

## Sidney Sussex College

The **Unreserved Business** Minutes of **College Council** held on Wednesday 11 October 2023 at 2pm

### Present:

<b>Ex officio members</b>	Master, Vice-Master, Senior Tutor, Bursar, Interim Bursar
<b>Elected members</b>	Professor Biagini, Dr Bordin, Dr Doran, Professor Garcia-Mayoral, Dr Groom, Dr Lambert, Dr Ranasinghe, Dr Strelchuk, Dr Sumnall, Dr Wilson-Lee
<b>Student members</b>	Ms Morgan (JCR President), Mr Nicholas (JCR Vice-President), Mr Robertson (Student Representative)
<b>In attendance</b>	College Registrar (Council Secretary)

### 1. Introductory Business

#### 1.1 Welcome and apologies for absence

The Master, Interim Bursar, Professor Biagini, Dr Strelchuk, Dr Sumnall and Dr Wilson-Lee were welcomed or welcomed back to the Council. Apologies were received from Professor Eilstrup-Sangiovanni and Ms Mahmood (MCR President).

#### 1.2 Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved.

#### 1.3 Declarations of Interests

No interests were declared. The Master reminded Council that, although not legally bound by its obligations, the College chose to abide by the Public Sector Equality Duty.

#### 1.4 Minutes of 28 June 2023

**(CC.2023.10.11.1.4)**

The minutes were **confirmed**.

### 2. Reports from Officers

#### 2.1 Master's Business

##### a) Charity Trustees: Responsibilities and Register of Interests

The Master reminded all members of their responsibilities as Trustees and reported that all completed register of interest forms had been received well ahead of the deadline.

##### b) Discussion of inter-collegiate business and other relevant issues

- The Marking & Assessment Boycott had now concluded. Work was underway to finalise results.
- In light of recent news reports about the British Museum, Council asked the Muniment Room Standing Committee to provide assurance of appropriate security arrangements for the Muniment Room and other College collections, and to confirm that a full inventory existed and was regularly checked.

**Action: Registrar/Muniments Committee**

## CC-2023-10-11 Unreserved Minutes (unapproved)

- There had been news reports of students undertaking part-time employment; Council asked the Education and Pastoral Care Committee to keep a watching brief on the situation and report back to Council if necessary.

**Action: Registrar/EdCom**

### c) **College Plan 2023-24** (CC.2023.10.11.2.1c)

The Vice-Master reminded Council of the rationale behind development of a College plan and encouraged the Council to review it before considering new projects, noting that it was a 'live' document. Council **noted** that current governance arrangements might not necessarily support the work required to address the agreed priorities. The Registrar undertook to co-ordinate information from committee workplans and to bring termly update reports to Council.

**Action: Registrar**

Council **agreed** the plan subject to the following amendments:

- Combining the 'Student Wellbeing Initiative' and 'Tutorial and Pastoral Care Programme' priorities as 'Student Care';
- Including reference to maintaining free reserves at or above the target level of £5 million in the 'Financial Recovery' priority;
- Adding the Tutorial Review Working Group as one of the responsible committees for the Tutorial Office Departmental Review priority;
- Refer to 'College facilities' rather than only 'student accommodation' in the priority for improving quality and accessibility on College premises

Council thanked the College Registrar for the plan.

### d) **\*Code of Governance Review: Progress Update** (CC.2023.10.11.2.1d)

The update was **noted**.

### e) **Future Plans for Annual Report and Financial Statements 2023** (CC.2023.10.11.2.1e)

Council **approved** the updated list of future plans, which took into account feedback received since its previous consideration at the Annual Meeting.

### f) **Research Fellowship Competitions: Approval of interview panel chairs**

Council **appointed** Dr Wilson-Lee (Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences) and the Master (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) as respective panel chairs.

## 2.2 Senior Tutor's Business

### a) **\*Admissions Report 2022-23 (Final)** (CC.2023.10.11.2.2a)

The report was **noted** and Council thanked Dr Sumnall and Mr Mill, Acting Admissions Director 2022-23, for the update.

**b) College Research Associates and Visiting Scholars 2023-24**  
**(CC.2023.10.11.2.2b)**

Council **noted** the list of College Research Associates (CRAs) and Visiting Scholars appointed by the Senior Tutor, Dr Doran and Dr Lambert under delegated authority (ACC.2023.06.28.6.2c).

The Senior Tutor reported that:

- administrative arrangements for the scheme had transferred from the Tutorial Office to the Master's Office; and
- with the support of the postgraduate tutors, the MCR executive and two existing CRAs, a comprehensive welcome programme had been organised for new CRAs.

The Master undertook to bring a report to a future meeting on reciprocal dining and accommodation arrangements for Fellows of St John's College, Oxford.

