

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS

at the seventy-first meeting of the

**COUNCIL OF THE IMPERIAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND
MEDICINE**

The seventy-first meeting of the Council was held via Microsoft Teams, hosted by Imperial College London, South Kensington, at 10 am on Friday 14th May 2021, when there were present:

Mr. J Cullen (Deputy Chair), Professor N. Brandon, Mr. C. Brinsmead, Mr. T. Courtauld, Professor R. Craster, Professor A. Gast (President) (from Minutes of 12th February onwards), Mr. R. Kalifa, Sir Jonathan Michael, Dr. M. Safa, Ms. S. Murray, Professor J. Sanders, Mr. M. Sanderson (from Minutes of 12th February onwards), 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 (from Minutes of 12th February onwards)).

Apologies

Mr. J. Allan.

In attendance

Mr. M. Murphy (from item 2: Minutes of 12th February onwards), Miss A. Wolthuisen, and Mrs. R. Knight (Assistant Clerk to the Court and Council).

WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1. Apologies were received from Mr J Allan. Council sent their best wishes for a quick

recovery.

2. The Deputy Chair updated members on the OfS investigation.

MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

3. Council received the minutes from the meeting held on 12th February 2021.

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Council, held on Friday 12th February 2021, be approved, subject to being renumbered.

4. There were no matters arising to note.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Audit and Risk Committee

5. The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, Mr John Cullen, presented the report from the meeting held on 17th February 2021. He highlighted that the number of outstanding internal audit recommendations continued to trend downwards. The meeting on 11th May 2021 had focused on risk, including an interesting debate on the annual risk review, which the Committee had agreed to recommend should be approved by the July Council meeting.
6. The Committee received an overview of the risks associated with the College relationship with NHS Trusts and an update on how the College and sector was responding to the National Security and Investment Act. The College's due diligence process had been strengthened with the introduction of a Scrutiny Committee, and members discussed the challenges of balancing the College strategy and mission against the emerging new expectations.
7. In closing his report, the Chair reported that the Committee also received an update on the cladding remedial works, which would be followed up between meetings, and noted that the Committee would shortly begin its effectiveness review.

Finance Committee

8. Mr Chris Brinsmead, the Chair of the Finance Committee, presented the report. He drew attention to the USS pension's position, which had ramifications beyond finance, and would be discussed at the July Council. The next Finance Committee meeting would focus on the College's future financial capacity.

White City Syndicate / Property Committee

9. The Chair of the Committee, Mr Toby Courtauld, provided an update on the last meeting of the White City Syndicate on 24th February 2021, and the first meeting of the Property Committee on 6th May 2021. Both meetings had considered how estate planning should help deliver the College's Academic and Sustainability Strategies. The Committee had identified eight key deliverables for the White City site progress against which would be reviewed at upcoming meetings.
10. Council welcomed the higher profile of sustainability in a built environment, and noted that successful academic development depended on quality social and collaboration space.

Search Committee

11. The Search Committee, formally constituted at the end of March by written approval from Council, was working with Perrett Laver to identify the next President. Committee members had recently received equality and diversity training. Progress was as expected, with the aim of bringing a nomination to Council by late July.

MATTERS FOR DECISION

Strategy Committee

12. The President, Professor Alice Gast, and the Provost, Professor Ian Walmsley, presented the paper, which proposed that Council establish a Committee to support its role in overseeing the College Strategy. The Committee would build on progress already made in the approach to strategic thinking and planning, which

balanced a collective direction to achieve goals, with the independence of creative and autonomous scholars.

13. In discussion, it was noted that the role of Council in relation to the College Strategy was not clear. The President's Board was responsible for developing and delivering the Strategy, and the new Committee would report to Council on progress against objectives. Although Council regularly discussed strategic themes, particularly through deep dives at every meeting and discussion at each Away Day, it was requested that the Council terms of reference and other documentation should be reviewed to reflect its role with respect to the College Strategy.

ACTION: The College Secretary to check whether the Council terms of reference referred to its role with respect to strategy.

14. Council discussed the possibility of adding a student to the membership of the Committee. The student voice was vital to the development of strategies and plans, particularly those related to education and student experience, and Council agreed it would be important to hear from students in the development and implementation of relevant strategies and policies. The oversight function of the new Committee was recognized as different. Hearing directly from students at the recent Away Day had been very informative, and more face-to-face connectivity between external Council members and students would be welcomed. There would be a review of the workings of this new Committee after its first year.

Resolved:

To approve the establishment of a Strategy Review Committee, as set out in the Terms of Reference at Annex A.

Nominations Committee

15. The Deputy Chair presented the report from the Nominations Committee. In discussion, it was noted that Saxton Bampfylde was assisting with the recruitment of non-executive Council members, taking into account skill and diversity gaps.

Resolved:

To approve:

- a. the appointment of Ric Lewis to Council from 1 January 2022 for four years, to 31 July 2026, and as a member of the Property Committee with immediate effect;**

- b. the re-appointment of Dr Mahnaz Safa and Professor Jeremy Sanders to Council for a second term of four years, until 31 July 2025;**
- c. the appointment of Ron Kalifa and Dr Mahnaz Safa to the Strategy Review Committee;**
- d. the appointment of the Deputy Chair, Mr John Cullen, as Senior Independent Director (SID).**

CHAIR, PRESIDENT AND PROVOST REPORTS

Chair's Report

- 16. On behalf of the Chair, the Deputy Chair reported that there had been one Chair's action since the last meeting. On 3 April 2021 the Chair had approved the OfS 2019-20 monitoring return for widening participation and access, which had been previously reviewed in the meeting on 12th February 2021.

