

KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

At a meeting of the Council held
on Tuesday 6 February 2024 at 2.00pm in the Audit Room and zoom

Present:	Provost	In	First Bursar
	Professor Candea	Attendance:	Domus Bursar
	Professor Dunn (until 16:10)		Senior Tutor
	Ms Headen		Admissions Tutor
	Dr Sarkovic		(Items 63 and 64 only)
	Professor Giannitsarou		
	Dr Taylor		Registrar
	Dr Russell		
	Dr Good (via Zoom, until		Mr Lee Boya*
	16:00)		Mx Graham*
	Mr Limoncelli		
	Ms Bulteel		

*Open Business

56. Apologies for Absence

Professor Sharman, Dr Adhikari and the Vice Provost apologised for their absence.

OPEN BUSINESS

57. Declarations of Interest

None.

58. Minutes of Open Business 23 January 2024

Approved.

59. Matters arising

None.

60. Oral reports

Ms Bulteel (KCGS) recited the oath for Junior Members of Council.

The First Bursar provided an oral report on a bike sale that will take place on Wednesday 7 January in Webbs Court. Refurbished second hand bikes will be sold by a social enterprise organisation, and the sale is open to all members of College.

61. Council Timetable – Open Matters

Papers on privately funded College fees and a report on the 2023-2024 admissions round (along with outreach activities) in agenda.

The First Bursar provided a paper on the 2024 Planning Round process.

62. Council Action List – Open Matters

Report from the Senior Tutor on Scholarships and Prizes to follow this term. Education Committee to present revised terms of reference, to reflect absorption of SEC responsibilities, to Council after its next meeting.

Draft financial regulations (First Bursar) overdue.

Strategic

63. Admissions and Outreach Report

The Admissions Tutor presented a report on Admissions and Outreach. The report covered the beginning of the 2024 Admissions round, still underway, and the 2023 outreach season.

The Admissions Tutor drew Council's attention to a drop in application numbers experienced this year. She does not think this is cause for concern, as application quality was higher. The College had also made greater use of the pool, but she feels this use was strategically effective.

She highlighted successes in attracting Widening Participation candidates, but noted this may increase demand on student support resources.

Her report also commented upon recent outreach activities and future plans. The success of the Bridging Program was noted. She also highlighted that the College had been running small-subject (e.g. ASNC) residential. The 2023 residential was themed around 'conflict'; feedback on this model was positive and plans are being made for a 2024 residential themed around 'freedom'.

In response to the Senior Tutor's query, the Admissions Tutor explained the range of information sources she uses to produce her report. Sources include the College's own application data, strength of field reports received from other Colleges, and information shared with Admissions Forum.

The Admissions Tutor explained what drives the outreach and subject specific interventions her team designs. Interventions have historically been driven by donations, but Admissions Lunch is becoming a valuable forum to consult King's Fellows.

Council thanked the Admissions Tutor and noted the report.

64. Interview Format in 2024-2025

Having implemented Governing Body's chosen Interview Format for 2023-4, the Admissions Tutor will return to Governing Body with a view to securing a vote on the format to be adopted from 2024/5 onwards.

Council were asked for their views on a draft of the paper that will go to Governing Body. The Admissions Tutor emphasised her aim to empower Governing Body to reach a decision on how to proceed, and asked for feedback on how to ensure Governing Body would not be led by the paper.

The Provost commented on the data-rich paper and suggested that the paper should expressly ask Fellows to consider the data in full.

Professor Candea spoke in favour of creating a model that would enable each subject to decide whether to hold in person, or virtual, interviews. The Admissions Tutor's view was that this approach would not be operationally feasible, and that the approach may also deter potential applicants who are already subject to complex and varied admissions requirements.

The Domus Bursar noted their support for the optimal student experience and highlighted that while the Domus Teams have provided opportunity costs and real costs associated with admissions, they are committed to the student experience and will support whatever model is decided upon.

The Senior Tutor noted that there was little evidence upon which to decide that a particular model led to better admissions outcomes. It would therefore be difficult for the College to justify an independent approach.

Dr Good commented that different candidates might perform better under different interview conditions, but suggested that the diversity this facilitates could be of value to the University as a whole. Several of those present, including the Admissions Tutor, expressed agreement with this.

Dr Taylor suggested that the paper should be re-phrased so that it is clear the costs of each model are marginal.

Council considered whether the vote on the draft paper should be amended. Professor Sharman (not present) had suggested prior to the meeting that it should mirror the last Governing Body vote. The Senior Tutor supported this, and asked Council to consider whether to apply a timeframe to Governing Body's decision so that it must be reviewed at a particular date, or whether the vote could be indefinite. If indefinitely, Governing Body would be free to return to the decision at any time.

Council discussed how best to ensure members of Governing Body had the opportunity to contribute to this decision. The Registrar will ensure online attendance is clearly advertised for this extraordinary congregation and that online votes are counted using a Zoom poll.

Council agreed the following preferences:

- a) that the vote for Governing Body should not include the option to vary model by discipline;
- b) that Governing Body's decision should be for an indefinite period; and
- c) that the vote should be structured as follows:

Vote 1

- i) *To agree to adopt a model of online interviewing; or*
- ii) *To agree to adopt to a model of in-person interviewing.*

Vote 2 (If governing body votes in favour of (i))

- iii) *To agree to adopt a Hybrid interview model; or*
- iv) *To agree to adopt an all-online interview model.*

65. Privately Funded College Fees

The Senior Tutor and the First Bursar asked Council to agree the level of fees for privately funded undergraduate students from October 2025. Council were presented with three different perspectives on possible fee levels (costs of provision, benchmarking against other colleges, and student affordability).

