



**Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Technological University of the Shannon:
Midlands Midwest**

Monday 29th May 2023 at 10:00am

via MS Teams & in person – Midwest Campus

Members: Ms. Josephine Feehily – Chair (in person)
Prof. Vincent Cunnane (in person)
Mr. John Doyle (in person)
Ms. Anne Meagher (in person)
Ms. Colette Ryan (Teams)
Mr. Tony Mahon (in person)
Mr. John Griffin (in person)
Ms. Marguerite Doyle (in person)
Mr Shahboz Babaev (in person)
Ms. Anne Cusack (Teams)
Ms. Catherine Collins (Teams)
Mr James Hadnett (in person)
Mr George O’Callaghan (in person)
Mr Niall Naughton (in person)
Mr Kevin McLoughin (in person)

In Attendance: Mr. Bill Delaney, Governing Body Secretary (in person)
Ms. Martina Moran, Recording Secretary (in person)

4. Apologies: Mr. James Ring, Mr. Noel Gavin, Mr. Martin Quinn, Ms. Brigid Delamere.

SECTION A: STANDING ITEMS

1. Chairpersons Opening

The Chairs and Presidents were due to meet with Minister Harris which has been re-scheduled until the Autumn. Minister Harris is due to visit TUS at various events in the coming weeks.

In order to have the IPA Governing Body evaluation finalised, members were encouraged to complete the 1st stage of the process which is to complete the evaluation survey. As the response rate is not sufficient, the Report will not be ready for the June meeting, therefore it will be re-scheduled as an agenda item at the September meeting.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved.

3. **Expressions of Sympathy**



5. **Declaration of Conflicts of Interest**

There was no declaration of conflicts of interest.

6. **Correspondence**

Correspondence from Minister Paschal Donohoe TD dated 2nd May 2023 was noted.

7. **Minutes of Governing Body meeting of 8th May 2023.**

The minutes were approved.

Proposed by G. O’Callaghan and seconded by M. Doyle.

8. **Matters Arising**

Academic Council will take place this afternoon.

9. **Action Log**

The President gave an update on the following items:

Item 11 will be ‘closed’ and will be replaced with a new item below:

Item 28 is ongoing (Autumn ‘23)

Item 31 – follow up with VP Campus Services & Capital Development for the next meeting

Governing Body agreed that all items coded ‘green’ are now closed and can be removed from the Action Log.

Action	By whom	By when
Clarity on HR Policies	B. Delaney	September ‘23
Item 31 - follow up with VP Campus Services & Capital Development	Secretariat	Next meeting

10. **Risk Management**

The Joint Audit & Risk and Finance & Physical Development Committees reviewed the Risk Register at their meeting on 15th May ‘23, which will be presented to the Governing Body meeting on 19th June.

The migration of AIT /LIT e-mails and the website are taking place today on all campuses.

11. **TUS Key Strategic Priorities Progress Report and President’s Update**

- Key Strategic Priorities:
 - CAO Change of Mind Campaign is continuing
 - Dr. Liam Brown will be invited to a future Governing Body to give an update on recent research funding successes.
 - Cycle 2 RUN EU application outcome – hope to know by the June Governing Body meeting
 - International Update – Recruitment is going well with 400 approx. new students and 300 returning students.

