



Board Meeting 19 June 2024

This meeting was held in the Trinity Board Room

Present: Chairperson (Mr P Farrell), Provost (Dr L Doyle), Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer (Professor O Sheils), Professor K Ahmad, Ms A Bennett, Ms D Caden, Professor M Cunningham, Professor A Dignam, Ms T Doyle, Ms I Goggin, Dr N Hardiman, Professor D Jones, Dr M Kelly, Professor C Leahy, Mr L Molnárfi, Ms O Muldoon, Dr D Thornhill, Professor J Walsh.

Apologies: Professor I Arnedillo Sánchez, Ms R Mathews McKay, Mr M Murtagh-White, Professor A Nolan, Professor C O'Farrelly, Dr M Olmstead, Dr L Roe, Mr A White.

In attendance

(ex officio) Secretary to the College/Director of Governance (Ms V Butler), Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer (Ms L Ryan), Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation (Professor E Denny), Chief Operating Officer (Ms O Cunningham).

In attendance

Project Manager, Secretary's Office (Ms S Brown).

SECTION A

BD/23-24/251 Statements of Interest

The Secretary to the College/Director of Governance advised the Board that she had received a statement of potential conflict of interest from Professor Sheils and Professor Denny in respect of agenda item A. 13 Annual Officers. Having discussed the item with Professor Sheils and Professor Denny, the Secretary to the College/Director of Governance proposed, and it was agreed, that they would leave the meeting for the item.

The Secretary to the College/Director of Governance advised the Board that she had received a statement of potential conflict of interest from Ms Cunningham in respect of agenda item D. 37 Position of Chief Operating Officer. Having discussed the item with Ms Cunningham, the Secretary to the College/Director of Governance proposed, and it was agreed, that she would leave the meeting for the item.

This item was taken at this point in the meeting.

BD/23-24/252 Board Membership

(i) **Students' Union**

The Board noted that Ms Jenny Maguire and Mr Hamza Bana have been elected and will serve as members of the Board for the academic year 2024/25.

(ii) The Board noted and approved that Ms Maguire would attend to observe the Board meeting of 19 June 2024.

Ms Maguire joined the meeting at this point.

The Chairperson invited Ms Maguire to introduce herself.

On behalf of the Board the Chairperson issued a statement of thanks to those members who were finishing their term of office and the Board gave a round of applause.

BD/23-24/253 Minutes

The Board approved the draft minutes of 22 May 2024.

BD/23-24/254 Matters Arising

The following matters were raised under matters arising:

In response to a query the Provost clarified the role of the University Council regarding research and education.

BD/23-24/214 Proposed Changes to the 2010 Consolidated Statutes

The Chairperson clarified to the Board that provisions already exist in law (under the Universities Act 1997 and in the Trinity College Dublin Code of Conduct 2021) for the removal of a member of the Board. He informed the Board that the purpose of the proposal that had been brought to the previous meeting had been to make provision for the legislation in the University's Statutes. He noted that there was currently no provision for lesser sanctions to be imposed. In light of the concerns of the Board expressed at the previous meeting, the Chairperson proposed and the Board agreed that Board members would make submissions on proposed sanctions or any other related thoughts to the Secretary to the College/Director of Governance via the Secretary's Office by the end of July. The Secretary to the College/Director of Governance advised that she had met with the Registrar, Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson and that they would continue to work on a proposal to be brought to the Statutes/Schedules Working Group and to the Board for approval.

In response to query it was clarified that the involvement of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson relates to their function of the running of the Board.

BD/23-24/226 University Council

The Secretary to the College/Director of Governance informed the Board that she was working with the Registrar on documenting the governance relationship between the Board and the University Council which would be brought to the Board in the Autumn.

There were no other items raised under matters arising.

Actions/Decisions

254.1 The Board agreed that members would make submissions on proposed sanctions or any other related thoughts to the Secretary to the College/Director of Governance via the Secretary's Office by the end of July.

Major Strategy Item

BD/23-24/255 Strategic Plan 2025-2030

The Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer introduced the item with reference to her presentation dated 19 June 2024 which had been circulated. She noted that targeted consultations are continuing to take place, and drew Board's attention to the list of Committees and Groups that had been consulted from April to June 2024. She informed the Board that the online survey issued to staff, students and alumni was open until 21 June and that responses would be collated over the summer. She reported that although the surveys are not yet complete, certain themes are emerging, and presented the themes that have emerged from staff surveys under the headings of Finance, Staff, Students, Research, Digital Infrastructure and Technology and Climate/Civic. She noted that emerging student concerns relate to accommodation, a student centre and sports. She informed the Board that she would continue to meet with the Board Working Group over the summer.

