

# KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

At a meeting of the Council held  
on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 2.00pm in the Audit Room and zoom

<b>Present:</b>	Provost Professor Sharman Professor Dunn Professor Hall Dr Adhikari Dr Good Dr Taylor Dr Dolan *Ms Kadlecova	<b>In Attendance:</b>	Vice-Provost Senior Tutor First Bursar Domus Bursar Registrar  *Ms Olumide-Wahab *Mr Gasienica-Ciulacz
-----------------	--	-----------------------	---

*\*Open business only*

Also in attendance – Professor Arnold (item 257), Ms Sultana-Feinstein and Mr Ilyas (item 260).

## Apologies for Absence

Professor Griffiths and Mr Erwig apologised for their absence.  
Professors Giannitsarou and Candea were on leave.

## OPEN BUSINESS

### 251. Declarations of Interest

None.

### 252. Minutes of Open Business 30<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Approved.

### 253. Matters arising

None.

### 254. Council Timetable – Open Matters

In agenda, with a number of papers due to be reported during the Vacation Term (Qualifications of a Charity Trustee, Choir Strategy Report and Durham Fund).

### 255. Council Action List – Open Matters

Papers anticipated are up to date, with a number due during the Vacation Term.

### 256. Oral reports

The First Bursar notified Council that the legal separation of King's College School had been completed on the terms agreed by the College.

The First Bursar provided an update regarding evolving matters relating to the endowment. Papers to Council will follow as proposals firm up. The First Bursar updated Council on the recruitment process for the Domus Bursar.

The Senior Tutor informed Council that Governing Body had voted to return to in-person interviews, which will take place from the week beginning 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023 for up to two weeks. The Senior Tutor asked that colleagues begin to arrange interview schedules and external interviewers. Further details of interview plans will be put to Governing Body in a paper.

The Provost informed Council that the new College statutes will be approved by Privy Council tomorrow, and that they will come into force on 31 July.

## **Principal Items of Business**

### **257. Planning Round 2023/24**

The Chair of the Finance Committee joined Council for this paper. The First Bursar invited Council to consider plans for 2023/24 and to propose a budget for Governing Body's meeting on 26 June. He presented the culmination of detailed work with Heads of Departments (Business Plans) and their associated Committee, and the Finance Committee, with the paper being accompanied by seven Annexes. The paper provided an overview, highlighting that a combination of higher costs, many outside the College control, will lead to a period of deficit being more prolonged than envisaged. Opportunities for greater income generation were presented as were some options for internal improvement.

The First Bursar emphasised that these proposals had their origin in College's charitable objectives, and that the proposed budget was intended as part of a wider effort to strengthen the College community. This approach was welcomed by Council. The First Bursar responded to several queries made by members of Council, noting areas in which he felt the College could make faster progress and well as areas that would require more detailed review. The Risk Register was also discussed.

Council commented upon the contribution the Research Managers could make to additional income generation, but stressed that they needed additional support. This was accepted in principle and the Research Managers were invited to provide additional information to the HR Committee for consideration.

Junior Members of Council proposed that Council postpone discussion of these proposals until Item 260 (regarding the ongoing student rent boycott) had been discussed. Council agreed to postpone a vote to after consideration of Item 260, but to discuss the budget and planning proposals before moving on to other agenda items.

Council returned to this issue after consideration of Item 260 and agreed to recommend to Governing Body:

- a) To approve the proposed budget, including College charges, for 2023/24, and
- b) to approve the proposed Risk Register.

## **Other Items for Discussion**

### **258. Legacies Report on recommendation arising**

Council agreed to the proposals made by the College officers in response to the recommendations of the Legacies of Slavery committee.

### **259. K Gates Report**

The Domus Bursar presented an update on the K Gates Portfolio, drawing Council's attention to progress with decarbonisation in College and necessary repairs to a basement staircase in Gibbs' Building. He emphasised to Council that the remaining staircases in Gibbs were currently safe to access.

Council agreed:

- a) To further investigate, capture and report costs, and with further approval undertake necessary repairs to basement staircases in Gibbs' Building,
- b) to approve Chetwynd Court improvements (current cost £100k) and Bodley's X6 set refurbishment (project cost £96k) moving to the Delivery Stage, and
- c) to recommend to Governing Body the Gatehouse roof repairs/replacement and stonework repairs/conservation project (project cost £620k) moving to the Delivery Stage.

### **260. Rent Boycott – update Addressed after budget**

Maya Sultana-Feinstein and Adnaan Ilyas joined for this discussion. They provided an update on an earlier paper (2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023) and informed Council that discussions regarding proposed rent increased continue with the Senior Tutor, Financial Tutor and the First Bursar. They made reference to testimonials and other information regarding the affordability of living in College.

