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Council

Friday 14 February 2020 at 2:30pm

Minutes

Present Members:
Professor Michael Arthur; Mr Mintoo Bhandari; Mr Dominic Blakemore; Mr Victor Chu CBE, Chair; Professor Lucie Clapp; Dr Alun Coker; Professor Annette Dolphin; Professor 3 D W U L F N + D J J D U G 0 V / L Q G V D \ 1 L F K R O V R Q 0 % (0 U Ms Caroline Paige; Professor Hynek Pikhart; Professor Helen Roberts; Lord Sharkey; Ms Ashley Slanina-Davies; Mr Philip Sturrock MBE; Mr Justin Turner QC; Baroness Valentine; Ms Sarah Whitney.

Attendees:
For Minutes 47 - 54: Dr Matthew Blain, Executive Director, Human Resources
For Minutes 51 - 67: Dame Nicola Brewer, Vice-Provost (International)
For Minutes 51 - 67: Dr Celia Caulcott, Vice-Provost (Enterprise)
For Minutes 51 - 67: Mr Phil Harding, Director of Finance & Business Affairs
For Minutes 51 - 67: Ms Fiona Ryland, Chief Operations Officer
For Minutes 51 - 56: Professor Anthony Smith
For Minute 55, 57 - 58: Ms Francesca Fryer, Director of Estates
For Minute 55: Professor Paola Lettieri, Academic Director, UCL East
For Minute 55: Mr Kevin Argent, Deputy Director Estates and Director of Estates Development
For Minute 55: Ms Helen Fisher, Operations Lead, UCL East
For Minute 56: Professor Hazel Genn, Chair of the Gift Acceptance Committee
For Minute 56: Mr Adrian Punaks, Executive Director of Development
For Minute 59: Dr Kathryn Walsh, Director of Knowledge Exchange Policy and Practice
For minute 60: Ms Collette Lux, Executive Director, UCL Communications and Marketing

Apologies:
Dr Andrew Gould
Ms Lori Houlihan, in attendance
Professor David Lomas, in attendance
Professor David Price, in attendance

Observers:
Mr Ewart Woolridge, CBE
Mr David Allen, OBE

Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion

51. Provost ¶ Business

51.1. The Provost reported the following items to Council:

Rankings Performance

a. UCL was the biggest recipient of UK research council funding in 2018-19, being awarded £139.9m million in competitive grants and fellowships, putting it a long away ahead of Oxford which was in second place.

b. UCL was ranked third globally in another recent league table which assessed performance based only on scientific citations.

Brexit

c. It was now certain that staff could make applications to Horizon 2020. It was expected that tuition fees for EU students would be the same as for domestic students until 2021; it was unclear what would happen after this point. The Russell Group was encouraging an articulation agreement to be put in place for EU, European Research Council and Erasmus funding.

Ministerial portfolio changes

d. Michelle Donelan has been appointed as the new Universities Minister. The science portfolio had been split away and this would sit within the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, indicating that the government viewed universities as separate to research and science.

Coronavirus

e. No cases had been reported at UCL and five UCL students had returned from the Hubei region and had tested negative for Coronavirus. A Coronavirus Group had been set up to establish a mitigation plan to address the consequences which were already being felt.

f. There had been an incident on campus where two Chinese students had been abused as a result of the Coronavirus. The Provost had written to all students with advice and information on seeking support and all staff and students were encouraged to report similar incidents.

Commission of Inquiry Report

g. The Commission of Inquiry Report had been circulated to all Council members and Academic Board had its initial consideration Report at its meeting on the 12 February 2020. The Report contained many factual

inaccuracies which would be amended before the consideration of its recommendations by Academic Board.

Inquiry into the History of Eugenics at UCL

h. The Inquiry into the History of Eugenics at UCL, led by Professor Iyiola Solanke of the University of Leeds was due to report on the 28th February 2020. This inquiry had been commissioned by UCL in 2018. The report was quite hard-hitting, appropriately so, and the U H S R U W ¶ V recommendations would be brought back to Academic Board and Council for consideration.

