



HARTPURY

Minutes of the Meetings of Hartpury University and Hartpury College Boards 10 am Wednesday 17th May 2023 Equine

Members

Mr Edward Keene
 Ms Alison Blackburn
 Mr Patrick Brooke
 Mr Robert Brooks
 Ms Sascha Bruce
 Ms Barbara Buck -
 Professor Andy Collop
 Mr Alastair Grizzell
 Ms Jennifer Garvey
 Ms Mary Heslop
 Mr Henry Hodgkins
 Mr Thomas Legge
 Mr Sean Lynn
 Mr William Marshall
 Mr Chris Moody
 Ms Lucie Hammond
 Prof. Ian Robinson
 Mr Philip Robinson
 Dr John Selby
 Ms Helen Wilkinson

University Board

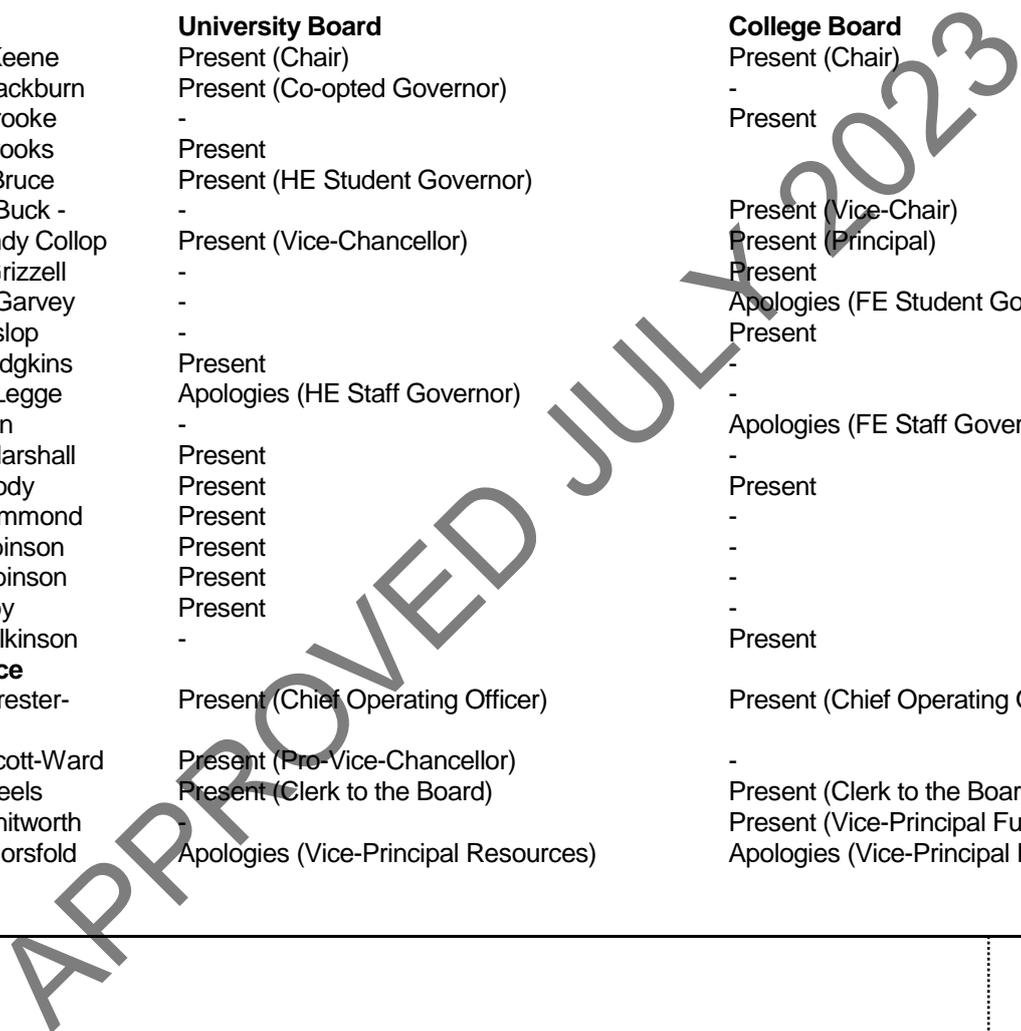
Present (Chair)
 Present (Co-opted Governor)
 -
 Present
 Present (HE Student Governor)
 -
 Present (Vice-Chancellor)
 -
 -
 Present
 Apologies (HE Staff Governor)
 -
 Present
 Present
 Present
 Present
 Present
 Present
 Present
 -
 Present (Chief Operating Officer)
 Present (Pro-Vice-Chancellor)
 Present (Clerk to the Board)
 -
 Apologies (Vice-Principal Resources)

