
College Council Minutes - Approved

Date	2 April 2020, 17.00
Location	Council Room, Strand Campus
Present	Lord Geidt (Chair); Dr Angela Dean (Vice-Chair); Professor Ed Byrne; Mr Paul Cartwright; Sir Jon Coles; Mr Michael D'Souza; Mr Paul Goswell; Mr Shaswat Jain; Sir Ron Kerr; Ms Ros King; The Right Reverend and Right Hon. Dame Sarah Mullally; Sir Nigel Sheinwald; Ms Clare Sumner; Professor Guy Tear; Ms Kat Thorne; Dr Susan Trenholm; Ms Nhuoc Lan Tu and Professor Evelyn Welch.
Apologies	None.
In attendance	Standing attendees: Baroness Bull, Vice President & Vice-Principal (London) Professor Jonathan Grant, Vice President & Vice-Principal (Service) Ms Annie Kent, Interim Chief Finance Officer Mr Steve Large, Senior Vice President (Operations) Professor Sir Robert Lechler, Provost/Senior Vice President (Health) Mr Chris Mottershead, Senior Vice President (Quality, Strategy & Innovation) Professor 'Funmi Olonisakin, Vice President & Vice-Principal (International) Professor Nicola Phillips Vice President & Vice-Principal (Education) Professor Reza Razavi, Vice President & Vice-Principal (Research) Mr Vivek Ahuja, Council Member from August 2020 - observing Secretariat: Ms Joanna Brown, Governance Manager Ms Xan Kite, Director of Governance Services Mr Paul Mould, Director of Business Assurance

1 Welcome, apologies and notices

The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting, which was the Council's first meeting to be held remotely. The Chair noted, that in the current environment, there may be a need to request approvals from Council outside the timetable of normal business. The Council was asked for flexibility in the event of urgent business.

2 Approval of agenda

The Chair noted that the agenda had been designed to provide time to focus on issues relating to the coronavirus and its repercussions, and that consequently more items than usual had been moved to the Consent agenda.

Decision

That the agenda be approved.

3 Unanimous Consent Agenda (including Minutes of the Previous Meeting) [KCC-20-04-02-03]

Decision

That the reports on the Unanimous Consent Agenda, including the minutes of the 30 January 2020 meeting, be taken as read and noted or approved as set out in the papers.

4 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

5 Report of the Chair

5.1 OfS Widening Participation Access Monitoring [KCC-20-04-02-05.1]

Noted under the Unanimous Consent Agenda

5.2 Fellows Dinner 2020 - postponement

Noted under the Unanimous Consent Agenda

6 Report of the President & Principal

6.1 Summary Report on Key Issues [KCC-20-04-02-06.1]

The report of the Principal outlined key current issues. The Principal provided the following brief updates to his report:

Industrial Action – his appreciation to staff, who had been magnificent in not working to rule in the current health emergency.

Senior Appointments – The new Dean had been appointed and would commence the role on 1 January 2020. Interviews for the new Senior Vice President (Health) would take place online the first week of May.

National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Academic Health Sciences Centre – King's Health Partners had been successful in achieving a five-year renewal for the Academic Science Centre. This was an outstanding achievement by the Provost/Senior Vice President (Health) and his team.

Royal Brompton Hospital project - This item had been removed from the main agenda in order to provide time for discussions around Covid-19 and had not been suitable for the Consent Agenda. Time would be allocated at a future meeting for a focused discussion and approval of the project, which had received approval from the Boards of the other parties involved.

6.2 Coronavirus [KCC-20-04-02-06.2]

The President & Principal outlined the discussion planned to update the Council on the Novel Coronavirus pandemic: a general outline of scientific and medical issues; King's community contribution in helping the nation; a detailed discussion about the university's response to the situation; a review of market protection, and the domestic and international markets; key issues for 2021, which would be an unusual academic year; and finances.

