

KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

At a meeting of the Council held
on Tuesday 19 November 2024 at 14:00 in the Audit Room and zoom

Present:	Provost (via Zoom, in person from Item 542 onwards) Ms Headen Professor Dunn Dr Taylor Professor Giannitsarou (until 15:25) Dr Good Dr Russell Professor Candea Dr Adhikari Dr Sarkovic Mr Limoncelli*	In Attendance:	Vice Provost First Bursar Senior Tutor Domus Bursar Mx Graham* Mr Lee Boya* Registrar Dr Mody, Dr Hasthanasombat (Item 536 only) Professor van Eck (Item 537 only) Dr Mohaddes (Item 539 only) *Open Business
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529. **Apologies for Absence**

Ms Bulteel was absent. Professor Sharman was on leave.

The Vice Provost chaired the meeting as the Provost was attending remotely for the first part of the meeting.

OPEN BUSINESS

530. **Declarations of Interest**

None.

531. **Minutes of Open Business 5 November 2024**

Approved.

532. **Matters arising**

The Provost and Vice Provost had been contacted by a group of Fellows with regard to Item 505 (E-Lab Hackathon). The Vice Provost read out the group's comments. The group were of the view that Council's recommendation that representatives from the E-Lab should liaise with students to better understand their concerns was not a fair and effective way to consult and that a mixed-interest group should, instead, be convened.

The KCSU and KCGS representatives stressed that direct engagement with E-Lab Directors was what was needed to resolve issues. The student representatives did, however, feel it would be beneficial to have a neutral party (such as a Fellow not connected to the E-Lab) support this engagement process. They and members of Council shared the view that it would not be appropriate to, in effect, establish another committee alongside the E-Lab Committee.

533. Oral reports

None.

534. Council Timetable – Open Matters

Year End Review, including Audit Report, in agenda. Report on restricted funds to follow. Domus Bursar to provide Visitor Department Report alongside Health and Safety report in advance on Annual Congregation.

535. Council Action List – Open Matters

No reports overdue. Report from HASS Research Manager (Dr Good) on prospects for developing a summer seminar series due this term.

Strategic

536. Year End Review

Dr Mody and Dr Hasthanasombat (members of the Audit & Scrutiny Committee) attended for this item.

The First Bursar presented the College's Annual Report and auditor's report which, subject to any comments from Council, will be noted by the Governing Body at Annual Congregation.

Ms Kelly Bretherick from the College's external auditors (Peters, Elworthy & Moore, 'PEM') attended to speak to their report ('Audit Matters'). Ms Bretherick highlighted PEM's positive findings regarding the areas of highest risk. She drew Council's attention to various points that had arisen from the audit, including accounting rules around legacy and gift recognition. Ms Bretherick emphasised that the College accounts for most gifts and legacies correctly. However, she encouraged the College to keep records to demonstrate its reasoning for including or excluding a donation or legacy from its statutory accounts at the point at which it is promised.

Ms Bretherick confirmed that the conclusions of the audit were positive and thanked the Finance team for their cooperation during this year's process.

Council noted the auditor's comments regarding a Bitcoin donation received by the College. Although acceptance of Bitcoin is permitted by the College's Gift Acceptance Policy, Council suggested that the First Bursar work with the Development Office to assess whether this remained appropriate.

The First Bursar spoke to the College's Annual Report & Financial Statements for the 2023–24 financial year. He drew particular attention to the report of the trustees, which included a summary of the College's priorities and progress against them.

Council suggested that the report should be provided to new Council members in January to prepare them for their roles as trustees.

Council noted minor errors that the First Bursar undertook to amend.

Council:

- a) Received the auditor's report for the financial year 2023–24
- b) Accepted the Annual Report & Financial Statements for the financial year 2023–24
- c) Authorised the Provost and First Bursar to sign the Annual Report & Financial Statements for the financial year 2023–24

- d) Authorised the Provost to sign the Letter of Representation on behalf of the College
- e) Recommended to the Annual Congregation the reappointment of Peters, Elworthy & Moore as auditors for the financial year 2024–25

Council was content to reappoint PEM as the College's auditors but discussed whether it would be beneficial to explore alternatives. Dr Mody noted that the external member of the Audit & Scrutiny Committee had highlighted that this would be common practice. Council weighed PEM's significant expertise auditing College accounts against the benefits that might be gained from a fresh perspective.

Council asked the First Bursar to come to Annual Congregation with a proposal for how the College might appoint an alternative firm for 2025–26.

Routine

537. Participation in Marie Skłodowska-Curie Doctoral Network

Professor van Eck, who attended for this item to answer questions on her paper, proposed that King's College takes part as an associated partner in the ERC-funded MSC Doctoral Network ARTEFACT.

The Senior Tutor will liaise with Professor van Eck and Professor Colucci (Graduate Tutor) to ensure those involved in facilitating this scheme at King's are aligned.

