HUGHES HALL
CAMBRIDGE

COLLEGE COUNCIL

MINUTES

One hundred-and-forty-sixth meeting of College Council 28 April 2026

Council Room at 16.30

Present: Sir Laurie Bristow (Chair), Dr Bart de Nijs, Prof John Doorbar, Dr Joe Ellis, Prof Sonia Ilie, Mrs Kerry Wilson, Mr Laurie Smith (Bursar), Ms Zahra Grieve (MCR Vice President), Dr Guillermo Serrano-Nájera, Prof Nidhi Singal, Mr David Wolffe (MCR President), Dr Nigel Yandell,

Apologies: Prof Ajith Parlikad, Dr Aga Iwasiewicz-Wabnig.

In attendance: Sarah Langford (Head of Communications), Pat Dunne (Assistant Bursar) for Open Business and Katherine Springthorpe (Secretary).

OPEN BUSINESS

Preliminary Business

46.1. Introduction

46.1.1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed members and noted apologies as above

46.1.2. Declarations of interests

There were none.

46.2. Minutes and Matters arising from Open Business of College Council, 24 March 2026

46.2.1. Minutes (46CC 01)

Council approved the minutes of the previous meeting as an accurate record.

46.2.2. College Council action list: Open Business(46CC 02)

The Secretary reported that the Code of Conduct was with external HR advisers following discussion at the previous meeting and that the IT Acceptable Use Policy was with the Bursar for review.

46.2.3. Approval of starred items (***)

Council noted the starred items without discussion.

46.2.4. Matters arising not otherwise on the agenda

There were none.

Standing Items

46.3. President's Report

46.3.1 Strategic priorities (46CC 03)

The President introduced the report, with discussion focused on the following:

- Students – Funding for undergraduate outreach was now secured, including external support from partner colleges. Progress on deeper FE relationships and on part-time and PhD engagement had been slower due to capacity constraints.
- Impact – There was a strong pipeline of activity, but the College remained between Impact Directors. Work was focusing on clarifying priorities, partnerships and internal leads ahead of recruitment, which was unlikely to conclude before autumn.
- Governance – The Secretary reported on progress towards Statutes and Ordinances reform, noting the need to resubmit the revised Statutes in full to the Privy Council, with approval not now expected until autumn 2026.
- Systems – An AI pilot involving 12 staff had commenced using Microsoft Copilot premium licences, alongside wider guidance on other University-approved tools. The aim was to identify practical use cases and inform future rollout. Migration of the finance system to a cloud platform remained a longer-term objective.
- Development – Activity remained on track, with no slippage to date. Work was progressing on the impact and education pillars, with proposals expected to return to GB in June. Council noted the emphasis on donor pipeline building, management of c.300 prospects, progress on the legacy campaign and that Giving Day preparations were well advanced.

Council noted the report.

46.4. Officers' Report (45CC 04)

Council received a combined Officers' Report covering business-as-usual activity. The following items were noted:

- Admissions for 2026-27 were progressing well despite a challenging second round, with c.50–60 undergraduates expected. Council noted a continued year-on-year increase in exam access arrangements and asked for comparative data across colleges, which the Acting Senior Tutor agreed to take away. **(ACTION: Dr Joe Ellis)**
- The Bursar reported on the 2026-27 budget process, noting an ongoing pressure on costs. Council discussed estate security measures being implemented in response to recent bike thefts, including new CCTV, fencing enhancements and controlled gate access.
- Council noted updates from Development and Communications, including progress on direct debit giving functionality via the Development Office's CRM, international engagement supported by Governing Body Fellows, and preparations for the Afghan women's cricket match scheduled for 27 June 2026.

Council noted the report.

46.5. MCR Business (oral update)

The MCR President and Vice President reported that Easter term activity was focused on welfare and exam support, with fewer large-scale social events. Preparations for the June end-of-year event and early planning for Freshers' Week were underway.

Council thanked the MCR for the update.

Strategic and Operational items

46.6. Management Accounts (46CC 05)

The Bursar presented the management accounts for the eight months to 31 March 2026. Council noted income was broadly on budget and expenditure showed a favourable variance.

Council noted the update.

46.7. Pay Review Process (46CC 06)

The Bursar outlined the proposed pay review process for 2026, including a cost-of-living award for all assistant staff and a discretionary merit element for some, supported by benchmarking and a moderated decision-making process. Council approved the Pay Review Process for 2026.

46.8. Incident Management and Business Continuity Plan (46CC 07)

Council received the policy one year from inception, noting only minor amendments and significant progress on the detailed operational plan and training. Council approved the Incident Management and Business Continuity Plan.

46.9. * Principles of Collaborative Fundraising (April 2026) (46CC 08)**

Council noted the Principles of Collaborative Fundraising without discussion.

Minutes

46.10. ***Minutes of committees

46.10.1. ***Unconfirmed Minutes Estates Committee (46CC 09)

Council noted the Minutes without discussion.

46.11. Any other Open Business

46.11.1. Catering Survey Results (46CC 09b)

The Bursar summarised early findings from the catering survey (which would close 30 April), with over 230 responses received at the point of reporting.

Council noted very positive feedback on staff professionalism and atmosphere, alongside areas for improvement including portion sizes and consistency of everyday provision (as opposed to weekend brunch, Formal Hall etc.). It was agreed that an action plan would be developed and that feedback and planned actions would be communicated to Fellows, students and other respondents once the survey closed.

Meetings 2026: 02 June 2026, 23 June 2026.