

## Minutes of proceedings of the Governing Body Meeting

**Date:** Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020  
**Time:** 10.00am  
**Location:** Microsoft Teams and Boardroom, Galway Campus

**Present:** Mr Cormac MacDonncha (Chair)  
Mr Joe Cunningham  
Dr Orla Flynn (President)  
Cllr Michael Maher  
Mr Gareth Roe  
Cllr Colm Keaveney  
Dr Eleanor Rainsford  
Mr Michael Geoghegan  
Cllr Paul Murphy  
Ms Maureen Walsh  
Ms Proinsias Ní Ghrainne  
Ms Maria Ruddy  
Ms Siobhán Kennedy  
Mr Victor O'Loughlin  
Ms Saidhbh McIntyre  
Cllr Terry O'Flaherty  
Ms Mary McGinley  
Mr Tom Grady

**In Attendance:** Mr Jim Fennell, Secretary / VP for Finance & Corporate Services  
Dr Michel Hannon, VP for Academic Affairs and Registrar  
Dr Rick Officer, VP for Research and Innovation  
Ms Fiona Faherty, Meeting Secretary  
Ms Jean Carpenter, Corporate Governance and Risk Management Officer  
Ms Mary Nestor, EDI Manager (Item 5.0)

**Apologies:** Mr David Leahy

<b>1.0 Declaration of Conflict of Interest with Agenda Items</b>	<b>ALL</b>
There were no conflicts of interest declared by those present or in attendance.	
<b>2.0 Minutes of Previous Meeting</b>	<b>All</b>
The minutes of the Meeting held on 26 <sup>th</sup> November 2020, were approved on the proposal of Cllr Michael Maher and seconded by Cllr Colm Keaveney.	
<b>3.0 Matters Arising</b>	<b>All</b>
<p>Mr Michael Geoghegan referred to item 6.2 of the minutes and sought an update on the Student Building.</p> <p>Mr Fennell informed the Board that professional procurement advise had been sought on the reengagement of the design team. An update will be provided to the January meeting.</p> <p>Clarification on the expiration date of the planning permission for the Student Building will be clarified at the January meeting.</p> <p>The amended Terms of Reference for the Mayo Campus Subcommittee were circulated and approved on the proposal of Cllr Colm Keaveney and seconded by Cllr Michael Maher.</p>	
<b>4.0 President</b>	<b>O Flynn</b>
<p><b>4.1 President's Report</b></p> <p>The President's Report was tabled at the meeting and Dr Flynn thanked everyone who had contributed to the report in the short timeframe between the November and December meetings.</p> <p>She highlighted the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The annual Christmas Teaching and Learning Showcase takes place on December 10<sup>th</sup>, joined by Dr Eileen Kennedy from University College London.</li> <li>- Land acquisition process continues</li> <li>- The completion of the Canteen was achieved in November and it is hoped to open the new facilities in 2021</li> <li>- A budget of €1.5m has been agreed for minor works for 2021</li> <li>- The School of Engineering has teamed up with Thermo King, Galway, to develop a higher certificate and BEng in Automation and Robotics</li> <li>- The 'Graduate Outcomes Survey' will take place for 2020 graduates, the survey had been deferred due to COVID19</li> <li>- The Institutes virtual choir released their latest video recording, and this was dedicated to the memory of their colleague Ms Patricia Carrick, RIP</li> <li>- The President held the first ever all-staff meeting, virtually, on November 30<sup>th</sup>, with over 500 attendees.</li> </ul> <p>Dr Rick Officer informed the meeting of the positive response to the 2020 GMT Research &amp; Innovation Strategic Endowment (RISE) Scholarships where 30 applications were submitted.</p> <p>Funding of just under €180k was received for the Galway and Mayo iHubs under the November Enterprise Ireland Enterprise Centres funding call. Dr Officer commended and congratulated Mr George McCourt for his work in securing this funding.</p> <p><b>4.2 Media Coverage Report</b></p> <p>The Media Coverage Report which was circulated prior to the Meeting was taken as read.</p>	

