

Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting – June 17, 2020

- Present:** David Holohan (Chairperson), David Smith (President), Dr Fionnuala Anderson, Celine Blacow, Kieron Connolly, Anthony Dunne, Maeve McConnon, John McDonnell, Fiona McLoughlin, Joachim Pietsch, Jim Pipe, Aoife Ruane, Tom Taylor
- Apologies:** Eimear Boyd, Marie Carroll, Sorcha Nic Cormaic, Áine O’Sullivan, Cllr Barry Saul
- In Attendance:** Bernard Mullarkey, Elizabeth Stunell, Rachel Sarsfield Ryan, Somhairle Quigley Brennan (from 4.00 pm)

This meeting took place using the MS Teams Platform – IADT Governing Body Group. Attendance for the meeting was monitored throughout the meeting by the Secretary to the Governing Body and the Recording Secretary to the Governing Body.

Suspension of Standing Orders:

IADT’s campus remains closed due to the COVID-19 crisis, and therefore a corporeal meeting of the Governing Body is not possible at this time. It was therefore proposed that the Governing Body suspend Standing Orders for this meeting. This proposal was agreed by the Governing Body:

Proposed: Chairperson
Seconded: John McDonnell

The Secretary/Financial Controller noted that Rachel Sarsfield Ryan and Somhairle Quigley Brennan – incoming Student Representatives to the Governing Body – were in attendance as observers for this meeting.

1. Adoption of Agenda

The Agenda was adopted as circulated.

Proposed: Chairperson
Seconded: John McDonnell

2. Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest were reported regarding items for discussion on the agenda for this meeting.

3. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting of May 6th 2020 (including Internal Publication)

The Minutes of the Meeting of May 6th 2020 were approved (including approval for internal publication).

Proposed: Dr Fionnuala Anderson

Seconded: Chairperson

4. Matters Arising

- **Governing Body Membership** – the Secretary/Financial Controller has written to the Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board seeking a nominee to the Governing Body, in place of Cllr. Barry Ward who was recently elected to the Seanad. As yet no response has been received. In addition, formal appointment of the incoming Student Representatives to the Governing Body by the Minister for Education and Skills, is awaited.
- **Financial Statements to the Year Ended 31st August 2019** – following approval at the last meeting, the signed Financial Statements to the Year Ended 31st August 2019 have been submitted to be laid before the Oireachtas. The financial audit processes in relation to the 2018/2019 academic year are now complete.

5. Correspondence

No correspondence.

6. Technical Approvals

6.1 Bank Accounts

No changes to IADT's bank accounts.

6.2 Property Rentals

A number of Media Cube companies have availed of 'rent holidays', which has had an impact on IADT's externally earned income streams. A number of Media Cube companies are now commencing working back on campus and are implementing appropriate physical distancing protocols.

6.3 HR Appointments

Prior approval was sought from Governing Body to fill a number of positions in advance of the next meeting, including:

- Head of Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies – interviews to take place in the next few weeks
- Disability Officer (maternity leave cover)
- ICT Educational Technologist (1 Year Fixed Term Full Time – Career Break Cover)
- ICT Technician (Maternity Leave Cover – Full Time)
- A number of academic posts

Proposed: Chairperson

Seconded: John McDonnell

7. Governing Body Committees and Academic Council

7.1 Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting of 26th March 2020

Circulation of the Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting of 26th March 2020 were noted. In addition, a summary report regarding the meeting of May 21st 2020 was also provided and was noted by the Governing Body. An update on matters considered by the Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting of May 21st was given by the Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee.

A register of outstanding actions identified during Internal Audits, has been compiled and will be reviewed at each meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee. 14 actions to be completed have been identified, of which 4 have now been deemed to have been closed. In addition, 1 action item has been deemed to be an acceptable risk, 7 actions are in the process of being resolved, while two further action items are open. A review of procurement processes in relation to a tender for student support services was carried out. The Audit and Risk Committee considered IADT's Annual Report for 2018/2019. During this meeting, the Audit and Risk Committee also received a briefing regarding the management of risks and actions associated with the COVID-19 emergency. The Chairperson thanked members of the Audit and Risk Committee for their work on behalf of the Governing Body.

