



University of London  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Wednesday 20 October 2010  
4.00 pm  
Room 104, Senate House

## MINUTES

### PRESENT

Dame Jenny Abramsky (Chair)	Mr Edward Hartill
Mr David Beever	Mr Maxwell Hutchinson
Mr Abdul Bhanji	Professor David Latchman
Professor Geoffrey Crossick	Mrs Suzanne McCarthy
Mr Steven Fogel	Professor Peter Rigby
His Honour Judge Grainger	Professor Geoff Whitty

### APOLOGIES

Professor Rick Trainor

### IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Martin Burchett	Mr Kim Frost
Mr Richard Cryer	Ms Janet Hoskin*
Miss Damaris Currie	Miss Catherine Swarbrick
Ms Collette Cushion	

\*Present for BTMM 0967 to 0979 only

### Welcome

0957 The Chair welcomed Mr David Beever to his first meeting of the Board and Professor Geoffrey Crossick to his first meeting as Vice-Chancellor.

### Functions, Constitution and Membership

0958 The Board noted its Functions, Constitution and Membership for 2010-11 as set out in Document BT273. It was noted that Professor Rigby's last day as Chief Executive of the Institute of Cancer Research would be 14 January 2011 and that he would therefore conclude his term on the Board on that date and not 31 December 2010 as stated in the report.

### Minutes of the Meeting Held on 14 July 2010

0959 The Board confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2010.

### Matters Arising

0960 The Board noted Document BT274 updating members on matters arising from previous meetings. It was noted that there was a minor error in paragraph 14 of the report in that Sir Graeme Davies had not been able to attend the formal

naming ceremony for the RV *Actinia* at the University Marine Biological Station Millport on 24 September 2010.

### **Vice-Chancellor's Report**

- 0961 The Vice-Chancellor presented his report, Document BT275, to the Board. The report updated the Board on matters relating to: the Saatchi Gallery; the establishment of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group (VCEG); the Quality Assurance Agency Institutional Audit; the Centre for Creative Collaboration (C4CC); the London Living Wage; and Foundation Day 2010. Attached to the report was an appendix providing summary data for the C4CC (BT275A).
- 0962 Members noted the commitment outlined in the Vice-Chancellor's report with respect to the London Living Wage.
- 0963 In response to a query about the relationship between the VCEG and the business of the Board, the Vice-Chancellor advised that the VCEG met fortnightly. It would review the agenda for meetings of the Board with a view to highlighting any items where senior management input would be useful. The VCEG would also consider all significant strategy reports prior to their submission to the Board.
- 0964 The Vice-Chancellor advised that the full implications for higher education of the Comprehensive Spending Review announced earlier in the day were not yet clear. He also reported on the findings of the recent *Independent Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance* led by Lord Browne of Madingley and outlined some of the key recommendations of the report.
- 0965 In terms of the impact of the recommendations upon the University, members noted that the University received a relatively small proportion of income from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), but that it would be important to protect the funding received for the School of Advanced Study (SAS). The University would also need to be aware of the increased financial pressure on the Colleges and to ensure it delivered Value for Money (VfM). On a related point, the Vice-Chancellor reported that the VCEG had recently discussed the need further to develop the shared services agenda.
- 0966 The Vice-Chancellor informed the Board that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had confirmed Government funding for the UK Centre for Medical Research and Innovation, a partnership between four leading biomedical research organisations, one of which was UCL, and members welcomed this announcement.

*BTMM 0967 to 0980 are considered exempt from disclosure in accordance with section 36 of Part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.*

### **Finance Report**

- 0981 The Board considered the Finance Report (BT277) which included: a First Draft Income and Expenditure Account 2009-10 (BT277A); Management

Accounts for the two months to 30 September 2010 (BT277B); the Balance Sheet (BT277C); Cash Flow Statement (BT277D); and the Monthly Finance Report for September 2010 (BT277E). All papers were Confidential.

- 0982 The Director of Finance reported that the trading surplus for the year of £2,896k compared to a forecast deficit of £740k. The improvement in the result had largely been due to an exceptional out-turn in Student Services which mainly comprised the Halls of Residence. The income from this activity had been underestimated as it had not reflected the full impact of rental increases imposed at the beginning of the year. Additionally, further rooms had been created in the Halls from reconfiguration and savings had been made in both staff and non-staff costs. The Director of Finance reported that, whilst the overall outcome had been positive, there remained concerns about the inaccuracy of the forecasts in this area. A project had, therefore, been initiated to review the financial reporting and monitoring of the Halls and to take remedial action to ensure this situation did not recur. The Board agreed that a progress report on the project should be made to the Board's meeting in March 2011. The Director of Finance also reported that a Head of Financial Planning had recently been appointed who would have responsibility for this area of monitoring.
- 0983 It was noted that income and expenditure figures were distorted by London Deanery expenditure which would be fully recoverable in due course.