<p>Dr Flynn congratulated Dr Simon Berrow for his interview on Morning Ireland where he discussed the study of basking shark genetics and complimented him on this success. Mr Joe Cunningham also complimented Dr Berrow on the interview and success of this project.</p>	
<p><b>5.0 Report from EDI Subcommittee</b></p>	<p><b>O Flynn</b></p>
<p>Cllr Colm Keaveney, Chair of the EDI Subcommittee provided an update from the EDI Subcommittee meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> December.</p> <p><b>5.1 Athena Swan Application</b></p> <p>Ms Mary Nestor, EDI Manager, joined the meeting and provided an update on the Athena Swan Application. The draft application was circulated to the meeting in advance. Ms Nestor informed the Board that it is hoped to have the application submitted by the end of December.</p> <p>Cllr Colm Keaveney thanked Ms Nestor for the work in putting this application together.</p> <p><b>5.2 Gender Action Plan</b></p> <p>The Gender Action Plan was circulated for approval. Ms Nestor provided information on the draft plan and thanked the contributors for the work in putting this plan together. She specifically thanked the HR Department for providing the required data over the past three years.</p> <p>The Gender Action Plan was approved on the proposal of Cllr Colm Keaveney and seconded by Cllr Terry O’Flaherty.</p> <p><b>5.3 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy</b></p> <p>Ms Nestor informed the meeting that this policy has been developed in consultation with a range of stakeholders across the Institute and with the guidance of the Governing Body EDI Subcommittee.</p> <p>The EDI Policy was approved on the proposal of Mr Michael Geoghegan and seconded by Cllr Colm Keaveney.</p>	
<p><b>6.0 Establishment of Capital Projects Subcommittee</b></p>	<p><b>J Fennell</b></p>
<p><b>6.1 Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>The terms of reference for the Capital Projects Subcommittee were approved on the proposal of Cllr Michael Maher and seconded by Cllr Colm Keaveney.</p> <p><b>6.2 Appointment of members to the Subcommittee</b></p> <p>The following members were appointed to the Capital Projects Subcommittee on the proposal of Ms Maureen Walsh and seconded by Cllr Paul Murphy:-</p> <p>Mr Cormac MacDonncha, Dr Orla Flynn, Mr Victor O’Loughlin, Dr Eleanor Rainsford, Ms Siobhain Kennedy, Cllr Michael Maher, Mr Joe Cunningham and Cllr Terry O’Flaherty.</p>	
<p><b>7.0 Registrar / Academic Affairs</b></p>	<p><b>M Hannon</b></p>
<p><b>7.1 Student Fee Policy 2020/21</b></p>	

Dr Michael Hannon advised the meeting that the main amendment to the Student Fee Policy for 2020/21 is the inclusion of a section on refunds for students who commence in months other than September or January. Consultation has taken place with Life Long Learning, the Finance Officer, Fee collection and staff in the OAA. The policy was approved by Executive Board on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

The Student Fee Policy for 2020/21 was approved on the proposal of Cllr Michael Maher and seconded by Cllr Paul Murphy.

## **7.2 Fee Policy 2020/21**

The following amendments to the Fee Schedule for 2020/21 as presented by Dr Hannon were approved on the proposal of Cllr Michael Maher and seconded by Ms Maureen Walsh.

- No additional fees shall apply to research students who have had to extend their projects due to COVID-19.
- Addition of new programmes on the fee schedule:
  - ✓ Certificate in Data Cybersecurity (SPA) €1,620
  - ✓ BEng in Automation and Robotics (Level 7, 60 ECTS per year) €6,000
  - ✓ Certificate in Applied Leadership & Management (30 credits) Mayo €2,520
  - ✓ Postgraduate Diploma in Science in Applied Leadership & Management (60 credits, level 9) Mayo €5,040
  - ✓ Master of Science in Applied Leadership & Management (Level 9, 90 credits) Mayo €7,560

## **7.3 Academic Plan**

The Academic Plan for 2020/21 to 2024/25 was circulated for approval. Dr Hannon informed the meeting that during the month of November individual school plans were reviewed by members of the Executive Board, and a consolidated Institute Academic Plan was considered at a joint meeting of Executive Board and Management Group. The Institute Academic Plan was recommended for approval at the Executive Board on December 8<sup>th</sup>.

The Academic Plan was approved on the proposal of Cllr Michael Maher and seconded by Ms Maureen Walsh.

## **7.4 Quality of Engagement Update**

Dr Hannon provided an update on the level and quality of student engagement, in response to a query from Cllr Colm Keaveney at the Governing Body meeting held on November 26<sup>th</sup>, under item 8.1.1 Recoding Policy. He assured the Board that ongoing support is provided to students from Institute staff, Counselling office, Access Services, Student Health Unit and the Chaplaincy.

Dr Hannon added that a further review on student experience from September to December will be explored and he will provide this feedback to the Board.

Dr Eleanor Rainsford noted that there was limited feedback from students on assessments. She also asked if there were additional plans for further engagement on staff surveys. Dr Hannon noted this and added that it can be reviewed yes.

