

Approved Minutes

Present

Mr Graham Raikes MBE	(Chair)	Independent Governor	GR
Dr Sue Cooper		Academic Staff Governor	SC
Mr Stephen Criddle		Independent Governor	StC
Mrs Kate Doodson		Independent Governor	KD
Miss Lauren Edwards		Student Governor	LE
Mr Matt Evans		Independent Governor	ME
Mr Alex Hawtin		Independent Governor	AH
Prof Patricia Hind		Independent Governor	PH
Mrs Victoria Holbrook		Independent Governor	VH
Mrs Jacynth Ivey		Independent Governor	JI
Rt Rev'd Nick McKinnel		Independent Governor	NM
Mrs Ruth Mounstephen		Independent Governor	RM
Rev'd Prof Gina Radford		Independent Governor	GiR
Mr John Searson		Independent Governor	JS
Prof Gary Shum		Academic Staff Governor	GS
Mrs Lynn Tamsett-White		Professional Services Staff Governor	LWT
Mrs Emma van der Lugt		Independent Governor	EL
Prof Rob Warner		Vice-Chancellor	RW

In attendance

Mr Simon Arthurs	Director of Finance	SA
Ms Laura Butler	Student Engagement Officer	LB
Prof Michelle Jones	Deputy Vice-Chancellor	MJ
Mr Stephen Plant	University Secretary & Registrar	SP
Mrs Jessamie Thomas	Governance Officer (note taker)	JT

For item 5

Mrs Lucy Pengelly	Director of People & Organisational Development	LP
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For items 5 & 8

Mr John Bailey	Director of Estates & IT Infrastructure	JB
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For item 6

Mrs Katy Willis	Pro Vice-Chancellor, Student Success	KW
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For item 8

Ms Claire Gibson	Attendee, former Governor	CG
Mr Ben Humphries	Attendee, Architype	BH
Mr Hugh Pearce	Attendee, Architype	HP
Mr Steve Rankin	Attendee, Architype	SR

1. Welcome, Apologies & Declaration of Conflicts of Interests

- 1.1 Chair of the Board of Governors (BoG), Graham Raikes MBE, welcomed colleagues.
- 1.2 GR invited Rt Rev'd Nick McKinnel to open the meeting with a prayer.

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- 1.3 Apologies were received from co-opted members Jackie Westerman and Michele Shoebridge and from University Chaplain Rev'd Michelle Parkman.
- 1.4 Conflicts of interest - Matt Evans reminded colleagues that the company of which he was CEO, Active Devon, was a tenant of the University. No other conflicts of interest were declared.
- 1.5 GR invited new governors Stephen Criddle and Lauren Edwards to introduce themselves.
- 1.6 GR invited governors to unstar items from Part B for discussion; while nothing was identified, GR highlighted the importance of careful consideration of the information presented, noting particularly: Access & Participation Plan update, Office for Students (OfS) student number controls, Prevent monitoring report, Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) update, OfS registration and COVID-19 risk register. The Chair's action from Senate was **RATIFIED**.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meetings

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2020 were **APPROVED** as an accurate record with no amendments.
- 2.2 The minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2020 were **APPROVED** as an accurate record with no amendments.

3. Report from Vice Chancellor/Deputy Vice Chancellor

- 3.1 The report from Deputy Vice Chancellor, Prof Michelle Jones, was received.
- 3.2 Vice Chancellor, Prof Rob Warner, provided an oral update. He referenced the report submitted by MJ to BoG on 1 June 2020. RW noted how the report had captured the professionalism of the Senior Management Team (SMT) and staff through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3.3 RW invited University Secretary and Registrar, Stephen Plant, to confirm formally to BoG that complaints and appeals were being handled correctly. SP confirmed that the process remained robust. Regular reports were received by BoG, and a summary included at item 22.
- 3.4 RW noted that OfS had recently held telephone discussions with every provider of Higher Education (HE) to assess their provision for students during lockdown and their financial position. OfS confirmed Marjon's positive performance in both areas. RW highlighted analysis of HESA data which had produced a consolidated risk assessment also providing reassurance regarding the University's position.
- 3.5 RW noted the ongoing commitment of the University to serve the people and economy of the South West by providing an inclusive education on a COVID-secure and student friendly campus. The University and Marjon Student Union (MSU) were committed to ensuring a rich social life.
- 3.6 RW confirmed that staff were kept informed of developments and support mechanisms.

