BIRKBECK
University of London

MINUTES OF THE ESTATES COMMITTEE

26 January 2011

Present:
Professor David Latchman (chair), Professor Philip Dewe,
Professor Hilary Fraser, Ms Karen Scott, Professor Nick Keep, Professor Philip Powell,
Mr Rob Park (as deputy for Sean Rillo Raczka), Professor Miriam Zukas, Professor Patricia
Tuitt.

Apologies for absence:
Mr John Biggs.

In attendance:
Mr Keith Harrison – College Secretary & Clerk to the Governors, Mr David McGhie –
Director of Estates and Planning, Mr Malcolm Pearson – Estates Project Manager, Mr
Malcolm Mooney – Estates Manager, Ms Elizabeth Whitehead - Facilities Manager, Mr Tom
McCartney - Safety Officer, Mrs Megan Reeves – Deputy Secretary, Mr Mike Devereux –
Management Accountant, Mr Terry Andrews - Income Accountant, Mr Mark Pimm -
Disability Co-ordinator, Ms Stephanie Chesters – Environmental Manager, Ms Julia Lerch –
Corporate Support Intern, Mrs Katharine Bock – Head of Governance and Corporate
Support.

In attendance for item 16:
Jeremy Tanner (Conference Manager)

13 MINUTES
Confirmed
13.1 The Minutes of the Estates Committee meeting held on 27 October 2010.

14 REPORT TO THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
Noted
14.1 F&GPC’s receipt of the report of the Estates Committee following its last meeting.
(E 2010 13)

15 ESTATES STRATEGY UPDATE
Considered
15.1 An update on implementation of the Estates strategy. (E 2010 14A)

Noted
Russell Square
15.2 The initial phase of refurbishment at houses 27-28 was concluded and the teaching
rooms and offices were in use. History, Classics and Archaeology staff offices were
moved into the houses over the Christmas break. The postgraduate research room in the basement was being furnished.

15.3 Following informal discussions with Camden Council’s planning office on the refurbishment of houses 25-26, a formal planning application was submitted in December and the outcome was expected in March. Planning permission was sought for all the projected work; the work that would actually be carried out would depend on the budget, which would be reviewed once new income was confirmed.

15.4 Discussions with the Wiener Library were continuing on their use of Birkbeck’s security and estate management services (on a charged basis) as well as provision of an additional library accessions room and shared space for bicycle parking.

**Gordon Square**

15.5 The School of Arts’ relocation to Gordon Square was complete. Energy efficient heating and wiring had been installed and the fire alarms commissioned. The postgraduate research student room was complete. The work at 32 Tavistock Square, which housed theatre studies and performing arts, was almost complete. Following a £50K pledge by a donor to refurbish the Keynes Library room at 43 Gordon Square, the work was scheduled for completion in February.

15.6 The School was developing ideas for upgrading the reception area at Gordon Square, and would be meeting with the Estates Team to discuss costings and potential funding avenues.

**Malet Street**

15.7 The final phase of Library remodelling involved an already commissioned lift modification enabling the lift to bypass the first floor giving secure and continuous space within the library, including access to the toilets. The library entrance was now on the ground floor and there was access, including for wheelchair users, within the library to its upper floors.

15.8 In the basement, Crystallography and Computer Science had installed their servers in the new shared data centre facility. The next phase involved installation of an additional chiller followed by relocation of the ITS College servers, scheduled over Easter. The testing facilities for the department of Psychological Sciences had been completed and were in use.

15.9 Following replacement of the main reception lifts, the College had not been satisfied with the quality of the steelwork (although the lifts fulfilled safety requirements). The contractor had agreed to do the necessary remedial work within the original price. The next planned lift upgrade was for the middle (goods) lift. The lift upgrade would also include installation of a communication system enabling disabled people to communicate with Reception from the lift lobbies during fire alarm evacuations.

**ACTION** (Operational Estates Manager)

15.10 Update the Disability Service Manager on the installation of this facility.

15.11 The Committee commended the Estates team on the progress made in implementing the Estates strategy.
Emerald Street

15.12 The College was selling its share of 23-29 Emerald Street, where the London Knowledge Lab and archive facilities were based, to the Institute of Education. Governors had agreed in November 2010 that sale negotiations should go ahead and had delegated formal agreement of the sale to the Chair of Governors and the Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee, who had agreed a sale price of £1.634M. The sale was expected to be completed by the end of March.

