MINUTES OF THE ESTATES COMMITTEE

31 October 2011

Present:
Professor David Latchman (Chair), Professor Philip Dewe, Professor Hilary Fraser, Professor Nicholas Keep, Professor Philip Powell, Professor Patricia Tuit, Professor Miriam Zukas, Mr John Biggs

In attendance:
Mrs Katharine Bock – Head of Governance and Corporate Support, Miss Stephanie Chesters – Environmental Manager (for item 7), Mr Keith Harrison – College Secretary and Clerk to the Governors, Mr Tom McCartney – Health and Safety Officer, Mr David McGhie – Director of Planning and Estates, Mr Malcolm Pearson – Estates Project Manager, Ms Megan Reeves – Deputy Secretary, Mr Andreas Schmidt – BEI School Manager, Mr Jeremy Tanner – Conference and Space Planning Manager, Mr Peter Westley – Director of Finance, Ms Elizabeth Whitehead – Facilities Manager, Ms Roisin Lynch – Corporate Support Intern

1 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SCHEME OF MEMBERSHIP
Received
1.1 The terms of reference and scheme of membership for 2011/12 (E 2011 01)

2 MINUTES
Confirmed
2.1 The Minutes of the Estates Committee Meeting held on 11 May 2011.

3 REPORT TO THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
Noted
3.1 F&GPC’s receipt of the Report of the Estates Committee (E 2011 02)

4 START OF SESSION
Received
4.1 A review of operations for the start of the 2011/12 session (E 2011 03)

Noted
4.2 Estates and Facilities continued to work to secure external rooms of appropriate quality and value for money. The number of rooms available from UCL had decreased and two new venues had been taken on: Anglo American and Shakespeare College Bloomsbury. Options for hiring SOAS space were being explored.

4.3 The most significant need was for lecture theatres that could hold one hundred or more students, to accommodate Birkbeck’s increasing class sizes. For this reason larger Colleges such as UCL tended to have more suitable space compare with smaller Colleges such as SOAS. It would be necessary to develop a long term view on how to address the problem of large capacity rooms.
4.4 The start of session had gone well with more students finding their way to class without problems compared with previous years. Most problems that did occur were related to information not being entered into the system or students not being registered on modules.

4.5 Allocation of rooms for 2012-13 would commence with a meeting on allocation of space for large groups. There was likely to be competing demands for the College’s larger lecture theatres. It was suggested that school managers rather than individual academics attend this year’s meeting.

**Action**

4.7 (JT) Produce a brief report on the feedback from the meeting with the Deans on the outcomes of the start of session.

5 **ESTATES STRATEGY UPDATE**

**Received**

5.1 An update on implementation of the Estates strategy and the capital programmes budget *(E 2011 04)*

**Noted**

**Department of Earth Sciences**

5.2 A design for teaching, office and research space on the sixth floor of the Main Building had been developed to allow Earth Sciences to move from space currently rented from UCL. The preliminary estimate of £100,000 was revised upwards to £155,000 after discussion with the department on their specialist needs. The cost would be offset by savings from 2011/12 on the rental charge levied by UCL.

**Approved**

5.3 The allocation of an additional £55,000 for the Earth Sciences relocation budget.

**Noted**

**Laboratory Refurbishments**

5.4 £146K of funds were reserved for fitting out laboratories 321/323, once the School of Science had developed plans for the use of this space.

**Department of Psychological Sciences**

5.5 Reconfiguration of 5th floor office and research space had been completed on schedule.

**School of BEI**

5.6 The main administrative office had been relocated to the ground floor of the Clore building, three offices created on the third floor, and further office space refurbished for the School in 28b Torrington Square.

5.7 The creation of a centrally located BEI PG research student centre was scheduled for the first quarter of 2012. It was proposed that it be located in room 110 on the first floor of the Main Building, with ITS staff relocating to the 4th floor.

**School of SSHP**
The entrance and reception area in House 26 were refurbished and a ground floor connection made into House 27. The Department of Psychosocial Sciences had been relocated from the Main Building into 30 Russell Square.

School of Law

The second floor of 18-20 Gower Street had been leased from the University and refurbished for use by staff in the School of Law.

Teaching space

The Clore Lecture Theatre had been adapted to enlarge its capacity from 180 to 240 seats, and the air conditioning had been upgraded. The air conditioning work had incurred an extra cost of £15.5K over budget.

Following the May meeting of Estates Committee, the plan for the new IT workstation room was reviewed and the facility was provided on the 1st floor Main Building rather than the 4th floor.

The print room had been relocated from B06 into B15 and B06 converted into a seminar teaching room. Three other seminar rooms had been created and the Library seminar room had been refurbished to enlarge its capacity.

Salix-loan funded sustainability works

A revolving door had been installed in the Main Building to reduce heat loss and energy consumption. The replacement of the rooftop chiller cabinets serving the Main Building and extension was in progress and was expected to be completed in mid-November. It was anticipated that the project would be within budget once VAT exemption had been claimed. Estates and Facilities staff had worked to ensure minimal disruption during the electrical shutdown that was necessary for this work.

Lift replacement

The replacement of the Main building goods lift was underway with a slight delay due to technical problems. It was expected to be completed on budget.

Additional proposed projects

Approved

Refurbishment of 7 Bedford Square prior to its lease to Amity Global Business School. Half of the cost would be paid by Amity but they would be reimbursed if they remained as tenants for more than two years. The Committee authorised expenditure up to £60,000.

Refurbishment of a suite of rooms on the sixth floor of the Main Building extension to allow the relocation of the Institute of Children, Family and Social Issues from 7 Bedford Square. The estimated cost of the work was £42,000.

Allocation of an additional £24,000 for the purchase of equipment for a basement Library store room, enabling increased study places in the Library.

