

**APPROVED COUNCIL MINUTES  
MEETING HELD ON 4<sup>th</sup> JULY 2025, 9AM  
Rooms A and B Northampton Suite**

Members		Meeting 1 20.09.24	Meeting 2 10.10.24	Meeting 3 28.11.24	Meeting 4 20.02.25	Meeting 5 14.03.25	Meeting 6 09.05.25	Meeting 7 04.07.25
Independent Members	Professor Ian Jacobs (Chair)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Professor Sir Anthony Finkelstein (President)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Mr Godfrey Allen	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Professor Bob Allison	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Mr Jonathan Curtiss	A	A	N/M	N/M	N/M	N/M	N/M
	Mr Mark Evans	N/M	N/M	N/M	✓	A	✓	✓
	Ms Adrienne Fresko	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Mr Josh Joshi	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Mr Max Khan	N/M	N/M	N/M	N/M	N/M	N/M	✓
	Ms Rachel Lock	A	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓
	Mr Mark Lowcock	N/M	N/M	N/M	N/M	N/M	A	✓
	Ms Catherine McGuinness	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Ms Gillian Norton	✓	✓	A	A	✓	N/M	N/M
	Ms Julia Palca	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Mr Anant Prakash	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	A
	Mr Damian Reid	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Ms Christine Swabey	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mr Ron Zeghibe	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Staff and Student Members	Ms Sandra Ashton	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Professor Leanne Aitken	✓	A	✓	N/M	N/M	N/M	N/M
	Ms Ayla Hamzayeva	✓	✓	✓	A	A	A	A
	Professor Jon Friedland	N/M	N/M	N/M	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Professor Elisabeth Hill	✓	✓	P	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Mr Joe Kenwright	A	A	A	✓	A	A	✓
	Professor Rich Payne	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓
Ms Helen Watson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

**Key:** ✓ In Attendance A Apologies P Part Attendance N/M Not a Member S Sabbatical

In Attendance	Reason and Meeting Section
Ms Kiren Chima	Head of EDI
Mr Dominic Davis	Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance
Professor Jessica Jones-Nielsen	Assistant Vice-President EDI
Dr William Jordan	University Secretary
Ms Sarah Lawton	Senior Governance Officer
Ms Charlotte Martin	Director of Governance Support, Development and Integration
Mr Matthew Swales	Chief Financial Officer

**MINUTES SECTION A – OPEN FOR PUBLICATION**

**Part One – Preliminary Items**

- Apologies for Absence**  
Council noted apologies from Anant Prakash and regular attendees Professor Natalie Armstrong and Professor Andre Spicer.
- Quorum**  
The meeting was quorate.
- Highlighted Items**  
Council **agreed** the highlighted items.
- Minutes**  
The minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2025 were approved.

## 5. **Matters Arising**

Council noted the actions arising from past meetings.

Matter Arising 2, SU Report/Mental Health and Wellbeing: The University Secretary would liaise with the new SU Team to consider how best this work might be taken forward and reported on to Council.

## 6. **Conflicts of Interest**

None reported in relation to the items of business on the agenda.

## 7.1 **Items Specially Brought Forward by the Chair**

### **Welcome**

The Chair welcomed new independent Council Members, Mark Lowcock and Max Khan, to their first meeting of Council. The Chair also welcomed Nasir Mohammed, SU President-elect who was observing the meeting and would take up office on 1<sup>st</sup> August.

### **Farewell**

This was Joe Kenwright's final meeting as a student member and on behalf of Council the Chair thanked Joe for all his work to help join the two legacy unions, which had been a great success.

This was Ron Zeghibe's final meeting as his term of office would end on 31<sup>st</sup> August and the Chair thanked Ron for his commitment to the University. Ron had served as a Council Member for 9 years and had contributed a very great deal over that time, including driving progress on the Strategy and towards the merger. Council wished Ron well and hoped he stays in touch.

### **Merger**

It was almost a year since the merger had taken place and the Chair reflected on how impressed he was that the two legacy Councils were working as a unified CSG Council. The University was in more than "good shape". Finances would necessarily remain a focus but were currently stable and the merger integration was moving forward. The current challenge was finding a way to realise and to communicate the benefits of the merger.

### **School Visits**

The Chair and several Council Members had enjoyed exciting and inspiring visits to the following schools:

- Communication and Creativity
- Policy and Global Affairs
- City Law School
- Bayes

The visits to the School of Science and Technology and the School of Health and Medical Sciences had been postponed and were in the process of being rearranged. All Council members would be notified of the new dates.

