

COUNCIL
Thursday 28 March 2019

CONFIRMED MINUTES

Present:

Lord Clement-Jones (Chair)	Ade Adefulu	Kath Barrow
Professor Colin Bailey	Professor Alison Blunt	Dr Véronique Bouchet
Monica Chadha	Sarah Cowls	Celia Gough
Stella Hall	Isabelle Jenkins	Ahmed Mahbub
Dr Darryn Mitussis	Bushra Nasir	Professor Mangala Patel
Luke Savage	Peter Thompson	Professor Wen Wang
David Willis		

In attendance:

Joanne Jones	Dr Maggie Leggett	Dr Nadine Lewycky
Dr Philippa Lloyd	Tom Longbottom	Professor Stephanie Marshall
Jonathan Morgan	Mike Wojcik [for minute 2018.059 only]	

Apologies:

None

Welcome

2018.048 The Chair welcomed Ade Adefulu as a member to his first Council meeting.

Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2018 (Paper QM2018/39)

2018.049 Council **confirmed** the confidential and non-confidential minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2018 subject to an amendment to the Chair's update (2018.022) to state that the Centre for Studies of the Home is co-directed with Sonia Solicari, Director of the Geffrye Museum.

Matters Arising (Paper QM2018/40)

2018.050 Council **noted** the matters arising from the meeting held on 29 November 2018.

[a] It was noted that the Director of Estates, Facilities and Capital Development would be responsible for the next Health, Safety and Fire annual report.

Chair's update (Oral report)

2018.051 The Chair said that:

- [a] A list of his activities would be circulated to members along with the minutes.
- [b] He had met with Aaron Porter and Kim Ansell from AdvanceHE and was looking forward to receiving their report on Council effectiveness.
- [c] The Principal's Nominees to Council, Professor Bill Spence and Professor Steve Thornton, had stepped down. The Chair thanked Bill and Steve for their contributions on behalf of Council. Dr Philippa Lloyd, Vice-Principal (Policy and Strategic Partnerships) and Professor Colin Grant Vice-Principal (International) had been nominated and approved by Governance Committee. The nominations would be circulated to Council for approval shortly.
- [d] The application for university title had been submitted.

President and Principal's Report (QM2018/41)

2018.052 Council **received** the President and Principal's Report. The following points were noted:

Senior Personnel

- [a] *Minute 2018.052[a] is confidential.*
- [b] *Minute 2018.052[b] is confidential.*
- [c] *Minute 2018.052[c] is confidential.*

Branding of the School of Medicine and Dentistry

- [d] The BLSA President said that students had raised concerns via a petition about the introduction of the new SMD faculty logo. It was felt that the logo, in using the short 'Barts & The London' title, rather than the full 'Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry' name, did not capture the way in which students, staff and alumni identify with the School. The QMSU sabbatical officers had sought to represent the strength of feeling on the issue among students in an article for the student newsletter. The BLSA President suggested that, although consultation had taken place, this did not go far enough and would need to continue in order to gain students' support for the direction of travel.
- [e] The President and Principal said that Barts and The London was, and would continue to be, an important part of the university's identity and history, but the previous use of the name without reference to Queen Mary had impacted adversely on the visibility of the medical and dental sciences outside the institution. Some changes had been made to the logo as a result of consultation with students, but not all of the changes requested were practicable or consistent with the brand. The petition had been signed by only 6% of students in the university.
- [f] Members of Council noted the strength of feeling on the issue among student and took assurance from the fact that students had been involved in the development of the brand narrative and the new logo. It was suggested that the faculty logo was a good compromise and that it was

important for student and staff leaders to build support around the brand going forward.

Fees

[g] The Augur review would report in late April or early May. It was anticipated that tuition fees would be reduced to £7,500, representing a cost to the university in the region of £15 to £20 million per annum, subject to the position taken on student bursaries. The Treasury might backfill on some subjects, but only in the short term.

[h] *Minute 2018.052[h] is confidential.*

[i] The decision of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on the treatment of student loans meant that they were now accounted for as a cost to the Treasury of £10 billion per annum. Cuts to Higher Education funding could be expected irrespective of the Augur Review.