- President's Report:
 - MOU was signed with TUS and UPMC (for a Bachelor of Science (Hons) in General Nursing and Mental Health Nursing programmes).
 - Awaiting HEA Capital Funding to commence various capital works projects.
 - Series of Regional Dialogue meetings are due to take place at the behest of the Minister's office regarding tertiary education. A co-ordinated approach between CEOs' of ETB's and Presidents of TU's and Universities will take place in advance to discuss education within the regions.
 - Minister Harris will visit TUS Athlone and Ennis in the coming weeks.
 - The Taoiseach is scheduled to visit Clonmel campus to open the new Sports Campus.
 - TUTF – awaiting confirmation re continued TUTF funding from September, communication will issue to HEA from THEA, this issue could be a significant potential risk.
 - 1st year students – Leaving Certificate results will issue 25/8/23 which now gives TUS choice on commencement of term for 1st year students.
 - Campus space – work on Coonagh is on schedule and should be ready for January '24 start date (which will facilitate 350 – 400 students approx) Over the next number of weeks a process to dismantle 18 prefabs will commence which will mean an electrical lab will have to be accommodated in alternative space as well as alternative flat teaching spaces.
The VP Campus Services & Capital Development is in a consultation process in developing a plan to address the space issue.
 - ACI (a Limerick based company) has agreed to send reconditioned laptops to Ukraine Beketov National University of Urban Economy in Kharkiv.
 - Recent public comment regarding a governance matter for University of Limerick was noted; - TUS has won a catering tender for the Irish Prisons; further information on this will be given at the next Governing Body meeting.
 - Issue of Professor role(s) - a case to support the role of Professor is being worked on by a TU sub-group who are liaising with the Department.
 - TUS Organisational structure – a meeting is scheduled to take place with Mazars, VP and Deans later this week.

SECTION B: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/APPROVAL

12. Joint meeting of Audit & Risk Committee and Finance & Physical Development Committee Report 15-5-23

G. O'Callaghan briefed Governing Body on the Report of 15/5/23.

12.1 Draft TUS Consolidated Financial Statements 2021/22

The Financial Statements were discussed in detail including the amendments made

since Draft 1. On the recommendation of the Joint ARC and FPDC, the Governing Body approved the Consolidated Financial Statements 2021/22.

Proposed by G. O'Callaghan and seconded by J. Griffin.

12.2 C&AG TUS Audit Completion Memo 2021/22

██████████ C&AG provided a high level summary of the Audit Completion Memorandum to the Joint ARC and FPDC meeting which included the sequence of events to enable certification.

Governing Body noted the C&AG TUS Audit Completion Memo 2020/21 as provided by the C&AG.

The C&AG acknowledged the work of TUS in its first year. In the private session with external members and the C&AG there were no separate matters or issues raised.

As this is a very significant milestone for TUS, the Chair acknowledged and thanked ARC and FPDC for all their work. As this is the first year of TUS Consolidated Statements a thank you letter will issue on behalf of the Governing Body to the Finance Team after the Audit Certificate is returned.

Action	By whom	By when
Issue thank you letter to the Finance Team.	Governing Body Secretariat	When Audit Certificate is returned

The Chair also thanked the VP Finance & Corporate Governance and the team for completing the integrated financial system for TUS and the C&AG audit outcomes.

12.3 Draft TUS Letter of Representation 2021/22

The draft TUS Letter of Representation was discussed. With reference to Section 1 part 3 – the payment of Directors fees which refer to the Directors of the subsidiaries, who are not paid. This point will be reviewed further for 22/23.

On the recommendation of the Joint ARC and FPDC, the Governing Body approved the Letter of Representation.

Proposed by G. O'Callaghan and seconded by J. Griffin.

Both the draft TUS Consolidated Financial Statements 2021/22 and the Letter of Representation will be duly signed by the President and the Chair and will be sent to the C&AG. Once the certification is received the documents will be furnished to the Minister.

12.4 Risk Register Review and Budget Letter

The forecasted deficit of €1.9m focused on the two main reasons for the deficit which was:

- 1) Funding for Pay Awards and
 - 2) Cost impact of inflation,
- both of which were noted at Governing Body.

The budget letter was submitted to the HEA on the 4/5/23. THEA are preparing a document on the matter of the Pay Award funding and the cost impact of inflation for onward discussion to DFHERIS.

The Chair and the President briefed Governing Body on an outstanding HR matter. TUS are currently seeking a decision from DPER as TUS has no authority on this matter and once a decision has been received Governing Body will be appraised. The C&AG has also been made aware of this issue.

13. **GNC Report 16th May 2023**

The GNC met on the 16th May and dealt primarily with two issues – Charity Governance Code and nominations for committees and subsidiary companies. It is the intention to have the Charity Compliance Record Form (CRF) correspondence ready for consideration by Governing Body at the June meeting.