**Action: Master**

**2.3 Bursar's Business**

**a) Draft Financial Results 2022-23** **(CC.2023.10.11.2.3a)**

The Bursar reported that:

- The audit had just been completed, with the final report and audit matters to be presented to Governing Body and Council on 8 November;
- The College had achieved its £5m free reserves target;
- The College's net assets had increased to £139.5 million, primarily due to external factors such as the underlying market value of investments and movements in Pension Provision: Council must remain aware that continuing cost pressures from high inflation and reduced income from the commercial property market meant that the College continued to operate at an operational deficit.

Student members recognised the importance to the College financial results of commercial conference trade, and requested that there be clear communication with the student body, particularly towards the end of Easter Term, about arrangements for summer conferences.

The draft results were **noted**.

**b) Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) Consultation**

Council **noted** that consultation was underway until 24 November. The Bursar reported that if the proposals were accepted, employer contributions were expected to decrease from 21.6% to about 14.5%, with a full-year impact for the College of around £250,000 to assist with addressing the operational deficit.

- c) **\*Data Protection Update** (CC.2023.10.11.2.3c)  
The Data Protection update was **noted** and the Data Protection Policy (CC.2023.10.11.2.3c.i) was **endorsed**.

- d) **\*\*Mandates for College's banks and other financial authorities** (CC.2023.10.11.2.3d)  
Council **authorised** that updated signing mandates be produced for all relevant banks and investment holdings to reflect the change in Mastership and appointment of the Interim Bursar; and **agreed** that all future mandates would henceforth be refer only to office rather than to individuals.

- e) **\*\*Yang Sun Foundation Board Membership**  
Council **appointed** Professor M Burton and Mr M Pierce, as Master and Bursar respectively, as Board Members of the Yang Sun Foundation in accordance with Article 5(a) of the Board's Statutes and Byelaws, and in accordance with the decision of Council on 24 November 1999 (Minute 22d) to appoint the Master, Bursar and Senior Tutor for the time being.

- f) **\*\*Company Administration Arrangements**  
Council:  
i. accepted the resignation of Professor R Penty and **appointed** Professor M Burton as director of Sidney Sussex Limited, with effect from 1 September 2023;  
ii. accepted the resignation of Ms S Bonnett and **approved** the appointment of Mr M Pierce as Council-nominated director and secretary of Sidney Sussex Pension Trustee Limited, both with effect from 13 October 2023;  
iii. accepted the resignation of Ms S Bonnett and **appointed** Mr M Pierce as director of Sidney Sussex Limited, with effect from 13 October 2023; and  
iv. accepted the resignation of Ms S Bonnett and **appointed** Mr M Pierce as director of Sidney Sussex Hospitality Limited, with effect from 13 October 2023.

- g) **\*Use of College Seal**  
Council **noted** the use of the College Seal:  
i. Lease – Grand Floor Basement, 14 Sussex Street  
ii. Transfer – Sale of Adnams B Shares

## 2.4 Development Director's Business

- a) **\*Development First Quarter Report 2023-24** (CC.2023.10.11.2.4a)  
Council **noted** the first quarter report and offered its thanks to the Development Team and to the student volunteers for the telephone campaign which had performed above expectations despite having fewer volunteers than anticipated.

## 2.5 Steward's Business

Nothing to report.

**2.6 Safeguarding Officer's Business**

Nothing to report.

**2.7 Student Business**

**a) JCR Easter Term report and plans for Michaelmas Term**

**(CC.2023.10.11.2.7a)**

In response to the reference in the report to accessibility works, the Master noted that the Domestic Bursar was preparing a progress update for students on the priority list of improvements identified and agreed by the Accessibility Working Group, which included student representatives. The report was **noted** and the JCR were thanked for their support and engagement with Preparation Week activities.

**b) MCR Easter Term report and plans for Michaelmas Term**

**(CC.2023.10.11.2.7b)**

The report was **noted**.

**c) June Event 2023 Report and May Ball 2024 (CC.2023.10.11.2.7c)**

Council **noted** the report and that the June Event 2023 accounts and further details of plans for the May Ball 2024 would come to the next meeting. Council congratulated the June Event 2023 Committee for achieving the Access-A-Ball award, and the students confirmed that arrangements would be in place for the May Ball 2024 to offer lower-price tickets for eligible students who would otherwise not be able to afford to attend.

**3. Reports from Committees**

**3.1 Chapel Committee**

**a) \*Unreserved minutes of 25 May 2023**

Not received.

**3.2 Finance and Needs Committee**

**a) \*Unreserved minutes of 2 October 2023**

**(CC.2023.10.11.3.2a)**

The minutes were **received**.

**i. \*\*Fellows' Expenses Policy**

**(CC.2023.10.11.3.2a.i)**

The updated Expenses Policy was **approved**.

**4. Other Business**

**4.1 Any other business**

Mr Robertson, Student Representative, was thanked for his time on the Council.

**4.2 Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 8 November 2023 (Audit Meeting) in the William Mong Hall following reserved business of the Governing Body.