MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS

at the

Fourteenth Meeting of the

COUNCIL

of the

IMPERIAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND MEDICINE

The Fourteenth Meeting of the Council was held in the Council Room, 170, Queen’s Gate at 10.30 a.m. on Friday, 20th October 2000, when there were present:

Lord Vincent (Chairman), Mr. W. L. Banks, Professor P. W. Bearman, Professor J. N. B. Bell, Mr. R. D. Buchan-Dunlop, Mr. A. R. F. Buxton, Professor T. J. H. Clark, Professor C. R. W. Edwards, Professor M. G. Haines, Professor J. S. Higgins, Professor S. P. F. Hughes, Dr. M. P. Knight, Mr. H. B. Lowe, Mr. R. J. Margetts, Sir Alan Munro, Mr. H. M. Neal, Professor R. D. Rawlings (from Minute 2 onwards), Dr. C. L. Vaughan, the Rector, the Deputy Rector and the President of ICU, together with the Clerk to the Court and Council.

Imperial College Union Observer: Mr. E. Pollard (Deputy President, Finance and Services).

In attendance: the Academic Registrar, the Director of Estates, the Director of Finance, the Director of Personnel, the Director of Planning and MIS and the Assistant Clerk to the Court and Council.

Apologies: Mr. G. Able, Dr. E. Buttle, Professor I. J. Graham-Bryce, Dr. D. P. Isherwood, Sir Stuart Lipton, The Hon. Mrs. Sara Morrison, Professor P. Poole-Wilson and Dr. B. G. Smith.

Welcome

The Chairman welcomed Mr Hugh Lowe, who had been in attendance at the previous year’s meetings as the observer appointed by the Wye College Board of Governors, to his first Meeting as a member of the Council. The Chairman also welcomed Mr Hamish Common and Mr Etienne Pollard, respectively the new President and Deputy President (Finance and Services) of the Imperial College Union, to their first Meeting of the Council.

APPOINTMENTS (Paper A)

1. The Clerk introduced Paper A and informed the Council that the Nominations Committee had recommended the appointment of Professor Rees Rawlings and
Professor Malcolm Green to the Council to fill the two vacancies for members of the senior staff.

Resolved: That the appointment of Professor R. D. Rawlings and Professor M. Green to the Council, as set out in Paper A, be approved.

2. Following his appointment as a member of Council, the Chairman invited Professor Rawlings to join the Meeting and welcomed him formally on behalf of the Council.

MINUTES

Council – 30th June 2000

3. The Minutes of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Council, held on 30th June 2000, were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

MATTERS ARISING

Council Ratification of Resolutions (Council Minutes, 30th June 2000, Minutes 33 - 41)

4. The Chairman reminded Governors that, during the latter part of the previous Meeting, covered by Minutes 33 to 41, the Council had been inquorate and that the resolutions taken during this period had therefore been approved by Chairman’s action only. These resolutions had now to be formally ratified by the Council. They were:

   a. The Resolution to amend the Academic Regulations to include the MRes as a degree conferred by the College (Minute 33.).

   b. The Resolution to amend the Criteria for Degrees to include the criteria for the MRes (Minute 33.).

   c. The Resolution to approve amendments to the Regulations for Students (Minute 35.).

   d. The Resolution to approve changes to the ICU’s Financial Regulations (Minute 36.).

Resolved: That the resolutions approved by the Chairman during the latter part of the Council Meeting on 30th June 2000 when the Council was inquorate be formally approved.

ICU Memorandum of Understanding (Council Minutes, 19th May 2000, Minutes 37 - 39)

5. The Clerk reminded the Council that, at its last meeting, the then President of the Imperial College Union (ICU), Miss Natasha Newton, had raised the issue of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the College and the Union. The Clerk
reported that the Central Secretariat had conducted a thorough review of the MoU and was now proposing significant revisions that would, he felt, help to clarify the relationship between the College and the ICU. A revised draft of the document had been given to ICU for consideration that week. However, there were still two areas requiring further work, these being the identification of the space allocated to the Union and formal confirmation of the legal status of the Union and of the sabbatical officers. He hoped that these would be resolved shortly and that the revised MoU would be ready for approval by the Council in December.