Mr Gareth Roe asked if the Institute had any further plans to bring more students back on campus in semester two, outside of practical's. The President informed the meeting that the School of Business will continue to delivery their programs fully online for semester two. However, the situation is continually being monitored and reviewed for all other schools by the COVID Officer, Dr Seamus Lennon, considering students' accommodation among other factors.

<p>Dr Rick Officer raised the issue of space requirements for the growing post graduate students. He added this area needs investment and should be a high priority among the capital projects plan. This was noted by the President.</p>	
<p><b>8.0 Corporate Governance</b></p>	<p><b>J Fennell</b></p>
<p><b>8.1 Risk Management Policy</b></p> <p>Mr Jim Fennell highlight some minor amendments to the Risk Management Policy. The Policy was approved on the proposal of Cllr Michael Maher and seconded by Dr Eleanor Rainsford.</p> <p><b>8.2 Review of Internal Controls &amp; Risk Management</b></p> <p>Ms Jean Carpenter presented the review of Internal Controls &amp; Risk Management. She explained the responsibilities of Governing Body:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ensure that an <b>effective system of Internal Control</b> is instituted and implemented.</li> <li>➤ <b>Annual review</b> of the effectiveness of systems in place within 3 months of year end (a defined process to support the SIC)</li> <li>➤ Identify areas where <b>corrective action</b> is needed.</li> <li>➤ Identify <b>any material control weaknesses</b> that need <b>to be reported in SIC.</b></li> <li>➤ Confirm in the Statement of Control that there has been a review of the effectiveness of Internal Control and risk management</li> </ul> <p>Following reviews by the Audit &amp; Risk Committee (ARC) and Internal &amp; External Audits the following opinion was formed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Based on consideration of its ongoing work and the information supplied to it, the ARC is satisfied that corrective action for weaknesses in internal control that have been identified during the period have been addressed with control actions put in place or in progress at the year end.</li> <li>➤ Reasonable assurance can be provided to the Governing Body in relation to the adequacy of the sources of assurance and to the operation of risk management, control and governance in GMIT.</li> </ul> <p>The Chairman complimented the ARC for the level of work gone into the reviews but expressed significant concern regarding the Green Campus Bank Account.</p> <p>Ms Mary McGinley, Chair of the ARC, shared Mr MacDonncha’s concerns and noted the findings as a serious matter. She added that the ARC requires the necessary assurances from Management that the ARC recommendations are taken on board and are implemented.</p> <p><b>8.3 Audit &amp; Risk Committee Annual Report to Governing Body</b></p> <p>The Audit &amp; Risk Committee Annual Report was welcomed by the Chair and he thanked the ARC Committee, Chair Ms Mary McGinley and Ms Jean Carpenter for their support and work over the past year. The report provides assurance to the Governing Body.</p> <p><b>8.4 Governing Body Assessment of Effectiveness of Internal Controls and Risk Management (Based on Item 8.2 and 8.3 Above)</b></p> <p>The Governing Body approved the Effectiveness of Internal Controls and Risk Management (based on item 8.2 and 8.3 above) on the proposal of Cllr Michael Maher and seconded by Cllr Terry O’Flaherty.</p>	

