

IMPERIAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND MEDICINE

Minutes of Special Council Meeting

Held online on 21 February 2023, at 08.30

Present

Mr J. Allan (Chair), Professor Sir L. Borysiewicz, Professor H. Brady (President), Professor N. Brandon, Professor R. Craster, Mr J. Cullen, Mr D. Khanna, Mr R. Lewis, Professor J. Mestel, Sir Jonathan Michael, Dr M. Safa, Professor J. Sanders, Mr S. Saxena, Professor F. Veloso, Professor I. Walmsley (Provost), Professor J. Weber, Mr C. Williams, Ms H. Wong, and Ms. G. Brankin (College Secretary).

In attendance

Head of Central Secretariat.

Appointment of additional Council members

1. The Chair thanked members for their attendance and noted apologies received from Mr T. Courtauld, Sir R. Kalifa, Mr R. Kerse, Dr M. Meaney, and Ms S. Murray.
2. It was noted that the special meeting had been called to consider the process for the appointment of new Council positions, which the Council had agreed to create from 2023/4. A paper setting out the background and a proposal had been circulated on 14 February 2023.
3. The President introduced the paper which had been discussed by the Nominations Committee, noting that the Committee had considered feedback from many Council members and had rehearsed arguments for various alternative methods of appointment. Given the desired timing of the appointments, the Committee had recommended that the first cohort of members were appointed for an initial term of two years and the process would be reviewed before the end of the first term.
4. The College Secretary explained the background and summarised the feedback received during the consultations which had taken place prior to the meeting. This had been varied but there was agreement on the need to include under-represented members of the community, and on broadening input into Council discussions.

5. There was a wide-ranging discussion, with broad consensus that:
 - a. The additional student member should be nominated by the Student's Union from its Board of Trustees.
 - b. The current process for electing the existing professorial staff member should go ahead in 2023 for the usual two-year term.
 - c. The initial appointment of the additional staff members should be limited to two years to allow for both timely action and review.
 - d. The initial process of appointment, operation of the new Council composition and linked arrangements will be reviewed in advance of the next round of appointments in 2025.
6. Following discussion there was no conclusion on the best trial process to appoint additional staff members. Points raised included:
 - a. the role of staff Council members would not be to represent specific interests of a group but act as Trustees with the same broad responsibilities as other Council members,
 - b. that an open election process would enhance trust in Council and the leadership,
 - c. that the membership of the appointment panel should include representatives from the College community,
 - d. experience had been that elections can result in a narrow or special interest groups dominating positions,
 - e. the lower likelihood of electing diverse members when the eligible pool of candidates was not diverse,
 - f. experience that intervention was necessary in the short-term to achieve objectives,
 - g. that transparency and communication would be important, and there should be clarity about what the Council was trying to achieve in the short and long term.
7. Given there was no broad consensus, the President agreed to review whether the recommended interim position addressed diversity and trust, and to consider how members of the College could be represented in the appointment of staff Council members. A revised proposal would be circulated to Council as soon as possible.

Meeting closed 09.27.

Post meeting note: A revised proposal was circulated on 28 February 2023, in advance of the awayday on 3 March 2023.