### **QS Rankings**

As a direct benefit of the merger, CSG had moved up 44 places which was excellent news. The Director SPP was working on actions to move CSG further up the rankings and would develop a report on the University's position in league tables and how it could be improved, for discussion at the October meeting of Council. **[Action]**

### **Senate Attendance**

The Chair thanked those Council Members who had attended Senate over the past year and noted that there was a vacancy to attend the December meeting. If anyone was interested in attending they should contact the Corporate Governance Team.

## 7.2. **Independent Council Member Appointment**

As recommended by CGNC, Council approved the appointment of Max Khan for a period of 3 years from today. *[This item was taken at the start of the meeting before Max joined.]*

## 7.3 **Appraisal of the Chair**

The Chair's appraisal would be undertaken by the joint Deputy Chairs of Council. In advance of the appraisal all Council members would be sent a questionnaire for completion and members were encouraged to answer as fully as possible, avoiding "yes and no" answers. The Deputy Chairs would also hold discussions with the President and University Secretary's direct reports, respectively. The appraisal report would be available at the October Council meeting.

## 8. Calendar

Council members noted the calendar.

## 9. President's Report

Council noted the report from the President which included updates from the Vice-Presidents and Executive Deans.

The President highlighted the following activities which had taken place since the last meeting:

- Whilst CSG's rankings in the Complete University Guide had dropped slightly, as a result of the merger, the University's Employability and Graduate Outcomes position was outstanding. CSG was ranked among the top 20 institutions in the UK for employability, ahead of several members of the Russell Group.
- The President's recent message to all staff entitled "Hard Yards" noted that members of the University were all collectively busy working on the delivery of ERP along with many other projects which underpinned the University's strategic direction.
- Partnership discussions had proceeded apace with several bodies and the President hoped to provide a more detailed update on developments at a future meeting.
- The President and colleagues were involved in the establishment of Research+, a new group for research focussed universities with a common purpose. A launch was planned for the autumn.

In discussion the following points were noted:

- A close eye was being kept on developments at the University of London where both an interim Chair and interim Vice-Chancellor were currently in post.
- Important developments around freedom of speech and the new regulations, along with the issues of equality and trans rights, would need to be addressed in coming months.
- A report on the work being undertaken with the More Partnership would be considered at the next Strategy and Development Committee and Council members would welcome a summary of the paper before the next meeting of Council. **[Action]**
- Council members would welcome an update on the Internationalisation Strategy and the President suggested this could happen early in the New Year. **[Action]**
- It was anticipated that the new Dean of the School of Science and Technology would take up post in January or February of 2026. In the meantime, the school would be in safe hands with Professor Neil Audsley, the current Deputy Dean.
- The Chair noted thanks on behalf of Council to Professor Raj Roy and wished him well in his new post at Loughborough University.

### 9.1 Business Continuity Management Update: Flood incident at Tooting Campus

Council received a verbal update from the COO and the following points were noted:

- A flood in the Hunter wing had caused damage to multiple floors, some of which remained inaccessible.
- On 18<sup>th</sup> June, the BCM process was activated – exams and teaching had to be relocated and all were rescheduled within 24 hours. Communications were scaled up to ensure that all staff and students were made aware.
- The Estates Team were on the scene and where fire alarms were compromised, temporary walking watches were in place to ensure the safety of staff and students.
- This was not a reportable event to the OfS, but a lessons learned review would be undertaken and the report provided to Council at a future meeting. **[Action]**
- The incident emphasised the issues which were raised in the due diligence work prior to merger – which highlighted poor insulation of pipes etc.,
- The COO thanked all staff who had ensured BAU and a special thanks to the SU who provided a reassuring and friendly presence for students. The incident highlighted excellent engagement with staff and students.
- It was worth noting that the incident had also impacted on the NHS staff and patients.
- Conversations were now underway with insurers and loss adjusters –work may be involved to determine which pipes are whose etc.
- The incident highlighted the need for a stronger relationship between CSG and the key NHS staff on the Tooting campus.
- Following the incident, we would review whether the order of works planned in the Estates Compliance Improvement Programme (ECIP) would need to be revisited

- The Chair congratulated the COO and the Executive Team on a prompt and effective response to a very serious problem.

