

Received:

- 1 the Student Success Programme (SSP) Business Case from the Provost dated 29 September 2020 (document VUWC 20/155).
- 2 supplementary material circulated in an additional board book at the end of last week.

Noted:

- 1 that the report was taken as read.
- 2 that the business case was considered in detail at the 28 September Finance Committee meeting at which there was a request for further information as supplied in the supplementary material.
- 3 that the Vice-Chancellor and Provost expressed their strong support for the Student Success Programme (SSP) and emphasised that although the timing was challenging it is critical to invest for the future.
- 4 that the Chair of Finance referred to the fact that ten out of twelve Council members were at the Finance Committee meeting when the business case was discussed and that the detailed minutes of that meeting had been included with this Council meeting's documentation. A lot of the Committee's questions had been answered in the supplementary documentation and it was emphasised that this was not a cost reduction programme but a revenue generating one, alongside improved student experience and delivery.
- 5 that although some previous aspects of the project had not been successful there are the following significant differences and risk mitigations as the Council considers the business case:
 - i) External governance advice through Siri Bartlett
 - ii) Use of external partner Fusion 5 who have delivered a similar project at other universities
 - iii) Regular PwC reviews of processes and progress
 - iv) Stop/Go stage gates
- 6 that concern was expressed that the supplementary material did not sufficiently address the people costs and that there would be more comfort considering the business case in February 2021 when there was more clarity around student numbers, if the border was to open to international students and the Covid-19 deficit reduction programme results were known. That in the current environment of staff being asked to make savings such a large capex item may not go down well.
- 7 that views were expressed that both cost cutting (operating expenses) and investment (capital expenditure) need to happen as Council looks at areas to invest to grow for the future whilst understanding sensible areas to reduce costs consistent with meeting the immediate challenges.
- 8 that concerns around the ability to deliver the project were expressed due to the history of the programme. Council was assured by management that systemic and personnel changes along with evidence of success by other universities had increased confidence.
- 9 that the majority of Council members, whilst acknowledging and being deeply respectful of the issues, agreed it was time on balance to support the programme whilst actively monitoring progress as it moves forward.

Action:

- 10 that the first communications regarding the programme will be from the Chancellor via University News with an emphasis on the decision being a capital investment matter with a view to the future success of the University. Following this it is critical that a positive tone be used along with sensitivity to the issues especially around change management.
- 11 that the Chancellor confirmed that at the time of apologising for the meeting [REDACTED] Ms Nesus had conveyed her support for the business case on the basis that it be closely monitored as detailed previously.

Resolved:

that Council:

- 1 **notes the report and additional information requested by the Finance Committee and provided in the supplementary board book.**
McCarthy/Judge
Carried
200181
- 2 **notes that this investment and the associated project milestones will be subject to appropriate review gate and reporting controls.**
McCarthy/Judge
Carried
200182
- 3 **approves the Student Success Programme Business Case**
McCarthy/Judge
Carried
200182
Against: Lawrence/ Bönisch-Brednich/Hunter
- 4 **approves \$6,115k Capex and \$842k Opex within the Business Case.**
McCarthy/Judge
Carried
200183
Against: Lawrence/ Bönisch-Brednich /Hunter

20.45 STUDENT SUCCESS PROGRAMME (SSP) BUSINESS CASE

Received: the Student Services Programme (SSP) business case and covering memorandum from the Provost dated 22 September 2020 (document FC 20/21).

- Noted:**
- 1 that the covering memorandum and business case were taken as read.
 - 2 that the Provost acknowledged the long journey to this point and her pride in presenting the business case highlighting that SSP will:
 - simplify the admission process, delivering new admission and enrolment systems, enabling potential students to apply online (removing the need for paper applications from international students) at any time in the year and decoupling the admission and enrolment process;
 - centralise student support services with standardised and streamlined processes providing consistent help to students and the provision of online services such as self-service and appointment booking;
 - implement a holistic student adviser model that supports students at risk of failing or dropping out of University to achieve academic success;
 - implement a student portal providing a consistent and digital point of entry to student services that will enable students to easily find information, stay informed about their study and request services online;
 - maintain a centralised record of the student's interactions with the University by implementing a CRM. This will provide a 360-degree view of the student and enable the provision of better and consistent support;
 - establish a new organisational unit, Titoko - the Centre for Student Success based on a hub and spoke support model. T
 - 3 that there was a lengthy discussion from which the following key points were made:
 - confirmation that the Establishment Director will be a senior person with significant appropriate experience in leading large change processes in a university setting;
 - the need to understand incremental costs such as the advisors who are not factored into the current business case;

- the need for any recommendations to Council to include clear stage gates at which the proposal can be reconsidered in order to mitigate risk;
 - proactive pre event audits of the project by Internal Audit (PwC) including a strong emphasis on process design against a set of standard QA documents will take place quarterly. The auditors will flag areas of concern, highlight areas that require training, ensure that standards are understood amongst other checks and balances;
 - a request for further evidence and corroborative data including the experience of other NZ universities who are further down the track on similar projects, results or information from the pilots that are in place and the Georgia State university experience;
 - along with the above request for additional information the Fusion5 roadmap will be made available to Council members in a set of supplementary material in support of the business case.
 - that Mr Suri Bartlett (independent quality assurance consultant – Managing Director of Tenzing), be invited to speak when the business case is considered by Council on 5 October.
- 4 that the Chancellor emphasised in order for Council to approve the business case on 5 October the importance of management providing sufficient assurance so that Council can have confidence in both delivery and outcomes.
- 5 that the Chair agreed that final discussion take place at the full Council meeting on 5 October and that the report be noted at this stage.

Resolved: that the covering memorandum and business case be noted.

Carried
Judge/McCarthy
Carried