

## Minutes of the 8<sup>th</sup> Governing Body meeting

**Date:** Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022  
**Time:** SETU Waterford (Boardroom, O’Connell Bianconi Building)

**Chair:** Professor Patrick Prendergast

**Attendees:** Professor Veronica Campbell  
 Mr Jim Bergin  
 Ms Ruth Beadle (via Teams)  
 Mr Kevin Lewis  
 Mr Mark Dunne (via Teams)  
 Mr Patrick Curtain

**In attendance by invitation of the Governing Body as Observers:**

Mr Claus Derenda  
 Ms Louise Kelly  
 Mr David Kane  
 Ms Sarah Clarke

**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

**In attendance for Agenda Item 4**

Mr Paul Quirke  
 Mr Keith Williams

**In attendance for Agenda Item 6.1**

Dr Mark White  
 Dr James O’Sullivan

**Secretariat:** Mary Clare Coogan

Item Title	
1.	<b><u>Chairperson’s Opening:</u></b>
1.1	<u>Welcome &amp; approval of agenda</u> Prof Prendergast welcomed all to the 8 <sup>th</sup> SETU Governing Body meeting. Confirming the meeting was quorate he commenced the normal business.
1.2	<u>Invitation of PMSS observer</u> The Chair referred to the discussion that had taken place at the last meeting regarding the attendance by invitation of a PMSS observer until formal elections had taken place. He recalled that the decision of

the Board was to refer the matter to the Nominations Committee for discussion at their July meeting. He stated that the recommendation of the Nominations Committee was to invite a PMSS observer and that Governing Body approval was required to invite Ms Sarah Clarke as the PMSS observer.

**AGREED** To approve the attendance of Ms Clarke as PMSS observer.

Ms Clarke joined the meeting at this point.

Conflicts of Interest

**NOTED** It was noted that members and observers did not have any conflicts of interest or conflicts of loyalty to report.

1.3 Approval of minutes: 26<sup>th</sup> July 2022

**AGREED** To approve the minutes of 26<sup>th</sup> July 2022 and to upload to the website.

1.4 Matters arising (Action Log)

**NOTED** The Chair advised that since the last meeting an Action Log has been established and explained that the items on the log were matters arising from the last Governing Body meeting. This log will be presented at each meeting going forward which outlines the Governing Body reference meeting and agenda number, the action, the timeline to complete the action, the owner, and the status of the action. The Action Log from the meeting of the 26<sup>th</sup> July outlined that out of eight actions, four were in progress and four have been completed.

A suggestion was made that when policies are adopted by Governing Body and uploaded to the website, that an all-staff email be circulated to inform staff of the policy approvals. This was agreed.

**ACTION** To send out all staff emails regarding policy approvals as policies are approved.

2. President's Section:

Report from President

**NOTED** The President provided an update on a number of matters to the Board as follows:

- SETU was awarded €830k from the HEA for a project with an addiction recovery organisation called Tiglin, and the purpose of the funding is to provide access to higher education for service users of this organisation. She further advised that SETU were only one of six higher education institutions that are being funded under this scheme which was a great reflection on the work being done. Prof Campbell acknowledged the work of Dr Joe Collins, Head of Faculty of Lifelong Learning in the Carlow Campus and his team who led this project;
- Under Irish Research Council Funding, SETU was awarded €1.3m across twenty projects, which include five that are specifically enterprise partnership schemes. Examples of the enterprise partners being engaged with includes Glanbia (now Tirlán), Mens Health Forum and Green Restoration Ireland Co-operative Society;
- Under the European Universities Initiative, SETU has been funded for two initiatives which are partnerships involving several European universities. The projects are called EU Green, and EU Connexus and were applied for by the legacy Institutes of Technology, each of which were full partners in each of those initiatives. Seeking advice from the European Commission, Prof Campbell was advised that the EU rules only allow us to be a full member of one of those consortia, and therefore SETU has gone through an internal process and sought an independent external review. As a result, SETU will remain a full partner in EU Connexus which is an alliance on smart sustainable coastal communities and address the green, the blue and the digital agendas. Prof Campbell proposed that an annual report on EU Connexus be brought to the Governing Body;

- Work is underway on the Strategic Plan and will be an agenda item for the October Governing Body meeting;
- There has been on-going stakeholder engagement with the President and Local Authorities, ETB's, industry, government agencies. In addition, SETU will be hosting the Enterprise Ireland Board on campus in Waterford on the 7<sup>th</sup> September;
- It was noted that student accommodation continues to be a challenge for students. For a short term measure SETU has introduced Student Pad, an app that links students with potential landlords who may have a vacant room or a house available. The Students Union have been very involved in this initiative, and it has been launched across Carlow, Waterford and Wexford campuses. A student accommodation task force has also been established which comprises a multi-functional group of staff across the university and also involves the Students Union, who will be reviewing and actioning opportunities and options for delivering student accommodation;
- The Executive Management Team have commenced meeting fortnightly. Early discussions have taken place around structures in areas such as academic affairs, graduate studies and research;
- The formal launch of SETU will take place on 24<sup>th</sup> October with events in both Waterford and Carlow campuses; a working group has been set up to discuss what format that will take. It is expected that Minister Harris will attend and also that Governing Body members, staff, external stakeholders and communities will be very much a part of the event.

