
Minutes of the 88th meeting of the Board of Governors
Resource for London, Holloway Road
11 May 2017
14:00 –18:00

Members present:

Mr Mark Anderson, Independent Governor (Chair)
 Ms Rolande Anderson, Independent Governor
 Mr Baron Anyangwe, Co-opted member FRC
 Ms Fionnuala Duggan, Independent Governor
 Mr Rob Hull, Independent Governor
 Ms Harini Iyengar, Independent Governor
 Mr Mick Mannion, Co-opted member FRC
 Mr Tony Millns, Independent Governor
 Ms Ann Minogue, Independent Governor
 Mr Michael Murphy, Independent Governor
 Ms Florence Onwumere, Student Governor
 Prof. John Raftery, Vice Chancellor
 Mr Alex Tarry, Staff Governor

Others in attendance:

Ms Lynn Burke, OC IOG Programme Director
 Ms Nicola Cahill, Assistant University Secretary (minutes)
 Dr Elizabeth Charman, Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic Outcomes
 Mr John Duffy, Chief Operating Officer
 Mr Peter Garrod, University Secretary
 Mr Richard Lee, Finance consultant
 [REDACTED] s.43(2) FOIA - commercially sensitive
 Ms Pam Nelson, Deputy Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer
 Ms Catherine McCabe, Incoming Independent Governor
 [REDACTED] s.40(2) FOIA - personal information
 Mr Tunde Toki, Incoming Student Governor
 Ms Shefaly Yogendra, Incoming Independent Governor

Welcome, Apologies and Announcements

1. The Board received apologies from Governor Adrian Kamellard; Governor Dianne Willcocks; Governor Cécile Tschirhart; Incoming Governor Tim Cochrane; Incoming Governor Renarta Guy; Professor Dominic Palmer-Brown, Pro-Vice Chancellor Employment Outcomes; and co-opted members of the Audit Committee Mr Avnish Savjani, Ms Jane Broadbent and Mr Richard Indge.
2. The Chair welcomed [REDACTED]; Ms Catherine McCabe and Ms Shefaly Yogendra, proposed incoming Independent Governors; Mr Tunde Toki, Incoming Student Governor; [REDACTED] Gustafson Porter + Bowman; [REDACTED], Design Engine; and [REDACTED], Parthenon-EY. s.43(2) FOIA - commercially sensitive s.40(2) FOIA - personal information
3. The Chair advised that volunteers to act as a Presiding Officer for the School of Human Sciences' Graduation Ceremony, to take place on 31 July at 1:00pm, were sought. Volunteers were asked to contact the Assistant University Secretary (Governance).

Declarations of interest

4. Governor Fionnuala Duggan declared her role as an employee of Informa, which was involved in the delivery of some distance learning courses offered by London Met. This was not considered to present a conflict with any matter on the agenda.
5. Governor Harini Iyengar declared her candidacy as the Parliamentary Candidate for the Women's Equality Party for Vauxhall. This was not considered to present a conflict with any matter on the agenda.
6. There were no other declarations of interest.

Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising

BG 88/1.1

7. The Board approved the minutes of the Board of Governors' meeting and the joint meeting of the Academic Board and Board of Governors' held on 16 March 2017 as a correct record, subject to it being noted that Governor Michael Murphy had not attended the joint meeting of the Board of Governors and Academic Board.
8. Following a question from the Staff Governor, Governors were advised that meetings had not yet taken place to discuss London Metropolitan University's contributions to the LPFA. The Board would be kept up to date with future developments.
9. The Staff Governor asked whether consideration had been given to adding risks relating to the restructure of Student Journey to the Corporate Risk Register. It was noted, in response, that the Corporate Risk Register would be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team in advance of it being submitted to the next meeting of the Audit Committee and the Board.

Appointment of Independent Governor

BG 88/2.1

10. The Board considered a report which sought approval for the following appointments as Independent Governors, subject to due diligence checks: Ms Renarta Guy, Ms Shefaly Yogendra, Mr Timothy Cochrane and Ms Catherine McCabe. The Board was also asked to confirm the appointment of Mr Tunde Toki as the Student Governor, subject to due diligence checks.

Conclusion:

11. The Board approved the appointments as follows:
 - i) Ms Renarta Guy, to commence as an Independent Governor with immediate effect, for an initial term of three years ending on 31 July 2020;
 - ii) Ms Shefaly Yogendra, to commence as an Independent Governor on 1 August 2017, for an initial term of three years ending on 31 July 2020;
 - iii) Mr Timothy Cochrane, to commence as an Independent Governor on 1 August 2018, for an initial term of three years ending on 31 July 2021;

- iv) Ms Catherine McCabe, to commence as an Independent Governor on 1 August 2018, for an initial term of three years ending on 31 July 2021;
- v) Mr Tunde Toki as the Student Governor, subject to due diligence checks, to commence on 1 July 2017 with the commencement of his term of office as President of the Students' Union.

