

Response to the recommendations of the Governance Effectiveness Review

Introduction

1. The aim of this paper is to set out the agreed responses of the Board to the recommendations of Advance HE's Governance Effectiveness Review, which was conducted between September and December 2019.
2. The Board's agreed actions outlined in this paper follow a meeting of the Governance Effectiveness Review Steering Group of governors held on 6 April 2020 at which Advance HE's findings were reviewed in detail and a way forward on each was then proposed by the group to the Board of Governors at its meeting on 7 May.

Background

3. The Committee of University Chairs' Higher Education Code of Governance requires governing bodies to undertake a review of their own effectiveness every four years. Following a competitive tender process, the university appointed Advance HE to conduct its latest review. This review follows the previous review, which was conducted in 2015 by David Fletcher Consulting Ltd.
4. To help direct the process of the review, the Board of Governors formed a subgroup known as the 'Governance Effectiveness Review Steering Group'. The group helped to guide the process of the review and acted as a governor point of contact for Advance HE as they went about their work. Serving on the group are independent governors: Lin Hinnigan (Interim Chair of the Board at the time of the commencement of the review), Sara Pierson, Daniel Toner and Fiona Cownie. Following his commencement in the role of permanent Chair of the Board in early January 2020, Ian Squires joined and chaired the group.
5. Alongside the Governance Effectiveness Review, the university is engaged in the delivery of its action plan with the Office for Students (OfS). As highlighted within Advance HE's report, a number of areas of improvement either had been made prior to, or were being made during, the process of the Governance Effectiveness Review.

Executive Summary

6. The Board is required to respond to a number of recommendations and suggestions made in a report by Advance HE on its effectiveness. This report sets out a number of proposed responses of the Board to those recommendations on which it is for the Board to determine how it should proceed. Action is proposed in this report by way of response to all 15 of Advance HE's substantive recommendations. This report also proposes a number of actions by way of response to the suggestions made by Advance HE to improve the University's governance arrangements.

Agreed actions of the Board to the Governance Effectiveness Review

7. In its report, Advance HE made 15 principal recommendations to the Board of Governors. In addition, Advance HE also put forward a number of suggestions to the Board which fell outside of its formal recommendations. This report outlines the agreed actions of the Board to each of the review's findings under the following two headings:
 - A. Agreed actions of the Board to the formal recommendations of the Governance Effectiveness Review report; and
 - B. Agreed actions of the Board to the suggested actions made in the Governance Effectiveness Review report.

A. **Agreed actions of the Board to the formal recommendations of the Governance Effectiveness Review report**

8. Under each of the recommendations of Advance HE's Governance Effectiveness Review below, the agreed actions of the Board are set out in the coloured boxes:

- (1) 'The new Chair and Board devise a development programme with the Executive to clarify their roles, how they will work together in the future, and their mutual expectations and needs of each other. This is important in creating the culture and behaviours for good and effective governance.'

Board decision:

As a result of a number of changes in personnel at both Board of Governor and Executive Board level, the further imminent changes expected at Board of Governor level (resulting from the ongoing independent governor recruitment exercise) and the numerous improvements already implemented as part of the OfS action plan, it is felt that significant progress has been made in improving the working arrangements between the Board of Governors and the Executive Board. In addition to these actions, the following further actions will be taken:

- The response to the findings from DMU's Cultural Audit of staff which relate to the leadership and governance of the university will be taken forward by the Board of Governors and the Executive Board on a collaborative basis; and
- The cultural audit outcomes will inform a programme of development activities involving the Board of Governors and the Executive Board, including joint training opportunities and 'away days' involving both bodies, geared toward further progressing a culture of collaboration. An initial focus of the development programme will be embedding further the work to clarify respective roles, and how governors and the Executive will work together, including establishing clear expectations of each other.

- (2) 'The Board, under the leadership of the new Chair, should, as part of its routine business and building on this report, conduct a regular review of how effectively it is working, taking into account its evolving dynamics and relationship with the Executive.'

