PRESENT:

Professor A Copestake (Chair), Professor Z Barber, Dr T Tiffert, Dott C Domenici, Ms M Krish, Ms J Wyburd

APOLOGIES:

Dr J Fuld, Dr J Kelly, Dr J Aitken and Dr Y Liu

ABSENT:

Dr A Kabla

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mrs E Furuta, Ms J Farmer-Eynon (Secretary)

1. WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS AND APOLOGIES

Ms Wyburd welcomed Professor Copestake as the new Chair of the Committee.

Professor Copestake welcomed Ms Krish to the Committee and noted the apologies.

2. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE COMMITTEE

The Terms of Reference were received by the Committee (LCCM 17.01).

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 16 May 2017 were approved as an official record of the proceedings (LCCM 17.02).

4. MATTERS ARISING AND FOR REPORT

Certification / Recognition of CULP Award (item 7, 01/11/2016; item 2a, 02/03/2017, item 2a, 16/05/2017)

Ms Wyburd reminded the Committee of the background to this matter and informed the Committee that she had been in contact with both Educational and Student Policy, and the General Board’s Education Committee (GBEC) to discuss it. She further informed the Committee that she had subsequently had discussions with the Student Registry, who advised that inclusion of the CULP Award on the University transcript again was dependent on the CamSIS improvement project, and it would probably be possible for students to be enrolled onto the system at the time that their exams were due to be taken. Ms Wyburd also advised the Committee that students who failed their exams for the CULP Award would not have anything recorded on the transcript. Ms Wyburd also informed the Committee that she had spoken to Jenny Green at the Student Registry and had been advised by her that the matter could potentially be considered at GBEC at its meeting on 5 December 2017.

5. APPROVAL OF STARRED ITEMS

The item starred at 11 was approved.
6. Strategic Planning

a) Vision, Mission and Strategic Goals
The Committee received the Centre’s vision, mission and strategic goals document (LCCM 17.03). Ms Wyburd reminded that the strategic goals were updated regularly; the vision and mission had not been updated for approximately eight years.

b) Outline Five-Year Budget
The Committee received the Centre’s five-year outline budget plan (LCCM 17.04). Ms Wyburd drew the Committee’s attention to the deficits projected for most sections and noted that the budget surplus projected two years ago had now become a deficit owing to a number of factors, increased employment costs and a decrease in CULP enrolments among them.

Ms Wyburd advised the Committee that the Centre continues to seek to diversify its sources of income, with a view to increasing the proportion from intra-University provision; she drew the Committee’s attention to the effect that the University’s Indirect Cost Charges were having on the Centre’s overall finances, and that continued year-on-year losses meant having to utilise the spendable reserves on operational rather than strategic activities. She also advised that the senior staff team were engaged in regular cost reviews.

The Committee discussed last year’s decrease in CULP students for general courses, with Ms Wyburd advising that the number of enrolments for Michaelmas / Lent Term courses this year were broadly in line with last year’s; Ms Krish noted the financial burden on students. Professor Barber asked about how the Centre advertised its courses; Ms Wyburd listed the various means. The Committee then discussed the Centre’s advertising strategy, with significant input from Ms Krish, who raised the possibility of advertising via CUSU’s Facebook page and using testimonials from former students in the student newspapers as a form of advertising and Mrs Furuta agreed to follow up on this suggestion. The Committee also discussed the possibility of the Language Centre identifying one student representative per College and then offering identified reps an incentive of some kind, e.g. free or subsidised tuition for CULP courses, and then monitoring enrolments from the Colleges to determine if this had any effect.

Professor Copestake asked Ms Krish if CUSU ran any focus groups which might be able to give general student feedback on Language Centre courses and activities. She also noted that graduate students were encouraged to undertake 75 hours of researcher training and that targeting Faculties and Departments on the value of language learning within this framework might prove fruitful.

7. Learning and Teaching Review 2017-18
Ms Wyburd reminded the Committee that the last Learning and Teaching Review had been carried out in 2011-12 and informed the Committee that a pre-meeting with colleagues from the Engineering Language Unit, and Education and Student Policy had taken place in October, during which the timing and duration of the panel visit had been discussed. She informed the Committee that the submission document and appendices compiled by a cross-section of Centre staff were in preparation for a deadline before Christmas and that the submission text would be received by at the Committee’s Lent Term meeting.

