
College Council Minutes - Approved

Date	30 January 2020, 17.00
Location	Council Room, Strand Campus
Present	Lord Geidt (Chair); Dr Angela Dean (Vice-Chair); Professor Ed Byrne; Mr Paul Cartwright; Mr Paul Goswell; Sir Nigel Sheinwald; Professor Guy Tear; Ms Kat Thorne; Dr Susan Trenholm; Ms Nhuoc Lan Tu and Professor Evelyn Welch.
Apologies	Sir Jon Coles; Mr Shaswat Jain; Sir Ron Kerr; Ms Ros King; The Right Reverend and Right Hon. Dame Sarah Mullally; Mr Michael D'Souza and Ms Clare Sumner. Professor Sir Robert Lechler, Professor Jonathan Grant and Professor 'Funmi Olonisakin (standing attendees).
In attendance	Attendee for specific item: Ms Bethany Southgate, Associate Director (External Reporting), Quality, Strategy and Analytics (for Item 6.4) Standing attendees: Baroness Bull, Vice President & Vice-Principal (London) Ms Annie Kent, Interim Chief Finance Officer Mr Steve Large, Vice President (Finance) Mr Chris Mottershead, Senior Vice President (Quality, Strategy & Innovation) and Interim Senior Vice-President (Operations) Professor Nicola Phillips Vice President & Vice-Principal (Education) Professor Reza Razavi, Vice President & Vice-Principal (Research) Secretariat: Ms Irene Birrell, College Secretary Ms Joanna Brown, Governance Manager Mr Paul Mould, Director of Business Assurance

1 **Welcome, apologies and notices**

The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the meeting.

2 **Approval of agenda**

The Chair highlighted the reserved items on the agenda and reminded members that these should not be disclosed or discussed outside of Council.

3 Unanimous Consent Agenda (including Minutes of the Previous Meeting) [KCC-20-01-30-03]

Decision

That the reports on the Unanimous Consent Agenda, including the minutes of the 26 November 2019 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 Update on President and Principal Search [KCC-20-01-30-05.1]

[REDACTED]

5.2 Report on Chair's Action (RESERVED)

[REDACTED]

5.3 Graduation ceremonies

The Chair put on record his thanks to those Council Members who had deputized for him at short notice at recent graduation ceremonies.

5.4 Committee Meeting Schedule for 2021-22 [KCC-20-01-30-05.3]

Council noted the meeting schedule for 2021-22.

6 Report of the President & Principal

6.1 Summary Report on Key Issues [KCC-20-01-30-06.1]

The report of the Principal outlined key current issues. The Principal provided the following comments on his report [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Changes in the Senior Management Team – The role of the Director of Students and Education had been filled on an interim basis, following an internal search, by Darren Wallis from the King’s Business School. The role of the Director of UK and International Relations which would be vacated in April would not be filled immediately as there would be a restructuring of that unit. As part of that restructuring, the Corporate Communications team would now report to the Principal. The role of the Director of Health and Safety was being filled for the time being by the Assistant College Safety Officer.

Industrial Action Update – The recent UCU ballot results indicated potential strike action in March over pensions. There was a possibility this could be averted through negotiation, but it was necessary to be prepared for strike action, taking on lessons learned from the previous strike action, in order to be best placed to mitigate the potential impact on student outcomes. A paper had been tabled and members were requested to contact the Vice President (Education) with any questions.

Champion Hill Student Residences – there would be a detailed investigation overseen by the Chairs of ARCC and the Estates Strategy Committee. All staff involved, many of whom had worked through the Christmas holiday, were commended in their handling of the incident. Students seemed mainly content that the incident had been dealt with as well as possible. Communications had been handled well. There had been recognition at government level that the incident had been well managed.

Brexit – Work was ongoing to ameliorate the impact on staff and students, and this was being closely monitored. There were regular updates on the intranet to the university community.

Times Higher Education (THE) world university rankings – King’s had been recognised as one of the most internationalised universities in the world, ranking 11th in the world in the recent THE rankings and 4th in the UK.

Coronavirus – The university was abreast of the situation as much as was possible and would be providing updates on a regular basis to the College community as more information became available.

Examinations



King’s Health Partners had been playing a major role in facilitating an agreement between the Royal Brompton Hospital and Guys and St Thomas’ to develop a partnership that would be world-leading in cardiovascular and respiratory health. The proposal had been supported by NHS England and was now working its way through the various governance mechanisms of the partner. It was expected that a formal proposal would be brought to the next meeting of Council.

