



**TUS**

Technological University of the Shannon:  
Midlands Midwest  
Ollscoil Technoíochta na Sionainne:  
Lár The Iarthar Láir

www.tus.ie

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

**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> of January 2022 at 10.30am via MS Teams & in person – Athlone Campus.**

**Members:** Ms. Josephine Feehily – Chair (in person)  
Mr. George O’Callaghan (Teams)  
Professor Vincent Cunnane (in person)  
Ms. Colette Ryan (Teams)  
Mr. John Griffin (Teams)

**In Attendance:** Ms. Áine Daly (in person)  
Mr. Cormac Dillon (in person)  
Ms. Anne O’Leary (in person)  
Ms. Brigid Delamere (in person)  
Mr. Tony Mahon (in person)  
Ms. Shelley Ann McCarthy Buckingham (Teams)  
Mr. Eoin Woodlock (Teams)

**In Attendance:** Mr. Bill Delaney, Corporate Secretary (in person)  
Ms. Martina Moran, minute taker (in person)

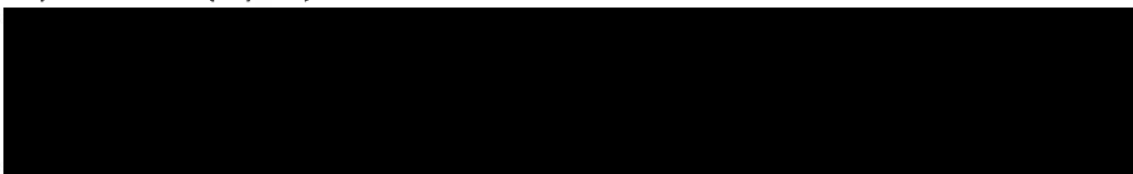
**1. Chairperson’s opening**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and explained the background to new format to the layout of the agenda which is a work in progress. An Action Log (derived from the minutes of each meeting) will be developed and colour coded i.e. red, amber green. (RAG) to show progress on the completion of each action.

**2. Approval of the agenda**

The agenda was approved.

**3. Expressions of Sympathy**



## 5. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

There were no Conflicts of Interest noted.

## 6. Correspondence

It was noted that the Chair had received correspondence from C&AG re Audit Planning for both AIT and LIT.

## 7. Minutes of GB meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> of December 2021

Minutes were agreed.

**Proposed by C. Ryan and seconded by G. O'Callaghan.**

## 8. Matters arising.

The "External Governing Body Members Candidate Brief" was recently launched. It has been disseminated on the Public Appointment Service (PAS), and TUS website and via TUS social media channels. The election process for staff members on the Governing Body has also commenced, and the initial feedback regarding Mi-Voice is positive. A brief meeting with Governing Body members took place virtually on 13<sup>th</sup> of January in order to make an amendment to the Election Regulations – 1.2. providing for an 'Assurance Report'. B. Delaney cc the Amended regulations to the staff representative bodies. The minutes of this meeting will be presented for approval to the next Governing Body meeting.

Storm Barra – Exams took place on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> of December.

An early solution for students who tested positive for Covid and who were subsequently unavailable to sit exams is still under review. Both the VP of Academic Affairs & Registrar & the VP of Student Education & Experience are in discussion regarding this and it is expected to have an outcome to revert to student and staff unions. Management is very conscious that TUS is still in a transition period and Covid regulations are still in place.

## Section B. Committee Reports

The following documents have been provided and are taken as read:

*Minutes of Finance Committee 11<sup>th</sup> of January*

- *Draft minute of AGM Subsidiary Company AIT Sportsco Ltd*

- *Annual Financial Statements 2020/21*

- *Auditors Management Letter 2020/21*

- *Statement of Internal control 2020/21*

- *Capital Expenditure Investments*

- *Risk Register*

- *Draft minute of AGM Subsidiary Company College Support Services (CSS)*

- *Annual Financial Statements 2020/21*

- *Auditors Management Letter 2020/21*

- *Statement of Internal Control 2020/21*

- *Capital Expenditure Investments*

- *Risk Register*

- *TUS – HEA Financial Reporting Return*

The Chair invited G. O'Callaghan, Chair of the Finance Committee to brief the Board on the Finance meetings of 11<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2022.

## 9.0 Minutes of Finance Committee 11<sup>th</sup> of January 2022

There are currently four members of the Finance Committee and when the full Governing Body Board is in situ it is the intention to address the gender imbalance of the Committee. The meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> of January primarily dealt with the Midlands subsidiary companies. It was noted that AIT Sportsco Ltd is in a good financial position and CSS while showing an annual operating loss for 2020/21 due to Covid-19 have good financial reserves and cash position. A query was raised in relation to parking. B. Delaney gave a background to the parking provision on the Athlone Campus, and the President advised on parking arrangements in the Moylish campus (additional parking is provided in Thomond Park and buses are being used to transport students). The Students Union believe there is disparity on the Athlone Campus between students from Coonagh and staff regarding the payment of car parking for this academic year. There is also disparity between payments for students across campuses - Athlone Campus (€20 per annum) and Moylish (€3 a day).

