

KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

At a meeting of the Council held
on Tuesday 5 March 2024 at 2.00pm in the Audit Room

Present:	Provost	In Attendance:	First Bursar
	Professor Sharman		Senior Tutor
	(until 16:00)		Vice Provost
	Professor Candea (until		Domus Bursar
	16:00)		Dean of Chapel
	Dr Adhikari		Director of Music (until
	Professor Dunn		the end of item 131)
	Dr Russell		Professor Moggridge
	Ms Headen		(item 154 only)
	Dr Sarkovic		
	Dr Good		Mx Graham*
	Mr Limocelli*		Mr Lee Boya*
			Registrar

*Open Business

124. **Apologies for Absence**

Dr Taylor, Ms Bulteel and Professor Giannitsarou apologised for their absence.

OPEN BUSINESS

125. **Declarations of Interest**

None.

126. **Minutes of Open Business 20 February 2024**

Approved, with amendments shown in track in Council's papers (changes were at Item 97 in relation to the status of the IntoUniversity project) accepted.

127. **Matters arising**

None.

128. **Oral reports**

The Director of Music attended to provide an oral report on the Easter Festival, as (due to staffing pressures) a written report must be deferred to next term. He confirmed that temporary staff support had been arranged to support with the Festival. He described the program of events and noted the involvement of the BBC and the Cambridge Music Festival. He commented upon the Festival budget, which he predicted would result in a deficit. However, the budget for the season on the whole is on track. The small deficit he expects will be absorbed by the Concerts Fund.

Council thanked the Director of Music for his report and hard work on the Easter Festival.

129. Council Timetable – Open Matters

Student Accommodation Charges, College Security Review and routine Development Office papers in agenda. It was necessary to place the strategy discussion on the agenda for reserved business.

KCGS will report on the Vac Bar at the start of Easter Term (other timetabled papers on student activities already received).

130. Council Action List – Open Matters

Reports from the Senior Tutor on Scholarships and on Prizes in agenda, along with draft Financial Regulations (First Bursar). No actions remaining for Lent term.

Strategic

131. Working Group on College Choirs

The Dean and Director of Music, with the support of the Chapel Committee, proposed that Council established a working group to consider and make recommendations relating to the future of King's College Choir and choral opportunities for students within the College.

The Dean spoke to the paper. He emphasised the gravity of the situation and drew Council's attention to the key issues highlighted in the paper. His hope is that the Group will be able to report next term with some initial analysis.

Council spoke in support of the proposal. The Senior Tutor endorsed the Working Group having a broad remit.

The Dean responded to a question from Mx Graham regarding the addition of students to the Group. The Dean explained that many of the core issues for the Group to consider are only suited to discussion in reserved business. However, he noted that it would be essential for the Group to consult widely, and that students would be included in this.

Council agreed to establish a Working Group to investigate and report on the recruiting, membership and funding issues that need to be addressed to ensure the future viability of KCC and the fair provision of opportunities to all chorally gifted and ambitious students within the College.

The membership of the group will be:

- The Vice-Provost
- The Senior Tutor
- Professor Marston
- The Dean of Chapel
- The Director of Music; and
- Other fellows appointed by Council. (This matter was considered by Council in reserved business. Professors Browne, Humphrey, Zeeman and Faraglia were appointed. A member of the Junior Caucus will also join the group once interest and availability has been fully ascertained.)

Routine

132. Student Accommodation Charges

The First Bursar and Senior Tutor asked Council to consider a modified approach to setting accommodation charges. The First Bursar spoke to the paper.

He noted developments which suggested the College's current approach to setting student accommodation charges was no longer appropriate (dynamic UK inflation rates, for example). Under the proposed approach some student accommodation would be re-banded to result in a more even distribution of accommodation across charging bands (currently skewed towards the top end). The method for calculating the charge would also change. Accommodation charges, from the 2025/2026 academic year, would grow based on a rolling 5-year average of CPIH (this method would be set until a rent review in 5 years' time). For the coming year (2024/25) charges for each band would increase by 2.5%: this was equivalent to the announced increase in student maintenance loans (2.5%). The overall impact of these changes would, this year, result in students paying 2.1% less between 2023/24 and 2024/25.

The First Bursar emphasised that the proposal had been developed in consultation with students. Mx Graham confirmed that students had been provided with information about the proposals and that feedback was positive.

