



HUGHES  
HALL

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

## COLLEGE COUNCIL

### Confirmed minutes

#### One hundred-and-sixth meeting of College Council 12 October 2021

#### Video conference at 4.30pm

*{}* indicates that this item will be removed prior to publication on the College website.

**Present:** Dr Anthony Freeling (Chair, President), Prof Nidhi Singal (Vice-President), Dr Sonia Ilie, Prof Bill Irish, Dr Tobias Kohn, Dr Yury Korolev, Dr Tori McKee (Senior Tutor), Ms Zainab Rehman (MCR Vice-President (Internal), to item 6.17), Prof Ricardo Sabates, Dr Lars Vinx, Mr Yuchen Zhu (MCR Secretary, to item 6.17).

**In Attendance:** Dr Stephen Axford (Director of Strategy and the Bridge), Mr William Conner (Director of Institutional Advancement), Mr Andrew Grieve (Assistant Bursar, to item 6.17), Mrs Wendy Solomou (Secretary).

**Apologies:** Mr Jordan Corbett (MCR President).

### OPEN BUSINESS

#### 6.1. Introduction

##### 6.1.1. Welcome

The President welcomed Dr McKee and Dr Korolev, who were attending their first meeting of Council. He also welcomed the Assistant Bursar, Mr Grieve, and Ms Rehman, who was attending the meeting in place of the MCR President.

##### 6.1.2. Declarations of interests

Prof Irish declared an interest in item 6.9 and withdrew from the meeting when the item was discussed.

#### 6.2. Minutes and Matters arising from the Open Business of College Council, of 22 June 2021

##### 6.2.1. Approval of minutes (CC6 01)

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

## **6.2.2. College Council action list: Open Business (CC6 02)**

[5.7.2] Pensions.

The Bursar to advise the Assistant Bursar to further explore the option of offering a pension salary exchange scheme.

- Completed. The Assistant Bursar reported that he had been briefed and would be investigating the option with the Finance Team.

[5.7.3] Other staff benefits.

The Bursar to advise the Assistant Bursar to organise a second survey of staff benefits and stakeholder engagement in one year's time.

- Completed. The Assistant Bursar reported that he had been briefed and would initiate action in March 2022.

[5.11] Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).

(1) Dr Roughley to submit a budget to support the proposed EDI committee and associated initiatives/activities, to be included in the restated budget for 2021-22.

- Completed. The President reported that £10K had been added as a placeholder to the restated budget. In response to a question, he confirmed that it had not yet been decided who/which body would have responsibility for the budget.

(2) The Secretary to refer Council's request for the establishment of an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee to Governance Committee.

- Completed. On the agenda for 15 Nov 2021.

## **6.2.3. Matters arising not otherwise on the agenda**

### **6.2.3.1. [5.6] Centre for Climate Change Engagement (CCCE)**

The President informed Council that since its last meeting:

- The CCCE had shortened its name to Centre for Climate Engagement and updated its logo.
- One of the new post-doctoral positions (the two-year Hoffmann Fellowship) discussed at the meeting of 22 June 2022 was being advertised at University Spine Point SP38-SP48 and not at a starting salary of Spine Point 37 as proposed.

## **6.3. President's report**

The President reported the following:

- The new academic year had started well, and everyone was pleased to see students properly back in college.
- The College Agenda 2021-22 had not yet been developed since two key Officers, the Senior Tutor and Bursar, were only just taking up office. The President proposed continuing with the 2020-21 Agenda for the time being and for Council to agree amendments in the Lent term. He noted that staff were extraordinarily busy and that it was important to prioritise what could be achieved over the coming year.
- He aimed to hold an election for the current vacancy on Council at the Governing Body meeting of 1 December.

- Together with the Master of Gonville and Caius College he was co-chairing the committee conducting the search for a new Vice-Chancellor of the University.

#### **6.4. MCR business**

Ms Rehman reported that there had been daily events during Freshers' Week and the MCR and students were active and meeting each other. She said that the MCR was looking forward to planning more social and academic events for the coming term.