8. Governing Body Resolutions

8.1 The Governing Body Approves the IADT Annual Report 2018/2019 (14/2020)

Circulation of the IADT Annual Report for 2018/2019 was noted by the Governing Body. A query was raised regarding the process by which academic staff members are appointed to the Academic Council. An overview of the process was provided by the President. It was agreed that the term 'elected members' in relation to the Academic Council, would be changed to 'nominated members'. Subject to this amendment, the IADT Annual Report for 2018/2019 was approved. Resolution 14/2020 was adopted by the Governing Body.

Proposed: Maeve McConnon
Seconded: Joachim Pietsch

8.2 The Governing Body Approves the IADT Protected Disclosures Policy (15/2020)

Circulation of an updated Protected Disclosures Policy was noted by the Governing Body. Issues regarding the policy being out of date had been flagged to the Audit and Risk Committee, and work to address a number of policies due for update has been ongoing over the last number of weeks. Updates to the Policy were noted to the Governing Body. It was further noted that IADT's Protected Disclosures Policy is consistent with Protected Disclosure Policies in place in other Institutes of Technology. Resolution 15/2020 was approved by the Governing Body

Proposed: Dr Fionnuala Anderson
Seconded: Aoife Ruane

8.3 The Governing Body Approves the Extension of the existing licence to Vodafone to 2030 on the same Terms and Conditions (16/2020)

The Secretary/Financial Controller reminded the Governing Body that IADT entered into a rental agreement to facilitate the housing of a Vodafone communications mast on the Atrium Building. A rental fee of €10K is paid to IADT each year for this. The current agreement is in place until 2027. A proposal has been received from Vodafone that this rental agreement be extended to 2030, in order to facilitate a mast sharing opportunity, as in accordance with the County Development Plan, mobile phone providers must share masts with other services providers and such an opportunity has now arisen. This arrangement will require planning approval from Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, in accordance with the existing planning permission for the current masts. Vodafone requires an extension to the current agreement in order to make the investment needed to share the mast. Additional income will be derived from this arrangement for the Institute and additional licences, subject to Governing Body approval will be needed. This proposal was accepted by the Governing Body and Resolution 16/2020 was approved.

Proposed: Chairperson
Seconded: Jim Pipe

(Aoife Ruane left the meeting at 3.45 pm)

9. President's Briefing

9.1 President's Briefing

Update on COVID-19 and Contingency Plans in place at IADT

The President updated the Governing Body on contingency plans in place at IADT, in preparation for the re-opening of the campus and start of the next academic year.

Institute and National

- **Leaving Certificate** – a decision to cancel the Leaving Certificate examinations was announced by Government on May 8th last. The CAO has indicated an intention that offer and acceptance timelines will be as close to pre-COVID published timelines as possible. However, the quantity of individual assessment marks that need to be uploaded by schools to the central Department of Education agency responsible for issuing the calculated grades is immense. It is anticipated that the first round of CAO offers will issue in late August/early September.
- **Recruitment** – IADT is maintaining an active recruitment campaign for CAO and applications to 1st year of programmes. The Sector has agreed a start date for incoming 1st year students of September 28th next, and a statement to incoming students has been issued by each Institute of Technology noting this date. In addition, assurances regarding the on-campus experience are being issued and promoted by the Institutes to give reassurance to prospective 1st year students that although their campus experience may be different to what would have been expected, it is intended to provide a positive on campus experience for the coming academic year for all students.
- **Springboard+ and HCI Funding Initiatives** – the outcome of both the HCI and Springboard+ initiatives have been announced and the President noted that IADT has been awarded in the region of €500k in relation to the provision of

postgraduate programmes through these two initiatives. The President noted that this is welcome funding for IADT, and commended the work of all staff involved in submitting proposals to these initiatives, which was done in difficult circumstances during the COVID lockdown.