Unconditional Offers

[j] *Minute 2018.052[j] is confidential.*

Multi Academy Trusts

[k] The Chair and the Vice-Principal (Education) would be meeting with Morag Shiach to discuss the Multi Academy Trust (MAT) and would report back to Council with any developments. Council noted that David Willis was a Chair of another MAT supported by the Paradigm Trust, but this was not considered to represent a conflict of interest in relation to the current discussions.

President's Report [QMSU] (QM2018/42)

2018.053 Council **received** the QMSU President's report. The following points were noted:

[a] The QMSU President had just returned from Paris where he discussed support for Queen Mary students at the University of London in Paris (ULIP).

[b] Students had held a vigil in Library Square for the victims of the attacks in New Zealand.

[c] The number of votes cast in the elections for next year's QMSU Sabbatical Officers was down from the previous year. The reason was not known, but better communications were needed to encourage students from different backgrounds to put themselves forward for election.

[d] QMSU was undertaking a democracy review to improve representation on its student council from across the university. The review would also look to streamline the Union's democratic processes.

[e] The handover for the new Sabbatical Officers usually took place in July. Council encouraged the Sabbatical Officers to start the handover earlier to ensure that key issues and joint projects were transferred effectively.

[f] The number of students supported through the QMSU employability

scheme was increasing each year. A wider portfolio of the types of training offered contributed to this.

- [g] The QMSU President and the BLSA President would be writing a pamphlet in the summer for the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) on co-creation, with support from the Vice-Principal (Education).

Current Financial Position (Presentation)

2018.054 *Minute 2018.054 is confidential.*

2019–20 budget and current financial forecasts (QM2018/43)

2018.055 *Minute 2018.055 is confidential.*

Finance and Investment Committee (Oral report)

2018.056 Council **noted** an oral report on the Finance and Investment Committee meeting held on 27 March 2019. The Treasurer said that:

- [a] The Committee had received an update on QMSU finances which showed that the deficit in the reserve position had worsened. While much of this could be attributed to the one-off unavailability of facilities, the situation should be monitored.
- [b] The Committee had considered and approved the proposal for the London Institute of Transport Technology at Albert Island. The Committee had been mindful that there were lessons to be learned from the Medical School in Malta.
- [c] The Committee considered the financial implications of the new strategy and discussed the bridge between the business as usual activity and the strategy. Space demands in the first few years would exceed supply and would need to be filled by leasing additional property. An update on the residential space requirements to support the student growth in the strategy would be presented to the Committee in September. The Committee had noted that there was a lot of work to do but had been encouraged by the transparency provided by the executive.
- [d] The Committee flagged to Council the need to consider the governance arrangements for monitoring the financial implications of the strategy.

Action: [c] Director of Estates, Facilities and Capital Development

University strategy (QM2018/44)

2018.057 Council **considered and approved** the proposed university strategy following a detailed presentation from the President and Principal. The following points were noted in discussion:

- [a] The university needed to grow to achieve its ambitions as a major research institution, but the current growth model was not sustainable. Growth would be achieved through controlled quality growth underpinned by excellence.

A cultural shift was needed to improve efficiencies in teaching and the use of the existing estate.

- [b] Staff and students were supportive of the proposed strategy and had encouraged the executive to be ambitious. Students had been engaged in developing the education pillar of the strategy and the sabbatical officers had helped to refine some of the enabling plans.
- [c] Council noted that the growth forecasts were ambitious. The executive felt that growth in distance learning and overseas taught postgraduate (PGT) students offered the right balance between profitability and volume. Existing overseas programmes and partnerships could be used more effectively to increase the number of students progressing onto programmes in London.
- [d] Many universities around the world were entering the distance learning market and Queen Mary would need a distinctive offering. Distance learning would be undertaken with an external partner to provide the platform and tutors. Due diligence was being conducted on prospective partners with the assistance of an external consultant. The initial offering would be focussed in areas of strength and target established markets where good returns were expected quickly. Academic staff would be the front line of the distance learning courses and contribute the pedagogy, but external tutors were needed to make the programmes scalable.
- [e] A dashboard of KPIs was under development. Council asked the executive to write the KPIs using language which matched the strategy so that the connections were clear.