Board decision:

- The University's internal auditors will be asked to conduct biennial reviews of the effectiveness of all senior committees, including the sub-committees of the Board of Governors, the Executive Board and the Academic Board. This process will include surveys and, where determined appropriate to do so by the internal auditors, interviews with staff and committee members. The resultant reports will be submitted to the Board of Governors and Executive Board to enable them to take a view on any changes that might be required to improve the arrangements;
- All senior university committees (including the Executive Board and the Academic Board) will have a mandatory standing agenda item at meetings to explicitly seek contemporaneous feedback from members as to the extent to which the meeting had been effective in discharging its responsibilities, and whether all members had been enabled to be effective in their contribution to the meeting; and
- An explicit element of the new appraisal scheme for Governors (see recommendation (8)) will include feedback on how effectively the Board of Governors and its sub-committees are working and the quality of their respective relationships with the Executive.

- (3) The Board and Executive explore and agree a future model of governance. This work has already begun under the interim arrangements. It will need to be consolidated further as the new Chair and permanent Vice-Chancellor take up their appointments (alongside a University Secretary, see later recommendation).

Board decision:

- The actions set out within this report (and previous actions in the delivery of the OfS action plan) are all geared toward developing a collaborative model of governance, informed by mutual respect between the Board of Governors and Executive Board.
- The Board of Governors seeks to progress the various actions outlined within this report both prior to the recruitment of a substantive Vice-Chancellor and with the support of that individual when appointed.

- (4) Board members should be prohibited from undertaking any consultancy work for the University.

Board decision:

- The Board has determined that governors should be prohibited from undertaking consultancy work for the university.
- It is recognised that there may be occasions where the University, following an appropriate procurement process, appoints third parties to conduct work on the university's behalf for whom governors may be employed. So long as that governor is not directly involved in the procurement process or delivery of this work, it should not preclude the appointment of relevant third parties. The University's conflict of interest processes will continue to be carried out stringently in order that any potential, actual or perceived conflicts of interest can be identified and managed appropriately to protect the University's reputation.

- (5) Any travel or accommodation which Board members undertake representing the University needs to be appropriate, clearly and explicitly justified, proportional and in accordance with a single travel and expenses policy that applied to all staff and governors alike.

Board decision:

- A revised Business Travel and Expenses Policy, which was significantly amended as part of the University's action plan with the OfS, was approved by the Board of Governors at its meeting in March 2020 and addresses this action. In regard to this recommendation, the Audit Committee will continue to have a key role in ensuring that the revised policy is being adhered to by governors and will be required to raise any concerns with the Chair of the Board and Vice-Chancellor if concerns are identified.

- (6) Board and Committee appointments:
- Continue and diversify the use of external search.
 - Continue to be undertaken against a skills matrix to ensure an appropriate balance of skills, knowledge and expertise.
 - Address strengthening non-executive experience.
 - Address strengthening higher education expertise
 - Diversity action plan for Board and committee appointments with agreed targets and/or indicators to track and review progress

Board decision:

It is recognised that, whilst the Board has historically achieved a good level of diversity among its membership, following the departure of a number of governors, improvements in this area are now required. The previous (Spring 2019), and current ongoing (due to complete in June)

independent governor recruitment exercises have been carried out transparently, making use of an external search firm and recruiting against an identified skills matrix to recruit new governors possessing the right balance of skills, knowledge and expertise. Among other requirements, the current ongoing governor recruitment process seeks to identify candidates with a strong background in higher education and that have non-executive director experience.

The Board has an overt aspiration to be a diverse body. The ongoing governor recruitment exercise (and future exercises) will seek to recruit governors that enable the Board 'to reflect the diversity of both its student body and the city in which it thrives' and will continue to signal in recruitment literature that the Board welcomes applications from all sections of the community, particularly from groups that are currently under-represented on the Board.

The Board does not perceive that a 'target' for diversity will provide it with the sophisticated measure it requires to achieve the optimum mix of skills and diversity among its membership and could create the perception of a 'tick-box' mentality.

The Clerk to the Board will work with relevant internal and external stakeholders with a view to creating a pipeline of diverse independent governor candidates and will work to pro-actively develop and train those interested in becoming the DMU governors of the future.

The Clerk to the Board will utilise their networks to identify other university governing bodies that have successfully tackled the issue of board diversity, to identify what further strategies the Board, and any executive search firm acting on its behalf, might deploy to become more reflective of the diversity of both its student body and the city.

Future independent governor recruitment initiatives will continue to focus on diversity concurrent with the skills requirement of the Board at that time.

- (7) DMU should consider appointing a Senior Independent Governor (SIG).

