COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON 9th October 2015
UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Members

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<td>Mr Roger Bright (Deputy Pro-Chancellor)</td>
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<td>Ms Issy Cooke</td>
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<td>Ms Mary Luckiram</td>
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Key: ✓ In Attendance  A Apologies  P Part Attendance  NM Not a Member  S Sabbatical

In Attendance

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<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Prof John Fothergill</td>
<td>Pro Vice-Chancellor Research and &amp; Enterprise (PVC (R&amp;E))</td>
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<td>Mr Kevin Gibbons</td>
<td>Director of Property and Facilities (D, PAF) for Items 13 and 14.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr William Jordan</td>
<td>University Secretary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miss Sarah Lawton</td>
<td>Governance Administrator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prof Richard Verrall</td>
<td>Pro Vice-Chancellor (Strategy &amp; Planning) (PVC (S&amp;P))</td>
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MINUTES SECTION A – OPEN FOR PUBLICATION

Part One – Preliminary Items

1. Highlighted Items
   Council agreed the highlighted items. Council agreed to “un-star” Item 11 and noted that most members had contributed to the consultation and there would be an opportunity for further discussion at the November Plenary.

2. Minutes
   The minutes of the meeting held on 10th July 2015 were approved.
3. Matters Arising
Council noted the table of actions arising from past meetings. The following was noted:

**Action 2, minute 7, 10.10.14, Council agreed** to keep USS as a standing item. The Director of HR confirmed that the proposed reforms were going through and all staff in the USS were notified that they would move to the new career average scheme from 1st April. The threshold/defined contribution scheme would take effect from October 2016. An update paper would be provided to Council at the next meeting.  

**[Action]**

**Action 3, minute 8, 28.11.14, the SU had just appointed to a media post and so would start to issue SU updates shortly. Council members would be added to the circulation list.**

**Action 4, minute 5, 20.03.15, Council agreed** that this action could be removed following CGNC’s discussion of an induction paper on Academic Quality and Standards at its October meeting.

**Actions 8 and 9, minute 9, 08.05.15, Council agreed** to remove the actions under Development and Alumni Relations Office.

Council **agreed** that the Register of Interests should be included in all the bound papers to ensure that members check and update them on a rolling basis. **[Action]**

4. Conflicts of Interest
There were no conflicts of interest.

5. Items Specially Brought Forward by the Chair
The Chair, on behalf of Council, welcomed Janet Legrand who was a new lay member of Council, Dr William Jordan the new University Secretary, and Professor Marianne Lewis, Dean-elect of the Cass Business School who was observing the meeting.

The Chair noted that Professor John Fothergill had decided to retire during the coming academic year. His departure would be marked in due course.

The Chair set out his proposals for keeping in touch with former Council members by way of sending the Vice-Chancellor's messages, invitations to Court and the Chancellor’s dinner and generally maintaining links with City. Contact would also be maintained with former University Secretaries, commencing with Frank Toop.

The Chair noted that the farewell dinner in July had had good social feel to it and suggested that the July 2016 dinner should be organised in a similar way and invitations be extended to the aforementioned former members and University Secretary. Council **agreed** this proposal which will be taken forward by the Governance Team. **[Action]**

The Chair would meet with staff and student groups this term. The meeting with staff this term would be with representatives of the Trade Unions.

6. Council Calendar
Council received the rolling Council Calendar and the following points were noted:

- The Senate Annual Report would be presented at the November Council meeting
• The CEO of HEFCE, Professor Madeleine Atkins would speak at the November plenary dinner, the timing of which would be especially fortuitous if the BIS Green Paper has been published by that time.
• The Away Day on Friday 5th February 2016 would focus on the Vision and Strategy 2026.
• Professor Iain Gray would attend the Senate meeting on 14th October. Roger Bright would attend the December 2015 meeting and Adrian Haxby would attend the March 2016 meeting. Feedback from Senators was that Council members’ attendance at Senate had been seen very positively.

