1. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SCHEME OF MEMBERSHIP

Received

1.1 The Terms of Reference and scheme of membership for 2015-16 (E 2015 01)

Agreed

1.2 To revise the Terms of Reference to make more explicit reference to the Committee’s role in confirming assurance that teaching space is meeting student requirements.

2. MINUTES

Confirmed

2.1 The Minutes of the meeting of 6 May 2015.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Student Learning Pods

3.1 Four student talk pods have been installed. The Committee heard that the Estates team are working to minimise distraction from the outside environment, installing frosting on the windows and considering acoustic insulation. The ambient noise
levels would continue to be taken into account when considering the placement of future pods.

Gender neutral toilets

3.2 Gender neutral toilet facilities were available in the Malet Street building. The Students’ Union were invited to contact the Operational Estates Manager to discuss any necessary changes to the signage on or in reference to these facilities.

4 REPORT TO THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
Noted
4.1 Finance and General Purposes Committee’s receipt of the Report of the Estates Committee (E2015 02)

5 ACTIONS
Received
5.1 An update on progress on actions agreed at the previous meetings (E2015 03)

Senate House North Block

5.2 The Committee heard that the agreement with SOAS for sharing space in the redeveloped North Block had been confirmed. Birkbeck would have usage of fewer than had been anticipated, partly due to the size of the rooms that had been built, which did not meet Birkbeck’s needs. Members noted the importance of insisting that there was signage in place to allow the rooms to be consistently badged as Birkbeck rooms while being used at night by Birkbeck students.

5.3 Discussions are underway between the Environmental Manager and colleagues in the School of Science regarding the projected budget for energy optimisation in Crystallography.

Action

5.4 (OB) Discuss the feasibility of the available options for energy optimisation in Crystallography with members of the School of Science and report to the next meeting of Estates Committee.

Student Space

5.5 The Master had met with representatives of the Student’s Union as agreed to discuss the estates strategy and other matters of mutual interest, and would offer termly meetings along similar lines.

6 TEACHING SPACE AND START OF SESSION
Received
6.1 A report on teaching space and the start of the 2015-16 session (E 2015 04)
Noted

6.2 There had been a successful start to the session, with most students able to find their classes using the online timetable and with the help of the newly deployed venue guides. Schools and the Estates Department would continue to work together to improve the student experience at the beginning of the session. Members suggested that including full postal addresses of the rooms being used would assist students who might have difficulty locating their classroom.

6.3 The requirement, set by UKVI, to teach students whose immigration visas are sponsored by the College in education designated space is complicating class allocations this year. 64 teaching events needed to be reallocated. This highlights the importance of the College retaining and increasing classrooms and lecture theatres within its own space. There is limited space for hire in the area that has educational use designation and also meets other requirements such as accessibility and high quality facilities.

6.4 Members considered the annual classroom user feedback survey. Over the year one venue had been withdrawn and replaced after poor user feedback.

6.5 In 2014-15 the College spent £83K on maintaining and improving existing classroom facilities, and £25K on new classroom furniture. The Committee discussed whether more should be spent in the future, given the importance of high quality teaching facilities to student satisfaction. Consideration was being given to the potential for improving particular rooms through donor funding. Members also heard that some rooms have become unsuitable for other reasons such as size, and in the long term consideration would be given to reallocating these for different use if the pressure on teaching space could be reduced.

Action

6.6 (EDs) Identify specific rooms that are in need of updating.

6.7 An issue with reduced capacity in the large lecture theatres at Friends House was reported. If necessary, the Master would meet with senior management at Friends House to ask that these kinds of changes be made in consultation with the College in future.

7 ESTATES PROJECTS UPDATE
Received
7.1 An update on progress in Estates maintenance projects 2014-15 (E2015 05)

Noted
7.2 The 2014-15 programme had largely been completed. The three lift installations had been transferred to the 2015-16 budget in terms of completion and payments.
Estates Committee noted the resource intensive and potentially expensive impact of maintaining old electrical infrastructure in the main and extension buildings. Works on the Malet Street electrical sub mains distribution and rising busbars had been placed on hold pending a full intrusive survey, thermal imaging report and plan of action for replacement of old electrical infrastructure is planned. Progress will be reported back to the Estates Committee.

