

Council

17 September 2020

3pm- 6pm

Held via Microsoft Teams

Present: Dinah Caine (Chair), Frances Corner, David Oswell, Elisabeth Hill, David Reddaway, Lauren Corelli, Anna Furse, Naomi Thompson, Atau Tanaka, Ben Fowler, Philip Stoltzfus, Ian Borman, Irene Adeyinka, Pam Raynor, Aaron Porter, Ben Morton-Wright, Susan Dilly, Ravi Mahendra, Lynn Percy, Monika Barnes and Ronke Akerele

In attendance: Helen Watson, Nirmal Borkhataria, John Dickson-Lilley, Matthew Brooks, Carol Ford and Sally Priddle. Sara Bafo, Fowsia Kadiye and Niquella Simpson-West (for item 6).

Apologies: Andrew Laurence

OPEN BUSINESS

1 Apologies for Absence

As noted above.

2 Chair's Action

Noted:

- 2.1 The Chair approved the British Muslim PGT Fee Waiver to enable implementation from 1st September.
- 2.2 The Chair approved the Safeguarding Policy - to enable implementation from 1st September, additional approval being requested in the meeting.
- 2.3 Council welcomed four new members:
 - 2.3.1 Mr Ben Morton-Wright, an independent member with a background in philanthropy and branding.
 - 2.3.2 Ms Irene Adeyinka, an independent member with a background in mental health, mentoring and careers support for new graduates.
 - 2.3.3 Dr Naomi Thompson, an Academic Board representative and Lecturer in Youth and Community Work.

- 2.3.4 Professor Anna Furse, an Academic Board representative and Professor in Theatre and Performance.
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3 Minutes

Received:

- 3.1 Minutes from meeting on 18th August 2020

Noted:

- 3.2 A question was raised about the work Mark d’Inverno would be undertaking on behalf of the College from September 2020. It was reported that Mark would be providing support to SMT one day each week, whilst undertaking normal Professorial work for the other four days.

Resolved:

- 3.3 The minutes were approved as an accurate record.
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4 Actions

Received:

- 4.1 Updates from the action tracker.

Noted:

- 4.2 Council noted the updates on the action tracker.
- 4.3 It was reported that a working group had been established to look at values, it had been discussed at the Nominations and Governance Committee but there was nothing to report at this stage.
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5 Council Terms of Reference, Responsibilities and Schedule of Business for 2020-2021

Received:

- 5.1 The terms of reference, responsibilities and schedule of business, and the identification of any additional items.

Noted:

- 5.2 Council received the terms of reference and responsibilities as an annual reminder of their responsibilities and role. It was also asked to consider the proposed schedule of business.

- 5.3 The schedule of business detailed the normal scheduled of meetings, at present the College needed to have additional meetings.
- 5.4 Council agreed it would be beneficial to review the responsibilities to modernise their contents and presentation and streamline the documentation.
- Action:**
- 5.5 Refresh the Council code in light of the revised CUC Code of Conduct.
- 5.6 Provide a short summary of the role of Council which could be utilised on the website and shared with the community.
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6 Warden's Report

Received:

- 6.1 The Warden's report.

Noted:

- 6.2 The Warden's report included updates against the Strategy, project work and responses to a number of actions agreed at the last Council meeting. The report intended to demonstrate to Council that alongside the issues and work escalated, the College was continuing to implement agreed projects and address other issues.
- 6.3 It was outlined that the issues and experiences of young people over the past month could not be underestimated. Some of these issues would continue for A-level students next academic year. The College had worked hard to secure recruitment and ensure that students were clear on what kind of experience they would receive when they arrived at Goldsmiths.
- 6.4 The College was working in partnership with the local authority to ensure all appropriate measures were in place.
- 6.5 Work on the Green New Deal was continuing and the government had announced its plans to become carbon neutral, Goldsmiths had a role to play in this work.
- 6.6 The College's Critical Incident Group had been managing the Covid19 incident and preparing for the opening of campus. A lot of work had been undertaken to ensure there was effective student support. It was important to note the extent to which young people had had their A-levels and studies disrupted. The College needed to work in partnership with the Student's Union to ensure all students were supported. Plans included the expansion of the Hardship Fund.
- 6.7 The report updated the Council on the Senior Management Team's work on equality and inclusion and the alignment between staff networks and SMT.

