

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE

COUNCIL OF THE IMPERIAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND MEDICINE

Held on 30 September 2022, at 9.30 am, in Beit Hall, SW7 2BB

Present

Mr J. Allan (Chair), Professor Sir L. Borysiewicz, Professor H. Brady (President), Mr T. Courtauld, Professor R. Craster, Mr J. Cullen, Sir R. Kalifa, Dr. T. Lawrence, Professor J. Mestel, Sir Jonathan Michael, Ms S. Murray, Dr M. Safa, Professor J. Sanders (online), Mr S. Saxena, Professor F. Veloso, Professor I. Walmsley (Provost), Professor J. Weber, Ms H. Wong, and Ms. G. Brankin (College Secretary).

In attendance

Mr. D Allen, Halpin Partnerships (item 11), Co-Director of the Institute for Security Science and Technology (item 8), Associate Provost (EDI) (item 10), Vice-Provost (Student Experience and Education) (item 7), Head of Central Secretariat, Director of Communications, Chief Information Officer, Director of Public Affairs.

Welcome and apologies

1. The Chair welcomed all attendees, in particular the new President, Professor H. Brady. Apologies were received from Professor N. Brandon, Mr D. Khanna, Mr R. Lewis, Dr M. Meaney Haynes, and Mr C. Williams. Ms H. Wong welcomed members to the Imperial College Union building and invited members to join the ICU Officer Trustees for lunch following the meeting.

Minutes and matters arising

2. The Minutes from the meeting held on 15 July 2022 were approved.
3. The action tracker was noted.

Chair's report

4. The Chair provided an update on his visits to the College since the last meeting of Council. He reported that he found the organisation and infrastructure to be in good heart and reflected on the depth of talent of academic staff evidenced by lectures and other events.

President's report (Paper 4)

5. In addition to the paper, the President noted the following:
 - a. He had received a warm welcome from the senior management team and everyone at the College.
 - b. He had formed a University Management Board (UMB), replacing the President's and Provost's Boards, which had discussed key areas for strategy and planning at their first UMB away day.
 - c. The Strategy Review Committee had been postponed, pending the development of a new longer-term strategy, which process had been started and Council should expect to see developments over the year with the new approach to Council agenda, including presentation of a key strategic, risk and research item at each meeting. The aim was to launch the new strategy at the start of academic year 2023.
 - d. The senior management team were aware of the need to be visible to staff to respond to low morale caused by Covid, increased workload, the impact of external world disruption, and personal challenges faced by staff and students including energy costs and the increased cost of living. These cost issues were also being addressed at organisational level.
6. The Provost was thanked for his support during the transition to a new President and particularly for his handling of difficult matters over the past year.

Provost's report (Paper 5)

7. The Provost presented his report.

Finance report (Paper 6)

8. The Acting Chief Financial Officer noted that the provisional figures in the finance report were accurate at the time of writing, but that these had been impacted to a limited extent by recent changes to the national economy, in light of the majority of Imperial's utility costs now being fixed for the period and the low exposure to interest rate changes.
9. The external audit was ongoing, and Council were reminded that the annual accounts would post a significant deficit in 2021/22 due to the required pension provision.

Strategy deep dive: Teaching and learning (Paper 7)

10. Council received a presentation from the Vice Provost (Student Experience and Education) which set out:
 - a. A summary of the teaching and learning strategy, including progress to date, emerging priorities, and the actual and forecast project spend.
 - b. Actions being taken to address the weaker areas identified in the 2022 NSS, particularly improving student assessment and feedback.
 - c. Feedback from teaching and learning staff which had flagged the need to avoid requiring the delivery of new strategies without considering the current workload.
11. There was a discussion, including:
 - a. The importance of a diverse student body, and cultural awareness in relation to the UK academic system and expectations around teaching, learning and assessment.
 - b. The ongoing ambition to increase the College's global footprint through developing online teaching for large groups of learners across the globe, including lifelong learning, but it was important to be fair to academic staff by ensuring workloads were considered. There was feedback around the need to ensure administrative processes were proportionate and effective.
11. The Council thanked Professor McCoy for her contributions to the College, most recently as Vice Provost (Student Experience and Education) and as a long-serving member of staff.

