



**COLLEGE COUNCIL**  
**Confirmed minutes**  
**Ninety-fifth meeting of COLLEGE COUNCIL 24 June 2020**  
**Video conference**

*{ } indicates that this item will be removed prior to publication on the College website.*

**Present:** Dr Anthony Freeling (Chair, President), Dr Hilary Burton (Vice-President), Mr Martin Coleman (from item 95.2), Miss Alexandra Entwistle-Thompson (MCR President, to item 95.12), Mrs Victoria Espley (Bursar), Dr Agnieszka Iwasiewicz-Wabnig (from item 95.1.1), Dr Philip Johnston (Senior Tutor), Dr Corinne Roughley, Dr Eugene Shwageraus, Miss Anie Vasileva (MCR Secretary, to item 95.12), Dr Lars Vinx.

**In Attendance:** Dr Stephen Axford (Director of Strategy and the Bridge), Dr Othman Cole (to item 95.5), Mr William Conner (Director of Institutional Advancement), Mrs Wendy Solomou (Secretary).

**Apologies:** Prof Jonathan Powell (Pro-Vice-President), Prof Bill Irish.

**OPEN BUSINESS**

**95.1. Introduction**

The President gave a vote of thanks to Dr Burton, Mr Coleman, Dr Iwasiewicz-Wabnig and Dr Shwageraus, who were attending their last meeting of Council.

He welcomed Dr Othman Cole, who was attending to speak to items 95.4 and 95.5.

**95.1.1. Declarations of Interests**

There were no declarations of interests.

**95.2. Minutes and Matters arising from the Open Business of College Council, of 27 May 2020**

**95.2.1. Approval of minutes (CC95 01)**

Council approved the minutes as an accurate record.

**95.2.2. College Council action list: Open Business (CC95 02)**

- [93.9.] Honorary Post-holders  
President to write to all Honorary Post-holders to thank and encourage them.
  - Completed.

- [87.13] Smoking Shelter  
The Bursar to organise the removal of the smoking shelter and to implement a policy of non-smoking throughout the College site.
  - To be considered at a later meeting.
- [89.11] Diversity and inclusion in the Senior Membership  
Dr Roughley to organise the collection of data from the Senior Membership and to provide feedback from the Work Strand to Fellowships Committee.
  - Dealt with in item 95.5.

### **95.2.3. Matters arising not otherwise on the agenda**

There were no other matters arising.

### **95.3. President's Report**

The President reported that he and the Bursar continued to have discussions with the University and other parties about development of the College's estate.

### **95.4. MCR Business (CC95 03a, CC95 03b)**

The MCR President reported that the MCR had held a 'town hall' style meeting on 16 June as a forum for students to raise concerns about how the College and MCR approached and dealt with racial inequalities and racial harassment and to consider what the College and the MCR could do to combat problems encountered by some within College. The meeting had had been attended by around 30 students.

The MCR President summarised the issues raised concerning the College and outlined suggested actions to be taken to address them (included in Paper 03a, together with the minutes of the meeting). She also referred to an open letter (included in Paper 03b), 'Hughes Hall needs to act on racism and racial inequalities', addressed to 'the President, the Senior Tutor, Dr Roughley [Deputy Senior Tutor and Chair of the Equality and Diversity Working Group] and the tutorial team of Hughes Hall'. The letter, which echoed the issues summarised in Paper 03a, included 43 signatories.

Students raised the following points at the 'town hall' meeting:

- Concerns of a performative and superficial response to the Black Lives Matter movement, and to issues of racism and racial discrimination in the past.
- Lack of a formal racial misconduct and disciplinary procedure (as is currently in place for sexual misconduct and other forms of harassment).
- The Prevent policy being included in the Equality and Welfare section of the College website. This was not felt to be appropriate by some students.
- Students unaware until recently that Dr Othman Cole was a BAME champion and unsure of what this meant - the role felt undefined.
- Lack of diversity in the tutorial team and reports of a lack of support from their tutors to BAME students.
- Lack of diversity in fellowship roles.