Board decision:

The Board has now appointed a Deputy Chair of the Board, the role being occupied by the governor with the most experience of the Higher Education sector. This role will encompass the functions of a SIG as outlined in Advance HE's Report. It is intended that the Deputy Chair will fulfil the following functions:

- to act as a sounding board to enable, whether individually or collectively, Governors and others to raise concerns where it has not been possible to resolve them through the established and primary channels of the Chair of the Board, the Vice-Chancellor or the Clerk;
- to lead the appraisal process for the Chair of the Board, with responsibility for gathering and relaying feedback on their performance from other board members, regular attendees and key stakeholders, including members of the Executive Board;

It has been suggested that Advance HE is intending to issue some guidance on the way in which the role of Senior Independent Governor might be deployed within a Higher Education setting, which it is acknowledged is a role that is yet to be widely adopted across the sector. The Board is therefore content to await the publication of the guidance and consider this issue again, as appropriate.

- (8) Board performance and development

- Every member of the Board should undertake an annual review meeting (including the Chair).
- Board member participation in training/development events should be recorded and reported to the Nominations Committee on an annual basis.
- The Clerk to the Board should analyse the outcomes of the annual review meetings, the skills matrix together with training undertaken by individual governors to draw together an

annual training plan for the Board. These could take the form of sessions immediately before/after Board meetings. Implementation should be monitored by the Nominations and Governance Committee

Board decision:

The Clerk to the Board will:

- Oversee the development of an annual appraisal process for governors, to commence from the 2020/21 academic year;
- Submit annually to the Board of Governors a report setting out a summary of governor training undertaken; and
- Analyse the outcomes of the annual appraisal meetings, the skills matrix and training undertaken by governors to develop, with the Chair of the Board, an annual training plan for all governors, to be approved by the Board.

(9) Board size, diversity and succession planning: Consideration by the Board as to the balance that should in future be struck between the:

- Size of the Board
- Importance of increasing the diversity of Board membership
- Maintaining an optimal mix of skills and competencies
- Servicing the roles required on Committees

Board decision:

- The Board is of the view that succession planning, increasing the diversity of its membership and maintaining an optimal mix of skills and competencies is key to the good governance of the institution and will be captured by other actions it either is already taking, or plans to take, in response to the effectiveness review report. The Clerk to the Board and the Chair of the Board will keep under review the size of the Board and will recommend its augmentation if necessary, to ensure that it has the skills mix and diversity it requires to be effective.

(10) Remove HR from the existing 'Finance and HR committee' and separately establish a 'Finance and Infrastructure committee' and 'People and Culture Committee'.

Board decision:

- From the 2020/21 academic year, the Finance and Human Resources Committee's remit will be separated into two sub-committees of the Board (i.e. thus constituting an additional committee): one entitled 'Finance and Performance' and the other entitled 'People and Culture'.
- The Clerk to the Board will submit to the Board for consideration the proposed constitutions and schedules of business for the new committees, in preparation for the 2020/2021 academic year. The Nominations Committee will make a recommendation to the Board, following the ongoing independent governor recruitment exercise, as to the chairing arrangements for these committees.

(11) Academic governance:

- The Academic Board, in consultation with the Board of Governors, should reappraise its role and how it will operate in future.
- As the cycle of business is developed for the Board going forward, further emphasis should be placed on the oversight of quality and standards, the student experience and research.
- The relationship between the Academic Board and the Board needs to be further developed.

Board decision:

- As determined by the Board at its meeting on 5 March 2020, an independent governor will sit on the Academic Board as a non-voting member until further notice.
- The elected academic staff representative and/or the independent governor attendee at the Academic Board will provide an update at each Board of Governors' meeting on the discussions that took place at the Academic Board's preceding meeting, to assist the Board of Governors in overseeing issues such as quality and standards, the student experience and research.
- A space will be reserved on all Board of Governor meeting agendas to enable Deans and Pro Vice-Chancellors to present and be questioned on pertinent academic issues.
- Priority will be given to academic issues in the Board's cycle of business and in the setting of the Board's agenda.

(12) Support to the Board:

- DMU should prioritise the appointment of a University Secretary who is appointed by, and answerable to the Board. The Clerk to the Board would then report to the University Secretary.