College Board

Present (Chair)
 -
 Present
 Present (Vice-Chair)
 Present (Principal)
 Present
 Apologies (FE Student Governor)
 Present
 -
 -
 Apologies (FE Staff Governor)
 -
 Present
 -
 -
 -
 -
 Present
 Present (Chief Operating Officer)
 -
 Present (Clerk to the Board)
 Present (Vice-Principal Further Education)
 Apologies (Vice-Principal Resources)

In Attendance

Ms Lynn Forrester-Walker
 Mrs Rosie Scott-Ward
 Ms Gillian Steels
 Ms Claire Whitworth
 Ms Lesley Worsfold



		ACTION & ACTION DATE
01/05/23	<p>Apologies and Confirmation of Quoracy Apologies as detailed above.</p> <p>It was confirmed the meetings of the University Board and the College Board were quorate.</p>	
02/05/23	<p>Declaration of Interest The Clerk advised that members' interests would be taken as those disclosed in the Register of Members Interests.</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	There were no further Declarations relating to the agenda.	
03/05/23	<p>Minutes of the meetings</p> <p>The Minutes of the University Board and the College Board meetings held on the 1st March 2023 were agreed by the respective Boards to be true and accurate records.</p> <p>The Minutes of the Meeting of the FE Board 2nd May 2023 were approved as a true and accurate record.</p>	
04/05/23	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>An action log had been provided updating on issues raised at previous meetings.</p> <p>The update was NOTED.</p>	
	Part 1 Priority Agenda Items	
05/05/23	<p>Vice-Chancellor and Principal's Update</p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor and Principal provided a presentation.</p> <p>The presentation covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External environment • Staffing & budget • Hartpury 2030 • Structural review • Sustainable cows • Equine-assisted learning • Women's sport • Animal update • Priorities <p>External Environment</p> <p>College</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft LSIP released – to be published on 31st May • Annual Accountability Statement sets out response to LSIP (in papers) • 3-yearly review of how well the education/training meets local needs These elements to be built into regular planning cycle. • Changes to Ofsted complaints system but single grade to stay – pressure for greater consistency Notice period now 5 days to enable employers to be contacted to feed into skills element of inspection. <p>University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry & Regulators Cttee inquiry into OfS ongoing – tensions apparent • General concern over use of AI in student learning – watching brief – ethics, threats, opportunities. Governors queried the potential impact and noted the reduced time spent outdoors by children. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal advised Hartpury had set up an HE and FE working group to explore this. • Increasing activism large scale events- Extinction Rebellion, Just Stop 	

**ACTION &
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- Oil – risk assessment re any potential disruption Hartpury events
- Journey to 1 million – projected 30% increase in demand for HE
- Annual OfS Financial Return 2021: 117 providers “further assessment”, 51 of these “informal engagement & monitoring” & 31 of these “formal monitoring

Challenging landscape for FE and HE.

Governors queried whether the site could accommodate additional recruitment. It was confirmed facilities were being developed alongside additional student numbers, which was part of the current strategy.

Budget

- Work on going to develop budget for approval in July
- Significant cost pressures – rising costs, static fees
- Smaller than planned HE cohorts work through system (3-year effect)
- Principles for 2024/25 & beyond updated in HE report

Staffing

- COO (one of two senior postholders) recruitment underway - interviews on 15th June – governors significantly involved
- Director of Sustainability appointed - joining in July – breadth of experience
Dean -Teaching, Learning & Student Experience – appointed & in place. Role includes international lead.

