



Unreserved business minutes of College Council on Wednesday 4 December 2024.

Present:

Ex officio members	Master, Vice-Master, Senior Tutor, Bursar
Elected members	Professor Biagini, Dr Eaton, Dr Groom, Mr Ireland, Dr Öner, Dr Ranasinghe, Dr Sumnall, Dr Wilson-Lee
Student members	Ms Chen (MCR President), Ms Harrison (Student Representative), Mr Nicholas (JCR President), Ms Woods (JCR Vice-President)
In attendance	College Registrar (Council Secretary)

Introductory business

401 Apologies for absence

Ms Baskerville and Dr Bordin were on leave, and apologies were received from Professor Fruk and Dr Harasimov.

402 Approval of agenda

Approved.

403 Declaration of interests

None declared.

404 Unreserved business minutes of 6 November 2024

(CC.2425/404)

Confirmed by circulation.

405 Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda

(CC.2425/405)

Noted.

Decision items

406 Squash Court: proposal for temporary refurbishment for use as a multi-purpose space (Vice-Master)

(CC.2425/406)

The Vice-Master presented a proposal on behalf of the Squash Club, following the Buildings & Environment Committee's May 2024 decision to invite formal quotes for temporary refurbishment. Although it had been agreed in 2023 to consult on options for future use of the building, the College's recent acquisition of 20-22 Sidney Street allowed permission to be granted for its temporary use as a Squash Court pending a College-wide estate strategy. The building would remain available for out-of-term storage. The Bursar undertook to support the Squash Club in identifying funding for the works.

Action: Bursar

Council **approved** the proposal for temporary refurbishment of the Squash Court, subject to identification of suitable funding, and **gave permission** for the facility to be used as a Squash Court during term time for up to four years from the completion of works.

407 Alumni Dining Privileges (Master) (CC.2425/407)

Council **approved** in principle the updated alumni dining privileges, subject to further discussions between the Bursar, Development & Alumni Relations Office (DARO), the Domestic Bursar and Head of Hospitality to refine the proposals, including costings and co-ordination with student society events, for further Council consideration in Lent Term.

Action: Bursar, DARO, Domestic Bursar, Head of Hospitality

The Vice-Master undertook to review with the Fellowship Committee to explore whether additional High Table dinners for Fellows might be possible in conjunction with dinners in Hall taking place for student societies or other events.

Action: Vice-Master

408 Membership of Sidney's Giving Circles: Spousal / Partner Policy – new (Master) (CC.2425/408)

Council **approved** the updated giving circles policy in relation to spouses and partners.

409 Personal Relationships Policy – major revision (Registrar) (CC.2425/409)

The Registrar explained that the policy had been aligned with the University's new policy, adapted to reflect the circumstances of a College and its various constituencies.

Council **approved** the updated policy, subject to clarification of the guidance in section 8.2.10 relating to supervision arrangements for residential Fellows. The Registrar invited suggestions from residential Fellows for alternative wording. **Action: Registrar/Residential Fellows**

410 Charitable Partnerships – Community Engagement Update (Master / Registrar) (CC.2425/410)

The Master and Registrar presented updated proposals relating to charitable partnerships, including whether the College would be in a position now or in the future to support employment for individuals who had recently experienced homelessness. The HR Committee had recommended that the College did not sign the Cambridge Homelessness Charter or Crisis Homelessness Covenant at this time with respect to employment due to current management capacity limiting the resources available to meet the Charter and Covenant requirements to the standard the College would wish.

Attention was drawn to:

- the place of the Community Engagement Working Group within the College's governance structure;

- the available resources within College to support charitable partnerships, and whether opportunities for joint working with other Colleges were available;
- Fellows' outside appointments, such as school governorships, which offered further partnership working opportunities to explore.

Council agreed:

- a) to enter into a partnership with Rowan and not to seek any further partnerships at this time;
- b) that any charitable partnerships be evaluated before the end of the third year;
- c) that the Working Group make a formal proposal to Council for the future arrangements of management and resourcing of charitable partnerships within the College's governance structure; and
- d) to invite student members to join the Working Group. **Action: Registrar**

411 University's position on the application of web filtering (Registrar) (CC.2425/411)
Council endorsed the University's position not to apply web filtering to its networks.

Discussion items

412 Inter-collegiate business and other relevant issues (All) (CC.2425/412)

Heads of House

- Recent news about temporary accreditation for the Veterinary Medical School, and the impact on students and staff, had been the main topic of discussion.

Senior Tutors' Committee

- Veterinary Medicine students were meeting with their Directors of Studies to discuss the accreditation news; wording was to be provided to interviewers to answer any questions from candidates in the forthcoming admissions round;
- The proposals from the review of provisions made for students with disabilities were endorsed;
- An operational review of undergraduate admissions about to commence in the next few months to understand overall costs of current arrangements.