4. Introductory report from incoming MSU President

- 4.1 Lauren Edwards introduced herself and outlined her experience at the University and her aims as MSU President. With the onset of COVID-19 and social distancing, further goals and challenges had arisen, and LE explained how she aimed to address these with colleagues across the University.

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4.2 BoG expressed its support for LE and noted that her contributions would be welcomed. This in turn would allow governors to learn as much as possible about the priorities of Marjon students and provide the best possible offering going forwards.

5. Response and Approach to COVID-19

- 5.1 The COVID-19 2020-2021 Strategy was received, outlining the University's response to the situation operationally and strategically. MJ noted the work of the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) and Connected Marjon Working Group. Efforts were focused on ensuring the campus was ready for September 2020, prioritising retention and recruitment of students, refining the Strategy and focusing on financial sustainability.
- 5.2 MJ provided background to the development of the Strategy 2020-21 and its approval by Senate.
- 5.3 MJ guided the Board through the five key headlines of the Strategy, giving examples of each.
- 5.4 BoG commended the overview and timely update, particularly the Executive Summary showing devolution of decision making. MJ confirmed that measures of success would be kept under review.
- 5.5 Responding to a question about how student wellbeing would be supported, MJ gave examples of inbuilt systems, plus mechanisms and approaches being discussed by Marjon Connect.
- 5.6 In response to a question, MJ confirmed that Marjon's response to future outbreaks of COVID-19 would be guided by the levels of operation document, managed by CIMT. In the event of a lockdown, teaching, learning and student support would revert to 100% digital.
- 5.7 In response to a question, MJ explained steps being taken to prevent the digital exclusion of students.
- 5.8 In response to a question, MJ confirmed that while the paper made mention of an Equality Impact Assessment for home working, an EIA on the whole Strategy had not yet been completed.
- 5.9 In response to a question, MJ confirmed that the University continued to work closely with Public Health Plymouth. In the event of a local lockdown advice from DfE was that residential students would remain on campus.
- 5.10 It was noted that the University's decision to follow a hybrid model to deliver teaching and learning going forwards aligned with student feedback. MJ confirmed that face to face support would continue to be offered in a digital model, and the Student Engagement and Outcome Panel would convene more regularly to review and refine the University's approach. MJ accounted for a certain level of dissatisfaction recorded in the survey, which was conducted just into lockdown.
- 5.11 The Board **APPROVED** the COVID 2020-21 Strategy.
- 5.12 The Business Continuity Plans and Critical Incident Management Team Arrangements report was received. Director of Estates & IT Infrastructure, John Bailey, was welcomed to the meeting. JB summarised Marjon's Business Continuity response and that of CIMT.
- 5.13 Coronavirus University Code of Practice (UCOP) report was received. JB summarised the purpose of the UCOP, which was being updated ahead of the new academic year, aligned with guidance from Public Health England, the Foreign Office, UK government and the NHS.