General outline of scientific and medical issues

The Provost/Senior Vice President (Health) updated Council. Covid-19 was a new virus in the corona family, to which human beings had no immunity. It was highly contagious and the mortality rate was estimated at about 1% based on current testing numbers around the world. Due to the timing of the lockdown and what was known about incubation it was reasonable to predict that the peak would be in around two weeks' time. The big unknown was how many people in the population had been affected and so it was important to have an antibody test and achieve population testing as fast as possible. Guys and St Thomas' hospital had been involved in diagnostics and Dyson was looking to rollout kit. Many trials were underway, mainly repurposing known drugs. Vaccinating trials were underway in humans. It could be assumed that lockdown would continue until the end of May. What happens then would depend on what happened in other countries ahead of the UK in the cycle, and what levels of immunity were discovered with antibody

testing. A series of waves of infection could be anticipated and a series of waves in circumstances as the UK government managed the relaxation of lockdown.

King's community contribution in helping the nation

The King's community response had been impressive and gratifying and reflected the close partnerships with NHS. Many had put research to one side in order to help the NHS, which was under incredible pressure. King's had made as many of its buildings available as possible for simulation and training. Some student residences had been made available for NHS staff. It was noted that this included the Champion Hill residences which had been vacated of students around fire hazard concerns. Council was assured that the fire risk assessment had been properly revisited in the light of the proposed occupation by staff rather than students and that the balance of risk and need had led to a decision to allow NHS staff into residences as King's College Hospital was under immense strain. It was noted that the university would not be benefiting financially from this arrangement. King's had introduced a voluntary scheme to fast-track medical students and nursing students onto wards. Staff at the IoPPN were offering mental health stress relief support and were in discussions with partner trusts as to how best to do that. A scheme had been implemented providing tablets to patients in order that they could communicate with relatives.

King's research community had galvanized in response to the request for research applications to combat Covid-19 with proposals for all kinds of projects from new treatments to building ventilators, and to mental health research. Most applications had been extremely high quality but only about 30 could be funded. It was hoped that it would be possible to fund others through alternative funding mechanisms.

It was expected that teaching would remain completely online until Christmas, and that it would be a year until there was a return to a more normal situation.

The university's response to the situation

The Senior Vice President (Quality, Strategy and Innovation) outlined three phases of response:

Phase 1 – The transition to home working, study and assessment for 9000 staff and 30,000 students, including the closure of many buildings. The majority of this work had now been achieved due to a massive combined effort across the university.

Phase 2 – Securing the student base domestically and to the extent that was achievable, internationally, for the next academic year. This would overlap with phase 3.

Phase 3 – To plan for the shape of the university for the transition year 2020/21 once the state of the market for both King's and the higher education sector was known and there was more certainty about government funding for research.

Transition to home working, study and assessment (Phase 1)

Overall framework: Management had spent two weeks building a coherent framework which had subsequently been implemented through line management.

Philosophy Community spirit: The transition to home working, study and assessment had worked well because the approach had been for "one community". Early and important signals had been sent to the community which had been appreciated and well received and included: not taking strike pay deductions; and respecting the need for flexible working from those with childcare and care responsibilities. There had been a community feeling of deep concern for students. Complaints from students had been modest and, where received, started with deep understanding of the situation that the university was dealing with and the efforts being made. This approach had not been taken in some other Russell Group universities and differentiated King's from other institutions.

Structure: A set of coordination teams had been put in place to understand, monitor and manage different aspects of the situation with an overall coronavirus response coordinating team (the Gold Team) retaining an overview and ensuring that overlaps and gaps were dealt with. The groups included three silver teams: A personal health team, which was preparing for the impact on the community; a team overseeing

infrastructure which had overseen the closure of buildings and establishment of the IT structure and would now focus on student applications for the next year; and a third team focusing on mental health and support for King's Health Partners and other local partner groups deploying for the national and international interest. Other aspects being monitored and managed included student interest, and reputation. The Vice President (International) had taken the inspirational approach that King's become a beacon for potential international students, rather than viewing them as solely income as appeared to be the case at some competitor institutions and it was recognized that this approach would enable the university to continue to prosper if this was maintained and protected.

