

COUNCIL
Thursday 19 October 2017
CONFIRMED MINUTES

Present:

Lord Clement-Jones (Chair)	Kath Barrow	Professor Colin Bailey
Monica Chadha	Sarah Cowls	Celia Gough
Stella Hall	Dr Darryn Mitussis	Bushra Nasir
Dr Mangala Patel	Luke Savage	Professor Bill Spence
David Willis	John Yard (Vice-Chair)	Yasir Yeahia

In attendance:

Suezanne Awotwi	Rakin Choudhury	Rhys Davies
Kathryn English	Laura Gibbs	Maggie Leggett
Dr Nadine Lewycky	Ahmed Mahbub	Sian Marshall
Jonathan Morgan	Mary Ojo	Mike Sheppard

Apologies:

Professor Richard Ashcroft	Dr Véronique Bouchet	Joanne Jones
Simon Linnett	Professor Steve Thornton	Professor Wen Wang

Part 1: Preliminary Items

Welcome and apologies

2017.001 The Chair welcomed:

- [a] Professor Colin Bailey, President and Principal, who was attending his first meeting of Council.
- [b] Dr Darryn Mitussis, elected academic staff member from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, who had joined Council from 30 September for an initial 4 year term.
- [c] Dr Mangala Patel, elected academic staff member from the School of Medicine and Dentistry, who had joined Council from 30 September for an initial 4 year term.
- [d] Maggie Leggett, Director of Marketing and Communications, who had joined QMUL on 18 September 2017.
- [e] Mary Ojo, Vice-President Education, and Ahmed Mahbub, Vice-President Welfare, from the Students' Union.
- [f] Rakin Choudhury, Vice-President Barts and The London from the Students'

Union who would be in attendance at Council meetings throughout the 2017–18 academic year.

- [g] Kathryn English, Executive Officer (to the Chief Operating Officer), and Suezanne Awotwi, Project Board Executive Officer, Estates and Facilities, who were observing the meeting for development purposes.

Minutes: 10 July 2017 (Paper QM2017/01)

2017.002 Council **confirmed** the confidential and non-confidential minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2017 subject to a typographical amendment.

Matters Arising (Paper QM2017/02)

2017.003 Council **noted** the matters arising from the meeting held on 10 July 2017.

Chair's Opening Remarks (Oral Report)

2017.004 The Chair **said** that:

- [a] He wished to thank Simon Linnett, who had given his apologies for the meeting, for his considerable contribution to QMUL during his time as both a Council member and Treasurer of QMUL.
- [b] John Yard had decided to step down as Vice-Chair of Council following this meeting owing to the uncertainty of his work commitments, and would continue to serve as a member of Council until the end of his second term on 31 August 2018. The Chair thanked John for his contributions as Vice-Chair. Council **approved** the nomination of Monica Chadha as Vice-Chair of Council.
- [c] Becoming Chair of Council was both a great privilege and responsibility, particularly in light of the issues facing QMUL and the external pressures on universities at the current time. Council would need to demonstrate considerable resilience in ensuring that QMUL safeguarded both its values and independence.
- [d] He wished to review the schedule of business for Council with the President and Principal and the Council Secretariat and would report back to Council on any proposed changes or enhancements.
- [e] The Council Secretariat would be contacting members to arrange one-to-one meetings with the Chair from Spring 2018. The Chair would also be at QMUL most Friday mornings and would be available to meet with members and staff at this time.
- [f] The Winter Graduation Ceremonies would be held on 18-20 December and Council members were encouraged to attend.

Action: [d] Chair, Council Secretariat

President and Principal's Report (QM2017/03)

2017.005 Council **received** the President and Principal's Report. The President and Principal **said** that:

- [a] *Minute 2017.005[a] is confidential.*
- [b] It was a priority to improve QMUL's financial position by increasing cash generation and reducing the cost base. More cash was required to invest in the estate, IT and student support. A review of overseas student fees was currently in progress.
- [c] *Minute 2017.005[c] is confidential.*
- [d] There would be a consultation on the creation of a new Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF), which would measure how effectively universities were engaging with business and knowledge exchange, such as intellectual property outputs. The consultation would be led by Research England which, under the Higher Education and Research Act, would form part of UK Research and Innovation.
- [e] The Office for Students would come into place in April 2018 and the proposed framework for the regulation of the sector was currently out for consultation. A risk-based approach was proposed that would rely on the monitoring of universities through data returns. QMUL would need to improve its systems for managing data accordingly. There were a range of other issues to be considered, such as freedom of speech, staff and Vice-Chancellor pay.
- [f] The Finance Director would give a presentation to the next meeting of Council on QMUL's current financial position and plans for external borrowing.
- [g] Members requested information about QMUL's current position in relation to black and minority ethnic students and students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds in terms of attainment and entry tariff.