6. The new ICU President, Mr. Common, thanked the Clerk and the Central Secretariat for their work on the MoU. He stated that the Union had some concerns about the revised draft which he would discuss with the Head of Central Secretariat in the next few weeks. While agreeing that the aim was to complete this work in time for the December Meeting of Council, he advised that it might prove necessary to delay submission until the Council’s Meeting in February. The Council agreed that it was important that the revised MoU be accurate and noted that, although it remained the objective to approve the MoU in December, if this proved impractical a postponement until February was acceptable.

RECTOR’S BUSINESS

Staff Matters (Paper B)

7. The Rector formally presented Paper B, which was received for information.

Annual Operating Statement (Paper C)

8. The Rector presented Paper C advising that the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) required the College to produce an Annual Operating Statement. This had been submitted to HEFCE in July and was now presented to Council for information.

Oral Reports

9. **Principal of the Imperial College School of Medicine (ICSM).** The Rector reported that the identification of a successor to Professor C. R. W. Edwards as Principal of ICSM was a high priority for the College. The Advisory Committee to consider this appointment had unanimously recommended a particular individual with whom the College was now conducting negotiations. The Rector hoped that he would be able to announce the appointment within the next few weeks.

10. **Multi-Disciplinary Research Building (MDRB).** The Rector reported that, after wide consultation, it had been decided to name the MDRB the Flowers Building in recognition of the work of Lord Flowers, the Rector of the College from 1973 to 1985, who had played a major part in the re-organisation of Medicine in London. In addition to this, parts of the building would also bear the names of other organisations and individuals, and in particular a Seminar Room would be named after Lady Flowers. The Flowers Building would be formally opened with a ceremony in December.
11. **BA Festival of Science.** The Rector reminded the Council that the British Association for the Advancement of Science’s annual Festival of Science had been held at Imperial in September with the theme of ‘Creating Sparks’. As this was the Millennium year, the Festival had been enlarged to celebrate the relationship of science and the arts and had included all of the other institutions based in South Kensington, including the Science Museum, the Natural History Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Royal College of Art, the Royal College of Music, the Royal Geographical Society and the Royal Albert Hall. A particular highlight had been the closure of Exhibition Road to traffic on Sunday, 10th September for a public ‘street party’ during which a number of special events had been staged. The Rector paid tribute in particular to the School of Medicine for their imaginative participation in this event which had helped to make that day, and the whole Festival, a considerable success.

12. **House of Lords.** The Rector reported that a question had been asked in the House of Lords about the provision of teaching in medical schools and that particular reference had been made to the Imperial College School of Medicine. As Governors were aware from previous meetings, the College had every confidence that, despite the restructuring of some of the Divisions of the ICSM, the School would continue to be able to deliver high quality teaching to its students. Professor Edwards agreed and remarked that he found it bizarre that, at a time when there was pressure for evidence-based medicine and an explosion in biomedical innovation, the Government should be seeking in its national plan to reduce the length of medical courses. This was an issue which Lord Winston had taken up in the House of Lords.

13. **Fundraising (Paper M).**

   a. The Rector presented Paper M, copies of which were tabled. He reported that, as the College had been concentrating on building relations with its alumni, its fund-raising efforts over the last seven years had been relatively low key. However, he was pleased to announce that, on the previous evening, he had received confirmation that Dr. G. Tanaka of the US-based investment trust, Amerindo, would be donating £25M to the College to provide new accommodation for the Management School linking in to the Goldsmiths’ Wing of the Royal School of Mines (RSM) and incorporating a new and prestigious entrance to the College on Exhibition Road. Not only was this an extremely imaginative project which would greatly enhance the College, but, by releasing the Management School’s present buildings for commercial use, it was the key to unlocking the further refurbishment of the RSM Building. In addition to the £25M to endow the new building, Dr. Tanaka was also providing an endowment of £2M for a new Chair in Internet Technology.

