

Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting – January 13, 2021

Present: David Holohan (Chairperson), David Smith (President), Dr Fionnuala Anderson, Celine Blacow, Marie Carroll, Kieron Connolly, John McDonnell, Fiona McLoughlin, Sorcha Nic Cormaic, Áine O’Sullivan, Somhairle Quigley Brennan, Aoife Ruane, Rachel Sarsfield Ryan, Cllr Barry Saul, Tom Taylor

Apologies: Maeve McConnon, Jim Pipe, Joachim Pietsch

In Attendance: Bernard Mullarkey, Elizabeth Stunell,

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. The meeting commenced at 12 noon, and concluded at 1.00 pm.

1. Adoption of Agenda

The Agenda was adopted as circulated.

Proposed: Chairperson

Seconded: Dr Fionnuala Anderson

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 the Meeting of December 9th 2020 (including Internal Publication)

The Minutes of the Meeting of December 9th 2020 were approved (including approval for internal publication).

Proposed: Chairperson

Seconded: Dr Fionnuala Anderson

4. Matters Arising

- **Appointment of Governing Body** – following the election of staff members of the Governing Body to take office on 1st April 2021, the Secretary/Financial Controller has written to the Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board, to inform them of the result. It is anticipated that nominations to the next Governing Body of IADT, will be an agenda item for the next meeting of the DDLETB.

5. Correspondence

- **Annual Governance Statement** – correspondence was received from the Higher Education Authority on 13th January, regarding IADT's 2018 Governance Statement. IADT has been reported to be broadly compliant and has satisfied the majority of inquiries made. Four items were noted and a report on these will be presented to the Governing Body at the meeting of 3rd February next. The matters concerned were noted to be minor technical items.

6. Technical Approvals

6.1 Bank Accounts

No changes to IADT's Bank Accounts.

6.2 Property Rentals

The following Media Cube License was approved:

- Venture Capital Investment Management t/a Enterprise Equity

Proposed: Sorcha Nic Cormaic

Seconded: John McDonnell

6.3 HR Appointments

Completed Interview Board Recommendations

Permission is sought from Governing Body for the President, subject to the satisfactory completion of the verification processes, to offer appointments on foot of the competitions, which were advertised during the summer. Such sanction to appoint is conditional on the President being satisfied, following review, that the necessary funding arrangements and compliance with Employment Control Ceilings are in place to support appointments on a case-by-case basis.

Part time Library Assistant (Grade III)

Various Posts

Permission is sought from Governing Body for the President, subject to the satisfactory completion of the verification processes, to offer appointments on foot of the following additional competitions which will be advertised later this week:

- ICT Technician
- New Frontiers Project Co-Ordinator

The President noted that a recruitment competition is being initiated for the vacant Executive post. It has also been agreed that the post will revert to the title of Director of Research, Development and Innovation.

Proposed: Sorcha Nic Cormaic

Seconded: John McDonnell

7. Governing Body Committees and Academic Council

7.1 Minutes of the Academic Council Meeting of November 2nd 2020

Circulation of the Minutes of the Academic Council meeting of November 2nd 2020 were noted by the Governing Body. An overview of matters discussed by Academic Council was given by the President. The Academic Council considered the outcome of the Autumn Exam Session and noted that IADT has met all quality standards for the 2019/2020 academic year. A significant amount of programme development is ongoing which is reflected in the work of the Programme Validation Committee. The need for a formal Continuous Assessment Policy to be developed has been identified. The slightly later start for first year students in September 2020 is being monitored by the Academic Council.

A query was raised regarding the accessibility of online content to students in relation to Broadband and hardware. The President noted that issues in relation to domestic Broadband are beyond the scope of IADT to provide. However, in relation to computer hardware, the rollout of the HEA-funded and DELL-funded Laptops for Students schemes has been completed – through the funding provided, 79 PC-based and 12 MAC computers were purchased, and an application process run for students to apply for this hardware. In the region of 70 applications were received from disadvantaged students and all students in need who applied to the scheme were provided with the appropriate hardware to support them in their studies. A small number of computers remain available should further needs be identified.

8. Governing Body Resolutions

No Resolutions.

(Cllr Barry Saul joined the meeting at 12.20)

(Rachel Sarsfield Ryan joined the meeting at 12.25)

9. President's Briefing

9.1 President's Update

President's Briefing – Update on COVID-19 and Contingency Plans in place at IADT

The President updated the Governing Body regarding national and strategic issues, and the operation of the campus under the recently reinstated COVID Level 5 restrictions.