Bursars' Committee

- Noted that the cost of undergraduate admissions operations was higher than at any other university;
- A presentation from the University's Head of Wellbeing had highlighted reduced waiting times and College levies being retained at the same rate for the coming year, but also concerns about inconsistent adherence to the strategic model.

413 College Finances: Q1 2024-25 Update (Bursar) (CC.2425/413)

The Bursar reported that, at the end of the first financial quarter:

- Operational and donation income totalled just under £3.1 million, an increase of £280k compared to the same period in 2023-24, principally due to increases in Conference business, and investment income;
- Operational expenditure was £500k higher than in 2023-24, of which however £350k related to increased budgets for major works and maintenance, representing increased investment in the estate;
- Staff wages continue to represent nearly half of operational expenditure and substantial savings against the budget were unlikely;
- The forecast underlying deficit (excluding donations and one-off exceptional items) for the year remained broadly unchanged at this stage, at c.£1.1 million;
- The value of the balance sheet, standing at £154.3 million at the end of the quarter, had reduced by just over £1 million from the end of the previous financial year, attributed to changes in investment valuations and fluctuations in cash levels;
- The continuing catering deficit remained a high concern, and actions to address it would be discussed in Lent Term.

Council **noted** the update.

414 Vision & Strategy and Risk Register 2025 (Registrar) (CC.2425/414)

Council **noted** that the trends in risks to higher education remained static, and that specific risks identified through the development of a Vision & Strategy would be included in the 2025 Risk Register.

415 External review of archives and muniments (Deputy Senior Tutor) (CC.2425/415)

The Deputy Senior Tutor presented the priorities for a Lent Term external review by the East of England Archive Service. The priorities were **endorsed**, with the addition of priorities relating to addressing satisfactorily the health and safety and data protection risks previously identified, and clarification of how certain collections, such as silver and portraits, related to the archives.

Council also considered the resource implications inherent in fully cataloguing and establishing the value of the College's collections for insurance purposes, understanding required conditions for historic assets and for data minimisation. Future proposals for possible development of a shared library and archives centre would be addressed in a College-wide estate strategy.

The external advisor's report would be presented to Academic Committee and Council in Lent or Easter Term 2025. It was asked that the next presentation to Council include benchmarking archives management against other colleges.

Action: Deputy Senior Tutor

- 416 Archivist's Annual Report 2023-24 (Deputy Senior Tutor)** (CC.2425/416)
The Annual Report was received.
- 417 Librarian's Annual Report 2023-24 (Deputy Senior Tutor)** (CC.2425/417)
The Annual Report was received.
- 418 Director of Music's Annual Report 2023-24 (Master)** (CC.2425/418)
The Annual Report was received.
- 419 Wellbeing Service Annual Report 2023-24 (Senior Tutor)** (CC.2425/419)
The Annual Report was received.
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Policy items for approval 'en bloc'

- 420 Employment Handbook – annual review** (CC.2425/420)
Approved.
- 421 Workers' Handbook – annual review** (CC.2425/421)
Approved.
- 422 Staff Code of Conduct – 3-yearly review** (CC.2425/422)
Approved.
- 423 Equal Opportunities Policy – 3-yearly review** (CC.2425/423)
Approved.
- 424 On Call Working Policy – amendment** (CC.2425/424)
Approved.
- 425 Severe Weather Policy – 3-yearly review** (CC.2425/425)
Approved.
- 426 Fellows' Expenses Procedure v4.1 – amendment** (CC.2425/426)
Approved.
- 427 Interment of ashes and memorial guidelines – 5-yearly review** (CC.2425/427)
Approved.

Information items

428 Use of College Seal

Noted:

- Contract and assignment of rent arrears relating to the purchase of 20-22 Sidney Street
- Land Registry TR1 (transfer deed) for 20-22 Sidney Street

429 Multifaith Prayer and Meditation Room

(CC.2425/429)

The Chaplain's update was **noted**.

Reports from committees

430 Academic Committee 28 October 2024 (confirmed)

(CC.2425/430)

Received.

431 Student Wellbeing Committee 4 November 2024 (unconfirmed)

(CC.2425/431)

Received.

**432 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Committee 5 November 2024
(unconfirmed)**

(CC.2425/432)

Received.

433 HR Committee 5 November 2024 (unconfirmed)

(CC.2425/433)

Received.

434 Finance & Needs Committee 25 November 2024 (unconfirmed)

(CC.2425/434)

Received.

Other business

435 Any other business

Council expressed its gratitude to Dr Fulda at the conclusion of his tenure as Editor of The Annual.

436 Date of next meeting

Wednesday 29 January 2025 at 2pm in the William Mong Hall.