#### *Gem Courier Contract*

- 0984 Members' attention was drawn to the recommendation in the report that the Board authorise the renewal of the contract for the provision of courier services provided by Gem Courier and Freight Services. The contract was mainly used by the University of London International Academy and its renewal for a further two years (with an option to extend for a further year thereafter) had been negotiated with the existing service provider. The final outcome of the renegotiation had been to secure a reduction in rates which, if applied to the 2009-10 spend, would produce a saving of £123k.
- 0985 The Director of Finance advised that, whilst the contract had an estimated annual value of £1.2M, it was a non-exclusive arrangement and the University could, at its sole discretion, during the period of the contract, use other suppliers where it was deemed to be operationally and financially desirable. The Board approved the renewal of the contract effective from 1 November 2010.

#### *Financial Strategy*

- 0986 The Vice-Chancellor reported that a Financial Strategy was in preparation and would be considered by the VCEG as it was developed. Once finalised, the Financial Strategy would be presented to the Board for consideration. An outline of the Strategy would be provided to members at their meeting on 29 November 2010.

0987 **AGREED**

- (i) That a progress report on the project to review the financial reporting and monitoring of the Halls should be submitted to the Board's meeting in March 2011.
- (ii) The renewal of the contract for the provision of courier services provided by Gem Courier and Freight Services as detailed in BT277.

**Business Change Programme**

0988 The Board considered Document BT278, a progress report on the Business Change Programme (BCP). The Programme Sponsor, Catherine Swarbrick, highlighted that three new projects had been defined and would start in 2011.

**Application to Exercise Degree-Awarding Powers**

0989 The Board received a report (BT279) on an application by St George's, University of London (SGUL) to exercise its degree-awarding powers. The report included a statement addressing the various points necessary for Collegiate Council and Board of Trustees approval (Appendix BT279A) and a list of frequently asked questions drafted for SGUL students (Appendix BT279B).

0990 The Board was advised that the Collegiate Council had considered the application from SGUL to exercise its degree-awarding powers at its meeting on 1 October 2010, where it had been noted that all the necessary assurances had been received. The Collegiate Council had, therefore, agreed the exercise of degree-awarding powers by SGUL, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees.

0991 **AGREED**

To approve the exercise of degree-awarding powers by SGUL.

**Human Resources Strategy for 2010–11**

0992 The Director of Human Resources (HR) introduced Document BT280, a report on the HR Strategy for 2010-11. Appended to the report were the draft HR Strategy 2010–11 (BT280A), a document providing context and background to the HR Strategy (BT280B) and the HR Divisional Plan Outline (BT280C). Members' attention was drawn to the new Objective 6 which had been included within the Strategy: "Deliver Cost Effective, Value for Money HR Services to Customers", for which associated aims and targets were detailed at the end of the document. The Director of HR advised the Board that these targets included further exploitation of IT solutions for transactional work, shared services with neighbouring institutions and a commitment to providing VfM for customers.

0993 The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee reported that the Committee had stressed the need for staff throughout the organisation to be aware of the University's aims in terms of VfM and suggested that this area should be

addressed in staff performance appraisals. She proposed that there should be more explicit reference to VfM within the HR strategy and the Director of HR agreed to amend the document accordingly.

0994 **AGREED**

To approve the HR Strategy 2010–11 subject to the strengthening of the reference to VfM.

**Estates Matters**

0995 The Board received a report seeking its approval of a number of estates-related matters, namely leases in respect of 30b Torrington Square and Room G38 Senate House, the disposal of 52 Gordon Square, and providing an update in relation to Knight Frank's preparation of a strategy for the future development of the Intercollegiate Halls (BT281).

0996 The Director of Estates outlined the situation in respect of 52 Gordon Square. The property had been used as the London residence of previous Vice-Chancellors. The current Vice-Chancellor did not require accommodation in London and, should such accommodation be needed by future Vice-Chancellors, an alternative arrangement could be made. The property was therefore surplus to the University's requirements.

0997 The Board noted that expressions of interest in the acquisition of the premises had been sought from Colleges but no positive responses had been received. A significant disadvantage was the residential use designation under Town and County Planning legislation. Valuation advice received by the University suggested that the premises were more valuable with a residential use than as offices. The University was proposing that the ground to fourth floors be disposed of, but the basement be retained by the University for use as an academic visitors' flat, for which there was continuing demand. This would enable the University to retain the freehold.

