

Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting – March 3, 2021

Present: David Holohan (Chairperson), David Smith (President), Dr Fionnuala Anderson, Marie Carroll, Kieron Connolly, Maeve McConnon, John McDonnell, Fiona McLoughlin, Sorcha Nic Cormaic, Áine O’Sullivan, Joachim Pietsch, Jim Pipe, Somhairle Quigley Brennan, Aoife Ruane, Rachel Sarsfield Ryan, Tom Taylor

Apologies: Celine Blacow, Cllr Barry Saul

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 3.00 pm, and concluded at 4.50 pm.

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 the Meeting of February 3rd 2021 (including Internal Publication)

The Minutes of the Meeting of February 3rd 2021 were approved (including approval for internal publication).

Proposed: Marie Carroll
Seconded: Maeve McConnon

4. Matters Arising

- **Appointment of Governing Body** – formal appointment of the next Governing Body to take office on April 1st 2021 is awaited from the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science.

5. Correspondence

No correspondence.

6. Technical Approvals

6.1 Bank Accounts

No changes to IADT's Bank Accounts.

6.2 Property Rentals

The following Media Cube Licenses were approved:

- The Convex Lens
- Glocal Advertising Cloud t/a GladCloud
- Feedback Analytics Ltd t/a CX Index

Proposed: Maeve McConnon

Seconded: Marie Carroll

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 recently. 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.

Librarian (Permanent) - Open Competition

ICT Technician (Permanent) – Open Competition

New Frontiers Coordinator (Fixed Term) - Open Competition

Proposed: Chairperson

Seconded: Joachim Pietsch

7. Governing Body Committees and Academic Council

7.1 Minutes of the Academic Council Meeting of January 18th 2021

Circulation of the Minutes of the Academic Council meeting of January 18th 2021 were noted by the Governing Body. An overview of matters discussed by Academic Council was provided by the President. With the country again in Level 5 COVID restrictions, necessary processes and procedures need to be maintained to support students in completing their examinations and assessments in the current academic year. IADT's Ethics Policy and Committee Membership Policy were discussed. Annual Reports for a number of Sub-Committees of Academic Council were reviewed and noted. In addition, the Programme Board Reports completed by each Programme Team are presented to Academic Council – a number of these were noted. Templates for Programme Board Reports have been introduced which ensure that feedback from students is captured in each of these reports. An issue concerning ineffective communications with students regarding when they are likely to return to campus was raised by the Student Union at the last Academic Council meeting. However regrettably, IADT is not in a position to provide any certainty to students regarding a return to campus. Programme

Teams are making an increased effort to stay in regular contact with students, which it is hoped will address this.

7.2 Summary Note from the EDI Committee Meeting of 22nd February 2021

Circulation of a Summary Note from the Meeting of the EDI Committee held on 22nd February 2021 was noted by the Governing Body. An overview of matters discussed by the EDI Committee at this meeting was provided by the President. The EDI Committee approved the Terms of Reference for the Committee. An update was provided to the Committee by Claire McGing – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager – regarding preparations for a re-submission for Athena SWAN Bronze Level Accreditation.

7.3 Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting of November 25th 2020

Circulation of the Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting of November 25th 2020 were noted by the Governing Body. A summary report from the Meeting of February 18th 2021 was also circulated and noted. An overview of matters discussed by the Audit and Risk Committee at the meetings of November 25th 2020 and February 18th 2021 was provided by the Chairperson of the Committee. The Audit and Risk Committee has met with the Internal Auditors to consider two Internal Audit Reports, with minor findings in relation to compliance with the Employment Control Framework and the THEA Code of Governance. It was agreed that 'Risk Management' should be a standing item for future Governing Body meetings. Out of 153 Code of Governance compliance items assessed, only 5 minor issues were noted with 143 items confirmed as being compliant. This was noted as being very positive. The Secretary/Financial Controller and the President put on record their appreciation to members of the Audit and Risk Committee for their support and work on behalf of the Institute over the past five years. Members of the Governing Body also recorded their appreciation to the Audit and Risk Committee for their work on behalf of the Governing Body. The Governing Body also recorded their appreciation to Dr Fionnuala Anderson for her work as Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee.