Hartpury 2030

- Initial round of meetings held - focused on identification of academic priorities
- Next round of meetings planned for May & June – focus on prioritization of Strategic Priorities, Cross-Cutting Themes, Values & key elements of Mission & Vision
- Input from key external stakeholders & students
- Information collated into Draft “Strategy on a Page” (July Board)
- Expansion for extended (~8 page) Hartpury 2030 strategy (Aug – Oct)
- Governor session at September Board
- Draft Hartpury 2030 (November Board)
- Fine tuning for final approval at March 2024 Board Away Day

Structural review

Draft report received - review undertaken between Jan & March- 28 recommendations overall.

Key Points:

- Staff proud to work for Hartpury & demonstrate great loyalty
- Investment in some Professional Service areas not kept pace with University & College growth overall
- Siloed working, single points of failure, diverse reporting lines
- IT & data management
- Property & facilities management
- Some gaps in structures
- Potential re-alignment of senior responsibilities

Further update to be provided once recommendations worked through and prioritised.

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Sustainable cows

- Led by Director of Agriculture - Prof. Matt Bell
- Breeding Index created based on traits to increase sustainability (milk production, health, fertility, lifespan, ...)
- Goal to select and breed cows that are best suited to Hartpury farm conditions & reduce carbon emissions from each cow by 10%
- ~80% of Hartpury herd identified as sustainable – plan to replace 20%
- Approach can be used by any commercial farm to select more sustainable animals
- Results published in *Agriculture*, Vol. 13(2), 2023 and discussed on Gloucestershire Radio.

Equine-assisted learning

- Partnership with Sedbury Trust and HorsebackUK
- Aim to support children in Gloucestershire through trialling an alternative learning provision that boosts confidence, motivation & self-esteem
- Mutual benefits for Hartpury students - developing their own coaching and communication skills as they work with the children

Women's sport

Rugby

BUCS/AoC

BUCS National League champions

BUCS National Championship winners

Rosslyn Park 7s National winner

AoC National Champions

Gloucester-Hartpury

- Joint-Venture (J-V) being established with Gloucester for Premier 15s from 2023-24 - James Forrester appointed as part-time CEO

J-V arrangements to come to July Board

Currently top of Premier 15s & qualified for play-offs in June (Kingsholm)

Football & Futsal

AoC Southern Premier League champions

AoC Women's National Premier Cup winners

AoC National Championship winners/runners up

(final abandoned 10th May)

BUCS Futsal Southern Premier League champions

BUCS Futsal National Championship runners up

BUCS Division 1 champions & promoted to Premier League

Animal update

- Preliminary discussions with potential partners – it was confirmed all partners were carefully assessed to ensure fit with Hartpury values.
- Field trip to Mankwe, South Africa – first since Covid – short-term job offers (90 days)!
- Universities Federation for Animal Welfare Conference – Ellie Martin (BSc Zoology student) won prize for best presentation on Visitor Effect on Captive Raptor Behaviour at a Falconry Centre in the UK

Future priorities were outlined.