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- 5.14 JB explained that every department had set up its own Business Continuity Plan and noted the success of planning to date.
- 5.15 COVID-19 Secure - Phase 1 Return to Campus Working (PH1 RTCW) Risk Assessment report was received. JB confirmed that generic risk assessments had been completed. All other risk assessments would be complete by 7 August 2020, with the aim of enabling the University to declare the campus COVID-secure on 14 August 2020. Students would be welcomed back from 1 September 2020 onwards. JB praised the work of the Health, Safety and Security Manager, the IT manager, the Digital Transformation Manager and their teams. GR asked JB to convey BoG's thanks. **ACTION: JB**
- 5.16 In response to a question as to how the continuity processes had coped with the pandemic, and whether there was any learning to be taken forward specifically into the high level business continuity process, JB was satisfied that the planning had worked well, with a rapid up-skilling of the staff body; he confirmed there would be a reflection on learnings going forward.
- 5.17 SA confirmed that there had been a loss of income due to the closure of the sports centre.
- 5.18 Director of People & Organisational Development, Lucy Pengelly, was welcomed to the meeting. LP updated BoG on the work of the People Team. LP summarised the furlough position. LP noted that a small on-site team had remained on campus with the rest of the workforce working from home.
- 5.19 All staff had received bespoke communications, including a homeworking policy and risk assessment. Staff had visited the campus where appropriate to collect items required for homeworking.
- 5.20 LP explained that OH engagement was being undertaken where appropriate.
- 5.21 Maintaining staff health and wellbeing throughout the pandemic had been a priority and LP explained a number of new initiatives, including support for managers.
- 5.22 LP confirmed she had regular and positive engagement with the unions.
- 5.23 A new stress risk assessment process had been created and individual wellness action plans. LP's business partners in her team had been delivering training to managers based on those processes.
- 5.24 Given that the workforce and culture had evolved significantly, more innovative working practices were being reviewed. LP was working on a paper: 'Shaping our Workforce post Lockdown'.
- 5.25 LP highlighted voluntary initiatives under consideration, including a reopening of the voluntary severance process. The Board agreed that it was appropriate to convey to LE (Chief Executive of the Student Union and Chair of their Board of Trustees) that the Board would be willing, in an equitable way, to offer a voluntary severance scheme to MSU staff, funded in the same way as for Marjon employees.
- 5.26 Recognising the impact of the pandemic on staff, GR invited Staff Governors to share their experiences through lockdown with colleagues. A number of challenges were noted by each Staff Governor in turn, and GR thanked them for their adaptability and commitment during this period.
- 5.27 MJ recorded formal thanks to BoG, all staff including the onsite team and to Marjon's students – expressing gratitude to everyone for their adaptability, resilience and humanity.
- 5.28 GR thanked everyone for their contributions to this item.

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*LP left the meeting. The Board took a short comfort break.
The agenda was re-ordered to take Item 8 before Item 6.*

6. Student Recruitment Update

- 6.1 The Student Recruitment Update report was received. Pro Vice Chancellor Student Success, Katy Willis, was welcomed to the meeting to present a summary.
- 6.2 KW noted that applications were holding up well and had accelerated since the report was written. More enquiries, applications through clearing and late applications had been received than at this time last year.
- 6.3 KW went through the headline numbers of applicants, noting particularly strong areas.
- 6.4 KW drew attention to the fact that conversions were down, which appeared to demonstrate a reluctance by some who had applied pre-COVID to commit. This contrasted with the conversations being held with those freshly thinking about applying to University. KW explained steps being taken to encourage conversion and promote applicant experiences.
- 6.5 Marketing activity during the next few weeks would be critical and KW described the activity plan which would guide ongoing marketing, clearing and the handling of late applications.
- 6.6 KW was asked for her view on delaying the start date to January or accepting cohorts at different times. KW confirmed that this had been discussed but was not deemed advantageous. RW provided sector-wide context on this issue. He also noted that most 18 year olds were keen to move forward, having been out of school since March.
- 6.7 Given the demographics of this year having the lowest number of 18 year olds yet applications being up significantly, RW noted that normally this recruitment update would be very positive, but there was uncertainty caused by COVID-19.
- 6.8 GR expressed thanks to KW and to her team.
KW left the meeting.

