

CONFIDENTIAL

GENERAL COLLEGE MEETING
Friday 17 March 2017 at 9.15 a.m. in the Munro Room
MINUTES

OBSERVERS: Dr Walker

JUNIOR MEMBERS: Mr Albrow-Owen, Miss Whitehead, Mr Wakelam and Mr Collins

NOTE-TAKER: Mrs Pope

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

I UNRESERVED MINUTES of the College Meeting on 15 February 2017

The Unreserved Minutes of the College Meeting held on 15 February 2017 were approved.

II MATTERS ARISING

1. The Senior Tutor notified the Governing Body of a talk by the Black Cantabs Research Society taking place later that afternoon in the Erasmus Room. Spaces are limited but if anyone wishes to attend, they should let Dr Kelly know.

The President added that the College is commissioning a high quality reproduction of the photographic portrait of Alexander Crummell, believed to be the first Black Cantab to matriculate and graduate from the University. This will be placed somewhere appropriate in due course.

Dr Seshia joined the meeting

FUTURE OF THE COLLEGE

The President informed the Governing Body that it had been brought to his attention that those members of the Governing Body who were on sabbatical leave have been prevented by University regulations from attending Governing Body meetings. However, given that this is an important long-term discussion, he had invited members on leave to attend for this part of the business, if they wish to speak, they may do so, but they would not be able to vote.

The President introduced this item of business. Given the extensive discussion at the last meeting, followed by a period of reflection since that meeting, he proposed that the discussion focused on a concrete proposal. He said that he was enormously grateful to Dr Milgate for putting forward some suggestions, and recommended that this paper be used as the basis for discussion.

The President also drew attention to the additional papers on number of intermitters, and the additional note on graduate numbers from the ad-hoc graduate committee.

Undergraduate numbers

The President introduced Dr Milgate's paper focusing on the issues discussed previously and invited comments.

Dr Gee said that the working party on undergraduate numbers had previously considered the issues, and decided to put any constraints aside and look at ultimate cohorts, teaching and learning matters which are central to what we do as a College. These findings were contained in reports previously circulated. All Directors of Studies (with one exception) agreed that in order to get an optimal teaching and learning environment, they all wanted to grow the cohort, and the conclusion from the Directors' of Studies was they would prefer to admit 40 more students each year. This led to a reflection on issues of social cohesion – these issues were discussed at length, resulting in the committee's recommendation that there should be no change in the number of undergraduates admitted.

Considering Dr Milgate's proposal, which is based on accommodation constraints, this would result in a reduction in the number of admissions which is the exact opposite of what Directors of Studies want, therefore Dr Gee said he felt strongly that reducing these numbers would be wrong.

Prof. Nickl said the issue was not purely related to accommodation – it is a question about the size of the fellowship. Dr Gee responded it relates to our ability to provide teaching and learning, reiterating that he was not suggesting we increase in size, purely that we do not reduce the number of admissions and therefore not change the size of fellowship. He added that the largest change in recent years has been the increase in the size of the Fellowship – this has doubled in over 20 years, if we managed to provide teaching and learning with half the number of fellows we have now, we ought to be able to do that now given the number of fellows. With our low student-to-fellow ratio, we managed to grow the endowment therefore we ought to be able to maintain that.

Dr Maguire said this would not be a reduction in the long-term, it is accommodating what we can manage in terms of our resources which may change in terms of the endowment and fellows. Dr Gee accepted this, but felt strongly that teaching and learning should be our core values and the right way to make decisions.

Dr Crowley reflected on our commitment for the "3 year promise of accommodation on the main site". As this appears to be a major driver, he said he would like to hear the reasons for that commitment to be aired so that we can all decide whether we want to retain this as a fundamental commitment.

Dr Thompson reminded the Governing Body that the earliest we could change this policy would be 2019, the 2018 prospectus had already been published and we cannot renege on this.

Dr Milgate said it was his intention that his document was used as a way to try to focus the discussion not on a specific number but a simple rule on how the Admissions Tutor could work out a target each year. He suggested we separate constraints from principle – he agreed about changing constraints, but not about the principle. This speaks to Dr Crowley's comment about constraints, the number of fellows etc – he said the whole range of constraints should be up for discussion. He envisaged that admission numbers would change each year, subject to constraints. The intention was to look at our resources and constraints, and present targets to the Admission Tutor to work with – the Admissions Tutor would then work with Directors of Studies as to how this amounts to in terms of their aspirations.

The JCR members were invited to speak, given that some caution had been noted about reducing numbers at the last meeting at last GB.

The JCR observer felt that the intake on subjects would change, some subjects would be decreased in size of the cohort and any increase would be quite small. On the issue of the 3 year promise of accommodation on the main site, she felt this does have a unique role in the atmosphere with students feeling a sense of togetherness.

Revd Harling referred to the issue of intermitting returning students and he believed there should be the ability to house these students on the main site. He added that the idea we do not accept intermitting students until they are 100% well is untrue. We receive them back when we can manage them and this requires input on site. He felt there should be an option for the Senior Tutor to not allow them on main site, but on medical grounds, we ought to have capacity to house them on main site.

