



COLLEGE COUNCIL
Confirmed minutes
Ninety-third meeting of COLLEGE COUNCIL 29 April 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), Prof Jonathan Powell (Pro-Vice-President), Dr Stephen Axford (Director of Research Translation), Mr Martin Coleman, Miss Alexandra Entwistle-Thompson (MCR President, from item 93.4 to item 93.16), Mrs Victoria Espley (Bursar), Prof Bill Irish, Dr Agnieszka Iwasiewicz-Wabnig, Dr Philip Johnston (Senior Tutor), Dr Corinne Roughley, Dr Eugene Shwageraus, Miss Anie Valiseva (MCR Secretary, to item 93.16), Dr Lars Vinx.

Apologies: Mrs Wendy Solomou (Secretary).

In Attendance: Mr Bill Conner (Director of Institutional Advancement).

OPEN BUSINESS

93.1. Introduction

The President welcomed Miss Anie Valiseva, MCR Secretary, to her first meeting. It was noted she is a first-year graduate medical student.

93.1.1. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interests.

93.2. Minutes and Matters arising from the Open Business of College Council, of 18 March 2020

93.2.1. Approval of minutes (CC93 01)

Council approved the minutes as an accurate record.

93.2.2. College Council action list: Open Business (CC93 02)

- [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.

- [90.11] 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.
 - Dr Roughley stated that there had been good RF/RA response, but a poor senior GB Fellow one. It was suggested Fellows be 'nudged' by discipline. Dr Roughley will discuss data issues with the Compliance Administrator, as it was noted older/vulnerable Fellows will not attend College for meetings etc. It was agreed we need a sensitive approach to GDPR issues.
- [91.5] College's relationship with Chapter Zero
The President to pass the questions raised to the Chapter Zero Governance Working Group.
 - It was noted that Dr Ron Zimmern and Mrs Julie Baddeley Director will attend GB on 6 May, when agreement will be sought on the preferred relationship between Hughes Hall and Chapter Zero.
- [91.7] Amendment to constitution of Council in Ordinances
The Secretary to refer Council's preferred option to Governance Committee.
 - For the next meeting of Governance Committee.
- [91.8] Review of Council's Terms of Reference in Ordinances
The Secretary to refer the proposed changes to Governance Committee.
 - For the next meeting of Governance Committee.

93.2.3. Matters arising not otherwise on the agenda

There were no other matters arising.

93.3. President's Report

The President noted he had not used powers delegated to him (on 25 March), but that the Gold team and a special Council meeting had taken all decisions. The powers would not be renewed at Governing Body on 6 May.

93.4. Update on business contingency planning for Coronavirus

The President gave an overview of university-level planning and the implications for College. He highlighted three unknowns: impact of the virus; the Government response; and the UK's position internationally. He explained that scenario planning was the main effort, and four were being developed. He warned that even a 'normal' Michaelmas Term would see capacity issues for both teaching and research. He added that College must be ready to respond following HMG's review on 7 May and the Prime Minister's statement on 10 May.

He continued, noting recovery planning will be complex, that there may be academic impact, and that members of Council will need to engage over the next few months.

The Bursar highlighted operational aspects. The College remains open, with some 150 students in residence and staff (around 50%) had been furloughed from 2 April. She reminded Council of the Gold/Silver/Bronze structure.

Dr Roughley summarised student issues: looking at systems to allow students to arrive and leave; working on priorities for accommodation; and liaising with Tutors on student support and welfare.

The ensuing discussion focused on student hardship and financial pressure, including the availability of College and University funds. The MCR President noted hardship was the second most commonly asked question from students.

The President raised the key point, that intergenerational fairness must be considered. However much we decide to do for those struggling in the current crisis, we must be able to support properly future students. He added that the University will be under severe stress for at least the next year and probably many more. For Hughes Hall, if there no students in residence next year, the College will suffer a loss in excess of £1m.

The President continued, explaining there is planning in all 31 colleges and 150 departments; strands needed to be combined, and actions formulated without central control.

Dr Iwasiewicz-Wabnig noted that she is part of a group looking at how to open up laboratories etc., and the need to be aware of career impact, and fairness where ongoing childcare or other caring commitments, for example, are an issue.

Mr Coleman noted that HMG would support HEIs, but with conditions such as controls on student numbers and the balance of disciplines. These would affect the college-departmental interaction.

The President concluded, noting that defining and even resuming 'normality' is easier for colleges than departments.

93.5. {[REDACTED]}

93.6. Accommodation policy and fees 2020-21

93.6.1. Accommodation fees for students (CC93 04a)

The Bursar set out the key issues relating to changes in accommodation charges. She proposed a 2.5% increase for 2020/21 and the absorption of the Kitchen Fixed Charge (KFC) within rental charges. She emphasised there would be no overall cost impact to students from the latter.

In response to questions concerning the possibility of there being no catering provision, the Bursar explained rebates would be agreed. It was agreed that the KFC had been contentious for students for many years, and this approach would address this source of friction.

Dr Shwageraus asked what drives student satisfaction with accommodation. The Bursar responded that the answer was not clear and that a focus group was planned. It was not linked for example to room size. The MCR President acknowledged there had been more complaints, but that this appeared to be linked to general feelings and expectations of the current student cohort.

It was agreed that good comms would be needed to avoid any sense of subterfuge around the change.

Council agreed the changes to accommodation charges.