   b. The Rector noted that this was, by some way, the largest single benefaction ever received by the College. He continued by explaining that outline sketches for the new building had been prepared by Sir Norman Foster and that he had been very helpful in giving his time to explain the plans to Dr. Tanaka. These sketches suggested that the College would be gaining an exciting and innovative building in a highly visible location. However, he cautioned that the planning issues would have to handled sensitively and he asked that members treat this information as confidential until Commemoration Day on Wednesday, 25th October 2000 when the endowment would be announced formally.
c. The Rector went on to report that Dr. Tanaka was an alumnus of the College, having completed his MSc and PhD in Mathematics at Imperial. He had subsequently gone into investment banking, setting up the successful investment trust, Amerindo, a company that specialised in investing in ‘hi-tech’ companies.

d. In response to a query from Sir Alan Munro, the Rector confirmed that the new building to be funded by this benefaction was entirely consistent with the College’s Capital Investment Plan as it would allow the College to commence work on the refurbishment of the RSM Building. Governors agreed that such a major donation could also be instrumental in launching further fund-raising activities and encouraging other donations. The Council expressed its thanks to the Rector for his considerable efforts in obtaining this significant donation for the College.

Resolved: (i) That the College should accept with gratitude the sum of £25M offered by Dr. G. Tanaka to provide a new building for the College’s Management School;

(ii) That, subject to appropriate financial arrangements being made with the donor, the College agreed in principle to proceed with the planning and preparation for the construction of a new building to provide accommodation for the Management School with a view to completing the Project in December 2003/January 2004;

(iii) That the Director of Estates should examine the proposal in detail and provide a full report on the proposed way forward for the next Meeting of the Council;

(iv) That the Director of Estates should review the strategy for the Royal School of Mines as a whole in the light of this proposal, reporting through the Estates Committee to the Council.

RESTRUCTURING IN THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE (Paper D)

14. The Deputy Rector introduced Paper D and reminded the Council that the restructuring of Divisions within the School of Medicine had been the subject of regular reports to the Council over the previous year. At the end of July the College had withdrawn the enhanced terms for voluntary severance and the London Implementation Group (LIG) deadline of 31 December was fast approaching. In consequence, the position within ICSM had changed in the two weeks since Paper D had been written. As reported in the Paper, £1.9M of savings had been achieved by voluntary severances and transfers to the NHS. This was £500K short of the target set for ICSM. The speed of change of the situation was such that an additional £390K had been saved since the Paper had been written. Only one academic post remained under threat of compulsory redundancy. Furthermore, additional savings would be achieved from the restructuring of support staff which had necessarily to wait until the academic staff restructuring was complete. As a result the Redundancy Committees programmed to meet during September had not had to do so, although the possibility remained that a Redundancy Committee might yet
be required to consider the one outstanding case. The restructuring of support staff was proceeding well and the College was now confident that the original target savings would be achieved by 30 November 2000.

15. The Rector paid tribute to the Deputy Rector, the Principal of the ICSM, the Heads of the Divisions concerned and the Director of Personnel for their contribution to this exercise. He acknowledged that restructurings on the scale of those undertaken in ICSM were always difficult and unpleasant experiences and had the potential to lead to unwelcome negative publicity. That these restructurings had been achieved successfully without undue animosity or adverse publicity was a tribute to the firm yet fair and sensitive way in which they had been handled. In particular the Employee Relations and Pensions Manager, Mr. J. Payne, and the Secretary of the ICSM, Dr. J. Green, had played key roles in bringing the work close to a successful conclusion.