Campaign to decolonise the curriculum – It was requested that time be scheduled at a future meeting, possibly at the Council Away Day, to brief Council Members on this topic.

6.2 Principal’s Reflections [KCC-20-01-30-06.2]

The report consisted of two documents. The first, Progress and reflections on vision and strategy, was the Principal’s own views, and a useful briefing for Council in the context of the search for his successor. It would also form the basis of the Principal’s annual ‘State of the university’ report and so feedback was invited. The Chair noted that the paper reflected some very deep thought and contained some rich material that the Council might want to unpack over time

The Principal noted that the second attachment, Collective Delivery Plan, was a piece of work that the Vice Presidents had prepared against the Vision 2029 objectives. Council Members were asked to note this report, which could be considered in more depth at a future date.

6.3 OfS Monitoring – Access and Participation [KCC-20-01-30-06.3]

The Vice President & Vice-Principal (Education) presented the paper which summarised King’s monitoring return to the Office for Students (OfS) on the 2018-2019 Access Agreement, and informed members of the requirements from next year onwards. Changing expectations of OfS meant that Council now had a greater oversight role on access and participation. A briefing on the nature of the

requirements for reporting purposes would be scheduled for Council members, but in the meantime the university was faced with a very tight deadline for this year's return which did not fit with Council's meeting schedule. On this occasion, the paper would go to the senior management team, and then be sent to Council electronically. New procedures would be put in place now that the OfS requirements were known.

6.4 KPIs/Balanced Scorecard [KCC-20-01-30-06.4] (RESERVED)

The Principal introduced the paper which set out the fourth biannual update on the university balanced scorecard. The report had been improved over time and was now being used as a live management tool for decision making. The Associate Director (External Relations) was in attendance to present the paper and take questions.

This publication contained updated KPIs and benchmarks based on the latest data available, as well as a small number of enhancements to existing measures. The changes had been reviewed and approved by the senior management team and addressed areas of performance. Work was still being done on space usage KPIs (frequency and occupancy), and on graduate outcomes.

During discussion with members the following points were noted:

- The scorecard was a tangible monitoring tool for independent members and members were pleased to see the level of maturity contained within it. As it was rolled out across the institution and used by more people it would become a more powerful tool.
- Members challenged the appropriateness of some of the lower quartile targets and were keen to fully understand the logic behind target setting. Management welcomed input on whether individual targets should be more ambitious. Each KPI was formulated differently and was partly based on what management believed could be realistically achieved based on benchmarks. For example, reshaping the workforce was a long-term ambition. Some of the targets had been set at faculty level and rolled up. In some areas, for example staff costs, holding to a steady target was a challenge.
- In order for the balanced scorecard to be a truly effective and meaningful monitoring tool, members thought Council should be provided with more narrative in order to achieve a clear understanding of how targets were set, and which benchmarks were used. It was suggested that Council should sign off on the targets, and the Principal agreed that this could be done at one of the strategic Council meetings.
- Regarding whether the KPIs steered behaviours to achieve the 4-6% surplus income target, it was noted that managing the university against the surplus income target was challenging, and that unexpected capital issues also needed to be factored in. The surplus target was a sector-wide aspiration and it was further noted that the reason the surplus was low was because in recent times it had been reinvested and not banked. The Chair of the ARCC proposed that if the 4% surplus income was key, then it should be embedded in the balanced scorecard.
- Many of the RAG ratings were red. It was noted that an annual operating plan, including a selection of red RAG ratings, was common in other organisations, and could perhaps be incorporated in part in the next stage of refinement.

6.5 Annual Health & Safety Report 2018-2019 [KCC-20-01-30-06.5] (RESERVED)



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

6.6 Modern Slavery Act 2018-2019 Annual Transparency Statement [KCC-20-01-30-06.6]
The Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement 2018-2019 was approved by Council on the Unanimous Consent Agenda.

7 Reports of the Committees

7.1 Report of the Joint Finance and Estates Strategy Committees [KCC-20-01-30-07.1] (RESERVED)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(iii) **SUSTech**

The Executive Dean of the Faculty of Life Sciences and Medicine had attended the joint meeting to advise that negotiations with the Southern University of Science and Technology (SuSTech) regarding a potential long-term collaborative relationship in medical education and research, were at an advanced stage. It was a significant, major international project. There was no financial decision needed and no property decisions – the risks were geopolitical and reputational rather than financial - but the project was academically significant, and senior management were confident that they had the requisite academic controls in place. Council was requested to endorse the collaboration as proposed.

