

KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

At a meeting of the Council held
on Tuesday 28 May 2024 at 2.00pm in the Audit Room

Present:	Provost (via Zoom, until 15:20)	In Attendance:	First Bursar
	Dr Adhikari		Senior Tutor
	Professor Sharman		Vice Provost
	Dr Russell		Domus Bursar
	Ms Headen (not present 15:30-15:55)		*Mr Lee Boya
	Dr Sarkovic		*Mx Graham
	Dr Good		
	Dr Taylor (see item 275)		Registrar
	Professor Giannitsarou		

*Open Business

252. **Apologies for Absence**

Professor Dunn and Professor Candea apologised for their absence. Mr Limoncelli and Ms Bulteel were absent.

The Provost who was away in the Far East joined via Zoom. The Vice Provost chaired the meeting.

OPEN BUSINESS

253. **Declarations of Interest**

None.

254. **Minutes of Open Business 14 May 2024**

Approved.

255. **Matters arising**

None.

256. **Oral reports**

None.

257. **Council Timetable – Open Matters**

Strategic:

- Planning Round 2024-2025 in agenda.

Routine:

- Easter Festival Budget and Recording Label Annual Report & Accounts overdue. The Dean and Director of Music have confirmed that Council should expect an update at a later meeting.
- Development Report received at last meeting.
- Papers on Scholarships and funds will follow.

Compliance:

- Domus Policies in agenda.
- Information for OIA Return not yet available. The Senior Tutor will report on this once it has been received.
- Report from the Charities Committee expected. The Registrar will follow up if not received at the next meeting.
- Chapel Committee have confirmed that policy reviews have been launched, but that no Chapel Policies will come to Council this term.

258. **Council Action List – Open Matters**

Actions due to be completed during Easter term:

- Paper to Council regarding Croft Gardens budget reforecast (Domus Bursar)
- Review of effectiveness of EDI Committee (Vice Provost)
- Provide Council with proposal to simplify College access rights (Domus Bursar)
- Update on policy review/return draft events policy to Council (Registrar)
- Return revised terms of reference for the Gardens Committee (Domus Bursar).
- Return revised terms of reference (that reflect absorption of SEC responsibilities) to Council (Senior Tutor).

Further actions due during the Vacation.

Strategic

259. **Planning Round 2024-2025**

The First Bursar presented strategic priorities for the coming year with improvements in teaching, research, and pastoral care; more support for the College's community life; and upgrades to essential spaces and services. These priorities were underpinned by a financial plan that targets breakeven in the coming year.

Building on this work, the First Bursar presented outline strategic aims for the coming three to five years, for further discussion with committees, Council, and the Governing Body.

The First Bursar's paper drew together departmental cluster plans produced by College Officers working with relevant committees and heads of department. Further materials provided financial detail (projections and itemisation of spending requests and charges) as well as an analysis of the major risks to which the College is exposed, captured in the College's risk register.

Council praised the First Bursar's proposals, in particular the way they prioritised the College's core activities. Council commented that the way in which the First Bursar had conceptualised the life of College could be valuable to our fundraising activities.

Council noted the range of risk types captured in the College's risk register and asked how they, as trustees, might best support College risk management. This was discussed further in relation during Item 160.

Council agreed to recommend to Governing Body to approve the proposed priorities, budget (including charges), and risk register for 2024/25.

260. Risk Management

The First Bursar proposed modifications to the College's risk policy. During the 2024/25 planning round the key risks to which the College is exposed had been assessed using an updated methodology aligned with good practice across the collegiate University and elsewhere. The proposed policy amendments (which would not alter the College's statement on its attitude towards risk, nor to risk ownership structures) reflected those updates. The Finance Committee had reviewed and approved both the methodology and policy.

In relation to a question posed by Finance Committee, the First Bursar explained that the Termly Update process would support ongoing review and management of risk by committees and Council.

Council discussed the rationale behind the revised methodology. It was noted that the majority of top 15 risks sit outside the Education & Research cluster. Nonetheless, many of those risks have the potential to impact our core teaching and research activities, and require careful management for that reasons.

Council approved changes to the College's risk methodology and policy.

261. Draft Response to Students' Gaza Open Letter

At its last meeting Council had received an open letter from King's College Student's Union (KCSU) students requesting a range of actions from the College in relation to the ongoing conflict in Gaza. Council asked College Officers to return to this meeting with a proposed response.

The First Bursar spoke about the College's investment and banking arrangements. The Investment Committee and the College's investment advisors have been working through a review of the College's public equities holdings, exploring alternate approaches with a stronger emphasis on 'ESG' (environmental, social, and governance) issues. Council and Governing Body will be asked to discuss the outputs of this review later in the calendar year. The First Bursar also elaborated upon efforts across the collegiate University to engage with major UK banks in relation to their financing and other practices.

The Senior Tutor has been responding to concerns raised in the letter about student welfare. She and KCSU are taking forward a working group to respond to students' needs in this regard. KCSU will work with the Senior Tutor to help establish this group, but the student representatives reported

that many students wanted to move past the exam period before engaging. She informed Council that the College's displaced scholars' fund was also being utilised to provide support as appropriate, and that other forms of pastoral and financial support remain available through the Tutorial system.

The Senior Tutor highlighted some of the challenges around identifying students who might need additional support. The College doesn't systematically collect data on religion, nor does it hold data about heritage beyond nationality. She also highlighted that these characteristics alone were not sufficient to indicate a person at risk of being impacted, as many students will have friends or family in Palestine. This limits the extent to which the Tutorial Office can proactively identify students who are impacted. The Senior Tutor emphasised that once students identify themselves as being in need of support to their Tutor, a full range of interventions can be looked at.