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	The University Board and the College Boards NOTED the Report.	
06/05/23	KPIs – Confidential Commercial Sensitivity 3 years	
07/05/23	Management Accounts – March 2023	
	<p>The Report provided an update on the financial position of the University Group. It highlighted that the operating result for the eight months ending February 2023 was a surplus of £1,532k compared to a budgeted surplus of £682K. The favourable variance was mostly resulting from higher FE high needs funding from Local Authorities together with lower than budgeted staffing costs mostly as a result of vacancies. A full reforecast was carried out in January and showed a projected surplus of £1,474k compared to an original budget of £1,054k. It was noted that Cash balances at the month end were £4,022k. The University had an overdraft facility of £1m. The University complied with its bank covenants and was forecast to continue to do so.</p>	
	<p>A member of the Farm Committee commented that the latest accounts had set out some forecast changes and queried when these would be reflected in the Group Accounts. The Board was advised these would be reflected in the April Management Accounts.</p> <p>A governor queried whether there were some other KPIs which would be more useful than “Debt as % of income”. He was advised this was a key measure used by OfS and ESFA, but that SFR could review the KPIs at their next meeting to assess if there were any additional KPIs it would be helpful to monitor. It was confirmed that the higher the performance ratio the better and that the nearer the Adjusted Current Ratio was to one the better, although as Hartpury raised its invoices at the start of the year and then released them though the year this was unlikely to occur.</p>	SFR June 2023
	<p>A governor asked if there was confirmation on a change to the Financial Year for colleges following their reclassification within the public sector, and queried the likelihood and impact of such a change. The Chief Operating Officer advised clarity on this was awaited, if a change was made such that the financial year was revised to 31st March there would be a significant impact – for example: requiring additional external audit work, governing body time, challenges to consolidation the college accounts with the University. She advised that when a similar decision had been made in Scotland that the year end had been changed to 31st May for one year but then changed back to reflect the business cycle. Lobbying of DfE was ongoing by the AoC etc and a decision on this was awaited.</p>	
	<p>Governors considered the new Summary financial information for 2022/23 which had been developed following requests from governors. It was agreed it was very helpful.</p> <p>The College and University Boards NOTED the Management Accounts.</p>	
08/05/23	HE Report	
	<p>The Board discussed the HE Report, noting Higher Education (HE) is working hard to maximise recruitment and income generation, while also considering opportunities to work more efficiently. It was recognised these</p>	

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were sector issues and that Hartpury was working to ensure sufficient planning time to maintain a high-quality student experience.

The following was also highlighted:

Student recruitment: While the sector was currently down by 1.81%, with many land-based providers reporting lower numbers, comparative Hartpury data was currently 1% up on applications compared to the same point last year (UCAS data, including deferrals). Work was ongoing to maximise conversion of application to firm (first choice).

Currently animal and Veterinary Nursing were down and were receiving focus. Governors queried whether this should be a concern given the planned new building for Veterinary Nursing. The Deputy-Vice-Chancellor advised that new resources would maintain and grow its place in the market. The Link Governor commented that her recent visit had confirmed the need for the centre. Sport was up 10% and Agriculture up 28% (recognising it was small numbers). It was confirmed standards were being maintained.

Governors queried the position on International recruitment. It was confirmed this was an area Hartpury continued to explore, which would take time to develop. The Deputy-Vice-Chancellor advised that EU recruitment was up over the last two years with applications in sport and equine particularly. Beyond the EU recruitment was slow. Some new agents had been put in place, it was recognised these would take time to impact. Applications from Canada had increased, there were some applications from India and Nigeria, but it was recognised that applications were not the same as enrolments. The Deputy-Vice-Chancellor noted that additional onsite accommodation would help recruitment. It was confirmed agents were paid a small percentage on enrolment and more if the student stayed a year.

A governor asked for more information on the shortfall against the current HE Strategy. The Deputy-Vice-Chancellor advised that HE was c 450 students short of its 3,000 target, set within the Hartpury 2025 Strategy. Key areas which had not grown as targeted were postgraduate, animal and equine.

Retention: This was challenging for Hartpury, especially for sport and animal. While reasons seem to focus on wellbeing, opportunity for employment and financial hardship, we have a number of initiatives in place to support students to continue and complete their academic studies.

A governor asked if students were given sufficient understanding of what was HE study would entail. The Deputy-Vice-Chancellor advised that entry requirements had been maintained and applicant days included a panel on expectations. She advised that retention issues were in 1st, 2nd and even 3rd years. She confirmed that Hartpury was flexible to support students to maintain study, and that key groups were being monitored. The profile of those most likely to have retention issues were young white males living in private accommodation.

Quality and Enhancement: We were monitoring closely changes within the HE sector, with several developments relating to OfS and beyond.

