

Council

24 June 2021

Microsoft Teams

Present: Dinah Caine, David Reddaway, Ben Morton-Wright, Anna Furse, Anna Carlisle, Ben Fowler, Philip Stoltzfus, Frances Corner, Lynn Percy, Naomi Thompson, Irene Adeyinka, David Oswell, Aaron Porter, Sara Bafo, Andrew Laurence, Elisabeth Hill,

In attendance: Michael Banissy, Matthew Cragoe, John Dickson-Lilley, Stephen Graham, Elizabeth Williams, Helen Watson, Matthew Brooks, Sally Priddle

Apologies: Monika Barnes, Pam Raynor, Ravi Mahendra and Lauren Corelli

OPEN BUSINESS

1 Chair's Action

Received:

- 1.1 Report of action Chair has undertaken on behalf of Council

Noted:

- 1.2 Resignation of Atau Tanaka as academic representative. Council thanked him for his contribution and work on Council.
- 1.3 Welcomed Sara Bafo as new President of the Students Union.
- 1.4 The Chair approved the sale of the Laurie Grove properties. The principle for selling the Laurie Grove properties had previously been approved by Council but the offer and formal sale had to be approved by Finance and Resources Committee and Council before it could be completed. The rationale for requesting Chair's action was to progress this sale at the required pace to secure the offer.
- 1.5 The Chair approved the revised PhD fee level for 2021-22. The revised fee level was recommended by the Fees and Scholarships Working Group. The rationale for requesting Chair's action was to publish the fees on the College's website within the required timeframes.
- 1.6 The Chair approved the late change to the fee for MA Artists' Film and Moving Image programme.

2 Minutes

Received:

- 2.1 25th March 2021- Open Minutes
- 2.2 25th March 2021- Confidential Minutes
- 2.3 27th April 2021- Confidential Minutes

Noted:

- 2.4 Point 2.10 to be updated to say concerns about accuracy of the metrics.

Resolved:

- 2.5 The open minutes of the 25th March 2021 were an accurate record.
 - 2.6 The confidential minutes of 25th March 2021 were an accurate record once 2.10 had been updated.
 - 2.7 The confidential minutes of 27th April 2021 were an accurate record.
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3 Action tracker

Received:

- 3.1 Action tracker

Noted:

- 3.2 Council noted the updates against the actions and how the actions linked to agenda items for this or July's meeting.

Action:

- 3.3 Actions which sat with the previous Students Union's President would now be taken forwards with the new Students Union's President at the next Senior Management Team and Students Union meeting.
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4 Strategic Plan Development Process

Received:

- 4.1 The proposed strategic plan development process (20-484)

Noted:

- 4.2 It was noted that the College's current Strategy runs from 2018-2023 and while the purpose as an education and research institution endures, the operating environment had changed considerably over the last three years.
- 4.3 It was commonly seen as good practice to undertake a two-year development process of a new institutional strategy. Beginning this process in September 2021 would allow the College to move from implementing the existing strategy through its recovery programme to a renewal phase.
- 4.4 The proposed development process aimed to be inclusive and build trust, in pursuit of a future strategy that was owned by the Goldsmiths community and enabled Council to hold the Executive accountable for its delivery and implementation.
- 4.5 A refined approach to monitoring Goldsmiths' existing Strategy was provided, it demonstrated how the Executive would assure Council on its delivery during the College's recovery phase. The proposed monitoring approach incorporated emergent strategic necessities developed since the development of the existing Strategy, such as the Green New Deal.
- 4.6 Council agreed that the strategy needed to be mindful of the issues facing the sector as well as the internal issues.
- 4.7 The report outlined the process for monitoring the existing strategy whilst the new strategy was being developed, as well as how KPIs would be established to enable risk escalation.
- 4.8 It was agreed that vision and mission needed to be central to the strategy and links needed to be made to all strands within it. Council agreed that the vision piece needed to be higher profile than was currently presented in the report.
- 4.9 Council asked for clarity on how the size and shape process would align with the strategy, it was agreed the College wanted to grow but the needed to be clarity on what form this would take.
- 4.10 It was reported that the College wanted to move towards being an agile and flexible institution with a strong USP; it already had the component parts and it now needed to work to hone these down.
- 4.11 It was reported that Council would play a key role in strategy development and there would be dedicated session to ensure input. There would also be a senior strategy group, a staff reference group and a series of opportunities for student input; students were central to the plans development.

