



LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Tuesday 31 May 2011

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Professor Michael Worton (Chair)
Dr Paul Ayris
Mr Michael Chessum
Dr Mike Cope
Dr Caroline Essex
Professor Richard North
Dr Hilary Richards
Professor Philip Schofield
Professor Hans van Wees

In attendance:

Mr Gary Hawes (Secretary), Mr Ben Meunier (Assistant Librarian (Building Projects))

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Marco Federighi, Professor Adrian Forty, Ms Caroline Hibbs, Professor David Price and Dr Andrew Wills.

Key to abbreviations

FLC	Faculty Library Committee
JISC	Joint Information Sub-Committee
LC	Library Committee
RLUK	Research Libraries UK
SMT	Senior Management Team
SSEES	School of Slavonic and East European Studies
UKRR	UK Research Reserve

11 MINUTES¹

- 1.1 The Minutes of the LC meeting held on 26 November 2010 [*LC Mins. 1-10, 26.11.10*] were confirmed by LC and signed by the Chair.

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Minutes of meetings of LC are available online at <http://ucl.ac.uk/staff/committees/library-committee/>

12 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

[see also Minutes 13 & 16 below]

12A **Annual Library 'open town meeting'**

[LC Min.7, 26.11.10]

Received:

12A.1 At APPENDIX LC 2-04 (10-11), notes of the Library 'open town meeting' which took place on 2 March 2011.

Reported:

12A.2 The Library 'open town meeting' had attracted only a modest turnout of a relatively small cross-section of UCL staff, and those colleagues who had provided comments and questions had mainly represented their own areas of interest or those of specific interest groups. In light of this, doubts had been raised as to whether the meeting offered a useful means of eliciting institution-wide feedback on strategic library issues. However, it was agreed to revisit at LC's Autumn term meeting the issue of whether or not arrangements for the meeting should be repeated during the Spring term 2012.

Discussion:

12A.3 With reference to the section of the notes of the meeting that pertained to the UCL Masterplan and the fact that some of the existing site libraries, such as the SSEES and Cruciform libraries, would be likely to remain *in situ* instead of being brought within the encompassment of the single central Library in the Wilkins Building, the Chair of LC confirmed that the Masterplan related to the Bloomsbury campus only and that there were no plans currently to relocate libraries on other UCL campuses, such as the Royal Free Medical Library on the Hampstead campus, to the Wilkins building.

13 **FACULTY AND DEPARTMENTAL RESPONSES TO LIBRARY STRATEGIC ISSUES**

[LC Min.6, 26.11.10]

Received:

13.1 At APPENDIX LC 2-05 (10-11), a summary report of Faculty and Departmental responses to the various strategic issues that had been discussed at LC's previous meeting on 26 November 2010.

Reported:

13.2 The Director of UCL Library Services expressed concern that although he had outlined at LC's previous meeting how much space was left for books and periodicals at the Wickford store at current rates of activity, Faculty and Departmental responses had failed to take this into account in suggesting criteria to identify which monographs should be relegated.

Discussion:

- 13.3 The following main points were noted during discussion:
- 13.3.1 Although digitisation had been suggested as a possible solution to the Wickford storage space issue, this was not thought to be a viable option given the timescale and the costs involved. In addition, it was noted that this would be a less appropriate option for books and monographs than for journals, and that it was unlikely that the legal infrastructure that would be required to obtain the necessary copyright clearance would be in place in the UK for a number of years.
 - 13.3.2 The UKRR had been lobbied by UKRR members and the wider community to give consideration to expanding its service to include other types of materials, and in particular research monographs.
 - 13.3.3 The UCL Bloomsbury Masterplan architects had confirmed to the Director of UCL Library Services that it was unlikely that there would be any possibilities for assigning any of the putative space on the Masterplan for library storage purposes.
 - 13.3.4 Although there was some discussion of the rationale for basing relegation criteria on the length of time that books and/or periodicals had remained in storage without being accessed by a student or a member of staff, some members of LC noted that this would be inappropriate since it was impossible to foresee which subjects or materials might experience a revival and be relevant to teaching or research in future. However, other members of LC noted that this would not be sufficient justification in itself for the continued retention of copies of books and periodicals that had not been accessed for a number of years.
 - 13.3.5 Some members of LC suggested that UCL might consider a policy in future of only acquiring digital copies of new books or monographs, where these were available. However, it was noted that publishers were in general opposed to releasing textbooks in electronic format, as this did not suit their business models – this was in spite of evidence from initiatives such as the JISC National e-Books Observatory Project which had shown that free-at-the-point-of-use e-books had no negative impact on print sales to students. While it was suggested that a way might be found of imposing access restrictions on e-book usage that would reconcile publishers to this option, it was pointed out by the Director of UCL Library Services that this would have the adverse effect of restricting the advantages of using e-books over their paper-based counterparts.
 - 13.3.6 Since UCL Library Services did not have any obligations as a national library and there was unlikely to be a significant uplift in funding in spite of the new university fee regime that would come into effect in 2012-13, it would need to face some stark choices, since if it persisted with its practice of retaining old copies of books and periodicals without a robust set of relegation criteria, this would be at the expense of the acquisition of new materials.
 - 13.3.7 It was agreed that the Director of UCL Library Services should consult with subject librarian teams with a view to developing a series of options for relegation criteria, based on different rationales, for consideration by LC at its next meeting in the Autumn Term 2011. For each option, it was agreed that it would be helpful to provide an indication of the number of books and periodicals that would be relegated (broken down by classmark) and the space savings that

