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MEDIA RELEASE

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New Chairman for Committee for Ballarat

The executive board of the Committee for Ballarat last night elected Prof David James AO as its new chair.

Prof James was the foundation Vice Chancellor of the University of Ballarat and is currently chairman of the Ballarat Foundation.

He has had a distinguished career as a physical inorganic chemist and laser researcher working in both industry and tertiary institutions.

Prof James has also served as a councillor on the City of Ballarat, with several Western Victorian enterprise and community development committees and accepted appointments by the Premier to various groups, including a Knowledge, Innovation, Science and Engineering Committee.

During his term as Vice Chancellor of the University of Ballarat, Prof James oversaw the amalgamation of the institution with two TAFE Colleges, creating the only university of its kind in regional Australia.

He has played a pivotal role in the social and economic development of the region served by the university, including the establishment of community networks and development of the Ballarat Technology Park and Greenhill Enterprise Centre.

Prof James was made a Member of the Order of Australia in 2002 and was also a recipient of the Centenary Medal in 2003.

He replaces Mr Noel Coxall who announced his resignation in May and stepped aside last month.

Acting chair of the Committee, Luke Rieniets, said the executive board was privileged that a person with Prof James' high credentials had agreed to accept the position.

“Prof James is a leading achiever and citizen of this city and region and has been intricately involved in regional development issues for a considerable period of time,” Mr Rieniets said.

“His knowledge, contacts and ability to work effectively with a wide range of groups and individuals will enhance the Committee’s already well established credentials.”

Mr Rieniets said the Committee was now well placed – with Prof James’ election and the new Executive Director Darren Booth taking up his appointment this Monday – to continue to carry forward its representations on behalf of Ballarat and region.

“There remains much to achieve in areas such as water, policing, employment, skills development and leadership and the Committee will continue its commitment on these and other important issues,” he said.

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