UNAPPROVED COUNCIL MINUTES
MEETING HELD ON 13th MAY 2022, 9.00am to 12.00 noon
AG01, College Building

Members

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<th>Members</th>
<th>Meeting 1 07.10.21</th>
<th>Meeting 2 26.11.21</th>
<th>Meeting 3 24.02.22</th>
<th>Meeting 4 01.04.22</th>
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Key: ✓ In Attendance   A Apologies   P Part Attendance N/M Not a Member  S Sabbatical

In Attendance Reason and Meeting Section
Mr Dominic Davis Director of SPPU (interim)
Dr William Jordan College Secretary (CS)
Ms Kathy Kingwill Governance Administrator
Professor Miguel Mera Vice-President, Research
Ms Marion O’Hara Finance Director
Mr Mark Pacey Project Manager Change Support Unit, for Item 7i
Professor Susannah Quinsee Vice-President, Digital and Student Experience
Ms Kerry Shepherd Minerva, for Item 9
Professor Andre Spicer Dean of Bayes Business School
Mr Ben Tucker Minerva, for Item 9

MINUTES SECTION A – OPEN FOR PUBLICATION

Part One – Preliminary Items

1. Highlighted Items
   Council agreed the highlighted items.

2. Minutes
   The minutes of the meeting held on 1st April were approved.

3. Matters Arising
   Council noted the actions arising from past meetings.

Staffing Matters

USS Update
   Scheme reforms had been implemented in the April payroll.

JNCHES
  UCEA’s negotiating team had written to unions with a final offer of an increase of 3.18% and was awaiting a formal response. The proposed increases would be a
range with weighting for Grades 1.3 of up to 9%; for City the majority of staff would receive 3%.

One university had opted out of the collective bargaining process led by UCEA this year. This was likely to lead to larger pay rises being agreed at that institution both for the current year and for future years.

**Industrial Action**
City was not currently impacted by industrial action but an assessment boycott was underway in 41 institutions.

There had been a useful meeting at City to discuss with UCU a range of non-pay issues on which the UCU was campaigning, including workload.

**Urdang**
Council received a verbal report on actions taken following the acquisition of Urdang. The acquisition announcement in March had been low key due to other events at City that week. The TUPE process was ongoing. Degrees for the current cohort of students would continue to be validated by the University of Birmingham, following a ballot among students. While the majority of students had voted for their degrees to be validated by City, the threshold required in the ballot to change current arrangements had not been met. Next steps would be to plan further integration events for staff and students during the summer months. The HR Director would meet with the Trade Unions to discuss staffing issues: Some Urdang staff were on permanent contracts, but there was also a group of freelance employees, and a group of cleaning staff who would be transferred to City’s service provider Julius Rutherford.

A progress report on the acquisition of Urdang at the next meeting, including a report on any staffing issues, would be presented to the next meeting of Council. [Action]

4. **Conflicts of Interest**
None reported.

5. **Items Specially Brought Forward by the Chair**
The Chair had hosted a London Universities Chairs’ Dinner at Bayes. Discussion had focussed on international activities. The University of London had noted that it would soon be hosting an event for all London universities (whether or not they were members of the UoL) to discuss the promotion of London universities generally.

The Rector’s Dinner had taken place for the first time in three years; it had been an excellent event and continued to improve.

The Council Chairs’ Dinner had taken place on the previous evening. Discussions had also focussed on City’s international activities, notably international recruitment and international research partnerships.

There was a vacancy for a Governor at COLAI to be nominated by City as Ron Zeghibe was standing down in the summer. Simon Harding Roots agreed to be nominated for the vacancy.

The Chair of CGNC provided an update from the meeting held on 12th May:
- A recruitment search was underway for an HE leader to join Council. A second vacancy for an independent member was being paused pending further consideration of the proposed major strategic project Blind Castle.
- A retendering exercise for recruitment consultants was due to take place in the summer months. Council members should send to the College Secretary any suggestions for head-hunters who should be invited to tender. [Action]
• The Chair of CGNC sought views on the Council oversight of academic standards and particularly whether an annual report was sufficient to provide the required level of assurance. In discussion, it was noted that:
  o The Annual Report was the norm in the sector with regard to assurance.
  o It was helpful for independent members of Council to attend meetings of Senate as observers. All independent members should aim to do so on at least one occasion each year. The College Secretary would issue to all members a note of the dates of future meetings. [Action]
  o It would be useful to receive a ‘refresher’ on the academic standards framework presentation given to Council members at a Plenary Dinner a few years ago. [Action]
  o The School Links programme could also provide enhanced insight into City’s work on academic quality and standards.
• Ron Zeghibe’s second term of office would end in August 2022. CGNC recommended to Council that he be reappointed for a third term of office.