## 10. **SU President's Report**

Council considered the report which gave a full account of the events and campaigns being taken forward by the Students' Union. In discussion the following points were noted:

- The progress of the "Make Every Day Better Strategy" was monitored through the advancement of each promise's associated projects.
- The recent leak in Tooting had significantly affected both service delivery and team capacity. Since Wednesday, 18 June, the entire second floor of Hunter Wing had been inaccessible. This area includes key facilities for students, e.g., the Dragon Bar and SU Welcome Desk. To maintain support for students, the SU had temporarily relocated the Welcome Desk to the University's main reception area.
- The Students' Union Merger Board had been closed with remaining tasks being delegated to teams or the Union Leadership Team. At the most recent Merger Board over 95% of the tasks had been completed.
- A refreshed Advice and Support Service would launch in August 2025, following an insight-led redesign that places student voice and needs at its heart. The new model was designed to be inclusive, proactive, and responsive to the evolving challenges students face. A high-visibility rollout was planned for Welcome 2025, supported by updated materials and coordinated communications.
- The Union was reaching the end of delivering the micro-placements project. The Union had provided 26 4-week placements for City St George's students as part of the University's Career Activation programme.
- The report contained a reference to increasing SU visibility at Clerkenwell and Tooting and the SU was asked to include Moorgate in this ambition.
- Students had raised concerns about security on campus and the lack of barriers at the Northampton Square entrance. The President assured Council that this related to a specific spate of presence from non-CSG students and the matter had now been resolved.
- Key priorities for the SU President-elect were work on the Hardship Fund, scholarships for Palestinian students, improving student feedback and proposals for a new site for the SU shop.

## 11. **Council Effectiveness 2024/25**

Members reflected on the effectiveness of Council in 2024/25 in taking forward its remit (as discussed at the September Council Away Day).

Introducing the item, the Chair of CGNC noted that this was an opportunity for members to reflect on how Council had performed with regard to strategy, shaping culture and holding the Executive to account.

In discussion the following points were noted:

- The biggest concern at the time of merger had been whether the new Council would come together as a single team – but there had been very constructive engagement by all members, which was a testament to the members around the table.
- Legacy City members had valued the insight from legacy SG members and never felt that anyone was on any particular side but all were there for the whole University. The process of becoming one Council had been seamless.
- It was refreshing to have non-executive staff members on Council to provide observations and perspectives that were not available before. This had enriched Council discussions.
- The Council committees were all working effectively and the input from Committees enabled Council too to work very effectively. The committees were working well together.
- Council had been a great partner to the Executive and where, on occasion, Council has been moved to make operational suggestions, the advice had been valuable and well taken.
- The SU President-elect noted that Council had overseen the merger well, listening to the student voice and ensuring that the legacy identities were not lost in the process.
- Consideration should be given to Council Member attendance and representation at events outside of attending Council and its sub-committees. It would be beneficial to be more systematic and organised about how this is implemented, e.g. attendance at Graduation and other events.

- Council was lacking an independent member from the private sector with experience of running a complex business at the highest level. Such a member would be hugely beneficial and a CEO from a large business might provide an opportunity to draw us closer to the City. This should be considered in the recruitment of independent members in future.
- The Chair thanked everyone for their feedback noting that the forthcoming external review of Council would allow for confidential comments and feedback from all members.

## 12. Strategy Refresh

Council considered the strategy refresh narrative paper, which had previously been considered by the Strategy & Development Committee.

Introducing the discussion, the Chair noted that following consideration at Strategy & Development Committee, he hoped that all Council members could agree that work on the strategy refresh narrative document had now been completed and that this could now inform the ongoing work of the University. The next steps agreed by Strategy & Development Committee would be for a short form version of the paper to be developed for Council approval and for wider dissemination. The President would also arrange for the actions set out in the refresh paper to be positioned as a plan.

In discussion the following points were made:

- The President noted the need to develop further what was currently said in the strategy refresh narrative about internationalisation and about innovation and the development of IP.
- The ambition of the University could helpfully be made clearer. For example, it would be helpful to make clear (potentially) that the University would offer students the education they needed to become the next generation of leaders in business, practice and the professions (if this was the strategic aspiration); and to make clear the extent of the University's ambition in fundraising.
- It would be helpful to make clear what a Multi University Trust would be, and how, for example, it was different from being a member of the University of London (UoL) (alongside other Universities), as well as CSG's connection with UoL.
- The suggestion that Engineering was at the heart of the institution seemed a little odd, given its positioning as the University for business, practice and the professions in the round. This might be further considered as the 'short version' of the strategy was developed and in the light of input from the incoming new Dean of SST.
- The document was rich in detail and content and required repeated reading. It would be important for the new 'shorter' strategy document, intended for wider dissemination, to have a very different look and feel.