Meeting the human capital needs of London: progress in developing strategic options for London Met.

BG 88/2.1

12. The Vice-Chancellor introduced a report which provided an overview of the aims of the Strategy Day and set the context for subsequent discussions.
13. The Strategy Day continued the process, begun at the Strategy Day on 26 January 2017, of exploring strategic options for the future of London Met. No decisions by Governors were required at this stage; rather, the Strategy Day was an opportunity to review work done since January and discuss the wider strategic context to decisions that the Board would make in June 2017 and beyond.
14. For the benefit of new and incoming Governors, the Vice Chancellor reviewed the achievements since 2014 in improving the University's financial sustainability and improving student outcomes. The Programme for Improved Student Outcomes (PISO) and the One Campus | One Community (OC | OC) programme had made significant progress in achieving a more academically and financially stable position, although more remained to be done (e.g. to improve retention and differential attainment).
15. The Vice-Chancellor provided the Board with an overview of work underway with regards to the estates masterplan, in advance of the OC | OC 'gateway' review at the Board's meeting in June 2017. A review of the masterplan was underway to reflect how the external environment had evolved since OC | OC's inception in 2015. In line with the phased approach approved by the Finance and Resources Committee in March, it was anticipated that in June approval would be sought for the next phase of construction (expected to be the 'J' Block learning and teaching space project and the associated move of the Students' Union to the Harglenis Building), and the next phase of design and development work (expected to be the Energy Centre, the courtyard and the Tower).
16. The presentations from Design Engine and Gustafson, Porter + Bowman at item 3 would present the emerging vision of a transformed Holloway campus. At items 4 and 5, Parthenon-EY would provide the Board with an update on progress since the January 2017 Strategy Day in the detailed options appraisals commissioned by the University to identify opportunities for gaining market share in online learning and apprenticeships. Parthenon would present their interim findings, in advance of further work to develop detailed recommendations for consideration at the Board's meeting in June.
17. The Board was provided with an update on the academic boycott called by the UCU. It was noted that since the report had been circulated, the boycott had been withdrawn by the UCU following correspondence from the University; it had then been re-instated by the UCU in an amended form. In discussion, it was noted that the academic boycott was an attempt to damage the reputation of the University that required a robust response, and was an example of the

challenges faced by the executive in implementing the strategy approved by the Board of reducing costs to secure the University's financial sustainability. [REDACTED]

s.40(2) FOIA -
commercially sensitive

[REDACTED]; the Board would be kept up-to-date on developments.

18. The Staff Governor suggested that the Board had not been provided with information on the UCU's position. The Chair advised that Governors were able to request information as required via the University Secretary's Office. It was not appropriate for the Board to become involved in industrial relations matters, which was the responsibility of the executive.
19. The University's position in the latest Complete University Guide league table was noted. It was disappointing that the University was placed 127th (the same as in 2016), despite recent improvements in student outcome metrics. The Vice-Chancellor informed the Board that work was underway to better understand the factors affecting league table performance and how the University's position could be improved.

Conclusion:

20. The Board noted the update report.

Emerging Options for a transformed Holloway Campus

Presentation

21. The Board received presentations from Design Engine (the consultants working on the masterplan review), and Gustafson, Porter + Bowman, the winners of University's competition to select consultants for developing options for the landscaping of the Holloway campus.
22. The presentations provided an overview of the central components of the masterplan and the developing designs for social, study and public spaces. Proposals included the development of formal and informal teaching and learning spaces, alongside proposals for the courtyard which were intended to create a versatile, active and engaging public space that improved the connection between the campus and the local community. The interconnections between building projects and the development of landscaping options would need to be carefully considered, as each affected the other. The proposals included plans for improved environmental sustainability with a view to reducing the University's carbon footprint. Pilot teaching and learning spaces had been established at the Holloway Campus designed to support modern approaches to pedagogy, which Governors were encouraged to visit.
23. In discussion, it was noted that public access to the courtyard presented security challenges which would be addressed by the University's security consultants as part of the project. The British Library served as an excellent example of effective security measures within an open courtyard setting. The Board welcomed the proposals to adjust the ground levels across the courtyard to facilitate entry to buildings without the need for steps or disability ramps. The University would consult with the Graduate Centre's architect in the event that alterations to building and courtyard design had implications for the Graduate Centre.
24. The landscape proposals included the creation of a shallow water feature (a 'scrim') in the courtyard which could be drained easily when required. The

maintenance costs of the water feature would be reflected in the proposals as they were developed.

