

## Minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> Governing Body meeting

**Date:** Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> May 2022  
**Time:** 4.00pm, via Microsoft Teams

**Chair:** Professor Patrick Prendergast

**Attendees:** Mr Jim Bergin  
Ms Ruth Beadle  
Mr Kevin Lewis

**In attendance by invitation of the Governing Body:**  
Professor Veronica Campbell (Incoming President)

**In attendance by invitation of the Governing Body as Observers:**  
Mr Claus Derenda, Academic Staff Representative  
Ms Louise Walsh, Academic Staff Representative  
Mr David Kane, Professional Management Support Staff Representative

**In attendance under the Code of Governance:**  
Ms Elaine Sheridan, Vice President for Corporate Affairs & Finance  
Mr Cormac O'Toole, Vice President for Corporate Affairs

**Apologies:** Mr Sam Alcock, Professional Management Support Staff Representative  
Ms Rachel McCartney, Student Representative  
Mr Thomas Drury, Student Representative

**Secretariat:** Mary Clare Coogan

Item Title	
1.	<p><b><u>Chairperson's Welcome</u></b> The Chair welcomed members to the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Governing Body of SETU. Confirming the meeting was quorate, he commenced the normal business.</p> <p>Ms Sheridan advised that for the purposes of minute taking, the meeting was being recorded, and when the minutes have been drafted, the recording would be deleted.</p>
a.	<p><b><u>Agreement on Observers in attendance</u></b> <b>NOTED</b> Ms Sheridan referred to the document that was uploaded to the Teams folder '<i>Transitional Arrangements for attendance at Governing Body meetings by Staff and Students</i>'. She advised that the board would be familiar with the majority of the information in the document as per the discussion that had taken place on this matter at the last meeting, and the subsequent approval of same.</p> <p>The document outlined that the following are invited to attend the Governing Body meetings as observers: Academic Staff - Ms Louise Walsh and Mr Claus Derenda Professional Management Support Staff (PMSS) - Mr David Kane and Mr Sam Alcock</p>

Students - Ms Rachel McCartney and Mr Thomas Drury.

Ms Sheridan advised that since the last meeting, the VP's for Corporate Affairs received correspondence from the Forsa Union indicating that Mr Alcock would be stepping down as an observer, and that they had proposed another member of the PMSS staff to join. Forsa were advised that their proposal was not in line with the process that the Governing Body had put in place and their proposal would have to be brought back to the Governing Body for further discussion. Ms Sheridan advised that confirmation was received earlier today that Mr Alcock had not stepped down, but he was not available to attend the meeting today.

**ACTION** The VP's for Corporate Affairs to seek full clarification on the matter and report back to the next meeting.

**AGREED** That the observers can join by invitation of the Governing Body.

The observers joined the meeting at this point. The Chair welcomed them to the meeting as observers, and they introduced themselves to the board.

**b. Conflicts of Interest**

**NOTED** It was confirmed by members and observers that they did not have any particular conflicts of interests or conflicts of loyalty to report.

**c. Approval of Minutes of 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022**

**AGREED** To approve the minutes of the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

**d. Matters arising**

**NOTED** Clarification was sought on the agreement reached under Item 2c. where the administrative address was discussed. It was confirmed by the Chair that the decision was that the address would be in Waterford, and the matter would be reviewed in 2 years with the intention to change the address to Carlow. This decision would be for the Governing Body at that time to make.

**NOTED** As advised at the last meeting under AOB, the Chair reported on the meeting that all Chairpersons of Governing Bodies of the Technological Universities were invited to, with the Joint Committee on Education, Higher and Further Education, Research, Innovation and Science. He reported that a lengthy and worthwhile discussion took place with the committee. Afterwards the Chairs present agreed that it would be useful for the Presidents and Chairpersons of Governing Bodies of the five Technological Universities meet separately. This would be an informal meeting and would be helpful in sharing the common challenges between governance in all of the Technological Universities. The Chair will keep the Governing Body updated on any developments.

**2.**

**Report from incoming President**

**NOTED** Prof Campbell stated that when she has officially taken up her post as President in July she will present a more detailed update to the Governing Body at its meetings. She reported on some recent activities across three areas that she has either participated in directly, or has been informed about.

*Additional funding from the HEA*

€6m has been awarded by the HEA for the Burrin Building deep fabric retrofit project on the Carlow Campus, and the Business School deep fabric retrofit project on the Waterford Campus. Both projects are for energy efficiency and decarbonisation purposes. A note of thanks was passed to the Estates teams and the Corporate Services for their work in developing the proposal on behalf of SETU.

SETU has been awarded €3.1m in funding from the Springboard initiative, and this will provide 750 funded places per annum across 26 programmes that are associated with re-skilling and up-skilling. This application was led by the Lifelong Learning faculties, and in particular Dr Joe Collins and Dr Helen

Murphy who worked with colleagues across SETU to prepare the application. The information on this is still under embargo but should formally be announced soon.