- 6.8 It was agreed the College's position in the league tables was not good enough. It also demonstrated bigger issues that the College needed to address including student experience and teaching quality.
- 6.9 International fees for EU students would come into force in September, and the potential impact of this was not yet known. The financial position of countries and students across Europe is extremely variant and needed to be considered when establishing any form of European Scholarships or initiatives. The College's relationship and partnership with institutions in Paris and Berlin would be fundamental and built upon to establish the College's future with Europe.
- 6.10 Council discussed potential on-campus testing for Covid19 and it was reported that the College had looked at all options for supporting the well-being and safety of students on campus. Unless a new form of testing became available with quick and accurate responses, it would not be feasible for the College to install on-campus testing. There was a walk in site in Deptford and another in Catford, so it was felt there was good testing capacity within the Borough; this would be reviewed once students had returned to campus. The College was working in partnership with the local Council on preparations and plans.
- 6.11 The Student's Union President outlined that she had expected Racial Justice and progress of the work to be reported in the Warden's report. Due to there being a Racial Justice update later on the agenda it had not been included in the report on this occasion, however going forward updates on the topic would be included in the Warden's report. The Student's Union President outlined that there were concerns about the Racial Justice Team, which would support and be accountable for the work.
- 6.12 The Warden had previously reported to Council about the significant number of complaints around industrial action. These were being progressed through the stages of the complaints policy, but the Student's Union expressed concerns about the delay in complaint resolution and capacity within the Complaints Team to resolve them.
- 6.13 It was reported that the College had put measures in place to ensure student contracts could be supported through lockdown and that students could be supported if they were required to isolate. It was reasonable to assume that students could claim breach of contract at some point during the academic year. There was a significant amount of work being undertaken to support students, fulfil their contracts and address complaints.
- 6.14 Council asked for the Head of Departments' response to the league table position and clarity on their understanding of the priorities for improvement.
- 6.15 It was agreed it would be beneficial to understand the College's approach to employment given the current external issues, this should include self-employment and start-ups.

6.16 It was agreed it would be beneficial for Council to see the Retention Strategy once finalised.

Action:

6.17 Provide Heads of Department feedback to Council on response to league tables and priorities for improvement.

6.18 Share the Employment Strategy with Council.

6.19 Share the Retention Strategy with Council.

7 Student's Union Report

Received:

7.1 Introduction and Impact of Student's Union

7.2 Sabbatical Officer Priorities 2020-21

7.3 NSS – Student's Union reflection (20-03)

Noted:

7.4 Council welcomed the new Sabbatical Officers and confirmed they looked forward to working with them for the coming academic year. It was agreed it was beneficial to receive the reports to gain greater clarity on the role of the Student's Union and their priorities.

7.5 The Sabbatical Officers outlined that they would individually introduce themselves, summarise the current context and provide and outline of their priorities. It was reported that the Student's Union had a reduction grant this academic year and as a result of Covid a reduction in commercial income. This year the Union wanted to reimagine its work and make significant changes to its structure.

7.6 The Union's fundamental values were to make change and support liberation and justice. They wanted to build on these and look at how they could effectively represent in the Council space.

7.7 Lauren Corelli was the President of the Student's Union. She outlined that her priorities were making significant changes to the Union's internal structure whilst fulfilling the GARA demands and supporting mental health services.

7.8 Sara Bafo was the Welfare and Liberation Officer. She outlined that her priorities would be to achieve transformative change, work to achieve the GARA demands, challenge racial injustice and support the local community by incorporating them into activities and work.

- 7.9 Niquella Simpson-West was Campaigns & Activities Officer. She outlined that her priorities would be to support accessible education, improve accessibility across the campus and support the needs of all students.
- 7.10 Fowsia Kadiye was Education Officer. She outlined that her priorities would be to secure compensation for students for lost learning, decolonise the curriculum, support access across campus, and to secure improvements in disability and mental health services.
- 7.11 The group priorities were outlined as racial justice, transparency, awareness of decision making and governance and staff welfare.
- 7.12 The Student's Union were a democratic organisation accountable to the students. They represented issues and used their mandates to make change.
- 7.13 The Sabbatical Officers outlined concerns with the NSS score relating to academic representation, which was only part of the Union's work. The Student's Union ran its own survey which better represented the range of issues and work.
- 7.14 Council asked what the Student's Union wanted to do in partnership with the Institution and how they knew they were effectively representing the student body.
- 7.15 The Sabbatical Officers outlined that they wanted to improve accessibility and implement the GARA demands as a priority with the College. There was a spectrum of partnership and the department representatives' system was a good example of how this could work.
- 7.16 It was reported that students had very different experiences in course administration depending on their department. Council agreed it would be beneficial to work with management on establishing consistencies to ensure all students received a consistent, positive experience.
- 7.17 Council discussed the Student's Union's perception of their role and whether it fulfilled the students' needs, supporting as well as holding to account.
- Action:**
- 7.18 Share the Student's Union survey data with Council.
- 7.19 Provide update to Council on the review of department representatives support.