- **PPP Projects** – the outcome of an appeal to An Bord Pleanála in relation to IADT's Digital Media Building is awaited. Currently work in relation to all buildings within IADT's bundle is progressing well.
- **National Forum** – a National Forum comprising representatives from the TUI, THEA, Department of Education and Skills and the IUA, has been established to agree flexibilities with academic staff for the delivery of learning to students in the coming academic year. As yet no agreement has been reached, however it is understood that the National Forum is due to meet on June 22nd to progress discussions further. The impact of the delay in reaching an agreement is impacting on planning for programme delivery for students in the coming year.
- **Return to Work Protocols** – the Department of Education and Skills is in the process of preparing guidelines to issue to Higher Education Institutions to guide a return to campus for staff. A draft has been circulated and feedback is being provided by the Institutes of Technology on the draft.
- **Technological Universities** – the Governing Body noted that Cork Institute of Technology and Tralee Institute of Technology, have been awarded Technological University Status with effect from January 1st 2021. The Governing Body congratulated all involved and wished them well for the future.
- **Reports and Information Requests** – the President outlined that a continual stream of requests are being received from the HEA and QQI for reports and supplementary information. It was further noted that in a significant number of cases, the information requested has already been requested and provided in various formats. The need for a national coordinated system of information requests to be developed to avoid duplication of work for Higher Education Institutions was noted.
- **Programmatic Review** – Programmatic Reviews have now been successfully completed for both the Faculty of Enterprise and Humanities, and the Department of Technology and Psychology – no conditions were imposed by the panels for either Programmatic Review. Programmatic Review for the Department of Design and Visual Arts will take place on June 18th, with Programmatic Review for the Department of Film and Media scheduled for June 23rd. A number of new programmes have and will be presented for approval as part of Programmatic Review, and a significant curriculum re-alignment is being implemented across both Faculties to take effect from September 2021.
- **Complaint to Health and Safety Authority** – the President noted to the Governing Body that a complaint was made against the Institute to the Health and Safety Authority, regarding IADT's alleged failure to follow protocols relating to staff returning to work on campus. The President noted that as yet, there has been no general return to campus by staff, and that the complaint, albeit denied by the Institute was premature. However, an extensive investigation and inspection has been undertaken by the Health and Safety Authority. The immense level of administrative work required from IADT to address this complaint was noted to the Governing Body. A small number of recommendations were made by the Health and Safety Authority which were already underway and are being actioned at present. However, the Health and Safety Authority has acknowledged that at present, IADT is preparing to re-open the campus, rather than being opened. There were no findings against the Institute arising from the complaint.
- **Investors in Diversity Bronze Award** – IADT has been accredited with the Bronze Investors in Diversity mark. Overseen by the Irish Centre for Diversity and supported by IBEC, IADT is one of a small number of Higher Education Institutions in Ireland to hold

this mark. The Bronze mark was awarded to IADT following an application process and audit of IADT's suite of policies for staff and students.

Plans for Students

- **Technology Deficits for Students** – IADT is mindful that in the context of a blended learning approach for programme delivery in the coming year, a number of disadvantaged students may face technology deficits which will impact on their learning. As part of the recent Dell initiative, a number of DELL desktops and laptops have been received by IADT, and a process is being put in place to ensure that these are allocated to students most in need of additional technology to undertake their studies.
- **First Year Matters** – IADT's induction programme First Year Matters will be of particular importance to incoming first year students. A Steering Group has been established to manage the First Year Matters induction programme and most of the elements of the programme are being prepared for online delivery.
- **Communication with Class Representatives** – the President has maintained regular contact with the Student Union, and participated in an open meeting on June 12th last, with the Student Union Officers and Class Representatives Group to answer any questions that they had regarding the coming academic year. The President again put on record, the positive engagement and support received from the IADT Student Union throughout the COVID-19 emergency, and particularly noted the support and positive contribution made by Tony Dunne in his role as President of the Student Union.
- **Communication to Students** – the President noted the issue of communication directly from the President to all students on June 15th, setting out the broad principles with respect to the academic year 2020/2021. The communication was also posted on IADT's website, and provides the most up-to-date information available for students in relation to the coming academic year. The uncertainty felt by students in relation to the coming academic year is well understood by IADT's Executive, and further information will be issued to students as soon as possible. The President noted that IADT is endeavouring to allay student anxieties regarding the campus experience for the coming academic year. However, it is not as yet possible to provide significant levels of detail regarding the coming academic year until an outcome is available from the National Forum negotiations.

