

# **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Wednesday, 19 May 2021, at 4.00 pm

**Matters Arising**

5349 Members discussed concerns within the sector about the early implications for London of the Government's 'levelling up' agenda and how the University could contribute to and influence debate in this area. The Vice-Chancellor reported that she was ensuring that the University was supporting London's interests in the sector, for example through her involvement with the Centre for London, London Higher and the civic university network.

## **PRO VICE-CHANCELLOR (RESEARCH AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT)**

### **Update on Activities**

5350 The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Public Engagement) reported on good progress being made to lay the foundations for the Library Transformation Programme (LTP), including work to deduplicate collections to release space in anticipation of the needs of the LTP. Work had also commenced on mapping digital opportunities that could provide benefits to MIs and to the University.

5351 The new Librarian, Catriona Cannon, was due to commence her appointment in late June 2021 and, together with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Public Engagement), would be meeting with librarians across the Federation to discuss how the Senate House Library (SHL) might best support the MIs.

5352 The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Public Engagement) highlighted a range of activity in London, including, in particular: a productive London Futures workshop hosted by the Centre for London on 18 May 2021; and work being undertaken by Professor in Practice – London, Ben Rogers, on several projects that would provide opportunities for liaison between the MIs and the Greater London Authority (GLA), and draw together researchers from across the capital.

5353 The School of Advanced Study (SAS) was keeping a watching brief on possible forthcoming changes for the humanities. There were concerns that Government changes to the tuition fee regime could ultimately have a detrimental effect on the accessibility of humanities research, and thereby on the next generation of potential researchers. In this context, SAS was facilitating an event for humanities leaders across the UK, to consider how best to influence discussion and policy in this area. In addition, MI Deans in Humanities were jointly considering what action could be taken at a more local level.

5354 The Board had been informed, at its previous meeting, of the adverse effect on SAS of the confirmation by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) of a reduction in the Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget. One of the affected projects was the RECAP (Research capacity strengthening and knowledge generation to support preparedness and response to humanitarian crises and epidemics) programme run in conjunction with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM). An application had been made to use the unspent funding to bring the project to a successful conclusion; the outcome of the application was awaited.

5355 The Board noted that the inquiry into the Future of Commonwealth Studies at the University continued. The Committee conducting the inquiry, chaired by Sir Malcolm Rifkind, was expected to report in July 2021.

## **PRO VICE-CHANCELLOR (INTERNATIONAL, LEARNING AND TEACHING)**

### **Update on Activities**

5356 The Pro Vice-Chancellor (International, Learning and Teaching) introduced a report on key activities within her -rdh5 ve [(r)n atNTey2 Cntidetial)  
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*University of London Institute in Paris (ULIP) Developments*

5362 The Board noted the update on activity at ULIP. In line with French Government regulations, ULIP had been able to keep its building open since the start of the academic year, despite recent lockdowns. It was reported that ULIP was seeing

5368 **AGREED**

The Board approved the Federal Subscription and Member Institution Charges for 2021-22.

**Office for Students Conditions of Registration D (Financial sustainability) and G (Accountability for fees and funding)**

5369 The CFO presented a report on the OfS conditions of registration D and G (BT1543, Confidential). The Board noted the assurances provided within the report in relation to the University's compliance with these conditions of registration.

**Report from the Finance Committee**

5370 The Chair of the Finance Committee presented a summary of issues considered at the Committee's meeting on 4 May 2021 (BT1544, Confidential), noting that most of the key matters were covered elsewhere on the Board agenda. She reported that the Committee would be considering the draft University budget for 2021-22 at its meeting on 29 June 2021, prior to the budget's submission to the Board for approval.

**Report from the Investments Committee**

5371 The Board noted a summary of the key issues discussed by the Investments Committee at its meeting on 10 May 2021 (BT1545, Confidential). It was reported that there had been some discussion on the current investment return target; this would be the subject of further consideration at the Committee's away day later in 2021.

**Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) - A Consultation**

5372 The Board considered a report on the University's proposed response to the Universities UK (UUK) consultation on the outcome of the 2020 valuation of the USS (BT1546, Confidential). The Board noted the four key elements of the consultation: covenant support; contribution levels; opt-out rate; and benefit reform.

5373 It was noted that the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group (VCEG) had discussed the four elements of the consultation at its meeting on 5 May 2021sc wJ [(ohni1..