8 Recovery and Resilience Plan

Item 8 was discussed under Closed Business.

9 Draft Civic Strategy

Received:

- 9.1 The draft Civic Strategy

Noted:

- 9.2 The Chair reported that she sat on the Civic Universities Commission. Goldsmiths' values and mission was aligned with the work of the Commission in terms of the College's duty to the local community it served and that externally value was appropriately given to this area alongside teaching and research.
- 9.3 There had been a considerable shift in the Civic Strategy's work, looking at what could be undertaken locally and supporting engagement to support local communities. The College was aware of its space within the capital and local area, mindful of ensuring that advancement did not mean gentrification. The College was working with a number of stakeholders to develop this work.
- 9.4 The Strategy aimed to outline the College's overarching priorities, background and context. Evolution rather than revolution was the goal, whilst avoiding the reinstatement of approaches the College had taken previously. It required buy in from across the community.
- 9.5 The approach included plans to support a continuous learning network within the area.
- 9.6 It was reported that more could be done to support outreach and widening participation, reskilling and upskilling as required. Youth unemployment and partnerships with schools and FE Colleges. How the College supported students and graduates for employment was a key concern, in light of recent research that suggested that 90% future jobs would require digital literacy.
- 9.7 Lewisham Council was going to be the London borough of Culture for 2022, this was an opportunity for the College to engage more with the local area and support projects.
- 9.8 A strategic working group would be established to monitor the work. Community engagement forums would be arranged to ensure the Strategy reflected the community's needs. A revised plan would be shared at the next Council meeting.
- 9.9 Council agreed that the College's recovery plan should not be considered in isolation from the Civic Engagement Strategy, there were opportunities within both to further the College's aims and mission.

- 9.10 Council asked for more information on how Council would be engaged with the civic engagement strategy. There were a number of stakeholders in this work and a mixture of internal and external stakeholders needed to be engaged with to formalise arrangements and measure impact.

Action:

- 9.11 Provide a revised Civic Engagement Strategy to the next Council meeting.
- 9.12 Include a civic engagement work-stream in the project management paper.
- 9.13 Confirm Council's engagement with the Civic Engagement Strategy.

10 Racial Justice Report

Received:

- 10.1 The draft approach to racial justice work

Noted:

- 10.2 Council received this report to provide assurance on the progress of this work and confirmation of how it will receive updates going forward.
- 10.3 The report provided an update on how the Racial Justice Board would be formed and how the Terms of Reference would be reviewed and finalised. A more extensive plan would be established and reported back to Council following the initial meeting of the Racial Justice Board.
- 10.4 Staff and student forums would be established to look at different topics and areas within the Strategy. The Consultation Hub would also be used to engage the community in different topics which would feed into decision making.
- 10.5 It was reported that the Racial Justice Strategy would be a standing item on the Council agenda.
- 10.6 The Student's Union President asked for clarity on responsibilities for the Racial Justice Strategy and who was in the Racial Justice Team. It was also not clear how the Strategy monitored by the Board would sit alongside the racial justice audit currently underway. Concerns were raised about the lack of progress of work previously commissioned and delays in reports to Council.
- 10.7 It was reported that the Board would look at the overarching strategy for all racial justice work, this included the GARA commitments and the racial justice audit. The Board would review all ongoing work and ensure there was greater oversight and visibility of the work. The Racial Justice Team was currently being reviewed by HR and the Student's Union would be spoken to about the shape of the team.

Action:

- 10.8 Include Racial Justice Strategy as a standing item on the Council agenda.
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11 Safeguarding Policy

Received:

- 11.1 Safeguarding Policy and consider Council role and responsibilities.

Noted:

- 11.2 Council was receiving the Policy as it had a statutory responsibility for safeguarding. The Policy outlined specific responsibilities of Council and therefore Members needed to be clear on the expectations and how they received assurance.

Resolved:

- 11.3 Council approved the Safeguarding Policy for implementation.

