

## **Sidney Sussex College**

The Minutes of  
**COLLEGE COUNCIL**  
Held in the Old Library  
on Wednesday 23 February 2022 following the meeting of Governing Body

### **UNRESERVED BUSINESS**

#### **In attendance:**

##### **Senior Members Present**

The Master, Vice-Master, Senior Tutor, Bursar, Dr Bordin; Professor Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, Dr Fulda, Dr Garcia-Mayoral, Dr Groom, Dr Oner, Dr Ranasinghe, Professor Reynolds, Dr Stasch, Dr Sumnall

##### **Student Members Present**

Ms Dadiya, Ms Mahmood

#### **Also Present**

Ms Harkin (College Registrar/Council Secretary)

### **1. INTRODUCTORY BUSINESS**

#### **1.1 Apologies for absence**

Professor Sepulchre, Mr Lu, Ms Kazani,

#### **1.2 Approval of Agenda**

It was requested that item 3.7 (Buildings & Environment Committee minutes) be unstarred. Otherwise, the agenda was approved.

#### **1.3 Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interests.

#### **1.4 Confirmation of the minutes of the unreserved business of the Meeting of Council on 26 January 2022 (CC.220223.1.4)**

The minutes were confirmed.

- a) Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda  
None

### **2. REPORTS FROM OFFICERS**

#### **2.1 Master's Business**

##### **a) Intercollegiate business**

The Master outlined the main items of business discussed at the Senior Tutors and Bursar's Committees since the last Council

meeting. This included the outcome of the mid-term break consultation, the use of LNAT for law admissions and difficulties in obtaining supervisors for the Physics Tripos at Senior Tutors Committee and the future of the asymptomatic and symptomatic testing programme at Bursars Committee.

**b) Flag flying**

**(i) Policy (CC.220223.2.1bi)**

**(ii) Request for an additional flag day (CC.220223.2.1bii)**

**(iii) \*\*Schedule 2021-22 (CC.220223.2.1biii)**

The Vice-Master spoke to the three papers explaining that they had been looked at and discussed by the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) working group.

With regard to the policy, he explained that it had come up for its periodic review. The proposal was that the policy remain largely as it had been before but with clarifications: first, that it was principally concerned with flying the College or Union flags; second, that Council could exceptionally authorise flying additional flags; third, the display of flags external to buildings and rooms was prohibited. He asked if Council was willing to endorse the revised College policy. He also asked Council to consider the request from students for an additional flag day on 31 March each year to recognise the Transgender Day of Visibility. With regard to the latter, the Vice-Master explained that the EDI working group was on balance happy to support the proposal and would like Council to endorse this.

In discussion, the following points were made:

- The policy does not permit the flying of flags from students' windows. This was partly for health and safety reasons but also because there had been problems in the past where a display from a window had attracted objections. If a flag is flown from the College flagpole, then it is easier to explain that Council has discussed the matter and authorised the flying of the flag for inclusivity or other substantive reasons; this is harder to say and control if individual flags are flown from a student window.
- It was recognised that there was a concern that Council could end up with multiple requests for different flags to be flown which might have the effect of causing divisiveness across the college community. However, currently the student representatives were not aware of any other flags that the students might request, and it was recognised that transgender people were a minority group that currently needed more support in society. In addition, the Vice-Master made it clear that authorisations for flags other than the College and Union ones were exceptional authorisations, as

well as being time-limited with the flag flying schedule being reviewed by Council.

- In recognising that flags were not inherently inclusive, the point was made that rather than relying solely on symbols such as flags, it was important to take action in relation to the College's EDI objectives.

Council endorsed the revised policy and authorised the schedule.

**c) Review of Governance risk and University and Inter-collegiate relations risk (CC.220223.2.1c)**

Council discussed the two risks and approved the two entries, including the revised downgrading of the risk scores for each.

**d) College Calendar**

The Master outlined the process for finalising the College Calendar for the next academic year. He asked Council members to submit any comments they had to the Master's PA whose next step will be ask the Committee Chairs and Secretaries to agree the proposed dates for their Committee meetings.

