

**Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors
held at 10.00 am on Thursday, 26 September 2019
Avonmouth house**

Present

Jerry Cope (Chair)
Douglas Denham St Pinnock (Vice-Chair)
Duncan Brown
John Cole
Michael Cutbill
Peter Fidler
Nelly Kibirige
Mee Ling Ng
Jeremy Parr
David Phoenix
Rashda Rana
Tony Roberts
Deepa Shah
Vinay Tanna

Apologies

Mark Lemmon
Nazene Smout
Andrew Owen
Craig Barker
Richard Duke
Ruth Farwell
Tony Giddings
Chris Mallaband
Carol Rose
Steve Balmont
Adesewa Ogunyomi
Lesley Morrison
Jennifer Brathwaite

In attendance

Pat Bailey
Michael Broadway
Richard Flatman
James Stevenson
Marc Griffith
Stuart Bannerman
Steven Brabenec
Patrick Callaghan
Alison Chojna
Kirsteen Coupar
Sarah Cowley
Dan Cundy
Natalie Ferer

George Ofori
Janet Jones
Monica Marongiu
Marcelle Moncrieffe-Johnson
Sarah Moore-Williams
Warren Turner
Hassan Rizvi
Ralph Sanders
Mike Simmons
Philip Cunniffe
Michael Webb

1. **Programme**

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting.

2. **South Bank Academies**

The meeting noted the highlights and challenges for SBA including:

- **Challenges:**
 - Improving outcomes – destinations, progress
 - Local competition
 - Demographic change
 - Funding
 - Nationwide and local staffing shortages
 - Curriculum changes
 - Political landscape including recent Labour policy announcement to abolish MATs
- **Highlights:**
 - Conduct, relationships, climate for learning
 - Social and cultural capital development
 - Employability
 - Engagements
 - Innovation in pedagogy
 - Destinations
 - LSBU academic input

3. **South Bank Colleges**

The meeting noted the highlights and challenges for SBC including:

- **Challenges:**
 - Establishing sector-specific career pathways for young people and adults across the group
 - Establishing education framework aligned to the new strategic plan
 - Health and Safety

- Group strategy for apprenticeships
- Highlights:
 - Recent positive Ofsted inspection – grade 3 but Ofsted recognised improvements
 - Improvements in 16 – 18 year olds’ achievement
 - 26% increase in students progressing to LSBU
 - New staff benefits offer in place
 - New Centre for Professional Development of Teaching & Learning opened

4. **LSBU**

The meeting noted the highlights and challenges for SBC including:

- Challenges:
 - Still some areas where student satisfaction below benchmark. The aim is to be ‘the London 90% NSS University’
 - Better progression, particularly focusing on attainment gap issues
 - Immediate priority is specific actions to improve our REF2021 submission which is linked to increase in our research and enterprise income.
- Achievements:
 - NSS: up around 4.5%
 - Mock REF: 175 staff at GPA 2.75
 - League tables: 86th in Times/ST (up 21 places)
 - Finances: £3M surplus (after in-year investments)
 - Recruitment of new students: beat challenging target

5. **Financial context - Update and key challenges**

The Group CFO presented on the current financial context for LSBU and SBC, including 2018/19 financial performance and consolidated financial forecasts. The meeting noted and discussed:

- That LSBU expected to deliver a £3m surplus for 2018/19;
- That following acquisition of Lambeth College mid-way through the financial year, SBC had begun the turnaround and its financial performance was due to be better than originally forecast for 2018/19;
- That SBA expected to meet its income and surplus target for 2018/19;
- Challenges for the future including income growth, improving the surplus and cashflow and project delivery management.

The meeting noted the need for consolidated income to reach £200m - £250m for the Group to continue to be sustainable.

The meeting noted the need for borrowing and investment to meet the financial challenges and that the Board would scrutinise all borrowing and investment proposals carefully.

6. **Ambitions and environment**

The meeting discussed a presentation on the LEAP project. The vision for the LEAP project is to make LSBU group distinctive and to be recognised as a digital leader in the UK for student experience. The project was embedded in 6 of the 12 sub strategies and relevant for the other 6.

Key themes from the discussion:

- Personalised approach for all students and potential students - recognising the diversity of the LSBU audience
- Need to fix the fundamentals (process and policy)
- Missing so far - the Education Strategy, Education delivery, and the digitally enhanced learning
- Need to identify if LSBU is catching up or advancing
- Focus on research and business - broader engagement
- Don't want to be known as the 'Education Dinosaur'
- 100% sign up - all or nothing
- Cultural shift - staff, digital literacy and new ways of working
- Are devices available? - recognising the role of technology
- Share process with business partners e.g. NHS to help them enhance the experience they provide
- Consider different pathways to study
- Costs, savings and technology need to be considered
- Value of interactive student support metrics (experience personalised)
- Digital and online learning - student must find learning valuable to invest the time
- Need to consider regulatory and ethical requirements
- Big opportunity for LSBU
- Focus on the end-to-end experience
- Need to help colleagues evolve ways of working
- Automation enables staff to 'value add' rather than focus on administration
- Need a forward thinking approach
- Not a "fix all"

Ambitions and Environment – political environment and measuring success of LSBU Group (David Phoenix)

The meeting discussed what makes the LSBU Group distinctive and agreed the following:

- Diversity;
- Location (sense of place);
- Employability;
- Social mobility;
- Student experience;
- Technical and professional focus; and
- Insight (research and enterprise).

The meeting discussed how to measure the success of the LSBU group and the proposal to have three 'pillar' KPIs to cover the three academic pillars of the Corporate Strategy, 2020-25, measuring social, personal and economic impact of the Group.

The meeting supported the direction of travel and commented as follows:

- need more focus on destinations of students and an output measure of student success;
- how is the success of the parts of the group working together measured?;
- how is performance around diversity measured?
- is the target on research and enterprise ambitious enough?

7. Key challenges, threats and opportunities

The Board discussed the key challenges, threats and opportunities for LSBU. The two key areas of focus for the University are:

- Distinctiveness; and
- Quality and impact.

Discussed the position of LSBU in the HE sector. The University is investing in, and raising its, research profile and expects to improve its performance in the REF in 2021. It has risen rapidly in the league tables while maintaining its entry tariffs and a surplus.

The Board discussed how to address challenges with meeting the 2025 group consolidated income target of £250m, including:

- Continued improvements in progression;
- Acquisitions of academies to grow SBA to achieve "critical mass", although this is not profitable income growth;

- Investing in international student recruitment; and
- Reviewing opportunities to offer distance learning.

The Board noted the need to invest in 'enablers' to address past underinvestment but that this alone would not enable achievement of the 2025 income target. The Board agreed that prioritised investment in the strategic growth areas was key.