7. Vice-Chancellor’s Report
The Vice-Chancellor highlighted several items from his report. In discussion the following points were noted:
• NSS – City students were now the most satisfied university students in London and over the last three years City had increased student satisfaction by more than any other university in the country. The University had achieved its highest ever overall satisfaction score of 87% and highest participation rate of 74%. The Chair congratulated everyone across the institution who had contributed to this significant improvement.
• City had risen five places to 41st nationally (and one place to 7th in London) in the Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2016.
• City had also risen 40 places to its highest ranking of 301st in the QS World University Ranking 2015/16.
• The City of London Academy Islington had achieved a pass rate of 100% for “A” level and Level 3 BTEC courses.
• Greg Wray, City’s Income Manager and his team had collected 99.8% of all 2014/15 tuition fee income in the year.
• The Main Entrance Project was underway. Major demolition works had been delayed by the need to isolate and relocate the main fire and security control rooms, the impact of this being that noise and vibration would continue beyond the start of term.
• Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), Ministers in BIS were committed to introducing the proposed TEF from next year, notwithstanding the difficulties in defining teaching excellence. Whether City would score well enough to be allowed to increase fees would depend on how widely such permission was extended. City would be unlikely to fall within the top 10% of Universities on any likely measure of teaching excellence but should comfortably fall within the top 50%.
• A formal paper would be presented to Council on the strategic direction for SMCSE when the proposed changes are agreed. [Action]
• Talks with INTO (Joint Venture) were ongoing. The venture was not currently financially viable and the CFO and PVC International were continuing to explore ways to make it work. There would be a further report at the next Council meeting. [Action]

8 President of the Students’ Union Report
The President highlighted several items from her report. In discussion the following points were noted:
• The SU President was now a member of SIPCo and had attended the September 2015 meeting.
• The SU Segmentation Project was underway, which would give a better understanding of who City students were, why they had chosen City and what their expectations were in order to inform the development of the Students’ Union Strategy.
• The *City Life Off Campus* project was underway and aimed to provide students with opportunities to meet other people who live geographically close to them.
• Welcome Week 2015 had been a success and as last year, the Mansion House welcome party for our international students had been particularly well-received.
• The *History of the Students’ Union Project* aimed to develop pride in the Students’ Union and University and to communicate that students are part of a history that spans over 100 years.
• The Students’ Union was pleased to see an increase in the SU NSS score.
• As City joined the University of London the SU would aim to strengthen the links which already exist with UoL Unions.
• Janet Legrand had agreed to become a Trustee of the Students’ Union Board.

**Part Two – Major Items for Discussion or Decision**

9. **University of London**
Council received a verbal update on the University of London process and the following points were noted:
• Consultation on the University’s name change would commence in mid-October.
• Following informal consultation this year, a formal application would be made to the Privy Council in February next year to amend City’s Charter and Statutes which would change City’s name and the titles of its senior officers.
• City’s joining UoL would be the theme of the Chancellor’s Dinner on 20th April 2016.
• An informal event would be arranged at Senate House to enable Professional Service Directors from across the UoL colleges to meet.
• Students were already entitled to free membership of “Student Central” (formerly University of London Union) which enables students to get involved with everything the organisation has to offer including sports, societies, online tickets and access into its bars.
• The Vice-Chancellor would investigate whether there were any forthcoming UoL events which City’s lay members of Council might wish to attend. [Action]

10 **International Update (deferred from the July 2015 meeting)**
The PVC International gave a verbal update on the international dimension of the work of the University. In discussion the following points were noted:
• The University needed a coherent strategic approach to its international work.
• The work served several purposes: to increase global brand visibility, by forging research links for example; to prepare students for the global world (in part through shorter or longer overseas placements); to improve engagement with global business and business networks, and to increase income through the recruitment of international students.
• Overseas students faced higher tuition fees in the UK than in Germany or in Holland, for example, while in the UK non-EU students were now facing tougher-than-ever visa requirements. Lower student numbers could put some university courses at risk.
• Overseas provision of courses in Dubai was working well for Cass and Engineering students. There might be scope to extend such provision.
• The International Strategy should be combined with work to develop the Vision and Strategy for the University so that international activity became a matter of course for City. Council would give further consideration to these key topics at its February Away Day. [Action]
11. **HEFCE Consultation**
Council noted City’s response to the consultation on future approaches to quality Assessment in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

12. **Finance**

12.1 **Financial Performance Report for 2014/15**
Council considered the paper which summarised the pre-audit financial performance For 2014/15. In discussion the following points were noted:
- In 2014/15 the University had generated a surplus of £2.6M. This was the first surplus for seven years.
- There was a case for revisiting the decision taken in March by Council not to secure a line of credit from a bank at that time. Cash reserves were now lower, however, and it was likely that there would be a need for significant investment to deliver the new Vision and Strategy.