13.1 Nominations

On the recommendation of GNC, Governing Body agreed the following nominations:

ARC: Mr. Connie O’Doherty

Proposed by J. Feehily and seconded by A. Cusack.

Chair of LIT Sports and Leisure Facilities Ltd: Mr. John Cregan

Chair of AIT Sportsco Ltd:

Mr. Richard O’Hara

Both nominations were Proposed by K. McLoughlin and seconded by G. O’Callaghan.

Governing Body agreed that the term of office for the external member of ARC and the Chairs of the subsidiaries would be for 4 years.

Further nominations are awaited for EDI and Finance & Physical Development Committees.

14. **CSS Report 20-4-23**

President Cunnane is currently the Chair of CSS, and this will be reviewed when the in-house review is concluded.

After a discussion Governing Body agreed with the decision made by CSS at their meeting of 20/4/23 that the ‘status quo’ i.e. Athlone catering would remain in-house and Midwest catering would remain outsourced for at least two years.

Other items noted:

- CSS has been requested to run a Tender competition for Midwest campus food services, and to take responsibility for a tender contract for the operation and management of catering services (2 years with extension of 1 year).
- Supplier challenges for CSS Midlands have been identified and the CSS Board agreed to continue with the current suppliers, until a final decision is made at the next CSS Board meeting.
- Pricing is benchmarked and operations on TUS campuses have the same essential requirement to offer a hot meal for €5.
- The Government’s Climate Change Mandate for the Public sector to eradicate ‘single use plastic’ – will be an agenda item for consideration at a future Governing Body meeting.

SECTION C: ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/NOTING

15. **Staff Appointments**

Noted.

Governing Body requested due notice if they are being invited to sit on TUS interview panels.

16. **Students Union Annual Review Presentation: SU President Niall Naughton**

Students Union President, Niall Naughton gave a presentation - 'Annual Report 2022-2023', which was followed by Q&A. The final report will be uploaded to Decision Time for the June meeting. The following points were noted:

- With regard to smoking and vaping on campus, the Students Union will note this item for campaigning for the next academic year. - The role of Students Union being an 'opinion former' was recognised as being very important for the student body.
- The Students' Union supports around academic integrity were discussed.
- It was acknowledged that students behaviours since Covid have changed particularly regarding social isolation and this is proving an ongoing issue for many students.

The Chair congratulated the Students' Union on winning the award of Student Union Team of the Year 2022-2023 and acknowledged the integration of TUS Students Union from the beginning of TUS.

The President on behalf of the executive and the team thanked Niall and the Students Union team for all their endeavours and the huge progress which has been made to date.

As this is Shahboz last meeting on Governing Body, the Chair thanked him for his participation on Governing Body and for his broader involvement across TUS and wished him well for the future.

SECTION D

17. **AOB**

Due to an error on the original TUS Schedule of Fees (presented and agreed at Governing Body on 27-3-23) an amendment to TUS Annual Schedule of Fees 1.10 International and Non-EU Students (Midland and Midwest) was proposed and agreed by Governing Body. **Proposed by G. O'Callaghan and seconded by J. Doyle.**

A proposal to grant a license – 'right of access' between TUS and ESB was proposed and agreed by Governing Body. The property portfolio will be lodged with Westmeath County Council.

Proposed by G. O'Callaghan and seconded by J. Doyle.

The license will be duly signed by the Chair and the President.

It was queried as to what decision had been made regarding the Academic Council reporting mechanisms to Governing Body. The President advised that currently the three options proposed by VP Academic Affairs and Registrar are being enacted and a further proposal will be brought back to Governing Body.

A private session for external members will take place at the end of the meeting scheduled for 19th June 2023.

The next meeting will take place on Monday 19th June at 10:00am on the Midlands Campus.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 1:10pm.

Signed:


Chair of TUS Governing Body

Date:

19/6/23

