

Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee
held at 4pm on Tuesday 3 February 2015
in room 1B27, Technopark, London Road, London SE1

Present

Jerry Cope	Chairman
David Longbottom	Chairman of the Board
Prof David Phoenix	Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive
Ken Dytor	
Prof Hilary McCallion	
Anne Montgomery	
Sarah Mullally	
Diana Parker	
Prof Jon Warwick	

Apologies

Ilham Abdishakur	SU President
Neil Gorman	
Diana Parker	

In attendance

Prof Pat Bailey	Deputy Vice Chancellor
Richard Flatman	Chief Financial Officer
Prof Paul Ivey	Pro Vice Chancellor (Research and External Engagement)
James Stevenson	University Secretary and Clerk to the Board of Governors
Michael Broadway	Governance Manager

Welcome and Apologies

1. The Chairman welcomed governors to the meeting.

Declaration of Interests

2. No member declared an interest in any item on the agenda.

Minutes of the previous meeting

3. The committee approved the minutes of the meeting of 12 November 2014 and the proposed redactions for publication, subject to minutes 5 and 10 being published. (paper **PR.01(15)**).

Matters Arising

4. Minute 4 of 12 November 2014 – a letter dated 3 February 2015 had been sent to independent governors in relation to expenses.
5. There were no matters arising which had not been previously covered. The committee noted that the Property Committee had considered the post-occupancy evaluation of the Clarence Centre at its meeting of 28 January 2015.
6. The Vice Chancellor gave an update on the investigation by the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) into fraud on the TOEIC English language test (minute 12 of the minutes of 12 November 2014).

Key Performance Indicators

7. The committee discussed the proposed key performance indicators, targets and rating criteria for 2014/15 (paper **PR.02(15)**) as recommended by the KPI working group. The indicators had been aligned to the eight goals and the success measures of the corporate strategy 2015-2020. In addition to the KPI report the Board would receive a quarterly report on progress against the three outcomes and the strategic enablers.
8. The committee approved the KPI set subject to an additional KPI for the “good employer” success measure.
9. The student/staff ratio was discussed. The ratio was expected to improve in the following year.

Management accounts to 31 December 2015

10. The committee discussed the management accounts to 31 December 2014 (paper **PR.03(15)**). The full year forecast was a surplus of £0.5m against a budget of £1m. In order to deliver the £1m budgeted surplus staff costs were being tightly controlled.

Staff cost analysis

11. The committee discussed an analysis of staff costs for 2014/15 (paper **PR.04(15)**). In the current financial year non-recurring staff costs were forecast at £1m. Staffing costs in 2014/15 to 31 December 2014 are £100k above the comparable period for 2013/14.

12. Staff costs have been carefully managed by the Executive and a number of controls have been put in place. Workforce planning was being undertaken and an update would be made to the Board meeting of 14 May 2015.
13. The committee noted that staff costs as a percentage of income was a key sector measure. An analysis of this measure along with the student staff ratio would be presented to the Board annually with benchmarking.

University research, enterprise and innovation update

14. The committee discussed an update on research, enterprise and innovation (paper **PR.05(15)**). It was noted that income was slightly behind the comparable period for 2013/14. This was largely due to invoicing activity which was being addressed.
15. The committee requested future updates to include a commentary on profiling of income and clarification on costs.

Student recruitment, 2015/16

16. The committee discussed student recruitment for 2015/16 (paper **PR.06(15)**). Firm acceptances for undergraduate full time are up 19% in comparison to the last year. Applications for the School of Health and Social Care were down on last year. This was primarily due to higher entry requirements and applications were down across the sector. The Executive expected that the School's recruitment targets would be met.
17. The committee noted that following the lifting of the student number controls for 2015 entry, the number of institutions seeking to expand was greater.
18. In a survey all new entrants for 2014/15 had been asked about their primary reason for choosing LSBU. Most were focussed on course content, quality and on future careers.

Overseas partnerships update

19. The committee discussed an update on overseas partnerships (paper **PR.07(15)**), including an update on the partnership with the British University Egypt and a proposed partnership with the Applied Science University (ASU) in Bahrain.

20. There were two aspects to the partnership with BUE: 1) LSBU would continue to validate BUE programmes with a target of 900 FTE for September; and 2) a collaborative research centre linked to engineering and based in Egypt..
21. The proposed partnership with ASU in Bahrain would be on a similar model to that of BUE. Validation of ASU programmes would take place in March 2015. As part of the partnership LSBU would help ASU develop its offer in engineering and establish a College of Engineering within ASU. The research centre was likely to be focused around petrochemical engineering
22. The committee supported the proposed partnership with the Applied Science University but noted the potential reputational risk for the University operating in Bahrain. The committee recommended the proposal to the Board for approval.

Acquisition of Hugh Astor Court from Peabody Trust

23. The committee discussed the business case for the proposed acquisition of Hugh Astor Court from Peabody Trust (paper **PR.08(15)**). The business case had been supported by the Property Committee.
24. The committee recommended the acquisition of Hugh Astor Court at an agreed price of £11.4m to the Board for approval.

Media Centre business case

25. The committee discussed in detail the business case for the creation of a new Media Centre (paper **PR.09(15)**), which would enhance undergraduate specialist teaching provision for Journalism, Film Practice, Sound Design and Digital Design. The business case had been supported by the Property Committee.
26. The committee recommended the business case and investment of £4.1m to the Board for approval.

Change programme update

27. The committee discussed an update on the ICT and infrastructure theme of the change programme (paper **PR.10(15)**).
28. The Excellent Student Experience project had been completed and a presentation of the software would be made to the Board at its meeting of 14 May 2015.

Treasury Management report

29. The committee noted the treasury management report (paper **PR.11(15)**).

Any other business

Governance effectiveness review update

30. The committee received an update from the Chairman of the Board on initial findings and recommendations of the governance effectiveness review. As a result of the review the committee structure would be revised and this was likely to be last meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee (governors were however asked to keep future committee dates in diaries). The draft report and recommendations would be discussed at the Board strategy day of 23 April 2015.

Retiring governors

31. The committee noted that this would be the last committee meeting for Dame Sarah Mullally, chair of the committee, who would shortly be retiring as a governor. The committee warmly thanked Sarah for her contribution to the committee.

32. The committee noted that this would be the last governors' meeting for Anne Montgomery, who would shortly be retiring as a governor. The committee warmly thanked Anne for her contribution to the committee, the Board and the University.

Date of next meeting

33. The next committee meeting will be at 4pm on Wednesday 6 May 2015 (subject to there being substantive items). This would be subject to the outcome of the governance effectiveness review (minute 28 above refers).

The Chairman closed the meeting.

Confirmed as a true record:

..... (Chairman)

{Secretary's note: this is the final meeting of the committee. The Board closed the committee on 14 May 2015 as part of the governance effectiveness review}