A lengthy discussion took place in relation to the lack of student accommodation and how it might impact this coming academic year with students potentially not being able to attend university. The President stated it was a big concern and that accommodation should not be a barrier to access education. She further stated she would be getting an update later this week on the performance of Student Pad and find out how many students are still on waiting lists for accommodation. Both Students Union Representatives provided an update on the accommodation situation and strongly advised that apart from the lack of accommodation available, the biggest issue will be the rising cost of same.

The Board were advised by the Presidents of the SU that an accommodation sleepout was arranged for the 19<sup>th</sup> September to spotlight the situation. The Chair recognised the great stress students are under with the accommodation crisis and advised that they liaise with the President on the matter of the proposed sleepout. A suggestion was made that some data on the accommodation crisis be prepared and presented to the Minister when he visits on the 24<sup>th</sup> October for the formal launch of SETU, and perhaps some discussion can take place on this very important issue.

**ACTION** To include annual report on Connexus on work plan of Governing Body.

**ACTION** Collation of data on student accommodation crisis for presentation to the Minister.

### 3. **President's Workplan:**

#### President's Workplan (2022 - 2023)

**NOTED** The Chair introduced this item to the Board. He advised that the President reports to the Governing Body, and an important part of the Board's oversight of the work of the President is that the President's work plan for the year is approved by Governing Body. The President then reports back to the Governing Body at the end of the academic year regarding the achievement of the workplan.

The President presented her Work Plan for the 2022/23 academic year outlining the four areas in which she will be prioritising her time throughout the year, and these areas are as follows:

- **Strategic:-** Strategic Plan; Organisational Structures; Capital Projects; Academic Planning; "One SETU"; European Universities Initiative; President's Advisory Forum.
- **Governance:-** Governing Body and sub-committees; Academic Council (chair); Executive Management Team (chair); Taskforce on Student Accommodation (chair); Taskforce on Rankings (chair).
- **Sectoral:-** OECD report & Academic Contract; NTUTORR; TU representation and role of THEA.

- **Community:-** Formal launch of SETU; President’s inaugural lecture; External stakeholder engagement; supporting the SETU community.

The President outlined the key activities/outputs under the above areas and the indicative timelines to be brought to Governing Body for updates/approvals. She further outlined she would not be working in isolation on the various activities as outlined, and that she will be working alongside other members of the Executive Management Team (EMT) and other members of the university.

A discussion took place where the President was asked what help and support was required from the Governing Body to ensure that the work plan was deliverable. The President stated that while funding was not something that the Governing Body had control over, the support of the Governing Body in terms of advocating for government funding would be crucial in delivering on the capital projects that are a big part of SETU’s strategy. She went on to say it was not just about capital funding, it was also about having a sustainably funded technological university.

**AGREED** To approve the President’s Work Plan (2022 - 2023).

The Chair and members thanked Prof Campbell for her presentation.

**4. Discussion on Capital Projects:**

Waterford, Wexford, Carlow Campus updates

**NOTED** Mr Paul Quirke and Mr Keith Williams were welcomed to the meeting and presented an update on the following:

**Funding Submissions:**

*Proposed Campus extension - Waterford;*

- Acquisition of adjacent 20 acre site at Cork Road to enable future expansion on one consolidated undergraduate campus.
- Proposed buildings on campus to include:- academic buildings; apprenticeship & skills buildings; student accommodation; research, enterprise & innovation buildings.
- Commercial development on balance of site linked to university by third party agencies.

*Proposed Campus Developments - Wexford Campus;*

- Secure acquisition of 48 acres at Ballynagee, Wexford.
- Phased development of campus.
- Initial phase proposed to include:- academic teaching and research space, library/learning resource; restaurant; students union; academic staff office; administration offices; playing fields; external works including carparking.

**PPP Buildings:**

- Engineering, Computing and General Teaching Building, Waterford Campus.
- Advanced Science Building, Carlow Campus.

**Major Capital Projects currently onsite**

- Corporate Services Building, Carlow Campus.

A lengthy discussion followed where various queries were raised and responded to. The Governing Body were fully informed on developments in the Waterford, Wexford and Carlow Campuses. They were supportive of these developments, but look forward to seeing more detail as time progresses.

The Chair and members thanked Mr Williams and Mr Quirke for their updates.

