

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2023 IN ROOM RS103, REGENT STREET AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

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PRESENT:	M X Wang (Chair) J Bairamian Dr P Bonfield V Foster	D Hoyle T Sketchley P Wales (from Minute 22.31)
IN ATTENDANCE:	C Hinge Professor M Kirkup J Lamarque (Secretary)	E McMillan (Clerk to the Court) I Wilmot <sup>1</sup> (Deputy Company Secretary)
APOLOGIES:	J Cappock (Company Secretary)	R Poole

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**22.28 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 22.28.1 The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting.
- 22.28.2 Members noted apologies for the meeting as recorded above.
- 22.28.3 Members did not declare any conflict of interest for the matters on the agenda.

**22.29 SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELLBEING UPDATE**

- 22.29.1 Ian Wilmot, Acting University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer (USCOO) updated members on the work of the Staying Safe: Business Continuity Group, formerly the Being Safe, Feeling Safe group. Members heard that the new group meets monthly with a similar cohort.
- 22.29.2 The Acting USCOO reported on COVID-19 case rates, managing the student experience during recent industrial action and numbers of colleagues and First Aiders on site.
- 22.29.3 In response to a member's query on the legal requirement for First Aid provision, the Deputy CS reported that there will be campaign to all colleagues asking them to volunteer to be First Aiders.

**22.30 DIGITAL STRATEGY UPDATE**

- 22.30.1 On behalf of the Director of Information Systems and Support, the Acting USCOO presented the Digital Strategy update (Document RES 230216J), which included an update on the Student Digital Insights Survey results from January 2023.
- 22.30.2 The Acting USCOO reported on implementation of multi-factor authentication for the student cohort, cyber security, the Student Hub customer relation management system and the continuing challenges in sourcing audio visual equipment.
- 22.30.3 A member commented on the proportion of respondents to the Digital Insights Survey with an impairment, health condition or learning difference and noted that this is a factor to be considered in the draft Estates Strategy.
- 22.30.4 In response to members' queries, the Acting USCOO explained that:
- the University scores well in this survey;
  - the results provide evidence that the University is progressing in the right direction; and
  - the University has provided support for students experiencing digital poverty and the issue is being looked into further.

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<sup>1</sup> Ian Wilmot attended as Director of Finance and Acting University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer

**22.31 UNIVERSITY FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE**

- 22.31.1 The Director of Finance presented the Management Accounts for December 2022 (Document RES 230216A).
- 22.31.2 Members heard that the accounts are in line with expectations; the Quarter 2 figures are expected to be slightly better than Quarter 1; and expenditure on the capital programme will increase later in the financial year.
- 22.31.3 A member commented on debtor balance asking if the cost of debt is becoming more expensive due to interest rate rises. The Director responded that debt interest is fixed so the University is not exposed to rising interest rates.
- 22.31.4 In response to a member's query on research grant income, the Vice-Chancellor commented that the impact of research turnover is small financially but significant in other ways and highlighted that the University had recently been awarded two large research grants. The member suggested that it would be useful to see longer term trend data in the report.

**22.32 PEOPLE STRATEGY UPDATE**

- 22.32.1 Malcolm Kirkup, Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC) for People and Culture updated members on strategic matters relating to colleagues.
- 22.32.2 Members heard that the University is recruiting for a Director of People, Culture and Wellbeing, and is mid-way through the implementation of the Voluntary Release Scheme (VRS) launched last summer, with most of the colleagues approved for the VRS leaving in July 2023.
- 22.32.3 The PVC (People and Culture) reported that:
- a new online Professional Development Review process will be introduced shortly, through which the importance of teaching quality will be reinforced and training put in place;
  - the Head of Learning and Development has led focus groups and produced a set of recommendations for reducing academic administration processes;
  - following a successful trial in the Westminster Business School, the Inspiring Teaching Training course will be rolled out to the other Colleges;
  - additional training is planned on assessment, feedback, and management and leadership;
  - other initiatives include away days for Professional Services (PS) departments, an online recruitment tool and a review of the Part Time Visiting Lecturer community.
- 22.32.4 In response to a member's query on the impact of the VRS, the PVC reported that it was a compassionate scheme that has not had a negative impact on morale. He explained that the scheme has enabled recruitment at Lecturer level and an induction programme and training programme will be delivered for the new recruits.
- 22.32.5 A member expressed concern that PS colleagues will be under pressure from extra work and the Vice-Chancellor confirmed that through the new PDR system all colleagues will be encouraged to prioritise their work where it will have the greatest effect on the University's priorities.
- 22.32.6 In response to a member's query on leadership for the HR department while a new Director is recruited, the PVC reported that the two Deputy HR Directors are leading the department and there is additional support in place.
- 22.32.7 A member queried whether cost issues will be repeated as the newly recruited Lecturers gain experience and progress to more senior positions. The PVC explained that progression will be linked to performance, supported by the new PDR system.

**22.33 ESTATES STRATEGIC UPDATE****Draft Estate Strategy 2022-2029**

- 22.33.1 Chris Hinge, Director of Estates, Planning and Services (EPS) invited members to comment on the draft Estates Strategy (Document RES 230216I).