**[Post-meeting note:** Following the meeting it was noted and agreed that the College policy on harassment does include racial harassment. However, the 2017 statement on harassment only covers sexual harassment, which is misleading and should be rectified.]

The following remedial actions were proposed at that meeting:

- Need for explicit and quick action from the Equality and Diversity Working Group to ensure that College is not 'performative'.
- Write/re-write the racial harassment policy with the input of students (along the lines of the sexual harassment policy) to be in place by start of Michaelmas 2020.
- Increase the material available on anti-racism and BAME experience – potentially in the form of books and other resources, perhaps announce a fund specifically for this.
- Hiring of more BAME mentors, tutors and fellows who may be able to adequately support our students better.
- Define the role of the BAME champion and explain how this is meant to help BAME students.
- Improve communications with BAME students, through small working focus groups, with the intention of giving input on the hiring of mentors and tutors, as well as BAME support and what is needed going forward.
- Publish the application and admissions statistics for BAME students and staff.
- Purchasing of food or reaching out for catering/other College event opportunities from BAME local businesses.

In response to a question about which issue she considered to be the main concern for students, the MCR President said that students would like to see more Tutors and Fellows who were BAME, and specifically more Tutors who were black, although the idea of having BAME mentors would also be seen as a positive move. She said that some students had complained that their Tutors were not readily accessible nor able to adequately support BAME students. The Senior Tutor observed that it was in fact difficult to recruit Tutors and that the College had already been considering how the tutorial team might be strengthened by supplementing the partly administrative job of Tutor by recruiting mentors from the Senior Membership, including mentors of BAME background. The MCR President responded that it would be helpful if BAME mentors could be appointed before the beginning of the next term.

There followed a lengthy discussion about the nature of the problem - whether the College was failing to take on board structural and organisational concerns or whether problems centred around individual grievances and particular incidents. The MCR President acknowledged that there were individual complaints but said that there were also important organisational issues to address, such as establishing a racial harassment policy (in parallel with the sexual harassment policy) and increasing the proportion of BAME Tutors/mentors and academic staff. She stressed that it was important to implement such actions quickly. She also stated that it was the MCR Committee's aim to do more to integrate new BAME students at the beginning of the academic year, with events and partnering with recent graduates.

Dr Cole spoke in favour of appointing BAME mentors from the Senior Membership as well as from alumni who had been through the system and could offer support and networking opportunities.

The President suggested that Council move to the next item to consider the recommendations made in the report of the Equality and Diversity Working Group since they addressed a common set of issues.

## **95.5. Report and recommendations from the Equality and Diversity Working Group (CC95 04)**

Dr Roughley (Chair of the Equality and Diversity Working Group) spoke to the paper. She presented an initial analysis from the recent survey of the Senior Membership and the Working Group's recommendations for both immediate actions and a programme of major change.

The survey highlighted the fact that there were currently fewer women than men, particularly within some subject/discipline areas and sub-groups of the Senior Membership. There were also imbalances in race/ethnic background when compared with data for the University, although data for LGBTQ+, religion and disability were more in line with that of the University. The Working Group therefore recommended an initial focus on gender and ethnicity as areas of greatest concern, with other aspects of diversity to be considered in the future. The Working Group made the following recommendations:

1. Immediate actions by end of July which relate to both key areas of inclusion:
  - a. Convene listening groups and meetings of students, seniors and staff, starting this week.
  - b. Require Equality and Diversity Essentials training and Understanding Unconscious or Implicit bias training be undertaken by all staff and seniors. The University provides free online training (combined duration 1.5 - 2hrs) which we can access.
  - c. Publish diversity information for the college community (students, staff and seniors) – recognising the challenges for some characteristics due to small sample sizes.
  - d. Commit to working with strong principles of positive action throughout hiring processes at Hughes Hall
  - e. Immediate actions specifically focused on anti-racism and improving inclusion for Black and other minority ethnic members of College. Clear statement and signposting to resources on racism on website and in induction materials for students/staff/seniors
2. By the beginning of the next academic year where possible (end of calendar year as hard deadline):
  - a. Agree a code of conduct for all staff/fellows interacting with students – we have worked on appropriate relationships for academics, and the Staff Handbook for staff but there are still significant gaps. And there is nothing on racism specifically.
  - b. Provide clear processes for raising concerns and addressing complaints – the Bursar is already reviewing the process for handling complaints about staff conduct; the student harassment and sexual misconduct procedure needs re-framing to ensure mediation and agreed resolutions are clearly and readily available to those experiencing all sorts of discrimination and abuse; there also needs to be a clear avenue for raising concerns. Training is essential for those chairing/facilitating these processes.
  - c. Increase transparency on procedures for appointing seniors – Fellowships Committee is already looking at this
  - d. Book events with major speakers from outside Cambridge starting next month – get these into the calendar now, ensuring that there is diversity of speakers. Ensure that events include areas such as black history, post-colonialist theory, racial discrimination etc

3. Over the coming 12 months, develop and implement an overall 'change programme' with external input – on both ethnicity and gender. We expect this to include:
  - a. Workshops with groups of College staff and members to build our shared understanding, including racial literacy workshops which will be strongly recommended for all fellows/staff
  - b. Developing a more sophisticated approach to pastoral care for those with protected characteristics, complementing the existing Welfare Team by providing a range of support over the year
  - c. Mentoring individuals or groups.
  - d. Developing/delivering further specific training programmes using external trainers to deliver effective training - and thus with budget implications. There will be an expectation that all GB Fellows and staff will take part.
  - e. Assess the potential of a range of approaches to increase inclusion (e.g. recruiting more diverse staff and fellows) and reduce structural inequality; implement recommended solutions.

Dr Roughley requested that Council approve the following proposals to implement the recommendations of the Working Group:

1. Approve the immediate actions and proposal for work over the summer.
2. Agree to the proposed approach to a change programme, including an initial budget for 2019/20 of up to £10,000 for external training/consultancy.
3. Agree the remit of the Group and formalise the existing Group as a Working Group of Council, its reporting being a standing item at Council meetings, with the intent to turn it into a formal Committee of Council at the next GB.

The MCR President supported the recommendations and proposals, which she saw as addressing many of the concerns of the MCR. She said that the MCR Committee would continue to be involved in the proposed programme of work.

Dr Cole also supported the recommendations and proposals. He thanked Dr Roughley, the Working Group, the MCR President and MCR Secretary for their work in consulting College members and developing the proposals. He offered to help with the proposed programme of actions.

Council approved the three proposals.

## **95.6. Update on business contingency planning for COVID-19**

### **95.6.1. Hughes Hall Crisis Recovery Task Force: planning for the future (CC95 05)**

The President spoke to the paper, which outlined the Recovery Task Force's proposed recovery strategy for the College. The Task Force had formulated a series of strategic plans to deal with the challenges posed by the four pandemic scenarios developed by the University (Rapid Recovery, Extended Lockdown, Repeated Waves and Global Gloom). From this a more detailed combined plan to deal with either, or both of, the Rapid Recovery and Repeated Waves scenarios had been generated. The aims of the combined plan were to provide the best possible student education and experience under variable approaches to social distancing; to operate within means; and to allow the College to open up more quickly if there were to be no serious second wave.

The additional work involved in developing and implementing a detailed project plan would be undertaken by a newly established Project Management Office (PMO) under the leadership of the Director of Strategy and the Bridge and to include other seconded personnel. The PMO would report to Council and it was likely that it would be required until at least the end of 2020.

The President asked that Council approve the overall strategy and the recovery plan's five main goals (and associated action plans as detailed in the paper):

1. Innovate to provide space and communal catering according to student need and health guidance
2. Engage staff and Fellows, and other Colleges, to replace lost Departmental educational support
3. Rebuild the community through enhanced pastoral care and social activities, with a focus on the first eight weeks
4. Adopt flexible, resilient and cost-effective approaches to transitioning in and out of lockdown
5. Invest selectively in technology, communications, fundraising and income generation

Council approved the crisis recovery plan.