Summarising the discussion, the Chair noted that Council had **agreed** that no further work was required on the strategy refresh narrative, which had served a very useful purpose. He would discuss next steps further with the incoming Chair of Strategy and Development Committee.

### [Action]

## 13. Relationship between the University and GESH

Council considered the report which had been jointly commissioned by City St George's and GESH. In discussion the following points were noted:

- The University had many NHS partners, but GESH was a key partner. It was a unique relationship in the sense that it was co-located, embedded in hospital space, and CSG provide their status as a university hospital.
- This report was part of a set of analyses that would feed into discussions between the University and GESH.
- None of the stakeholders interviewed for the report had been non-executive members of Council; so further insights from Council would be welcome to feed into further thinking on these issues.
- Further insights would also come from the work of the Presidential Sprints that would be picked up over the summer along with further developments in the context of the strategy implementation development as well as the SHMS strategy and health blueprint.
- There were clear opportunities to work together and a roundtable to discuss the report and possible next steps was planned for September.
- The next year offered a good time to give fresh impetus to the University's ambition to be the new health powerhouse for London. It would be very disappointing if, in a further years' time, the opportunities had still not been realised.

- It should not be forgotten, however, that the Trust was substantially larger than the University and needed to manage a complex day to day business. This might place some constraints on what is achievable.
- The DP&P assured Council that a lot of the groundwork towards becoming a health powerhouse has been done, e.g., developing relationships across CSG. The previous year had not been solely devoted to taking forward the mechanical aspects of the merger.
- The VP, Research, confirmed that the University was already working with GESH on various initiatives and there were many opportunities to be realised.
- There was a 'Southwest London gap' in the health sphere calling out to be filled and that might be worth considering at the roundtable discussion in September.
- There might also be opportunities for the University to work with King's Health Partnership on wider work in train in various quarters, on health equity.
- The Chair felt that it was important to consider carefully how we "badge" this to tell the story internally and with stakeholders. Council looked forward to hearing about progress at a future meeting.

#### 14. Freedom of Speech

Council considered the paper which provided an update regarding legislative and regulatory requirements on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom, and detailed steps to be taken by the University to ensure compliance with those requirements. In discussion the following points were noted:

- The new guidance from the OFS arrived only two weeks ago and there was work to be undertaken to ensure compliance. Council was being asked to approve the amended Ordinance B.4. today prior to considering the revised Code in October. The COO considered using the current Code until October to be low risk, noting that the Complaints Scheme and other enforcement powers were not yet in force.
- One member suggested that the policy at the end of the paper was very university focussed and lacked other matters, e.g., the Economic Crime Act.
- The University's Legal Counsel would be invited to attend Council in October to provide an overall legal and assurance update. **[Action]**

#### Decision

Council **agreed to adopt** the amended Ordinance B.4. and **agreed** to the additional steps proposed to be taken by the University as outlined in the paper.

#### 15 EDI Annual Report

Council considered the annual EDI report from the Office for Institutional Equity and Inclusion (OIEI) which set out the achievements of the University on EDI issues over the previous 12 months. In discussion the following points were made:

- The EDI report was an outward facing document accessible to all via the City St George's website.
- EDI issues were hard to tackle effectively; while good progress was being made on many fronts, the going would only get harder for the OIEE as fundamental drivers of inequality were addressed.
- The next staff survey, in November, would give a sense of staff engagement in the EDI agenda and the extent to which staff perceived generally that good progress was being made.
- It was clear from the annual report that there were many committees involved in the governance of EDI work at the University. This must represent a considerable cost in terms of staff time, which it might be helpful to calculate. The non-pay budget was modest, approximately circa £120k pa, as a result of bringing much of the training in-house. The Head of EDI would be able to provide an overall breakdown of the costs of governance in this area, following the meeting. **[Action]**
- The DP&P noted that EDI was everybody's responsibility and as such an element of all salaries should be allocated to EDI matters. The number of committees, although this was high, was essential to ensure the EDI agenda was taken forward in a uniform way across the university. All this added up to creating a collectively inclusive environment.
- Very few professors in the University were Black (0.8% only), but a far higher number of staff on Fixed Term Contracts were from Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds. Issues in this domain would need to be handled with care as the future of a range of different academic

programmes at the University was reviewed. Continuation of development programmes including 100 Black Women Professors NOW will continue to support this area of work.