Research and Knowledge Exchange: The additional RKE related funding

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	<p>this year was a great achievement by the team.</p> <p>Governors queried the approval process for new curriculum areas recognising thorough plans, timelines, costs, cost differentiation between options would need to be considered. It was confirmed that any proposed new curriculum area would be taken to SMT, Academic Board and the Board. The Deputy-Vice-Chancellor advised that it was planned to provide HE QuEST with an update on plans. She advised that some curriculum was close to current curriculum. External analysis was ongoing. It would be necessary to move quickly to have courses up and running for 2024/25. She commented that the majority would need Awarding Body accreditation which would need building in to the process.</p> <p>A governor, recognising that last year's post graduate survey results had been disappointing queried expectations for the current year. The Deputy-Vice-Chancellor advised that participation had risen to 50% for this year's survey (last year c22%) and that focus groups had not identified any significant concerns. The National Student Survey (NSS) had also just closed. The outcome from both surveys was awaited.</p> <p>The Deputy-Vice-Chancellor and her team were thanked for their work.</p>	
	<p>The HE Update was NOTED.</p>	
<p>09/05/23</p>	<p>FE Report</p>	
	<p>The report provided a high-level overview of progress made within key areas of development for Hartpury College, and an overview of recent updates to policy and the external environment. The 2023-2024 Hartpury Accountability Statement, recently approved by the FE Board was also highlighted.</p> <p>Policy / External Environment: the external environment continued to evolve and the key areas of focus for Hartpury included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New statutory requirements for Governors - Skills Review and approval of our Accountability Statement 2. Qualification Reform 3. Strategic Development Funds <p>Our Accountability Statement detailed our collaborations and engagement with the LSIP and many other organisations /sources of evidence of local, regional and national skills need, all of which provided the basis for our concluding objectives. The objectives and action plan were highlighted. The close working that had taken place to support the LSIP process was noted. Governors queried the audience for the Accountability Statement. The Deputy-Principal Further Education advised it was for stakeholders, DfE and Ofsted. It needed to be produced every year and would evolve over time. It would align to the Self-assessment Report and Quality Report. The Chair noted the challenge relating to the T-level action, given that the course requirements had not yet been released, and that late provision of information would make it harder to recruit to. The Deputy-Principal Further Education advised that the awarding body had just released further information.</p>	