**Action: Council Members**

**2.2 Senior Tutor's Business**

**a) Interim report 2022 UG Admissions Round (CC.220223.2.2a)**

The Admissions Director spoke to her report, explaining that the main issue for the College was how address the knowledge gap that applicants, offer holders and Freshers were currently experiencing when they arrived at Cambridge. She said that she would welcome any suggestions as to how to tackle this issue. The Senior Tutor suggested that this topic be put on the agenda and discussed at the subject review meetings in July. He also confirmed that it should be possible to offer a standard approach to the solution across the subjects. The point was made that 'access and participation' should be a funding category within the Development pillars. The Master noted that the new Foundation year initiative and the introduction of new Triposes would also influence the subject mix of offers made as it was College policy not to increase the overall number of offers.

**Action: Senior Tutor**

**b) \*\*Extension to Memorandum of Understanding – Postgraduate numbers (CC.220223.2.2b)**

Council approved the proposed numbers.

**c) Postgraduate funding proposal and consultation questions (CC.220223.2.2c)**

The Senior Tutor explained that what was being proposed was that funders across the collegiate university, when offering a fully funded studentship, should meet a baseline of benefits for a full-time student – as set out in the paper. He stated that there was a tension between the cost of meeting this baseline of benefits and the impact this might have on the number of studentships that could be offered by funders. Colleges felt unable to agree to the proposal until they had a better idea of the impact on numbers, and this was difficult to ascertain. The Senior Tutor requested that any comments on the proposal should be forwarded to him and noted that a proposed response would be brought to the next meeting.

**Action: Senior Tutor**

**e) \*\*Student Suicide Prevention and Response strategy**

Council agreed that it supported the updated strategy..

**f) CRAs and Visiting Scholars – request for nominations**

The Senior Tutor explained that there one vacancy for a CRA/Visiting Scholar and that an email will be circulated to the Fellowship asking for any nominations to be submitted for consideration by Council.

**Action: Senior Tutor**

**2.3 Bursar's Business**

**a) Data Protection**

**(i) Data Protection Compliance Report 2021**

The Bursar spoke to the report asking Council to endorse the actions set out. Council endorsed the proposed actions.

**(ii) \*OIS Data Protection Officer report – Sidney's Accountability Profile 2021**

Council noted the report.

**b) USS Update**

The Bursar updated Council members on the USS consultation. She stated that the most recent proposal had been approved which meant the employee's contribution would continue to be 9.8%, with the employer's contribution increasing by 0.2% to 21.6%. There were also some changes to the benefits – employees would accrue 1/85 of their salary each year as defined benefit, rather than the current 1/75, and the threshold up to which defined benefit would be paid will be lowered to from about £60,000 to £40,000.

**2.4 Development Director's Business**

**a) \*Director of Development's report Q2 2021-22 (CC.220223.2.4a)**

Council noted the report.

**2.5 Steward's Business**

There was no business.

**2.6 Student Business**

There was no business.

**3. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES****3.1 Music Committee**

- a) \*Unreserved minutes of 21 January 2022 (CC.220223.3.1a)  
Council noted the minutes.

**3.2 Statutes & Ordinances Committee**

- a) \*Unreserved minutes of 1 February 2022 (CC.220223.3.2a)  
Council noted the minutes.

**3.3 Investment Committee**

- a) \*Unreserved minutes of 2 February 2022 (CC.220223.3.3a)  
Council noted the minutes.  
(i) \*Draft Letter to Blackrock  
Council noted the draft letter.

**3.4 Prevent Committee**

- a) \*Unreserved minutes of 3 February 2022 (CC.220223.3.4a)  
Council noted the minutes.

**3.5 Development Committee**

- a) \*Unreserved minutes of 4 February 2022  
Council noted the minutes.

**3.6 Education & Pastoral Committee**

- a) \*Unreserved minutes of 7 February 2022  
Council noted the minutes.

**3.7 Building & Environment Committee**

- a) Unreserved minutes of 14 February 2022  
A Council member asked about item 9 in the minutes, and specifically the reference to request for repurposing the squash courts. The Bursar explained that the minutes simply recorded that Muniment Committee had raised the question as to whether the space could be repurposed as an archive store, and the response to note an estimated cost. It is not the role of the Buildings and Environment Committee to decide priorities for space utilisation. The Committee does review refurbishment requirements and prioritises the limited funds available according to stated College priorities. Any proposal, and there were currently none on the table, to repurpose the squash court would be brought to Council.

**4. OTHER BUSINESS**

**4.1 Any other business**

None

**4.2 Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 16 March 2022