Board decision:

The Board is of the view that the appointment of a University Secretary, with a Clerk to the Board reporting into that role, would potentially create role ambiguity, rather than clarity, and would therefore not best serve the Board going forward. Instead, as a newly reformed body, the Board is of the view that it should continue to develop the role and profile of the Clerk to the Board. To facilitate this, and in the interests of providing the best possible support to the Board of Governors, the following additional measures will be put in place:

- The role of Clerk to the Board to be broadened to 'Secretary/Clerk to the Board' (to be commonly known as 'the Secretary'). The broadened role will emphasise its status and independence, its primary accountability to the Board of Governors and the need for it to act effectively in a triumvirate alongside the Chair of the Board and the Vice-Chancellor.
- A dual line management reporting line to the Chair of the Board and the Chief Operating Officer, with primary responsibility for day-to-day management and objective setting resting with the Chair. In circumstances where the Chair and Chief Operating Officer's views differ on any specific issue, the Chair's view will take primacy.
- The Secretary/Clerk to the Board will become a non-voting member of the Executive Board; and
- The effectiveness of the role and its office will be measured via an annual appraisal process conducted by the Chair, involving conversations with other stakeholders as appropriate, including members of the Board and Executive, and the biennial review of effectiveness carried out via the internal auditors as part of the response to recommendation (2).

(13) The University initiate a progressive process to improve the quality of Board papers.

Board decision:

- The Board is of the view that, while the quality of papers considered at Board and committee meetings are generally of a high standard, the papers are frequently lengthy and challenging to digest.
- The Secretary/Clerk has commenced a process to procure a governance management software solution which will aid the quality of board papers and the security of their dissemination to governors.
- In the interests of making the best possible use of governors' time at meetings, the Secretary/Clerk to the Board will develop guidance for report authors and presenters on drafting and presenting of reports, and guidance on drafting focused reports that prioritise key information and what action is required of governors, with more detailed information to be included in appendices.

(14) The Board explicitly considers a policy paper on Board remuneration, publishes a justification of any decisions made and regularly publishes levels of remuneration and expenses paid to Board members.

Board decision:

- The Board is of the view that, whilst recognising the charitable aims of the University, remuneration for certain key governor posts remains in the best interests of the University. The Secretary/Clerk to the Board will draft a policy statement on the Board's approach to governor remuneration which, when approved by the Board, will be published on the university's website. The policy statement will clarify the remuneration arrangements for key governor roles and the process for their review, ensuring that all such arrangements are in accordance with the university's charitable status.

(15) University strategy:

- The creation of the next strategy should be an extensive and consultative process. The Board should be extensively engaged in helping to set the parameters and framework, and the senior officers should lead a wide consultation exercise with staff, students and other stakeholders.
- The agreed strategy should then shape the cycle of business that is brought to the Board

Board decision:

- The Executive and Board are both committed to ensuring that the next strategic plan will be the subject of extensive engagement with key stakeholders (including staff and students). The Board will play a key role in the creation of the university's next University Strategic Plan, agreeing its scope and content. Once finalised, the content of the plan will inform the Board's cycle of business and associated reporting arrangements.

B. Agreed actions of the Board to the suggested actions made in the Governance Effectiveness Review report.

9. Under each of the suggested actions of Advance HE's Governance Effectiveness Review below, the agreed actions of the Board are set out in the coloured boxes:

- (1) We would strongly encourage DMU's new Chair, with the active support of the Board to:
- Further promote a culture that supports good governance based on mutual respect, encourages constructive challenge and discussion and which respects diversity of opinion.
 - Promote further independence in the relationships between Chair, Vice-Chancellor, Secretary and Executive.
 - Champion a positive dynamic in the management of the Board's business.
 - Support the appointment of a University Secretary.
 - Explore the setting of appropriate boundaries between executive and non-executive matters to enable the Executive to be effectively held to account by the Board.

Board decision:

- With the exception of some aspects of the proposed appointment of a University Secretary, which is dealt with elsewhere in this report, the Board wholeheartedly supports and is committed to delivering these requirements and is of the view that these have either already been addressed, or are addressed as part of the responses made by the Board elsewhere in this report.

(2) We are encouraged that the University is committed to revising and where necessary clarifying the scheme of delegation (alongside relevant supporting documents). In our experience, effective schemes typically include:

- Transparent arrangements for holding the Vice-Chancellor to account.
- The basis for involving the Board in key decisions (such as in the formulation of the university's strategy).
- A commitment to and practical arrangements to ensure that the staff and student voice on the Board are effectively engaged.
- Oversight of Board appointments.