this would engender. In the meantime, LC members were asked to consult with colleagues within their Faculties with a view to notifying the Director of UCL Library Services of any relegation criteria that might be applied to books and or periodicals within their specific subject areas.

RESOLVED:

- 13.4 That the Director of UCL Library Services consult with subject librarian colleagues with a view to developing a series of options for relegation criteria, based on different rationale – and providing an indication of the number of books and periodicals that would be relegated (broken down by classmark) and the space savings that this would give rise to – for consideration by LC at its next meeting in the Autumn Term 2011. **[ACTION: Dr Paul Ayris]**
- 13.5 That LC members consult with colleagues within their Faculties with a view to notifying the Director of UCL Library Services of any relegation criteria that might be applied to books and or periodicals within their specific subject areas. **[ACTION: LC members]**

14 **UCL MASTERPLAN**

Noted:

- 14.1 The Library Services Building Projects Officer, Mr Ben Meunier, was in attendance for this item.
- 14.2 The consultation draft of the UCL Masterplan was available online at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/masterplan/>. The deadline for receipt of responses to the consultation was 20 May 2011.

Received:

- 14.3 An oral report from the Director of UCL Library Services

Reported:

- 14.4 There had been a good number of responses to the consultation draft of the UCL Masterplan, and these had revealed a generally high level of satisfaction with the proposals.
- 14.5 The Masterplan envisaged the following main developments in respect of the UCL Library:
- the establishment of a single central library within the Wilkins Building and the migration of all materials from the UCL Science Library;
 - the conversion of both the ground floor of the Wilkins Building into a central public library space and the basement of the building, including the Refectory, into additional library premises;
 - the retention of the computer clusters and IT-enabled spaces on the ground floor of the UCL Science Library and the creation of other IT-enabled spaces on the ground floor of the Wilkins building, with emphasis on different types of IT-enabled study and social spaces to cater for different

student needs, including spaces for project-based and group-based learning as well as spaces for quiet individual study;

- the creation of UCL 'hubs' across the campus which will provide a variety of spaces suitable for individual and group study, supported by appropriate services and resources such as catering facilities, complementary library provision and ICT;
- the return to the Bloomsbury campus of the Special Collections with a view to making these more accessible and encouraging their use for teaching and research as well as in a public engagement context.

14.6 From the point of view of UCL's ongoing strategic commitment to helping to foster and facilitate interdisciplinarity, it made good sense for the Masterplan proposals to envisage all of the UCL collections being housed in one central library building.

Discussion:

14.7 The following main points were noted during discussion:

14.7.1 The UCL Masterplan envisaged a movement away from the classical perception and configuration of library space in favour of library space that incorporated and combined traditional teaching and study spaces with new and more varied spaces for learning and study. Some members of LC noted that this was exemplified by university research libraries such as the University of Edinburgh.

14.7.2 From September 2011, an upgrade to the UCL Wi-Fi network would mean that students and staff would be able to access library services in the same way that they would from any cluster pc. This would help to change the manner in which students used the Library.

14.7.3 The fact that the Masterplan did not appear to make any commitment to stating where new library space might be identified was far less reassuring.