- 4.12 Council agreed it was an exciting time for the College, looking up from recovery and considering what the College wanted to look like and what it aspired to be. It was noted that any HEI looking at strategy needed to balance process and consultation so that there was meaningful input but the process did not drag out too long. The paper provided a perspective on a UK HEI but through a Goldsmiths lens. It was important that recovery was delivered so the College could move on to these issues.
- 4.13 Council discussed how strategies cohesive, optimistic and future focused but at present colleagues were overwhelmed, tired and pessimistic. There were concerns about duplication particularly with the curriculum review. The consultation around the strategy needed to be shared with exacerbating or triggering trust issues. Colleagues were reported to be cynical about the future when the College was in the middle of the recovery programme.
- 4.14 It was reported that the work and reviews currently underway would be used as part of the strategy to avoid duplication.
- 4.15 Council discussed whether the proposal was too broad and asked for clarity on when the themes would be settled on.
- 4.16 Council discussed how the strategy could look at things outside of the College's control and pre-empt or prepare its response, this could include external factors or forecasts. It would make the strategy more agile and proactive. It was important that the strategy was about re-capitalising Goldsmiths and getting a strong foundation in place to build on.
- 4.17 Council the merits of having a strong endowment to support its work. It was acknowledged that endowments were hard to come by. The strategic plan needed to establish a narrative that the College could fundraise around.
- 4.18 Council agreed the short term actions had to be done with long term objectives in mind.
- 4.19 Council discussed the need to have an international perspective in the strategy as it recruited a high number of international students.
- 4.20 Council discussed the use of EAB. Concerns were raised about using an external company and how this would be perceived by the community. It was reported that EAB would not cost as the College had an existing relationship. Furthermore, EAB's work would guide, provide insight and not push a particular agenda. There were concerns about an externally enforced agenda.
- 4.21 It was noted that the titles of the workshop were deliberately provocative to initiate conversation and they were not proposing a model for Goldsmiths. It was agreed that the phrasing of workshops needed to be appropriate to ensure colleagues didn't have an immediately negative response or lead to more mistrust.

- 4.22 It was agreed that the workshops should not or appear to have established outcomes beforehand so that consultation was meaningful and not perceived to be tokenistic. Workshops needed to consider the longer term future and not be lured into a particular post-pandemic response. Flexibility was essential and lifelong learning would be positioned as well as pedagogically informed decisions about online, blended and on campus options to meet student needs and wants.
- 4.23 Council discussed how to future proof including ringfencing money that was potentially at risk, sharing the potential risk of Augar with departments now to prepare for any changes in advance.
- 4.24 Council agreed there was a process around the existing strategy and reminding the community about it.
- 4.25 It was reported that some colleagues were not enthusiastic about the College's future and there would be a significant challenge to win the hearts and minds of these colleagues. Some colleagues did not identify with what the College was changing towards. Academic colleagues should be engaged with to identify the themes as they regularly felt like there was an externally imposed agenda. It was important to identify how Council would support management to support colleagues to engage so that colleagues felt like they had a voice in the future.
- 4.26 It was agreed that process would not just look at growth but how to grow.
- 4.27 Council agreed that it had an essential role in scrutinising and monitoring the strategic plan both development and implementation but it also needed assurance around the operational plans. There needed to be assurance provided through the Warden's report, especially during a transition period.
- 4.28 Council agreed that the direction of travel was positive but more information was required at the next meeting, integrating the feedback provided and with clarity on the reporting and monitoring mechanisms. The report should also identify the strategy group members.