15.13 Estates officers were discussing with their counterparts at IoE leasing back space until alternative accommodation in the main building could be provided. Although Birkbeck staff would ultimately relocate, this would not affect Birkbeck’s continuing commitment to the London Knowledge Lab partnership with IoE.

Leases

15.14 Birkbeck’s acquisition of 27-29 Russell Square and additional space in Gordon Square entitled it to ask the University for low cost 99 year leases on the other properties in both runs of houses. In addition, last year the University had agreed to issue 999 year low cost leases for the “headquarters” buildings of the Bloomsbury based Colleges. The University had indicated that it would work on the “headquarters” building leases first and then move to the house leases. The College would establish with the University a timetable to expedite this.

HEFCE Capital Investment Framework (CIF) 2011-14

15.15 The College had made its submission for HEFCE Capital Investment Framework (CIF 2) funding in October 2010. HEFCE planned to notify institutions whether they had met the requirements of CIF 2 by the end of January and to confirm allocations at the HEFCE Board meeting in March. It was anticipated that allocations would show a sharp reduction compared to the previous round of CIF (2008-11).

16 ESTATES STRATEGY PHASE 2

Considered

16.1 An outline programme of proposed Estates work for 2011. (E 2010 14B)

Noted

16.2 Detailed planning for the next phase of relocation and refurbishment was underway and consultation with Departments and Schools was taking place.

16.3 The emerging programme included:

School of Science
- Relocation of Earth Sciences staff from University College space to the Main Building in summer 2011.
- Additional staff offices and more efficient space use to accommodate future expansion in Psychological Sciences.

School of Business, Economics and Informatics
- Consolidation of the School’s administration on the ground floor of the Clore building
- Centrally located postgraduate research student space.

School of Arts
- Minor improvements to the Vasari space in History of Art and Screen Media.
- Update of directional signage was required throughout Gordon Square
- Upgrading of reception and other common areas.

School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy
- Completion of works as noted in Minute 15.3 above in 25-26 to enable the final stage of the SSHP relocation with the move of Philosophy from Gower Street to Russell Square.
- Further office moves for Geography, Environment and Development Studies.

School of Law
- Following the relocation of Philosophy, consolidation of the office space in 10-16 Gower Street and vacation of 4 Gower Street.

Teaching space
- A 100-seat IT teaching room in the Main Building
- Expansion of the seating capacity in the Clore Lecture Theatre from 180 to 220/240.

16.4 The Committee discussed the competing calls on the College's Estate for space and facilities, noting that further discussion and evaluation would be necessary to evaluate space needs and match needs with available space as closely as possible.

16.5 A costing exercise for this work was underway. The College would need to take a strategic decision on what projects to prioritise, based on availability of funds. A costed plan would be presented to the Committee after the funding available through HEFCE CIF 2 was confirmed.

ACTION (Estates Team)
16.6 Meet with Executive Deans to evaluate the space needs of the Schools and the space available to match needs with available accommodation.

17 TEACHING SPACE
Considered
17.1 A report on internal and external teaching space use. (E 2010 15)

Noted
17.2 College teaching space was used exclusively for Birkbeck teaching on weekday evenings and for a mixture of Birkbeck teaching and commercial hire at other times. There were 95 teaching rooms in 2010-11. Eight rooms had a capacity above 100 and most rooms had capacities of 20-29 and 30-39.

17.3 In terms 1 and 2 an equal amount of teaching took place in College and external venues. In term 3, demand was lower and there was a clear opportunity to increase the use of the estate. The Teaching Patterns sub-group of the Teaching Space Steering Group was considering how to address this.
Agreed

17.4 To refer consideration of teaching space and teaching patterns to the Strategic Planning Committee

Noted

17.5 Commercial room bookings income had increased significantly in the last four years, to £1.9 M for 2009-10. However, the limits of achievable revenue under the current model were now being reached due to a lack of space.