Students: Students had suddenly found themselves in very varied situations, whether in London or in their homes in the UK or overseas. The speed of adaptation required had presented a significant challenge and had a significant impact, particularly for those who had health issues and difficult domestic situations. The graduation ceremonies had been postponed. Students had been active in communication with the university, wishing to express their views about their education; they had shown that they saw themselves as part of the collective effort at King's.

King's had not brought forward the end of term as many other institutions had done, but had moved to total online teaching overnight. It had been a truly impressive effort and a major achievement in implementing new ways of teaching and assessing using new technology. Implementation of online delivery had accelerated the Education Strategy by three years and the early and successful experience confirmed exciting possibilities for the longer term. Teaching would be largely complete by Easter for the current academic year and efforts would then focus on assessment, student support and preparation for teaching provision in September. All student services, including library services, had been shifted online overnight, and students were making good use of all of these. The Government was looking to provide enhanced mental health support for students and King's would be closely involved in this.

Building closures and IT: The academic estate had been closed on a phased basis and was now closed to all but essential workers, which included some of the research staff who were working on Covid-19 related research. There remained 3,100 students in the residences, of which 600 intended to return home by Easter if they were permitted to travel. The university had released all students wishing to go home from residences contracts at no cost. Remaining students were receiving practical support from the residences staff.

The IT infrastructure had supported the transition to homeworking for 8-9k staff very well. The next phase was to further improve resilience of the IT networks, noting that a residual cyber security risk was being evicted but would remain until July 2020 at the earliest. It was noted that parts of the capital spending plan were ringfenced and protected, including network security and cyber security, all areas supporting online education, and all investment in IT which was supporting homeworking.

Student recruitment and the domestic and international markets (Phase 2)

It was noted that the Higher Education landscape would not return to that which had been in place before the Covid-19 pandemic. The more engaged the university could be in online offerings, the more successful it would be in the marketplace next year and the years after that.

King's would have preferred a more collaborative approach to recruitment securing a package for the whole sector, but the actions of some peer institutions in seeking to use the domestic market to backfill international losses had left King's and others with little choice but to move to protect their own interests. There was now a moratorium on universities amending all conditional offers to unconditional offers as some had been doing. Advice on next steps was awaited from the Government.

Worse case scenarios predicted there could be an 80% downturn on international students, and that students in their second and final years might choose to defer rather than have continued disruption. A range of scenarios were being modelled as it was crucial to protect as much income as was possible at the same time as supporting staff and students. Marketing had been moved online, and the marketing team were reaching out to prospective international students. A range of King's conversations were being translated into other languages and 53 webinars had been scheduled over the next eight weeks. The

crucial question was when London would start to be seen as a safe place for students, not just in terms of lifting travel and social distancing restrictions, but also confidence that the infection was under control. Financial decisions would be made when the state of the market and Government funding for both King's and the wider higher education sector was known.

Shape of the university for the 20/21 transition year (Phase 3)

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7 Reports of the Committees

7.1 Report of the Finance Committee [KCC-20-04-02-07.1]

The Chair of the Finance Committee had provided a verbal update on the financial position situation during the discussion on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic above. All items on the report of the meeting of the Finance Committee held on 12 March 2020 were noted on the Unanimous Consent Agenda as the current position had moved on from the status at the time of that meeting.

All items of the Finance Committee report were noted with the Consent Agenda:

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- (i) *Coronavirus*
 - (ii) *Debt Raising*
 - (iii) *Productivity Improvement Plan*
 - (iv) *Management Accounts*
 - (v) *Champion Hill/Bristol Update on Costs*
 - (vi) *Indications for the Five - Year Plan*
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7.2 Report of the Governance and Nominations Committee [KCC-20-04-02-07.2]

Council received the report of the Governance and Nominations Committee.

