

# IMPERIAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND MEDICINE

## Minutes of Council Meeting

Held at The Stadium, Scale Space on 29 September 2023, at 09.00

### Present

Mr J. Allan (Chair), Professor F. Allen, Professor D. Ashby, Ms A. Ashley-Smith, Ms C. Boutrolle, Mr J. Cullen, Professor Sir L. Borysiewicz, Professor H. Brady (President), Professor N. Brandon, Mr T. Courtauld, Professor R. Craster(online), Ms R. Dabagh, Dr L. Elvidge, Sir R. Kalifa, Mr R. Kerse, Mr D. Khanna, Dr M. Meaney, Sir J. Michael, Ms S. Murray (online)(until item 4), Ms N. Podder, Dr M. Safa, Professor J. Sanders, Mr S. Saxena, Professor I. Walmsley (Provost), Mr C. Williams, and Ms G. Brankin (College Secretary).

### In attendance

Ms K. Briggs (online)(until item 5), Vice Provost (Education and Student Experience)(until item 5), Vice Provost (Research and Enterprise) (item 7), Director of Communications, Director of Public Affairs, Director of HR (item 5), Senior Strategic Planning Adviser (item 7) and Head of Central Secretariat.

### **Welcome**

1. Apologies were received from Mr R. Lewis and Professor L. Lightstone. The new members introduced themselves.
2. None of the members noted a conflict with items on the agenda.

### **Minutes and matters arising**

3. The Minutes and notes from the meeting held on 14 July 2023 were approved and the action tracker was noted.

### **Socially responsible engagement framework (Paper 7)**

4. The Vice Provost (Research and Enterprise) and the Senior Strategic Planning Advisor presented the paper, which set out the College's proposed Fossil Fuel Company Engagement Framework. The framework was underpinned by the principle of

engagement for change to support decarbonisation and to play a role in the development of green energy. Annual review conversations would inform engagement, and disengagement decisions, and final assessments would be published to ensure transparency.

5. The Council welcomed the framework and expressed their support of Imperial's approach. In discussion, it was acknowledged that there was not a consensus across the community on how to engage with fossil fuel companies, and that there was likely to be pushback from different perspectives. Balance, transparency, and clear routes to address concerns were necessary.

**Resolved:** that the socially responsible engagement framework be approved, subject to discussed modifications and ongoing review.

### **Chair's Report**

6. The Chair provided a verbal report from the Nominations Committee which met on 28 September. The Committee received an update on the search for a new Chair of Council and agreed that the incoming Chair would take forward recruitment for the Deputy Chair, vacancies upcoming in July 2024, and the introduction of a light touch appraisal process for Council members, as agreed by adopting the Halpin recommendations.
7. Ms Mary Meaney-Haynes had agreed to replace John Allan as co-Chair of the Imperial College Council Women's Network. The Committee was currently planning the 2024 programme.
8. The Deputy Chair updated Council on the search for a new chair of Council which was proceeding according to the agreed process.

### **Reports (Paper 3)**

9. Council discussed the reports from the President, Provost, and Chief Operating Officer.
10. The ICU President provided a verbal update and outlined current student feedback. Of particular note was the new student experience fund, created in collaboration with the College, which provides funds for students in receipt of the Imperial Bursary to ensure that they have the opportunity to participate in Union activities and events.

## **Imperial Strategy - management update and Council feedback**

11. The President updated Council on the development of the strategy, which had been the focus of the recent UMB two-day residential. Engagement with the College community and other stakeholders had shaped the discussions, which had been collegial and challenging.
12. The Provost outlined strategic themes and projects, pinpointing four areas for future growth aimed at fostering interdisciplinary research and teaching, while strategically projecting the College's presence within the UK and globally.
13. The Chief Financial Officer set out funding and investment considerations, including physical and digital infrastructure, Carbon Net Zero, and people. Substantial investment would be needed to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 230, necessitating careful financial planning. This could include income-generating assets and considering infrastructure investment from operational cash flow.
14. In order to develop the detail and to work with the incoming Chair of Council and other new members, it was agreed that new strategy should be launched in March 2024. This would also blend better with the timing of the preparations for the advancement campaign, the brand, and other internal reviews.
15. In discussion, there was a focus on enhancing the College's global reach, ensuring sustainability, maintaining financial stability, political considerations and addressing the challenges related to diverse student demographics and engagement. The Council understood that the next iteration of the strategy would have more detail about how the College's offering was distinctive, prioritisation, and metrics.

## **Staffing and organisation annual report (Paper 5)**

16. The Director of HR presented the first annual people report. The report set out how the Directorate supported the academic strategy, and outlined the approach to addressing HR challenges, underscoring a commitment to transparency, diversity, and improvement. Of particular note was the Report and Support tool, which had improved the ability to address concerns, with a focus on making data accessible for action and follow-up.
17. The main points in discussion were:

- a. Succession and talent plans could be enhanced, with processes to identify and nurture talent.
  - b. Mental health for staff and students was an ongoing concern, and good progress had been made with increased investment and provision, in partnership with the Students' Union.
  - c. the need for regular staff surveys to build comparative data and year on year analysis, with a commitment to effective follow-up and response.
18. It was agreed that future reports would encompass explicit reporting on diversity, which Council also received at the July meeting.

#### **EDI annual report (Paper 6)**

19. The Provost opened the report by thanking Professor Curry, who had recently completed his term as Associate Provost (EDI). He reported that going forward the role had been split into two positions, which had allowed broader community representation. The new Associate Provosts, Professor Lesley Cohen and Dr Wayne Mitchell, were developing a new EDI strategy. Following the wider governance changes the Associate Provosts chaired the EDI strategy group, which reported to the UMB people and culture committee, chaired by the President.

#### **Updates to Charter, Statutes and Ordinances (Paper 8)**

20. The College Secretary and General Counsel presented the paper and reminded Council that the proposed changes would formally create the new positions for staff and students on Council as previously approved, and implement other recommendations made in the Halpin Report. She reported that since the revised Charter and Statutes had been circulated to Council with the proposed special resolution on 7 September 2023, the Privy Council had indicated informally that they would approve the changes, subject to a minor technical comment from the Charity Commission relating to a legislative reference, which would be incorporated into the final version. It was noted that discussion with the unions about the relocation of the Appendix on Academic Staff to the Ordinances was ongoing, to ensure that their questions were addressed.

**Resolved, as a Special Resolution:**

- a. to approve the amendments of the Charter set out in the mark up in the Diligent reading room (subject to the approval of Court and such amendments as may be required by the Privy Council and which are approved by the College Secretary);
- b. to approve the amendments of the Statutes set out in the markup in the Diligent reading room (subject to such amendments as may be required by the Privy Council and which are approved by the College Secretary); and

**Resolved:** to approve the revised Ordinances circulated with the papers, to come into effect at the same time, upon the date of the revised Royal Charter and Statutes by the Privy Council.

**Change of purpose of named endowed funds (Paper 9)**

21. The College Secretary and General Counsel presented the paper.

**Resolved:**

- a. That the purpose of the Gerladine Harmsworth Scholarship fund be amended to “provide scholarships to undergraduate students commencing a medical degree at the College.”
- b. That the purpose of the Stoddart-Williams Lecture Fund be amended to “advance education for the benefit of the public in Chemistry by supporting named postgraduate prizeds within the Department of Chemistry.”

There were no items of other business and the meeting closed at 12.45.