8. Governing Body Resolutions

8.1 The Governing Body Approves the Regulations for the Election of Student Members of the Governing Body to take office on 1st July 2021 (1/2021)

Circulation of the Regulations for the Election of Student Members of the Governing Body to take office on July 1st 2021 was noted. Resolution 1/2021 was adopted by the Governing Body.

Proposed: Chairperson
Seconded: Marie Carroll

9. President's Briefing

9.1 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 current COVID restrictions. The following points were noted:

- **Compact Self Assessment Report** – IADT’s Self Assessment Report on achieving COMPACT targets agreed with the HEA, was submitted on February 26th. The President noted the contributions to completing the document made by members of the Executive and Management Team. Following feedback on previous submissions received from the HEA, a more detailed response was prepared and submitted for this report and evaluation of our strategic progress.
- **Irish Survey of Student Engagement** – the 2021 Irish Survey of Student Engagement is ongoing and will close on March 15th next. The importance of capturing feedback from students as part of the survey was outlined and IADT encourages as many students as possible from the target groups to complete the survey.
- **Higher Education Act Reform** – a consultation process has been initiated by the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, in advance of an update to the Higher Education Act. The current Higher Education Act has been in place since 1971. A sectoral response is being prepared by THEA. IADT will also make an Institutional submission focussing on areas of importance to smaller specialist institutions and will also focus on possible reforms in the area of Governance – an area in which IADT has a consistent record of excellence.
- **Student Recruitment for 2021/2022** – following the closing date for CAO applications, IADT’s application numbers as of 1st February have increased by approx. 15%. In addition, students have engaged positively with the online portfolio submission platform with positive numbers of portfolio and Project Day work being submitted for assessment.
- **Programme Delivery under COVID Restrictions** – the announcement of the extension of COVID Level 5 restrictions was disappointing to staff and students alike. The National Steering Group including representatives of THEA, the IUA, Department of FHERIS and the Social Partners, continue to work towards establishing the necessary agreements to facilitate students in completing their studies within the current academic year. However progress has been slow. Concern is growing within the sector regarding the increasing risk that students on programmes with specialist craft, practical and technical elements which cannot be replicated through online modes thus requiring on-campus attendance, will not be able to complete their studies in the current academic year. The Faculties have worked with the Directorate of Academic Affairs to extend submission and assessment deadlines as far as is possible whilst still providing for all processes that require input from academic staff to be completed prior to the June 20th commencement of academic leave. There is particular concern for students in award years of programmes. Significant work continues to be undertaken by the Faculties, Academic Council and Sub-Committees of Academic Council, to implement necessary programme and assessment modifications to enable students to meet their learning outcomes for programmes. Of key importance to the Institute is to safeguard quality and the professional standing of programmes.
- **International Women’s Day** – a number of events and talks have been organised to mark International Women’s Day.
- **Creative Futures Academy** – the President noted that Ms. Louise Allen has been appointed as Programme Director for the Creative Futures Academy.
- **Creative Arts Spring School** – due to COVID restrictions, it was not possible to hold the Creative Arts Summer School in summer 2020. However an online Creative Arts Spring School has been organised – the Creative Arts School is part of the HEA-funded PATH initiative.

9.2 IADT: Financial Update

An update on IADT's financial position was given by the Secretary/Financial Controller. IADT has received confirmation of the RGAM allocation for 2021 – an increase of 1.3% on the 2020 has been allocated by the HEA. Although an increase, the 1.3% increase is among the lower levels of increase within the sector and is a result of student numbers remaining static over the past number of years. In addition, IADT's poor performance in the area of research, resulted in a reduced RFAM allocation from the €5m budget allocated to the sector in relation to research activity. In order to secure future and sustainable levels of allocation from the national education budget, IADT will need to both re-enter a student numbers growth phase and to increase research activity significantly.