Decision

That the proposed collaboration be approved, including the financial proposal at Appendix 2 of the report.

(iv) **Centre for Children and Young People's Mental Health**

The Chair of the Estates Strategy Committee reported that the ESC and Finance Committees had provided approval in principle with the full business case to come forward in due course. The Centre for Children & Young People's Mental Health (CYP) was a proposed new, purpose-built centre bringing together research, clinical and educational activities in the pursuit of improved mental health for children and young people. The Committees believed this to be an important project dealing with a very serious, highly topical issue, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(v) **Financing the Capital Plan - Borrowing Update January 2020**

The Finance team had been investigating additional debt facility and the Chair of the Estates Strategy Committee reported that there was a once-in-a-generation opportunity, with the current interest rates, to own properties rather than rent. The current covenants were restrictive and the Committees were supportive of reducing them, but at the same time it was desirable to have long term money and there would need to be a trade-off between those two things. The administration had also been asked to return to the Committees with more detail on revaluing of estate. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(vi) **Quad Engineering Redevelopment Update**

The Chair of the Estates Strategy Committee reported on the discussion around rising costs of the redevelopment. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

7.2 Report of the Academic Board [KCC-20-01-30-07.2]

The Principal, as Chair of the Academic Board, introduced the report, which requested consideration from Council on two items. He reported that the new format of the Academic Board was working very well, and that the Board had been drilling down into key academic issues. Portfolio simplification, which was a massive undertaking, had been received well, though not unanimously.

(i) **Update on REF Preparations**

The Research Excellence Framework (REF) is a UK-wide exercise managed by Research England whereby universities submit evidence of the quality and impact of their research to be assessed by expert panels. The Vice President & Vice-Principal (Research) presented the update on the preparations for REF 2021. REF has a huge reputational and financial impact on the university: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(ii) SUSTech Project

The Principal reported that while the Academic Board had been supportive on the whole about the SUSTech project, concerns had been raised about the ethics of doing business in China and potential reputational risks. The Director of the Lau China Institute, KCL and the Vice-Principal (International) were developing an ethics framework for working in China to address those concerns that would be discussed at Academic Board in due course.

Members of the Council who also served on the Academic Board noted that staff concerns were particularly around areas such as freedom of expression and academic freedom. It was noted, too, that there had been much in the media about the danger of over-reliance on China. They also wanted to be sure that students in the UK would not find their support lessened in any way because King's staff might be sent to the SUSTech program.

The Principal agreed with the Academic Board's view that it was essential to be clear-eyed about the partnership and aware of reputational risks. China was a growing player in the marketplace, and had been open about not sharing King's values, although there was no difference in the aspirations of the quality of education to be offered, and there would not be any impact on the university's ethics of medical education. It was noted that SUSTech was staffed mainly by people who had spent most of their careers in the west. Ethical issues had been, and were being, considered in depth. However, rather than trying to impose restrictions on another culture, the approach being taken within the international market was to recognise the situation and the local culture, and, if possible, to slowly influence from within. There would be constant evaluation: these would be King's students and graduates and King's would need to be able to ensure their safety and well-being. There were resources available outside of King's on some of the practical issues that might arise and lessons learned as to how they might be dealt with. *[Secretary's note – Council approved the project at Item 7.1(iii), above]*

(iii) Portfolio Simplification

The Vice Principal and Vice-President (Education) stated that while there had been some expressions of disquiet raised at the Academic Board, mainly about decisions to discontinue particular courses, these had tended to come from new members who had not been involved in the earlier extensive discussions about the process. Such responses were not unexpected in a big project like this which required difficult choices, and discussions had, on the whole, been collegial.

The remaining items of the Academic Board report were noted with the Consent Agenda:

- (iv) Environmentally Sustainable travel Policy*
- (v) Sharing Accountability*

8 Report of the KCLSU President [KCC-20-01-30-08]

Items for Consideration

Council received the standing report of the President of the KCLSU, which was taken as read.

9 Any Other Business

There being no other business for the regular session, the meeting adjourned to an In-Camera session.

All staff members other than Professor Guy Tear, Dr Susan Trenholm, Ms Kat Thorne and the College Secretary left the room for the following item.

10 In Camera Session (RESERVED)

Discussion was held on the following issues:

- (i) Pensions
- (ii) The search for a new Dean of the College
- (iii) The search for a new SVP Health.

11 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.

Lord Geidt
February 2020