22.33.2 Members suggested enhancements including:

- Add a separate heading for residential for each campus.
- Add information on how the Strategy relates to individual Schools.
- Add a separate heading for Facilities Management and PS and how they integrate.
- Add a list of which School/academic area is based at each campus.
- Clarify what is unique about our Estates Strategy.
- Clarify how the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) are going to be applied.
- Consider whether targets on achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 are achievable.
- Cover hybrid working and how buildings will need to be adapted for this approach.
- Include a timeline for delivery of the various parts of the Strategic plan.
- Add information on how the University will design for safeguarding and interlink access and accessibility.
- State that the Court will take a judicious view on acquiring any more properties.
- Strengthen the information about the residential strategy including bold statements about the impact this will have on the student experience.
- Clarify further how the Strategy is enabling delivery of the Being Westminster 2022-2029 objectives and priorities.
- Clarify our own ideas for responsible production and consumption instead of using the text from the UN SDGs.
- Add a systematic list of all University buildings.

22.33.3 A member noted that there are lots of employment opportunities through delivery of the Strategy, including integration with the University's courses to support students' progression into employment.

22.33.4 Members were asked to email any other comments directly to the Director of EPS. Members heard that the draft strategy would also be shared with members of the Estates Advisory Group and Academic Council.

## 22.34 CAPITAL FORECAST – MID TERM REVIEW

22.34.1 The Director of EPS presented the Capital forecast mid-term review report (Document RES 230216L).

22.34.2 Members heard that following the review of the capital expenditure investment plan there is a request for [REDACTED] additional capital funding in 2022/23 to deliver a series of estates projects.

22.34.3 The Director of Finance confirmed that the additional expenditure would be funded by the cash generated in year.

22.34.4 A member suggested that future proposals are presented more clearly to enable members to better understand spending against budget and whether the timetable for expenditure is realistic.

22.34.5 In response to a member's query, the Director of Finance confirmed that the additional capital expenditure will impact on the capital budget for 2023/24 and that the work will be carried out over the summer.

22.34.6 **APPROVED** Members confirmed the following additions to the capital expenditure budget for 2022/23:

- Harrow Halls Phase 5 refurbishment programme - [REDACTED]
- Harrow Sports Hall - [REDACTED]
- Phase 2 development of computer labs and office space at 115 New Cavendish Street - [REDACTED]
- Darkroom refurbishment, Harrow - [REDACTED]
- Campus lifts - [REDACTED]
- Other strategic projects - [REDACTED]

**UPDATE ON 29 MARYLEBONE ROAD**

- 22.34.7 Linsey Cole, Director of Business Engagement (BE) presented an update on the 29 Marylebone Road (MR) project (Document RES 230216K).
- 22.34.8 The Director of BE reported that the revised planning application was submitted at the beginning of February 2023 and the revisions included changes to the height of the building, removal of the roof terrace and changes to the elevation on Luxborough Street.
- 22.34.9 In response to a member's query, the Director of BE confirmed that the planning application had been validated and that the contingency will be reviewed.
- 22.34.10 The Director of BE reported that planning permission is expected by the end of April 2023, the main contractor will be appointed in May 2023, building work will take place from June 2023 to June 2024 and the new centre will be launched in September 2024.

**22.35 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

- 22.35.1 **AGREED** Members confirmed that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2023 (Document RES 230216B) are an accurate record.
- 22.35.2 Members noted a report on actions from previous meetings (Document RES 230216C).

**22.36 UNDERGRADUATE (UG), POSTGRADUATE (PG) AND OTHER FEE PROPOSALS 2024/25**

- 22.36.1 **APPROVED** UG, PG and other fee proposals for 2024/25 (Document RES 230216D) to be implemented as presented.

**22.37 STUDENT ACCOMMODATION FEES 2023/24**

- 22.37.1 Members noted the student accommodation fees for 2023/24 (Document RES 230216E), which had been approved by the University Executive Board.

**22.38 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REVIEW**

- 22.38.1 Members noted the Treasury Management mid-year review (Document RES 230216F).

**22.39 EXTRACT FROM AUDIT COMMITTEE MINUTES**

- 22.39.1 Members noted the record of the discussion of the annual report and financial statements for the year ending 31 July 2022 at the Audit Committee meeting held on 8 November 2022 (Document RES 230216G).

**22.40 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 22.40.1 The Vice-Chancellor updated members on the number of active students in UWSU clubs and societies.

**22.41 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Thursday 27 April 2023 at 4.00pm  
Thursday 22 June 2023 at 4.00pm

Thursday 14 September 2023 at 4.00pm  
Tuesday 14 November 2023 at 5.30pm (preceded by attendance at Audit Committee from 4.30pm)  
*Thursday 18 January 2024 at 4.00pm (provisional - for urgent approval of major projects only)*  
Thursday 15 February 2024 at 4.00pm  
Thursday 25 April 2024 at 4.00pm  
Thursday 20 June 2024 at 4.00pm