Noted

Estates strategy update

Planning for the College’s estates strategy was currently focused on three areas:
The University Square Stratford project, due for completion in 2013
Completion of outstanding works which formed part of the College’s
restructuring and improvement of student facilities
Planning for the long term development of the College estate.

5.20 There were several other potential projects that could be considered if funds became available.

5.21 In the longer term, plans were focused on consolidating and developing accommodation in the Bloomsbury precinct. A proposal had been made to conduct a master planning feasibility study to examine the potential for development.

5.22 Birkbeck was working with SOAS to bid for teaching space in Senate House North Block. SOAS and Birkbeck would present their proposals to the Project Review Group of the University Board of Trustees.

6 BIRKBECK STRATFORD
Noted

6.1 The joint governance structure was in place and operating well. The land lease was completed, contracts exchanged, and possession of the site received.

6.2 The co-operation Agreement between Birkbeck and UEL was finalised and signed. A draft Operational Agreement had been prepared.

6.3 The building contractor Volker Fitzpatrick (VFL) had been appointed on an initial letter of intent with negotiations ongoing to conclude the terms of the contract appointment and to accommodate the risks of delay and complication from Olympic Games activities. VFL had taken possession of the site and begun preliminary works. The schedule was unchanged with completion due for the start of the 2013-14 academic year.

6.4 A series of consultative meetings were being scheduled to refine aspects of the design.

6.5 As the tendered contract price was within the project budget, the contractor had been asked to incorporate enhancements to the fabric of the building, as well as to develop plans to enable the building to qualify for BREAM ‘Outstanding’ classification for sustainable building design, rather than ‘Excellent’.

6.6 Formal confirmation of the HEFCE funding profile had been received, and funding had commenced.

6.7 Birkbeck’s funding team was working to secure funding through philanthropy and private support and was making the Stratford project a fundraising priority.

6.8 Members noted the questions surrounding the potential impact of the Olympics on the progress of the project. The contractors was in touch with the London Borough of Newham over this issue and the project was registered with the Olympic authorities.
7 ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Received
7.1 A report on energy and environmental management (E 2011 06)

Noted
7.2 Electricity use and CO2 emissions were increasing, although as the College had expanded, energy use per student had reduced.

7.3 This was the first year that the data had been collected. Going forward it would be possible to carry out year on year comparisons and assess the efficacy of environmental policies.

7.4 Systems were being upgraded to become more efficient. For example, the voltage optimisation project was expected to have an impact on energy use after a payback period.

7.5 The Committee discussed the impact of inexpensive energy saving initiatives, such as reminding staff to turn lights and equipment off. It was reported that the Green Champions initiative would be launched in mid November, and champions in each area would then be able to implement these and similar campaigns locally.

7.6 It was noted that keeping up with basic maintenance, especially in the older buildings, could have an impact on energy consumption. Schools should make maintenance requests to the Estates Department (http://www.bbk.ac.uk/ef/helpdesk/form.shtml or ext 2001).

Received
7.7 A proposal for a Bloomsbury Colleges Environmental Policy (E 2011 06A).

Noted
7.8 It was proposed that the Bloomsbury Colleges pool resources and adopt a high level single environmental policy.

7.9 The School of Pharmacy had left the Bloomsbury Colleges in its merger with UCL, but intended to stay within the environmental group. The Royal Veterinary College would not be involved in the environmental group.

Agreed
7.10 The proposed Bloomsbury Colleges Environmental Policy.

8 OPERATIONAL ESTATES BUDGET

Received
8.1 A report on the 2010/11 operational estates budget outturn and the allocations for 2011/12 (E 2011 07).

Noted
8.2 The budget for energy would be reviewed in the mid-year budget review. Previous budgets had allowed large margins for energy costs.
8.3 The Room Bookings team was congratulated on their increased room hire income projections.

9 **LONG TERM MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME**

Received


Noted

9.2 The report reflected the need to clear a significant amount of asbestos that had been found on the main building fourth floor.

9.3 In January there would be a list of projects that would need funding. A revised approach to Long Term Maintenance with a five year programme was proposed, as this would be more straightforward to manage than a recurrent budget allocation given that most LTM work happened in July and August at the transitional point between financial years.

9.4 The SALIX loans for work supporting energy use reductions would be paid back from the utilities budgets rather than the LTM budget.

10 **SECURITY POLICY**

Received

10.1 The proposed updated security policy *(E 2011 09)*

Noted

10.2 It was necessary to have a codified policy to support the security staff in their work, for example to see ID carts and to ensure rooms were vacated by midnight.

10.3 It was suggested that the draft be expanded to refer to the use of social networking.

Agreed

10.4 To invite members to suggest any further refinements to the policy by email and to forward to F&GPC and Governors for approval.

11 **LONDON OLYMPICS 2012**

Noted

11.1 The College would remain open for operations during the Olympic period. Provision would be made to offset disruption, both from the expected extra demand on roads and public transport and from the operation of the Media Hub in Russell Square. Teams would need to plan their work; and staff availability; individually and it was not assumed that the best policy would be for everyone to work from home.

11.2 There had been a meeting with the Bloomsbury Colleges and Transport for London (TFL) to share information on expected numbers of staff and contractors needing access.
11.3 It would be important to share and communicate plans in advance with staff and students, in particular those enrolled on summer courses.

11.4 Schools and professional services were being asked to identify their plans and identify specific concerns. The plans would be collated so that an all staff email could be sent. The target for this was the end of December. This would be the first of a series of communications for staff and students.

11.5 IT services were preparing for increased demand in remote access to services. It would be sensible, if teams were planning for staff to work from home, to discuss needs with ITS in advance and to test remote access set-ups before their deployment. ITS should also identify systems that would not be accessible remotely, for further consideration.