The Chairperson opened the item to questions and comments.

In response to a comment from a Board member on a survey response that sought the provision of courses that meet the actual needs of students, the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer noted that it may refer to recent initiatives of engaging with industry and enterprise to develop courses that meet

the skills needs of employers and students. The Provost noted an emerging global trend of dis-engagement from traditional third level education.

In response to a query from a Board member the Vice-Provost/CAO clarified that while the survey feedback to date has been mostly operational in nature the strategy would be developed above the emerging themes. She noted the importance of scoping out the options for the financial supports that would underpin the strategy.

The importance of giving the Board an opportunity to make strategic inputs as the themes begin to emerge was noted.

With regard to the financing of the strategic plan, differing perspectives were raised. On the one hand the importance of considering the University's finances as a whole was underlined, and considering what compromises the University would be willing to make to deliver the strategy. In that regard, the Vice-Provost/CAO noted the importance of building in multi-annual operational funding such as funding of digital and research infrastructure. On the other, it was considered that the development of a strategic vision should not be limited initially by financial constraints; the strategy could be adjusted subsequently to align with the financial supports identified.

The Chairperson closed the discussion by thanking the Vice-Provost/CAO.

Action/Decision

254.01 The Board received an update from the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer.

Critical Infrastructure Matters

BD/23-24/256 Report from the Chair of the Critical Infrastructure Committee

Ms Doyle as Chair of the Critical Infrastructure Committee (CIC) provided a verbal update to the Board on the activity of the Committee. She informed the Board that the CIC had met twice since her last report and that membership was almost complete with the exception of an undergraduate student member which would be filled next term.

She listed the capital projects for which the CIC had received updates at their April meeting, namely, Trinity East Programme, Dartry Project, Trinity South Renewal Programme, Student Spaces, and Strategic Space Management. She also listed the items of business that had been considered at the Committee, i.e., the Library Annual Report 2022/23 and Cyber-Security update. She noted that the Federated IT and Cyber Group which had been established provides reports to the CIC which gives it a level of reassurance around risk and compliance. She reported that Dashboards have been introduced on Capital Projects and Digital Projects to give the CIC an overview of the status of these projects.

Ms Doyle advised that at the June meeting of CIC, proposals and updates on the development of the Iveagh Grounds, the E3 Learning Foundry and Portal had been considered. She reported that policies relating to the security of library collections had been approved and that the CIC had asked to look at other collections to make sure policies were in place to mitigate against risks. She highlighted the maintenance programme and environmental standards for buildings which requires significant increased investment. In response the Vice-Provost/CAO confirmed that she is aware that there are issues and that in the context of the strategic plan, it would be imperative that any funding source identified would be used for multi-annual requirements such as this.

Action/Decision

256.01 The Board received an update from the Chair of the Critical Infrastructure Committee.

BD/23-24/257 Large Scale Sports Infrastructure Fund – Iveagh Grounds Application

Ms Breda Walls, Director of Student Services, Ms Michelle Tanner, Director of Sport and Physical Activity, and Mr Matthew Dossett, Deputy Director of Sport and Physical Activity joined the meeting for this item.

The Chief Operating Officer introduced the item with reference to her memorandum dated 13 June 2024 and the presentation dated June 2024 which had been circulated. She presented the proposal that funding be applied for under the Government's Large Scale Sport Infrastructure Fund 2024 (LSSIF) to develop Trinity's Iveagh Sports Grounds in partnership with Athletics Ireland, the National Governing Body of Athletics. She presented to the Board the background to the LSSIF, the format that applications must follow and the rationale for applying now. She noted that the grounds at Iveagh Grounds are in poor condition and that the investment being sought would make a significant difference.

Professor Walsh joined the meeting at this point.

The Chief Operating Officer noted the impact that the development of the site would have on the student experience and the wider benefits, including to research, to the community, its contributions to inclusivity through engaging marginalised groups, the opportunities it would present for sustainability and the University's infrastructure. She noted also that supporting statements had been issued by the Presidents of the Students' Union and of the Trinity Sport Union.

