

# IMPERIAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND MEDICINE

## Minutes of Council Meeting

Held at The Stadium, Scale Space on 01 March 2024, at 09.30

### Present

Mr J. Allan (Chair), Professor D. Ashby, Ms A. Ashley-Smith, Ms C. Boutrolle (online), Ms. K. Briggs, Professor Sir L. Borysiewicz, Professor H. Brady (President), Professor N. Brandon, Ms. K. Coates, Mr T. Courtauld, Professor R. Craster, Ms R. Dabagh, Dr L. Elvidge, Mr R. Kerse, Mr D. Khanna, Professor L. Lightstone, Dr M. Meaney Haynes, Ms N. Podder, Dr M. Safa, Professor J. Sanders, Mr S. Saxena, Professor I. Walmsley (Provost), Mr C. Williams, and Mr R. Martin (Registrar and University Secretary).

### In attendance

Mr M. Banga (from strategy item), Mr J. Seppala (from strategy item), Vice-Provost (Education and Student Experience), Vice-Provost (Academic Partnerships and Vice-President (International)), Vice-Provost (Research and Enterprise), Chief Financial Officer (from strategy item), Director of Communications, Director of Public Affairs, Director of HR, Director of Strategic Planning, Director of Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions, Senior Strategic Planning Adviser and Head of Central Secretariat.

### **Welcome**

1. Apologies for absence were received from Professor F. Allen, Sir R. Kalifa, Mr R. Lewis, and Ms S. Murray.

### **Minutes and matters arising**

2. The Minutes and notes from the meeting held on 21 November 2023 were approved, subject to a correction to the apologies for absence.

### **Chair's report**

3. The Chair provided an oral update, and reported the following Chair's actions since the last meeting:

- a. On 30 November 2023, on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee, the Deputy Chair approved Chair's action to amend the incoming Chair's start date from 1 January 2024 to 1 April 2024, and extended the current Chair's end of office to 31 March 2024.
- b. On 12 February 2024 approved the appointment of Mr Richard Martin as University Secretary.
- c. On 12 February 2024 approved urgent operational changes to the Freedom of Speech policy on the recommendation of the University Management Board. A fuller set of changes to the freedom of speech code of practice would be brought to Council in due course.
- d. On 27 February 2024 approved the entry into a contract with Oracle as the new Enterprise Resourcing Planning (ERP) system on the recommendation of the Finance Committee.

#### **Access and participation plan (Paper 4)**

4. The Provost introduced the item, and the Director of Strategic Planning presented the paper.
5. The main points raised in discussion were:
  - a. The proposed intervention strategies combined existing and new activities to align with the initiatives set out in the new strategy. As such the overall ambition exceeded the regulatory requirements.
  - b. The support programme for unrepresented groups that was proposed to run alongside their study programme was built on the success of a pilot in the Faculty of Engineering. Feedback had been positive, and learning from the pilot would be incorporated into the whole University approach.
  - c. Additional wellbeing needs and outcomes, including mental health, were included in the plan.
  - d. The plan did not include support for care system leavers, for whom there were separate targeted initiatives.

**Resolved:** That the objectives and intervention strategies set out in the draft Access and Participation Plan be endorsed, and that the Chair of Council be authorised to approve the final version of the plan for submission to the Office for Students in early May 2024.

### **Any other business**

6. In order for the strategy discussion to double as an introduction to the informal discussions, the Chair invited any other items of business.
7. The new branding had been launched. Council and the University Management Board were aware of a student petition against the new logo, which formed part of the brand strategy.
8. The Chair thanked Dr Malcolm Edwards for his support and contributions over recent months as the Acting College Secretary.

### **Imperial strategy (Paper 6)**

9. The Chair welcomed and introduced the incoming Chair, Mr M. Banga, Mr J. Seppala (co-opted member of the Endowment Board), and the Chief Financial Officer to the meeting.
10. The President presented the strategy, which had been shaped through broad consultation with staff, students, alumni, and partners. The strategy document set out Imperial's ambition and the accompanying paper included a plan for when the nine key initiatives would be discussed at Council in detail. It was noted that some initiatives had already gained significant momentum and visibility. The President shared details of three flagship initiatives.
11. The main points raised in discussion were:
  - a. The strategic initiatives would not remove the space needed for unexpected discoveries stemming from fundamental exploratory and small-scale transformational science. The core of Imperial's work would continue to be driven by academic departments, enhanced by convergence science.
  - b. For the strategy to be successful, it was imperative to ensure alignment with the priorities of funders and other key stakeholders.
  - c. The ambition was compelling, yet there could be challenges regarding resource or gaps in disciplinary expertise, particularly in the social sciences. Establishing collaborative partnerships had the potential to alleviate any limitations.
  - d. Streamlining recruitment processes for staff and enhancing career opportunities for staff and external candidates should be prioritised.

- e. Council members were keen to contribute their experience and to increase their engagement.

**Resolved:** That the strategy be approved.

The meeting closed at 11.15.