

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS

at the sixty-sixth meeting of the

COUNCIL OF THE IMPERIAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND MEDICINE

The sixty-sixth meeting of the Council was held via Microsoft Teams, hosted by Imperial College London, South Kensington, at 10:00 a.m. on Friday 15th May 2020, when there were present:

Mr. J. Allan (Chair), Professor N. Brandon, Mr. C. Brinsmead, Mr. T. Courtauld, Professor R. Craster, Mr J. Cullen, Professor A. Gast (President), Mr. R. Kalifa, Sir J. Michael, Ms. S. Murray, Dr. M. Safa, Professor J. Sanders, Mr. M. Sanderson, Mr. A. Sood, Professor T. Tetley, Professor F. Veloso, Professor I. Walmsley (Provost), Professor J. Weber, Mr. C. Williams and Mr. J. Neilson (Clerk to the Court and Council).

In attendance

Professor E. McCoy, (items 10 – 13), Ms L. Guerra (items 10 – 13), Professor N. Jennings (items 10 – 13), Mr. T. Lawrence (items 10 - 13), Professor O. Matar (items 10 – 13), Miss A. Wolthuizen, and Mrs. R. Knight (Assistant Clerk to the Court and Council).

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES

1. There were no apologies.

ITEM 2 – MINUTES

2. There were no comments on the minutes.

Resolved:

i) That the Minutes of the sixty-fifth meeting of the Council, held on Thursday 13 February 2020 be approved.

ITEM 3 – MATTERS ARISING

3. There were no matters arising to note.

ITEM 4 – CHAIR’S REPORT

4. The Chair reported that the Nominations Committee had met prior to the Council meeting and had recommended that Mr Ron Kalifa be appointed to the Finance Committee with immediate effect. Ms Sara Murray would be appointed to the Business School Advisory Board and would stand down from the White City Syndicate.

Resolved:

That Mr Ron Kalifa be appointed to the Finance Committee with immediate effect.

ITEM 5 – PRESIDENT’S REPORT

5. The President, Professor Alice Gast, reported that three staff had sadly died due to COVID-19.
6. The community response to the challenges resulting from the pandemic had been tremendous, particularly regarding education, teaching and assessment. To support the response, non-essential activity had been suspended or postponed. Hundreds of friends, staff and alumni donors, many new to College, had donated over £350K to the COVID-19 response fund. The President’s Fund had allocated £1m to supplement the fund which had now funded ten projects with another ten underway. Advancement had raised over £4m for Robin Shattock’s vaccine development from several major donors. The College was continuing its focus on student recruitment and ramping up campus activity.
7. Project Oak had been completed. This had taken over two years of persistent work by an excellent team. The President thanked Council for their input over the past three years. Work on the transition to new locations fulfilling the Faculty of Medicine vision was now underway.

ITEM 6 – PROVOST’S REPORT

8. The Provost, Professor Ian Walmsley, thanked staff, including the groups led by the Vice Deans and the various Faculty teams, for their work to deliver a smooth and rapid transition to remote teaching and assessment.
9. The new Director of Human Resources, Mr Harbhajan Brar, would join the College from St George’s University Hospital Trust on 1 June 2020. The Vice Provost (Education), Simone

Buitendijk, would be leaving the College at the end of August to become Vice-Chancellor at Leeds University. An internal recruitment was underway to appoint an interim Vice-Provost (Education) to the post for a year. The change would enable the reorganisation of academic services as a single operational unit, and an interim Director of Academic Services would be seconded for 3 months to develop proposals for this directorate.

10. Recent staff achievements included the appointment of Dr Rob Gross as the Director of the new UK Energy Research Centre (UKERC); the award of UKRI Future Leader Fellowships to Dr Cardona, Dr Thomas, and Dr Rouse; the election of Professor Custovic, Professor Hallett, Professor Howes and Professor Modi as Fellows of the Academy of Medical Sciences; and the election of Professor Stevens, Professor McCulloch and Professor Jackson as Fellows of the Royal Society. These achievements demonstrated the College's continued success in driving the frontiers of research.
11. The College had recently submitted its response to the second consultation on JEP2 regarding the options for the 2020 USS pensions valuation.

ITEM 7 – AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE REPORT (PAPER A)

12. The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, John Cullen, presented the report from the meetings of the Audit and Risk Committee on 20 February and 7 May 2020. The February meeting discussions were outlined in the report. The May meeting had focused on risk. The annual risk review had been deferred in present circumstances and would be presented to Council at the November meeting. Instead the Committee had discussed a report from the Director of Risk Management which had described the broad range of Covid risks, and a report from the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine which had outlined the clinical and non-clinical support provided by the College to its NHS partners.
13. The Students' Union had appointed a new Managing Director, to start in September 2020. The President, Abhijay Sood, had been re-elected for a second term.