ACTION (Conference Manager)

17.6 Report annually to the Committee on internal and external teaching space use.

17.7 Investigate the possibility of raising prices for commercial room bookings, to further increase income.

Considered

17.8 A note on options for extending teaching space and constructing a large lecture theatre. (E 2010 16)

Noted

17.9 A feasibility study had identified two options. Option A involved construction directly above the 1960s extension block and Option B involved construction near the southwest corner of the Main Building facing Senate House. Option B was preferred in terms of practicability and potential for delivering high quality teaching accommodation.

17.10 The total cost was estimated at £10M. As well as providing better facilities for students and savings on external room hire costs, there would be significant revenue-earning potential. Implementation would depend on identification of funding, possibly in partnership with a donor.

ACTION (Director of Planning and Estates; Estates Project Manager)

17.11 Pursue informal discussions on the feasibility of large lecture theatre construction with the planning authority and potential partners.

18 BIRKBECK STRATFORD

Considered

18.1 An update on the Stratford Island University Campus building project. (E 2010 17)

Noted

18.2 Good progress was being made. Planning permission had been confirmed in November and a deadline of May 2011 had been set for finalising the detailed terms of the land lease. The Co-operation Agreement between Birkbeck and UEL was finalised and would be signed following completion of the land acquisition.

18.3 The design had progressed to RIBA Stage D and formal tendering had commenced. Tender appraisal was expected in April 2011, contractor appointment in June 2011 and work on site in August 2011, with the building completed by summer 2013 in time for the start of the 2013-14 academic year.
18.4 An application had been submitted to the Foyle Foundation, linked to the performing arts facilities in the building. The application to Clore Duffield had been unsuccessful.

18.5 There was potential for gaining advertising revenue from the building site at Stratford during the 2012 Olympic Games.

18.6 The Olympics also had the potential to disrupt Birkbeck’s operation at Bloomsbury because Russell Square had been designated a transport hub. College officers would liaise with local planners to minimise disruption.

19 ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
Considered
19.1 A report on Environmental Management. (E 2010 18)

Noted
19.2 Birkbeck was working towards compliance with the international standard for environmental management systems, ISO 4001, using British Standard 8555 designed for small and medium sized organisations. The College had passed Phase 1 in 2008.

19.3 An Environmental Manager had been jointly appointed by four of the Bloomsbury Colleges (Birkbeck, LSHTM, SOAS and the School of Pharmacy). She would be meeting with Schools and departments to establish key environmental issues across the College.

19.4 The branding for environmental work would be based on the “Green Thing” initiative already taking place at the University of East London. A competition would be launched to promote staff involvement in developing the brand.

Agreed
19.5 Terms of Reference of a joint Project Board to guide and oversee the implementation of ISO 4001 across the four Colleges.

19.6 Confirmation of the Director of Planning and Estates as Birkbeck’s senior management representative to the Project Board.

20 FINANCIAL REPORTS
Considered
20.1 Reports on budget allocations and expenditure for:
- The operational Estates and Facilities budget (E 2010 19)
- The capital programmes budget (E 2010 20)
- The Stratford Island project (E 2010 21)

Noted
20.2 Projects were proceeding within the overall budgets.

21 PROJECT PROGRESS REPORTS
Noted
21.1 A progress report on previously agreed Estates projects. (E 2010 22)
21.2 The Committee commended the Estates Team on securing SALIX (Carbon Trust) loans for energy efficiency projects. An application had been submitted for an additional loan, to be repaid from future Long Term Maintenance allocations. If successful this could finance energy efficient air conditioning chillers, a revolving door at the main building entrance and an enhanced Building Management System. It was confirmed that any redesign of the main building entrance would preserve accessibility for users of wheelchairs and other mobility aids.

22 LONG-TERM MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME

Noted

22.1 A report on progress on implementing the Long Term Maintenance programme 2010-11. (E 2010 23)

22.2 The Committee asked for further detail in the report to help it understand the reasons for prioritisation of work.

ACTION (Operational Estates Manager)

22.3 Enhance the Long Term Maintenance report with further detail on prioritisation of work.

23 BUILDING ACCESS AND SECURITY

Noted

23.1 A note on building security measures recently put in place in the College. (E 2010 24)

23.2 Access to the Masters Office and Council Room had been restricted and, on occasion, students, staff and visitors had been asked to show identification. This level of security was comparable to other HE institutions in London.

24 DATES OF MEETINGS

Noted

24.1 The date of the Summer term meeting:
• Wednesday 11 May 2011 at 10.30am.