Action:

- 4.29 Update the report, integrating the feedback and return it to the next Council meeting.
- 4.30 Identify in the report who the strategy group members would be.
- 4.31 Ensure the the vision piece is higher profile than was currently presented in the report.
- 4.32 Consider the phrasing of workshop titles to better engage the community.

5 Good Governance Evaluation Report

Received:

5.1 Good Governance Evaluation Report

Noted:

- 5.2 As outlined in the CUC Code, Council had an externally appointed evaluation of its practice every three years.
- 5.3 The review had identified that the College was compliant with the CUC Code and OfS governance conditions.
- 5.4 It was reported the recommendations into 3 areas: housekeeping, engagement and transformation.
- 5.5 All of the housekeeping recommendations had been implemented to improve the processes and systems within the existing governance structure, clarifying roles and ways of working.
- 5.6 All of the engagement recommendations had been implemented to support members to interact and understand the College beyond Council meetings.
- 5.7 The transformation recommendations had been partially implemented within the existing structure, the additional recommendations would be considered alongside the recovery and strategy work and would be driven by conversations with the community. The College couldn't decide changes to its governance structure without understanding what structure it had.
- 5.8 It was important to note that the review identified that College community was engaged and cared about governance, this was a strength of Goldsmiths and should be built upon.
- 5.9 Council agreed that significant progress had been made but there were still areas for improvement and work would continue. Some of the developmental areas would be integrated into the strategic planning process and a governance strand.

Action:

- 5.10 Ensure that some of the governance developmental areas are integrated into the strategic planning process and a governance strand of the strategy.

6 Civic strategy

Received:

- 6.1 The draft Civic strategy
- 6.2 The draft University Agreement (CUA)

Noted:

- 6.3 Council agreed in September 2020 that the College should develop a new Civic Strategy, which would be underpinned by a Civic University Agreement. In doing so, it noted that the civic agenda nationally had been growing over recent years, notably, the UPP Foundation Civic Universities Commission launched an inquiry in 2018 into the future of the civic university, and how universities can most effectively 'serve their place in the 21st Century'. Following the recession, these considerations had become even more pressing as we are faced with a series of questions about how we might best support Covid-19 recovery while also building the foundations for more sustained civic engagement and investment. Heightened civic impacts also plays an important role in the College's recovery plans through increased student recruitment locally and other income generating activities.
- 6.4 Goldsmiths had been collaborating for many years with local partners with beneficial impacts for the economy, culture and society, which is a commitment in the College's overarching strategic plan – strategic theme no. 5: '*Civic engagement for mutual benefit, active partnership with our community*'. The College's local impacts are significant and are growing. Yet there was scope to do more. By building on these longstanding foundations for community engagement and by drawing together a range of related activity across the College, the strategy seeks to deepen and reorient its civic mission by adopting a systemic and strategic approach to its delivery. Starting initially with an evaluation of our local impacts, as well as an analysis of what our local community says it most needs from the College, these evaluations, supplemented by a series of internal and external consultations and evidence from partners, informed the development of the strategy.
- 6.5 The College had also partnered with the Design Council to explore through a series of interlinked workshops with stakeholders how design thinking might be applied to strengthened civic engagement. Alongside the launch of the two strategies, the College would be launching with the Design Council a series of 'How Might We' statements, demonstrating how design thinking could bring practical benefits to local communities.