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	<p>Governors commented on the timing issues around the LSIP Report and the challenge of aligning the Accountability Statement to it when it wouldn't be published in entirety until 31stMay – the same date the Accountability Statement had to be published. The Deputy-Principal Further Education advised that working with Business West, who had written the LSIP Report, had ameliorated this. She also advised the LSIP Report would be used within the three-year review.</p> <p>We were keeping a watching brief on other aspects that would impact us such as the qualification landscape, particularly in relation to T-Levels and de-funding of our current Uniformed Protection Services offer. Feedback on whether the funding position would change, post lobbying, was awaited.</p> <p>It was confirmed Hartpury was working to maintain a balance between its land based and other courses. The Vice-Chancellor and Principal commented on the need for course contribution also to be part of the issues to be mindful of.</p> <p>T'levels - it was noted Hartpury had been successful in achieving a £1.4m equipment grant for T'levels. Feedback on the Capital Grant Bid was awaited. It was noted the DfE had undertaken a review of T'levels which highlighted some issues with variability. The Deputy-Principal FE confirmed the outcomes of the review, plus feedback from other colleges already teaching T'levels, would be used to inform planning.</p> <p>Recruitment: 2023-2024 applications continued to be strong and we were continuing to focus on conversion against targets. Some courses had been capped. It was recognised it was a complex process for this, balancing ensuring efficiency and quality of courses, reflecting on conversion rates and access to onsite residential accommodation and transport. Every student was interviewed to confirm their attitude to learning.</p> <p>Continuous Improvement: we continued to drive forward further improvements as reflected throughout the report. Good progress was being made with the actions on our Quality Improvement Plan overall. Our key focus last term was the 'deep dive' process which had been invaluable in complementing our other quality processes to determine further areas of focus needed. Continuous improvement is reflected in our BTEC national exam results to date.</p> <p>A governor queried why although A 'level achievement was on target; the meeting of aspirational grades was not. The Deputy-Principal Further Education commented that this in part reflected resilience following Covid and centre assessed grades. She confirmed that work continued to support achievement. The Residential Team supported onsite students who were homesick etc. A governor queried retention and was advised this was strong.</p> <p>The Deputy-Principal Further Education and her team were thanked for their work.</p>	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
	The FE Report was NOTED.	
10/05/23	<p>Student & Staff Voice</p> <p>Student Governors In March a number of Hartpury students had attended the National Union of Students Conference, with discussions including the cost of living crisis. The Hartpury response in comparison to other universities was considered positively, for example the level of support and relationships with tutors – for example check in processes if a student failed to attend, transport and access. Some suggestions relating to housing and foodbank type support had been brought back.</p> <p>Work was ongoing on the STAR awards – awards from Students to recognise the staff who had supported them.</p> <p>Feedback was being collected on areas where students wanted focus – currently indicating transport and catering.</p> <p>Governor Link Feedback A ‘Levels - 21st November 2022 & 21st January 2023, plus one open day event – Alastair Grizzell Health & Safety - 23rd February – attendance Health & Safety Forum, 3 April 2023 – John Selby Estates – 30th March 2023 - Ian Robinson Veterinary Nursing – Lucie Hammond Skills and Careers – Mary Heslop</p> <p>Students feeling safe – generally positive, impact Covid and need to monitor speed of cars on campus noted. Staff Morale – generally positive, hybrid working appreciated. Pressure on catering and estates noted.</p> <p>The issue of career paths for staff was flagged. It was noted that some changes had been introduced.</p> <p>The progress made in relation to Health and Safety was noted.</p> <p>Strategic Issues re Skills and Careers Identified - Aligning employer engagement with the July 2022 statutory duty for the Board to review how well the education or training provided meets local needs.</p> <p>Hartpury’s role in developing capacity and capability in the workforces of industry partners.</p> <p>The Updates were NOTED.</p> <p>The Chair thanked governors for their feedback which helped to triangulate the information provided at the meetings.</p>	
11/05/23	Capital Projects – Commercial Confidentiality – 5 years	

		ACTION & ACTION DATE
11.3	Car Park – Milestone 4 Report The Report, including lessons learnt, was NOTED.	
11.4	Graze – Milestone 4 Report The Report, including lessons learnt, was NOTED.	
11.5	Water Treadmill – Milestone 4 Report The Report, including lessons learnt, was NOTED.	
12/05/23	Strategy Finance and Resources Committee Minutes of the meeting 9th May 2023 – were noted. The Chair updated on key discussion points from the meeting, covering the budget, and noting that the Management Accounts and Capital Reports had been further considered at the Board.	
	Policy Update – HE Fees Policy – NOTED this had been APPROVED under delegated authority.	
	EDI Report – governors commented that the report contained a lot of good practice which was very positive. There were some questions of detail relating to metrics which it was agreed would be taken to the Deputy-Principal Resources outside the meeting. A governor noted there had been an increase of sexual abuse cases and asked if it was possible to tell the proportion relating to increased awareness and the proportion that was historic. It was agreed the Deputy-Principal Resources would be asked to advise.	Deputy Principal Resources July 2023
13/05/23	Audit & Risk Management Committee It was confirmed that matters raised relating to Health & Safety had been resolved. Minutes of the meeting 30th March 23 – NOTED.	
14/05/23	Application of Hartpury Seal* Noted the Seal had been used in relation to: Shared Prosperity Fund Grant Forest of Dean District Council and Hartpury University The Seal had been used in line with agreed parameters.	
15/05/23	Any Other Business Potential On-site Accommodation – work on this was awaiting completion of the recent Project Manager tendering process. The Chair thanked all governors and staff for their work. The meeting closed at 12.15 pm	

APPROVED JULY 2023