Board decision:

- The Board's Scheme of Delegation, alongside its Instrument and Articles, a new set of Standing Orders, relevant Human Resources policies - including the Whistleblowing Procedure - and the Financial Regulations, were significantly revised and approved by the Board at its meeting on 5 March 2020 as part of the University's action plan with the OfS. These documents were explicitly devised to enshrine the above principles and to facilitate the ongoing improvements in governance throughout DMU.
- Democratically elected staff representatives were reinstated in Autumn 2019 to ensure that the staff voice on the Board is heard effectively.
- The Nominations Committee will continue to take the lead role on the Board's behalf for managing the skills matrix, ensuring diversity and succession planning for the Board and general oversight of Board appointments.
- A standing item will be added to the Board's agenda for the student representative governor to report on any specific issues of interest/concern.

- (3) Board and committee appointments: regarding diversity, practical steps which could help are:
- Future recruitment needs to transparently prioritise ethnicity to ensure that the Board becomes more representative of the student body at the university
 - Recruitment literature to be clear that DMU is seeking diversity and the images used must reflect diversity

- Recruitment processes promote that DMU will offer support and training to candidates from diverse backgrounds.
- Develop a comprehensive and tailored training scheme and induction processes to support new board members from diverse backgrounds. This will help them to contribute effectively. The training must include additional support for those who are less familiar with the higher education sector.
- Ensure that recruiters and interview panels have received unconscious bias and equality training, and that this is regularly refreshed.
- Ensure that selection criteria are rigorously applied and that 'non-relevant' information is not taken into account when appointing.

Board decision:

- With the exception of the suggestion for unconscious bias training for governors, all of the above suggestions are in place as part of established governor recruitment processes or the proposed responses to recommendations of the review.
- Presently, governors have not undertaken DMU-commissioned unconscious bias training, but the intention is that this will be incorporated into the Governor Development Plan covered by way of response to recommendation (1). The suggestion for training for diverse Board members will form a key part of the response to recommendation (6).

- (4) One area where we do propose a change is the structure of the Finance and Human Resources committee. In our view its present remit is too broad to be encompassed within one committee. It already encompasses matters such as estates and IT within the terms of reference. Accordingly, we suggest that a new Committee is set up with a focus on people and culture (including organisational development). What is presently Finance and Human Resources would therefore become 'Finance and Performance'.

The Terms of Reference will need to clearly show an integrated approach to strategic oversight for how DMU's staff has the competency, support and direction to give assurance that the strategic plan can be delivered. Other terms of reference which need to be reviewed and clarified might include, People related KPI's, gender pay gap, responsibility for the ongoing OfS conditions of registration, and formal oversight (sic) for public sector equality duties and health and safety, including duty of care.

There is also a case to rename the 'Nominations committee' as the 'Governance and Nominations committee' to better signal and reflect the work of that committee, and to consider wider expectations such as training, development and annual appraisal.

As a result, the proposed new committee structure would comprise:

1. Audit committee
2. Ethics committee
3. Finance and performance committee
4. People and culture committee
5. Governance and Nominations committee
6. Remuneration committee
7. Academic Board.

Board decision:

- As set out in the response to Recommendation 10, the business of the current Finance and Human Resources Committee will be dealt with by two new separate committees: "Finance and Performance" and "People and Culture".
- Having considered the advantages and disadvantages and practice elsewhere in the sector, the Board does not support the suggested change in name and role for the Nominations Committee, though the Committee will continue to have oversight of issues such as training, development and appraisal. Governance issues will therefore remain

a focus for the Audit Committee as per its current constitution, taking into consideration in particular the prevailing expertise that this Committee contains.

- (5) Following the appointment of the new Chair, Board members and Interim Vice-Chancellor it is timely that the Academic Board reappraise its role and how it will operate. The aim should be to strengthen its effectiveness and support the university better in meeting its obligations to assure quality and standards. We would suggest it also needs to have a strategic away-day, using some external facilitators, and consider practices of other universities, and through use of breakout groups, address, amongst other things:

- Its role and membership
- Its relationship with Faculty Academic Governance
- Its Committee Structure
- Its use of Performance Indicators and the provision and use of credible and consistent data and narrative to provide assurance to the Board in relation to its role
- How best it can assure the Board of Governors that effective standards and quality is delivered
- How best it can engage with the student voice
- The processes it wants to use – seminar sessions, working/breakout groups; and
- How it demonstrates to the University community that it is adding value to the University and effectively aligned and integrated with Institutions strategic aim.