Presidents' Report

- 17. The President, Professor Alice Gast, presented her report, beginning with the dashboard. Covid asymptomatic testing had been very successful, thanks to the efforts of staff, with over 40,000 tests completed. The College was currently transitioning to Lateral Flow testing on campus and at home supported by its own track and test programme.
- 18. There had been an increase in PGT applications, although the number of EU students had declined. New scholarships and other initiatives would be announced in the upcoming President's address, aimed at encouraging applications from international and underrepresented students. Senior leadership were aware that student and staff mental health remained a concern.

Provosts' Report

- 19. The Provost, Professor Ian Walmsley, presented his written report. A revision to the government COVID guidelines meant that more students would be welcomed back onto campus from 17th May 2021, following the return of students on many practical programmes in March.

20. The Royal Society had recently named four members of staff as Fellows. This was more than any other single institution in the UK. Professors Geoff Hall, Ten Feizi, Nigel Brandon and Michael Finnis were recognised for their outstanding contributions to their respective fields.
21. Since December there had been a lot of effort to consider how the College academic mission should develop post-pandemic. Council members were invited to join the discussion with Deans, Vice and Associate Provosts in June which would contribute to the development of a plan that would be presented to Council for discussion in September.
22. The President and Provost were thanked for their written reports.

MAJOR DISCUSSION ITEMS

Away Day Follow-up

23. The President provided a verbal reflection following the Council away day in February. The discussions had led to a better appreciation of the impact of the pandemic on the College mission. The contributions from the students and early career researchers had been informative and demonstrated that the College could be adaptable as it changed its ways of working, teaching, and learning. There was a strong desire to retain the best of these changes as we move back into more in-person teaching and working. The discussions would continue as each Dean presented their Faculty Strategy to Council over coming meetings, and the Provost Board discussed the growth plan, leading to the presentation of the Financial, Estates and Property Strategies at the Council Away Day in February 2022.

International Student Recruitment Strategy

24. The Provost introduced the item, which followed the July 2020 Council meeting discussion about the expected transition from a selecting to a recruiting university, with the intention of securing the pipeline of high-calibre students joining the College. Ms Leila Guerra, Associate Dean of Programmes (Business School), presented an update on the structural, systematic, and cultural changes that had been made to create a customer focused candidate journey. The ambition was to

make candidates feel welcomed and a part of the Imperial community from their first contact with the College. Last year the changes had had a positive impact on diversity in recruiting, and early signs were that this was continuing. The move to online activities had impacted marketing and admissions activities, and some digital activity would be retained for development in the future because it enabled a wider demographic reach.

25. Fully funded scholarships had been proven to be more effective than partly funded scholarships in attracting the most capable and able students to the College. It was hoped that the College would be able to create a strategic fund to support more scholarships in the future and the investment in scholarships to be announced in the President's Address would catalyse this fund. Advancement was working with the admissions team to generate a scholarship strategy and a campaign to build upon the matching funds to be announced by the President. Imperial's alumni networks also contribute to student recruiting efforts.
26. Although there was reasonable assurance that admissions targets would be met in 2021 and onwards, some risk remained. Work was ongoing with Faculties to diversify offers and to continue conversion activity to mitigate some of the admissions risks, particularly relating to the decline in EU applications. The Business School had established a European hub, to support students and engagement with employers. There was discussion about what would constitute a balanced student intake in terms of a cross cultural experience and gross exposure to financial risk.
27. The Provost thanked Professor Dallman, Richard Martin, Leila Guerra and teams for their efforts and expertise.

Faculty of Engineering Strategy

28. The Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, Professor Nigel Brandon, presented the Faculty Strategy, which had been updated since it was created in 2019. He set out the Faculty vision, explained the SWOT analysis and provided a summary of the current position against the ambitions.
29. In discussion, it was noted that members of the Faculty routinely engaged with industry and government at both a technical and strategic level. This engagement

delivered a benefit, in alignment with the Academic Strategy, to identify solutions which created jobs, had an economic benefit, and made a positive difference.

30. It was recognised that benchmarking against the world's top universities had shown that the Faculty had fewer capital reserves to invest per academic member of staff. This resulted in higher teaching loads and less thinking time. Quality time was required to maintain a leading edge, and flexibility provided by better reserves from donors would help drive strategic initiatives.
31. Council thanked Professor Brandon for his presentation.

REPORT FOR DISCUSSION

32. The Advancement six monthly report was deferred to the July meeting due to time limits.

STARRED ITEMS FOR NOTING

33. Council received and noted the report from Senate and the Staff Matters report.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

34. Congratulations were offered to Professor Nick Jennings, who had been appointed Vice-Chancellor at the University of Loughborough. Professor Jennings would leave the College at the end of the academic year.
35. There was no other business.

The meeting closed at 1.05pm