0998 Consideration was given to whether to seek the disposal of the property forthwith or to wait to see how the market developed. Following discussion, the Board agreed that there was no need to delay the disposal.

0999 **AGREED**

- (i) To approve the renewal of a lease to the London Diocesan Fund, on behalf of the Anglican Chaplaincy, for the occupation of the basement at 30b Torrington Square for a further five years on the existing terms.
- (ii) To approve a lease to the European Economics and Financial Centre (EEFC), for Room G38 Senate House on the same terms and conditions as for its previous lease of Room 14, Senate House, for the balance of the original term.
- (iii) To authorise the disposal of the ground to fourth floors of 52 Gordon Square. The basement of the same building would be retained for use as an academic visitors' flat.

## **Safety Committee Annual Report for 2009-10**

1000 The Board received and noted the Annual Report on the work of the Safety Committee during the 2009-10 session (BT282).

## **Strategic Risks**

1001 The Board received a report on the University's high-level ('red') risks (BT283). It was noted that the full Strategic Risk Register would be presented to the Board on 29 November 2010.

## **Review of Effectiveness for 2009-10**

1002 The Board received a report on the outcome of the annual review of the effectiveness of the Board of Trustees for 2009-10 (BT284). Members supported the proposed actions outlined in the report. It was noted that the comments received had included a suggestion that the business of the Board was driven by the annual calendar and that members rarely had the opportunity to suggest issues for the Board to discuss. The Vice-Chancellor supported this comment and advised that, in addition to the Board selecting areas for discussion, the VCEG was also likely to identify strategic issues for the Board's consideration.

1003 It was noted that the report suggested that members might wish to consider what form of ongoing development they would find helpful. Members agreed that they had found their visits to Colleges to be very useful and that they would welcome visits to those Colleges not yet visited. In addition, the Board agreed that consideration should be given to how members could maintain ongoing contact with Colleges.

1004 The Secretary drew members' attention to the section of the report on future reviews of effectiveness. The Board noted that it had been suggested that an annual effectiveness review was too frequent for committees and boards which generally met only three times a year. The Board agreed that, for boards and committees, a review every two years would be sufficient. It was agreed that the Board and the Collegiate Council, which both met more frequently, should continue to have an annual review of effectiveness and that further discussion should take place about the form this review should take. It was agreed that officers should prepare a report for the Board with suggestions on the format of future reviews. It was noted that the Ordinances would need to be amended in the light of the Board's decision for boards/committees to conduct biennial reviews. The changes would be presented to a future meeting of the Board for its approval.

1005 **AGREED**

(i) That officers should take forward the actions detailed in paragraphs 10-13 of BT284.

(ii) That the Board would wish to consider 'strategic' items as appropriate.

- (iii) That the Board wished to visit those Colleges it had not yet visited.
- (iv) That consideration should be given to methods for members' ongoing contact with Colleges.
- (v) That the Board of Trustees and the Collegiate Council should continue to have annual reviews of effectiveness and that other boards and committees should review their effectiveness every two years. Required changes to Ordinances would be presented to the Board for approval in due course.
- (vi) That a report should be prepared for the Board with proposals for the format of future reviews of effectiveness of the Board of Trustees and Collegiate Council.

### **Memberships of Committees of the Board of Trustees for 2010-11**

1006 Members considered Document BT285 which set out the memberships of the Board's Committees for 2010-11.

1007 **AGREED**

The Board authorised the Vice-Chancellor to approve, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, appointments to vacancies arising during 2010-11.

### **Senate House Project**

1008 The Board noted a report from the Director of Special Projects providing an update on current progress in respect of the Senate House Project (BT286, Confidential).

### **Action Taken under Delegated Authority**

1009 The Board noted the action taken under delegated authority since that reported to its previous meeting on 14 July 2010, as detailed in Document BT287.

### **Sealings**

1010 Members noted a report from the Vice-Chancellor on sealings of documents (BT288).

### **Election of Fellows to the British Academy**

1011 The Board noted Document BT289 listing members of the University elected to the British Academy in 2010.

### **Dates of Future Meetings**

1012 Members noted the dates of future meetings of the Board as follows (all meetings would commence at 4.00 pm).

#### **2010-11**

Monday, 29 November 2010  
Wednesday, 26 January 2011  
Wednesday, 30 March 2011  
Wednesday, 25 May 2011  
Wednesday, 13 July 2011

#### **2011-12**

Monday, 10 October 2011  
Monday, 21 November 2011  
Wednesday, 25 January 2012  
Wednesday, 28 March 2012  
Wednesday, 23 May 2012  
Wednesday, 18 July 2012