Action:

[f] Finance Director

[g] President and Principal

QMSU President's Report (QM2017/04)

2017.006 Council **received** the QMSU President's Report which had been circulated by email on 16 October 2017.

Part 2: Performance Review

Professional Services update (Presentation)

2017.007 Council **received** a presentation from Laura Gibbs, Chief Operating Officer. The following points were made:

- [a] Professional Services (PS) had a pivotal role to play in supporting university activity and providing a solid platform from which to respond to the changing external environment. There were pockets of excellence across PS and many good staff, but there were frustrations about the speed at which PS had changed to support the university; the cost, which was not spread evenly; and some pockets of poor service. The out of date systems and processes that underpinned PS and the poor execution of projects had led to low expectations within schools and institutions and the development of local systems and processes to compensate. It was, however, positive that there was considerable appetite for improvement.
- [b] The focus of the last year had been on developing a body of professional and support staff engaged with the university mission, the appointment of new Directors of PS departments and the creation of systems and processes to support change. Going forward a change programme had been launched using benchmarking information on staff and activities to identify opportunities for improvement across all areas of PS.

2017.008 Council **received** a presentation from Maggie Leggett, Director of Marketing and Communications. The following points were made:

- [a] *Minute 2017.008[a] is confidential.*
- [b] Investment in marketing and communications activity had not been significant when compared to other institutions. Staff, students and alumni had also not been empowered to promote QMUL to others.
- [c] There was a sense that QMUL did not pursue applicants sufficiently, partly owing to a strong overseas base and good links with local schools. The decentralisation of activity in schools and institutes meant that there was lots of capacity and expertise, but a lack of co-ordination. There was, however, a positive culture of working together and appetite for engagement.
- [d] A long term plan was being developed with QMSE to make improvements. In the short term changes to open days were planned that were anticipated to have an immediate effect.
- [e] Members thanked the Director of Marketing and Communications for the useful presentation and noted that it was important to spend time developing plans for addressing complex issues such as the QMUL and Barts and The London brands. Council members were keen to be involved in improving QMUL's reputation and acting as ambassadors for the institution.

2017.009 Council **received** a presentation from Mike Sheppard, Interim Director of Estates, Facilities and Capital Development. The following points were made:

- [a] *Minute 2017.009[a] is confidential.*
- [b] The Directorate's role was to underpin the academic activity of the university and to support the student experience. The focus of the previous year had been on the development of the Master Plan for the estate and a

series of other strategic and operational plans to drive improvements, which had not previously been substantially developed.

- [c] It was a challenge for student recruitment that QMUL was not able to guarantee accommodation for all first year students, which a number of competitor institutions did. The Residences Strategic Plan would address this issue.
- [d] Further capital investment was required to improve the estate, particularly in relation to the provision of student and teaching space, long term maintenance and a new School of Business and Management building, but would need to be carefully considered in light of QMUL's financial position.

2017.010 The following points were noted in discussion:

- [a] Members noted concern that some of the issues raised had not been reported to Council previously, but welcomed the opportunity for a full and frank discussion. It was noted that members would need to understand how PS activity would be measured so that they could be reassured that it was focused in the appropriate areas. There were a range of key performance indicators (KPIs) within the QMUL Strategy that enabled PS activity to be monitored, particularly in relation to the estate and QMUL's cost base. Owing to external pressures there was a need to develop further KPIs in relation to value for money.
- [b] A review of research support across the university had recently been completed and a series of recommendations would be considered by QMSE during the following week. The proposed changes would be implemented over a 12 month period and would be measured against KPIs.
- [c] *Minute 2017.010[c] is confidential.*
- [d] *Minute 2017.010[d] is confidential.*
- [e] Introducing changes within PS would require effective communication and external HR support was also being sought to take forward the change programme as the HR partners did not currently have sufficient capacity for this.
- [f] QMUL had responded well to the recent WannaCry ransomware attack with effective teamwork and communication to ensure the impact was minimised. There was further work required to ensure QMUL's cybersecurity resilience and the appointment of a Chief Information Security Officer would ensure this was taken forward.