- **IADT Strategic Plan** – Mid-term Re-Prioritisation – the Executive met – Facilitated by Mazars – on December 16th last, to undertake a mid-term review of the IADT Strategic Plan, and to re-prioritise actions from the Strategic Plan to reflect changes in the educational landscape since the Strategic Plan was developed. The Executive also had the opportunity to discuss possibilities and potential strategic opportunities with Dr Graham Love, former CEO of the HEA. During the session, actions identified within the Strategic Plan were categorised into A, B etc. priorities, with actions categorised as Priority A to be delivered during 2021. Over the past 9 months, IADT's Executive has necessarily focussed on ensuring the academic and management operations of the Institute during the COVID crisis, and to some degree, the management of actions identified within the Strategic Plan was not a key focus. Approx. 60% of actions agreed in the Strategic Plan are in progress, 15% have been completed and approx. 25% of

actions have not as yet been commenced. This level of progress was noted as a significant achievement given the academic delivery and operational focus during the past year. The benefit of having the meeting facilitated was highlighted by the President and allowed for a more constructive dialogue. A presentation on the outcome of the reprioritisation is being developed by Dera McLoughlin of Mazars, and it is intended to invite Dera McLoughlin to give a presentation on this to the next meeting of the Governing Body.

- **HCI Modular Programmes** – IADT was allocated funding for 140 places to be offered through the HCI Modular Programmes initiative. The deadline for applications closed in Mid-December but was extended for a small number of programmes. Application numbers for these programmes have been strong and it is anticipated that all 140 places will be allocated.
- **Creative Futures Academy** – the President was a member of the Interview Panel that interviewed for a Project Director for the Creative Futures Academy project. The post attracted a significant number of international applicants and a preferred candidate was identified for the post. The Creative Futures Academy project is being led by NCAD, with IADT and UCD as partners.
- **EU University Project** – the EU University Project is an international project, with the Head of Faculty of Film, Art and Creative Technologies leading IADT's participation in the project. Interviews have taken place within IADT to identify staff to be partially seconded to work on this project.
- **TU Transformation Fund** – the HEA has allocated €100K funding to IADT, to undertake a desk-based review of the potential for a University of the Creative Arts for Ireland under the TU Transformation Fund. Interviews for a number of partial secondments to this project have taken place and two internal staff members have been identified to undertake this role.
- **Strategic Academic Leadership Initiative** – the Heads of Faculty are working with the HR Manager and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager, to finalise IADT's application to the SALI initiative. It is intended to submit applications for two posts.
- **National Development Plan Mid-term Review** – a mid-term review of the National Development Plan is underway at national level. Higher Education Institutions were required to make a submission to the HEA regarding the review. This was a very significant submission requiring substantial amounts of information to be collated and submitted by a number of managers across the Institute.
- **Munster Technological University** – Tralee Institute of Technology and Cork Institute of Technology have now merged to form the Munster Technological University, which came into existence as of 1st January 2021. Prof Maggie Cusack has been appointed as the first President of Munster Technological University. Munster Technological University has indicated an intention to remain as part of THEA which has been welcomed by the sector.

- **Security Issue** – an update regarding the Security issue reported to the last meeting of the Governing Body was requested – the President noted that the investigation is ongoing at present.
- **Health and Safety Authority Complaints** – all information requested by the Health and Safety Authority regarding the recent complaint made to the HSA in respect of IADT has been provided. No further update has been received from the HSA. It was further noted that once an investigation has been undertaken by the HSA, communication will only be issued should the complaint be upheld. Correspondence is not generally issued to bodies regarding the outcome of a complaint, where there is no finding against that body.

COVID Update – the Institute continues to work within the confines of COVID Level 5 restrictions. The reinstatement of COVID-19 Level 5 restrictions over the Christmas period came as a great disappointment. There had been a sense of optimism and expectation that an increased level of on-campus activity for students would be possible in Semester 2 and had been key to plans for programme delivery post-Christmas. However, the need to prioritise public health is of key importance. The level of on-campus activity is at a very low level with very few staff on campus to undertake essential work or to access essential systems that cannot be accessed remotely. There is almost no student activity on campus with only a handful of students being granted access on a 'case-by-case' basis to use specialist facilities critical to their studies. In addition, the opening hours for the campus have returned to levels in place during the last period of Level 5 lockdown. IADT's Executive remains mindful of the impact that this will have on students and staff alike.