(Jim Pipe left the meeting at 4.00 pm)

10. IADT Strategic Plan Mid-term Re-Prioritisation – Follow-up Discussion

Following the presentation given by the President and Dera McLoughlin (Mazars) on the re-prioritisation of the Strategic Plan given at the meeting of February 3rd last, the President invited members of the Governing Body to provide feedback and comments on the presentation. The following points were noted:

- Due to the changing nature of the education sector, the Executive undertook an in-depth review of the current Strategic Plan and agreed that the timeline for delivery of actions articulated in the Strategic Plan, will be shortened by a year with all actions to be completed by the end of 2022.
- An outline of the prioritisation of actions was given.
- 40% of actions have not as yet been commenced, however most of these actions were not due to be completed until 2022/23. The President also noted that the Executive and Management Team within the Institute necessarily focussed on the emergency response to the COVID emergency, resulting in delivery of actions within the Strategic Plan being a lesser focus over the past year. With the range of appropriate procedures and processes in place and mechanisms for the management of the campus during COVID being established, the Executive now has the opportunity to focus on fully delivering the Strategic Plan.
- The delay in delivery of the Digital Media Building has also impacted on IADT's ability to deliver some actions – particularly in the area of growth in student numbers.
- Additional opportunities identified through the use of online delivery methods are opportunities for IADT to consider and exploit into the future.
- The potential of projects which have been developed and which have received funding post the development of the Strategic Plan were noted – these include the Creative Futures Academy and the Film EU project.
- A reform of the Higher Education Act has commenced which is likely to impact institutions within the Higher Education Sector.
- The Governing Body recommended and endorsed an increased focus on Research and Development within the current and future Strategic Plans, outlining its importance to branding, funding, international reputation and opportunities, and to enhance the future career opportunities for graduates.
- The importance of ensuring a focus on student and staff mental health, wellbeing and provision of effective learning supports within strategic actions and thinking was highlighted.

11. End of Governing Body Process

The Secretary/Financial Controller reminded members of the Governing Body of their responsibilities under the Data Protection and FOI Acts regarding any retention of materials circulated to the Governing Body for meetings. It was again noted that if members of the Governing Body wish to return materials to IADT for destruction, this will be facilitated. Alternatively should members of the Governing Body wish to retain information or to destroy materials themselves, they must confirm this to the Secretary/Financial Controller in writing/by e-mail.

12. Reflections on 5 years of Governing Body

As this was the last scheduled meeting of the current Governing Body, members of the Governing Body took the opportunity to share their reflections on the past 5 years. A number of points noted include:

- It was recommended that some time for Governing Body to meet on a more social setting should be incorporated into the schedule for the next Governing Body.
- Members of the Governing Body were very positive towards their experience of being members of the Governing Body.
- The start time of meetings greatly affects availability for some members.
- It was suggested that some time be given to identifying areas of specialist expertise among members of the Governing Body, to enable the Governing Body to draw upon that expertise during the course of its work.
- A number of members expressed a willingness to stay in touch with IADT and noted as positive meeting former Governing Body members at events.
- Members of the Governing Body noted that through meetings and updates received, they were provided with a real sense of the level of work undertaken by the Executive and Management of the Institute .
- Members of the Governing Body expressed their thanks to the President, Secretary/Financial Controller, former President and staff of IADT for their work and support over the past 5 years.
- The Secretary/Financial Controller noted that IADT is in excellent standing with the HEA and Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (and formally with the Department of Education and Skills) in relation to governance and accountability – a significant achievement for the Institute.

The Chairperson acknowledged the contribution made by members of the Governing Body and wished all well for the future. The level of achievement for the Institute over the past 5 years was noted, and the contribution of the Governing Body to this was welcomed.

The President concluded the meeting by extending his immense gratitude to members of the Governing Body – the first Governing Body of his term of office as President. The President noted the contribution of IADT's Executive, Management Team and staff to governance and accountability, and noted the immense contribution made by the Governing Body to this and to meeting the challenges that the Institute has faced over the past year. The President thanked members of the Governing Body for their support – noting that this is done on a voluntary basis – and wished all well for the future.

13. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

The Institute is mindful of equality and diversity issues for students, and the need for students with additional needs and vulnerable students to have access to on-campus facilities. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee of Governing Body has commenced meetings, with notes from the first meeting being circulated to and noted by the Governing Body. IADT has organised a series of events to mark International Women’s Day. The Executive of the Institute remains mindful of the health and wellbeing of staff and students alike during this time.

The next meeting of the Governing Body will take place on 14th April 2021.

Signed: _____
David Holohan

Date: _____