

**Minutes of the meeting of the STRATEGY AND PEOPLE COMMITTEE
held on Tuesday 29 October 2024, 4:00 PM — 6:00 PM GMT
Technopark 1B16**

Present

Shona Brown (Chair)
Danny Clegg
Helen Coleman
David Phoenix
Paul Hayes (virtually)
Charlotte Adams

In attendance

Samuel Curtis (Group Company Secretary)
Deborah Johnston (Deputy Vice-Chancellor)
Alex Bush (Chief People and Legal Officer)
Tara Dean (Provost)
Tony Moss (PVC, Education & Student Experience)

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and in particular Paul Hayes who recently joined the Committee.

2. Declarations of interest

Charlotte Adams declared an interest in the Student Union governance update paper. The Committee noted this conflict but agreed no further action was required.

3. Minutes of the previous Strategy and People Committee meeting

The Committee approved the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record.

4. Matters arising from the previous meeting

The Committee noted the actions of the previous meeting and in particular:

- 1) The Committee's work programme has been reviewed and updated to support the new Board cycle. This review will now be conducted on an annual basis.
- 2) The equality and diversity assessment section on the cover paper has been reviewed and will be rolled out in the new year, as part of the paper template.
- 3) The Committee noted that the OfS Condition of Registration E6: Harassment and sexual misconduct will come into force in August 2025. Further work will be conducted to ensure the Board has sufficient training and oversight on this.

5. **Organisational KPI performance update**

The Committee received an update on the organisation's KPI performance.

The Committee noted:

- 1) Of the nine indicators reported, eight have improved with four improving above target.
- 2) KPI 9b: THE World University Rankings ranking has remained static; however this is still in line with target.
- 3) A significant driver of the upward trends is an improvement in the organisation's NSS scores.
- 4) The leading indicators have indicated that in year withdrawals and interruption rates have reduced and there has been an improvement in Level 4 module first-sit and overall pass rates.
- 5) Currently detailed benchmarking across the 'post-92 institutions' is not possible, however the metrics are being reviewed and monitored in other ways. Where benchmarking is available, it has been provided.
- 6) Relative targets will be considered as part of the strategy development process.
- 7) The Academic Board has regular "deep dives" into the KPIs at school level.
- 8) There was a considerable improvement across a large number of KPIs and thanked the teams for their hard work.

The Committee noted the update.

6. **Student recruitment update**

The Committee received an update on the current student recruitment.

The Committee noted:

- 1) The recruitment landscape has been volatile and challenging in 2024/25, with regulatory uncertainty around the International Graduate Route visa leading to a sharp decline in international demand.
- 2) The undergraduate target outlined in the budget was recognised as [REDACTED] still made significant progress towards it.
- 3) LSBU has increased awareness and applications from the 18-year-old cohort, however suffered from a more competitive environment for their conversion to accepted as other institutions have dropped their entrance criteria.
- 4) There was an initial [REDACTED] in international applications earlier in the cycle, however the position has improved, and enrolments are expected to be [REDACTED].

The Committee noted the Student Recruitment update and thanked the team for the outstanding results.

7. **Student retention update**

The Committee received an update on student retention.

The Committee noted:

- 1) First-sit module pass rates in 2023/24 have increased on the previous year by ■ percentage points.
- 2) All schools have seen a rise in first-time pass rates, save for one which is has been acknowledged and monitored.
- 3) LSBU has focused recently on avoiding over-assessment and embedding more authentic competence-based assessment which has led to the reduction of traditional in-person exams.
- 4) There has been a significant decrease in the number of students that 'failed to submit'.
- 5) There has been an institutional change in approach to exams which has had a positive impact on results and retention.
- 6) An early intervention process has been rolled out which emails/texts students if they are not engaging or attending in their course.
- 7) The process that allows students additional time to submit coursework has been streamlined which has had a positive impact on staff workloads and the student experience. During the monitoring phase, this approach has found that the majority of students submitted well before the deadline.
- 8) The Student's Union worked with the executive on many of these processes and was wholly supportive of the strategy.

8. **Student Union governance**

The Committee received an update from the Student's Union on a recent governance review.

The Committee noted:

- 1) Following feedback from this Committee, Board approval will be sought as the Articles of Association will need to be updated.
- 2) This was a comprehensive update, and the new structure is a pioneer approach to the Student's Union governance. The Committee welcomed the positive approach and was wholly positive of the approach.
- 3) There should be consideration given to measuring the impact of these changes both from a short term perspective but also long term.
- 4) To mitigate as many risks as possible, charity lawyers and the NUS have been engaged throughout the process.
- 5) LSBU's student body is vastly different from other Universities, further engagement methods may need to be considered if this structure is approved and implemented.
- 6) It is proposed that the new structure will have a positive impact on student outcomes.

The Committee noted the Student Union governance review.

9. **Strategic HR report**

The Committee received an update on key achievements and future priorities across the People, Culture and Legal Team.

The Committee noted:

- 1) The teams are continuing to support the fit for the future academic transformation programme.
- 2) There will be various change programmes starting on the Professional Services of the organisation.
- 3) A leadership development programme will be launched in the next few months to support managers at all levels.
- 4) The riots in the summer had an impact on the People Team as they supported the organisation through this.
- 5) The team has been shortlisted for “HR Team of the Year”.
- 6) There is ongoing work to merge the SBC and LSBU HR teams.
- 7) There is an all staff awards ceremony planned which will highlight achievements in the Group
- 8) The next staff pulse survey is scheduled for January 2025.

The Committee noted the Strategic HR report.

10. **Review of terms of reference**

The Committee noted the update to its terms of reference removing the restriction of Audit & Risk Committee members being a member of this Committee.

11. **Annual work programme**

The Committee noted its annual work programme.

Date of next meeting
28 January 2025 at 16:00

Confirmed as a true record

..... (Chair)