The Chairperson opened the floor to questions and comments. In the course of discussion, the proposal was broadly welcomed by Board members.

The Chairperson of CIC informed the Board that there had been enthusiastic support for the proposal from Committee members and that no reservations had been expressed.

The Board approved the request to submit an application to LSSIF 2024 to develop the Iveagh Grounds, the proposed partnership with Athletics Ireland in submitting the application and to source the required matched funding from a combination of philanthropy, strategic funds, corporate partnerships and sponsorship.

It was agreed that any change to the project costs would be brought back to the Board.

The Chairperson closed the item by thanking the Chief Operating Officer, Ms Walls, Ms Tanner and Mr Dossett for their presentation.

Action/Decision

257.01 The Board approved the request to submit an application to LSSIF 2024 to develop the Iveagh Grounds, the proposed partnership with Athletics Ireland in submitting the application and to source the required matched funding from a combination of philanthropy, strategic funds, corporate partnerships and sponsorship.

Ms Walls, Ms Tanner and Mr Dossett, left the meeting at this point.

BD/23-24/258 Strategic Capital Projects Dashboard

With regard to the E3 Learning Foundry, the Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation informed the Board that further to Board approval in February 2024, the HEA had approved the request to increase the programme budget and the extension of time. In response to a query she advised that the Heads of Term negotiations are ongoing and that the project was operating within the Board-approved budget.

The Board noted the Strategic Capital Projects Dashboard as had been circulated.

Dr Thornhill left the meeting at this point.

BD/23-24/259 Trinity East Update

Mr Colin Brogan, Capital Projects Manager, and Mr Stephen Walsh, Programme Manager for Strategic

Projects joined the meeting for this item.

The Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation introduced the item with reference to her presentation dated 12 June 2024 which had been circulated. She noted that the update to the Board comprised of three parts, i.e., (i) the proposed plan for the phased approach to the refurbishment of the Trinity East site, (ii) the increased philanthropic gift for an expanded Research and Innovation Library, and (iii) the capital cost challenges on the Portal project and proposed approach. She summarised the background to the project, noting that the original proposal which had been approved by the Board in 2019 had been circulated for the information of the Board, but in light of funding challenges, the impact of construction inflation, and the sustainability agenda, a strategic decision had been taken by Board in September 2023 to refurbish existing buildings rather than newly build, and outlined the three principles underpinning that decision.

She informed the Board that the Finance Committee had approved the proposal at its meeting of 30 May 2024.

The Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation presented the plan for the phased approach to the refurbishment of the site by providing the background context and the proposed phased approach. She presented in detail the proposed plan for the first phase which would include the development of the Portal Innovation Hub and the Research and Innovation Library and which it was aimed to complete within 5 years. She summarised the other three phases, noting that funding had not yet been identified for these and that construction work on any of these would not commence at least for another 5 years, and that the order in which each of the next phases would commence would be decided in the future.

Mr Brogan summarised the timeline overview of the Portal Capital Expenditure and Mr Walsh presented the Portal Capital Costs, including a budget overrun analysis and contingencies in identifying a source of funds for the anticipated cost overrun. He recommended taking on a Clerk of Works to the project which had proved to be a valuable resource on other capital projects. He drew the Board's attention to the additional scope analysis which included the back square at Portal noting that to include it in the first phase would be considerably more cost effective while the Portal contractor is on site and when it can be sequenced with the works on the Portal front square.

The Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation finished the presentation by outlining the next steps should Board approve the proposal.

The Chairperson opened the item to questions and discussion.

The Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation responded to a number of queries from Board members. She undertook to get a current valuation of the site in light of the changed business plan. She confirmed that the income plan and updated business plan will be brought to the Board later in the year. With regard to the flood masterplan, she informed the Board that this was considered as part of the application for planning permission and that it would be considered further as part of the first phase of development. She confirmed that the research and innovation library would form part of the existing libraries on campus.

In response to a request by a Board member that in future greater clarity be provided to the Board so that it is clear when they are being asked to approve a critical decision, the Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation undertook to address this and also to factor into contingency planning the standard percentage overrun on project costs. She confirmed that the allocation of budget from Trinity East to go towards the source of funds for the Portal cost overrun will not impact on the delivery of the Trinity East project which will be delivered within budget and clarified that the funding model of Trinity East differs by identifying funding before each phase is developed.