7. Equality Report 2020

- 7.1 It was agreed that this item would be deferred to the next meeting, to allow for full consideration. **ACTION: MJ/JT**

8. Campus Development Plan (CDP)

- 8.1 GR welcomed guests to the meeting: Claire Gibson (former Governor, Chair of Estates Development Task Group EDTG and Dep Chair of F&R)); Ben Humphries, Hugh Pearce and Steve Rankin (Architype).
- 8.2 The following reports had been received: CDP Cover Paper; CDP Stage 3 Executive Summary; CDP Stage 3 Report; CDP Marjon Digital Vision and Strategy.
- 8.3 GR noted that BoG and F&R, with EDTG, had considered the various stages of the CDP in detail over a period of time and GR invited RW to provide the context to the current position.
- 8.4 RW explained that approximately two years ago, EDTG with F&R had recommended that work be initiated on a CDP, to avoid piecemeal development of the campus, the address the current dominance of cars and with the aim of maximising the potential use of the campus while moving towards carbon neutrality. Following a procurement process, Architype had collaborated with Marjon to produce this overarching strategic document. RW noted that

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approval of the CDP would set a strategic shape through to 2035. It would not involve any financial commitment at this point.

- 8.5 RW noted Architype's assessment that, with the exception of two of the oldest halls of residence, the skeleton of the other buildings was structurally sound.
- 8.6 RW noted that the campus was built on such a scale that a doubling of student numbers would be possible. The plan would look at how, in addressing the needs of students and the climate/ecosystem, the campus could move forward in a coherent and adventurous way.
- 8.7 JB noted that via the CDP working group and Architype's consultancy team, a range of views and voices had been heard.
- 8.8 JB went through the purpose of the plan, which would allow for continued growth in student numbers and make the campus more unified, more accessible, improve the flow of movement and create a positive space for wellbeing, integrating a digital learning vision.
- 8.9 JB invited the Architype team to present their Executive Summary on screen. SR reiterated the collaborative effort behind the CDP and thanked the Marjon community for their contributions – there had been a great deal of research, analysis and engagement from students, staff and BoG.
- 8.10 SR highlighted the eleven strategies and Marjon values underpinning the framework of the CDP.
- 8.11 HP recapped the strategies, noting that a full description was located within the Stage 3 CDP report.
- 8.12 In the section on Marjon Budget Appraisal, HP discussed the cost of three models versus the cost of doing nothing over the same period. These models had been assessed against how well they delivered the objectives of the CDP. It was apparent that Model 3 would achieve all aims at a lower cost than a new build, and HP explained further the rationale behind this being the optimum model.
- 8.13 Ben Humphries noted the trailblazing and externally facing nature of the plan. BH urged BoG to give careful consideration to prioritisation of projects and that each be assessed in the same investigative and collaborative way that the CDP had been undertaken. BH suggested that progress against the CPD should be reviewed on an annual basis.

Kate Doodson left the meeting

- 8.14 GR thanked the Architype team and invited CG to summarise her position. CG noted that the process to date had taken two years. The recruitment of JB had brought relevant experience leading to the appointment of a strong consultancy team led by Architype. Collection and analysis of campus data, and consultation with staff, students and BoG, had led to the development of exciting ideas, vision and a set of strategies. This plan would guide the redevelopment of the University over the next 15 years and help deliver on Marjon's ambitions and the Growth Plan.

CG noted that EDTG with F&R had met on 3 July 2020 and had endorsed this CDP. There was no financial commitment required at this time but endorsing the plan would allow JB to consider project prioritisation. CG noted there would be many more discussions about the CDP with detail to be worked through, but CG believed that this CDP was a positive place from which to build.