Council raised concerns that students might, in future years, try to challenge a rent increase despite this agreement. The First Bursar's view was that the consultation and student engagement was good this year. He also expected King's accommodation to be cheaper compared to other colleges as a result of the change, so the cost of student accommodation is likely to remain reasonable in comparison to other College's regardless of future inflation-led price increases.

Council also discussed graduate accommodation, as the Senior Tutor noted that the number of King's graduate students in College accommodation was low in the context of other colleges. She and the First Bursar hoped that adopting this approach to charges would drive uptake.

The Senior Tutor encouraged KCSU and KCGS to maintain good records of decision making so subsequent committees would understand the consultation process that had taken place.

The First Bursar responded to queries about the cost of this approach to the College. His view was that the additional subsidy could be accommodated within the College's plans to return to an operating surplus. He noted, additionally, that stronger support for students was in keeping with the College's more progressive ethos and commitment to access and widening participation.

The Vice Provost noted that voting to approve this proposal would change the approach the College has, for many years, taken to student accommodation charges. The College's established approach has been to endeavour to ensure students at King's are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged in comparison to students at other higher education institutions.

Council agreed:

- a) To approve accommodation charges for the academic year 2024/25; and
- b) To approve changes to the method of calculating accommodation charges until the next rent review, in the academic year 2028/29.

133. Access Permissions

The Domus Bursar asked Council to support changes to College access permissions for University Card and CamCard holders. The proposal would reduce the number of guests these cardholders can bring into King's from two to one (per visit)

The proposal was developed by the Visitors Services Team and had been endorsed by the Visitors' Committee. The Domus Bursar emphasised that the aim of the change is primarily to address the growing issue of University Card and CamCard holders fraudulently running private paid College tours.

Council broadly spoke in support of the proposal, but acknowledged that the change would deprive students at other Colleges of the opportunity to bring two guests to visit King's for free for legitimate reasons (their parents, for example).

Council noted how complex current access arrangements are, and how poorly understood the rights of different cardholders are. They suggested ways to improve consistency of application, such as a poster with pictures of all the different cards and the access rights of cardholders being displayed in the Porters' lodge.

Council agreed:

- a) to support the proposal to reduce University Card and CamCard holders from 2 to 1 free guest per visit; and
- b) to ask the Domus Bursar to return to Council during Easter term with a proposal to further simplify access rights.

134. **E-Lab Hackathon**

The E-Lab Committee requested Council's approval for a new event, a law 'Hackathon' to be held on 23 June 2024 (this, Ms Headen noted, will coincide with Alan Turing's birthday). The Vice-Provost, chair of the E-Lab Committee, presented the paper.

The paper provided Council with an outline of the event, how it would be funded, and its anticipated benefits for the College community. Risk and due diligence assessments had been conducted. The event would encourage students to develop software solutions to legal challenges using AI.

The Dean noted that the event would clash with Singing on the River. Council asked the Vice-Provost to liaise with the E-Lab Directors and ask them to confirm the Hackathon would not disrupt this event.

Council discussed the role of AI in the event, and whether (given growing concern about the role of AI in the academic environment) adequate scrutiny of this aspect of the event had taken place. Council's view was that the event should promote critical assessment of the role of AI.

Council's view was that the event brief was not sufficiently clear, and that more detail should be provided to Council. Council expressed reservations about the event proceeding in if external funding was not secured. Council also commented that any bodies providing funding should be subject to scrutiny so the College could ensure their values were aligned with those of King's. Although Council was minded to enable event preparations to continue, they decided permission could only be granted subject to conditions.

Council agreed to grant permission to the Directors of the E-Lab to hold a Hackathon in College on 23 June 2024, as outlined in the paper, but subject to confirmation to the next meeting of Council that:

- a) full funding for the event had been secured from acceptable sources;
- b) the Hackathon was compatible with Singing on the River; and
- c) an explanation of exactly what the questions being investigated were and assurance that this event was in line with the Law Faculty's approach to AI and law and with King's values.

135. **Report on Scholarships**

The Senior Tutor provided her annual report on undergraduates who gained First Class Honours passes (or equivalent) in Tripos examinations in summer 2023. The report was delayed as a result of the 2023 marking and assessment boycott.

Council thanked the Senior Tutor, and accepted the report.

136. Report on Prizes

The Senior Tutor provided her annual report on prizes awarded to students for the academic year 2022-2023. The report was delayed as a result of the 2023 marking and assessment boycott.