Communication regarding the operation of the campus and delivery of learning has been issued to all students. Supports will continue to be provided to assist students as far as is possible during this difficult time. An added difficulty that the Institute faces during this period is the closure of schools. This has resulted in additional difficulties for parents who must combine home-schooling, child-minding and the delivery of their roles. The Executive Management Team has committed to providing as much flexibility as is possible to enable staff to deliver their roles in the context of their additional caring responsibilities. In relation to the difficulties that are being faced by students, IADT is committed to supporting students where possible, in achieving their learning outcomes and for students to successfully complete their studies in the current academic year.

Learning Deficits – due to the sudden and prolonged closure of the Institute in March 2020, a number of students were supported to carry a small number of credits into the current academic year for specific technical and specialist elements of programmes. It had been planned that these deficits would be retrieved in the current academic year, however significant concern is growing that in the context of another and prolonged lockdown, this will not be possible without a level of flexibility from IADT's social partners.

A number of possible contingencies which would provide the additional flexibilities for students to complete their studies in the current year have been identified, however negotiation on these will be required with the Social Partners at national level. The limitations placed on the Institute by strict adherence to the June 20th end of academic year for lecturing contracts are a cause for concern. Changes to submission deadlines that can be made within the confines of the academic contract

are being actively considered by the Executive. The President put on record the commitment and dedication of IADT's academic staff to supporting students, and it is hoped that staff will respond positively to supporting students to successfully complete their studies in the current academic year. Consideration is being given to making specialist campus facilities available to final year students over the summer months, to enable them to gain professional practice in relevant areas. Final year students have acquired a greater level of knowledge regarding how to safely operate and use equipment, and more self-directed access can be provided for this student cohort. In order for the necessary plans to be put in place, discussions on flexibilities and schedules will need to be held and decisions made to ensure that supports are in place for students.

9.2 IADT: Financial Update

As the outturn for the end of the 2020 financial year is being finalised at present, a monthly Management Report was not presented to this meeting. However, the Secretary/Financial Controller was able to confirm that IADT will return a balanced budget in respect of 2020. The recent allocation of €1.6m by the HEA in support of expenditure necessary to prepare the campus for the safe return of staff and students to working and studying on campus, has been a significant factor in achieving this. An additional allocation through the Devolved Grant was notified to IADT recently and it is intended to allocate this funding to projects that will enhance the student experience on campus. Enterprise Ireland has also awarded funding to IADT in support of necessary upgrades to the Media Cube.

It was noted that throughout the tenure of this Governing Body, IADT has returned a balanced budget for each financial year, with permission for an over expenditure from reserves to meet critical capital upgrades authorised by the Governing Body where necessary. This was noted as a significant achievement for the Institute and for the Governing Body.

10. Standards in Public Office Returns

The Secretary/Financial Controller reminded members of the Governing Body of their obligations under the Standards in Public Office Act, to return their Statements of Interest forms to the Standards in Public Office no later than January 31st 2021 in respect of the year 2020. Members of the Governing Body are also obliged to provide a copy of this return to be held by IADT. It was also noted that the Standards in Public Office has notified Public Bodies, that a hard copy with original signature is required. Scanned copies of the forms will not be accepted. The Secretary/financial Controller noted that if members of the Governing Body wish to return their original form to IADT, a copy of the form will be taken for the Institute's records with the original being forwarded to the Standards in Public Office. Forms will need to reach IADT no later than January 27th.

11. Completion of Term of Governing Body Processes

Circulation of information for Governing Body members regarding procedures for members at the end of their term of office was noted. The Secretary/Financial Controller informed members of the Governing Body that it is not recommended that they retain Governing Body papers issued to them in their role as Governing Body members, once their term of office has concluded. Should members of the Governing Body wish to retain their documentation, it would be subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act. Should members of the Governing Body wish to return their documentation to IADT, they should do so in late March, and it will be

destroyed on their behalf. Documentation received in electronic form is also subject to the same provisions, and it is recommended that this documentation is deleted following conclusion of the term of office of the Governing Body.

(Aine O'Sullivan joined the meeting at 12.45)

12. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

The supports being provided for students during the COVID restrictions were noted. All eligible students who made applications for hardware supports through the Laptops for Students scheme were allocated a PC/MAC as appropriate. IADT will submit applications for 2 posts through the Strategic Academic Leadership Initiative. The impacts and challenges faced by students and staff and particularly in the context of those with additional caring and child-minding responsibilities were noted, and it was confirmed that IADT's Executive Team is providing as much flexibility as is possible to support staff in fulfilling their roles.

The next meeting of the Governing Body will take place on 3rd February 2021.

Signed: _____
David Holohan

Date: _____