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- 8.15 Alex Hawtin, Chair of F&R, endorsed the CDP's prudent approach. He confirmed that F&R would look at individual projects and establish clarity on what was being considered for approval and why.
- 8.16 GR invited questions from BoG. A question was posed as to whether between Cost Models 3 and 4, there would be significant differences in running costs and maintenance? It was confirmed that there would not be an anticipated significant difference, apart from minor energy advantages of Model 4. The extent of retrofit would be equivalent to considering the building a new building.
- 8.17 A question was posed as to whether, of the existing buildings, any were time critical in terms of replacement which might impact the programme and the funding? JB noted that three older blocks of the halls of residence were part of the 1970s campus and their condition had dropped. While not impossible to refurbish, there would be significantly diminishing returns.
- 8.18 A question was asked about next steps. RW noted that he would expect JB to bring through F&R to the BoG a roadmap of initial major projects within the next six months or so. These would most likely be the West Wing, residential provision and the PAHC building. **ACTION:**
JB
- 8.19 GR proposed that BoG accept the CDP, as a 'blueprint for the future', noting that this did not entail any financial commitment at this time. BoG **APPROVED** the CDP, as set out in the full Stage 3 Report. GR thanked Architype and thanked CG for her contribution. Thanks were extended in absentia to Michele Shoebridge who had also served on the EDTG. GR commended all parties on a really good piece of work. JB thanked BoG for their feedback and support which had helped shape the CDP.
CG, BH, HP, SR, JB left the meeting.

9. Financial Update

- 9.1 RW provided national context to this item, noting huge sector-wide losses due to COVID-19. As mentioned earlier, OfS was meeting with every registered provider to assess liquidity and provision.
GiR left the meeting.
- 9.2 RW summarised the University's loss of income, noting specific areas in which losses had occurred, for example not charging students for accommodation during the summer term.
- 9.3 SA noted that recorded losses were less than the lost income, which demonstrated the success of the work done to achieve savings in-year.
- 9.4 RW acknowledged that 2020-21 held more uncertainty. The intention was to set a provisional budget now, which would also be acceptable to the External Auditors in consideration of the 'going concern' requirement. The proposal was that the provisional budget be brought back to BoG for final confirmation in November 2020, by which time there would be a definite account of student numbers and associated income and a number of assumptions would have been tested.
- 9.5 RW emphasised the prudent, rigorous approach to managing finances which Marjon had adopted and noted that the level of risk faced was not as significant as elsewhere in the sector.

9.6 2019-20 Forecast Outturn Position

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- a) The confidential 2019-20 Financial Year-End Forecast (Period 10 April) report was received.
- b) SA requested that BoG acknowledge the revenue, capital and cash position, with associated risks and actions.
- c) SA highlighted provisions being made to prepare for a COVID-secure campus and investment being made in digital innovation and revolution.
- d) SA reiterated the work being done to move to a position of meeting annual costs from annual income, with the focus on prudently preserving cash resilience as much as possible.
- e) BoG noted the position.

9.3 Budget 2020-21 (Capital & Revenue)

- a) The report was received. SA outlined the approach being taken to set the budget, in the highly unusual context of a global pandemic. The focus was on securing financial sustainability and long term resilience, taking a prudent and risk-based approach.
- b) SA summarised the intention to have a two stage process to determine the budget: a high level income based scenario to outline an indicative annual budget, which would satisfy the External Auditors' going concern assessment; a plan to hold back elements of the budget for the first four months to determine income and operating costs.
- c) SA noted that full business planning for 2021/22 – 2023/24 had been delayed until November 2020 to allow for clearer planning assumptions.
- d) Income scenarios had been carefully scrutinised; SA presented an overview.
- e) SA confirmed that debt finance was covered from income in 2019/20 and in 2020/21. In response to a question, SA confirmed there was a covenant to cover off two loans, the PAHC building and the Sports Centre; the intention was to set a break even position less capital loan repayments.
- f) SA explained the key actions in the 'fishbone' timeline diagram at item 7, which would culminate in the BoG meeting 18 November 2020, when it was proposed that the budget for the year would be approved, following careful monthly monitoring.
- g) With regard to risk, SA discussed with BoG the key risk around student recruitment, which was being carefully scrutinised.
- h) GR invited Chair of F&R, AH, to state his view. AH noted that F&R had convened three times since the last BoG meeting, including twice this month, to ensure scrutiny of the most up to date position available. COVID-19 had demonstrated the vital importance of taking control of safety nets and AH commended the outturn position, proactivity regarding investments, sensible cost-cutting decisions and helpful approach to progressing the CDP. AH confirmed his view that SA was presenting a prudent and well-timed approach. AH thanked SA and his team for their efforts.
- i) GR invited colleagues to consider the proposals. Following discussion:
The approach to the 2020/21 budget setting process as set out in the report was **APPROVED**.
The financial range for an annual budget as set out in the report, subject to refinement in September 2020 and November 2020, was **APPROVED**.
The plans to limit and control expenditure for a four month budget in the lead up to November 2020 were **APPROVED**.
Tuition Fees for 2021/22, as presented in Appendix One, were **APPROVED**.