**8.5 Governing Body Assessment of Effectiveness of Audit & Risk Committee (Based on Item 8.2 to 8.4 above)**

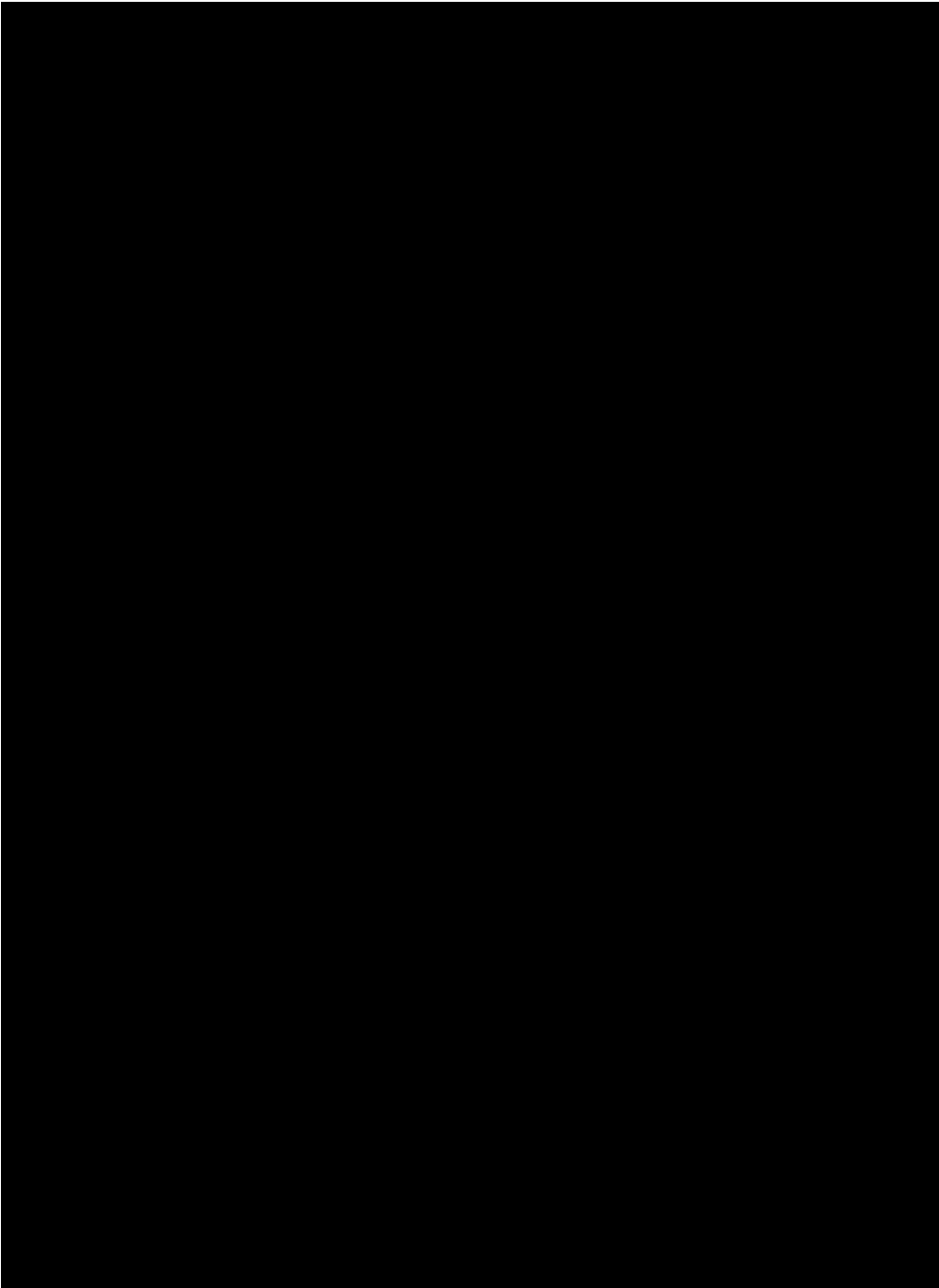
The Governing Body approved the Effectiveness of the Audit & Risk Committee (based on item 8.2 to 8.4 above) on the proposal of Cllr Michael Maher and seconded by Cllr Paul Murphy.

**8.6 Appointment of Member to ARC Subcommittee**

On the recommendation of the ARC committee Ms Kerrie Power was approved to be a new member of the ARC Committee, on the proposal of Cllr Michael Maher and seconded by Mr Gareth Roe.

**9.0 HR Matters**

**J Fennell**



<b>10.0 SU President Report</b>	<b>SU President</b>
<p>This item was deferred to the next meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Terry O’Flaherty provided an update to the Board on correspondence that she received from Galway City Council regarding the zebra crossing.</p>	
<b>11.0 Finance</b>	
<b>11.1 Finance Outturn to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020</b>	

<p>Mr Fennell informed the meeting that the Institute was running on target with projected budget spend.</p> <p>Circa €2.4m expenditure has been incurred on responding to the COVID19 pandemic crisis, including mobile devices in order to facilitate remote working, student mentors, and health and safety measures on campus. In view of the foregoing approval was sought to increase the non-pay expenditure by €1.5m. This was approved on the proposal of Mr Michael Geoghegan and seconded by Ms Maria Ruddy.</p> <p>The President thanked the Finance Subcommittee and the Finance Team for regular reports and updates.</p> <p>Mr Jim Fennell thanked Cllr Michael Maher for his support as Chair of the Finance Subcommittee and the Finance Team.</p>	
<p><b>12.0 Schedule of Meetings for 2021</b></p>	
<p>The schedule of Governing Body meetings for 2021 as was circulated, was approved on the proposal of Mr Garth Roe and seconded by Ms Maria Ruddy.</p>	
<p><b>13.0 Any Other Business</b></p>	<p><b>All</b></p>
<p>Cllr Michael Maher commended the President and Dr Rick Officer for their recent charity sleep out in aid of COPE.</p> <p>Mr Gareth Roe asked if the Management from Cluain Mhuire Campus could provide an update on the progress of works on Campus. It was agreed that the Capital Projects Subcommittee would meet with Dr Paddy Tobin and an update would be provided to the Governing Body.</p> <p>The President thanked everybody for their commitment to GMIT over the past year and wished all a Happy Christmas.</p> <p><b>This concluded the business of the meeting.</b></p> <p><b>Signed:</b> _____ Chairperson</p>	<p><b>Date:</b> _____</p>



