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## College Council Minutes - Approved

<b>Date</b>	<b>14 May 2020, 17.00</b>
<b>Location</b>	Online via MS Teams
<b>Present</b>	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; Professor Evelyn Welch.
<b>Apologies</b>	None.
<b>In attendance</b>	<p><b>Standing attendees:</b>            Baroness Bull, Vice President &amp; Vice-Principal (London)            Professor Jonathan Grant, Vice President &amp; 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 &amp; Innovation)            Professor 'Funmi Olonisakin, Vice President &amp; Vice-Principal (International)            Professor Nicola Phillips Vice President &amp; Vice-Principal (Education)            Professor Reza Razavi, Vice President &amp; Vice-Principal (Research)            Mr Vivek Ahuja, Council Member from August 2020 – observing</p> <p><b>Additional Attendees:</b>            Ms Annabel Chalker, Director of Corporate Communications            Ms Rachel Parr, COO (Health) for item 7.8            Professor Mike Curtis, Exec Dean, Dentistry, Oral &amp; Craniofacial Sciences for item 7.10</p> <p><b>Secretariat:</b>            Ms Irene Birrell, College Secretary            Ms Joanna Brown, Governance Manager            Ms Xan Kite, Director of Governance Services            Mr Paul Mould, Director of Business Assurance</p>

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### 1 Welcome, apologies and notices

The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting. No conflicts of interest were declared.

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### 2 Approval of agenda

There were two new items proposed: discussion of the final report of the Bush House Implementation Group to be taken within item 6.1 and a new item, 7.10 on planning for re-opening the campus.

#### Decision

That the agenda be approved.

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### 3 Unanimous Consent Agenda (including Minutes of the Previous Meeting) [KCC-20-05-14-03]

#### Decision

That the reports on the Unanimous Consent Agenda, including the minutes of the 2 April 2020 meeting, be taken as read and noted or approved as set out in the papers.

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#### 4 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

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#### 5 Report of the Chair

There were no items to report.

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#### 6 Report of the President & Principal

##### 6.1 Summary Report on Key Issues [KCC-20-05-14-06.1]

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

Coronavirus update – the university faced an incredibly complex scenario with the pandemic having a massive effect on many institutions across the country, perhaps King's in particular because of its involvement with the NHS. In the Principal's time in university leadership, he had not seen such cohesive leadership at multiple levels. He noted the outstanding contribution of Professor Sir Robert Lechler in his national leadership role in the response to the pandemic in his personal capacity as well as his leadership role within King's and the King's Health Partners.

League table rankings – King's had had considerable success in recent rankings, in particular being ranked ninth in the world, and third in Europe, by *Times Higher Education (THE)* for our social, environmental and economic impact.

Diversity and Inclusion – progress was being made in this critical area.

Implementation of the recommendations in the Report on Security Arrangements for the Opening of Bush House – The SVP (Arts and Sciences) and President of KCLSU had produced the report which detailed the short-medium term actions on review and change of policies, procedures and governance, the planned longer-term community consultation and engagement exercise and the hand-over of on-going work to operational areas (business as usual) to ensure that the recommendations of the Report are addressed in full. Substantial work had been completed to date through effective and successful collaboration between the university and KCLSU which had been valued by both organisations. The President of KCLSU reported that the process was building a stronger community across King's.

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##### 6.2 RBH/KHP Strategic Framework [KCC-20-05-14-06.2]

The SVP (Health) presented the Royal Brompton & Harefield NHS Foundation Trust and King's Health Partners (RBH-KHP) Partnership Strategic Framework (PSF) for endorsement. The PSF was a framework for the consideration of future business cases to fulfil the vision for the future of cardiovascular and respiratory research and care. It had been approved by the Partnership Board (November 2019) and RBH and GSTT NHS Foundation Trust boards. In discussion the following points were noted:

- The process for the merger of the Royal Brompton and Harefield with St Thomas was being fast tracked and all local approvals with relevant partners were in place. This provided a genuine aspiration to be ranked in the top five global institutions for lung and heart research. It would facilitate the attraction of talent and fundraising and would strengthen King's.
- The intention was to take the current opportunity to deliver cardiovascular and respiratory research and care differently and employing creative thinking to make sure there was a productivity gain rather than simply lifting and shifting current arrangements to the St Thomas' site. This would provide more efficient health care delivery with increased technology and remote monitoring.
- Council members noted that the financial expectations described in the paper represented minimal change and asked how the plans should be evaluated in financial terms. It was reported that the figures presented were prudent and conservative and that the finances sought were to be determined and would depend on the scale of research that was affordable.

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- It was noted that the vision offered a great deal clinically and academically to improve the whole of the cardio-respiratory environment and was well supported. There would be an expectation as we move to business case development to show that there is real potential for delivering something new and effective and King's would need to make the best of this financially.
  - In general relations with Imperial College were good.

### **Decision**

That the motion to endorse the Royal Brompton Harefield – King's Health Partners Partnership Strategic Framework, including the embedded assumptions and activity plans, be approved.