#### **95.6.2. COVID-19 Risk assessment (CC95 06)**

The Bursar reported that a series of COVID-specific risk assessments had been undertaken to help manage the risks that the virus posed to the College community and to inform decision-making. She explained that the Chair of the University's COVID Management Team had advised on the format and content of these risk assessments, and that the detail of the specific risks identified and the control measures applied to mitigate them had been provided by College staff.

The Bursar asked that Council review and approve the College-wide risk assessment; any future updates would be brought to Council for further review. (Individual operational risk assessments would be reviewed and updated by the College Silver Operations Team at its bi-weekly meetings.)

In response to questions the Bursar agreed that the assessment of the level of risk made by any individual was in danger of being subjective. However, she explained that all decisions would be subject to review by a wider group who would consider the evidence and relative risks with the aim of establishing a consistent approach. She added that all colleges would be following the specific advice provided by Public Health England.

Council approved the College-wide risk assessment given in Appendix 1 of the paper.

#### **95.6.3. Temporary structures (CC95 07)**

Dr Roughley reported that the Space and Operations Strategy Sub-group of the Recovery Task Force had considered the need for additional space in the coming academic year to allow studying, teaching, dining, and social activities to continue within the rules of social distancing. Having considered the costs and benefits of a range of options the Sub-group recommended buying a marquee (option 1) with the possibility of hiring a second marquee (option 5) should greater levels of social distancing need to be observed.

Council approved the option of purchasing a marquee, with the contingency plan of hiring a second marquee should it prove necessary. It was noted that planning permission would be required if a marquee were to remain in place for more than 28 days.

#### **95.7. Operational arrangements over the summer**

The President observed that members of staff had been exceptionally busy over the past few months, taking on additional tasks in response to the crisis. He said that the pace should slow down over July and August and that the Bursar and line-managers should encourage staff to take any remaining annual leave.

#### **95.8. Collection of declarations of interests and other information from Trustees**

The College Secretary sought Council's approval for asking GB Fellows to provide a declaration of all their interests instead of the usual annual update of any changes. This was to allow the information to be held electronically since, to date, declarations of interest forms were held in hard copy only. Council gave its approval and in addition agreed that information about skills and areas of expertise should be collected from each Trustee so that a skills matrix might be developed.

#### **95.9. Annual report from the Senior Boat Club Treasurer (CC95 08)**

Council received the Senior Boat Club Treasurer's report.

#### **95.10. Management accounts update (CC95 09)**

The Bursar presented the management accounts to 31 May 2020. She noted that since the last update presented to Governing Body on 10 June the forecast outturn had seen an increase in the deficit. This was mainly explained by planned increases in expenditure (summarised in her report). However, the forecast excluded the grant from the Colleges' Fund, which owing to the pandemic, could exceptionally be used as operational income in 2019-20 and, when included, moved the current year-end forecast deficit to a surplus. In view of the financial challenges envisaged for 2020-21 the Bursar advised bringing forward additional expenditure on refurbishment work (reviewed and approved by Estates Committee and detailed in the Appendix to her report) from 2020-21 to 2019-20.

Council approved bringing forward expenditure of approximately £98k from 2020-21 to 2019-20.

#### **95.11. Minutes of Committees**

Council received the minutes of the following committees without discussion:

**95.11.1. \*\*\*Confirmed minutes Estates Committee, of 10 February 2020 (CC95 10a)**

**95.11.2. \*\*\*Confirmed (revised) minutes Admissions Committee, of 26 November 2019 (CC95 10b)**

**95.11.3. \*\*\*Confirmed minutes Admissions Committee, of 3 March 2020 (CC95 10c)**

**95.11.4. \*\*\*Unconfirmed minutes Bridge Committee, of 13 May 2020 (CC95 10d)**

**95.12. Any other Open Business**

There was no other Open Business.

End of Open Business WS