The President thanked the MCR Committee for their support and initiative in rebuilding the community.

#### **6.5. Review of Council's composition and terms of reference (CC6 03)**

Council considered the constitution of Council in view of Governing Body's decision to elect a single Vice-President with a revised remit (16 June 2021 [GB77.7]).

Council's consensus was that the *ex-officio* membership of the Vice-President should be replaced by an elected member and that, to ensure membership of Council was not dominated by those holding an Office or Post which carried substantial executive duties, the additional elected member should not hold an Office or Post named on the Governance List. A second option, to reduce the size of Council, was rejected.

Council did not make any recommendations for changing the remit of Council.

**ACTION:** The Secretary to refer Council's recommendation for a change to the constitution of Council to Governance Committee.

#### **6.6. Governance for COVID**

The President proposed that since the College had returned to a state of 'business as usual' the Gold and Silver Teams, which had been established to undertake rapid decision-making and implementation of policies in response to the COVID pandemic, should be stood down.

Council approved standing down the Gold and Silver Teams with the proviso that the President, as Chair of Council, could reinstate them if there were to be a spike in cases and circumstances demanded it.

The Senior Tutor described a new, more streamlined process that had been put in place to support students who tested positive and said that it appeared to be working well.

Dr Vinx requested that Directors of Studies be informed when a student had tested positive so that they might inform the students' supervisors. The Senior Tutor agreed to add this step to the protocol for undergraduates. It was agreed that postgraduate students should continue to be responsible for informing their Director of Course/thesis supervisor upon testing positive.

**ACTION:** The Senior Tutor to update the protocol for dealing with COVID on-call management to include informing Directors of Studies of undergraduate students.

#### **6.7. Risk assessment – college-wide risks (CC6 04)**

The Senior Tutor spoke to the paper, which proposed a new college-wide risk assessment framework to reflect the current 'living with COVID' scenario, now that the vaccination programme had reduced the

risk of hospitalisation and death from the disease. She reported that there was positive support for the proposal from across the departments in college.

Council approved the proposed risk-assessment framework.

## **6.8. {[REDACTED]}**

### **6.9. Research-led evaluations for NHS/HEE (CC6 05)**

The Director of Strategy and the Bridge reported that good progress had been made in developing a partnership with NHS/Health Education England (previously reported on 23 February 2021 [1.13] and 27 April 2021 [3.14]). The College had been commissioned to provide academic, research-based evaluations of two HEE training and development activities: the Global Fellowships Programme, and the Blended Learning Platform. Two Fellows, Dr Caroline Trotter and Dr Riikka Hoffman, were leading each project on the understanding that as the project scope becomes clearer, there would be opportunity for other Fellows to play a role in either leading or contributing to the research. Each academic lead would supervise a researcher on their respective project.

Dr Axford informed Council that the College had received the funding for both projects in full on 30 September 2021 and requested that Council approve:

- The senior academic leads being compensated for the time spent leading the research, supervising the researchers, and overseeing delivery of the key outputs, the level of remuneration to be determined by Remuneration Committee.
- The near-final job descriptions for the two research posts, one for the Global Fellowships Programme, the other for the Blended Learning Platform.
- The budget for the two projects.

In response to questions, Dr Axford confirmed that the budgets included a 15% administrative overhead to the College and explained that since there were no fixed deadlines for the delivery of outputs it would be possible to employ a researcher for a longer duration if they worked part-time.

Council approved the proposals for both projects.

### **6.10. Update to role of Vice-President in student appeal procedures**

The Senior Tutor explained that following Governing Body's decision to elect a single Vice-President with a revised remit which did not include chairing a student appeal panel, it had been necessary to update the Grievance procedure and Disciplinary policy to reflect the change. She confirmed that both policies would be undergoing a wider-ranging review later in the academic year.

#### **6.10.1. Grievance procedure (CC6 06a)**

Council approved the proposed amendment to clause 4.2 (the updated procedure is given in the appendix to the minutes of Open Business).