**Decision**
Council approved the proposal for the CFO, in conjunction with SIPCo, to explore the opportunity of running a tendering exercise to establish a credit facility. This would come back to Council for further consideration and approval if required.

[Action]

12.2 **Finance and Student Number Update 2015/16**
Council received a verbal update report and noted that undergraduate recruitment had just exceeded target numbers.

12.3 **Investments Report**
Council noted the Investments Report and the CFO thanked Dr John Low for his continuing support with regard to work around endowment funds.

*The Director of Property and Facilities, Kevin Gibbons, joined the meeting at this point.*

13. **Tait L1 Student Amenity Project – Capital Case**
Council considered the recommendation from SIPCo for approval of capital expenditure of £8.484M on the Tait Level One Student Amenity Project. The project would provide a new space for the Students’ Union alongside space for study, faith areas, meeting and catering venues. It would complete the reorganisation of circulation around the main entrance, linking it to Goswell Road. In discussion the following points were noted:
- The project had previously been presented to Council as part of an overall description of works to improve circulation and amenity on the Northampton Square campus.
- The project would contribute to one of the 3 aims of the Estates Strategy, namely to recreate a sense of community and place.
- The SU President commented that the Students’ Union would be pleased to see the project proceed as it would provide a more defined ‘hub’ for student activities and as such students would not mind disruption caused by the works.

**Decision**
Council approved the Capital Case for funding of £8.484M to implement the Tait L1 Student amenity Project.
14. **Progress in implementing the Strategic Plan**

14.1 **Strategic Plan Biannual Progress Report**
Council considered the progress report setting out the project status within the three overarching Work Streams of *Academic Excellence, Succeeding with Students* and *Research and Enterprise*. In discussion the following points were noted:

- It would be important to connect the work that had already been done and to implement the current strategy and the achievements to date with the forward look to the new emerging Vision and Strategy.
- It might be useful if the “Definitions” sheet stated clearly that those were not the actual results being achieved by the workstreams. **[Action]**

14.2 **Strategic Estates Biannual Progress Report**
Council considered the progress report on the projects approved or confirmed by Council as part of the revised Estates Investment Plan, January 2014. In discussion the following points were noted:

- The overall forecast outturn position remained on target at £120.8M. For the second year running PAF and Finance had also hit the cash flow forecast for the year (subject to audit) with less than 1% variance. This was a substantial achievement given the uncertain nature of the estates capital projects.
- The £120.8M included the current budget allocation for the Council approved Tait L1 Student Amenity project.

*The Director of Property and Facilities, Kevin Gibbons, left the meeting at this point.*

14.3 **NSS 2015 Results**
Council noted the report which covered the NSS 2015 results which had earlier been reported by the Vice-Chancellor (agenda item 7 above). In discussion the following points were made:

- Some results had been particularly impressive – notably the 4th place City had achieved for turnaround times for student work, and the improved score for Library services.
- Schools were celebrating success where appropriate. Where results had slipped in some areas, the reasons for this would be explored and addressed.
- The Chair reiterated his congratulations to all those who contributed to this achievement.

14.4 **The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2016**
The tables for *The Times* and *The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2016* were published in *The Sunday Times* on 20th September (agenda item 7 above). In discussion the following points were noted:

- The NSS results fed into this process and had bolstered the results this year.
- City was ranked 25th for employability which was inside the top 20%.
- Work was being undertaken to improve the completion rate scores for engineering degrees.

