

KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

At a Strategic Meeting of the Council held in the Wine Room
On Tuesday, 3rd October 2017 at 2 pm

<i>Present:</i>	Provost	<i>In</i>	Vice-Provost
	Dr Barber	<i>Attendance:</i>	First Bursar
	The Revd Dr Cherry		Senior Tutor
	Dr Davies		Domus Bursar
	Ms Headen		*Ms Whittier from item 300
	Professor Humphrey		*Ms Grossfurthner
	Dr Sagar		
	Dr Taylor		* <i>Open business only</i>
	*Ms Mulcahy		<i>Dr Carne</i>
	*Ms Hawkins		<i>to take Minutes</i>

OPEN BUSINESS

The Provost welcomed the new members of Council, Ms Nina Grossfurthner, Ms Alice Hawkins and Ms Niamh Mulcahy. The new members took the oath as required by the College's Statutes, and were given the document "Guidelines on Confidentiality of Council Business".

Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Professor Dunn and Professor Efstathiou. Professor Mouhot is on academic leave.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

298. College's Financial Strategy

The First Bursar presented a paper on the College's Financial Strategy. It aims to give strategic guidance to the Finance Committee in its preparation of the budget, and to the Personnel Committee in its consideration of salary increases.

299. Introduction to the Budget

The First Bursar presented a paper outlining the budget process so that Council can consider whether any changes are required.

Council agreed that there should be a meeting at the beginning of the Lent Term to agree instructions for the Finance Committee. This would be with the newly elected Council and the point when the Finance Committee began its work on the forthcoming budget. The comparative data for the previous year at other Colleges will also be available. Hence, this meeting is to prepare for that future meeting; to determine what information will be required; and to give Council the opportunity to address issues during the term.

The timetable for the preparation of the budget was considered and approved.

Council should consider any changes to the budget during the financial year. There will be exceptional cases when significant changes are necessary but the First Bursar should ensure that Council keeps track of all changes that have been approved and that these are reported to the Governing Body as necessary.

300. Purposes of the College

The First Bursar presented a paper inviting Council to decide on priorities and how expenditure should be determined.

There is a need for a revised strategy. This might be more aspirational and less descriptive. It should be a short document that explains the basis on which we should make decisions about funding and priorities. The Provost will collect suggestions from Council and the wider Fellowship. These should be discussed by Council this term and then presented to the new Council in the Lent Term.

Council would like to see data on student numbers and Fellowship numbers over past years. The history of what Congregations decided and how it was implemented would be valuable but may be difficult to establish.

The Admissions Tutors and Senior Tutor should be asked to report on how effectively we spend money on widening participation and improving the quality of our applicants.

While the low charges at King's are appreciated, it would be easier to accept the need for increases if bursaries were also increased for those in need. In particular, the needs of disabled students should be considered. We might try to find a way to reflect energy costs in rents and so encourage less waste. Rents might be linked in some way to energy costs.

There was a discussion of hardship funds. While some felt that these should be advertised more widely, the Senior Tutor made the case that decisions rested with the Tutors and it was better to encourage all students who faced hardship to discuss their needs with a tutor.

The Service Charge for resident Fellows ought to increase substantially to, at least, cover Council Tax. The Vice-Provost and First Bursar were asked to prepare a paper for Council on how this might be done. It was felt that this was about fairness between Fellows. The overall distribution of charges and benefits for Fellows ought to be reviewed. Catering for Fellows was generous at King's compared with most other Colleges.

A large proportion of our endowment, 47.3%, is in restricted funds but many of these do not impose restrictions that we find difficult to accept. Council asked that, in future, the budgets for each department show the percentage of expenditure covered by restricted funds. The First Bursar is working to vary the terms of certain restrictive funds that we have been unable to spend. This needs approval by Council and the Governing Body on the basis of legal advice. The first of these might be completed this term.

301. Management Accounts – 9 Year Summary

The First Bursar presented an updated summary of the Management Account Budget approved by Council. It incorporates the audited data for 2016-17.

302. Expenditure – 9 Year Summary

The First Bursar presented a paper summarising the expenditure for the past 9 years.

An error in this paper was noted and will be corrected.

303. Resilience and Volatility

The First Bursar presented a paper inviting Council to consider how the College might protect itself from falls in its investments and how it should react to such volatility.

Council discussed our ability to reduce our expenditure quickly when there is a fall in the stock markets. It was acknowledged that this would be hard to achieve, particularly since a large part of our expenditure is for salaries. If the Investment Committee is required to invest to protect against such falls, its return is likely to fall and so the funds we have available to spend will be less. A more attractive alternative might be to build up a reserve that would allow us a little longer to make savings. Council asked for a further discussion of this issue later in the term.

Council asked the First Bursar and Officers to prepare more concrete proposals for discussion during the Michaelmas Term and decision at the start of next Term.

304. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

The next meeting of Council will be held on Tuesday, 10th October 2017 in the Wine Room at 2pm.