(i) Selection Process for the President & Principal

The Chair of the Governance and Nominations Committee reported that in-depth discussions on the emerging candidate brief had been held with independent members and with Perrett Lever. Due to the current environment, the timetable for the selection process had been amended to provide more time for the scheduling of discussions.

(ii) Annual Council Effectiveness Review

The Committee had considered the completed questionnaire responses received to date and would submit a full report and recommendations to Council when it had considered any remaining submissions. Remaining submissions should be made by Monday 6 April.

Early submissions showed that the fundamental role of Council was considered to be sound. There was an atmosphere of trust and good relationships between the governing body and the executive. There were areas for improvement however, including: more time to be scheduled for looking forward and debating strategy; development of the machinery for financial discussions; more detailed discussions about the KPIs and the way in which they are used; and a need for shorter and more focussed reports.

The Chair also noted the desire to hold informal meetings of independent members and a feeling that there were too many non-members present at meetings which hindered the intimacy around the table. A need to consider the role of the newly elected staff members and the reliance placed on them to convey staff views was also noted as was a need to consider potential improvements to the relationships between committees and Council.

(iii) Away Day Agenda

Topics for the Away Day agenda would need to be revisited in the Summer once more was known about the higher education landscape. There would be three sessions in the day: the first would be a presentation and discussion led by The Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, Professor Stephen Toope; the second a session on key current matters at King's on a topic to be advised by the Principal arising from the impact of the covid-19 pandemic; and the third in the afternoon would focus on financial sustainability advised by the Chair of Finance Committee. The Executive Deans would be involved in the third session and also in a post-meal discussion on priorities of and challenges faced by the Faculties facilitated by Angela Dean on the evening before the Away Day.

The remaining items of the Governance and Nominations Committee report were noted with the Consent Agenda:

- (iv) *Committee Appointments*
 - (v) *Review of Committee Vacancies*
 - (vi) *Joint Meeting Arrangements for Finance Committee and Estates Strategy Committee*
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7.3 Report of the Academic Board [KCC-20-04-02-07.3]

All items were noted on the Consent Agenda

- (i) *Report on Portfolio Simplification*
- (ii) *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*
- (iii) *Research Integrity*
- (iv) *National Institution for Health Research Competition Submission*
- (v) *Ethical issues concerning SUSTech*
- (vi) *Academic Board Subcommittee reports*
- (vii) *Other items to note*

7.4 Report of the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee [KCC-20-04-02-07.4]

All items were noted on the Consent Agenda

- (i) *Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee Business Calendar*
- (ii) *Principal's Report*
- (iii) *Internal Audit update*
- (iv) *External Audit update*
- (v) *Value for Money*
- (vi) *Compliance report*
- (vii) *Risk presentation and discussion: IT Service Delivery*

7.5 Report of the Estates Strategy Committee [KCC-20-04-02-07.5]

All items were noted on the Consent Agenda

- (i) *Strand Master Planning*
- (ii) *Estates Capital Working Group*
- (iii) *St Thomas' Campus Update*
- (iv) *King's Residences Demand and Supply*
- (v) *General Overview*

8 Report of the KCLSU President [KCC-20-04-02-08]

Council received the standing report of the President of the KCLSU, which was taken as read and noted. The President of the KCLSU reflected on the sentiment in the student body around the current coronavirus crisis. The student body had been taken aback by the Covid-19 situation, but both the Student Union and the student body at large felt the university was doing its level best, and the President put on record the Union's desire to collaborate with the university in any initiative to help, big or small. He noted that the King's approach had been appreciated by other Student Union bodies also. The President and Principal commended both the intellectual contribution and the degree of collaboration demonstrated by Shaswat and his colleagues in this crisis and noted that the executive officer of the Student Union had been invited to sit in on management discussions.

9 Any Other Business

The Chair noted that the College Secretary had been unwell, but was now recovering, and wished her well; and put on record his thanks to the Secretariat for supporting this first online meeting of the College Council.

11 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7pm

Lord Geidt
April 2020