#### **6.10.2. Disciplinary policy (CC6 06b)**

Council approved the proposed amendments to clauses 14.1.2, 23.1, 24, and 24.1 (the updated policy is given in the appendix to the minutes of Open Business).

### **6.11. College contact for the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) (CC6 07)**

The President explained that the University is regulated by the Office for Students (OfS), whilst the colleges are not. To date the OIA had dealt with the University and not with the individual colleges. However, a recent case had highlighted the need for the colleges to have a direct relationship with the OIA and that from 2022 each would need to become a member of the OIA scheme. He asked Council to note that there would be a subscription charge, although it would not be much more than the contribution made to the University under the current scheme. He proposed the Senior Tutor as the Point of Contact for the OIA.

Council approved the Senior Tutor as the Point of Contact for the OIA.

### **6.12 Bursarial**

#### **6.12.1. Report from the Assistant Bursar, including summary of financial year end (CC6 08a)**

The Assistant Bursar presented the bursarial report which had been prepared jointly with the Domestic Bursar.

#### **Finance**

- The year-end management accounts were completed and ready for sign off by the auditors. A high-level summary was presented to Council.
- The audit completion meeting would take place on 19 October. No material adjustments were expected to be recommended by the auditors, PEM, and the auditors had not indicated that they would raise any significant concerns or issues.
- The budget restatement exercise was underway although had been delayed owing to uncertainty over student numbers/mix.
- A summary of the management accounts as of 30 September 2021 would be circulated to Finance Committee in the following week.
- The Finance team had been heavily involved in upgrading SAGE 200 in recent months; the upgraded system would improve reporting capabilities.

#### **HR and staffing**

- The ending of the Government's Job Retention Scheme on 30 September 2021 would have no impact since no members of staff had been on furlough in recent months.
- The low numbers of applications for many advertised operational posts were causing problems in recruiting staff. Other colleges were reporting similar issues.
- The annual pay increase (1.5% for all spine points except spine points 11 to 33 where the increase ranged between 1.54% and 3.6% to take account of minimum wage rates) would be implemented in October and backdated to 1 August 2021.
- Staff were returning to work in college, at least on a part-time basis. An appendix to the report included a seating plan which indicated how everyone would have access to a desk.
- A policy to support agile working was being developed. It was noted that such a policy would involve a move from the use of desktop to laptop PCs.

### **Conference Team and Catering**

- The focus during Michaelmas term was on internal and student events. There was, however, buoyant external interest in hosting summer schools at the College for 2022.
- The coffee shop had opened in the Peter Richards Room and its usage was being monitored. The cafeteria had been open for several weeks offering a full service and had been busy to date. Matriculation dinners and formal halls were being held.

### **Accommodation and Housekeeping**

- All student rooms were occupied and students in quarantine were being supported.
- Three full-time unfilled vacancies in Housekeeping had necessitated some amendments to service provision.

### **Estates**

- The Head of Facilities has completed all planned works for 2021-22 over the summer two weeks ahead of schedule and £11k under budget.

The Senior Tutor raised the issue of a lack of space for staff, including rooms for tutors, supervisors, and Directors of Studies to meet with students in college. It was also noted that it would be helpful to have an electronic booking system to allow Senior Members easier access to rooms when they wanted to come into college for meetings and to work. The President responded that there were no easy solutions given the limited space, but that the College Officers would discuss the matter further.

#### **6.12.2. Employee Referral Bonus Scheme Proposal (CC4 08b)**

The Assistant Bursar spoke to the paper, which proposed the introduction of an employee referral bonus scheme. He described the current problem, shared with other colleges, of low numbers of applicants for vacancies in operational posts. He outlined the benefits of the scheme which would include a bonus of £250, to be paid through the payroll and subject to the referred new employee completing their three-month probation review

In response to a question the Assistant Bursar said that he believed that the bonus was sufficiently high to attract interest and was in line with similar schemes in other colleges.