Council thanked the Senior Tutor, and accepted the report.

Compliance

137. Financial Regulations

In October 2023 the First Bursar proposed the development of a new set of Financial Regulations which would provide a comprehensive account of the College's rules and procedures relating to financial affairs. Financial Regulations would replace several existing policies (Financial Controls, Authorisation Levels, and Policy on the use of College Credit Cards). Authorisation limits had also been increased to accommodate inflation in the years since they were last amended.

The draft regulations had been reviewed by the Finance Committee, who proposed a number of minor amendments to the draft. The First Bursar provided Council with an update on the Committee's comments. He noted that the Regulations will develop further in time.

Council agreed to approve a set of Financial Regulations for the College (as appended to the paper) to take effect from 5 March 2024, which shall be reviewed annually by the Finance Committee each Michaelmas term after which they shall be forwarded to Council for final review and approval.

138. College Security Review

The Domus Bursar presented the annual paper on the management of access and security across the College. The paper was developed in conjunction with the Head Porter. It took the form of last year's report, with the addition of a new Chapel Security Review.

The report showed good progress against recommendations from the 2016 College Security Review, however, the Domus Bursar recognised areas for improvement in relation to the security review system (including its rationale and presentation). It was her view that the current form was no longer fit for purpose, and she undertook to present Council with a revised form of report at the next review.

Council agreed:

- a) To note progress against recommendations arising from the 2016 College Security Report, and the introduction of a new Chapel Security Review 2024; and

- b) To ask the Domus Bursar to provide an update on College Security (encompassing the matters captured in the 2016 Report, the 2024 Chapel Review, and any other security matters deemed relevant by the Domus Bursar) during the Lent Term 2025.

139. Termly Development Report

The Head of Development provided her termly report on Development Office fundraising, events, and activities since the Development Director's last termly report (at the end of Michaelmas 2023).

Council thanked the Head of Development, and accepted the report.

140. Gifts of £10,000 or more

Council were asked to accept gifts of over £10,000 received by the College between 1 November 2023 and 22 February 2024. Council were provided with information about the gift types, sum, and purpose. The Development Office provided assurances that it had carried out appropriate due diligence for the gifts included in the paper.

Council agreed:

- a) To accept the gifts set out in the paper.

141. Minutes of the Education Committee meeting on 2 November 2023

Noted.

142. Minutes of the Development Committee meeting on 16 November 2023

Noted.

143. Minutes of the E-Lab Committee meeting on 12 January 2024

Noted.

144. Minutes of the Church Patronage Committee meeting on 12 February 2024

Noted.

145. Terms of Reference – Church Patronage Committee

The Church Patronage Committee asked Council to approve changes to its terms of reference, and to confirm the Dean's role as its chair. The changes to the terms of reference would clarify the scope of the Committee's responsibilities in relation to the College livings. Membership would also change, as the Chaplain would no longer be a member of the Committee, and the College Archivist would be invited to attend.

Council:

- b) to approve the appointment of the Dean as Chair of the Church Patronage Committee; and

- c) to approve the revised Terms of Reference for the Church Patronage Committee, as appended to the paper.

146. Minutes of the Chapel Committee meeting on 21 February 2024

Noted.

147. Any Other Business

147a. Anti-spiking provisions for students

A joint KCGS and KCSU Anti-spiking Working Group bought proposals to Council for improvements to the anti-drink spiking resources offered by the College. Representatives from the Group attended to speak to the paper. They drew Council's attention to the impact of drink spiking, including within the Cambridge collegiate community.

Council were asked to approve the College providing 50% of the funding for reusable drink cover scrunchies. The working group proposed that these should be made available in the College bar, at the Porters' lodge, distributed to all undergraduates and graduates, and included (in future) in student welcome packs. The cost to the College would be approximately £1500 per annum.

The Senior Tutor thanked the Group for the report and praised the Group's work on this matter. She asked the Group how KCSU would fund the remaining 50% of the cost. The Group confirmed that KCSU had budgeted for the cost to come out of their reserves for the next five years. The Senior Tutor suggested the arrangement should be reviewed in a year to enable funding arrangements to be reviewed.

Council were also asked to approve funding for drinks covers and drink testing strips, so these could be made available behind the College bar whenever it was in operation.

Council agreed to provide funding as requested, of the disposable anti-spiking measures at all times of College bar operation, and of 50% of the cost of the reusable scrunchies, subject to a review in one year's time.