Action:

- 11.4 Identify an alternative opportunity for Council members to hear about their Safeguarding responsibilities.
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12 Health and Safety Update

Received:

- 12.1 an update on the College's controls in place to ensure the health and safety of the College community this term and receive an update on the work and considerations of the Health and Safety Sub-Group.

Noted:

- 12.2 Council noted the update on controls in place to ensure the health and safety of the College community this term and the work the Health and Safety Sub-Group.

Action:

- 12.3 Identify an alternative opportunity for Council members to hear about their Health and Safety responsibilities.
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13 Governance Update

Received:

- 13.1 An update on the Governance Action Plan, feedback from Council members and proposed behaviours and values statement.

Noted:

- 13.2 The Governance Action Plan had been updated to demonstrate the work that had been undertaken to improve governance practice. It was reported that there was still a considerable amount of work required.

- 12.3 The Governance Steering Group had been re-established to monitor work.
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14 Deptford Town Hall Statues

Received:

- 14.1 The update on the next steps for the Deptford Town Hall Statues

Noted:

- 14.2 Council were receiving this report for information to clarify the next steps of the process. There would be a community wide consultation.

- 14.3 Council discussed whether personal opinions should be shared prior to the consultation.

- 14.4 Historic England, local MPs and Lewisham Council had all engaged in the discussion. Historic England were looking at these issues across the country.

- 14.5 It was reported that ultimately the decision would be Council's but this would be informed by a transparent and fully engaged process.
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15 KPI Report

Received:

- 15.1 The KPI report, including progress and risks.

Noted:

- 15.2 KPI report - note. Informs the thinking.
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16 Tuition Fees 2021-22

Received:

- 16.1 A report proposing a 4% increase of unregulated tuition fees for the academic year 2021/22 and recommendations made in relation to EU students and from departments to adjust programme banding. (20-17)

Noted:

- 16.2 The proposal had been reviewed by the Fees and Scholarships Working Group, and the Student's Union position was included in the report. The recommendation remained a 4% increase.
- 16.3 It was reported that the Government decided whether EU students paid overseas fees. It would be problematic to create separate EU categories or bands, as it would require assigning value or wealth to particular countries which may not be representative of students' positions.

Resolved:

- 16.4 Council approved the change in tuition fees.
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17 SMT Composition Changes

Received:

- 17.1 the proposed appointment of acting Heads of Schools, should vacancies arise following the appointment of Pro-Wardens.

Noted:

- 17.2 It was reported that outcomes of recruitment processes would be returned to the November meeting of Council.
- 17.3 Council discussed the need for change and the additional costs to staffing and whether the changes were required in the cost saving climate. It was noted that the figure quoted in the cover sheet was not accurate as the appointments would be internal and therefore a degree of resource would be covered.
- 17.4 Additional capacity was required to address the current challenges facing Goldsmiths and securing its future.
- 17.5 Council noted the approach for recruiting Heads of School and Pro-Wardens and confirmed outcomes would be reported to Council in November.

Action:

- 16.6 Clarify additional costs of SMT structure.
- 16.7 Bring recruitment outcomes to the November meeting of Council.
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18 SoundChalk Ltd

Received:

18.1 A report requesting the establishment of SoundChalk Ltd as a spin out company of Goldsmiths College.

Noted:

18.2 Council was receiving the report as it was required to approve the establishment of spin out companies. It was perceived to be a low risk decision.

18.3 It was reported that the College was protected from dilution of the stake and potential issues.

Resolved:

18.4 Council approved the establishment of SoundChalk Ltd as spin out company of Goldsmiths College.

Action:

18.5 Provide additional information on the contract to members of Council.

19 Committee membership

Received:

19.1 Council Committee membership for 2020-21.

Resolved:

19.2 Council received this to approve membership for the next academic year.

20 Internal Audit Plan

Received:

20.1 Internal Audit Plan for 2020-21- note anticipate changes to review.

Noted:

20.2 Council is receiving this to approve reviews for this academic year as Council are responsible for internal audit arrangements.

Resolved:

20.3 Council approved the internal audit plan for the academic year with the understanding reviews may be changed in response to the College's position.

21 Dean of Students on Academic Board

Received:

- 21.1 A request to change the composition of the Academic Board.

Noted:

- 21.2 Council is receiving this to approve a change in the composition as Council are responsible for the Academic Board's composition.

Resolved:

- 21.3 Approved the change to the Academic Board's composition to include the Dean of Students.