Council approved the employee referral bonus scheme as proposed.

#### **6.13. Senior Tutor's report (CC6 09)**

The Senior Tutor's report included the following:

- Admissions Committee annual report to Council on student numbers.
  - There were 804 continuing students and applicants with a confirmed offer (although 30 of the latter had not yet registered for their course), including 142 part-time students but excluding 94 writing up their PhD but no longer paying fees.
  - The breakdown across postgraduate and undergraduate cohorts has changed since the previous year with an intake of 62 more undergraduates and 79 fewer postgraduates. This had had an adverse effect on the budget with lower income from fees and a rise in student-support-related expenditure.

- Contributing factors to the fall in postgraduate numbers were multivariate but included lower conversion rates, especially at the doctoral level, compared to the previous year.
- Tutorial and welfare
  - Most students had returned to residence in Cambridge.
  - Tutors were reporting a generally positive mood amongst their students.
  - The Hughesians Together initiative was running for a second year to provide onboarding support for new undergraduates.
- Communications
  - The Senior Tutor was sending out a new weekly email bulletin to students to coordinate communications from across various departments and highlight key messages.
  - Significant updates had been made to the Covid information pages on the college website.
- Details of staff changes.

In response to a question concerning the fall in doctoral students, the Senior Tutor said that the intake had been particularly high in 2020 and that numbers this year were similar to the years prior to 2020. In addition, other colleges had exceeded their allocation this year and the ratio of offers to acceptances had not been met. She said that she saw funding as crucial for recruiting doctoral students and was in discussion with the Director of Institutional Advancement about the importance of securing funding to support full scholarships.

#### **6.14. Director of Institutional Advancement's report (CC4 10)**

The Director of Institutional Advancement highlighted the following from his report:

- **Staffing**
  - Mr Conner acknowledged the achievements of the outgoing Deputy Director of Development, Ms Jennifer Williams. Her progress report on fundraising for the period 2018/19 to 2020/21 was included in his report. Mr Jack Clarkson had been appointed as her replacement and the College was currently recruiting to fill his former position of Alumni Relations Officer.
  - Mr Hugh Aldridge would be contracted for up to 40 days to work on institutional fundraising opportunities in support of Bridge initiatives and the estates' development.
- **Prints of the Wileman Building** – the College would receive 20 % commission on the sale of prints of the Margaret Wileman Building by architectural illustrator, Sophie McIlwaine, in return for promoting them to alumni and graduands.
- **The International Group for Development** - two new members with interests in African funding sources had joined the IGD, Dr Roni Ajao (Associate) and Varun Giridhar (Alumnus).
- **Resumption of alumni events** – two Christmas parties were planned - one in college on 4 December and another at the Oxford and Cambridge Club in London on 15 December. It was hoped that an alumni event would be held in New York City when the President attended a CAM Board meeting in early December.

**6.15. Director of Strategy and the Bridge's report (CC4 11)**

**6.16. Minutes of committees**

Council received the minutes of the following committees without discussion:

**6.16.1. Unconfirmed minutes Admissions Committee, of 8 June 2021 (CC6 12a)**

**6.16.2. Confirmed minutes Estates Committee, of 26 May 2021 (CC6 12b)**

**6.16.3. Confirmed minutes Finance Committee, of 18 May 2021 (CC6 12c)**

**6.16.4. Unconfirmed minutes Finance Committee, of 7 July 2021 (CC6 12d)**

**6.16.5. Unconfirmed minutes Staff Strategy Committee, of 15 June 2021 (CC6 12e)**

**6.16.6. Unconfirmed minutes Development Strategy Group, of 14 June 2021 (CC6 12f)**

**6.16.7. Unconfirmed minutes Prevent Committee, of 15 June 2021 (CC6 12g)**

**6.16.8. Unconfirmed minutes Estates Committee, of 29 September 2021 (CC6 12h)**

{{[REDACTED]}}

**6.17. Any other Open Business**

There was no other Open Business.

End of Open Business WS