#### *Meetings*

Prof Campbell advised that she has spent time in the Carlow and Waterford campuses meeting staff and students. She further advised she had visited two of the four technology gateways that are associated with SETU, and visited the Wicklow and Wexford campuses meeting staff and students also. Introductory meetings have taken place with the CEO and the senior team in the HEA. Prof Campbell also met Waterford Chamber and has agreed to give the lunchtime address at the Chamber Presidents' lunch in June, and stated she would be keen to engage with other chambers across the region and will reach out to those over the coming weeks. Lastly, she advised that she had a brief meeting with the Minister of State for Public Procurement, eGovernment and Circular Economy in relation to a visit he made to SETU last week.

#### *New Research & Innovation Strategy for Ireland*

Prof Campbell represented SETU at the launch by Minister Harris of the Research and Innovation Strategy for Ireland called Impact 2030, which she noted was a really important strategy for the higher education research environment. She stated a few points to note in this strategy that are relevant to SETU, and to the Technological University sector more broadly, include:

- the specific mention in the strategy of the TU's as important components of the national research landscape
- reference to a TU appropriate academic contract to support research activity
- specific funding for the TU sector to bolster their research and innovation offices
- the importance of regional innovation and ring-fenced funding for the TU sector through the European Development Regional Fund. A call of approximately €83m is expected in quarter three this year. SETU has already given some thought to this call through the offices of the Vice Presidents for Research, and will be aiming for a strong SETU application. The Governing Body will be kept apprised of that in due course.

The Chair thanked Prof Campbell for her report.

#### **b. Academic Council Composition & Design Working group incl ToRs**

**NOTED** Before the VP's for Academic Affairs joined the meeting, the Chair informed the board that one of the tasks - as per the legislation, is for the Governing Body to ensure an Academic Council comes into existence, and to monitor and set up regulations for same. The Academic Council Composition & Design working group will report on its work to Governing Body and the intention today is to approve its composition and Terms of Reference.

Prof Campbell stated that the VP's for Academic Affairs have been working closely together on the arrangements for the Interim Academic Council, advised there were two documents uploaded to the Teams folder outlining the procedures and the committees associated with that. This Interim Academic Council that comprises of 58 members in total met for the first time on the 17<sup>th</sup> May, and will be in operation for no longer than June 2023 as agreed previously by the Governing Body. A draft Terms of Reference and membership for an Academic Council Design working group were also uploaded to Teams folder. That will recommend to the Governing Body a structure and membership of an Academic Council that best suits the functions of SETU, and this will replace the Interim Academic Council next year.

Prof Campbell advised that the legislative responsibility for establishing Academic Council and making regulations in relation to Academic Council rests with the Governing body under Section 16 of the Technological Universities Act.

The VP's for Academic Affairs Mr David Denieffe and Dr Derek O'Byrne were welcomed the meeting at this point. They presented a slide deck to update the Governing Body on the activities of the Interim

Academic Council, and also what Prof Campbell had outlined in relation to the Academic Council Design Working group for the future Academic Council.

The Chair commended Mr Denieffe and Dr O'Byrne on their presentation and thanked them for their attendance.

The Chair suggested setting a date to return to this matter by way of an interim update. Prof Campbell stated that membership will be brought to Governing Body for consideration as some point and an update would be given at that stage. She further stated the aim was to present an Interim Report to the December 2022 Governing Body meeting.

**AGREED** To approve the Terms of Reference and Academic Council Composition and Design working group.

The VP's for Academic Affairs left the meeting at this point.

3.

### **Strategic Matters**

#### **Engagement Framework**

At this point, the following were welcomed to the meeting:

- Dr Declan Doyle, Vice President for Development & Research, Carlow Campus
- Ms Kathryn Kiely, Vice President for External Affairs, Waterford Campus
- Dr Joseph Collins, Head of Faculty of Lifelong Learning, Carlow Campus
- Dr Helen Murphy, Head of School of Education & Lifelong Learning, Waterford Campus
- Dr Richard Hayes, Vice President for Strategy, Waterford Campus

**NOTED** Prof Campbell made a few introductory comments on this item. She noted that engagement was such an important and key activity for SETU as it is something that links to our teaching programmes, and to the research that links us to the industries, SME's and organisations across the region. That allows SETU to be responsive to regional needs, but we also need to position SETU to be transformational and innovative and setting the future skills for the region.

As part of the work to become a technological university, a working group on engagement was established, and a report was commissioned by consultants University Industry Innovation Network (UIIN). A copy of this report was uploaded to the Teams folder, and Prof Campbell invited the Vice President for External Affairs and the Vice President for Development & Research to present a slide deck they had prepared to the board. The VP's were joined by the Head of Faculties of Lifelong Learning and the Vice President for Strategy. Prof Campbell noted that the attendance of the group today really reflects the fact that many members of the Executive team have been leading out on specific aspects of engagement, and today was an opportunity to bring together the key elements for a discussion at Governing Body level, because embedding engagement across SETU will be a vital body of work as we start to develop the strategic plan.

