put in place. External Board Assessment to take place in the autumn. Board diversity continued to be area of focus. The Minutes were NOTED.</p>	
	<p>The University and College Boards, following the recommendations of the Search and Governance Committees AGREED to APPOINT Kam Nandra be appointed to the Search and Governance Committees as a co-opted member for a four-year term of office, subject to appointment checks being satisfactorily completed, based on Kam's breadth of experience within the education sector and his ability to link Hartpury to wider networks to help support development of diversity on the Boards.</p>	
	<p>The University Board, following the recommendation of the University Search and Governance Committee, APPROVED that Fiona Reece be APPOINTED to the University Board for a 4-year term of Office from 1st September 2024 and membership of the University SFR Committee based on her breadth of experience in PR, marketing and business, subject to appointment checks being satisfactorily completed.</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	The University Board, following the recommendation of the University Search and Governance Committee, APPROVED Robert Brooks be APPOINTED to the University Board Audit and Risk Management Committee in line with his term of office of the Board and cease to be a member of SFR as part of a regular rotation process and to use his skills for the benefit of the Audit and Risk Management Committee.	
	The University Board, following the recommendation of the HE Search and Governance Committee APPROVED that Alison Blackburn be appointed Vice-Chair of the HE Quest Committee	
	The University Search and Governance Committee AGREED to RECOMMEND the revised HE Quest Committee Terms of Reference to the University Board. (see agenda item 13) - Approved above	
	The University and College Boards, following the recommendations of the Search and Governance Committees AGREED the minor amendment to the SFR Committee terms of reference for the University and the College and the S&G Committee terms of reference for the University and the College (see agenda item 11) and the committee structure diagrams.	
	Noted that the following Student Governors had been elected for 2024/25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HE Governor - Amber Smith-Burchall – Equine • FE Governor – Ella Smith - Agriculture • FE Deputy Governor – Hannah Lennon- Equine 	
15/07/24	Application of Hartpury Seal* None	
16/07/24	Any Other Business It was noted it was Sascha Bruce, HE Student Governor's last meeting. Thanks were formally recorded for her contribution. A certificate to thank her for her hard work was formally presented.	
	The meeting closed at 12.35pm	