Contingency Plans for Examinations/Assessments/Conferring

- **Assessments and Examinations** – the summer examinations/assessments for all students were successfully completed through online platforms. In addition, all Exam Boards were held through online platforms this year and the process was reported to have been completed very successfully. A number of efficiencies were identified through the online processes implemented this year, and consideration may be given to implementing a number of these in future years. The Examinations Officer is preparing a report regarding the process. The President reported that the majority of IADT's students will progress/graduate from the summer examinations/assessments session. A small number of requests for deferrals were received, however it was noted that that number of deferral requests is in line with non-COVID years.
- **Graduate Showcase/Exhibition** – the cancellation of the annual Graduate Showcase/Exhibition was very regrettable for IADT's students and staff. An online showcase of student work is being put in place at present and it is hoped to launch this shortly. It is also intended to seek ways to hold exhibitions of

student work later in the year and mechanisms by which this can be achieved are being investigated at present.

- **Conferring** – it appears increasingly unlikely that a traditional conferring ceremony will be possible this year due to the need for physical distancing. However, IADT is mindful of the need to both celebrate the achievements of graduating students, and to ensure that students graduate in a timely manner to ensure that they can progress with the next phase of their work/study. A number of smaller events celebrating the graduation of students are being considered. Consideration is also being given to hosting an online conferring event. The President assured the Governing Body that a celebratory event to mark the graduation of students will be held, however it is not as yet possible to outline what that will be.
- **Honorary Fellow** – IADT's Executive has agreed that the award of IADT Honorary Fellow will not be made in 2020. A number of nominations for the award were received earlier this year, and will be held over for consideration in 2021.

Impact for Coming Academic Year

- **Postgraduate Recruitment** – applications for postgraduate programmes closed on June 4th last, however late applications will continue to be accepted over the summer and evaluated in September. Initial application numbers are positive and it is hoped that all postgraduate programmes will fill this year.
- **Programme Marketing** – it is not currently possible to offer 'Open Days' in the traditional sense. In place of open days, IADT has implemented a series of online live Question and Answer sessions for each programme area. These have been well publicised through IADT's website and social media.
- **Preparations for a Return to Campus** – limited access for staff to the campus is being provided for essential tasks. Extensive information and protocols have been circulated to all staff, and only a very limited number of staff are permitted to be on campus at any time for the present. Preparations for a wider staff and student return to campus are in progress and are being based on current available guidelines. Guidelines specific to Higher Education Institutions are awaited, however, as a physical distancing guideline of 2m has been set in guidelines published for a return to business, this physical distance metric is forming the basis of IADT's return to campus provisions. There is speculation that the 2m physical distancing requirement may be reduced to 1m later in the year, however no confirmation of the possibility of any potential reduction have been issued.
- **Remote Working for Staff** – procedures are being put in place for any staff member categorised as being 'vulnerable' to remain working from home for the foreseeable future. A process for these staff to make confidential declarations to the HR Manager has been put in place, and a formal Working From Home Policy is being developed.
- **Staff Wellbeing** – to date, no IADT staff members have been confirmed to have COVID-19. In addition, to date only one postgraduate student has been diagnosed as having COVID-19, and is understood to have recovered well.
- **Temporary Reassignment** – one IADT staff member has been temporarily reassigned to the HSE, and has been transferred to the National Maternity Hospital.
- **Lead Worker Representatives** – the President noted that as per national guidelines, two Lead Worker Representatives have been appointed – Linda Carroll and John Montayne have been nominated to fulfil this role and both have significant Cross-Institute experience and an in-depth knowledge of operational matters across various functional areas of the Institute.
- **Advisory Groups** – to assist the Executive in preparing for a return to working and studying on campus, the Executive has established four Advisory Groups to advise on various aspects of academic and operational matters for the coming academic year, and to provide guidance and recommendations for consideration by the Executive. Areas

addressed by the groups include Academic Management, Timetabling and Operations, Wayfinding and Campus Signage, and Teaching and Learning.

Conclusion

IADT is currently working in the absence of formal guidelines formulated for the Higher Education Sector. The need for the National Forum to conclude negotiations and to provide for meaningful flexibilities to enable learning for students to be delivered in the 'new normal' that will characterise the academic year 2020/2021 was highlighted. The urgent need to provide greater levels of clarity to students regarding their on-campus experience for the coming academic year remains a high priority for the Executive, however difficulty in providing the necessary assurances and detailed information to students prior to formal Higher Education guidelines and an agreement being reached by the National Forum was noted.

