

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body of Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest held on Friday 1st October 2021 at 10.00am via MS Teams & in person.

Members: Ms. Josephine Feehily (in person)
Prof. Vincent Cunnane (in person)
Ms. Colette Ryan (Teams)
Mr. George O’Callaghan (Teams & in person)
Mr. John Griffin (Teams)

In Attendance:

From Item 11 Áine Daly (Teams)
Mr. Cormac Dillon (Teams)
Ms. Anne O’Leary (in person)
Ms. Brigid Delamere (Teams)
Mr. Eoin Woodlock (Teams)
Ms. Shelley Ann McCarthy Buckingham (Teams)
Mr. Tony Mahon (in person)

In Attendance

For full meeting: Mr. Bill Delaney (in person)
Ms. Raquel Cox (in person)
Ms. Martina Moran, minute taker (Teams)

Note: Items are recorded in the order they were discussed.

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed members to the first meeting of Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest and acknowledged the significance of this historic day.

Conflict of Interest was addressed and no Conflict of Interest was noted, however it was noted that the President would recuse himself for item 4.

2. Correspondence of 27th September, 2021 from Mr Simon Harris TD, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science re appointments to the first Governing Body of the TUS Midlands Midwest.

The correspondence was noted. The Chair was concerned re the approval of her appointment to the position of Chairperson ‘Designate’, (the Act does not allow for Designate). Clarification was sought on this & the Department confirmed that there is full authority of the role of Chairperson under section 55 (2) (2) from 1st October.

3. Statutory Instrument (S.I.) 360 of 2021 establishing the Technological University

The legal instruction as per Minister Harris was noted.

4. Appointment of the first President

Professor Vincent Cunnane recused himself from the meeting for this item.

Correspondence from Minister Harris dated 25th of August designating Professor Vincent Cunnane as first president of Technological University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest in

accordance with section 56(1) of the Act was reviewed. In accordance with the provisions of Section 56 (2) of the TU Act 2018 the Governing Body appointed the president. The terms and conditions of the contract of employment were accepted and approved. Further correspondence is awaited from the minister re the term of appointment. The contract will be amended as required, to reflect this. The Governing Body authorised that the contract of employment be executed by the Chairperson on behalf of Technological University of the Shannon, subject to provision of outstanding items as per the offer letter. The President's salary is as designated by the Minister.

Note: Prof. Cunnane re-joined the meeting.

The Governing Body congratulated Prof. Cunnane and wished him well in his role as President.

The President declared his position as a Director in the private sector which was noted by the Board. The president committed to provide a list of current offices / directorships held in accordance with the requirement of TU Act 2018, schedule 2, part 7. The President highlighted an issue with the contract offered in relation to relative pay of the TUS President versus other Presidents of universities, he stated he was in discussion with the Department on the matter.

5. Adoption of TUS Governing Body Standing Orders

The Governing Body approved the adoption of the Standing Orders, however, the Standing Orders will be re-visited explicitly in conjunction with the Code of Governance with the wider Governing Body members. The appointment of a Deputy Chair to be deferred for a future meeting. Approved minutes will be published on the TUS website. The quorum currently at 3 members will be revisited.

9. Authorisation of TUS bank mandates

The proposal was reviewed. The Governing Body approved the opening & operation of bank accounts as listed from 1st October, 2021 subject to comments discussed re reviewing & reducing the number of required signatures & bank accounts over time. The mandates will be duly signed by the President & the Chair.

HR Matter

As Mr. O'Callaghan joined the meeting in person, B. Delaney & M. Moran were recused from the meeting to discuss this item. Governing Body discussed a HR matter and agreed a course of action.

8. Application for TUS Charitable Status & nomination of Charitable Trustees

The Governing Body approved the submission of the application for charitable Status. It was proposed and agreed that the following members would become trustees: Chair, President and George O'Callaghan. The Charity Trustee Declaration will now be signed which will accompany the application for registration under section 39 of the Charities Act 1009.

6. Adoption of TUS Code of Governance

The Code of Governance was noted, and will be an agenda item at a future meeting for review and approval.

Code of Governance Training (2 hour on-line session) will be provided for Governing Body members.

ACTION: B. Delaney to arrange training in the coming weeks.

7. Statement on application & scope of HR and other non-academic policies & procedures

Background to this was provided at the meeting.

In relation to HR policies it was highlighted that the existing policies in each institute 'roll over', as such and pending further review the HR policies were approved on an interim basis.

10. Proposal for Staff and Student attendance at Governing Body

The Governing Body adopted the proposal to facilitate staff and students to attend all meetings of TUS Governing Body. This process will remain in place until such time as procedure for appointment of members under section 12 of TU Act is complete. Some minor amendments will be made to the proposal, including the inclusion of the requirement for attendees to comply with the Code of Conduct for the Governing Body.

In line with normal business practice, the opportunity for a private session for members only will be provided at the start of every Governing Body meeting – if necessary the Standing Orders will be amended to reflect this.

The attendees joined the meeting and introductions took place. The attendees agreed to be bound by the Code of Conduct.

Attendees were advised that the TUS Code of Governance was noted but not agreed, & will be reviewed at a future meeting.

11. Establishment of TUS Interim Academic Council

The Interim Academic Council, constitution, composition and membership 2021-2022 was approved. The Chair requested that when completing membership fully the gender balance requirement must be met.

12. Presidents update & launch event of TUS Midlands Midwest

The launch of TUS: Midlands Midwest will take place today at 2pm in the International Arena in Athlone, which will include video links with Moylish campus.


Prof. Cunnane as President of TUS will be facilitated by 4 Vice Presidents in each institute. These V.P. roles were part of a review conducted by KPMG, the results of which were presented to the incoming President – the VP roles will be assigned in the coming days. The role of Deans and Heads of Department will remain as is. The Heads of Function will also continue to carry out their roles but there may be a change in the reporting structures.

The TU Act 2018 provides for the transition of employment of all staff in TUS. The TUS website went live at 4am today.

13. AOB

The Chair closed the meeting by thanking all involved today and wished the President every good wish for the launch later today and for the future as President of TUS. The Chair also advised that there will be short Governing Body meetings arranged for the coming weeks to assist members to fully understand their duties and responsibilities. The Chair will also be available to answer any queries and will be visiting both campuses over the coming days.

A photo was taken of the Governing Body and the meeting concluded at 11am.

Signed: 
Chair of TUS Governing Body

Date: 12/10/21