Albert Island Business Case (QM2018/45)

2018.058 Council **considered and approved** the business case for the London Institute of Transport Technology. The following points were noted:

- [a] Council noted the conflict of interest declared by the Finance Director who was an acquaintance of the developer. Council also noted the conflict of interest declared by the Vice-Principal (Policy and Strategic Partnerships) whose former team at the Department for Education was running the competition.
- [b] Queen Mary was working in partnership with Newham College to develop an Institute of Technology (IoT) to support skills development in transport technology, and had applied for funding from two government departments. The grant outcomes were expected by mid-April. The project would not proceed without funding as the university would not take on any risk in relation to the build and fit out. A condition of the grants was approval of the governing body and any approval given would be subject to full legal and financial due diligence being completed. A head of terms had been signed but was not legally binding. There were also reputational risks to the university which would need to be managed.
- [c] The project would contribute to the student number growth set out in the strategy and deliver more space. Some existing activities associated with

transport technology and engineering would take place at Albert Island. Current staff would be expected to lead on the delivery of the programmes as transport engineering was a strength in the Faculty of Science and Engineering, but additional teaching capacity would also be needed.

QMSU Financial Statements 2017–18, latest financial position (QM2018/46)

2018.059 Council **noted** the QMSU Financial statements for 2017–18. The QMSU CEO said that:

- [a] Intermittent service interruptions during the past year had negatively impacted on QMSU finances, but had been partially off-set by mitigating actions. Overall, the Group position was better than budget by £30K. The five year plan would be revisited and efforts made to improve the reserve position. The internal audit of the QMSU finances had identified no issues.
- [b] QMUL had oversight of the QMSU finances through discussions with the executive on the budget. The QMSU CEO and the Finance Director would meet in April to discuss the five-year plan. Finance and Investment Committee had noted the statements, but was not required to approve them. The subsidiary company had representatives from QMUL including the Director of Student and Academic Services and the Deputy Director of Finance (Financial Management), who also sat on the Audit Committee.

Audit and Risk Committee report (QM2018/47)

2018.060 Council **noted** the report of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 13 March 2019. The Chair of the Committee said that:

- [a] The Committee had received an internal audit report on Business Continuity which offered no reassurance (red). This was a concern, as internal audits had otherwise been improving over the last few years. A long-term vacancy in a key compliance role had impacted negatively on the outcome. The Committee would receive an update on whether there were vacancies in other key compliance roles as part of the legal compliance report in November. The Chair of the Committee was concerned that delegated leadership, as set out in the 2030 strategy, would be challenging without the right resources in place.
- [b] The Committee would normally approve the annual Value for Money (VfM) targets at this time of year, however, there had been no guidance from the Office for Students (OfS) on how this would be measured. Further discussions on VfM were needed.
- [c] Council **approved** the appointment of Deloitte as the external auditors for another year on the recommendation of the Committee.

Senate report (QM2018/48)

- **Annual report on student casework (QM2018/49)**

2018.061 Council **noted** the executive summary of the Senate meeting held on 7 March 2019. The following points were noted:

Senate report (QM2018/48)

- [a] The relationships between senates and councils were evolving under the Office for Students. Governance Committee had decided in October 2018 that one of the elected academic staff members would be taken from Senate. AdvanceHE had been asked to comment specifically on this area of governance as part of the effectiveness review.

- [b] The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) had published new guidance on freedom of speech. The university's freedom of speech policy would be reviewed in light of the guidance and considered by Senate in June. The updated policy would be presented to Council in July alongside context on how the policy was functioning in practice.

Annual Report on Student Casework (QM2018/49)

- [c] The casework report showed Council the types of student complaints, as part of its responsibilities for the welfare of students. Turnaround times had risen this year due to a higher number of appeals and complaints coming forward. Additional resources had been put in place and improvements were planned to academic advising.

- [d] Council noted that a project officer on sexual violence reporting mechanisms had started in post to oversee the implementation of an anonymous online reporting tool. The work would take place across the various professional services directorates and staff training would be offered.

Action: [b] Registrar and Secretary

***Use of the Common Seal (QM2018/50)**

2018.062 Council **noted** the paper on the use of the common seal since the last meeting.

***Agenda for the next meeting (QM2018/51)**

2018.063 Council **noted** the draft agenda for the meeting on 09 May 2019.

Dates of Meetings 2018–19

- Thursday 9 and Friday 10 March 2019 – annual conference plus Council meeting
- Thursday 11 July 2019, 1600 hours