Action	By whom	By when
Review parking provision for the next academic year	President with VP of Campus Services & Capital Development	

In relation to a question raised with regard to a decision on Capital Expenditure of AIT Sportsco, B. Delaney outlined the process – Capital Investment Proposals are brought to the AIT Sportsco Board, then ARC and subsequently to Governing Body for approval.

Food service provision in TUS Athlone: The Commercial Manager in Athlone is conducting a review with the VP of Campus Services and Capital Development regarding food service provision in TUS. The fundamental issue is *outsourcing versus in-house provision*.

Action	By whom	By when
Food Service Provision - Revert to Governing Body	President	On completion of Review

From a Governance & Risk perspective the commonality of Directors between TUS Governing Body members and the subsidiaries including the Secretary of the Governing Body was raised. The Governing Body requested the ARC to review the matter and report to Governing Body.

Action	By whom	By when
ARC Review	Chair of ARC	Report back to Governing Body

TUS HEA Financial Reporting Return – the finance team in both campuses will complete this Return which is then signed by the President. The Return is scheduled on the Finance Committee Work Plan & will subsequently come to Governing Body for information.

## 10.0 Draft minutes of Finance committee of 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2022

The meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> of January was joined by the Chair of Governing Body, Ms. B. Buckley (former Finance Manager), Ms. B. Murray & Ms. C. Ledwith. B. Delaney briefed the committee on the C&AG AIT Audit Planning Memorandum.

*AIT Consolidated Financial Statements 2020/21 (pre audit)*

The final AIT Consolidated Financial Statements for the 13-month period ended 30 September 2021 will be signed by the Chair of Governing Body and the President. The draft text needs to be amended in a number of respects to reflect the fact that the statements relate to a dissolved body, including the implications for the assurances being given by the President and the Chair. B. Delaney to consider and discuss a revised text with the Chair and the President.

The President stated that a review on structure and process will be developed which will include the student voice with a remit to identifying areas of concern and inequalities and to bring under one unitary organisation. The goal is to have this in place for 22/23.

Action	By whom	By when
Propose revised text for AIT & LIT Financial Statements	B. Delaney	
Commence a review with the VP of Student Education & Experience and the VP of Academic Affairs and Registrar	President	
Discuss with VP of Student Education & Experience the commencement of Clubs and Societies meetings	President	

As the new structures of TUS are only being embedded, the Students Union have not had the opportunity to raise issues at senior management level, therefore, it was agreed that the Students Union and the appropriate senior managers will meet to discuss the various issues.

Action	By whom	By when
Structure to be put in place for ongoing formal engagement between the Students Union and management	President	
Governing Body agenda item - Student Experience	Secretary	Future Governing Body

The President stated the role of the VP of Student Education & Experience is at the very heart of TUS and is a very unique role and will give a profound change to the student voice.

The Terms of Reference for the Finance committee were agreed by Governing Body.

**Proposed: C. Ryan**

**Seconded: J. Griffin**

The Chair thanked Ms. A. Clarke for the presentation of the minutes.

11.0 **Draft minutes of ARC meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> of January 2022**

The Chair of ARC gave a report on the ARC meeting to Governing Body members. This meeting was attended by the Chair of Governing Body and ██████████ (Deloitte) who joined the ARC meeting for the TUS Internal Audit Plan agenda item. Ms. A. Clarke was thanked for administration support.

*Terms of Reference for ARC*

The Terms of Reference for ARC were agreed by Governing Body.

**Proposed by J. Feehily**

**Seconded by G. O'Callaghan**

*TUS Internal Audit Plan 2021-2024*

The Chair of ARC gave background to the proposal of the Draft Internal Audit Plan 2021-2024. The Internal Audit Work Plan will be influenced by the Risk Register which is a work in progress. A revised planning memorandum will be presented by Deloitte, including additional information on the legacy reviews conducted in AIT and LIT. . The detailed planning memorandum for the conduct of the audit will be presented at the next ARC meeting.

The draft internal audit plan, with additional information as requested by ARC will be reviewed at the next ARC meeting and subsequently presented to Governing Body for decision. In the meantime, the internal audit of data migration (Agresso and Core Payroll) as recommended by ARC was approved by Governing Body

**Proposed: G. O'Callaghan**

**Seconded: J. Feehily**

*C&AG Audit Planning Memorandum*

Both ARC and the Finance committee reviewed the Memorandum. The final AIT audit has been outsourced to ASM Chartered Accountants by the C&AG. There will be two separate audits of AIT and LIT. LIT will be audited by C&AG. The planning memorandum for LIT will also go to ARC in due course.

*Correspondence from HEA regarding Export Controls for certain research activities*

The Chair of ARC received correspondence from the HEA dated 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021. Dr. Liam Brown, VP Research, Development & Innovation is currently completing a draft policy which will be brought to ARC for review in the coming months and subsequently to Governing Body for approval.