Received
7.3 An update on Estates maintenance projects 2015-16 (E 2015 06)

Noted
7.4 With the exception of two lift installations, work had progressed on the 2015-16 programme according to plan. Several urgent pieces of work had been added to the original programme: the Library lift which had broken down, the electrical survey of the main building noted above and removal of asbestos discovered in a plant room.

7.5 The two lift installations at 30 Russell Square and the Clore Management Centre had been awarded to the Jackson Lift Group, based both on cost and their ability to complete the works within a 12 week programme, outside term time. However, despite considerable management effort on the part of the College, the target dates for completion had slipped past the beginning of term, and the lift consultant had been instructed to issue certificates of non-completion. Members suggested that it would be helpful for the College Secretary to communicate the reasons for the late completion with affected staff.

7.6 Lessons learned from this experience included a need to review timeframes at tender stage to ensure they are realistic, and to ensure robust on-site supervision by the contractor, which appeared to been a significant factor in the Library lift refurbishment which was delivered on time by a different contractor.

7.7 The Operational Estates Manager would contact colleagues through the Bloomsbury Colleges network and Jisc mailing lists to discuss the approach taken by other institutions to reasonable timeframes for installations of this nature.

7.8 Members noted the timeline for completion of outstanding Carbon Management Plan (CMP) projects, and asked for future reports to include costs and estimated carbon savings.

Received
7.9 A report on 2014-15 development projects (E 2015 07)

Noted
7.10 The 2014-15 estates development projects programme is largely completed, including the initial phase of the match funded Earth Science Petrology Lab Suite project. Given cost and programme concerns, the department's preference to expand the scope of the project to include the provision of a Non Metallic Clean Room (NMCR) had been kept under review as the project progressed, with the key enabling and design works included as part of the first phase of the project. As sufficient funds were available the NMCR could now be provided.

7.11 Work on the Clore Management Centre heating and cooling system had also been largely completed, with some additional work and costs identified during the course of the project, including the need to repair damage to the rear wall by a nearby plane tree. Refurbishment of 7 Bedford Square had been put on hold pending a decision on the future use of the property as discussed in 7 below.

Received

7.12 An updated budget for Estates development and maintenance projects (E 2015 08)

Noted

7.13 The affordability of the current budget would have to be considered again at the next meeting in the light of any changes to the costs of ongoing and future projects.

Received

7.14 A paper on Estates development project requests for 2015-16 (E 2015 09)

Noted

7.15 Current project requests include a new wet lab for Biological Sciences, internal repairs at Gordon Square for the School of Arts, improvements to the entry phones at Gower Street for the Schools of Law and Social Sciences, History and Philosophy, further improvements to School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy facilities in Russell Square, group study space in the Library, and improvements to counselling, HR office and IT services space.

7.16 There are two proposed capital funded projects: the work on 32 Torrington Square set out in minute 6 below and a much larger magnitude proposal for a new electron microscope lab which will be taken forward with the broader Estates Strategy.

7.17 The Master noted his particular support for the proposal to create collaborative group study space in the Library, which had been identified by the Students’ Union as a key requirement. There was also a need to ensure that there was also sufficient quiet space in the library.

7.18 The indicative cost magnitude of the proposed revenue projects is £625K. The Committee noted the need to consider all proposals in the light of the longer term
strategy for the development of the College estate. More detailed costings would be considered at the next meeting of the Estates Committee.

Approved

7.19 A development fee budget of £40K for consultancy to develop fully costed proposals for these projects.

7.20. Ongoing specification and costing of the budgets listed in the schedule attached.

8 32 TORRINGTON SQUARE

Received

8.1 A report on 32 Torrington Square (E 2015 10)

8.2 The condition of the front façade of 32 Torrington Square had deteriorated rapidly over the spring and summer due to water ingress. Following inspection it had been agreed that the building should be temporarily closed until repairs were completed. The building had been stabilised to make it safe and the occupants were being temporarily housed in 7 Bedford Square. The stabilisation and decant costs were £47K. Members noted that the occupants of the building had been pleased with the Estates department’s rapid response to the issue.

8.3 A specification had been created for the remedial works, and the current estimated cost was £250K, with £75K contingency. It was reported that, as the building was empty, there was significant benefit to also carrying out a full internal refit of the property, which was falling due.