- The gender pay gap had increased since the last pay gap report in 2024 and work continues to close the gap and develop an understanding of the reasons for this, including through the use of exit interviews with female staff leaving the University.
- The Chair welcomed the informative report noting the gratitude of Council for the quality of EDI leadership at the University. There were many challenging areas to get to grips with but neither the University nor Council should hide from those challenges.

## 16. Transformation Board Update

Council noted the update for information and noted that it would give more time for fuller consideration and discussion of the next update in October. The CFO assured Council that the target date for the ERP launch, although challenging, remained 5<sup>th</sup> August.

## 17.1 2025/26 Budget and Draft 5-year Plan

Council considered the Budget (for approval) and draft 5-year Plan (for noting), both of which had been considered in detail by Finance Committee. In discussion the following points were noted:

- The Chair of Finance Committee (FinCo) was of the opinion that CSG was about to enter its highest risk year.. The financial plan itself was not without risk but it had been thoughtfully put together and the challenges ahead had been identified. In a year's time, the financial gains from the merger and the implementation of the new ERP system needed to become apparent, with the University 'stepping into its stride' financially.
- FinCo recommended the Budget to Council for approval and would maintain its close watching brief throughout the year ahead..
- It was likely that the recruitment of UG students would meet the target levels set out in the plan. Given the levels of UG competition however, there was an emerging concern that Russell Group institutions would be increasingly competing in CSG's target markets. If this were to crystallise, City St George's may need to consider its own entry tariffs across certain programmes in order to protect its own recruitment targets.

### Decision

Council **approved** the 25/26 budget as recommended by Finance Committee.

## 17.2 Annual Investment Policy Review 2025/26

Council considered the report which provided the combined City St George's Investment Policy following the latest annual review and refresh by the Finance Team. A number of notable amendments to the version approved by Council last year had been highlighted and a series of housekeeping changes had also been made, including updates to the University name and titles of Council sub-committees.

### Decision

Council **approved** the CSG Investment Policy for 2025/26.

## 18. Biannual Risk Register Review

Council noted the Risk Register which had been considered carefully at Audit and Risk Committee (ARC). The Chair of ARC assured Council that there was nothing of significance to bring to its attention. The report demonstrated rigorous controls were in place to manage risk.

In discussion, the COO suggested that Council might wish to invite the CIO to provide an overall update on the cyber security risk (which remained 'red' post mitigation) at the next meeting. In addition, a detailed audit report of the recent Cyber Security incident would be provided to Council in October. **[Action]**

## 19. Honorary Award Nominations

Council **approved** the two nominations as recommended by CGNC.

*This item is continued in the closed section of these minutes.*

## 20. Changes to Ordinances

Council considered the paper which proposed two major changes to "Ordinance C.1 Senate" for approval. Both changes had been extensively discussed at Senate and at Corporate Governance and Nominations Committee.

### Decisions

Council **approved** the proposal to add two additional ex-officio members to the Senate Terms of Reference: the Associate Vice President for Education and the Associate Vice President for EDI.

Council **approved** the proposal to introduce a maximum term limit of 9 years of consecutive service for elected Senators to apply from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2027.

**21. Mid-year Health and Safety Report**

Council noted the report which was considered at Audit and Risk Committee.

**22. Estates & Property Projects Update Report**

Council noted the report which was considered at Finance Committee.

**23. Annual Sustainability Report 2024**

Council noted the report.

**24. Minutes**

Council noted the minutes of the following meetings:

24.1 Corporate Governance & Nominations Committee, 8<sup>th</sup> May

24.2 Senate, 21<sup>st</sup> May

24.3 Strategy & Development Committee, 4<sup>th</sup> June

**25. Policy Update**

Council noted the report.

**26. FOI Review**

Council **agreed** that no changes were required.

**27. AOB**

Council members discussed a further item of business, which is recorded in the 'closed' section B of the minutes (for Council members only).

**28. Date of Next Meeting**

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2025, 9am

Professor Ian Jacobs, Chair of Council  
July 2025