Sidney Sussex
COLLEGE

Unreserved business minutes of **College Council** on Wednesday 18 March 2026

Present:

Ex officio members	Master, Vice-Master, Senior Tutor, Bursar
Elected members	Ms Baskerville, Professor Biagini, Professor Fruk, Professor Garcia-Mayoral, Dr Groom, Dr Harasimov, Mr Ireland, Dr Ranasinghe, Dr Sumnall, Dr Wilson-Lee
Student members	Mr Bowyer (JCR Vice-President), Miss Ellis (JCR President), Mr Lastowiecki (MCR President), Mr Orders (Student Representative)
In attendance	Dr Doran (item 708 only), Ms Ercan (Secretary)

Introductory business

701 Apologies for absence

Professor Bordin was on leave.

702 Approval of agenda

The agenda was approved.

703 Declaration of interests

There were no declarations of interest.

704 Unreserved business minutes of 25 February 2026 (CC.2526/704)

Confirmed by circulation.

705 Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda (CC.2526/705)

[CC.2526/615: Flag Flying Schedule] It was noted that the Flag Flying Policy outlines which flags are flown on which dates and the policy is due for review in Lent Term 2027.

Decision items

706 Room Capacities (Bursar) (CC.2526/706)

Council **noted** the updated room capacities and acknowledged that they are a legal requirement and must be adhered to accordingly.

707 Debt Repayment Fund (Bursar) (CC.2526/707)

On the recommendation of Finance and Needs Committee, Council **agreed** not to increase the annual transfer to the Debt Repayment Fund and to maintain the transfer at £125k per annum on the basis that, on current assumptions, this would accumulate sufficient funds required to pay off the total as the debts fall due. Council also **agreed** to review these

assumptions and payments on a more frequent basis, from every five years to every three years going forward, with the next review being in 2029.

708 Joint JCR / MCR Entrepreneurial Society Proposal (Dr Doran) (CC.2526/708)

The Master thanked Dr Doran, Chair of the Entrepreneurship working Group for speaking to the paper and noted that the proposal is an unusual new venture due to it not being a subject based society, as it spans all academic disciplines, and includes Fellows and Alumni as well as students. After discussion Council **approved,** in-principle, the concept of a Sidney Sussex Entrepreneurship Society to enable planning for Easter Term, and for it to return to Council in Michaelmas Term with a formal proposal. Dr Doran will speak to the Bursar about any immediate funding requirements.

Discussion items

709 Inter-collegiate business and other relevant issues (Master, Senior Tutor, Bursar)

Council **noted** the following updates:

Bursars' Committee:

- The levies for University-provided services and intercollegiate activities that Colleges benefit from are likely to increase substantially.

Senior Tutors' Committee:

- There will be one final round of awards from the University's College Wellbeing Stimulus Fund (CWSF) in June 2026. The college has already benefited from the Fund's support, which has funded the Sensory Garden, and the Head of Student Wellbeing will submit a further bid. The University will undertake a review and consultation on most effective use of the remaining balance of the Fund.
- Despite no final decision having been taken at that stage, the December edition of the University "mini-guide" stated that minimum A-Level entry requirements could include AAA. The document had been withdrawn, discussions were on-going, and any outcomes will be determined by the Undergraduate Admissions Committee.
- A summary of responses to the University's 2024-25 Student Pastoral Survey had recently become available. The survey has been suspended, during a strategic review to evaluate its utility and practicalities.

Heads of House:

- Discussed the Veterinary School announcement and communication implications which led to a discussion about the need for a University strategy.
- There is tension and a disparity between the information the University gives to applicants and Colleges' own admission requirements.

Intercollegiate Council of Presidents:

- The JCR President informed Council that this new Council has been convened, with its own constitution and charter. It was noted that the Intercollegiate Council of Presidents is not affiliated to the University Students' Union. Its purpose is collective action and to provide enhanced support for JCR presidents.