8.4 As previously reported, the College has agreed a price in principle with the University of London for a long lease on the adjacent 33 Torrington Square site. The lease arrangement for 32 is currently a longstanding rolling one year lease confirmed by letters. Members noted the University’s new Estates Strategy, which prioritised commercial exploitation of property not covered by restrictive covenants. It would be sensible for Birkbeck to renegotiate and confirm a long term interest in the property before spending significant funds on remedying the issues with the building. Members therefore supported College management’s intention to secure concurrent long leases for both 32 and 33, allowing for the cohesive development of both sites.

Endorsed

8.5 The following approach to 32 Torrington Square:
   • Carry out tendering exercise for structural remedial works and interior refurbishment of 32 Torrington Square.
   • Successfully conclude negotiations with the University for a concurrent 99 year lease for both the 33 site and the 32 building.
Once the lease is in place, carry out works to the property, taking into account the developments planned for the 33 site.

9 PROPERTY UPDATE

Received

9.1 An update on property related developments (E 2015 11)

Noted

Toddler Lab

9.2 Although Cambridge House offered an excellent opportunity to create a co-located space for the Baby Lab and Toddler Lab, alternative options including the original plans for the site of 33 Torrington Square had not been ruled out. Plans for this site would depend on the outcome of negotiations with the University of London regarding 32 and 33 Torrington Square (see minute 6).

7 Bedford Square

9.3 At the last meeting, some issues over the tenant vacating the property at 7 Bedford Square were reported. These had now been resolved, and Birkbeck was in possession of the building. Members heard that there was interest in the property from a potential purchaser, who had put in an increased offer after their initial proposal was rejected by the College. The College’s property advisors had indicated that this new offer represented a good deal at the current market rate.

9.4 Members considered options for 7 Bedford Square, including the original plan to refurbish for use by the College, and how they aligned with the College’s longer term estates strategy. The Executive Deans expressed regret that the property could not be used to accommodate expansion of School activities as originally mooted, noting the College’s ongoing shortage of space. However, this approach would lead to unavoidable obstacles, as the property did not have the educational use planning permission needed to teach international students, was a Grade 1 listed building severely restricting the changes that could be made to it, and required refurbishment estimated to cost £0.75M. Selling it could allow for investment in property that had fewer restrictions and better fit the College’s needs for the longer term.

Recommended to Finance and General Purposes Committee

9.5 The endorsement of the proposed sale of 7 Bedford Square.

Rental space

9.6 As approved at the last meeting, the estates team was looking for a suitable property to rent for short term use split between multiple occupants, to meet some of the current needs for office space. This space would be secured as soon as something appropriate was found.
10 **ESTATES STRATEGY**

Received

10.1 A report setting out options for the development of Cambridge House *(E 2015 12)*

Noted

10.2 Members noted the underlying principle that new space should be used as far as possible to enable teaching space and linked student facilities to be concentrated on the core Torrington Square campus, to give students the best possible experience.

10.3 Research space and office space were the two main use options under evaluation for Cambridge House. Each option would involve a series of moves to achieve the optimum configuration for the College’s needs, moving research or office accommodation off the core campus and creating teaching space in its place.

10.4 Members suggested that consideration be given to exploring the potential for creating a postgraduate research school during the course of the moves, or to co-locate all the College’s research centres.

10.5 Members noted that the VAT issues involved with the various use cases were complicated, and the Committee and Governors would need to be entirely satisfied on this point before a decision was made.

10.6 Any donors involved with the project would be consulted before a final decision was made on the use case.

Received

10.7 A paper setting out the framework for a ten year Estates Development Plan *(E 2015 13)*

Noted

10.8 The paper brought together the various strands of strategic thinking in relation to the Birkbeck estate. Members noted the need for a clear approach that highlighted the key principles that should be reflected in the estates strategy, with identified sites for development, to provide a framework for further discussion. Members noted that the development of the estate should support the College’s mission.

10.9 The key elements in the strategy were the Torrington Square extension building, development of additional teaching accommodation, accommodation for science research laboratories, co-funded developments with other institutions and development of Cambridge House.

**Action**
10.10 (Students’ Union) Define the SU priorities for the estate and communicate these to College management.

11 ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE
Received
11.1 An update from the sustainability manager (E 2015 14)

Noted
11.2 Members noted progress on the development of activities aimed to create a culture of continued environmental improvement within the college. Work continued towards certification to the ISO14001 Environmental Management standard.