14.7.4 The vision set out in the UCL Masterplan would go hand in hand with the proposals set out in the Provost's Green Paper, which placed the student experience at the very heart of its vision for the future of UCL and envisioned a transformative approach to investment in the UCL estate and the delivery of teaching and learning.

15 **LIBRARY SERVICES BUDGET 2011-12**

Received:

15.1 At APPENDIX LC 2-06 (10-11), two bids that the Library was making for additional funding in the budget round for 2011-12, for consideration by the Provost's SMT.

15.2 An oral report from the Director of UCL Library Services

Reported:

15.3 The focus of the first priority bid was on items from a wishlist of electronic journals, with recurrent costs, which UCL Library Services had been maintaining

for a number of years and benchmarked against a number of international comparator universities. However, the wishlist – which comprised 280 current titles across the whole range of subjects studied at UCL, at a total cost of £1,069,168 recurrent (at 2011-12 prices) – now represented a considerable shortfall in the resources that academic staff and students could expect to find in a research-led institution such as UCL. The Library's proposal was for UCL to fund the purchase of all the titles on the wish list in three tranches over a three-year period, beginning with £422,518 recurrent in the financial year 2011-12.

- 15.4 The second priority bid was for extended library opening hours, mainly in the UCL site libraries to improve services to students and further extensions to opening in the Main and Science Libraries. The Library's request was for UCL to fund both of these areas over a three-year period, beginning with £112,609 recurrent funding in 2011-12 for additional security and library staffing costs to cover extended library opening hours, mainly in the UCL site libraries.

Discussion:

- 15.5 The following main points were noted during discussion:

15.5.1 It would be more appropriate to present the first priority bid as a necessity to make up for a shortfall of provision relative to international comparator institutions rather than a 'wishlist' – and to emphasise both the range and interdisciplinarity of the titles.

15.5.2 The two bids should be transposed in order of priority.

RESOLVED:

15.6 That the bids at APPENDIX LC 2-06 (10-11) be transposed in order of priority.

15.7 That the bid for 'Developing Digital Delivery across UCL' outlined in Minute 15.3 above be presented as a necessity to make up for a shortfall of provision relative to international comparator institutions rather than a 'wishlist' – and that both the range and interdisciplinarity of the titles be emphasised.

16 **LIBRARY SERVICES STRATEGY**

[LC Min.6, 26.11.10]

Received:

16.1 At APPENDIX LC 2-07 (10-11), the final version of the Library Services Strategy

16.2 An oral report from the Director of UCL Library Services.

Reported:

- 16.3 The Library Strategy for 2011-14 represented an ambitious plan for development and growth to support UCL's teaching, learning, research and outreach activities.
- 16.4 The Strategy presented five Key Performance Areas which encapsulated the main emphases on which the Library would concentrate in its strategy for growth in 2011-14. These were:
- Student Experience
 - Research Support
 - Support for Healthcare
 - Space Management
 - Widening Participation and Public Engagement
- 16.5 The objectives of these Key Performance Areas were captured in Implementation Plans which would be overseen by the UCL Library Services Planning Team, supported by a comprehensive Communication Plan, which was included at APPENDIX LC 2-07 (10-11). The Strategy itself, and the Implementation Plans, would be reviewed annually by the Library's Planning Team to ensure that they reflected current UCL strategies and priorities.

Discussion:

- 16.6 It was noted that the Communication Plan at APPENDIX LC 2-07 (10-11) did not appear to incorporate a mechanism to provide for comment on and input into the Implementation Plan from students. The Director of UCL Library Services agreed that this would need to be addressed.

RESOLVED:

- 16.7 That the issue of the need to incorporate a mechanism to provide for comment on and input into the Implementation Plan for the Library Strategy from students be addressed. **[ACTION: Dr Paul Ayris]**

17 RESEARCH LIBRARIES UK: AFFORDABLE SUBSCRIPTION PRICE INITIATIVE

Received:

- 17.1 An oral report from the Director of UCL Library Services.