Decision
Council agreed to re-appoint Ron Zeghibe for a third term of office to 31st August 2025.

6. Calendar
Council noted the calendar.

7. President’s Report
The President gave an update on his recent activities and in discussion the following points were noted:
• The President noted that the impact of the pandemic had been more extensive than he had at first anticipated, particularly for students.
• The newly appointed Deputy President would arrive in post in September and two Deans had been appointed: Professor Anna Whitelock had been appointed as Dean of the School of Communication and Creativity, and it was hoped to be able to announce the appointment to the School of School of Policy and Global Affairs shortly. City was also seeking to appoint a Deputy COO with a strong emphasis on improving the student experience. A search was also underway for a Chief Information Officer which would also be a critical appointment.
• The development of the new City Strategy continued and the new academic planning process was also underway with good discussions taking place. There was a commitment to generating efficiencies. The intention was to centralise processes to coordinate and align standards of delivery, while empowering School Teams to deliver improvements in student experience. Efficiency would be achieved by reducing expenditure on activities not delivering the student experience in order to focus expenditure where it mattered.
• The COO and colleagues would undertake a modelling exercise to determine the quantum of efficiency savings that could be realised; and would report on this to Council in due course. [Action]
• It was important to note that high professional service costs were not always indicative of inefficiency as it might mean that academic staff had a lower administrative burden.

7.1 Blind Castle
Council considered an update on the Strategic Project Blind Castle.

*This item is continued in Section B of the Minutes, Closed Business.*
8. **SU Report**

Council considered the SU Report and in discussion the following points were noted:

- The Union was working closely with City’s Student Voice Team to deliver a new board designed to focus on the student experience, education and employability.
- Mental Health Awareness Week would take place 9<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> May 2022. The official theme was ‘loneliness’ and, across the week, the Union would encourage students to think about how they cope during difficult times and try to build meaningful connections with their family, friends, colleagues, and communities;
- The Union ran its annual elections during March and April. 2,675 students voted, casting 4,764 votes in total. This was a shorter election period than usual so the Union was pleased with the turnout.
- The following students were elected to the next Students’ Union Officer Team:
  - Gesmina Tsourrai – President
  - Aaminah Patel – Deputy President
  - Yavuz Emin Kafadar – Deputy President
  - Fortune Sampson – Deputy President
- EDI Representatives had been recruited and trained; they would campaign alongside the SU.
- The SU had launched a survey to ask stakeholders for views on City’s catering with staff and students interviewed. This will report at the end of summer and will come to Council in the autumn. The SU was working with PAF on this.
- Micro-placements had been arranged for students over the summer, working with City’s Careers team.
- The SU had visited Urdang to meet the students and would be working with their societies.
- The SU Awards had taken place on 12<sup>th</sup> May; it was well attended and very nice to see so many students and staff.

9. **Council Effectiveness Review**

*Kerry Shepherd and Ben Tucker of Minerva spoke to this item.*

Council considered the preliminary report which provided a summary review of work undertaken by Minerva in conducting an independent review of the effectiveness of governance at City between December 2021 and May 2022. There were a number of recommendations and suggestions. In discussion the following points were noted:

- The overall conclusion was that governance at City was excellent, with improvements in the relationship between executive and lay members since the previous review (which had reported in February 2017).
- There was good discussion at meetings with a sense of real debate and the tenor of meetings was polite and respectful.
- Hybrid meetings were found helpful by members with less flexibility in their diaries, but it was important to consider the impact of holding meetings in this format on the relationships between Council members and their opportunities to interact with each other.
- Recommendations and suggestions included: considering the introduction of the role of Senior Independent Director, reviving the link between the SU and Council though the membership of an independent member of Council on the SU Trustee Board; refreshing the School Link Scheme; considering further how best to appoint staff members of Council; and reviewing the remit of SIPCo potentially recasting this as a ‘Strategy and Finance’ Committee.
- There was also a need to consider further how to take forward discussion of complex cross-cutting issues such as ESG, which spanned the work of more than one committee. The challenge would be to avoid duplication of effort and ensure good communication of decisions.
• The President welcomed the opportunity for the executive to contribute and noted that Council felt constructive and positive with critical support for difficult decisions.
• A full report would be available shortly and then CGNC would take forward the recommendations.
• The Chair thanked Minerva for the preliminary report.

10. **Annual Review of the Investment Policy**
Council considered the revised Investment Policy which was required to be formally reviewed annually and in the event of large macro-economic changes that impact City, such as the Covid-19 pandemic. In discussion the following points were noted:
- No substantive changes were proposed this year and any changes arising from City’s new strategy would be considered and reflected in future updates to the policy once they had been assessed and worked through. The CFO would be very happy to discuss further with independent members of Council on an individual basis any detailed questions relating to any aspect of the policy or its financial implications for City.
- Section 7.8 of the policy outlined the sustainable investment criteria approved by Council in previous years. This element of the policy would be reviewed further by Council when the outcome of work (commissioned by SLT) to ensure consistency at City between its sustainable investment strategy and its policies on accepting research funding and income from consultancy work was known.

**Decision**
Council approved the Investment Policy.

11. **REF 20221: Results**
Council received a presentation from the Vice-President (Research) on the REF results, following the publication of the data. In discussion the following points were noted:
- Full analysis of the data was underway but it was already clear that City's was one of the sector's most improved institutions in terms of performance.
- The results for outputs were now on a par with Russell Group institutions.
- The results for impact and environment were less strong and so these were areas for future effort, given the weighting for impact, and the actual impact of research undertaken at City.
- Two UoAs had achieved a GPA greater than 3.5 and all UoAs had improved their GPA, which was excellent news with regard to future funding.
- Further data would be published externally in June and July so more analysis would be undertaken at this point.
- A REF 28 Strategy would be developed and embedded in Schools.
- It would be helpful to ensure that cases for increases in remuneration for staff based on research performance now fully reflected the outcomes of REF 21.
- The Chair expressed the congratulations of Council to all those involved at City in this outcome; and had written to the former President and former Vice President (Research) to thank them for their past leadership of this agenda.

12. **Bayes Project Update**
Council received a slide presentation update from the Dean of Bayes and in discussion the following points were noted:
- Three options for the refurbishment of Bunhill Row and Finsbury Square were now proposed for further discussion.
- The School needed to ensure that its Tier 2 Business School status was
maintained to ensure the level of student fees remained at current levels.

- Council broadly supported Option 3, noting that the student experience, with innovative teaching space, was a crucial factor for the project, as was the issue of long-term maintenance, and thanked the Dean and Bayes colleagues for the work to review the projects.

13. Special Resolution – Change to Statutes: University Title
Council considered the Special Resolution in respect of amendments to the Statutes of City, University of London and in discussion it was noted that papers relating to the Special Resolution had been sent to members of Council on 28th April to give the required “14 clear days” notice ahead of this meeting.

**Decision**
Council **resolved to approve** the proposed amendments to the Statutes of City, University of London in the form attached to the resolution (subject to such amendments required by the Privy Council and which may be approved by the Secretary of City) to come into effect on the effective date of the Amendment Supplemental Charter.

14. Minutes for Note
Council received the minutes of the following meetings, noting that they had been approved by the Chair but not the entire Committee:

- 14.1 Senate, 20th October and 15th December 2021
- 14.2 RemCo, 3rd November and 10th December 2021
- 14.3 SIPCo, 10th March 2022
- 14.4 Audit and Risk Committee, 15th March 2022

15. Institutional KPIs and Pls
Council noted the report.

16. Policy Update
Council noted the policy update.

17. FOI Review
Council **agreed** that no changes were required.

18. Date of Next Meeting
Friday 30th June, Plenary Dinner on Wednesday 29th June, venue tbc.

Julia Palca,
Chair of Council
May 2022