Council agreed that King's should become an associate partner, linked with the Department of Art History in Cambridge, in the MSC-DN application ARTEFACT.

538. Humanitarian Response Fund

The First Bursar asked Council to consider whether the College should commit £10,000 (which would be matched by the University) to the University's Humanitarian Response Fund. He will action the donation if doing so is supported by updated financial forecasts, so asked Council to make an in-principle decision.

The First Bursar drew Council's attention to their obligations as the College's trustees and recommended that they had regard to the extent to which the donation advances the College's objects and would be in its best interests.

Council discussed whether the money could be used internally to achieve similar benefit. Council noted the University's reach, resources, and the fact the scheme (although external) has already provided direct benefit King's student body.

Council agreed to contribute £10,000 to the University's Humanitarian Response Fund.

539. E-Lab Hackathon 2025 (Resubmission)

Dr Mohaddes and his co-organisers had provided Council with a revised proposal for an E-Lab Hackathon. Dr Mohaddes attended to speak to this item.

The KCSU representative expressed disappointment that neither KCSU's moral and ethical concerns nor their concerns about the impact on the College on the day had been addressed.

Council considered the engagement process the E-Lab had followed since the previous paper was received and whether a sufficiently broad range of parties had been consulted.

The Senior Tutor suggested that the E-Lab might apply a target quota for King's Student participation. She suggested 20 to 25 per cent of participants, acknowledging the E-Lab's aim to reach those outside King's.

Council asked Dr Mohaddes to comment further on how behavioural standards would be communicated and enforced. He drew Council's attention to an attendee code of conduct and suggested that its application could be improved this year. Council asked to receive a copy of the code of conduct.

Dr Mohaddes described the hackathon brief and gave examples of the social and legal issues (such as asylum applications) that last year's participants tackled. Council encouraged Dr Mohaddes to articulate these ambitions more clearly in the proposal.

Professor Giannitsarou left the meeting.

Council acknowledged that moral and ethical concerns were not at the forefront of its initial response to the proposal but agreed that the opportunity should be taken for them to be considered.

Council asked the E-Lab Directors to return an updated Hackathon proposal to Council which takes better account of Council's concerns, and which includes consideration of moral and ethical issues. Council also asked Dr Mohaddes to communicate with student representatives about the issues they had raised with the E-Lab and its events.

540. Education Committee – Terms of Reference

On behalf of the Education Committee, Dr Davies (the Committee's Chair) and the Senior Tutor proposed a change to the Committee's terms of reference.

Council agreed to amend the Terms of Reference for the Education Committee as follows:

- a) To increase the number of elected Fellows who sit on the committee to six (three in STEM, and three in HASS); and
- b) To make the Financial Tutor an ex-officio member of the Committee.

541. Loan of Uncle Dominique to the Musée Granet

Professor Zeeman, Keeper of the College Collections, proposed that the College should make a temporary loan of a painting (Paul Cezanne's Uncle Dominique) to the Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence.

Council agreed that Paul Cezanne's Uncle Dominique (K18), may be given on temporary loan to Musée Granet, Aix-en-Provence for the duration of the exhibition 'Cezanne at Jas de Bouffan'.

Compliance

542. Unacceptable and Unreasonable Behaviour Policy

The Provost joined the meeting in person.

The Domus Bursar asked Council to approve the adoption of a new Unacceptable and Unreasonable Behaviour Policy. The policy, which came recommended by the HR Committee, built upon wording approved by Council earlier this term.

Council warmly welcomed the policy in as far as it related to relations with third parties. It expressed a variety of concerns about the scope of the policy and

considered whether it intruded unnecessarily upon relationships in College between Fellows and between Fellows and staff.

The Senior Tutor and Domus Bursar spoke to the problems experienced by the staff in their teams and within the Fellowship. Both emphasised the need for the College to provide better support in this regard and endorsed the structured response strategy in the policy.

Council acknowledged that staff and Fellows, whilst performing duties for the College, can face unacceptable behaviour from a very small minority of both external parties and members of the College community.

Council discussed whether the policy captured the range of behaviour it seeks to address with adequate clarity, and stressed the dangers of over-specification.

Mr Lee Boya asked the Domus Bursar to consider further how the policy would be communicated to students to ensure effective application.

Council and the Domus Bursar agreed that should the policy be distilled and a more detailed Standard Operating Procedure issued alongside this could be welcomed by the College.

Council asked the Domus Bursar to return an updated draft policy to a future meeting.

Minutes

543. **Minutes of the Communications Committee meeting on 9 October 2024**

Noted.

544. **Minutes of the Church Patronage Committee meeting on 21 October 2024**

Noted.

545. **Minutes of the Charities Committee meeting on 30 October 2024**

Noted.

546. **Any Other Business**

None.