ITEM 8 – WHITE CITY SYNDICATE REPORT

14. The Chair of the White City Syndicate, Toby Courtauld, provided an oral report on the meeting held on 14 May 2020.
15. The Committee had identified priority areas for the syndicate for the next six months: the impact of Covid; the infrastructure delivery plan; the performance and measurement of risk; external opportunities outside the core properties; and site development. The Committee was conscious that the Covid pandemic had accelerated workplace trends, which could impact on the White City vision, for example, on the leasing strategy.

ITEM 9 – FINANCE COMMITTEE (PAPER B)

16. The Chair of the Finance Committee, Chris Brinsmead, presented the report from the Committee meeting on 30 April 2020. The Committee was currently meeting every four weeks.
17. The Committee had agreed with the College's recommendation that the £30m improvement in cash from operations now had to be delivered through cost reduction alone. However, there was also a need to find ways to increase revenue over the longer term.

ITEM 10 – SCENARIO PLANNING (PAPER C)

18. The Chief Financial Officer, Muir Sanderson, presented the scenarios set out in Paper C. He emphasised that the scenarios were being used to drive discussion on potential mitigating actions the College might need to take. None of them should be seen as forecasts.
19. There had been less interruption to the cash flows than originally anticipated, but actions were being identified to deliver the target improvement of £30m. Consultations were to begin shortly on a proposed restructuring of ICT.
20. There could also be opportunities to increase revenue based on the College's education and research reputation and the potential to contribute to the recharging of the UK economy through relevant research and the upskilling of the existing workforce.

ITEM 11 – RAMP UP

21. Nick Jennings, Vice Provost (Research), updated Council on efforts to restart more campus-based research. During the lockdown research had continued remotely, and essential labs had remained open. Pilots to resume activity in other labs had begun in accordance with the agreed principles for ramp up. There was strong staff support for the pilots, which had been oversubscribed. Childcare and public transport were the biggest barriers for people returning to work. Staff involved in the first pilots were those who did not require public transport and the College had opened the Early Years Centre to help support those with children.

ITEM 12 – STRATEGIC APPROACH TO ONLINE AND HYBRID EDUCATION

22. The Provost, Ian Walmsley, introduced Professors Matar and McCoy, who provided Council with an update on the transition to the online delivery of education and assessment. In doing so, the College had worked hard to maintain its obligations to students and the regulators, by prioritising the welfare of students and the quality of the education provision. The lockdown had occurred prior to the last week of the Spring term, and students had completed their work that term remotely. Consultation with students had informed the decision to transition to timed remote assessments. High quality learning outcomes had been maintained, and the assessments had gone well so far. The teams continued to work closely with staff and students.
23. In the future education would be delivered both on campus and online. In this format it would be important to maintain a holistic student experience and to maximise student opportunities across both academic and non-academic activities. How the College might achieve this was being addressed in collaboration with the Student Union. Council members emphasised the opportunity to think beyond current technology, through dialogue with students and other stakeholders, about future innovations for remote learning. Short online courses related to the College's research reputation had been launched, including the Coursera course in epidemiology.

ITEM 13– ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON STUDENT RECRUITMENT

24. Council received a presentation from Leila Guerra regarding student recruitment. Departments were engaging in active recruitment across the College.
25. Communication about the College offer was being carefully co-ordinated, with departments able to tailor their messages appropriately. It was suggested that the College should develop a campaign to increase its social media presence, for example by encouraging more staff to use LinkedIn and by mobilising academics to increase global awareness. Regular surveys could be a useful tool to track change.

ITEM 14 – OFFICE FOR STUDENTS REGULATIONS DURING COVID 19 (PAPER D)

26. Council received the report about changes to the OfS Regulations during the pandemic. The Provost explained the risks and mitigations regarding degree quality, student number controls and overseas students.

ITEM 15 – ADVANCEMENT (PAPER E)

27. The President presented the Advancement report (Paper E). There had been a swift response

to provide funding and support for covid-19 efforts. 72% of these donors were new to the College and had included major gifts. The Alumni team had developed connections that were being utilised in the Covid response, including assistance with student recruitment across the world.

ITEM 16– STAFF MATTERS (PAPER F)

28. Paper F was received for information.

ITEM 17 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

29. Council thanked everyone who had contributed to work to respond to the pandemic crisis.

NEXT MEETING

30. The next meeting would be held at 10 am on Friday 10 July, with an informal meeting on Wednesday 10 June at 2pm.

Meeting closed at 12:55.