## Governing Body List of Actions 2021

Action Items Reference Nos are explained as follows:

- The first number of the reference relates to the Date of the Meeting
- The second number of the reference relates to the Agenda Item

Action Item	Action	Action Owner	Target Date	Status
29.08.19 – 10.5 28.11.19 – 7.0	Strategic plans to be developed for: - 1. Marketing - 2. Communications	President	January 2020	Self-Evaluation taking place as part of QA process in 2021
29.08.19 – 10.5 28.11.19 – 7.0 30.01.20 – 9.1	- 1. International  Benchmarking exercise on Internationalisation within the Sector  Explore appointment of an External Consultant to review International	VP for International	January 2020  March 2020  March 2020	Delayed due to COVID19  Deferred due to COVID19  Decision not to proceed at this time
26.09.19 – 3 30.01.20 – 3.0	Establishment of GIHS Working Group / Review of School/Strategic Plan  GIHS Strategic Plan	Chair & President	Nov/December 2019  2020	Presented to December 2019 meeting  Review as part of Academic Plan Q4 2020 – Complete Presented to GB Oct 2020
26.09.19 – 5.1	<i>Institute to write to HEA regarding Accommodation Crisis</i>	<i>VP for F&amp;CS</i>	<i>October 2019</i>	<i>Complete/Part of sectoral discussions.</i>
12.12.19 – 5.1	<i>Clarification on Garda Vetting for Guest Lecturers</i>	<i>VP for F&amp;CS</i>	<i>January 2020</i>	<i>Complete</i>
12.12.19 – 8.0	<i>Communications Plan for delivering Mayo campus Strategic Plan to all Stakeholders</i>	<i>President/VP for Mayo campus</i>	<i>December 2019</i>	<i>Complete</i>
28.05.20 – 5.1	<i>Update from Return to Campus Implementation Team</i>	<i>President</i>	<i>June 2020</i>	<i>Agenda Item at August Meeting Regular updates at monthly meetings – Complete</i>
27.08.20 – 3.0	<i>Review of Action List</i>	<i>President and VP FSC</i>	<i>Sept 2020</i>	<i>Complete</i>
27.08.20 – 4.2	<i>Update of Inaugural Shadow GB meeting</i>	<i>President</i>	<i>Sept 2020</i>	<i>Complete</i>
27.08.20 – 5.2	<i>TOR Mayo Campus Subcommittee</i>	<i>President</i>	<i>Sept 2020</i>	<i>Complete</i>

27.08.20 – 5.2	ARC to review Risk Registers and provide update on findings	ARC/ JFennell	Sept 2020	Complete
27.08.20 – 5.2	Set up EDI Meeting	J Fennell	Sept 2020	Complete Meeting taking place on 5 <sup>th</sup> October
27.08.20 – 6.0	Capital Projects Priority List	J Fennell	Sept 2020	Complete
27.08.20 – 10.0	CAO outcome required for schools with poor student no's	J Fennell	Oct 2020	Complete
27.08.20 – 10.3	Trend analysis of Unit Cost Report	J Fennell	Sept 2020	Agenda Item for October Meeting – Complete
24.09.20 – 4.4	Honorary Fellowships	President	Sept 2020	Agenda Item for October Meeting - Complete
24.09.20 – 8.4	CAO Numbers – GIHS	Registrar	Oct 2020	Agenda Item for October Meeting - Complete
24.09.20 – 12.0	TU Submission	President	Oct/Nov 2020	Separate 1 Item Meeting – Date to be agreed Q1 2021
26.11.20 – 4.2	Circulation of Article	J Fennell	Dec 2020	December Meeting – Complete
26.11.20 – 6.2	Clarification on procurement – Reappoint Design Team on Student Building	J Fennell	Dec 2020	January Meeting
26.11.20 – 6.3	Capital Projects Subcommittee 1. Circulate TOR 2. Members of Subcommittee	J Fennell	Dec 2020	Agenda Item December Meeting - Complete
26.11.20 – 8.1.1	Update on Student Support – Recording Policy	M Hannon	Dec 2020	December Meeting – Complete
26.11.20 – 9.1	Finance Outturn Deferred	J Fennell	Dec 2020	Agenda Item December Meeting – Complete