- 6.6 In drawing up the draft strategy, the intention was to ensure that the priorities align (where appropriate) with commitments the College had as part of pre-existing memoranda of understanding with partner organisations. In line with what's seen as good practice adopted by other universities, it included a rationale for each of the four pillars, underpinned by four or five headline priorities and deliverables. The four pillars map onto each of the four priority areas of the CUA, as it was important that both documents speak to each other while serving different purposes. The Strategy set out Goldsmiths vision which extends in reach beyond the borough of Lewisham.
- 6.7 The College was not seeking solely to assess the difference it was having but also to capture the extent to which the locality the College served considers its needs were being met. Council's 'Task and Finish Group' agreed with a suggestion made by a senior figure at the Civic University Network (CUN) that the College should develop a 'theory of change' model. These models were often developed at the beginning of a major piece of work or programme, and show how change could happen in the short, medium and long-term. They could be particularly helpful for those planning how to evaluate a complex initiative.
- 6.8 Council were assured that the work done so far and intend to do appeared to be very much in line with what the CUN would consider to be good, if not very good, practice. Indeed, the CUN would like to convene an event for all its university members in late October focused solely on the work that Goldsmiths had done, using the College's approach as an illustration of good practice that could be followed by other universities.
- 6.9 The Civic agenda was embedded across a range of functions within the College (e.g. Enterprise; Careers and Employability; Widening Participation; Community and Public Engagement; Student Experience and so on), with staff and non-staff resource to be drawn mainly from within these existing budgets. This enabled the College to take forward its commitments while recognising that its resources were currently limited. It also had the advantage of making it easier to ensure that the civic strategy aligned with other strategies, such as: the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) and the Knowledge Exchange Concordat; the College's initiatives on widening access and participation and student knowledge exchange; local and regional skilling and reskilling priorities; local growth and regeneration; and public and community engagement. In addition, it also helped to add additional impetus for new and emerging initiatives concerned with the need to provide Goldsmiths' students with the skills and aptitudes that they would increasingly need to cope with the changing nature of work and the workplace.
- 6.10 Council noted that the civic strategy had subject to extensive consultation and it was important the strategy was not top down. It had been informed by extensive research and evidence reports about what the community wanted and where the College's existing impact was. Around 300 businesses had been surveyed. The local authority had undertaken similar consultation with residents including Citizens assemblies and these findings were shared. Findings from local community, voluntary organisations and housing organisations had also been shared. Throughout there had been a real effort to be a joint approach and the team were genuinely listening to feedback and responding to needs and wants.

- 6.11 The strategy was formed around local priorities informed by local businesses and people. There were new opportunities for the College to further this work including the London borough of culture.
- 6.12 It was reported that the Council task and finish had been clear that robust KPIs needed to be included in the outcomes for effective monitoring.
- 6.13 Council thanked the team were the reports and willingness to accept feedback. It was a tough time for the College and the positive work that had happened and was being planned was something worth celebrating. It was agreed this work needed to be effectively communicated to the wider community.
- 6.14 Council agreed it was tremendous example of the College's work and lifting eyes from recovery and focusing on what it wanted to do going forward. A risk was raised about unqualified people giving legal advice, it was reported the College were utilising an effective and robust model used at other institutions and it was fully supervised and risk assessed.
- 6.15 Feedback was provided on some of the language utilised in the report and Council it was important the reports language aligned with its positive and inclusive aims.
- 6.16 Council asked for clarity on who was meant by 'community' whether there was a specific target audience and asked if the term could be broken down in certain parts of the report for clarity. It was reported that the report was not referring to one unified harmonious community and it was talking about series of communities and this would be clarified in the next iteration. The support and work would be differentiated based on needs and wants.
- 6.17 The Students Union President confirmed the union would be happy to support this work going forward.
- 6.18 Council agreed that the strategy was a great foundation and it was great to be an area of best practice for the institution for the sector. It was important to be a partnership and not an imposed approach.
- 6.19 Council approved the draft and agreed it was important iterations of the report were brought back as well as progress reports.

Action:

- 6.20 Establish how the strategy and work could be effectively communicated to the wider community.
 - 6.21 Research team to follow up about the language within the report to ensure it was fit for purpose.
 - 6.22 Clarify who was meant by community and ensure that it did not appear to be a one fits all approach.
 - 6.23 Follow up with the Students Union to engage them with this work going forward.
 - 6.24 Provide updates on iterations of the civic strategy and progress reports routinely.
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7 Retirements from the Board

Noted:

- 7.1 Council noted that Lauren Corelli's sabbatical officer term had come to an end and it thanked her for her support.
- 7.2 Council noted that Atau Tanaka had revised his post and it thanked him for his support.