Equality and diversity report (Paper 10)

12. Council received a presentation from the Associate Provost (EDI) which set out key achievements to date and the challenges ahead. Given the large number of action plans relating to the different benchmarking schemes, there was a need to develop a more integrated approach to EDI which included a data infrastructure to improve reporting. It was reported that Imperial College Union were reviewing their EDI strategy, and that Council was focused on improving its own diversity to meet the Athena Swan gender balance target.

Research presentation: Institute for Security Science & Technology

13. Council received a presentation from Professor Chana, Co-Director of the Institute for Security Science and Technology. During discussion, Council explored the relationship with government partners, international cooperation, funding models and the benefits of being located in White City, among other topics.

Risk deep dive: Cybersecurity (Paper 9)

14. Council received a presentation which set out:
 - a. The context of the sector cyber risk and the College's readiness to respond.
 - b. A summary of the key cyber risks and mitigations.
 - c. The development of the cyber office and its objectives.
15. In discussion Council challenged the timescale of the roadmap to achieve the target risk mitigations, noting that there were potentially substantial differences between the needs of the enterprise and research systems. It was agreed that the UMB would consider the potential for policy decisions to support and speed up the implementation of the cybersecurity roadmap, to inform further discussion at Audit and Risk Committee.

Governance Effectiveness Review (Paper 11)

16. The Chair welcomed Mr. Allen from Halpin Partnerships Ltd and thanked him for his work on the governance effectiveness review. He outlined the key findings of the report, noting that the report had concluded that corporate governance was

fundamentally sound, but that there was a need to rebuild the confidence of the community in this fact.

17. Members asked Mr Allen for clarification on some matters raised in the report, including delegations and priorities for implementation. In discussion it was noted that the report included limited observations and recommendations related to committee effectiveness, but there had not been a systematic review of Council committees.

18. Mr Allen left the meeting. In further discussion it was noted that:
 - a. To respond to the demand by the community, including a wish to discuss how the Council managed disclosures of bullying from 2020 consultation, there had been broader consultation with all parts of the Imperial community than would be normal for an effectiveness review.
 - b. The report was wide-ranging and detailed, and the discussion focused on the 18 Recommendations and 8 suggestions.
 - c. Whilst the majority of recommendations offered included compliance issues that would be relatively simple to implement without delay, some recommendations required more consideration.
 - d. There were a number of views in relation to the recommendation regarding the composition of Council, with broad support for the Deans and CFO (to be updated to COO following the change in that role) remaining on Council and for increasing student and staff membership.
 - e. Given the report recommendation regarding a workshop to clear the air, learn lessons and move on from the bullying disclosures, there was a pressing need to respond to the report quickly, and that there was an opportune moment for communication from the President to the community before his Inaugural address on 11 October 2022. It was agreed that the College Secretary would organise a Council meeting within the next week to allow further discussion of the key Halpin Report recommendations.

Committee reports

19. The Chair provided an oral update from the Nominations Committee meeting held on 29 September 2022, noting the focus on succession planning, plans to achieve the Athena Swan target and more generally, take action to improve gender balance on the Council.

Resolved:

- a. To extend Mr John Cullen's second term of office for a period of one year and up to 31 December 2024 to allow for transition of his responsibilities as Deputy Chair, Chair of Audit and Risk Committee and Senior Independent Governor.
 - b. To appoint Mr Leszek Borysiewicz to Remuneration Committee.
 - c. That the Deputy Chair of Council be appointed the Chair of the Remuneration Committee with immediate effect.
20. Council received the report from the Finance Committee (Paper 12).
21. Council received the starred items and noted the Staff Changes report (Paper 13) and the Events update (Paper 14).

The meeting closed at 13.30.