



HARTPURY

Minutes of the Meetings of Hartpury University and Hartpury College Boards 10 am Wednesday 15th May 2024 Agri-tec, 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)
-
Present
Present
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)
-
Apologies
Present (Vice-Chair)
Present (Principal)
Apologies
Apologies (FE Student Governor)
Present
-
-
Apologies (FE Staff Governor)
-
Present
-
-
Apologies
-
Present
Present (Chief Operating Officer)
-
Present (Clerk to the Board)
Present (Deputy-Principal Further Education)
Apologies (Deputy-Principal Resources)

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
01/05/24	Welcome The Chair welcomed governors to the meeting. Apologies and Confirmation of Quoracy Apologies as detailed above. It was confirmed the meetings of the University Board and the College Board were quorate.	
02/05/24	Declaration of Interest The Clerk advised that members' interests would be taken as those disclosed in the	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>Register of Members Interests.</p> <p>Standing Interests – Chair, Vice-Chancellor/Principal and Chris Moody members of both University and College Boards</p>	
03/05/24	<p>Minutes of the meetings</p> <p>The Minutes of the University Board and the College Board meetings held on the 20th March 2024 were agreed by the respective Boards to be true and accurate records.</p> <p>The FE Board Agreed the Minutes of the Meeting of the FE Board 7th May 2024 as a true and accurate record.</p>	
04/05/24	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>An action log had been provided updating on issues raised at previous meetings.</p> <p>It was noted that an example of a Money Management Scheme had been provided and reviewed. At this stage while cash levels were being reviewed this was not being progressed. It would be reviewed again once there was more certainty on this.</p> <p>The update was NOTED.</p>	COO Nov 24
	Part 1 Priority Agenda Items	
05/05/24	<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 • 24/25 Budget • ULH • Priorities <p>University Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LLE - launch delayed until Jan 2026. Noted that the Labour Party were also committed to the concept, but that a change of government might mean changes to design or timeline. • Focus on franchised education through Commons Committee on Public Accounts – the focus had been on degrees delivered out of country. This was not an area where Hartpury was currently active, but it was agreed it was helpful to be aware of developments in this area, given our developing International Strategy. • Likely new condition of registration around harassment & sexual misconduct following consultation in Spring 2023 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Publish document explaining approach to tackling harassment and sexual misconduct ➤ Prohibit restricting disclosure of information about an allegation of harassment or sexual misconduct that involves or affects students ➤ Requirements relating to personal relationships between students & relevant staff (disclosure?) <p>Appropriate actions to be put in place by Hartpury once OfS finalised the new condition.</p>	

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	<p>College Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ofsted's "Big Listen" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How we report our findings ➤ How we carry out inspections ➤ How we can have a +ve impact ➤ What do we need to do to be world-class ➤ Consultation open until 31st May <p>The Board would be updated on any changes put in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AoC's "Opportunity England" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Single tertiary education system ➤ Existing system inefficient, ineffective & unfair, siloed & fragmented education policies without any clear strategy & priorities ➤ Whole systems approach <p>It was agreed this was an interesting area of consideration, but recognised that England was much larger scale, with many more institutions than Wales where a single regulator had been introduced. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal advised that currently universities had not been engaged in this discussion.</p>	
	<p>Hartpury Sporting Highlights</p> <p>Achievements in netball, football, rugby were detailed, with staff and students congratulated.</p> <p>The Boards were updated that Hartpury University Football Club had been promoted and would need improved facilities to meet the requirements of the higher league. After considering the costs of the option of improving the current stand and fencing, reflecting on safeguarding considerations and considering the risk assessment it had been decided to share the facilities with Rugby 1. Costs for this would be significantly lower than further improvements to the current area used. In the longer-term consideration would be given to changing the surface, to avoid issues if it rained. A business case was to be developed for this. External funding grants would be looked at.</p>	<p>SFR Nov 24</p>
	<p>QAA Reports</p> <p>Highlighted that Deputy-Vice Chancellor and Catherine Phillips had chaired QAA benchmark reports reflecting Hartpury's reputation and practice.</p>	
	<p>Business Development Activities</p> <p>The River Severn Partnership was highlighted this consisted of 26 partners spanning England & Wales. It was led by Shropshire CC, £800k for Hartpury 5G unit, staff and events. The development supported the Digital Innovation Farm.</p>	
	<p>Festival of British Eventing 2024 – 6-11th August</p> <p>Governors were advised that Hartpury had agreed to host this event, following the withdrawal of the previous host, and a review of Hartpury's ability to run it successfully, within agreed financial limits and to provide a quality experience for horse and riders. This would be a high-profile event which would be run alongside the International Events. Initially this would be for one year and then Hartpury would be able to tender for it in the future. Governors queried if there were any concerns about running the two events together. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor advised that rain was a potential issue. Experience had shown that heat could be managed. Care was being taken to manage staff capacity. More volunteers were being sought. Governors agreed it was a great reputational opportunity but queried the cost. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor advised that three scenarios had been developed</p>	