<p>5.</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p>	<p><b><u>Corporate Administration:</u></b></p> <p><u>Finance - Banking arrangement re IBB mandate</u>  <b>NOTED</b> Mr C. O’Toole explained that the banking arrangements and mandates were approved as presented at the last meeting, but the mandate itself that requires the signatures of the authorised signatories had not been circulated. Mr O’Toole apologised for this oversight and stated it had been circulated to the Board for transparency and completeness.</p> <p><b>AGREED</b> To approve the appropriate resolution circulated and the mandate changing the existing IBB mandates from Institute of Technology Carlow and Waterford Institute of Technology to SETU.</p> <p><u>Governing Body structure for Policy review processes</u>  <b>NOTED</b> Ms E. Sheridan reminded all that the Governing Body need to approve all SETU policies and that some require the Board to go through them in a lot of detail which will take up a lot of valuable time. However, there are other policies that perhaps can be reviewed in a much more efficient manner, and it is proposed that a working group be established to pre-review such policies before they are brought to Governing Body. This group would consist of the Chair, President, both VP’s for Corporate Affairs and any other member who would be willing to come on board. Mr Patrick Curtain agreed to join this group.</p> <p><b>AGREED</b> To establish a working group as outlined above.</p>
<p>6.</p> <p>6.1 &amp; 6.2</p>	<p><b><u>Policy Approvals:</u></b></p> <p><u>Conflict of Interest Policy &amp; Intellectual Property Policy</u>  <b>NOTED</b> Dr Mark White and Dr James O’Sullivan were welcomed to the meeting. The Chair reminded all that both policies were presented and discussed at the last meeting, but it had been agreed that they would be revised and presented at today’s meeting for further discussion.</p> <p>Dr White and Dr O’Sullivan outlined the key amendments to both policies as per the discussion that had taken place at the last meeting. They confirmed that the amended version was brought to Executive Management at their meeting in August and the President has been working closely with the Technology Transfer Office to finalise both documents to make them fit for purpose for the university.</p> <p><b>AGREED</b> To approve the Conflict of Interest &amp; Intellectual Property Policies and upload to website.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b> To upload policies to the website.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b><u>Academic Council:</u></b></p> <p><u>Minutes of meetings of 20.6.22 &amp; 19.8.22</u>  <b>NOTED</b> Academic Council minutes were circulated for information. The President advised that at the meeting of the 20<sup>th</sup> June, Academic Council ratified legacy committees relating to examination results, some minor course changes and external examiners. The meeting of the 19<sup>th</sup> August was a meeting of Academic Council Standing Committee, and the President explained that the Standing Committee is called during the summer to deal with routine approvals during the summer months because Academic Council breaks for the summer months. The committee which was chaired by the VP for Academic Affairs approved postgraduate external examiners, programme validations and ratified examination results.</p> <p>The President advised that from 1<sup>st</sup> September she will be chairing the meetings of Academic Council and will report to Governing Body on its activities.</p>

8.	<p><b><u>Nominations to Audit &amp; Risk committee:</u></b></p> <p>The Chair referred to the memo circulated to Governing Body seeking approval for the nomination of Ms Kathleen Holohan and Ms Nora Widger as members of SETU Audit and Risk Committee. The Chair advised that further nominations would be brought forward in due course.</p> <p><b>AGREED</b> To approve the nominations of Ms Holohan and Ms Widger as members of SETU Audit and Risk Committee.</p>
9.	<p><b><u>Membership of external board:</u></b></p> <p><b>NOTED</b> The President absented herself from the meeting for the duration of the discussion on this item. The Chair referred to the memo circulated to Governing Body from the President advising she had been nominated as a member of the Governing Body of the Atlantic Institute based at the University of Oxford. In accordance with the Technological Universities Act (2108), Prof Campbell is seeking the approval of the Governing Body to serve on the Governing Body of the Atlantic Institute.</p> <p>The Chair advised that the Atlantic Institute was a very prestigious Institute with branches all over the world, including one in Trinity, and felt it would be good for of SETU’s profile to have the President holding such a prestigious position. A discussion followed. While the Board were fully in support of this request, they were conscious of the time commitment involved and Prof Campbell’s ability to execute both, in terms of the ambitious work plan that was presented by her earlier in the meeting. It was noted that her role on the Governing Body of the Atlantic would cease on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022.</p> <p><b>AGREED</b> To approve Prof Campbell’s request to serve on the Governing Body of the Atlantic Institute.</p>
10.	<p><b><u>AOB:</u></b></p> <p><b>NOTED</b> The Chair advised that a meeting has been set up between Chairpersons of all Technological Universities and Minster Simon Harris for Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> September. He further advised that he would not be available on that date, and the Deputy Chair has agreed to attend on behalf of SETU.</p> <p><b>NOTED</b> The Chair advised that he has been invited on to the Board of Innovate for Ireland which is a government funded initiative to fund postgraduate students in the country with philanthropic donations matching government funding. He stated that if any conflict with regard to this initiative arises at Governing Body he will absent himself and the Deputy Chair will take over.</p> <p><b>NOTED</b> Mr P. Curtain referred to the President’s Work Plan where there were plans to expand the university and stated that while this was very positive, he further highlighted the requirement for student accommodation. The VP’s for Corporate Affairs advised that some of the expansion is not to increase capacity, but rather to address infrastructure deficits and also to bring some of the buildings up to a reasonable standard, therefore increasing the student experience. The urgent need for student accommodation was acknowledged and as discussed earlier in the meeting, the President has set up a student accommodation task force to address the matter.</p> <p><b>NOTED</b> There being no other business to attend to, the Chair thanked all and closed the meeting at 5.50pm.</p>



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

Date: 4 October 2022

**Professor Patrick Prendergast**