93.6.2. Fee and accommodation fees for Hong Kong University Visiting Fellows (CC93 04b)

The Bursar spoke to the paper and explained the proposed increases. It was confirmed that the HKU Visiting Fellows are currently being charged.

Council approved a College Fee of £3,909.00 and an accommodation charge of £45.42 per day for 2020-21.

93.7. Approach to ADR process 2019-20

The Vice-President introduced the item, explaining that this would usually be the point when the ADR process would start. This was felt to be inappropriate during the crisis. However, there was a need to recognise the work of those doing so much for College at the present time. She posed the question of what should be done instead.

The Pro-Vice-President echoed these points and stated that SCOs (Salaried College Officers) had handled the crisis exceptionally well: this must be acknowledged.

In response to a question from the MCR President, the ADR process was explained simply.

The Senior Tutor suggested there should be a general declaration of intent by SCOs, to indicate their priorities in the current climate.

The President summarised, indicating he had no concerns about performance, and that it would be valuable to maintain the 'getting advice' element from the wider Fellowship to support SCOs. He wished Governing Body to agree this, and Council agreed to recommend this approach to Governing Body.

93.8. Update from the Working Group for Governance of the Bridge

The President provided a short update, explaining that the Group had not had a chance to do much. One meeting had been held (18 March). The Director of Research Translation added that the focus on what we learned from real project examples, such as Chapter Zero and CIPHER (an education initiative), would provide the most valuable insights. The Bursar stated that progress was being made on the issues identified by Governing Body in February. Council agreed that the work should continue.

93.9. Annual reports from Honorary Post-holders

93.9.1. Honorary Archivists (CC93 05)

The report was noted.

93.9.2. Honorary Curator of Valuables (CC93 06)

There was a short discussion concerning a picture that may have been lost, but Council were reassured it was probably safe, somewhere.

93.9.3. Honorary Research Convenor (CC93 07)

The VP stated that the Research Convenor should be congratulated. It was unfortunate so many events were now cancelled, and that more should be done to encourage Fellows' engagement. There was a short discussion on the forms of support for postdocs, including how to engage beyond Cambridge. Funding for travel may be less useful post-COVID, the focus should perhaps be on virtual seminars and conferences.

93.9.4. Honorary Director of Music (CC93 08)

The President noted this included a budget request; he emphasised he felt the College is in a very good position on the musical front.

ACTION: It was agreed the President should write to all Honorary Post-holders to thank and encourage them.

93.10. MCR Business

There was no MCR Business.

93.11. Senior Tutor's Report (CC93 09)

The Senior Tutor summarised his report. Dr Irish asked what lessons were being learned from the challenges to the status quo. Examples include virtual working and teaching. Mr Coleman asked about the impact on student numbers, saying that as a sector he expected a 60-70% reduction in international students.

The impact on PGT courses was noted. It was also noted that virtual meetings are better attended than real ones.

The President identified three major changes: more blended learning; more experiments around online learning (especially for PGT); and a need to look closely at the question of what a college is for.

Further points included that supervisions work well online, but not for bigger seminars in excess of 20 participants. The advice from the Cambridge Centre for Teaching and Learning (CCTL) is useful, on tools etc. The University Information Service (UIS) have produced a one-page Zoom guide. The President, responding to Mr Coleman's question, suggested that we cannot know the impact on student numbers. Under Rapid Recovery scenario we would face a low hit; with Repeated Waves

applicants would not come and there would be a major impact. It was noted there could be too many undergraduate students and too few postgraduates. Mr Coleman flagged that HMG now thought numbers' control less important.

93.12. Bursarial

93.12.1. Bursar's Report (CC93 10)

The Bursar summarised her report, noting all Scenarios would impact 20/21 plans. She thanked colleagues. There were no questions.

93.12.2. Management accounts update (CC93 11)

It was agreed a deficit of £414,000 would be a good outcome and would allow us not to break our covenants. The President added that this was a containable hit on finances, and that the College would benefit from using the Colleges Fund income as cash, rather than endowment.

93.13. Director of Institutional Advancement's Report (CC93 12)

Mr Conner spoke to his report. He highlighted the recent gifts (for CIFER, from Hong Kong Alumnus). He explained the concept of a campaign, starting with Senior Members and expanding to alumni, based around the need for student support. He mentioned planning for virtual Open Days, both centred on Hughes Hall in Cambridge and in other countries.

93.14. Director of Research Translation's Report (CC93 13)

Dr Axford summarised his report, noting that despite the COVID crisis there was ongoing Bridge activity, particularly on projects led by Fellows keen to develop their impact through wider opportunities and engagements.

The MCR President asked about student engagement. Dr Axford confirmed that providing novel opportunities was always part of Bridge activities. The President highlighted the challenges faced by Hughes Centre for Climate Engagement and Chapter Zero, as people-focused engagement organisations, which made their work hard at present – but which would do more as we enter recovery phases. The Vice-President reminded Council about PhD and Postdoc support at the recent Ageing Conference. Mr Conner added that he was keen to support more scholarships to help engagement.

93.15. Minutes of Committees

Council received the minutes of the following committees without discussion:

90.15.1. Unconfirmed minutes Prevent Committee, of 28 January 2020 (CC93 14a)

90.15.2. Unconfirmed minutes Investments Committee, of 17 October 2019 (CC93 14b)

93.16. Any other Open Business

There was no other Open Business.

End of Open Business SA