710 Progress update on Vision and Strategy (Master) (CC.2526/710)
Council **noted** the Vision and Strategy progress update.

711 College Plan 2025-26: Mid-Year Progress Update (Master) (CC.2526/711)
The Master invited the Bursar, Senior Tutor and Development Director to talk to their sections, in addition to the 'other major project' and 'quick win' priorities. They reported that in the main priorities are on track to be delivered. Council **noted** the College Plan 2025-26: mid-year progress update.

712 Forecast outturn 2025-26 (Bursar) (CC.2526/712)
In addition to the paper circulated from Finance and Needs Committee, the Bursar handed out copies of presentation slides to aid his update. Council **noted** the following:

- £13.9m income was budgeted at the start of the financial year and there was £15m expenditure, resulting in an underlying (excluding donations and one-off exceptionals) budget deficit of £1.1m.
- The forecast underlying deficit, based on half year figures and revised departmental estimates, has been reduced to £0.7m.
- The £400k improvement is predominantly due to cost savings alongside a very small increase in income. The reduction in forecast Conference income compared with budget is of concern.
- Cost savings are roughly split 50/50 between staff and non-staff.
- Outside the underlying surplus/deficit calculation, donations were budgeted at £1.2m and the current forecast is £2.9m, though some donations are ring-fenced. The net surplus including donations and one-off exceptions is therefore £1.8m.

713 Undergraduate Admissions Report: 2026 Round (Admissions Director) (CC.2526/713)
The Admissions Director spoke to the report having made all offers during the normal admission round. He highlighted that it was a good year with the largest applicant field and that we were net donors to the pool. Council discussed ways to reduce the administration and the process of scheduling interviews for the Admissions Team.
Council **noted** the undergraduate admissions report: 2026 round.

714 **Widening Participation: 2025-26 Update (Admissions Director)** (CC.2526/714)
The Admissions Director presented the report, noting that in our link area where we do most of our outreach activity Sidney is the second most popular College compared to being 20th outside our link areas.
Council **noted** the update.

715 **Risk Register: 2026 first look (Bursar/Registrar)** (CC.2526/715)
The Bursar presented the draft 2026 risk registers for Governance, University and inter-collegiate relations, and Communications, and asked that comments be sent to him and the

Registrar. The final version will be presented for adoption in Easter Term. It was noted that we are committed to reviewing the risk register process for 2026-27.
Council **noted** the update.

Information items

716 Student Financial Support 2024-25 Annual Report (Senior Tutor) (CC.2526/716)
Council **received** the report.

717 Safeguarding Policy (Senior Tutor) (CC.2526/717)
The Senior Tutor presented the updated policy, noting that it had been lightly reviewed by Academic and Student Wellbeing Committee at their joint committee earlier that day, with the intention of a more substantive review of the policy over the summer. Council **received** the report.

Action: Senior Tutor and Head of Wellbeing.

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718 Use of College Seal
Noted:

- 25/02/2026 - Transfer Deed relating to the purchase of 10 Jesus Lane.

Policy items for approval

719 Collections Development Policy (CC.2526/720)
On the recommendation of Academic Committee, Council **approved** the new Policy.

Reports from Committees

720 EDI Committee 10 February 2026 (unconfirmed) (CC.2526/720)
The minutes were **received**.

721 Finance and Needs Committee 16 February 2026 (confirmed) (CC.2526/721)
The minutes were **received**.

722 Chapel and Music Committee 20 February 2026 (unconfirmed) (CC.2526/722)
The minutes were **received**.

723 Academic Committee 23 February 2026 (unconfirmed) (CC.2526/723)
The minutes were **received.**

724 HR Committee 3 March 2026 (unconfirmed) (CC.2526/724)
The minutes were **received.**

Other business

725 Any other business

There was no other business.

726 Date of next meeting

Wednesday 6 May 2026 at 2.00pm in the William Mong Hall.