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	and mitigations put in place to respond to worst case scenario. It would depend on the number of entries and the amount of sponsorship achieved. Governors queried why the previous event holder had withdrawn and were advised they had been impacted by rain the previous year, and had a very different structure to Hartpury. In the longer-term Hartpury would look at the potential for developing its events as a shopping destination. It was confirmed that the information from holding the event would be helpful for informing future tendering plans. Governors queried whether insurers had been advised, this was confirmed.	
	Confidential Item – Commercial Sensitivity – 3 years -	
	Confidential Item – 5 years – Commercial Sensitivity	
	Hartpury Strategy Launch Video Governors watched the video and agreed it set out Hartpury well.	
	Current priorities were also outlined.	
	The University Board and the College Boards NOTED the Update.	
06/05/24	Confidential Item - Commercial Sensitivity 3 years	
07/05/24	Management Accounts - March	
	<p>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. It was noted that the operating result for the eight months ending March 2024 was a surplus of £117k compared to a budgeted surplus of £142K. This was mostly in line with budget and the reforecast. Although we had had a very favourable in year review of funding from the ESFA for our FE provision, this was offset by lower HE student numbers as had been previously reported.</p> <p>A full reforecast had been carried out in January and showed a projected surplus of £1,323k compared to an original budget of £1,024k. Although there was movement on this, there was nothing to suggest that this would not be achieved. An updated settlement of an additional £157k from the ESFA relating to the increase in Teachers' Pension contributions had now been received, although not incorporated into the reforecast yet. A further review would be undertaken as part of the April Management Accounts preparation. It was noted that cash balances at the month end were £3,122k. The University had an overdraft facility of £1m. The University complied with its bank covenants and is forecast to continue to do so.</p> <p>A governor commented that utilities and transport remained points of concern. It was confirmed work was ongoing to better understand and control costs in these areas. The challenge of controlling transport costs without impacting on recruitment was recognised. It was confirmed work was ongoing to optimise use.</p> <p>A governor queried the causes of the adverse cost variance in sport. It was confirmed there had been an overall review of costs in sport and work was ongoing to reduce costs.</p>	
	The University Board and the College Board NOTED the Management Accounts.	