Dr Gee said he agreed with Dr Milgate in that we should have a tactical formula on how to set numbers, but felt we should discuss core principals first. Whether we are willing to support a reduction in numbers, given the feelings of Directors of Studies, this would have negative affect on teaching and learning, therefore these are high level strategic decisions which need to be discussed before looking at formula on how we set a target. If we accept this now without making strategic decisions we will reduce intake.

Prof. Terentjev noted that we will be changing the lives of students, but we should not do so at the expense of the quality of our contribution. Even though we have increased the fellowship, we are still 24th amongst colleges' fellows to student ratio. We cannot afford not to give them better support (comparable to other colleges) simply because this is our financial position. He felt that aiming to change the lives of students is a good strategy, but it needs to be clear that at present it comes at the expense of quality.

The JCR President joined the meeting

Prof. Prager said that in relation to changing lives, he has always been struck by what we achieve as a university in terms of excellent undergraduate teaching and education which is second to none. Notwithstanding the fact that we sometimes view ourselves primarily as a research power-house.

The President started summing up the discussion. He said that what we have identified is a very clear position the college is adopting. Firstly, we are reminded that this is one of the largest colleges in the University, and we have extended our numbers to accommodate large number of students. That aside, it seems we have clarified our thinking in two ways. Firstly, there is the idea of what Dr Gee puts as “the strategic position” and the recommendation of the ad-hoc committee to recommend undergraduate numbers remain as they are.

The issue then is what are the constraints upon it and these are sketched out in Dr Milgate’s note. The division into strategic goals and identification of the current constraints we must work within is very helpful.

The President put forward a proposal: we accept the recommendations of the undergraduate ad-hoc committee that it remains as the size it as a strategic goal, at approximately 150 a year. And that in moving towards that goal, we seek to discuss at length the constraints preventing us achieving this comfortably at present. In terms in which we navigate ourselves from here to there he suggested that Dr Milgate’s paper is a great help and a matter of advice to the Admissions Tutor in dealing with matters on a year by year basis. It highlights the constraints we have to deal with.

If we agree these 2 levels, it gives us scope to discuss everything else in terms of the size of the fellowship, accommodation and buildings issues etc.

Mr Spence noted that we have not yet explored the rationale for the 3 year promise of accommodation on the main site and that it would be helpful to know this rationale.

There followed a brief discussion. It was noted that the main draw for students to apply to Queens’ should be on teaching and learning. Dr Campbell suggested we vote on the first part today and then look at the various factors, investigate thoroughly and report back with a proper proposal. Dr Gee said he would support this, adding that in the ad-hoc report it was recommended that the Council of the College Union investigate this. Prof. Menon felt that it was impossible to divorce the two parts of the discussion as they are closely linked.

Dr Crowley referred to the accommodation promise for exchange students, and wondered whether the main site promise of accommodation is something we could reasonably give up as a commitment without affecting their experience.

The President recommended a formal proposal – that the Governing Body accept the recommendations of the ad-hoc committee to stay approximately the same size as we are (a ball-park annual figure of 150) – as a strategic goal - and that we recognise that in moving towards that goal there are constraints, some of which are set out in Dr Milgate’s note. The additional constraint is the promise of accommodation for 3 years on the main site. We will seek to have a paper or papers dealing with these constraints for discussion at a future meeting. The proposal was seconded by Prof. Menon and agreed by the Governing Body.

Dr Gee left the meeting

GRADUATE NUMBERS

The President spoke to the note from the ad-hoc committee and the suggestion that we remain the same size, recognising the constraints outlined.

The MCR President added that the report summarised the thinking of the graduate student body. He said that one of the most interesting things has been the squeeze on main-site accommodation over past 4 years, which has seen the number of graduates living on the main site reduce to 9 and he was puzzled as to why this is happening. He felt it important to have a graduate presence on the main site – from the perception of how the College views the MCR, and the importance of the integration of the two communities, there are lots of benefits to be had. He felt it extremely important that the number of 20 housed on the main site should not be squeezed to the side.

The JCR President added that the main issue which came up was the 3 years promise which was a big draw-card.

Dr Crowley reflected on the suggestion of the 2% increase, he said the College has considerably exceeded this commitment for some time. If this was dropped now, we still have a lot of credit to draw on if we do this. Mr Spence added that a number of other colleges would feel the benefit of meeting the 2% growth rate. Prof Rex pointed out that the University has not achieved this target.

The MCR President said the size of the student body is important, at Queens’ it is one of its main strengths, he did not feel there is the need to increase any further, given the accommodation issues we have and constraints make this unfeasible. He felt that a drop of 2% would be of no issue to the MCR.

The President made a formal proposal: That the overall goal is to sustain at the current aggregate level and as far as constraints, we should work towards accommodating at least 65% as recommended by the Senior Tutor’s committee. The proposal was seconded by Prof Hall and approved by the Governing Body.

