

Board of Governors

Minutes of the virtual meeting held on 6th July 2021

20/84 Attendance

84.1 Present
Mr J Bateman OBE

20/85 Annual Reports of the Remunerations Committees

[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]

The Vice Chancellor joined the meeting after agenda item 85.1.

Apart from the Director of HR who was already present, those listed as in attendance in item 84.2 joined the meeting after item 85.

20/86 Declarations of Interests

86.1 There were no declarations of interest.

20/87 Minutes

87.1 The minutes of the meetings held on 27th and 28th April 2021 [BG20/70] were confirmed as an accurate record of the meetings with the following change: in items 63.1 and 77.1 Sean Devlin should appear as an Independent Governor, not Co-opted Governor.

87.2 There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

90.2.2 The Board approved the 2021/22 budget and passed their thanks to the Finance team.

90.3 *[NOT FOR PUBLICATION]*

20/91 Sexual Harassment and Abuse

91.1 Update on allegations about sexual exploitation at the University [BG20/75a]

91.1.1 The Board received a confidential update from the Vice Chancellor on allegations of sexual exploitation at the University further to the article published by The Daily Telegraph on 27th April which the Board was advised of at its last meeting, and the statement from the UCU representative of a member of staff whose grievance was heard by a panel of governors. The UCU statement contained a number of accusations that were unsubstantiated and the UCU have distanced themselves from it. The University dealt with the allegations as transparently as possible and found there was no evidence of a culture of sexual exploitation. The Board noted the University's policy on sexual misconduct was under review and a revised policy was to be presented to this meeting of the Board.

91.1.2 The Universities Minister wrote to Vice Chancellors on July 2nd on sexual harassment and misconduct and the Vice Chancellor noted 119 universities were currently listed on the Everyone's Invited Website and that the University of Worcester was not currently mentioned.

91.2 Review of the University's arrangements for preventing and addressing harassment and sexual misconduct [BG20/75]

91.2.1 The Board received a report on the University's review of its arrangements for preventing and addressing harassment and sexual misconduct. In response to the allegations of sexual exploitation at the University and the OfS statement of expectations for preventing and addressing harassment and sexual misconduct affecting students in Higher Education, a working group was set up to review the University's arrangements. It concluded a specific 'Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment Policy' was required which would bring together and signpost how reports of this nature should be managed.

91.2.2 The Board considered the new policy. It was noted it applied to all staff, students and visitors and clearly set out the University's expectation that staff/student relationships are prohibited unless pre-existing. Dr Jones, joint Chair of the Working Group, noted the policy was the start of the work on this issue. (w)4.5 (o)361.e-ilet1

92.1.1 The Board considered the revised University's Instrument and Articles of Government and noted that the amendments were initially presented to the Board for consideration in April 2021.