Rather than a 0% increase to rents in 23/24 the paper proposed a 2.8% increase, aligned with the increase to student finance provisions for the same period. The paper put forward further asked that additional consequences of withhold rent (being able to attend graduation ceremonies, have access to College accommodation, and take up reserved College accommodation on return in Michaelmas) are not applied against those who are withholding rent.

When presenting the paper to Council Ms Sultana-Feinstein further noted that the above consequences applied to students with unplanned debt as well as those withholding rent, arguing that the College's position impacted students suffering financial hardship the most. Ms Olumide-Wahab provided Council with further information regarding levels of student engagement with the strike, which was high, noting that a letter in support had been signed by

184 students (the Senior Tutor, however, later noted that this represented 27% of the student body).

The Senior Tutor noted that she and others had met with students in an attempt to resolve the issues multiple times. She put forward evidence that affordability issues for students were not rooted in rent levels, which data suggested represented less than 50% of an average King's student's spending. She argued that the consequences faced by students withholding or unable to pay rent would impact only a very small minority of students (only two students withholding rent were due to graduate this summer, for example). She also noted the high levels of financial support available at College and University level for students suffering financial hardship.

The First Bursar refuted Varsity calculations that placed the College as sixth most expensive college for rental charges; he informed Council that College's own analysis of the same data placed King's as mid-level in this respect. He also responded to the paper in the context of the proposed budget and how, if Council supported the proposals to reduce proposed rent increases, this would increase the College deficit in the 2023/24 financial year.

Council expressed sympathy with students experiencing financial difficulties. Members of Council commented that they would welcome proposals regarding how the College could improve use of bursary provision in order to best support students in need. Council noted, additionally, that the College needed to balance several priorities, including the present affordability of rents, targeted support for students most in need, and provision for future generations of students. Taking these factors into account, Council voted NOT to approve the following proposals put forward in the paper:

- a) No disciplinary action for striking students - this includes disapplication of standard policy regarding "outstanding debt". This would allow students engaged in the rent strike standard access to summer accommodation, maintaining their reserved accommodation for Michaelmas Term of the 2023-2024 academic year, and allowing students to attend their graduation ceremonies; and
- b) for rent in the academic year 2023-2024 to be increased by 2.8%, not 7.5%. None in favour.

(Professor Sharman left at 1525).

## **261. Governance and Ordinances/Regulations**

The First Bursar presented a paper noting the recommendations made by Dominic Grieve KC in his report on governance at Christ Church College (Oxford). The First Bursar, drawing upon the Report and advice received from the College's solicitors, proposed a range of areas for further exploration. Council responded positively to the idea of exploring ways towards improvements in College governance.

Some further proposals were made for revisions to Ordinances and Regulations, in addition to those agreed at the last Council meeting.

Council agreed:

- a) To establish a working party, headed by the Vice-Provost, to consider steps that the College could take to adapt its governance practices in light of the Report and to report back to Council no later than the end of Michaelmas 2023,
- b) to approve the proposed further revisions to the draft Ordinances and Regulations, and
- c) to ask the College Registrar to provide, prior to Annual Congregation, a paper to Council regarding proposals for training to be undertaken by the College's charitable trustees.

## **Business for Report**

### **262. e-Scooters in College residential buildings**

Council agreed to ban e-scooters, e-skateboard and e-unicycles from College residential buildings, and to further ban the charging of e-bike lithium-ion batteries in residential buildings.

### **263. Honorary Rowe Librarian Report**

Noted with thanks.

### **264. KCBC Charity Event**

Council approved the King's College Boat Club using the Front Lawn on King's Parade for the Charity Ergathon from 1000 to 2200 on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2023, subject to detailed planning with the Domus Bursar, Head Porter and Head Gardener.

### **265. Termly Development Report**

Noted.

### **266. Gifts of £10,000 or more**

Noted.

### **267. Minutes of Development Committee 2 Mar 2023**

Approved.

### **268. Loan of portrait to Charleston House**

Council agreed that Roger Fry's *Portrait of Lord Keynes* (1917), 70 (K52) may be given on temporary loan to Charleston House for the duration of the exhibition 'Bring no Clothes'.

### **269. Minutes of Buildings & Safety Committee 5 Jun 2023**

Approved.

### **270. Medical Sciences Declaration Ceremony**

Council agreed that the Loke Yew Medical Sciences fund could be used to finance a reception for the final year clinical medical students and their guests to celebrate the Declaration Ceremony.

**271. Minutes of IT Committee 22 May 2023**

Approved.

**272. Folk Music Concert in Hall 3 Dec 2023**

Council received a paper from the Director of Development regarding a concert featuring The Young'uns in the Hall on 3rd December 2023.

Council agreed to defer consideration of the paper to a future meeting of Council, allowing time for consultation with the Director of Music and at which the Director of Development could present revised proposals.

**273. Any Other Business**

None.