In order to retain a structured process for correspondence from the HEA, the Chair of Governing Body stated that correspondence should not be addressed to committee chairs and should go directly to either the President or the Chair of Governing Body.

Action	By whom	By when
Write to CEO of HEA advising him of same	Secretary	

The Chair of Governing Body thanked the Chair of ARC and acknowledged the support of the ARC committee particularly those members who are not members of Governing Body.

## 12. Risk Management

The Chair of ARC noted that there was nothing specific to report at this time, but that the Risk Register is a work in progress, and that a plan is being developed for the top 15 risks for TUS. The ARC committee discussed the absence of a Risk Officer in the TUS structure, the President stated there would be an evolution of the structure over time, and that some of the 'red' issues are not internal issues they are in fact external issues i.e. funding for the sector, Covid, student accommodation and are therefore out of the control of TUS.

The Risk Register will be further discussed at the next ARC meeting.

The Chair advised that time will be set aside at a future Governing Body to discuss the Risk Register. She noted that Risk Management is a standing item on every Governing Body agenda and is not confined to the work done by the Audit and Risk Committee

Action	By whom	By when
Risk Register to be considered	ARC	Meeting of 8 <sup>th</sup> February 2022

## Section C

### 13. Presidents Update

The Chair, President and the Secretary of Governing Body have had preliminary discussion on the content of the President's Report going forward. Members were requested to reflect and advise the Chair of what they would expect from such a report. Previous President's Reports from Athlone and Limerick are available on request.

In the interim, the President provided an Update:

HEA Bill 2022 which is available for viewing on the HEA website:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/47c15-higher-education-authority-bill-2022/>

The President gave a background to the Bill, the purpose of which is to reform the supervision and regulation of HEI's and to modernise the regulatory role of the HEA. The Bill will provide a wide-ranging structure of governance, performance and accountability. The Bill has been discussed at Dail level and the expected timeline for enactment is Autumn '22.

The President briefed Governing Body on the OECD preliminary findings on the Academic Contract. The current academic contract has been in place for a long time and is not in line with TU, the new contract will provide for academic progression, however, the old contract will be in place for existing staff who choose to retain it. The full report is due shortly and will become the basis for a series of engagements and negotiations. The TUI have also met with the OECD and were afforded the opportunity to feed into the Report.

Professor Cunnane is the defacto spokesperson for TURN which is comprised of Thea, TU Dublin and MTU. The National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) has a €40m opportunity - €20m per annum for 2 years for Digital Infrastructure. A steering group has been convened as the HEA are looking for a national integrated response to the NRRP call by the middle of March.

Pressure is being exercised to have the Cassells Report published and acted upon.

RUN-EU Presidents continue to meet monthly with an aim to get a bilateral approach to joint degree awards.

The VP and Deans Councils have been convened and meetings have taken place. The VP's meet twice a month and the Deans meet monthly. Resource Planning for 2022/2023 Academic year is underway.

CAO will close on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022, the key indicator for TUS will be level 8 1<sup>st</sup> preferences – an update will be brought to Governing Body.

The Polymer Centre Capital Programme is up and running.

70,000 Antigen Tests have been procured and are being distributed to students.

TUS has signed a sponsorship deal with Munster Post Primary Schools GAA that will see the newly designated TU will provide financial and skills support to the provincial post primary school hurling and football competitions until 2025.

As the election process for a new executive of Students Union is due to commence next month, the President of Students Union requested a meeting between the current SU executive and TUS senior management.

Action	By whom	By when
Meet with SU Executive	President	

**14. Staff Appointment**

Staff appointments for TUS Midlands Midwest were noted for information. Any query/clarity on these appointments to be raised with HR.

**15. "Strategic Plan Development Process" Presentation by J. McKenna – VP Strategy, Transition & Projects**

Mr. John McKenna and Ms. Janet Owens attended the meeting for this item. J. McKenna gave a power point presentation which was followed by Q&A. The following points were noted:

- The tender process has commenced to appoint a consultant to assist with the Strategic Plan process
- The timelines for consultations in the development process of the Strategic Plan will take cognisance of proposed amendment in the HEA Bill 2022
- Graduate Attributes will be part of this Plan

The Chair noted that the Governing Body will be paying close attention to both the process and the content of the Plan as it develops with a view to ensuring that its approval is assured.

J. McKenna and J. Owens were thanked.

Action	By whom	By when
Proposal for GB engagement in the Strategic Planning process	J. McKenna	When the Full GB is in place
Strategic Plan to be on the GB agenda at appropriate intervals	Secretary	Ongoing

**Section D Other Matters**


16. AOB

The next meeting will take place in Moylish/Teams on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> of February at 10.30am.

**The meeting concluded at 1.00pm.**

**17. Members session**

This section of the meeting took place in private and considered a HR matter.

Signed:   
Chair of TUS Governing Body

Date: 14/2/22