The President noted the difficulties that IADT faced when the campus was forced to close at such short notice, and commended and thanked all staff and students for their work and flexibility in meeting the challenges. The President also put on record his appreciation to the Executive and to the Governing Body for their support during this difficult time. The Governing Body requested that the President pass on the appreciation and thanks of the Governing Body to the Executive and staff of the Institute for their work and dedication to IADT over the past number of months in responding to the COVID-19 emergency.

Financial Impacts of COVID-19

The potential financial impact of COVID-19 on IADT was presented to the last meeting of the Governing Body. Work was also undertaken by the Secretary/Financial Controller's Group to determine the overall likely financial impact for the sector. Necessary expenditure to deal with the COVID-19 emergency along with the financial impacts of COVID-19, are now starting to arise. With a greater degree of clarity regarding timelines for incoming 1st year students, it is hoped that income streams from incoming students will be closer to normal timelines than had initially been expected. There remains a possibility that a greater number of students may seek to defer their studies for the academic year 2020/2021 due to anxieties regarding the on-campus experience they will have along with the impact on their ability to generate income over the summer period and through part-time jobs during term time to support their studies.

The Secretary/Financial Controller noted to the Governing Body that the on-campus catering services providers hope to be back on campus in August. However, the service that can be offered in the coming academic year will be substantially reduced. It is likely that click-n-collect services will need to be introduced to ensure physical distancing and with the reduction in the number of users that will be allowed on campus each day, a potential subvention of €250K may need to be made by IADT to the catering service providers to keep an on-campus catering service in operation. A financial proposal is being worked through by the catering services providers at present for consideration by the Executive.

It was outlined to the Governing Body that due to the need to respond rapidly to the closure of the campus on March 12th last, both staff and students commenced working and studying from home with little preparation. Following the campus closure, IADT has been able to make use of a number of free licenses for online software and platforms. However to support longer term remote working and study, investment will be required in a number of online platforms and software licenses, which will result in a cost to the Institute.

9.2 IADT: Financial Update

Circulation of the financial report for April 2020 was noted by the Governing Body. IADT currently has a positive variance within the 2020 budget to date. It is expected that expenditure patterns will be different this year from those of previous years, with online software and platforms and the necessary hardware to support these accounting for a larger proportion of expenditure. It has been necessary to invest in software to support running

recruitment processes fully online, and investment was made earlier in the year in platforms to support the portfolio submission process. IADT's earned income streams have been substantially reduced this year, with a greatly reduced revenue from Media Cube licenses and no summer rentals possible this year as the requirement for physical distancing would make the summer camps delivered on campus in recent years unviable.

IADT's academic staff used technology available to them within their domestic environments to deliver the remaining elements of programmes (approx. 10-15% of the curriculum) through online learning for students following the emergency campus closure. However, it will be necessary to invest in appropriate technology and facilities to facilitate online delivery of more substantial proportions of programmes in the coming academic year. It is anticipated that there will be a better sense of the financial impacts of COVID-19 and the increased expenditure that will be required to support remote work and study towards the end of the summer.

10. Governing Body Meeting Schedule 2020/2021

Circulation of the proposed Meeting Schedule for Governing Body meetings for the academic year 2020/2021, was noted and approved by the Governing Body.

11. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

Achievement of the Investors in Diversity Bronze Mark was noted by the Governing Body. It was further noted that work is well underway in preparation for IADT to re-submit for the Athena SWAN Bronze Award in 2021. The President also noted that IADT remains mindful that staff and students may not have access to the levels of technology that they need to fully engage in online work and learning.

The Governing Body noted that this is the last meeting in the term of office for Eimear Boyd and Anthony Dunne, and took the opportunity to thank them for their work with and contribution to the Governing Body, and to wish them well for the future.

12. Governing Body Effectiveness Review

The President, Secretary/Financial Controller and Recording Secretary were not in attendance for this item.

The chairperson sought the opinions of the Governing Body as to the level of effectiveness that the Governing Body operates, and asked members to make contact directly with any issues or concerns on the matter. In totality, the Governing Body continues to believe that it operates in an effective manner.

The Governing Body considered the start time of meetings, in the context of facilitating family friendly policies. The Governing Body determined that the 8 a.m. commencement time should remain for the coming year.

The next meeting of the Governing Body will take place on September 9th 2020.

Signed: _____
David Holohan
Chairperson

Date: _____