The Board noted the update on the phasing plan for Trinity East and approved (i) the uplift of the total budget for the Research and Innovation Library reflecting an increased philanthropic gift, and (ii) the

increased budget for the Portal project and the proposed funding sources from philanthropy and an allocation from the Trinity East budget.

The Chairperson closed the item by thanking the Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation, Mr Brogan and Mr Walsh for their presentation.

Action/Decision

259.01 The Board noted the update on the phasing plan for Trinity East.

259.02 The Board approved the uplift of the total budget for the Research and Innovation Library reflecting an increased philanthropic gift.

259.03 The Board approved the increased budget for the Portal project and the proposed funding sources from philanthropy and an allocation from the Trinity East budget.

Mr Brogan and Mr Walsh left the meeting at this point.

BD/23-24/260 Old Library Redevelopment Project

Professor Eoin O’Sullivan, Senior Dean and Project Sponsor, and Ms Edwina Hegarty, Programme Manager for Strategic Projects, joined the meeting at this point.

The Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation introduced the item with reference to her presentation dated 12 June 2024 and to her memorandum dated 18 June 2024 which had been circulated. She updated the Board on the Old Library Development Project by presenting a summary of previous Board approvals, the background and original scope of the project, and the financial and logistical challenges of delivering the original architectural solution. She informed the Board that since the last update, an extensive review of the items within the project scope had been undertaken with key stakeholders and that it is no longer feasible to deliver the original scope of the project which leaves a number of options. She noted the recommendation is to continue the project but with a reduced scope which would address the fire safety concerns, repair the building, return as many of the collections to the building as possible, deliver an attractive visitor experience, and deliver a study space. She presented in more detail the positive impact of delivering the reduced scope, such as reducing disruption, interventions to the building fabric, and time and construction costs and a major reduction in risk. She noted that there will remain a significant number of unknowns which cannot be addressed until the design has progressed, in particular around the cost of the project and the likely future revenues.

Regarding the retail experience, she informed the Board that the Commercial Revenue Unit has already commenced research on an alternative location and that further information on associated capital costs, operating costs, contribution and timelines would be brought to the Board at a future date.

She informed the Board of the progress that had been made since the last update in relation to tendering for the Integrated design team, the completion of the decant and opening of the research collections study centre in the Ussher Library, and the interim exhibition space for the Book of Kells. She informed the Board that fire suppression testing had been carried out in Norway in October 2023 and that the final report had been completed and presented to the Trinity team in June. The Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation finished her presentation by outlining the next steps should the Board approve the current request. She noted that the proposal has the support of the Librarian and College Archivist and her team.

The Chairperson thanked the Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation and opened the item to the floor for discussion.

In response to a query from a Board member, the Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation clarified that potential negative consequences of removing mechanical environmental controls from the project scope could be that not all of the collections would return and some more vulnerable books would remain in off-site storage. Regarding the time commitment of library staff in progressing the

development of individual 'slip covers' to protect each book returning to the building, it was clarified that these would be developed in parallel with the project and that this course of action had been proposed by the Library and had the support of the Librarian and College Archivist. She confirmed that there had been full engagement with the senior management team in the Library and in response to a request from a Board member, undertook to ensure there was wider engagement with Library staff to keep them informed.

There was general consensus that the option of not proceeding with the project was not feasible due to the major reputational consequences it would have, as well as the building remaining at high risk. It was clarified that the fire safety issues must be addressed in order for it to be a functioning library. The Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation confirmed that the interim Book of Kells exhibition has continued to generate revenue in its temporary location.

In response to a query from a Board member, the Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation advised that as a public sector body, Trinity is required to tender for the new design team through public procurement and that any qualified party can apply under this process. She confirmed that a lot has been learnt from the original scoping exercise which can be used in writing the tender and at the tender evaluation stage.

The Provost acknowledged the need for including the logistical challenges in project proposals in the future, and the need to prioritise elements of the project at the outset.

Ms Doyle left the meeting at this point.

The Chairperson closed the discussion by noting that as part of the lessons learned from the project, it would be necessary to include the counter arguments when a proposal is brought to the Board for approval, highlighting the risks as well as the benefits. He commended the Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation for bringing to the Board's attention the risks associated with proceeding with the original proposal.