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## **7 COVID-19 – Response & Impact Context**

### **7.1 General overview and communications**

The Principal reported that the move to online delivery had been completed quickly and that the assessment process had been successful. Work was underway to plan for a very unusual and different academic process and development of the new normal. He had never seen a more integrated senior team approach and coordinated university response. There was no element of the institution that has not been impacted in a significant way.

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### **7.2 University Response**

The Senior Vice President (Quality, Strategy and Innovation) gave a verbal report. Management of the university's response to the pandemic continued to be delivered through the line management with surrounding groups working to establish frameworks to help with the delivery: health, recruitment and admissions, return to campus, well-being and mental health, continuing to serve, and international reputation. A new group would be added that would bring the vice-principals together to think about how the university can continue to deliver Vision 2029 with minimal damage to the institution.

King's had had 2000 people overall self-isolating, 50 percent of those being staff. There had been no deaths in the direct community although many people had been affected in the wider community. There were 1600 students still in halls, but none of these were now self-isolating. There were signs of increasing stress in the organisation progressing from first fears about COVID in March to student financial concerns and increasing concerns about domestic violence. Overall, the organisation was surprisingly buoyant, and staff and students had taken pride in the way the organisation has responded, but patience was starting to be lost.

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### **7.3 Contribution locally, nationally, internationally**

The SVP/Provosts gave verbal reports. Staff were working in partnerships with NHS trusts, clinical academics had volunteered to go back to the front line and researchers were working to assist with testing and diagnostics. Student residence space had been made available for NHS staff and King's facilities had been used to train more nurses to work in intensive care. In addition, social scientists were contributing their work to understanding the impact of the crisis.

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### **7.4 Education and Academic Strategy [KCC-20-05-14-07.4]**

The VP (Education) presented this report which provided an overview of the education response to COVID-19. The move of the whole of the institution to a completely different footing for all aspects of teaching and assessment required flexibility in order to continue to adapt in response to changing circumstances. This would be achieved by planning for the long term consistent with the long-term vision rather than framing solely in the language of a single year of crisis management. Faculties were developing their plans for teaching delivery and student support within the overall framework. Colleagues were reporting a great deal of confidence and engagement and the level of imagination being brought to education delivery was pleasing. The pace of adaption displayed by students had been impressive, however there was a lot of work to be done to convey the look of the coming year to them. KCLSU was involved in the discussions about student communications. Some students were nervous that the formats being adopted may not be as good or their experience not as

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engaging. King's was being explicit that in terms of education the quality will be at least as good. The issue would be how to replicate the cohort experience and other elements of university life, but good progress was being made in this area.

King's had been identified as being one of the few universities to be well placed with online delivery and it had been developing and putting out some very clear messages for international students in this area, working on the challenges that might deter those students, for example with regard to quarantine. A strategic advantage had been King's ability to translate its vision on to an online vision and also that it had been working closely with KCLSU and engaging with offer holders from the beginning of the pandemic.

Many parts of the university had finished teaching at the Easter break, but others had continued online since then. Feedback from students had been very positive. Some had reported that they missed the social interaction of the classroom, but they were starting to adapt to this and organising their own discussions online.

The delivery platform MS Teams was being used for tutorials and the chat function was being found to be helpful in enabling the more reticent students to participate in classes.

The online education experience was particularly challenging for postgraduate and final year undergraduate students with a shorter study timescale, in particular those who needed access to laboratories, performance space and other onsite facilities. Work was underway to identify ways to prioritise and meet their needs.

The Principal reported that King's was the strongest UK university in online delivery space, noting its partnership with Arizona State University through the PLuS Alliance, and that the challenge would be to move from the semi-analogue provision implemented rapidly at the start of the pandemic to the new online provision set out in the Strategy.

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## **7.5 International Strategy**

The VP (International) gave a verbal report. It was still not clear how many international students would return to the UK due to safety concerns. Students in China had some difficulties accessing online material. King's was planning for a fully flexible programme. Close contact was being maintained with the many current international students who had returned to their homes which was particularly important for final year students, and it was hoped that some of these would come back to King's for postgraduate work. A further challenge was that many of our competitors had lowered entry standards and were using questionable English language assessments. King's had extended its English testing facilities to add new assessors whose integrity could be trusted. King's sought to be distinctive and to differentiate itself with the best aspects of Vision 2029 beginning to surface, including curricular and co-curricular modules that combine service and education.

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## **7.6 Research**

The VP (Research) presented a verbal report. The community response to the crisis had been outstanding and many hoped that this approach would be used more often in tackling significant problems. The pandemic had had a significant impact on research with the closure of buildings, pause in field research, anxiety in grant funding, and PhD students not being able to finish and find jobs. King's had been one of the first universities to grant extensions to contracted research staff to continue to support them - and they had returned that with support for COVID issues. Approximately 1000 researchers were now being furloughed in order to save some resource that could then be used to extend the grants that were about to end. The timelines for the Research England Research Effectiveness Framework (REF) and Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) had been delayed for at least four months and possibly a year and King's was continuing to prepare for these. Work was underway to plan for the way in which King's would get its research up and running again. King's had funded 30 COVID research projects directly and was due to fund more following fundraising for this

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purpose. The possibility of establishing a testing programme for the college community was being explored.