11.3 The College’s carbon usage had increased compared with the previous year. The Committee asked for the data report on individual building performance to be made available to building users, in Tableau if possible, so energy use could be more closely monitored.

12 DATES OF MEETINGS
Noted
12.1 The dates of meetings for the 2015-16 session:
   • 15 February 2016
   • 5 May 2016
Estate Development Project Requests 15/16

1  REVENUE PROJECTS

Science

1.1  MAL B58 Wet Lab - The Department of Biological Sciences is running out of space and new wet labs are needed. Within the department, a room, B58, is presently used as a storage room for freezers and also houses a computer suite that is not used efficiently. The present plan is to minimally refurbish B58, so that new wet lab users can be housed.

Indicative Cost Magnitude £100 - 150k (not including equipment or any unknown infrastructure upgrade requirements)
Development Fees Requested £15k

Arts

1.2  *Gordon Square Internal Repairs – There are a number of areas within Gordon square that have suffered water damage or damp as well as several areas that would benefit from a decorative uplift to improve the student experience. This project is aimed at delivering those improvements.

Indicative Cost Magnitude £20 - 100k (more detail required)
Development Fees Requested £5k (maint)

*Due to the nature of this work it is recommended that it is carried out as part of our LTM budget and that once costs are finalised an appropriate adjustment is made to reflect this.

SSHP & Law

1.3  Gower Street Entry Phones – The School of Law and the Department of Politics are housed in Gower Street. The houses in which the offices are based are not fully linked and not staffed with attendants, so are reliant on a buzzer system to enable students, academic colleagues and administrative and support staff to enter and to visit individual offices. The current buzzer systems do not cover all offices. The technology therefore either needs replacement or extension so that an adequate system serving all the offices covers these buildings.

Indicative Cost Magnitude £15 - 25k (more detail required)
Development Fees Requested £5k

1.4 *25-28 Russell Square Toilets* - The toilets in 27 and 28 Russell Square and the toilet on the ground floor of 26 Russell Square are all shabby with pipework showing and poor decoration. Repeated flooding from the sinks in the toilets on the second floor of 27 Russell Square earlier this year resulted in damage to the office below.

This project will continue the improvement of the toilets within the Russell square properties.

**Indicative Cost Magnitude £40-60K**
**Development Fees Requested £5k**

*Due to the nature of this work it is recommended that it is carried out as part of our LTM budget and that once costs are finalised an appropriate adjustment is made to reflect this.*

Central

1.5 **Library, Collaborative Group Study Space** – Library Services would like to propose that a collaborative group study space is created in the Library responding to current student demand. The proposal is that the Reading Room is transformed into this group study space in the summer of 2016.

**Indicative Cost Magnitude £200 - 250k**
**Development Fees Requested £15k**

1.6 **4th Floor Counselling Office Soundproofing** – Two of the rooms used by the Counselling Service to meet with students are on the fourth floor of the extension building. The rooms are close to the bar and the Students’ Union and their use is being affected by noise from these areas. It is requested that steps be taken to mitigate the noise issue by installing acoustic protection for the rooms.

**Indicative Cost Magnitude £10 - 15k**
**Development Fees Requested N/A**

1.7 **ITS Comms Room Redevelopments** – Improvement of areas housing the College’s data network, providing facilities to support the current and future development of infrastructure supporting access control, the building management system, building services such as signage, attendance monitoring and telephones as well as the PC and wireless network.

**Indicative Cost Magnitude £30 - 60k**
1.8 **HR Office Refurbishment** – Following a move to e-filing and a subsequent freeing-up of space, the Director of HR would like to refurbish the HR department office in Egmont House prior to a change in layout.

*Indicative Cost Magnitude £15 - 25k*

*Development Fees Requested N/A*

**TOTAL INDICATIVE COST MAGNITUDE** £625K

**TOTAL FEE COSTS FOR APPROVAL** £40K

2 **CAPITAL PROJECTS**

**Central**

2.1 **32 Torrington Square Repair Works** - Covered in paper E 2015 10.

*Indicative Cost Magnitude £250 - 325k*

*Development Fees Requested £25k*

**Science**

2.2 **New EM Lab** – Covered under Estates Strategy.

*Indicative Cost Magnitude £Multi-millions*