The Board approved the presentation update noting that there are sufficient funds in the current approved budget to progress the project to November 2024. It approved the request (i) to proceed to issue the invitation to tender for the PM/QS and Integrated design team to develop a design to deliver the reduced scope of the Old Library Redevelopment Project, (ii) to cover internal staff costs until November 2024 and (iii) to progress the development of book slip covers for the protection of the historic collections subject to normal governance.

The Board noted that Finance Committee had considered and approved the requests at its meeting of 30 May 2024.

Action/Decision

260.01 The Board considered and approved the update as presented noting that there are sufficient funds in the current approved budget to progress the project to November 2024.

260.02 The Board approved the request to proceed to issue the invitation to tender for the PM/QS and Integrated design team to develop a design to deliver the reduced scope of the Old Library Redevelopment Project

260.03 The Board approved the request to cover internal staff costs until November 2024.

260.04 The Board approved the request to progress the development of book slip covers for the protection of the historic collections subject to normal governance.

Professor O'Sullivan and Ms Hegarty left the meeting at this point.

Financial/Audit Matters

BD/23-24/261 Quarterly Financial Review and Forecasts Q2 2023/24

The Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer introduced the item with reference to her presentation dated 12 June 2024 which had been circulated. She presented a summary of the key financial highlights from

the Quarter 2 Financial Review and Forecasts to the Board under the following headings:

- Financial Performance Q2 FY23/24 and Full Year Forecast to 30 September 2024
- FY23/24 Financial Summary I&E Dashboard – Full Year Forecast versus Budget & Prior Year
- Q2 FY23/24 Financial Summary Dashboard (Capital Projects, Cashflows, Research, Staff pay costs and Academic fee income)
- Q2 FY23/24 Financial Summary I&E Dashboard – versus Budget and PY.

She drew the Board's attention to a change in the income recognition basis for academic fees, noting that academic fee income is now recognised on a pro-rata basis over the full financial year, aligning with HEA quarterly reporting guidelines. She noted that Q2 income is ahead of budget due mainly to accelerated donation income, and an increase in the state grant. She drew the Board's attention to the increase in operating costs against budget, driven by increased pay costs and non-pay costs due to inflation.

She noted the 3% increase in final student numbers submitted to the HEA compared to 2023 student numbers. She drew the Board's attention to cash, borrowings and gearing ratio (45% in line with the Strategic Plan) and research activity expenditure.

She reported on capital project activity, noting an increase in funding year-on-year attributable to the timing of state and donor receipts. With regard to cashflows, she reported that the University maintained strong liquidity in Q2 but noted that closing cash was down on the prior year largely due to cyclically lower fee income and non-operating income (pension funding). She noted that forecasted capital expenditure for the year had been revised largely due to the timing of capital project-related spend.

The Chairperson thanked the Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer and invited questions. In response to a query from a Board member, Ms Ryan undertook to provide a breakdown on student related costs and awards. She confirmed that the TDA Director of Advancement and Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer will give a presentation on the Endowment Fund and Fundraising to the Board at a future meeting.

The Board noted the update on the quarterly financial review and forecasts.

Action/Decision

261.01 The Board noted the update on the quarterly financial review and forecasts.

261.02 The TDA Director of Advancement and Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer to present on the Endowment Fund and Fundraising at a future Board meeting.

Risk and Compliance Matters

BD/23-24/262 Report from the Chair of the Risk and Compliance Committee

Professor Cunningham, as Chair of the Risk and Compliance Committee, provided a verbal report on the work of the Risk and Compliance Committee (RCC) to date since the last report. He informed the Board that the RCC had held its fifth meeting on 7 June 2024 and that all membership was in place with the exception of student membership which would be put in place for the 2024/25 academic year.

He summarised the items that had been considered by the RCC since his last update. He informed the Board that the Vice-Provost/CAO and Executive Director of ASD had consulted with the Committee on the new Strategic Plan. He noted that there had been good engagement with several suggestions put forward, including that the University Risk Register could play a key role in its development. It had been agreed that the Vice-Provost/CAO would come back to the Committee at a future stage in the consultation phase.

He noted that the RCC had considered and approved the University Risk Register 2023/2024 Medium and Low Risks Summary and that it had been agreed that the Chief Risk Officer will bring an

interdependency map to the RCC in the autumn which would provide the Committee with a greater understanding of the link between risks.

