

CONFIDENTIAL
KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

At a meeting of the Council held
on Tuesday 8 July 2025 at 14:00 in the Wine Room and Teams

Present:	Provost	In Attendance:	Vice Provost
	Dr Good (online)		Senior Tutor
	Ms Headen		First Bursar
	Professor Grosse	Ruse-Khan	Domus Bursar (until 16:00)
	(online, until 16:05)		
	Dr Russell		Mr Warner* (online, item
	Professor Bullock		381 only)
	Professor Hall		
	Professor Foley (online)		Dean of Chapel (item 385
	Professor Giannitsarou		only)
	Dr Sarkovic		Head of Communications
	Mr Teare*		(item 385 only)
			Registrar

*Open Business

377. **Apologies for Absence**

Dr Knox and Ms Robinson apologised for their absence. Miss Kelly was Absent.

OPEN BUSINESS

378. **Declarations of Interest**

None.

379. **Minutes of Open Business 24 June 2025**

Approved.

380. **Matters arising**

None.

381. **Oral reports**

Reports on matters considered by correspondence addressed by oral reports.

Mr Warner joined the meeting.

Arts Theatre

Council had agreed by correspondence to authorise use of the College seal to execute a crane oversailing licence relating to the Cambridge Arts Theatre's programme of works (pursuant to the authority granted by Governing Body on 5 December 2024) [2025/375].

The First Bursar updated Council. He explained that the Theatre had not been able to complete their planned lifts because of issues with their sub-contractor's crane. Council are, therefore, likely to be asked to review a further similar licence by correspondence over the vacation.

Cambridge Shakespeare Festival

The Domus Bursar informed Council that protests on the first night of the Cambridge Shakespeare Festival had been announced by Equity (the group whose campaign against the Festival's employment practices Council discussed at its last meeting). She reassured Council that the Head Porter would be on shift during the demonstration, which was expected to be complete at the time the performance started at 7.30pm.

Council expressed concern about the Festival organisers' approach to engaging with the colleges on these matters.

However, Council remained of the view that the College should allow this year's event to proceed then perform a full review in Michaelmas term. Council noted that this remained the approach of the other impacted colleges (despite some inaccurate reporting in this regard).

Council supported the Domus Bursar's view that the colleges involved should endeavour to act collectively this year. Council encouraged the Provost to engage with the relevant Heads of Houses in support of this collective approach.

King's Parade Fences

Following further protest activity on King's Parade, and in light of security and safety concerns, Officers had extended current fencing to encompass that land. Council's permission had been sought in advance of this action [2025/376].

The First Bursar updated Council. He explained that Land Registry records showed the land to belong to the College. The tree in front of chapel was, therefore, currently assumed to be in College ownership and a tree survey had been arranged. The First Bursar conveyed University queries about protecting access to the land in question, which is an emergency exit for Senate House Yard.

Council discussed the extent to which the College might be liable for protesters on the land in front of the College, how high the current risk of protest or encampment might be, and the extent to which adequate alternative spaces for protest were available in the surrounding area. Council referred to Office for Students guidance on new freedom of speech duties in its discussion, as well as recent injunctions obtained by Trinity and St John's colleges.

Council spoke in favour of removing some or all the fencing in front of College but noted arguments in favour of protecting space around the tree and the University's emergency access. Council were mindful that the College may need to reassert control over the space in future and supported erecting signage to make the College's position clear. The Domus Bursar and her team have already started work on appropriate signs.

Council agreed that the College should remove Heras fencing on the front lawn once the University's public ceremonies conclude, save for an area around the tree sufficient to protect it and to preserve the University's emergency access route.

Mr Warner left the meeting.

382. **Council Timetable – Open Matters**

No Easter Term or Vacation reports required. College Security (Lent term routine item) not yet received.

383. Council Action List – Open Matters

Report on progress of plans to install memorial tablet in Chapel for Sir Stephen Cleobury, and proposals relating to terms of reference for the Audit & Scrutiny Committee, in agenda. Issue of temporary fencing returned to Council in oral reports.

College Officers' due to propose College position on Supreme Court Equality Act ruling/ECHR guidance and provide detail of any practical steps required (overdue).

The Registrar informed Council that the King's Affair Committee intend to submit their reflections and recommendations separately. The former will come to Council on 15 July and the latter will follow in Michaelmas term.

Strategic

384. Report of Audit & Scrutiny Working Party

A working group comprised of Dr Good, Professor Giannitsarou and Professor Foley presented Council with proposals for the future of the Audit & Scrutiny Committee.

Dr Good spoke to their paper, which articulated the difference between audit and scrutiny. He reminded Council that a sound internal audit function plays an essential role in ensuring Council, as trustees, are carrying out their duties. The group had considered, equally, the insight into how leadership are pursuing an organisation's goals that a scrutiny function can give that organisation's members.

Council welcomed the proposals, including the group's suggestion that College Officers should be tasked with developing proposed terms of reference.

The First Bursar thanked the group for their work on the paper, noting that it brought the College closer to understanding the distinction between audit and scrutiny, and developing structures which properly facilitate both. He and the other College Officers will consult with professionals in this field and return proposals to Council.

