May 2019

Steering Group

Many thanks to those of you who volunteered to be part of the Court Reform Steering Group. We were grateful for all the offers of help. Following discussion with the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and Board of Trustees, the following membership was agreed:

- A Pro-Vice Chancellor - Dr Erik Lithander (Chair)
- *Two Members of Board – Linda Fletcher (Lay Trustee); Sally Patterson (Student Trustee)
- *Two External Members of Court – Robert Dufton and Cllr Paul Smith
- *Two Staff Members of Court (or Staff Trustees) – Jane Khawaja, Kerry Humphries
- *One Member of the Alumni Association – Ms Sarah Gilbert
- Two Deans – Karla Pollmann & Ian Bond
- Registrar & Secretary – Lucinda Parr
- Head of Governance/Deputy Head of Governance – (Lucy Barling/Shana Johnson)

The group met for the first time on 25 April and will meet approximately once a month thereafter for the purpose of ensuring that the implementation of the changes remains true to the proposals approved by Court and that a new Court emerges that allows for the vision to be fulfilled.

Progress So Far

Constitutional Change
At the last Board of Trustees meeting in March, the changes to the University’s Statutes and Charter were approved. In accordance with the University's constitution, the proposed changes to the Charter will need to go back to the Board for a second time for approval, at the meeting on 31 May, prior to submission of the proposed changes to the Charter to the Privy Council. In parallel, the required changes to Ordinance are being drafted and will be submitted to the Board in July.

Membership Processes
The Steering Group is working through the revised composition for Court and developing processes by which each category of Core and Additional Members can be identified and appointed to the new Court. The current approaches will be maintained where appropriate. For instance, the Alumni Association will retain responsibility for its own mechanisms for appointing its members to Court.

Content and Structure of Court
The structure and content of Court sessions is being considered by the Steering Group. This necessarily involves a balancing act between the respect for tradition and the need for modernisation.

The mode by which Court is re-configured to allow for the open dialogue and exchange of views set out in the proposals is central to this activity.

Next Steps
I intend to provide you with regular updates after each Steering Group meeting. If you would like to offer any thoughts or views on what you have heard so far, do email the Governance Team (governance@bristol.ac.uk)

Dr Erik Lithander, PVC Global Engagement (Chair of Court Reform Steering Group)