Examples of how other universities have developed the inter-face between the Board and the Academic Board include, but is not limited to:

- Accompanying the minutes of Academic Board with a short covering report -no more than two sides- which capture the key talking points and discussion items from the last meeting
- Inviting a member of the Board - possibly on a rotational basis - to observe a meeting of Academic Board
- Inviting academic members of the Board, who are also on Academic Board, to offer a short oral report on the previous meeting
- Detailed scrutiny of an annual report from Academic Board which is presented to the Board
- A joint session of Academic Board and the Board (possibly once a year).

Board decision:

The response to recommendation (11) addresses some of the suggestions made above, but many of the issues relate specifically to the business and remit of the Academic Board, which the Board of Governors does not believe it should instruct that body to pursue. On this basis, the following actions will be undertaken:

- The above suggestions to be highlighted to the Academic Board with a view to it considering how it should progress any improvements that may be required, and reporting back accordingly to the Board of Governors.
- That those members of the Board of Governors that attend meetings of the Academic Board form part of a two-way dialogue between the two bodies to ensure that any issues of concern raised by the Board of Governors on academic matters are fed back to the Academic Board, if necessary ensuring that these matters are added to the Academic Board's agenda for discussion.

- (6) **Staff and Student Voice:** In our view, based on our experience of working with other institutions, actions that would support individuals and broaden the base of input at DMU should include:

- Providing a standard item on Board agendas for the student member to report on student issues and concerns – we suggest this is first discussed at Academic Board before being provided to the Board
- Ensuring that the student members of Boards are assigned a mentor on the Board

- Timetabling a meeting a week before each Board to give the student member the chance to go through papers with the Clerk to the Board or relevant member of the Executive
- Creating a student forum, whereby a meeting is convened by the Student Union involving a cross-section of different categories of student (part-time, PhD, international etc.), to discuss an agenda determined by the students. The Forum would be minuted and reported to the Board; and a Board response fed back to a subsequent meeting of the Forum
- Presentation of an annual student written submission and/or SU Annual report
- Specific induction for staff members on their role and how they might engage with their community
- High level results from a HR/staff survey
- Presentation from course representatives
- Presentation from departments/service areas of the University; and
- Analysis of the National Student Survey and other surveys.

Board decision:

- A standing item to be added to the Board's agenda enabling the student representative governor to report on issues of interest/concern;
- The Nominations Committee will annually propose to the Board an independent governor mentor for the student representative governor on the Board of Governors;
- Student governors are already offered additional support from the Clerk as part of the induction process. In addition, regular briefing meetings with the Secretary/Clerk to the Board, and/or the independent governor mentor, will be held prior to each Board meeting, as a means of increasing the help on offer to support them in their role; and
- The Secretary/Clerk to the Board, alongside the Chair of the Board, will hold discussions with the Students' Union about ways in which the Board of Governors might engage with the Union going forward to increase student engagement with the Board.

- (7) The role of the Director of Legal and Governance should be amended to focus on legal matters (Director of Legal), the Chief Operating Officer would operate as currently, without the formal Secretary to the Board functions which would transfer to a new University Secretary.

Board decision:

- The directorate of Governance and Legal requires a senior post to oversee its budget and staffing matters, though as covered as part of the response to Recommendation 12, the Director of Governance and Legal will have no line management responsibility for the Clerk/Secretary. The Director of Governance and Legal will continue to have a role in overseeing legal and compliance issues more broadly across the university.

- (8) We suggest all papers should be required to adhere to a mandated structure as regards the core covering information and those submitted without this information should be rejected by the Clerk to the Board. We would also suggest that all papers should:

- Have an executive summary
- Focus on the key issues and the input required from the Board / Committee.
- Make explicit reference to the University's strategy (where relevant); detail can be moved to annexes where appropriate.

We also suggest the cover sheets for papers be reviewed and quality assured within this framework to ensure:

- The content of papers is concise and the link to the University's strategy is evident with the relevant KPIs or milestones (if appropriate) clearly reference.
- Governors are given a focused and clear steer on points that are noteworthy, contentious, points for discussion, and the actions required, decisions sought (with options) are clear, e.g.

approval, for information, or communication protocols, that it is clear which committee(s) have seen the paper, when, and the conclusions they reached.

Board decision:

- Reports to the Board and senior bodies already adhere to a mandated structure and template which is considered to be broadly fit for purpose. The guidance being drafted by the Secretary/Clerk to the Board, as part of the response to recommendation (13), will address many of the above suggestions.