Reported:

- 17.2 The issue of rising, wildly-out-of-synch-with-inflation journal prices had been a matter of concern for university research libraries for a number of years. In recent years, percentage increases on subscription costs to the major publishing companies such as Elsevier had been running at about 10% per year.
- 17.3 UCL's present multi-year subscription deal with Elsevier for ScienceDirect titles – at a current cost of around 1.4m euros per year – would expire at the end of 2011 and negotiations on a new deal were currently taking place. However,

RLUK members, including UCL, had informed Elsevier and other publishing companies involved in the negotiations via JISC that unless there were significant, real-term price reductions in subscription costs, they would be forced to cancel significant numbers of subscriptions and look to alternative means of supplying the information needs of their users. A further issue that RLUK members wanted publishers such as Elsevier to address was for future subscription costs to be charged in Pounds Sterling rather than euros, since the falls in the value of the Pound against the euro had had a major impact on university library budgets.

- 17.4 The current negotiating position that had been reached with publishers was for a staged increase in subscriptions costs over the five-year period, which would amount to a minimal increase in the first two years followed by a bigger increase in years three to five. It was hoped that a deal between RLUK and Elsevier *et al* would be agreed by the end of September 2011. However, in the event that it was not and UCL agreed to cancel its Elsevier ScienceDirect subscriptions, a further issue would be whether or not it would continue to have access to the content of Elsevier titles that it had subscribed to previously.

Discussion:

- 17.5 The following main points were noted during discussion:

- 17.5.1 European research libraries, including UCL and other RLUK members, were in a significantly weaker negotiating position relative to the much larger and more financially influential US market. Moreover, the negotiating position of RLUK members could not be argued to be sustainable if the threat to withdraw subscriptions to Elsevier (and other publishers') titles was only intended to be a temporary measure.
- 17.5.2 A more effective strategy might be for UCL and other RLUK members to convince Elsevier *et al* of the validity of their position through a coordinated campaign involving academic staff who were themselves members of the editorial boards of publishing companies, along with those staff who were members of the learned societies. Such a campaign would carry all the more impact if it was combined with the threat of the withdrawal of the academic content and labour that these staff usually provided to publishers *gratis*.
- 17.5.3 It was agreed that the Director of UCL Library Services should be asked to feedback the views of members of LC to the RLUK. In the meantime, it was further agreed that it would be helpful for him to issue a note to UCL faculties informing them of the situation with regard to the current negotiating position between the RLUK and Elsevier *et al* and outlining the issues that were involved and the possible courses of action that academic staff might consider in an effort to persuade publishers to reconsider the plight of university research libraries.

RESOLVED:

- 17.6 That the Director of UCL Library Services be asked to i) feedback the views of members of LC expressed in Minutes 17.5.1 – 17.5.3 above to the RLUK and ii) issue a note to UCL faculties informing them of the situation with regard to the current negotiating position between the RLUK and Elsevier *et al* and outlining the issues that were involved and the possible courses of action that academic staff might consider in an effort to persuade publishers to reconsider the plight of university researchers.

[ACTION: Dr Paul Ayris]

18 **UCL LIBRARY SERVICES PROJECTS**

Received:

- 18.1 A report on currently funded projects, in addition to projects for which Library Services is presently seeking funding, at APPENDIX LC 2-08 (10-11).
- 18.2 An oral report from the Director of UCL Library Services.

Reported:

- 18.3 UCL Library Services had lost out to a commercial provider in its bid to NHS Evidence to continue to provide specialist collections.
- 18.4 The total amount of project funding obtained by Library Services so far during 2010-11 was an encouraging improvement on the previous year's total (£384,746 cf. £107,600).

19 **FACULTY LIBRARY COMMITTEES**

Noted:

- 19.1 Since the last meeting of LC, the LC officers had received the Minutes of the following FLC meetings:
- Arts & Humanities and Social & Historical Sciences (Joint FLC) – 18 November 2010, 3 March 2011
 - Built Environment – 15 November 2010, 7 February 2011

Reported:

- 19.2 Professor Schofield reported that he had been asked by the Laws FLC to raise the issue of the complaint of law students concerning the lack of space in the Laws section in the Main Library. The Director of UCL Library Services noted that the Library was aware of the issue but that it was hoped that this would be addressed in the longer term by the UCL Masterplan which would provide a variety of study spaces, all refurbished to the same high level, so that other students would have less of an incentive to leave the rooms dedicated to their particular disciplines.

20 **DATES OF MEETINGS 2011-12**

Noted:

- 20.1 Dates of meetings for the next session would be canvassed outside the meeting by the LC officers, in consultation with members, and notified to members in due course.

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