25. It was noted that as part of the pre-planning application stage, Islington Council's Members' Forum had been generally supportive of the University's proposals. Comments from Islington's Design Review Panel had been addressed in the University's planning application, which was expected to be determined by the Planning Committee in June 2017.

Conclusion:

26. The Board of Governors welcomed the presentation and noted the progress achieved to date.

Analysis of strategic options: progress since January

Online Learning

Presentation

27. The Board of Governors considered a presentation from Parthenon-EY which outlined interim findings of the strategic options appraisal commissioned in relation to online learning. This was a key enabler for other strategic options (such as apprenticeships), as well as an opportunity in its own right for gaining market share.
28. The Board were provided with a detailed fact pack which outlined the findings of the information gathering work undertaken thus far. While the national market for online learning had been flat in recent years, there was evidence of demand that was not being well-served by current providers, with a significant proportion of potential students reporting strong interest in online learning through a short course, degree or non-academic post-secondary qualification. Students were often interested in online learning opportunities through a university close to where they lived, allowing access to institutional facilities. Owing to a number of emerging trends, including labour market differentiation, post-secondary convergence, online enabling technologies and post-graduate loans, there was a demand for online learning that could be unlocked by the University with the right product offer.
29. The Board noted that the interim analysis suggested that there were opportunities for London Met to develop an online portfolio that was strongly employment-related, in partnership with an online enabler. 

30. In discussion, the high drop-out rates on online short courses was noted. This was primarily an issue for non-accredited courses; for accredited courses, completion rates were much higher, particularly at postgraduate level. It was noted that short-courses could serve as a valuable lead generation tool. Accreditation would assist in avoiding some of the pitfalls often associated with Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), for which completion often held little value to learners. The Board noted the importance of developing materials and pedagogy which engaged learners, to allow short courses to attract students who might consider additional study as well as to assist in brand-building.

s.43(2) FOIA -
commercially sensitive

Conclusion:

31. The Board considered the interim findings of the strategic options appraisal in relation to online learning. The next stage of work would be to develop implementable recommendations and a business case for investment in online learning opportunities for consideration by the Board.

Apprenticeships**Presentation**

32. The Board of Governors was provided with an overview of the opportunities available to the University following the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy in April 2017. This would significantly increase the size of the apprenticeship market, although there were uncertainties about how the market would develop and the possibility of further changes in government policy.
33. Degree apprenticeships represented a small part of the current overall market, and the number of apprenticeship standards was limited, but degree apprenticeships were growing quickly, and there was a demand for degree apprenticeships from both employers and learners. The majority of employers who did not offer degree apprenticeships were considering offering one. Nearly 80% of employers had yet to select their apprenticeship providers. There were opportunities available if the University could proceed quickly in areas where incumbent providers were not already in place.
34. The Board was advised that in order to be successful in this market, the University would need to develop a distinctive course portfolio, navigate the market - which comprised a mixture of national primes and sub-contractors - and build business-to-business sales capacity. A strong online learning capability would be essential to develop an apprenticeship offering that was attractive to employers.
35. The Board noted employers' preference for partnering with HEIs for high-level apprenticeships. This, combined with the strength in its London location, meant that the University was well-placed to leverage its areas of expertise for apprenticeship delivery.

Conclusion:

36. The Board of Governors noted the presentation on Parthenon's interim findings on apprenticeships. Further work to develop a business case for investment and implementable recommendations for consideration by the Board would take place in advance of the Board's meeting in June.

Round up and Close

37. The Vice-Chancellor offered his thanks to those attending for their valuable contributions throughout the Strategy Day, which would assist in preparing for the decisions which would be taken in June 2017 and beyond. The University's long-term sustainability would require carefully planned investment to develop new areas of business, which would involve accepting some degree of risk. It seemed evident that any new initiatives would involve enhanced capability in online learning, and entering into partnerships (e.g. in online delivery and business to business sales) to provide additional capacity and resource.

38. In closing the meeting, the Chair of the Board commended the reports and presentations received throughout the afternoon. The University was engaging positively and constructively with the challenges presented by the wider operating environment. It was important that the Board should proceed to make decisions that were fully informed and in keeping with the purpose of the institution.

CHAIRMAN _____