

**Minutes of the twenty first meeting of the Board of Governors  
held on 21 March 2007**

**Present:** Peter Anwyl

Jon Alsbury	Abdul Rahim
John Gabriel	Brian Roper
John Haworth	Finlay Scott
Stephan John	Abu Shohid
Bob Morgan	Michael Snyder
Prof Zenobia Nadirshaw	Sarah Tyacke
Raj Patel	

**Clerk to the Board:** John McParland

<b>In attendance:</b>	Bob Aylett	Rachel Thomas
	Lyn Link	Chris Topley
	Pam Nelson	

<b>For presentations:</b>	Robert Kingham	Drivers Jonas
	Jeremy Wilson	Drivers Jonas
	Kevin Kumar	Information and Projects Manager, London Office

**Apologies:** Graham Castle and Jeremy Mayhew

**276. Presentation**

The Board received a comprehensive presentation on the University's Estates Strategy from Drivers Jonas. It was noted that the Finance and Human Resources Committee had considered this matter at its meeting on 31 January 2007 (Agenda item BG 21/8.1) and had strongly

endorsed the strategy. The strategy compared 5 different options with option 5/5a being the only option which responded positively to the University's pan-London aspirations.

The following points concerning option 5/5a were noted:

- That further information was being collated on student travel patterns, population growth, employment growth, transport patterns post 2012. This work would be finalised and, having submitted the Pre-qualification Questionnaire, if the University was invited to negotiate with the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) a report would be submitted to a special meeting of the Board.
- That the political climate needed to be considered carefully as any decision would not depend solely on the commercial property aspects of the project.
- That the University would only proceed with this option if it was affordable.

**278. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2006**  
(Agenda item BG 21/1)

The Minutes of the meeting on 13 December 2006 were confirmed as a correct record.

**279. Matters Arising**  
(Agenda item BG 21/2)

The Board received the report on Matters Arising and noted that the Nominations/Governance Committee would be reviewing the purpose and function of the Awards Ceremonies in raising the profile of the University and this would include the role, participation and involvement of Governors.

**280. Report for the period 4.12.06 – 9.3.07 from the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive**  
(Agenda item BG 21/3.1)

The Board received and noted the report by the Vice-Chancellor.

**281. Olympic Opportunities**  
(Agenda item BG 21/3.2)

The Board received the report on Olympic Opportunities.

The following points were noted:

- That Governors strongly supported the development opportunity post the 2012 Olympic Games within the context of the University's Estates Strategy and offered to assist with the proposals.
- That the University should not underestimate the other bidders.
- That the legacy use of any properties should be reflected in the construction and design.

The Board:

1. Approved the recommendations set out in Section 5 of the report (page 51).
2. Approved the Strategic direction.
3. Noted that the University would be expressing an interest in the pre-qualification process.
4. Noted that the date for the submission of final proposals would be 1 June 2007 and Governors agreed that this matter would be considered at a Special Board meeting to be held prior to this date if the University's pre-qualification submission was successful.

**(Action: Vice-Chancellor/Clerk to the Board)**

**282. Research at London Metropolitan University**  
(Agenda item BG 21/4)

The Board received the report on Research at London Metropolitan University.

The following points were noted:

- That the University was aware of the RAE timeframe but the RAE methodology was largely based upon the notion of a single subject or academic discipline and not the type of societal research that gave LondonMet its distinctiveness. It was noted that the main purpose of the research proposals in the report was to improve longer term research performance and to raise the academic ambitions of the University and any RAE “spin offs” would be a bonus.
- That greater than 50% of the University’s academic staff were now involved in research and that the appointment of new staff and research students as set out in the report may help improve the RAE submission but that the prior objective would remain the longer term research prospects of the University.
- That the Board was supportive of the proposals as long as they were affordable. It was noted that funds of c£7m from the development fund would be transferred into the research budget and that the income received as a result of recruiting high calibre staff should contribute towards the additional costs and attract students to the University.

The Board:

1. Noted the contents of the paper, including the growth in research activity and the external assessments of the University’s performance to date.
2. Noted and approved the suggested changes in infrastructure support as outline in section 5.1 of the report.
3. The Board considered the proposal to appoint new staff and research students as outlined in section 5.2 and as detailed in Appendix 2 and agreed that a budget line should be set aside for this purpose in 2007/08 and for a further four years thereafter.

**(Action: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Development/Director of Finance)**

## 283. Management Information

(Agenda item BG 21/5.1)

The Board received and noted the report from the Director of Finance on Management Information for the half year and the forecast for the year to 31 July 2007.

The following points were noted:

- that the University was under budget for the first six months of 2006/07 by £1.3m
- that the following actions were recommended to compensate for the significant shortfall in income (c£9m for the year)

implementation of JNCHEs to be delayed until 2007/08 at the earliest as this was dependent on affordability (saving £3m)

to reduce the forecast severance payments for 2006/07 to £1m as most payments were likely to fall in 2007/8 (saving £1.5m)

departments to be asked to make savings of £5m rather than £4m against expenditure (saving £1m)

an immediate freeze on expenditure

unfilled staff vacancies would be kept under review

the remaining £1.8m contingency fund would be tightly controlled

- **Tuition Fee Variance Analysis**

That the main shortfalls in tuition fees were for Home Full Time new undergraduate taught (c1,100) and Overseas Full Time postgraduate taught (c900). It was noted that recruitment for part-time students for 2006/07 was continuing and the position could improve.

The following comments were also noted:

That more than half of the fall in tuition fee income was

attributable to the fall in overseas students, particularly postgraduate taught. The market for overseas students was highly competitive and the University was competing with Universities in the UK, Australia and the USA. Despite the fall in overseas students LondonMet had the third highest number of full cost international students and the most EU students. Overseas student recruitment had been hampered by Home Office regulations, but the International Office was working hard to improve overseas recruitment and the India Office was optimistic about future recruitment levels. It was also noted that the University's marketing strategy followed a diversified, geographic approach and LondonMet was not critically dependent on recruiting students from only one country as were some other Universities.

It was noted that the University's business plan would need to be reworked for the next 5 years and any adjustments would be submitted to the Finance and Human Resources Committee and to the Board.

**(Action: Director of Finance)**

## **284. Budget Principles**

(Agenda item BG 21/5.2)

The Board received and noted the report on Budget Principles.

The Board approved the principles (overall principles set out below), which would be circulated to budget holders as part of the budget instruction pack.

### *Overall principles*

- The budget will be set with the aim of achieving the University's financial targets, without compromising its strategic objectives and with adequate return on income.
- There will be continued support for new initiatives through the development fund.
- The introduction of full economic costing and the roll out of the university's costing and pricing policy, to include the notional charging of estate costs to activities.
- Maintenance of the estate strategy and the generation of sufficient cash to finance the capital programme and associated revenue implications.
- Good cash management and debtors control to improve cash flow.

- Continued investment in staff development.
- Support for the University's information strategy.
- New measures to improve student recruitment, retention and progression.
- Continued thematic reviews of departments to improve efficiency and cut costs.
- Continued drive to generate external income and improved net contribution.
- A fair and transparent process.
- It should be informed by bottom-up data on staff commitments, based on accurate staffing estimates.
- It should recognise non-controllable costs, i.e. those determined by contracts with external bodies (e.g. essential subscriptions) or by history (e.g. depreciation).
- Adequate provision should be made for contingency.

**285. Estates Strategy**  
(Agenda item BG 21/5.3)

The Board received the report on the Estates Strategy.

The Board:

- noted the options presented in the summary paper
- endorsed the general direction of the strategy
- approved further work on the variants of Option 5, for future presentation to the Finance and Human Resources Committee and the Board, **including a risk analysis**
- noted the affordability of the options in the context of past expenditure

**(Action: Director of Finance)**

**286. Board Composition**  
(Agenda item BG 21/6.1)

The Board received and noted the report on Board Composition.

**287. Committee Membership Structure**  
(Agenda item BG 21/6.2)

The Board received and noted the report on Committee Membership Structure and approved:

1. The change of title of the Nominations Committee to Governance Committee.
2. The revised Women's Library Council terms of reference.

**288. Student Representation**  
(Agenda item BG 21/6.3)

The Board received the report on Student Representation.

It was noted that at the Nominations Committee Governors had agreed that a wider review should be conducted by the University into arrangements for Student Representation. The review would seek to address:

- student feedback, consultation and communication
- operation of the current Student Representation (STARS) system at departmental level
- the role and operation of the Students' Union
- the status and Constitution of the Students' Union including accountability and democratic credibility
- value for money
- participation levels

It was noted that the review would be conducted over the next 6 months and a report would be submitted to the October Board.

**(Action: Clerk to the Board)**

**289. Any Other Business**

**Governance Effectiveness Review**

The following comments were noted:

That the reduced size of the Board had made it easier for Governors to contribute at meetings and attendance had improved.

Governors also commended the format and clarity of the reports.

It was agreed that future Board (and Committee) meetings should start at 5.30pm.

**290. Date of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Board would be held on Wednesday 20 June, in the 8<sup>th</sup> Floor Boardroom, Technology Tower, Holloway Road (North Campus) at **5.30pm.**

## **AGENDA PART TWO**

### **291. The Board noted for information**

(Agenda items BG 21/7.1 - BG 21/7.4)

- a) Dates of Future Meetings
- b) Current Membership
- c) Outline Agenda for next meeting
- d) Olympic Opportunities

### **292. The Board noted the unconfirmed Minutes of:**

(Agenda items BG 21/8.1 – 20/8.6)

- a) Minutes of the Finance and Human Resources Committee – 21 January 2007
- b) Minutes of the Nominations Committee – 13 February 2007  
November
- c) Minutes of the Joint Standards Board – 15 February 2007
- d) Minutes of the Health and Safety Council – 28 February 2007
- e) Minutes of the Audit Committee – 7 March 2007
- f) Minutes of the Women's Library Council – 8 March 2007