He reported that with regard to the Knowledge Security Group that had been established by the Chief Risk Officer with the aim of identifying the level of exposure of the risk of inappropriate access to research data, intellectual property and personal data, it had been agreed that the minutes from that Group should be brought to the RCC for information.

He noted other items that had been approved by the Committee, as follows:

- Revised Risk and Compliance Committee Terms of Reference
- Almanack 2024/25 (on section C of the Board agenda for noting and approving)
- Associated Companies – Directors' Reports

He completed his report by noting that the schedule of meetings for 2024/25 has been confirmed and the Committee will meet again in September.

Action/Decision

262.01 The Board received the update from the Chair of the Risk and Compliance Committee.

People and Culture Matters

BD/23-24/263 Report from the Chair of the People and Culture Committee

Professor Jones, as Chair of the People and Culture Committee, provided a verbal report on the work of the People and Culture Committee to date since the last report. He noted that the main items considered by the Committee had related to promotions and awards. At the last meeting of 2023/24 the Associate Vice-Provost for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion had presented a report from the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Sub-Committee. He raised the ongoing issue of items on the Committee's agenda that have financial implications but for which there is no budget.

With regard to the University's compliance with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014, the Secretary to the College/Director of Governance advised that her office would be working with the Equality Office over the summer to compile information on the activity that is happening which collectively would meet the University's compliance requirements under the Act. The Provost noted that such a mapping exercise would be welcome to deal with the increased reporting requirements from various sources under EDI.

Action/Decision

263.01 The Board received the update from the Chair of the People and Culture Committee.

Other

BD/23-24/264 New Governance Structure – Lessons Learned

The Secretary to the College/Director of Governance introduced the item with reference to her memorandum dated 13 June 2024 that had been circulated. She noted that following the reconstitution of the membership of the Board, the Board had approved six Principal Committees which had been operating for the past seven months. She informed the Board that as part of a lessons learned exercise, she would be liaising with the Chairpersons of these Committees with a view to considering what had worked well and improvements that could be made. She noted that the Committees would continue to be reviewed and that the observations of members on the new governance structures would be brought to a meeting of the Board in the Autumn.

Action/Decision

264.01 The Board noted the memorandum from the Secretary to the College/Director of Governance dated 13 June 2024.

The Vice-Provost/CAO, Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation and Chief Operating Officer left the meeting for this item.

BD/23-24/265 Annual Officers

The Provost invited the Board's attention to her memorandum dated 19 June 2024 and the nominations in respect of Annual Officers as contained within.

Action/Decision

265.01 The Board considered and approved the memorandum from the Provost dated 19 June 2024.

This item was taken at this point in the meeting.

BD/23-24/266 Position of Chief Operating Officer

(i) Permission to Commence Recruitment Process

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Provost dated 14 June 2024.

(ii) Interview Panel

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Director of Human Resources dated 18 June 2024.

The Vice-Provost/CAO, Bursar/Director of Strategic Innovation and Chief Operating Officer re-joined the meeting at this point.

BD/23-24/267 Provost's Report

The Provost provided the Board with a verbal update.

(i) Meeting with the Minister

She informed the Board that as part of the IUA grouping she had met with the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. She advised that he had expressed an interest in meeting regularly and that his main concern related to governance in the higher education sector. She reported that a case had been made for a number of items to be included in the pre-budget submission and the case for filling gap in core funding had been reiterated, as well as the disproportional allocation between Universities and TUs. She reported that the universities had agitated for release of the National Training Fund surplus to the university sector. The Minister had raised the issue of student accommodation which could indicate the possibility of another round of funding for the building of student accommodation in the future.

(ii) Science Foundation Ireland (SFI)

The Provost updated the Board on the impact that the current situation in SFI is having on research and research funding, including on the applications for the renewal of three SFI Centres, and the lack of information on research grant applications which in turn is impacting on industry engagement. The Dean of Research along with others had met with SFI earlier in the week but they had been advised that no information on research grants would be forthcoming for the moment.

(iii) Department of Education

The Provost advised that the Department of Education was looking to widen the range of people in the teaching profession and that the University was working with the Marino Institute to advocate for broader entrance to the profession while upholding current standards.

(iv) Rankings

The Provost noted Trinity's latest position of 87th in the QS World University Ranking, 2024.