The five staff members who joined the meeting introduced themselves to the board and the VP for Development & Research and the VP for External Affairs presented a slide deck that captured current engagement activities and a draft framework for the future.

A discussion followed. While the board commended the VP's and their teams for their work in preparing today's presentation, it was noted there was no mention in the presentation of community. It was felt that that SETU is a university for the south east and the people of the south east have got to feel part of it. It was also noted there was no mention of any link between further education and training, and higher education. Dr Collins responded by saying he concurred with what had been said, and advised that there were four working groups in the work stream and one was regional engagement and what has been presented today is very much coming out of the regional engagement and very much industry focused. He went on to say that there was a second working group on civic

	<p>and cultural engagement that very much looked at the broader community education environment including sports, cultural etc. The third group focused on internationalization, and the fourth group focused on lifelong learning. He reassured the board that the presentation today was just one part of the engagement framework.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the VP's and their team for their attendance and presentation, and they left the meeting at this point. A brief discussion among members noted the good work being done, but that further co-ordination between the various elements of engagements would be good, and that ultimately it should be related to the culture of the university, and the strategic vision and mission.</p>
<p>4.</p> <p>a.</p> <p>b.</p>	<p><b><u>Corporate Administration</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Update PMO/Grant Thornton</u></b> Mr Tim Cotter from Grant Thornton, who is leading the Project Management Office was welcomed to the meeting.</p> <p>He provided two slide deck presentations on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The progress update on from the Project Management Office (PMO) perspective.</li> <li>➤ The first set of results from the Pulse Survey that was conducted through April and the first week of May.</li> </ul> <p>Mr Cotter advised it was planned to conduct the next survey in November of this year, but if it was deemed necessary, one could be conducted earlier. Mr Cotter was commended on his very comprehensive presentation and the Chair thanked him for his attendance.</p> <p><b><u>Nominations Committee: Competency Framework, Terms of Reference</u></b> <b>NOTED</b> Ms Sheridan recapped on the decision made at the last meeting to approve the creation of a Nominations Committee, comprising of the Chair, Mr Kevin Lewis and Ms Ruth Beadle. Ms Beadle was nominated by the Chair in her absence, and has since confirmed her agreement to take up the position. Ms Sheridan stated that the Terms of Reference for that committee requires Governing Body approval. She referred to Section 8 of the document which was the most important section in that it outlines the duties that the committee has to undertake. She further stated that a list of competencies have been created, this is outlined in the candidate brief which is almost finalised. The Nominations Committee will go through that list in detail at their first meeting and agree the list of competencies before it goes to the HEA for approval.</p> <p><b>AGREED</b> To approve the SETU Nominations Committee Terms of Reference.</p>
<p>5.</p> <p>a.</p>	<p><b><u>Policy Approvals</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Recruitment &amp; Selection Policy</u></b> <b>NOTED</b> Before the policy owners joined the meeting, the Chair noted that the policy had been circulated very late. He suggested that the HR Managers present the document and the board should defer its approval until the next meeting.</p> <p>Ms Colette Lane, Director for People &amp; EDI in the Carlow Campus and Dr Neil O'Sullivan, HR Manager in the Waterford Campus were welcomed to the meeting and presented the draft Recruitment &amp; Selection Policy to the board. A lengthy discussion followed the presentation. Prof Campbell acknowledged the huge amount of work and the significant amount of consultation had taken place around the policy. She stated her initial impression was that she thought a bit of extra information could be included either within the document or as an Appendix. One example was around the robustness of the academic hiring process and she expanded on this issue. She advised there were a number of things that she would like to feed back in relation to strengthening the document and strengthen SETU's hiring process, and suggested Ms Lane, Dr O'Sullivan and herself meet and discuss these in detail.</p>

It was noted that there is currently a backlog of recruitment which is causing some concerns.

**AGREED** Prof Campbell to meet with Ms Lane and Dr O'Sullivan to review the document and to present an updated policy to the Governing Body at its meeting on the 31<sup>st</sup> May.

Ms Lane and Dr O'Sullivan left the meeting at this point.

**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Policy**

**b. NOTED** The Chair noted that this policy was presented to the board at the last meeting and he referred to the decision where the people responsible for creating the EDI policy were asked to present the policy and provide feedback on the queries that were laid out in the minutes of the meeting.

Ms Colette Lane who had remained in the meeting was joined by Dr Allison Kenneally, Vice President of Equality Diversity & Inclusion in the Waterford Campus, who outlined their responses to the queries raised by the Governing Body at the last meeting, to the satisfaction of the board.

**AGREED** To approve the policy. This will be reviewed in a year from now.  
The Chair thanked Ms Lane and Dr Kenneally for their presence and update.

There being no other business to attend to, the Chair closed the meeting at 6.35 pm



Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: **31 May 2022**

**Professor Patrick Prendergast**