The First Bursar and Senior Tutor's view was that benchmarking was the most useful comparison (they noted that some colleges had raised privately funded fees considerably, however, and that the impact of this on the market was not yet clear). The approach proposed was to increase fees in line with the majority of Colleges, and also to offer private fees on broadly the same terms as other Colleges. This would maintain King's position around the middle of the colleges with regard to course costs.

Council agreed:

- a) To set the College's privately funded undergraduate fees for the academic year 2025/26 at £12,482 for students whose course begins in 2025/26. The fee for these students will be the same in subsequent years of the course up to the fourth year. Fees and terms for students admitted in earlier years to remain unchanged.

66. Planning Round

The First Bursar briefed Council on plans for the planning round for the 2024/2025 financial year. The planning round is one of three processes being introduced with a view to improving College planning and transparency.

The major change from last year is to ask College Officers to produce plans covering 'clusters' of several departments. The 'clusters' had also been amended slightly. Visitors had been broken out into its own plan as a result of its impact on the College community during peak months and the College's income.

The First Bursar noted that the planning round will result in an improved approach to the College's risk register which would facilitate committee engagement with the College's risk profile. Council welcomed this.

Council discussed the grouping of teaching, research and the Fellowship into one 'cluster', and whether this was appropriate given their relationship to the College's charitable objectives. The First Bursar explained that this was linked to the interrelationship between these areas. The Senior Tutor noted that the three arms don't compete for resources in the same way as other College functions. The First Bursar hopes pooling these activities together will provoke debate about the allocation of spending.

Council thanked the First Busar for his update.

Routine

67. Chestnut Railing Fence

The Domus Bursar brought a paper to Council asking for their views on issues relating to the chestnut railings installed towards the College's back gate in October 2023. Installation of the railings was supported by the Gardens Committee, but following their installation the Adornment Committee raised concerns about their impact on the College setting.

Council discussed whether or not the authorisation for the fence itself should come to Council. The Gardens Committee felt it should have, given the significance of the intervention.

Council were, firstly, asked to decide what should happen to the railings.

Council's views on the aesthetic merits of the fence were divided. Mx Graham commented that removal of the fence could be perceived as a waste of resources.

Secondly, Council were asked to consider the relationship between the Adornment Committee and the Gardens Committee. In particular, whether the Gardens Committee must consult or inform the Adornment Committee on all projects that have significant impact on the College setting.

Council were presented with statements from the chairs of both committees, and the committees' terms of reference.

The Senior Tutor noted that an obligation to share minutes was not the same as an obligation to consult.

Council considered whether the Adornment Committee should be invited to reconsider its terms of reference, if it felt its purpose was maintain the appearance of the College. Alternatively, Council considered whether the Governing Body should be asked to decide. Council, however, noted that the committees both had authority delegated to them by Council so this was a matter that Council must decide on.

Council decided that, if the Gardens Committee would be obliged to consult the Adornment Committee, the Adornment Committee should be obliged to consult the Gardens Committee.

Council agreed:

- a) To approve the installation of the Chestnut Railings for a period of one year to then ask the Domus Bursar to bring the matter back to Council to review their situation in the landscape again;

- b) To agree, as a matter of interpretation, that the Gardens Committee must consult the Adornment Committee on all projects that have significant impact on the College setting; and
- c) To agree, as a matter of interpretation, that the Adornment Committee must consult the Gardens Committee on all projects that have significant impact on the outside College setting.

Council asked the Domus Bursar to ask both committees to review their terms of reference in accordance with these decisions and bring revised terms of reference back to Council for approval.

68. Open Iftar in Ramadan 2024

The Dean bought a proposal for an Open Iftar event at College on Monday 18 March 2024. The College would host the event in conjunction with the Ramadan Tent Project. Successful Open Iftars have been held in College in previous years, including 2023.

Council agreed:

- a) that an Open Iftar should be held on 18 March during Ramadan 2024 and that the Dean should act as the host of the event on behalf of the College working closely with RTP on the details of speakers etc.; and
- b) that that the Head of Catering and the Head Porter should ensure suitable arrangements are in place for use of site and security plans for the day, to be given final approval by the Domus Bursar.

Compliance

69. Terms of Reference – Library Committee

The Library Committee bought revised terms of reference to Council for approval. The changes include updating the list of members for accuracy, and reflecting this change in the terms of reference.

Council agreed:

- a) To accept the proposed Library Committee's terms of reference; and
- b) To accept the co-option of Dr Laura Davies as a 'fourth fellow' on the Committee for this year, and to approve her nomination as Chair of said Committee.

70. Minutes of the Library Committee on 10 October 2023

Noted.

71. Terms of Reference – IT Committee

The IT Committee bought revised terms of reference to Council for approval. The changes would update the list of members for accuracy, and collapse the first two points of the terms of reference so it reads as follows:

To enable academic and administration IT within the College, advising Council on policy, and to ensure the appropriate infrastructure is in place, maintained, and developed.

- Council agreed to approve revised terms of reference for the IT Committee.
72. **Minutes of the IT Committee on 23 October 2023**

Noted.

73. **Terms of Reference – Gardens Committee**

The Gardens Committee bought revised terms of reference to Council for approval. The changes would update the list of members for accuracy.

Council agreed to approve revised terms of reference for the Gardens Committee.

74. **Minutes of the Gardens Committee on 29 January 2024**

Noted.

75. **King’s College School – Board Minutes (1 June 2023 – 21 January 2024)**

In accordance with the governance protocol for the relationship between the College and King’s College School, minutes of King’s College School’s Board of Governors, and the board of directors of the School company, were reported to Council

Council agreed to note the minutes of the Board.

Any Other Business

76. None.