

Sidney Sussex College

Minutes of the

MEETING OF COLLEGE COUNCIL

Held via Zoom on
Wednesday 14 October 2020 at 2.00pm

Senior Members Present

The Master, Vice-Master, Senior Tutor, Bursar, Dr Bordin, Dr Doran, Dr Fulda, Dr Fruk, Dr Garcia-Mayoral, Dr McTernan, Dr Oner, Professor Reynolds, Dr Roberts, Dr Seymour, Dr Stasch

Student Members Present:

Mr Bryan, Mr Karsberg, Mr Mettry

Also Present:

Ms Harkin (College Registrar/Council Secretary)

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

1. INTRODUCTORY BUSINESS

1.1 Apologies for absence

Mr Sharma was not present at the meeting. Dr Fernando gave advance apologies of his need to leave part-way through. The Master welcomed Mr Mettry as a new Council member.

1.2 Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved, subject to item 2.2c being changed to a verbal update.

1.3 Confirmation of the minutes of the unreserved business of the Meeting of Council on 1 July 2020 and Extraordinary Meeting of the Council on 16 September 2020.

The minutes were confirmed.

a) Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda

2.1b Admission of New Fellows

The Master updated Council on the arrangements for the admission of new Fellows and the welcome of new Bye Fellows in Michaelmas term. This took place as an online event on Friday 9 October 2020.

1.4 Declaration of Interests

Council noted that all Fellows had a general interest in agenda item 2.3d (USS consultation), as well as item 2.3b (Catering arrangements).

2. REPORTS FROM OFFICERS

2.1 Master's Business

a) Publication of Council Minutes (Unreserved)

The Master reminded Council that it had been agreed that Council minutes would be published on the website from Michaelmas Term 2020 onwards.

Action: Publish Council and Governing Body unreserved minutes on the website. (Responsible: Council Secretary, after approval at subsequent meeting.)

b) Implementation of Recovery Task Force

The Master thanked all colleagues who had been involved in the Recovery Task Force over the summer. This had involved a lot of work to ensure that the College could re-open for Michaelmas term and carry out in person teaching. A financial plan for recovery is also underway. In addition, the Master, Bursar and Senior Tutor had been involved in intercollegiate University meetings to enable a cohesive approach to be developed.

c) Inter-collegiate Committee Feedback

The Master reported that an extraordinary Bursars' Committee meeting over the summer had been the only official inter-collegiate meeting since the last Council meeting. He updated Council on the key topics of discussion and stated that there were no decisions for the College to make at this stage.

d) College Outline Plan for Short to Medium Term – extract from Annual Report and Accounts (CC.201014.2.1d)

The Master asked for feedback on the draft of the College's Outline Future Plans which will be included in the Annual Report and Accounts. No substantive changes were proposed. Subject to some minor formatting changes, the draft text of Future Plans was **approved** for inclusion in the final draft of the Annual Report and Accounts which will come to the next meeting.

e) Annual Work Plan for Council Business 2020-21 (CC.201014.2.1e)

The Master presented the Annual Work Plan for Council Business in 2020-21 and asked for Council feedback. The planner was positively received by Council members. It was noted that regular business was heavily loaded

towards Michaelmas term and the Annual Meeting. Some minor points on timing of business were also noted. The Master encouraged College Committees to use a similar planner if they would find it helpful.

Action: Share Annual Planning template with Chair and Secretary of all College Committees to be adopted for that Committee as appropriate. (Responsible: Council Secretary, by week ending 23 October 2020).

f) Charity Trustees: Responsibilities and Register of Interests

The Bursar drew Council members' attention to the importance of reading the Charity Commission's *The Essential Trustee* publication (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/734288/CC3_may18.pdf). In particular, she outlined section two of the publication which sets out a summary of trustees' duties.

The Master reminded Council members of the necessity of completing the annual declaration of interests form.

Action: Council members to be reminded to return annual declaration of interest form as soon as possible. (Responsible: Council Secretary, by week ending 16 October 2020).

2.2 Senior Tutor's Business

a) *Tripos Annual report (2020 Final) (CC.201014.2.2a)

The report was **noted** by Council.

b) **Directors of Studies list (2020-21 revisions) (CC.201014.2.2b)

The list was **approved** by Council

c) Collegiate Learning and Support for Student Welfare

The Senior Tutor provided a summary of the pastoral and academic support that has been, and is being, put in place for Michaelmas term. This includes:

Pastoral support: Arrangements for early arrivals needing to quarantine; virtual briefing meetings for students ahead of term; individual meetings with all Freshers; the transfer of student medical records to a digital format; weekly meetings of the Tutorial team throughout Michaelmas term; liaison with the Disability Resource Centre, Head of the University's Counselling Services, and initiation of collaboration with the University's new Head of Student Well-Being..