9.4 Investment Briefing

- a) The report was received. SA provided background to the investment performance and key actions taken in consultation with F&R. AH commended SA's approach. The investment position was noted.
PH and NMCK left the meeting.

9.5 Financial Regulations

- a) Financial Regulations 2020-21 report was received. SA guided the Board through the approach taken and highlighted key changes compared with the current regulations.
- b) It was requested that Financial Regulations 2021-22 show a greater strategic/operational split, with BoG scrutiny to then focus on the strategic element. **ACTION: SA**
- c) Financial Regulations 2020-21 were **APPROVED**.

Close

In closing the main part of the meeting, GR thanked members and attendees for their time and contributions. The next scheduled BoG meeting would be on Friday, 18 September 2020 at 10.00, Microsoft Teams.

10. Reserved Business - *See RB minutes.*

Part B – for information only

The following were received for information with no queries:

11. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting
12. Access & Participation Update
13. Chair's Action – Senate
14. Student Number Controls
15. OfS Prevent Monitoring Outcome
16. Research and Knowledge Exchange Update
17. Office for Students Registration
18. COVID-19 Risk Register
19. To note the minutes of committees/sub-committees:
 - a) People & Workforce Development Sub-Committee (unapproved) 01.06.2020
 - b) Finance & Resources 24.04.2020 (approved)
 - c) Finance & Resources 10.06.2020 (approved)
 - d) Finance & Resources 03.07.2020 (M5) (unapproved)
 - e) Audit 19.06.2020 (unapproved)
 - f) Senate 19.01 (approved)
 - g) Senate 19.02 (approved)
 - h) Senate 19.03 (approved)
 - i) Senate 19.04 (approved)
20. To note meeting dates for the year (draft)
21. To note the cycle of business (draft)

RESERVED BUSINESS For Information – Noted

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- 22 Report on Legal Activities; Fraudulent, Whistleblowing, Health and Safety Incidents, Student Complaints & Welfare
- 23 To note the Reserved Business Minutes of: a) Audit 19.06.2020 (unapproved) (no staff) (no auditors)
b) Finance & Resources 10.06.2020 (approved)

Action Log

Minute	Action	Owner	Deadline
5.15	Convey BoG's thanks to IT manager, HSS manager, Digital Transformation manager – and their teams	JB	ASAP
7.1	Equality Report deferred to next BoG meeting	MJ/JT	BoG 18 Sept 2020
8.19	Campus Development Plan - update F&R and BoG	JB	By early 2021
9.5	Develop more strategic front end to Financial Regs 2021-22	SA	Update F&R Jan 2021

Decision Log

Minute	Decision
1.6	Chair's action from Senate 18.05.2020, regarding membership was RATIFIED
2.1	Minutes of the meeting held on 13 May 2020 were APPROVED
2.2	Minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2020 were APPROVED
5.11	COVID 2020-21 Strategy was APPROVED
8.19	Campus Development Plan (Stage 3) APPROVED
9.3i	The approach to the 2020/21 budget setting process as set out in the report was APPROVED.
9.3i	The financial range for an annual budget as set out in the report, subject to refinement in September 2020 and November 2020, was APPROVED.
9.3i	The plans to limit and control expenditure for a four month budget in the lead up to November 2020 were APPROVED.
9.3i	Tuition Fees for 2021/22, as presented in Appendix One, were APPROVED.
9.5c	Financial Regulations 2020-21 were APPROVED.