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### **7.7 Business Continuity & Business Recovery**

The SVP (Operations) presented a verbal report. The move to homeworking had been successful, the main risk being the dependence on IT noting that the cyber breach was ongoing. The short-term focus was on the preparation for delivery of educational programs in September, planning the financial response for next year with the anticipated reduction in resource of £150-200M, and reopening the buildings.

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### **7.8 Wellbeing & Mental Health [KCC-20-05-14-07.8]**

The leader of the wellbeing and mental health workstream, Rachel Parr (COO Health), presented the report which highlighted the following issues: challenge of limited interactions of staff and students; network building and interventions; cooperation with KCLSU and successful Take Time program; wellbeing portal for staff opened three weeks ago with over 3000 views to date; marginal increase in use of support by students which showed that the interventions in place were having impact. The workstream was investigating ways to monitor student interactions and to insert wellbeing into all staff processes to be sure that wellbeing and mental health were being considered.

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### **7.9 Continuing to Serve [KCC-20-05-14-07.9]**

The VPs for Service and London presented the report. King's had been ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the world in the Times Higher social impact rankings and 4<sup>th</sup> on the partnerships criterion and work was underway to ensure that King's retained that identity and distinctiveness in the current challenging environment. The commitment to service needed to be protected and now included further national outreach as the community had dispersed nationally and internationally and moved into a virtual space which meant that we were making additional contributions outside of London.

The pandemic had also highlighted King's civic role and the value we add to our communities. Relationships in the City of London were going to be key as we find ways to bring the London experience to our students and then fast-track our aspiration to have national impact post pandemic. The VP for London asked Council members to share the ways that their organisations were continuing to serve as part of the impact of the King's community.

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### **7.10 Reopening the Campus [KCC-20-05-14-07.10]**

The lead of the reopening the campus workstream, Professor Mike Curtis, presented the report. The working group, which had representation from all key areas, had begun its work towards the end of April. It was working with four principles: to protect all of our staff and students as they return; to use a phased approach to repopulate the campuses informed by government guidance and restrictions as well as some local environmental factors; to aim to recognise the diversity, needs and vulnerabilities of staff and students; and to provide a framework with delivery at the local level.

Some areas of the university were pressuring for early return and the principles outlined above would be used to plan the order.

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## **8 COVID-19 – Financial Proposals, Student Recruitment and Admissions**

### **8.1 COVID-19 Financial Strategy Development and near- term plan 2020/2021 [KCC-20-05-14-08.1]**

Council considered the approach to the development of a financial plan for COVID initial financial recovery. Financial modelling was presented which was by its nature imprecise but informative. The strategy continued to be the preservation of cash while maintaining the King's franchise. [REDACTED] and the university was currently in reasonable condition.

Real estate running costs had been cut down as much as possible and capital expenditure paused at sensible points. A plan for moving forward on the capital programme would be developed once there was more certainty around finances and enrolments.

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The Chair extended his thanks to the Chair of Estates Strategy Committee for all his efforts in the successful conclusion of the sale of Canada Water.

The Principal reported that before COVID demand from students had been higher than it had ever been at King's and that marketing information revealed that the brand remained as strong as ever and international students would return as soon as they feel that they can, but that the international market would take a major hit and the extent of that would not be known until July. In the meantime the university was doing all that it could to mitigate the anticipated reduction in overseas student numbers and continued to look after its staff and students and to act with transparency and fairness. King's was taking all possible actions to reduce non-pay costs and a number of actions were under way on the pay side including voluntary pay reductions of the senior team, furloughing, offering voluntary retirements and reduction to part-time working. Any other steps to be taken with respect to pay would be carried out in ways that spread the burden fairly.

[REDACTED]

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## 8.2 Marketing, Recruitment, Admissions – Managing our recruitment risk [KCC-20-05-14-08.2]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



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**9 Reports of the Academic Board [KCC-20-05-14-09]**

*All items of the Academic Board were noted on the Consent Agenda:*

- (i) COVID19 updates*
- (ii) Academic Board Operations Committee report*
- (iii) College Education Committee report*
- (iv) College Research Committee report*
- (v) College London Committee report*
- (vi) Election of Associates of King's College*

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**10 Report of the KCLSU President [KCC-20-05-14-10]**

The President of the KCLSU reported that the close working relationship between the officers and the university leadership was strong and growing and should be maintained in future.

KCLSU Spring Elections had taken place between January and March 2020, with the election of 85 places. The number of complaints received in connection with the annual elections had fallen.

Increasingly effective use of digital tools by union officers had improved engagement with students and provided better support to them. The union had had more interactions with the wider student body during the pandemic beyond those who might usually access union services and had seen an increase in survey responses.

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**11 Any Other Business**

The Chairman noted that Council would remain very engaged over the next period even though its next regular meeting was not until July 15. The members were very keen to lend their support to the university and to provide personal expertise wherever needed. Its support was absolute and it was enormously grateful to the Principal and all colleagues for all that they are doing during this difficult time.

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**12 Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7.35pm

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**Lord Geidt  
May 2020**