Academic: Continuation of the blended teaching model from Easter Term 2020; risk assessment of Fellows' offices and other additional rooms/space for supervisions; the development of a supervisions protocol which includes

making face coverings compulsory; the promotion of 'digital gateway' funding in College; the provision of loans to students and supervisors for the purchase of tablets; a meeting with the Directors of Studies to exchange experiences of blended learning, and for the Admissions Director to provide a briefing about the admissions process for 2020-21.

Action: A list of bookable rooms and their COVID secure capacities to be made available to Teaching staff, as well as Capacity Notices placed outside teaching rooms. (Responsible: Senior Tutor / Conferencing, by week ending 23 October 2020).

d) *Undergraduate Admissions Report 2019-2020 (CC.201014.2.2d)

The report was **noted** by Council.

e) **PG Funding Project Policy Consultation – response from Sidney (CC.201014.2.2e)

Council **approved** the consultation response prepared by the Graduate Tutors.

Action: Graduate Tutors to be informed of Council decision so that the response can be submitted. (Responsible: Council Secretary, by week ending 16 October 2020).

2.3 Bursar's Business

a) COVID-19 Testing and Reporting

The Bursar reported on the implementation and first couple of weeks' experience of the University's asymptomatic screening programme, noting that the student participation appeared to be very positive. The Master thanked the JCR and MCR Presidents for their help in setting up arrangements within College for implementation of the screening programme.

There was a discussion about the consequences of breaching College rules and protocols that have been put in place to keep the College community COVID-safe.

b) Catering arrangements for Michaelmas term

The Bursar updated Council on the catering arrangements for Michaelmas Term and said that these would be kept under review, including whether and when formal halls could be safely re-introduced.

It was noted that the current inability of Fellows to meet over lunch deprived the Fellowship of one of the main ways in which the community of Fellows was experienced. It was suggested that the Fellowship should give some thought to how the sense of Fellowship is sustained in 2020-21.

Action: Forward any ideas to the Master in respect of how to promote a sense of Fellowship within current restrictions. (Responsible: Fellows, by next Council meeting.)

c) Kitchen project progress report

The Bursar updated Council that progress on the kitchen project had been delayed because of the pandemic. She noted that the overall project cost was currently approximately £1 million over the original budget, but that costs had remained relatively stable recently.

d) USS consultation

The Bursar provided an update on the current consultation being undertaken with employers via Universities UK (UUK).

e) *Use of College seal

- i) Darwin Green – Electricity Substation Transfer
- ii) 25 Sidney Street – Licence for alterations
- iii) Darwin Green – Transfer
- iv) Darwin Green – Section 106 Release
- v) 17-18 & 19 Sussex St – Lease

The use of the College seal was **noted** by Council.

f) **College COVID-19 policies and protocols

- i) Face coverings (CC.201014.2.3fi)
- ii) Visitor policy (CC.201014.2.3fii)
- iii) Self-Isolation and Household isolation (CC.201014.2.3fiii)
- iv) Supervisions and academic meetings in College (CC.201014.2.3fiv)
- v) Safe working in College Risk Assessment (CC.201014.2.3fv)

Council **approved** the new and amended COVID-19 policies and protocols listed above.

2.4 Development Director

a) Annual report of Development Director (CC.201014.2.4a)

The Development Director drew attention to an incident detailed in the report, which happened earlier in the year, when there was a ransom attack on

Blackbaud. She informed Council that Blackbaud had confirmed that Sidney had not been affected.

The Master thanked the Development Director and the other members of the Development and Membership Office for the very good fundraising performance in 2019-20.

2.5 Steward's Business

None.

2.6 Student Business

a) JCR Report and Plans for Michaelmas Term (CC.201014.2.6a)

The JCR president summarised the JCR report, drawing specific attention to the large welfare effort SSSU had made following the initial outbreak of COVID-19 as well as the virtual open days that SSSU had contributed to, the launch of the new SSSU website and work on the new JCR constitution.

Tribute was paid to the JCR leadership for their outstanding work and support of the College over the summer.

b) MCR Report and Plans for Michaelmas Term (not available)

This report was not available but will be transferred to the agenda for the November meeting of Council.

c) SSSU JCR Constitution

- i. New Version (CC.201014.2.6ci)
- ii. Old Version (CC.201014.2.6cii)

The JCR President and Vice President explained that the old constitution had been developed when the JCR and MCR were one body, and that the new constitution has been drawn up to reflect that this is no longer the case. The Senior Tutor, as Chair of SSSU, flagged that the work modelled some of the good practice in the modernised constitution of the National Union of Students.

Council **approved** the new constitution.

3. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

3.1 Finance and Needs Committee minutes

- a) *Minutes of the Meeting of 6 October 2020 (CC.201014.3.1a)

- i. **Cycle to Work policy (CC.201014.3.1ai)
- ii. **Fellows Expenses Policy (CC.201014.3.1aii)

Council **noted** the minutes and **approved** the two above listed policies.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

4.1 Any Other Business

There was no other business raised.

4.2 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 11 November 2020 at 2.00pm (Audit Meeting) via Zoom