Operations Committee

24 January 2024

MINUTES

Present: Aimie Chapple, Vice-President (Operations) (Chair).

Suzy Adcock, Marion Atkinson, Dr Paul Ayris, Jeremy Barraud, Beth Beasant, Mike Brown, Simon Buller, Georgina Cade, Sara Collins, Sarah Cowls, Ian Dancy, Geoff Dunk, Helen Fisher, Clare Foyle, Ian Galloway, Megan Gerrie, Claire Glen, Katie Hamilton, Natasha Lewis, Sian Lunt, Andy Smith, Julie Smith, Thomas Turner, Dr Kathryn Walsh, Julie Whetton, Rebecca Whitham, Donna Williamson.

In attendance: Kate Fernandes (for Tansy Jones), Nick McGhee (Acting Secretary); Olivia Whiteley.

Apologies: Jason Clarke, Donna Dalrymple, Thea Gibbs, Alex Hall, Lesley Houfe, Tansy Jones, Mary McHarg, Ciaran Moynihan, David Pacey.

Part I: Preliminary Business

19 MINUTES

19.1 The minutes of the meeting of 30 November 2023 [Operations Committee Minutes 10-18, 2023-24] were approved.

20 CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP (Paper 3-01)

20.1 Operations Committee noted its updated Constitution and Membership, as approved by UMC on 12 December 2023.

Part II: Matters for Discussion

21 WORK SLATE 2023-24

21.1 The term 'work slate' referred to an agreed plan of essential projects for the year collectively owned by the leadership team and reflected in their annual objectives. It was the output of an extended period of discussion across senior leadership groups.

21.2 Eleven 'Priority 1' projects had been agreed on the basis of criteria including cross-institutional impact, resource implications, senior governance

involvement and the potential to unlock progress in other areas. Progress against agreed milestones would be overseen by Executive Oversight Groups. The UMC subcommittees would have an important streamlining role to play in reviewing progress and determining when it was necessary to refer business up to UMC.

21.3   The Priority 1 projects were: 'Programme Excellence' phase 1; functions; the Estates Masterplan phase 1; Digital Strategy; review of delegations; academic HoDs; admissions and student number planning; shape; disciplinary procedures review; EDI strategic review; international student market diversification.

21.4   A longer list of 'Priority 2' projects had also been developed. These were deemed to be significant business items captured on portfolio plans and deliverable within existing resources.

21.5   Operations Committee discussed:

a) the communications around this work, noting the importance of the message that this represented a continuation of the discussions with the community. A communications plan would be ready shortly;
b) the intention to align this work with other planning processes;
c) the question of governance approval routes, and the potential of the current work on delegations to clarify routes of approval;
d) the plans for closer alignment between finance and business planning, and the process for reflecting the work slate projects in the budgets;
e) the impact of this work on the work slate for next year, noting the likelihood of much activity rolling over into a second phase.

22   PS HUB AND STRATEGIC CHANGE UPDATE

22.1   Operations Committee was briefed on progress with the PS Hub and Change & Improvement review, which was seeking a route to a more unified service operating framework in place of the current fragmented services. As part of these changes, to improve operational alignment and to better focus on end-to-end Service improvement, the Continuous Improvement function would be moving to the PS Hub in January 2024. This would bring together the Lean Six Sigma (process excellence) and the Automation and Operational Excellence teams under a new role of Service Excellence Director. This combined function, along with the existing Systems and Data Configuration team and a new Service Performance and Quality Assurance team, would be led by Eleanor Gaskell-Taylor. Recruitment to other key senior leadership roles was ongoing and it was envisaged that appointments would be communicated early next month.

22.2   Enterprise Services Management was a key enabler of this process. Formal governance approval had been obtained. The current Discovery and Design phase would continue until March 2024 and would focus on understanding the current service and how the new system should look. In Phase 1 attention would turn to rethinking UCL's current services, including the mapping of

sample service journeys. In October 2024 Phase 2 would turn to the question of improving those services and enhancing functionality.

22.3 The Committee was briefed on the programme of work to identify, define and start reporting on KPIs across the VP Operations Leadership Team through to May 2024. It was being developed iteratively with first reports starting from January 2024. It was envisaged that Operations Committee itself would receive routine updates on these in order to inform the focus of its attention. Members were invited to flag any elements that they felt were missing as this process progressed.

23 IT SERVICE PERFORMANCE

23.1 Comprehensive service delivery statistics were reviewed on a termly basis by the ISD Service Delivery Board. A summary of the most recent statistics, relating to the period before the Christmas break, was presented to the meeting. These covered a range of measures including a view of the annual cycle of requests and incidents across various user groups, response times, and service availability.

23.2 In discussion it was noted that:

a) all statistics were reported on the ITSM report hub, and it was intended that some of these would be opened for the UCL community to view;
b) LCCOS employed an external scheme for tracking customer satisfaction. There would be value in exploring whether this could be rolled out to other PS functions;
c) most of the critical incidents arising in the reporting period related to the Student Admissions and Records Platform (SITS). This was recognised as a fragile key service and was being carefully handled.

24 ESTATES MASTERPLAN

24.1 Operations Committee was briefed on the process for the development of an Estates Masterplan. A consultation with the UCL community was due to launch in February, with the first iteration of a plan scheduled for issue by the end of the calendar year. Members were asked to advocate for a more collaborative and forward-looking view to planning for the wider estate.

24.2 Members urged the need to keep a close link with timetabling data and needs analysis on an annual basis, citing the sector's poor track record in predicting the nature of future trends in teaching delivery.

24.3 Operations Committee members also noted: the impact on professional services functions of being spread across multiple sites; the value of setting minimum standards criteria; and the need for target metrics as markers of future success.

25 **ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT UPDATE**

25.1 Operations Committee was briefed on the current admissions position. Offer-making had started much earlier this year and there was reason for confidence in exceeding last year's applications overall.

25.2 A paper addressing lessons learned from the current year's shortfall had been submitted to Council. This had prompted a number of questions about UCL's internal processes and their role in the situation, and in particular the offer turnaround times.

25.3 Other developments included: work on a diversification strategy; consideration of establishing satellite offices; iterative rounds of discussion about student number planning; interaction with the size and shape planning discussions; market analysis capacity; the establishment of the Recruitment and Admissions advisory group; work on the development of an SMS messaging facility.

25.4 Work was ongoing to review and reassign the functions of StRAFC and a final review of the proposed governance structures in this area would be taken to UMC on 13 February.

26 **MODERN DAY SLAVERY STATEMENT** (Paper 3-02)

26.1 At its last meeting Operations Committee had asked that Legal Services be consulted on this paper [Ops Cttee Minute 17, 30.11.23]. The paper had been revised to reflect Legal Services advice and would be submitted to Council.

26.2 Two versions of the statement were supplied, with and without UCLC, pending a decision by the UCLC Board on whether to produce their own statement. Other subsidiaries were below the turnover threshold requiring the production of a MDS statement.

26.3 Operations Committee endorsed the statement for submission to UMC and thence to Council.

Part III: Other Business for information or approval

27 **TIMESCALE FOR NEXT STRATEGIC PLAN REPORT** (Paper 3-03)

27.1 Noted.

28 **SERVICE DELIVERY BOARD PRESENTATION** (Paper 3-04)

28.1 Noted.

29   **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

29.1   20 March 2024 at 1-3pm.

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