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08/05/24	<p>HE Report</p> <p>Student recruitment It was confirmed this continued to be challenging, especially in equine and animal areas. It was difficult to get sector data, but equine recruitment was thought to be a sector issue. Agriculture numbers had grown, responding to recent investment. Veterinary Nursing applicants were at expected levels. A career advisors' day had been held to promote Hartpury as a university. The three-year impact of any decline in HE numbers was recognised. It was noted that non-European international recruitment was up by 29%, and the targeted 10% international growth target was expected to be achieved.</p> <p>The Deputy Vice-Chancellor commented that improved retention was positive, and confirmed this continued to be closely monitored. It was recognised that the return data after the summer was key.</p> <p>Curriculum developments Work continued on validating several new programmes, complementing existing provision. It was confirmed there would be new provision for 2024 and 2025. Governors queried recruitment on to the new programmes. They were advised Equine Dentistry had numbers of 12-14 applicants, the new business programme was at a viable level of applications, biological sciences had not recruited sufficient numbers to date and might be delayed. It was confirmed that if courses did not run that potential applicants would be advised of alternatives. Governors questioned whether existing provision was also reviewed and removed if it was not recruiting. This was confirmed. It was also noted that the curriculum had been reviewed to make it more efficient, for example by removing some options. It was confirmed that costs across HE had been reviewed and reduced where possible. It was recognised that staffing to recruitment was challenging because of the uncertainty around the numbers. It was confirmed numbers were being carefully monitored using a range of indicators.</p> <p>Research and knowledge exchange continued to make progress and attract additional funding. Work with UWE continued to develop, with the recent Ideation Day a really positive event for staff and students. There would be a Teaching and Learning Conference on 14th June and the Research Conference on 11th July.</p> <p>Access and Participation preparation continued, with clear groups to focus activities on. The APP (Access and Participation Plan) would be submitted in July.</p> <p>National Student Survey (NSS) – 80% completion had been achieved which was a strong level of return. The outcomes would not be known until later in the year. The timing had been difficult spanning issues with transport, flooding and the ULH delays.</p> <p>Some staffing updates were advised.</p>	
	The HE Report was NOTED.	
09/05/24	<p>FE Report</p> <p>The report provided a high-level overview of progress made with key areas of development for Hartpury College, recruitment for 2024-2025 and an overview of recent updates to policy and the external environment.</p> <p>Policy / External Environment: It was noted that the external environment continued to evolve, and the new key areas of focus included:</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>1. New Maths and English Resit Policy – this would increase the number of hours of study required from 2 to 3-4 which would be a significant additional cost and staffing challenge.</p> <p>2. T-Level Action Plan, released April 2024 - an assessment ratio of 1:3 would be required which would need to be managed.</p> <p>Recruitment: our applications and acceptances were currently strong although work continued to convert through to application, targeting the local market, given that a large number of those accepted require our onsite accommodation. It was highlighted that next year was our first year of T-Level delivery and whilst applications were strong, supported by an extensive marketing campaign, we remained cautious. Sport had been limited as beds were being prioritised by land-based subjects.</p> <p>A governor asked the reason for the high drop out rate at T'levels at institutions who were already delivering them. The Deputy Principal FE advised that this reflected that it was difficult to get the model right. Hartpury was using the experience of earlier adopters to help shape its provision to try to avoid such issues.</p> <p>Continuous Improvement: we continued to drive forward further improvements, focusing on our Quality Improvement Plan actions. This had recently been endorsed by our Ofsted visit where we were graded as Outstanding in all areas and making a 'strong contribution' to skills needs. There would be a Gloucestershire Local Authority SEND review in September. A skills review had taken place as required and the Accountability Statement would be formally signed off at Quest in June, following support at the FE Board.</p> <p>The Boards were advised that the termly ESFA visit would take place in June. Issues for discussion would be agriculture staff recruitment challenges, plans for 2024/25.</p>	
	The FE Report was NOTED.	
10/05/24	<p>Student & Staff Voice</p> <p>Student Governor <i>University Student Governor</i> – 3rd round of student feedback had just been received. Themes had been disappointment about the delays to ULH but pleased with SU building developments. Positive areas highlighted had been safety, staff, research opportunities, the campus.</p> <p>Staff Governors <i>University Staff Governor</i> – highlighted local challenges around recognition that Hartpury was a university as well as a college</p> <p>Governor Link Feedback The following link governor visits were noted: Research and Knowledge Exchange – Chris Moody Feb 24 Health & Safety – Ian Robinson to visit May 24 Skills & Careers – Mary Heslop Safeguarding – Barbara Buck – Monthly meetings</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>Overall Department Visit Feedback</p> <p>Morale - morale and pride reported to be high following the Ofsted inspection outcome, including the judgement on skills. The recent LANDEX review confirmed that managers had a sense of pride and rise to challenges.</p> <p>Industry Links – The applied nature of most research activity at Hartpury ensures its industry relevance. Confirmed by Skills Review</p> <p>Other Visits Bill Marshall visited the ULH Building May 24 Rose Stephenson to attend tour May 24 Barbara Buck – High Needs Conference – Jan 24</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>	
11/05/24	<p>Strategy Finance and Resources Committee Minutes of the meeting 7th May 24 The minutes were NOTED.</p> <p>The Chair advised that the Committees had discussed the ULH and Management Accounts, with feedback on these already provided in the meeting. Other areas covered had been the capital projects, EDI and the Fees Policy.</p>	
	<p>It was noted that the following had been Approved under delegated authority: EDI Annual Report – FE and HE SFR FE International Fees Policy – FE SFR</p>	
12/05/24	<p>Honorary Degree Committee Terms of Reference</p> <p>The amended Terms of Reference were noted. It was confirmed that the Academic Board was responsible for approving the terms of reference, which were then shared with the Board. It was confirmed that the Chancellor should not be listed as a member of the committee and confirmed this would be amended.</p>	Dep VC July 24
	<p>The Honorary Degree Committee Terms of Reference were noted.</p>	
13/05/24	<p>Application of Hartpury Seal* The following uses of the seal were noted: 28/3/24 - Non-Disclosure Agreement relating to UKSPF (UK Shared Prosperity Funds) Evaluation between Hartpury University and BMG 28/3/24 – Grant Agreement UKSPF between Hartpury University and Gloucester City 16/4/24 – Hartpury T'level Wave 5 Design and Build Contract – Hartpury University and Barnwood Limited 22/4/24 – Building Contract Incorporating the JCT Design and Build Contract – 2016 edition – Veterinary Nursing and Technical Skills Building, Hartpury 7/5/24 – Collateral Warranties – HU and (individually) Morgans of Usk Ltd Standard Patent Glazine Company Ltd (The) Studwelders Composite Floor Decks Ltd Stannah Lifts Ltd</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
14/05/24	Any Other Business	
	It was noted it was Amy Tranter, FE Student Governor's last planned meeting. Thanks were formally recorded for her contribution. A certificate was to be sent to her.	
	The meeting closed at 11.25am	