16. In response to a query from Mr. Margetts the Deputy Rector confirmed that, providing the School of Medicine achieved its expected gradings in the forthcoming Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), the restructuring would have succeeded in placing the ICSM in a financially sustainable position. Professor Edwards reminded Governors that the RAE was critical to the ICSM’s future success since the loss of a single grade for the School as a whole could reduce its income by up to £10M a year. However, the School had very high calibre staff and had been recruiting more and he was confident that this would not happen. Mr. Buxton noted that the restructuring in ICSM had addressed the deficits in particular Divisions. It was, however, important that they should not be dealt with in isolation, but that the School of Medicine should be seen as a whole, with the other Divisions being placed under equal pressure. Professor Edwards agreed and stressed that all ICSM Divisions were subject to the same financial disciplines. Indeed, although not part of this restructuring exercise, there had been staff losses in other Divisions as well. The Deputy Rector concurred with this, noting that a similar process was commencing in other parts of the College which were in deficit.

17. Drawing the discussion to a close, the Chairman added his own thanks to those whose hard work had achieved so much. He hoped that the Divisions in ICSM would be able to achieve their new structures without recourse to Redundancy Committees. However, as Governors would remember, the Council had given him delegated powers to make the necessary arrangements for the setting up of such Committees should any prove necessary.

ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES 2000 (Paper E)

18. Professor Higgins introduced Paper E noting that the Academic Opportunities 2000 Committee had derived its name from the business-led campaign Opportunity 2000 (now entitled Opportunity Now). As the year 2000 was now nearly over, she suggested that the Committee might need to consider another title. Going through her Report, she highlighted in particular the Committee’s wish to introduce monitoring of data relating to recruitment and promotion and she was pleased that the Committee would shortly be reviewing data on the relative ages of Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, Readers and Professors together with the rates of promotion to each of these positions.
Dr. Vaughan supported such monitoring as an important tool in understanding the extent of the difficulties which female academics faced as well in assessing the success of the College’s initiatives to create and ensure a ‘level playing field’ for them. She suggested that a presentation on this data might be made to a future meeting of the Council, a suggestion with which Professor Higgins concurred. Dr. Vaughan went on to ask if there were any new initiatives emerging from the College. Professor Higgins replied that new proposals on mentoring were expected from the Athena Project shortly and that the College would respond to these in due course. The Director of Personnel stated that flexible working patterns for both male and female academics were becoming increasingly acceptable across the College, which was encouraging.

**REMUNERATION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT (Paper F)**

The Director of Personnel, Dr. Kimberley, introduced Paper F, noting that, while the majority of staff in the College were employed on incremental scales, senior staff (of whom there were now 377 in the College) had fixed salaries which had to be reviewed each year by the Remuneration Committee. The College usually implemented national cost-of-living increases for all staff but the Remuneration Committee also considered awarding additional increases to individuals. Commenting on the Paper, the Rector stated that nearly all staff at Imperial were underpaid when compared to the external market. Regrettably, the College was not in a position to pay more since salaries already accounted for some seventy per cent of its costs. It was in a very labour-intensive business and in order to increase salaries across the board it would have to employ fewer staff. However, wherever possible, the College did what it could to recognise the contribution of its staff to its continued success.

**MAJOR PROJECTS UPDATE (Paper G)**

Before introducing Paper G, the Director of Estates, Mr. Caldwell, informed the Council of progress with the sale of the Ice Rink site. Planning permission for the proposed change in use had been obtained in September and the purchaser was now negotiating various ‘rights of light’ issues with neighbours. Provided these could be concluded satisfactorily, it was hoped that the sale would be completed by the end of December. Moving on to the Paper itself, Mr. Caldwell highlighted the large number of projects completed during the Summer vacation, stating that the College had succeeded in obtaining value for money whilst maintaining high standards. In response to queries, he confirmed that the Music and Arts Centre, which had been entirely externally funded, had been completed at a cost of £700K; the Registry had cost £850K; the Senior Common Room refurbishment £1.6M; and the Reynolds Building refurbishment £2.5M. This last, which had also been externally funded, was due for completion by the end of October.

The Honorary Treasurer, Mr. Banks, commended the refurbishment of the Registry which had resulted in a considerable improvement in that Division’s working environment. Professor Higgins remarked that the refurbished Senior Common Room also represented a considerable improvement in the quality of life for members of the College.
Moving on to consider the Beit Refurbishment Project, the Chairman reminded the Council that, at its last Meeting, the Council had delegated authority to him as Chairman “to approve, should it be necessary, any additional funding required in the light of the unexpected circumstances affecting the Beit Refurbishment Project”. He therefore wished to inform members of the subsequent action that he had taken in relation to this Project.