(v) Counselling Service

The Provost commended the Counselling Service for its achievement in receiving international accreditation from the international accreditation body IACS, noting that Trinity is the first University in Europe to achieve international accreditation for student counselling.

The Chairperson thanked the Provost and opened the item to questions.

A member of the Board noted that a strategic review of how the university engages with the rankings is underway and welcomed this initiative.

The importance of considering alternative research funding sources was noted and the Vice-Provost/CAO confirmed that this was being considered as part of the development of the Strategic Plan, in the context of identifying mechanisms that would better support research excellence.

Action/Decision

267.01 The Board received the update from the Provost.

BD/23-24/268 Any Other Urgent Business

There was no other item of urgent business.

SECTION A.2

BD/23-24/269 University Risk Register 2023/24 – Medium and Low Risk Summary

The Board approved the memorandum from the Chief Risk Officer dated 11 June 2024.

BD/23-24/270 Revised IT and Cyber Security Policy

The Board approved the memorandum from the Director of IT Services and the Cyber Security Manager dated 18 June 2024.

SECTION B

BD/23-24/271 Board Business

(i) Callover

The Board noted the callover updated to 22 May 2024.

BD/23-24/272 University Council

The Board noted and approved the draft Acta of the meeting of 5 June 2024.

In response to a query, the Secretary to the College/Director of Governance advised that the role of Board in noting and approving the minutes of Council and the Principal Committees is under consideration as part of the lessons learned exercise of the new governance structures.

BD/23-24/273 Audit Committee

The Board noted and approved the minutes of the meeting of 14 March 2024.

The Chairperson on behalf of the Board issued a statement of thanks to the outgoing Chairperson Ms Mary Fulton.

BD/23-24/274 Environment and Sustainability Committee

The Board noted and approved the minutes of the meeting of 27 February 2024.

BD/23-24/275 Finance Committee

The Board noted and approved the following:

- (i) Minutes of the meeting of 30 April 2024
- (ii) Draft minutes of the meeting of 30 May 2024.

BD/23-24/276 Quality Committee

The Board noted and approved the draft minutes of the meeting of 23 May 2024.

BD/23-24/277 Risk and Compliance Committee

The Board noted and approved the draft minutes of the meeting of 7 June 2024 and appendix: Revised Terms of Reference.

SECTION C

BD/23-24/278 Board Elections 2024 – Academic Staff (Non-Fellow) Constituency

The Board noted that Professor Jason Wyse has been elected to Board (2024/25 – 2027/28, first term).

BD/23-24/279 Administrative Procedures in the Summer Session

The Board noted and approved that items of routine College business relating to Board will be dealt with by the Provost or Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer between the last Board meeting of 2023/24 (19 June 2024) and the first Board meeting of 2024/25 (9 October 2024), and a report will be made to Board at its meeting of 9 October 2024.

BD/23-24/280 Prizes and Other Awards

(i) John A. Boland Scholarship

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the School of Law dated 27 May 2024.

(ii) Postgraduate Travelling Scholarship in Medicine 2024

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the School of Medicine dated 15 May 2024.

BD/23-24/281 Higher Degrees

The Board noted the Higher Degrees, approved by Council on 5 June 2024.

BD/23-24/282 Planning Group Report #30 to Board

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Vice-Provost/Chief Academic Officer dated 12 June 2024.

In response to a query, the Vice-Provost/CAO clarified that the funding requested had been arranged for the Senior Tutor's Office.

BD/23-24/283 Almanack 2024-2025

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Editor of the University Calendar dated 12 June 2024.

BD/23-24/284 Associated Companies – Reports of Directors to Board

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Secretary to the College/Director of Governance dated 11 June 2024.

The Chairperson requested that due diligence be given to HEAnet CLG in light of the increase in scope and associated threat.

BD/23-24/285 Trinity Global Annual Report 2023/24

The Board noted the report from the Vice-President for Global Engagement.

BD/23-24/286 Charities Regulator – Replacement Trustees

The Board noted and approved the memorandum from the Governance Manager dated 12 June 2024.

SECTION D

In compliance with the Data Protection Acts this information is restricted.

The Chairperson closed the meeting by thanking Board members for their contribution during the year. The Provost thanked the Chairperson for his work in the first year of the role and there followed a round of applause.

Signed:

Date: