

**Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors  
held at 4.00 pm on Thursday, 20 May 2021  
via MS Teams**

**Present**

Jerry Cope (Chair)  
Michael Cutbill (Vice-Chair)  
Duncan Brown  
John Cole  
Peter Fidler  
Mark Lemmon  
Nicki Martin  
Jeremy Parr  
David Phoenix  
Rashda Rana  
Tony Roberts  
Deepa Shah  
Maxwell Smith  
Harriet Tollerson  
Vinay Tanna

**Observer**

Ruchika Kumar

**Apologies**

Maureen Dalziel  
James Stevenson

**In attendance**

Pat Bailey  
Michael Broadway  
Richard Flatman  
Paul Ivey (for items 8 and 9)  
Nicole Louis  
Dominique Phipp

**1. Welcome and apologies**

The Chair welcomed the members and observer to the meeting. The above apologies were noted.

The Board had just received an informative pre-Board presentation on the portfolio and curriculum review.

The Board congratulated Max Smith for his appointment as President of the Students' Union, and Ruchika Kumar for her appointment as Council Chair of the Students' Union. Ruchika would join the Board as a Student Governor from 1 July.

The Board noted that this is Harriet Tollerson's last meeting. The Chair thanked Harriet for her valuable contribution to the Students' Union and the Board of the University in 2020/21.

## **2. Declarations of Interests**

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

## **3. Minutes of the previous meetings**

The Board approved the minutes of the meeting of 25 March 2021.

## **4. Matters arising**

The Board noted the update on matters arising from the previous meeting.

## **5. Chair's business**

The Chair reported that governors were supportive of resuming face-to-face board meetings from July 2021, provided adequate covid-safety measures are in place and in line with government guidance. Planning would begin to hold the July Board meeting on campus, subject to government guidance.

## **6. Committees update**

The Chair of FPR updated the Board on the committee's work, including regular review of the management accounts and of the recruitment position, recent reviews of the infrastructure required to deliver the corporate strategy, and a continuing focus on the student experience.

The committee is confident that the University's financial position is reasonably stable.

The committee is currently focused on student experience and plans to review the response to the findings of the latest Graduate Outcomes survey and National Student Survey at a future meeting.

The Board noted that the committee discussed IT and campus infrastructure at its last meeting. The IT and Estates teams have set out their needs and are developing plans for 2020/21 within their budgets.

The Board noted that uncertainties remain about student recruitment due to postponement of the UCAS cycle. Despite this, the Chair of the committee was optimistic that recruitment numbers would remain stable and the committee expected a reasonable outcome for 2021 entry.

The Board noted that the committee approved a Group Equality Statement at its last meeting.

## **7. VC report**

The Board discussed the Vice Chancellor's report.

The Board noted the strategic and operational importance of the portfolio and curriculum review. The purpose of the review is not cost-saving, but to encourage more efficient use of staff time. Simplifying the portfolio would alleviate the burden on staff, who are under increasing pressure due to the coronavirus pandemic and IT incident, and allow academic staff more time to carry out research and enterprise activities.

The Board noted that a small number of students have contacted the Vice Chancellor with concerns that LSBU may be indirectly investing in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Vice Chancellor confirmed to the Board that there is an ethical investment strategy for the University's endowment fund.

The Board noted that there had been a 'ground breaking' ceremony on 19 May 2021 for the development at SBC's Vauxhall site, to be known as South Bank Technical College. Representatives from the Department for Education, Greater London Authority and SBC attended.

The Vice Chancellor updated the Board on the restoration of systems following the IT incident in December 2020. A new IT Director is now in post and a review of the University's response to the incident would be carried out in due course.

The Board noted that staff are expected to return to campus in September 2021, subject to business need and working arrangements agreed with their managers, and government guidance. Most students' lectures would remain online, but seminars and smaller group working would resume onsite.

The Board noted the headline results of the Mid-Semester Modular Evaluation survey. The results showed that student satisfaction levels had not changed

significantly compared to Semester 1 despite the impact of the IT outage, and 80% of students agreed that the University has delivered what it had promised to deliver.

The Board noted the results of a review of compliance with consumer protection law, which was requested by the OfS. A detailed report on the results would be prepared for the Group Audit and Risk Committee.

The Vice Chancellor updated the Board on the results of the HESA Graduate Outcomes survey for the Year 2 graduate cohort of 2018/19. LSBU achieved 74.6% overall, a decrease of 1.1% from 2017/18.

The Vice Chancellor updated the Board on current government HE policy. The government's focus remains on Level 4 to 5 technical pathways, 'low value' courses, and the cost of student loans on the taxpayer. A new 'proceed' success measure, aiming to show the chance of obtaining a graduate job following study on a particular course, is being consulted on. The Board discussed the challenges for LSBU of the government's focus on the use of absolute measures to assess the quality of a university or course. The Board re-emphasised LSBU's commitment to providing opportunities for those in the local community to achieve their full potential.

## **8. CFO report**

The Board discussed the CFO report, which included updates on the current financial position, budget planning for 2021/22, and the University's response to the OfS recurrent funding consultation.

The Board noted that the recovery process of the financial records continues. The management accounts to 31 March 2021, which had been reviewed by FPR, forecast a £2m surplus [REDACTED].

The Board noted that SBC was likely not to be able to deliver to its budget. There was potential for up to £1m of clawback from the ESFA due to behind target achievement rates. The Board noted that the Central Leadership Group are actively reviewing this key area.

The Board noted the potential impact of the OfS's proposal for recurrent funding. The University had responded to the consultation which included strong disagreement with the proposal to remove funding for London Weighting.

The Board noted that the cash flow position remains on target and [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

The Board noted that the OfS's regulatory reporting timeline has been extended. The OfS finance return submission would now be due at the end of February 2022.

The Board asked if any unexpected financial impact had resulted from the IT incident. The CFO confirmed that no surprises had come to light and noted that control procedures would not be relaxed to speed up resolution of the remaining issues affecting LSBU's accounting processes.

The Board noted that the new Group Defined Contribution pension scheme had been implemented from 1 April 2021.

[REDACTED]

## **9. Annual research and enterprise report**

*Paul Ivey, Chief Business Officer, joined the meeting.*

The Board discussed the first annual research and enterprise report.

The Board noted that challenging targets have been set for research and enterprise activity, including increasing overall turnover to £250M by 2025, with third-stream income to make up 20%. The three sectors of focus for third-stream income are STEM, health, and inclusive growth.

The Board noted the extent of growth in research since LSBU's last REF (Research Excellence Framework) submission in 2014, from development of new external partnerships, to sabbaticals for academics, and a suite of research centres. Areas for improvement include research infrastructure and B2B environmental development.

The Board noted that staff are the most important resource for realising the research ambitions in the Corporate Strategy. It noted the link to the portfolio review discussed earlier, which would enable academic staff to undertake more research and enterprise activities.

The Board welcomed the report and requested to be kept informed of progress to meeting the research and enterprise targets in the corporate strategy.

## **10. LSBU Hub construction – delegation of authority**

The Board noted that delivery of the LSBU Hub project has been challenging and it is unlikely that the project would be completed on time and within the original project budget. Completion was now expected in October 2021, rather than June 2021 as originally projected.

The Board noted that the cost overrun remains unclear, but the likely range for overspend was estimated to [REDACTED]. The final figure is being negotiated with the contractor.

The Board noted that the anticipated upper limit of [REDACTED] (assumed worst case) has already been built into the latest cashflow forecast, but is hoped that the final cost negotiated would be rather lower.

The Chair of MPIC reported that the committee had discussed the project's development at its last meeting on 6 May 2021 and agreed that the estimated range of overspend is realistic.

The Board agreed to delegate authority to MPIC to approve additional unbudgeted expenditure of up to [REDACTED] to accommodate cost overruns with the LSBU Hub refurbishment project. The Board requested that a post-investment review of the project is carried out after completion to share lessons learned.

*Paul Ivey left the meeting.*

## **11. Corporate risk report**

The Board noted the updated risk register.

## **12. LSBSU election results**

The Board noted the Student Union election results and returning officer's report which demonstrated that the election was run in a fair and democratic manner as required under the Education Act 1994.

The Board noted that the election turnout was lower than in previous years and hoped that turnout improves next year.

## **13. Reports and decisions of committees**

The Board noted the reports from committees and the Group Equality Statement, which was approved by the FPR committee at its meeting on 27 April 2021.

## **14. Board strategy day report 22 April 2021**

The Board noted the report from the Board strategy session of 22 April 2021.

**15. Last meeting of the Provost**

The Board formally said goodbye to Pat Bailey, the Provost, who leaves LSBU at the end of June to pursue new opportunities. The Board thanked him for his significant and invaluable contribution to the University and the Group.

**Date of next meeting**  
**4.00 pm, on Thursday, 22 July 2021**

**Confirmed as a true record**

..... (Chair)