The Registrar highlighted that the Audit & Scrutiny Committee was a committee of the Governing Body required by Statute and suggested to Council that future proposals should be developed mindful of that framework.

Council agreed:

- a) To recommend to Governing Body that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee should be related with two committees, one covering Audit as a sub-committee of the Council, and one covering Scrutiny which will be a Governing Body Committee; and
- b) To request the officers to bring forward proposals for Terms of Reference for the two committees and membership.

Routine

385. Chapel Podcast Series

The Dean of Chapel and Head of Communications joined the meeting.

The Dean asked Council to support a Chapel Podcast initiative. He proposed that he should host the podcast, which would be produced by &Friends and company (who are producing the College's research podcasts).

The Domus Bursar and Senior Tutor asked the Dean to comment on his list of potential guests, as they noted it included current students as well as notable alumni. The Dean

expressed his view that the range would appeal to a wide listener base, and his confidence in the content of the podcast.

Council considered how this podcast would interact with the research podcast (also under development). The Head of Communications expressed the view that the two may complement each other.

The Dean and Head of Communications left the meeting, after which Council discussed further and voted.

Council expressed support for the Chapel Podcast concept but declined to approve the proposal as presented at this meeting. Considering the proposed expenditure, Council's view was that the Dean should present a more developed business case. Mindful that the Dean will retire in early 2026, Council also felt that further comment on how the podcast would be managed during his handover was needed. Noting the Dean's intention to assess the project's success in early 2026, Council also suggested that clear evaluation criteria should be proposed.

The Dean of Chapel will be invited to return the proposal with further comments on these matters.

386. Memorial Tablet Progress Report

The Memorial Consideration Working Group developing proposals for a tablet for Sir Stephen Cleobury provided Council with an update. The group had agreed a preferred design (review by the Diocesan Advisory Committee pending, and therefore subject to change) and hopes that the tablet will be in place by late November.

Council noted the Group's report and agreed to endorse the proposed location and design.

387. Chapel Committee Terms of Reference

The Chapel Committee re-submitted proposed updates to its terms of reference to Council. Council had first received proposals on 10 June 2025 but, as references to the Choirs' Diary Committee would be removed, queried what arrangements were in place to oversee the Choir's commitments and returned the draft to the Committee. The Committee re-submitted proposals which confirmed the Committee would review existing and proposed Choir commitments.

Council agreed to approved revised Terms of Reference for the Chapel committee.

388. Open Cambridge 2025

The College Librarian and Archivist asked Council's permission to host a one-day public exhibition for visitors on Wednesday, 17 September 2025 as part of the University's Open Cambridge festival, and event which the Library has participated in on several past occasions. The Head of Visitor Services and Head Porter had been consulted on the proposal.

Council agreed to allow access for the public into the library building on Wednesday 17 September 2025 for Open Cambridge, for the purpose of viewing an exhibition in the library. All arrangements to be agreed between the Head of Visitor Services, Head Porter, College Librarian and Archivist.

Compliance

389. Freedom of Speech Regulation Update

The First Bursar and Registrar provided an update on the commencement of the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023, which will take place on 1 August 2025.

The Registrar proposed measures to improve the College's compliance in advance of that date, which would effectively revert to the position the College took in Easter term 2025. She highlighted that Council are likely to be asked to consider additional compliance measures in due course.

Referring to proposed vote 'C', the Registrar asked Council to include in the group of amended policies the proposed new Harassment and Bullying (Student Complaints against Staff and Fellows) Policy, if approved when Council considered item 390.

Council agreed to:

- a) Approve proposed amendments to the College's Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech;
- b) Publish the College Events and Meetings Policy and Commercial Events and Meeting Policy on the College website as Annexes to the Code;
- c) Implement agreed amendments, minus text referring to the OfS free speech complaints scheme, to various College policies (per Council paper 2024/338, plus the Harassment and Bullying (Student Complaints against Staff and Fellows) Policy; and
- d) To ask the Registrar to circulate the updated Code to staff, Academic Staff, and students.

390. Student Complaints Policies

The Registrar presented proposed revised student complaints procedures to Council. The proposals were the work of a group convened by the Domus Bursar in response to recent difficult experiences which arose from the College's Student Complaints Procedure, and Student Complaints Against Fellows and Members of Staff Policy. The group had consulted the HR Committee, Fellowship Committee, and Education Committee, whose feedback had been incorporated into the drafts.

Council agreed to:

- a) Approve an updated Student Complaints Procedure, and an updated Harassment and Bullying (Student Complaints against Staff and Fellows) Policy; and
- b) Ask the Education Committee to review the policies biannually (in consultation with the HR/Fellowship Committee where this is considered appropriate) and report any changes to Council.

Council sincerely thanked the group for their extensive work on this project.

391. Charities Committee Report Easter 2025

Council noted a routine report on Charities Committee Activity in Easter Term 2025. This was the first report from Reverend Dr Jonathan Kimber, Chaplain, who will succeed the former Chaplain as Chair of the Committee.

Minutes

392. Minutes of the Adornment Committee meeting on 11 June 2025

Noted.

393. Minutes of the Catering Committee meeting on 16 June 2025

Noted.

394. **Any Other Business**

None.