Prof. Jones asked if the College is setting a time-scale to re-visit these discussions – it was agreed that there would ordinarily be a 10 year review.

III COLLEGE OFFICERS AND FELLOWS' BUSINESS

1. The President

The President announced that there will be a dinner in the President's Lodge for all Fellows on the evening of Monday 3 July to welcome our new Visitor, the Rt. Hon. Beverley McLachlin, Chief Justice of Canada, and to thank Lord Falconer, our outgoing Visitor.

2. Senior Tutor

All members of the College are required to respect the College Examination Period (24 April to 16 June 2017). During this period it is expected that noise in College will be kept to a minimum to allow students to prepare for their examinations.

3. Estates Bursar –

Dr Walker reported that the works on the Riverbank wall are almost complete.

Dr Walker invited questions about the paper outlining the proposed works for re-lighting the Old Hall (CM3634). Dr Milgate asked about the kind of lighting being proposed – Dr Walker explained the lighting will be dimmable, coloured lighting (ie not bright white). He noted that there is a set of prints in his office which give an impression of the proposal and invited members of the Governing Body to consult these if they so wish. The Governing Body approved the proposal for re-lighting the Old Hall as specified in CM3634.

4. The Director of Development informed the Governing Body of a new development office event designed to help with constraints. Benefactors who have donated £10K (net) or more in the last three years will be invited to an event on 7 May, they will attend the Commemoration of Benefactors ceremony in chapel, and then parade through the Old Library and President's Lodge, after which they will attend a feast in Old Hall. There will follow a couple of speeches by students and Fellows about how philanthropy has helped. It is hoped that we will retain donor loyalty and hope this will grow the number of donors. This is also an opportunity for current students to see the link between philanthropy, going forward. Fellows will be notified which benefactors who will be attending in due course.

The President added that the College is hugely dependent on philanthropy to help us achieve our goals. This is a way of thanking those who have supported us but also reinforcing their loyalty to the College. He said it would be greatly appreciated if Fellows can make effort to attend the event.

Mr Kitt noted that he and the President will be visiting New York, Washington and Hong Kong meeting new donors, and thanking current donors to help increase that benefactor group. He added that a lot of our major gifts come from these areas.

5. The Dean

Revd Harling spoke to CM3635, whereby the Governing Body is asked formally to approve the appointment of the Revd Terry Brown as Incumbent of the Parish of St Andrew's, Sandon, in the Diocese of Chelmsford. The Governing Body formally approved this appointment.

Revd Harling informed the Governing Body that a Memorial Service for Peter Watson will take place on 26 May at 12.30pm at the Church of St Mary the Great.

IV REPORT OF THE APPEALS AND DONATIONS COMMITTEE (CM3633)

The Governing Body approved the recommendations of the Appeals & Donations Committee contained within CM3633. It was noted that four student representatives were involved in the decision-making process.

V UNRESERVED MINUTES OF THE TUTORIAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 FEBRUARY 2017

The Unreserved Minutes of the Tutorial Committee meeting held on 22 February 2017 were noted.

Dr Kelly drew attention to the coming changing in Data Protection. He added that transparency will be main driver, the College will have to obtain consent, and that fines will increase considerably. More information will follow as the University determines its course.

The President said this is a result of a EU Directive which will be incorporated into UK law post-Brexit. These will be extremely onerous for College and for the Development office in particular. There is going to be a legally contested argument by the University arguing that the regulations do not apply to universities. The regulations apply to public bodies, the issue is the definition of public body. Given the complexity, the College is looking to introduce some professional assistance, perhaps in co-operation with 3 other local colleges. There is potentially a huge risk if we do not comply as under the new legislation we could be subjected to very heavy fines – up to £500 million which would essentially close the College. We are therefore taking steps with a consortium of other colleges to help guide us through this minefield.

Mills & Reeve have indicated that universities would not be exempt. Mr Kitt added that his office are already taking steps to change our Data Protection statement as

advised. He said it would be good practice for everyone to be careful about how they use peoples contact details, and where they place these in the public domain and urged all Fellows to direct all alumni- related matters via the alumni office.

Dr Kelly added that in this academic year, the class lists will be published - but it is unclear whether they will be published in subsequent years.

Dr Kelly referred to item 3, the Prevent conference. He noted this was a very wide-ranging and balanced conference and that conversations are recorded as part of the compliance process.

VI MINUTES OF THE TEACHING & LEARNING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON
23 FEBRUARY 2017

The Unreserved Minutes of the Teaching & Learning Committee meeting held on 23 February 2017 were noted.

Dr Kelly drew attention to item 5, Subject Contacts: Call for Nominations. He added that this is working extremely well and would be grateful if Directors of Studies could nominate subject contacts to Dr Tait.

Prof. Scott left the meeting

VII MINUTES OF THE PREVENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 FEBRUARY 2017
(This item was withdrawn from the agenda.)