14.5 **Annual Research Quality Monitoring (ARQM)**
Council considered a report on the latest ARQM results, which followed a recalibration in the light of the 2014 REF results. In discussion the following points were noted:

- A review had taken place over the summer and its recommendations were currently being considered by ExCo and Senate. It was intended that those recommendations would increase internal consistency and align the results even more closely with the REF.
- SIPCo had noted that the Committee’s lay members had been surprised that Schools were using different methodologies for the ARQM. It would be
important to ensure for the future, that measures were adopted in all Schools that gave the VC assurance that the ARQM process was a robust and institutionally consistent measure of research performance in all cases.

- The Chair suggested that as academic quality looked set to become more central to the business of Council, there would be a need to look at the skill set amongst future lay members. [Action]

15. HR Annual Report

Council received the HR Annual Report (noting that it had been incorrectly referred to on the agenda as “People” report) which provided a briefing on activities undertaken during 2014/15 and planned for 2015/16 in pursuit of the agreed HR Strategy and in support of the Implementation Plan. The report also provided a summary of the activities the University was pursuing in relation to staff equality, with a focus on gender equality. In discussion the following points were noted:

- The results of the Staff Survey 2013 and Pulse Survey 2014 had led to an organisational development focus for HR activities. Working with Marketing and Communications and the Strategy and Planning Unit, the activities in the HR Implementation Plan were now linked to the Organisational Development Framework (ODF) which Council considered in May 2015.
- The establishment of a Gender Equality Working Group which would continue work on current and planned Athena SWAN activities, together with the University’s resubmission, which would be in April or November 2016 depending on progress. Feedback on the 2014 submission from the Equality Challenge Unit and an internal Lessons Learned exercise would inform the other activities of the Group.
- The work being undertaken around performance management and defining appropriate standards across the institution had been challenging. Work was now being done to make the appraisal process more meaningful.
- CGNC would be asked to approve a proposal to change the Terms of Reference of the Remuneration Committee to give it the scope to discuss Equality and Diversity issues.

Part Three – Plenary Dinner, 8th October 2015, Emerging Vision and Strategy 2026

Plenary Dinner - Debrief

At a Plenary Dinner attendees had discussed the emerging Vision and Strategy 2026. The Chair commented that the evening had worked very well and he felt that there had been quality engagement with the theme of the Vision and Strategy 2026. A consistent theme of the evening’s discussions was the urge to be aspirational and distinctive and for City to be able to effectively articulate its distinctiveness. Another key theme had emerged around the importance of “social mobility” and understanding its value to the University. The key issues raised at the dinner table discussions were summarised by the lay members. These included the following points:

- The success of the current Strategy had provided an excellent platform for further development of the University.
- The Vision and Strategy 2026 should be set in the context of developments in Higher Education (such as new models of learning), and in the context of the forward strategies being adopted by other Higher Education institutions.
- The plan for growth could lead to a full service University rather than one focussed on business and the professions. It would be helpful for further work on the new Strategy to consider how the University wished in future to position itself in the market and what it wished to be known for.
- The University should look to exploit its geographical location further in the Vision and Strategy 2026. It could look more to the cluster of nearby businesses and also nearby charities to develop placements for students;
and seek to identify unmet local HE needs, for example perhaps in structural engineering.

- Lay members had an open invitation to future SIPCo meetings which would discuss the Vision and Strategy. The next meeting was due to take place on 21st October 2015.

**Decision**

It was agreed that it would be useful for each lay member to select an established business contact that they, along with a member of the Executive would meet with, with a view to discussing what skills particular business would be looking for when employing future graduates. The Governance Team would contact the lay members to take this forward. [Action]

**Part Four – Other Items for Decision without Discussion** Members noted they should star an item in this section if they wished it to be discussed.

16. **Minutes for Note**
   22.1 Senate, 8th July 2015
   22.2 Strategy, Implementation & Performance Committee, 17th September 2015
   22.3 Audit and Risk Committee, 21st September 2015

17. **University Events**
   Council noted the list of upcoming events.

18. **FOI Review**
   Council agreed the open/closed/restricted classification of items for the meeting as set out in the agenda.

19. **Date of Next Meeting**
   Friday 27th November 2015.

**Part Five – Short Meeting of Independent Members**

20. **Short Meeting of Independent Members**
    There was a short meeting of the Independent Members, which was not minuted.

Rob Woodward, Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council, October 2015.