He reminded Governors that, as had been reported at the last meeting, James Longley, the main contractor for the Beit Refurbishment, had gone into receivership in June leaving the Project uncompleted. The College’s priorities had been, first, to secure the site and then to identify a new main contractor to complete the Project and negotiate with the various sub-contractors involved. Recognising the importance of this Project the College had established a new Project Team to take the work forward as well as a Cost Recovery team to ensure that the College’s claims against Longleys or others were vigorously pursued.

The Chairman went on to report that, in order to ensure that the College obtained the best possible terms with its new contractor, members of the Estates Committee had been consulted regularly for advice on the strategy it should adopt and the Committee itself had held two emergency meetings over the Summer to consider proposals. The Committee had also visited the site during this period to ascertain the full extent of the remedial works required. In addition to this, the College’s Finance Strategy Committee had met to consider the impact of Longley’s failure on the College’s finances. The Chairman assured members that he had been kept informed of developments throughout. By the end of the Summer, he went on, the Beit Steering Group, supported by the work of the Estates Committee and the Finance Strategy Committee, had selected Bovis Lelliott to be the completion contractor.

On 29 September, having checked carefully the authority delegated to him together with the recommendations of the Committees which had met over the Summer, he had approved the appointment of Bovis Lelliott as completion contractor. He had also approved additional funding of £2.94M which, unfortunately, would now be required to finish the work. In reaching these decisions, the College had had to balance the cost advantages to be gained from extending the programme against the loss of revenue from conferences and other Summer vacation lets which would result if the completion date was later than June next year. On balance, the reduction in income had been judged to outweigh the potential reductions in Project cost and consequently it had been decided that the optimum course was the programme and final cost now agreed with Bovis Lelliott. This change and the significant increase in financial commitment combined to make an unwelcome disturbance to the College’s Capital Investment Plan. However, it had been important that the action he had just reported had been taken without further delay.

The ICU President, Mr. Common, expressed his support for the action taken in appointing Bovis Lelliott and noted that ICU had already appointed them to refurbish the Beit Basements. The Union was spending some £650K on this work and he invited Governors to visit them in due course.

Mr. Margetts asked whether there were any lessons to be drawn from this unfortunate incident. The Rector replied that he had instructed the Director of Finance, Mrs. Castle
who had not been with the College when James Longley had been appointed - to review the appointment process and subsequent management of the Project. She had concluded that the College’s processes were sound and that the choice of James Longley had been the correct one at the time. Although, in retrospect the College might have withdrawn from the contract once it became clear that Longleys were experiencing difficulties, in reality that would have been a risky operation and one which was unlikely to have been any less expensive to the College than the current situation. Mrs. Castle agreed, stating that the contractor went into receivership at the worst possible time for the Project. However, the College had acted quickly to secure the site, to stop further payments to Longleys and to minimise any other losses. This meant that the additional costs of completing the Project, unwelcome as they were, would be restricted to about £3M. Mr. Banks agreed, remarking that once the contract had commenced, it would have been almost impossible to withdraw from it unless the contractor had broken it in the most blatant manner.

29. Mr. Lowe asked whether the College could not have insured against this eventuality. Mr. Caldwell advised that it was possible for the College to take out a bank bond. However, this was an expensive option and one pursued by the College only in those cases considered to be ‘high risk’. He confirmed that, at the time the contract was signed, Longley’s would not have been considered as an ‘at risk’ contractor. Concluding this item, the Chairman expressed his thanks to the staff in the Estates and Finance Divisions and to the members of the Committees who had met over the Summer for their work in salvaging the Project.

FINANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT (Paper H)

30. The Director of Finance, Mrs. Castle, introduced Paper H, noting that her Report contained the provisional out-turn for the year 1999-2000. The need to fully embed the new ICIS system had meant it had been a difficult year for Finance, particularly because of the failure of the system’s automatic reconciliation software. Although the actual out-turn was better than originally forecast, this was due to two items, the sale of shares in Turbogenset and rates rebates negotiated by the Estates Division, although the money for this last had yet to be received through the NHS. Without these two exceptional items the contribution to general reserves would have been some £7M worse than forecast. This deterioration was due primarily to an increase of £2.2M in academic Department/ Divisions’ deficits; a £3M adverse variance for routine maintenance and cleaning and an increased provision for bad debts of £3.3M. With regard to the academic Departments and Divisions, Mrs. Castle stated that they could not be allowed to continue generating increased deficits. This situation had been addressed with the Divisions in ICSM and similar measures would now have to be taken in the rest of the College. Consequently, she reported, five Departments would henceforth be having quarterly meetings with the Deputy Rector and herself to monitor performance against their plans.

31. Moving on to consider the other contributing factors, Mrs. Castle reported that the adverse variance for maintenance and cleaning included a substantial, one-off element to regularise payments to the NHS Trusts. The increase in the provision for bad debts was primarily caused by staffing problems in credit control and research contracts. These shortcomings were being addressed by new appointments in these areas together
with the appointment of a new manager to oversee the important credit control function. The other major area of concern, she continued, was the College’s working capital provision since research ‘work-in-progress’ had now increased to £16M. The reasons for this were currently being investigated, but it appeared that the profile of research expenditure and reclamation of this from funding bodies had changed in recent years. It was therefore important that the College amended its procedures to ensure that this area moved back to maintaining a positive balance.

32. Agreeing with Mrs. Castle’s analysis, the Rector said that the College had allowed its credit control procedures to slacken somewhat, in addition to which a number of exceptional items, such as the sale of the Ice Rink, were coming through later than originally anticipated. Furthermore, he reminded the Council, Departments and Divisions had been encouraged to invest in the recruitment of new staff in advance of the Research Assessment Exercise. As these staff would not start to generate additional income until after the RAE, their recruitment added to the College’s short-term cash flow problems. The Rector went on to report that he had given authority for the Finance Division and Research Support and Development to recruit additional staff to address their immediate problems. If necessary, he had also agreed that supplements could be paid to attract the most able staff to fill these vacancies. In addition, although student fees would shortly start coming into the College, the Registry was considering ways in which this process could be speeded up in future. He concluded by saying that he was confident the situation would be very different by this time next year.

33. The Honorary Treasurer, Mr. Banks, endorsed the Rector’s statement. It was imperative that the College’s cash flow was now brought under control. With regard to the out-turn for 1999-2000, he felt that the results were disappointing, particularly as the income of £10M from the sale of Turbogenset had had to be used to fill the gap caused by the College’s immediate need for cash. He too hoped that next year’s results would be much improved. Mr. Buxton suggested that the percentage of bad debts appeared to be high. Mrs. Castle confirmed that the College was now improving its credit control procedures in order to reduce the number of old bad debts and to ensure that new debts were not added to these. The majority of bad debts for which this provision was made were now more than two years old.

34. Mr. Margetts noted that the Council had discussed the problem of deficit Departments/Divisions a number of times in the past few years, but that the deficits in these Departments appeared still to be increasing. He asked whether the College’s strategy for dealing with them was the correct one. The Director of Personnel, Dr. Kimberley, replied that the two Departments of particular concern, Chemistry and the T.H. Huxley School, were being reviewed and that their financial weaknesses would be addressed. Agreeing with this, the Deputy Rector reported that, across the Country, Chemistry had the highest turnover of staff of any subject. This was mainly due to the effect of the academic ‘transfer’ market before each RAE and this had affected the Department of Chemistry at Imperial adversely. However, in the last two years, its research income had increased by 30 per cent, although the effects of this had yet to be fully felt in the Department’s finances.