Financial Position

i. Forecast 1 which was being considered later on the agenda, showed there was a £15m shortfall to budget. This was due to additional liabilities that had arisen in relation to pay and pensions, the aligning of outsourced terms and conditions and other matters. There were short-term measures being taken and SMT was looking at the medium-term and longer term measures to address the shortfall; these would be shared widely with the academic community before being brought through Finance Committee and Council for consideration in two or three months-time.

Fire Safety

j. The decision has been taken to close Hawkridge House as the tower block has cladding that UCL believes that the government is likely to ban although it was not the same as that at Grenfell Tower. The hall was for postgraduate students who would moving to alternative accommodation. Where the new accommodation was more expensive accommodation, students would not incur additional costs and their moving costs would also be covered.

Insourcing Letter

k. A letter had been circulated to Council members from the IWGB on the insourcing of cleaning and security staff. & R X Q F L O Q R W H G 8 & / ¶ V S R Z R U N L Q J Z L W K 8 Q L V R Q R Q H R D Q G W K H 8 & / ¶ V O D U J H V W recognised trade union for this group of staff. Dr Matthew Blain, Director of Human Resources, explained that meetings were taking place regularly with Unison representatives. & R X Q F L O G L V F X V V H G 8 & / ¶ V approach to outsourcing, including progress with the levelling-up of terms and conditions for outsourced staff in line with staff employed directly by UCL.

The balance of the £15m shortfall, excluding the USS pension/interest movement, TOPS and exception items was driven by an adverse Y D U L D Z Q W H K L Q 3 6 ..9 3 ¶ P V R I

G There had been positive U H G X F W L R Q Lo Q staff cost, however, there had been an increase in contractor and agency costs.

H UCLB would deliver a better than forecast level of performance.

I The capital expenditure forecast for 2019-20 stood at £246.4m against a budget of

a. It was queried whether the growth in headcount set out in the paper was a result of bottom-up or top-down drivers. The Director of Estates confirmed that it as a mixture of both. Up until 2022 it was bottom-up, thereafter was a funding assumption of 2% increase per annum until 2034.
b. Council had yet to receive information about the Hampstead Campus, based at the Royal Free Hospital.
c. The operation of the Capital Projects Sub-Committee in relation to Estates Management Committee was questioned. It was confirmed that there was no change proposed in relation to current governance arrangements.
d. The view was expressed that hot-desking was not appropriate for academic staff and some professional services staff. Furthermore, it was important for academic staff that there were café and rest spaces as these were important areas for engaging with fellow colleagues. It was equally important to have such facilities for professional services staff and it was apparent that recent developments has resulted in the de-prioritisation of such spaces.
e. In the view of some Council members, recent business cases have not been fit for purpose, therefore, it was important to get these right as they were central to good decision-making. The Director of Estates confirmed that the team were working on governance processes.
f. One member had received feedback that there were issues with P-Block; it was not working successfully for many researchers, therefore, work on the Biological Services Unit needed to be accelerated.
g. There was a query about when UCL expected to be carbon zero. The Director of Estates advised that this was dependent on carbon removal from existing buildings and the Sustainability Strategy was addressing this matter. Faculties were able to track carbon activities on Tableau.
h. There was a question why only £5million was allocated to accessibility costs.

57.3. Council approved the Estates Strategy.

58. Interim Capital Fund Extension Request (3 -46)

58.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

58.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

58.3. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

Work was underway to address this matter including redesigned merchandise available on the online shop.

b.

62. OfS Regulatory Framework ±Continued Council Oversight, Reportable Events and Requested Information (3 -51)

& R X Q F L O Q R W H G W K H U H S R U W R Q W K H F R Q W L Q X H G D compliance with the OfS Regulatory Framework for which the UCL Council holds ultimate responsibility.

62.2. Council approved the delegation to the Secretary to Council to approve the submission of reportable events on behalf of Council.

63. Research In tegrity Annual Statement (3 -

69.2. Council agreed that the paper would be updated to give further information on the sub- J U R X S ¶ V F R Q V L G H U D W L R Q L R U H V L G H Q W L D O V W D W X V R U U H O D W L R Q V .

70. Minutes of Academic Board, Audit C ommittee and Finance Committee (3-59)

70.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

71. Date of Next Meeting

71.1. The next meeting of Council would take on Friday 17 April 2020 at 9.00am in the Council Room.

Ms Wendy Appleby, Secretary to Council
March 2020