Council asked College Officers to issue a response to KCSU's open letter based on these updates.

261a. Further Update on King's Students' Open Letter

After papers were circulated some Fellows received a letter from a separate group of students ('Kings College 4 Palestine'). The letter made demands of the College, some of which overlapped with demands made by KCSU. The letter criticised, in particular, the College's approach to events oversight. Council were provided with a copy of the letter, a brief reply sent by College Officers, and a response received from a Fellow (Officers had only received one such response).

Council confirmed that it would not be appropriate to make many of the statements the group had asked for.

Mx Graham commented on views they had received from members of KCSU about this letter, and noted that there had been some criticism of the letter's tone. Council noted that although signatories to this letter outnumbered those to KCSU's letter, KCSU had verified that each signatory to their letter was a current King's student.

The Vice Provost asked Council to consider how the College might respond. The Senior Tutor suggested that Council should set out a roadmap for how the College will address the issues the letter raised and how students can participate outside of channels led by KCSU. Council endorsed KCSU as the mechanism by which students are encouraged to engage with the College.

Council noted that a working group was currently considering the College's events policies. Council's view was that this group was not fit to become a general events oversight body, and that its task should remain to complete the technical process of producing a composite policy that captures the College's current processes and that can be appended to the College's Code of Practice on Free Speech before 1 August 2024.

Council's view was that a second process was required to consider the substance of the College's events approvals processes.

Council asked College Officers to respond to the letter and, in the response, to emphasise ways in which students can engage in this conversation.

Routine

262. Back Lawn Flower Meadow

Council received a paper from the Gardens Committee regarding the future of the flower meadow on the College's back lawn.

Council declined to express its own view about the future of the Meadow. However, Council discussed ways in which the Gardens Committee should improve the presentation of its case before the matter is discussed by Governing Body. In particular, Council recommended that the Committee should elaborate on the alternative options it considered and disregarded (including its case against total removal), describe the media exposure an expanded meadow might be expected to generate and how the College can use that to its benefit, and include a concise statement from the Conferencing and Events Team representing their views.

Council agreed that Governing Body should consider (in accordance with Governing Body's vote of 19 July 2019 (2019/58)) the future of the back lawn flower meadow at the Congregation on 24 June.

263. Room Bookings for E-Lab Residentials

Council received a paper from the E-Lab Directors regarding room bookings for E-Lab Residentials. Council were asked to confirm that E-Lab Residentials (for which spaces can, currently, only be booked four weeks in advance) are an annual internal event in the College calendar and to decide, therefore, that spaces in College should be reserved for the residentials on a rolling basis immediately as a priority. The Vice Provost spoke to the paper.

Council noted the impact this would have on Conferencing income and the College's options with regard to offering King's students accommodation before the start of term.

The Senior Tutor highlighted that admissions and outreach events were in a similar position and suggested that these events should, like events in the Conferencing calendar, be able to be booked several years in advance.

Council's view was that it should not make this decision in relation to E-Lab events alone as this would circumvent policy rather than addressing whether the policy itself was appropriate.

Council asked the Senior Tutor, Vice Provost and Registrar to review the College's current policy and return to Council with any suggested

amendment so as to ensure that both E-Lab and Admissions and Outreach events could book the rooms they required well in advance.

264. Fun Day 2024 Proposal

Council received an outline event plan for the King's Funday 2024 from KCSU's Entertainment Officers.

Council agreed that KCSU may organise a Fun Day on Sunday 16th June 2024 with details subject to the approval of the Lay Dean; Head Porter; Health, Safety and Compliance Officer; Designated Premises Supervisor; and the Domus Bursar.

265. Admissions and Outreach Flags

The Admissions Tutor asked Council to approve the use of 'Flag Banners' during the College and University Open Days 2024, and for the duration of interview week in December 2024.

Council agreed that College-branded flag banners may be displayed in College during open days (on 21 June 2024, 4 and 5 July 2024 and 13 September 2024) and during interview week (from 8 to 16 December 2024).

Compliance

266. Domus Policies (Health & safety, CCTV, Incident Management)

The Domus Bursar presented three policies to Council for routine review, and highlighted material changes.

With regard to the Health and Safety Policy, the Domus Bursar proposed some amendments in relation to governance. She proposed that she should become the designated Fellow for Health and Safety, supported by the new Head of Facilities, who would become the Health and Safety Officer. Council welcomed this proposal.

The College's Business Continuity Plan, drawing on feedback from an early 2024 training session, had been redeveloped as an Incident Management Plan ('IMP') which would capture a wider range of incidents. The Domus Bursar and Health and Safety Advisor will continue to develop this policy, with individual departments developing Emergency Response Plans, and return a final policy to Council at the next annual review.

The Domus Bursar clarified that references to "consultants" in the IMP generally referred to third parties mandated by the College's insurers.

There were no material changes to the CCTV Policy.

Council approved the College's Health and Safety Policy, CCTV Policy, and Incident Management Plan (V3.2).

The policies will next be reviewed in Easter Term 2025.

267. **Minutes of the Catering Committee meeting on 13 February 2024**
Noted.
268. **Minutes of the Education Committee meeting on 15 February 2024**
Noted.
269. **Minutes of the EDI Committee meeting on 22 February 2024**
Noted.
270. **Minutes of the IT Committee meeting on 24 April 2024**
Noted.
271. **Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting on 26 April 2024**
Noted.
272. **Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting on 3 May 2024**
Noted.
273. **Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting on 17 May 2024**
Noted.
- Any Other Business**
274. None.