Part 3: Strategic Planning

QMSU priorities for 2017–18 (Presentation)

2017.010 Council **received** a presentation from the QMSU Executive Officers. The following points were made:

- [a] QMSU was in the process of reviewing its strategy and intended to launch

a new Strategic Plan in January 2018.

[b] Priorities for the QMSU President for the coming year were as follows:

- i. Space on campus: improving Library access, refurbishment of the Hive and the development of a Sports Strategy;
- ii. Improving employability, which had been identified by students as a priority area;
- iii. Improving the sense of community and belonging amongst students.

[c] Priorities for the Vice-President (Barts and The London) for the coming year were as follows:

- i. Establishing a sense of community identity through effective communication, branding and access to facilities on all campuses;
- ii. Improving the accessibility, visibility and diversity of student representation;
- iii. Improving security, safety and wellbeing.

[d] Priorities for the Vice-President (Welfare) for the coming year were as follows:

- i. Promoting diversity through events and celebrations to bring students together;
- ii. Improving mental health and reducing stigma;
- iii. Improving safety on campus, reducing instances of hate crime and reassuring students they are safe.

[e] Priorities for the Vice-President (Education) for the coming year were as follows:

- i. Academic representation: reforming course representation, improving module feedback and ensuring consistency in approach by schools and institutes;
- ii. Improving availability and access to learning resources for students at all levels;
- iii. Creating a better sense of community through events and campaigns.

2017.011 The following points were noted in discussion:

[a] Progress against the QMSU plan for 2017–18 would be measured against a series of KPIs.

[b] QMUL had been in contact with Barts Health NHS Trust, Tower Hamlets Council and Police in relation to the increased occurrence of homeless sleeping in Whitechapel. The Head of Security would be asked to take up the matter again and an update would be provided to Council.

[c] Members thanked the QMSU Executive Officers for the excellent presentation.

Action: [b] Director of Estates, Facilities and Capital Development, Head of Security

Life Sciences (QM2017/05)

2017.012 Minute 2017.012 is confidential.

2017.013 Minute 2017.013 is confidential.

USS pension update (Paper QM2017/06)

2017.014 Council **received** an update on the USS pension scheme consultation and **noted** that those members who had attended the briefing had indicated their support for QMSE's position.

Part 4: Legislative and Conformance Issues

Revised Charter and Ordinances (Paper QM2017/07)

2017.015 Council **considered** a paper detailing proposed changes to the QMUL Charter and Ordinances and **approved** the draft amendments.

Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation of Financial Authority (Paper QM2017/08)

2017.016 Council **approved** the revised Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation of Financial Authority.

Part 5: Other Matters for Report

Finance and Investment Committee report (Paper QM2017/09)

2017.017 Council **received** the Finance and Investment Committee report.

Audit and Risk Committee report (Paper QM2017/10)

2017.018 Council **received** the Audit and Risk Committee report.

Honorary Degrees and Fellowships Committee report (Paper QM2017/11)

2017.019 Minute 2017.019 is confidential.

Governance Committee report (Paper QM2017/12)

2017.020 Council **considered** the Governance Committee report. The following points were made:

[a] The process for the recruitment of new members of Council to succeed Simon Linnett, Annette Doherty and John Yard was in progress and a recommendation would be made to the next meeting of Council.

[b] Council **approved**:

- i. the revised Terms of Reference for the Finance and Investment Committee;
- ii. the nomination of Monica Chadha as Vice-Chair of Council;
- iii. the revised Delegation Framework;
- iv. the revised role description for the Treasurer.

Action: [a] Council Secretariat

Use of the Common Seal of the College and Chair's Action (Paper QM2017/13)

2017.021 Council **noted** the report on the Use of the Common Seal of the College and Chair's Action.

***Agenda for the next meeting (Paper QM2017/14)**

2017.022 Council **noted** the agenda for the next meeting.

Dates of Meetings 2017–18

- Thursday 30 November 2017, 1600 hours, Colette Bowe Room
- Thursday 12 April / Friday 13 April 2018 – Residential conference including Council meeting
- Thursday 31 May 2018, 1600 hours, Colette Bowe Room
- Thursday 12 July 2018, 1600 hours, Colette Bowe Room