8. Draft Annual Report 2016-17
The Committee received the draft Annual Report for 2016-17 (LCCM 17.05). Ms Wyburd noted the current distribution of the Report and, further to the previous Chair’s suggestion
asked the Committee’s advice on proposing the Report be received by the General Board in addition to the statutory obligation for it to be taken by the Council of the School; it was agreed that this would be taken up with the Head of School. Ms Wyburd further noted that the Report was a valuable opportunity to showcase the service that the Centre provides to the rest of the collegiate University.

Professor Barber queried whether Colleges should be ordered by percentage of student population in the CULP stats and it was agreed that the table should be reordered to show absolute numbers. The Committee congratulated the Language Centre on the presentation and contents of the Report and approved it subject to this minor alteration.

9. **Pressland Fund Financial Report and Terms of Reference**

The Committee received an overview of the current state of the Pressland Fund, together with an extract from Statutes and Ordinances outlining the Terms of References of the Fund (LCCM 17.06). Ms Wyburd reminded the Committee that it had ultimate responsibility for oversight of the Fund.

In relation to the Terms of Reference, there was some discussion about whether they should be updated to specifically include the School of Clinical Medicine and it was agreed that Ms Farmer-Eynon should raise this with the University Draftsman. It was noted that previous provision of language courses for scientists had not had significant uptake.

Ms Wyburd informed the Committee that a significant underspend of the interest on the Fund had been identified during the year-end financial exercise and asked the Committee for suggestions as to how this might be used, beyond the current commitment to supporting the bespoke provision for Medics and the bursary scheme. There followed some discussion about opportunities for pump-priming projects, for example the provision of free tuition to College student representatives.

10. **Standing Items**

   a) **Academic English Literacy Test**

   Ms Wyburd gave a brief overview of the background to this project. She reported to the Committee that Cambridge Assessment had not yet made progress with the market research exercise. She informed the Committee that she had used an opportunity to raise the matter with the University’s new Chief Financial Officer, following which there had been some indications of escalated consideration of the project within Cambridge Assessment. She reminded the Committee that one hope for this project was that an externally administered, reliable test would reduce the burden on ADTIS staff. Ms Wyburd advised the Committee that it was envisaged that the Academic English Literacy Test would be offered for use by many universities, not kept solely for the University of Cambridge.

   b) **Fundraising**

   The Committee received the current fundraising proposal (LCCM 17.07).

   Ms Wyburd reminded the Committee that the strategy in its original form had been advised against by CUDAR, who encouraged a more donor-facing iteration. She noted CUDAR’s current priority of fundraising for graduate studentships which could provide a framework for the Centre’s approach and that this would further be discussed with CUDAR in January 2018.
There followed some general discussion about the need to attract larger donors and the status of the Centre in the School’s fundraising priorities.

c) Director’s Report
Ms Wyburd congratulated Ms Farmer-Eynon on her permanent appointment to the Language Centre Administrator post and thanked all the Committee members who had served on both appointment panels during the recruitment process.

She reported on the bid which had been submitted to the HEFCE Catalyst Fund, which had been prepared with Jim Gazzard, the Director of the Institute for Continuing Education (ICE) in partnership with the University of East Anglia. Ms Wyburd briefed the Committee on the proposed ‘ELICIT’ project which aimed to develop and deliver industry-specific language training in the East of England, leading to a postgraduate qualification.

11. *CULP Examiners Minutes and Reports from Externals*
The Committee received the minutes of the CULP Examiners Meeting of Friday 5 May 2017 (LCCM 17.08), and reports from the External Examiners and responses to them (LCCM 17.09).

12. Risk Register
The Committee received the Language Centre Strategic Risk Register (LCCM 17.10).

Ms Wyburd noted that the top two concerns were space and finance.

13. Date of Next Meeting
The Committee noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 6 February 2018 from 14h00 in Seminar Room G, 17 Mill Lane.

14. Any Other Business
Professor Copestake noted that Dr Liu, Professor Barber and Dr Fuld had all been nominated for a further, four-year term of appointment by the General Board on the recommendation of their respective Schools.