35. Professor Higgins drew attention to the extent to which the introduction of ICIS had complicated Departments’ checking of their research income. She also noted that the Research Councils would withhold the last payment of a grant until the final report was
submitted. The College needed to ensure that these reports were submitted in a timely fashion so that grants could be claimed. Slippage in claiming against grants awarded was also caused by difficulties in recruiting staff to undertake the research in the current employment climate. Mrs. Castle agreed but said that the recruitment of additional staff in Research Support and Development and Finance would ensure that any slippage was minimised.

36. Concluding the discussion, the Chairman said that the previous year had been an exceptionally difficult one with the legacy of the medical mergers still being worked through and the introduction of a new and complex finance and personnel management information system. However, it was recognised that the College must now give priority to its credit control procedures and ensure that the appropriate resources were in place so that this could be done expeditiously.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE GOVERNING BODY (Paper I)

37. In the absence of the Chairman of the Governance Committee, The Hon. Mrs. Sara Morrison, the Clerk introduced Paper I. He reminded the Council that this was the first of two reviews that governing bodies were being encouraged to conduct, the second being a review of the performance of the institution itself. In accordance with the decision of the Council at its meeting in May 2000, the Governance Committee, in conducting this review, had made use of the questionnaire produced by the Committee of University Chairmen.

38. The Honorary Treasurer stated that, although he might question some of the detailed points made in the review, in general he thought it a satisfactory summation of the Council’s position. The Chairman agreed, noting that Imperial was fortunate in that its Charter and Statutes were relatively new, having been granted by Her Majesty the Queen in 1998 following the merger with the medical schools. He felt that the key question to arise for the Council from this review was the balance to be struck between giving a strategic steer for the College and monitoring its performance and whether the Council felt that this balance had been achieved.

39. In response to a query from Dr. Vaughan, the Clerk confirmed the membership of the Governance Committee and that appointments to the remaining vacancies on the Committee would be considered by Nominations Committee. Dr. Vaughan expressed her concern that the report was too descriptive and did not, in her opinion, include enough recommendations on how the Council’s effectiveness could be improved. She suggested that the Governance Committee might be asked to reconvene to consider this point.

40. Mr. Buxton noted that, although some of the new members of the Council had been invited to take part in the induction programme designed for new Heads of Department, none appeared to have made use of this opportunity. Although he acknowledged that the Heads of Department Programme might not be entirely appropriate, he felt that it was important for new governors to have some form of induction in order that they could better understand the complexity of the College and their role as governors. He suggested that the College consider designing an induction programme specifically directed at governors and that, if this programme were introduced, the Chairman should
instruct new governors that they were expected to attend this programme. The Chairman reminded the Council that, prior to the granting of the new Royal Charter in 1998, the College’s governance arrangements had been rudimentary. This review showed that, although there was much that could still be done, a great deal had been achieved in the two years since then. He agreed to take up Dr. Vaughan’s suggestion that the Governance Committee come forward with specific recommendations for improving the induction arrangements for new governors.

PLANNING ROUND PROCESS (Paper J)

41. The Director of Planning and Management Information Services, Dr. Eastwood, introduced Paper J. He reminded the Council that the College’s planning process was essentially a devolved one in which individual departments were encouraged to develop initiatives and seek out new opportunities. However, the College recognised that, important as this ‘bottom-up’ process was, it was also important for the Departments and Divisions to be given a strategic steer from the College.

Resolved: That the planning process, as set out in Paper J, be approved.

CLERK’S BUSINESS

Proposed Changes to ICU Regulations (Paper K)

42. The Clerk introduced Paper K advising the Council that the change to ICU Regulations was required to include the Presidents of the Students’ Union and the Postgraduate Association at Wye as members of the ICU Council. The ICU President, Mr. Common, reported that he intended to conduct a more thorough review of the Union’s governance arrangements during the year, but that this change was required immediately so as to include appropriate representation from Wye on the Union’s Council.

Resolved: That the amendments to the Imperial College Union Regulations, as set out in Paper K, be approved.

Council Calendar 2000-01 (Paper L)

43. The Clerk tabled Paper L for the information of members on how the meetings of Council related to those of its committees through the year and when the reports from each committee were due.