

Confirmed

**Clare College
Cambridge**

Monday 7 November 2022

A meeting of the Governing Body was held this day at 2pm in the Riley Auditorium.

Present: Ms Minghella, Dr Klee, Dr Pollard, Dr Tatulea-Codrean, Dr van Holstein, Professor Parker, Dr Harris, Professor Lahr, Professor Hedley, Professor Jahn, Dr Foyster, Professor Tasioulas, Professor Lazar, Professor Lestas, Professor Friend, Dr Stillman, Professor Hughes, Dr Carter, Professor Wyburd, Professor Turner, Professor Laman, Professor Shorttle, Rev'd Dr Smith, Dr Burrows, Professor Lawson, Professor Budvytis, Professor Cabrera Serrenho, Professor Lockwood, Professor Berman, Professor Hartnoll, Ms Conder, Professor Block, Professor Howarth, Professor Goodman, Professor Phillips, Professor Thompson, Professor Greenham, Professor Philpott, Professor Frolova-Walker, Professor Sterckx, Professor Preston, Professor Leadlay, Professor Franklin, Professor Thomason, Professor Paulson, Professor Sprik, Dr Follini, Dr Guy, Dr Wilkinson

Apologies: Professor Holdstock, Professor Gibson, Professor Dunajski, Professor van Veen, Professor Weiss, Mr Ross, Professor Watson, Professor Chesters, Professor Cacho, Professor Chambers, Professor Rowitch, Professor Stranks, Professor Wolf, Professor Colleparado, Professor Clarke, Professor Lewens, Professor Ogilvie, Professor Prabhu, Dr Riley, Professor Griffiths, Jasmin Bath (MCR)

Student Representatives: Vithusan Kuganathan (UCS), Hannah Weber (UCS), Tom Else (MCR)

On Leave: Professor Sanson, Professor Toxvaerd, Professor Maniscalco, Professor Clayton, Professor Vinuales

MINUTES

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

1. ***Declarations of Interest***

There were no declarations of interest.

2. ***Matters Arising from the Unreserved Minutes of 13 June 2022 Meeting***

There were no matters arising.

3. ***Old Court Update***

The Bursar provided an update on the Old Court works and drew the Governing Body's attention to the following:

- Phase 1B has suffered delays for a number of reasons, including no allowance being made for quiet time in the College, the impact of Brexit and Covid, and the impact of the war in Ukraine on the supply of building materials. It is now expected that the kitchen completion date will be 18 April 2023, the riverside café completion date will be 10 May 2023, and the reinstatement works completion date will be 20 September 2023.
- Finance Committee has approved the request for additional budget of £1.5m for Phase 2 of the works, which is about to go out to tender. It is hoped that this phase will commence in September 2023.
- It is hoped that the work on the Great Hall will be complete by the end of May 2023. Both the Great Hall and Small Hall were outside the scope of the original project, but a recent donation means that they can be refurbished, with the Great Hall becoming adaptable for music performance.

The Master informed the Governing Body that a further significant donation of £2m towards the Old Court works has been received from two alumni, and she thanked Toby Wilkinson and all those involved in acquiring this gift.

4. ***Financial Performance to year end 30 June 2022***

The Bursar provided an update on the financial performance of the College over the last year. She asked the Governing Body to note the following:

- Investment income has greatly reduced. The value of investment gains has dropped from £25.1m in 2020-21 to £2.5m in 2021-22. There are a number of reasons for this. Market conditions are volatile, and the College has gradually divested and transferred its global public equities to low carbon ESG (Environmental Social and Governance) funds which are typically lower in the current market than non-ESG funds invested in the carbon intensive energy and mining sectors.
- The operating deficit has increased from £1.2m to £2.4m, largely on account of having to recognize the College's share of the increase in the USS pension deficit which amounts to £331k.
- Operational income is rising again. There has been an increase of £1.7m on the previous year, with the completion of St Regis, an increase in post-Covid undergraduate rental income, and an increase in conferencing and catering activity. However, the challenges of inflation will put significant pressure on College finances going forward.

5. ***PREVENT***

The Governing Body agreed to delegate to College Council the authority to sign off the annual PREVENT submission which is due by 1 December 2022.

6. ***Admission Report & Discussion Document***

Admissions

Dr Carter presented the report on the 2021-22 admissions round. He asked the Governing Body to note that application numbers were down slightly across the board, with the south-east and London still providing by far the largest number of applicants.

All interviews for this round will take place on Zoom. Dr Carter requested that if Fellows are interviewing this year in pairs, they do it from the same room. This makes the process feel more personal.

The summer Open Days using the large marquee on the Memorial Court lawn were a great success with good feedback provided by attendees. The plan is to do the same this summer. Some subjects needed more representation at the Open Days, and Dr Carter will send requests to the subjects in question.

Discussion Document

Dr Carter provided the results of two surveys conducted by the University's Admissions Office, one with school teachers, and the other with applicants. The surveys showed that both groups valued the students' opportunity for face-to-face interviews.

Dr Carter reported that Council had already agreed that the College's position on whether interviews should take place remotely or in person would mirror the University' decision. He asked the Governing Body to provide a steer on their preference by an indicative vote, the result of which he would feed back to the University.

Before voting, the Governing Body discussed a number of considerations:

- There should be a focus on the quality of the interview and how it helps academic decision-making.
- Does the environment in which interviews take place have a bearing on performance?
- Interviews in some subjects are technically difficult online e.g. Maths and Music.
- The expense of in-person interviews for the College is high – should the College be footing the bill for those who 'want to look round Cambridge'?
- Online interviews seem to have levelled the playing field between state and private sector applicants
- For less well-off students the process of coming to interview can be a barrier
- What is the sector norm for interviews? Is Oxford going to continue with in-person interviews?
- Are there sufficient data to establish which interview process is less discriminatory? Early figures suggest that state school applicants may perform better in on-line interviews.

After the discussion a majority of the Governing Body members present voted for online interviews with significant caveats.

7. ***Any Other Unreserved Business***

Professor Hedley informed the Governing Body that he and the Fellows' Butler would shortly be undertaking an audit of the College silver. They hope to organise an exhibition of the silver once the Old Court works are complete.