

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

MINUTES

A meeting of **GOVERNING BODY** was held on Wednesday 12th March 2025 at 2.00 p.m. in the Senior Common Room.

Present: The President, Professor S. Elston, Professor K. Nation, Professor P. Maini, Revd. Canon Professor W. Whyte, Professor R. M. Harding, Professor H. Bouman, Professor A. Starinets, Professor T. Burt de Perera, Professor M. Omri, Professor P. R. Hayes, Professor A. Russell, Professor C. Newton, Professor R. Ekins, Professor J. Obloj, Dr. G. Kantor, Professor B. Murnane, Professor J. Stanyek, Professor Z. Olszewska, Professor C. Beem, Professor L. di Mare, Professor G. Rose, Professor S. Kiefer, Professor N. Sugimura, Professor R. Slater, Mr. R. Crow, Professor S. White, Professor E. Greensmith, Dr. M. Nicholls, Professor B. McFarlane, Professor E. Wonnacott, Ms. Z. Hancock, Dr S. Campbell, Dr. K. Doornik, Professor R. Hoye, Professor L. Hunt, Professor T. Qutbuddin, Professor I. Williams, Professor G. Evans, Professor L. Moody, Professor C. Munday

Apologies: Professor A. R. Weidberg, Professor Z. Molnár, Professor M. Cannon, Professor D. Martin, Professor A. Hills, Professor S. Myers, Professor A. Wright, Professor J. Schnell, Professor H. Skoda, Professor N. Lübecker, Professor K. Southwood, Professor J. J. Pandit, Professor I. Klinke, Professor L. Pratt, Professor S. Toussaert, Professor N. Jones, Professor R. Lall, Professor K. J. Patel, Professor A. Lak, Professor S. Knott

In attendance: Ms. D. Cripps

ACTION

AGENDA 'C'

1. Minutes of Governing Body and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting of Governing Body held on 19th February 2025 were **approved**.

In matters arising the President reported on the responses to their governance decisions that other colleges had received from the Charity Commission. The Charity Commission had asked for a further update on progress in twelve months. The Governing Body had carefully considered the letter from the Charity Commission and would keep the issues raised under review.

PRESIDENT

The Principal Bursar reported that the Privy Council had been waiting on the Charity Commission's response in relation to the revisions to the College Statutes. Once the new Statute relating to the Visitor had been approved by Governing Body, the College's Statutes would proceed as a whole for Privy Council approval.

2. Honorary Fellowships

The Governing Body **elected** Mr Henry Dimbleby and Sir Christopher Wormald to Honorary Fellowships.

PRESIDENT

3. College Officerships: Vacancies for 2025/26

The President noted the College Officerships that would fall vacant for the next academic year and invited interested Fellows to contact her.

GOVERNING BODY

She also reported that the Working Party on College Officerships had been looking at the relationship between roles, with current officers providing an indication of the amount of time their role required.

The Governing Body discussed where scrutiny of College Officerships should lie and whether trustees were conflicted in discussing the roles themselves (noting that Remuneration Committee reviewed and made recommendations on any stipend). It was suggested that a report should be reviewed by General Purposes Committee in the first instance.

PRESIDENT

4. Governance Working Party

The minutes of the meetings held on 22nd January 2025 and 26th February 2025 were received.

The Governing Body **agreed** that the revised governance arrangements should be in during academic year 2025/26 and that an external review of Governing Body should be undertaken in 2026/27.

It was also **agreed** to adopt a Memorandum of Understanding between the College and the Visitor in the interim period until a new Visitor was appointed (see Appendix One).

PRESIDENT

The Governing Body received a report from the Governance Working Party on its work and **agreed** the following:

- a) the College's governance model (see Appendix Two);
- b) that the size and composition of Governing Body should remain as currently constituted;
- c) (in principle) that trustees should be able to resign from Governing Body membership (that is, to cease to be a trustee) for a fixed period of time and with a right to be reinstated, subject to agreement of acceptable wording in the College Statutes and By-Laws;
- d) (in principle) that there should be a quorum at Governing Body meetings of two-thirds of members of Governing Body to vote on major decisions, subject to agreement of acceptable wording in the College By-Laws;
- e) that external members should not be included as members of Governing Body and trustees of the College;
- f) that student attendance at Governing Body should not be expanded and that students should not serve as trustees of the College;
- g) that the President should continue to act as Chair of the Governing Body;
- h) that the Chair of the Audit, Risk & Governance Committee should be asked to provide an external perspective on the President's annual review;
- i) that there should be no change to the Statute relating to the President but that any future updates to this, and the possible creation of a new By-Law, should be considered further by Statutes Committee;
- j) that the Long Vacation Committee should be retained and come into operation after the Week 9 Trinity Term Stated General Meeting; that the relevant By-Law should be reviewed by Statutes Committee and reinstated in the By-Laws as a permanent committee of Governing Body;

- k) that the current frequency of Governing Body meetings should be retained, except for the Week 11 Trinity Term meeting which would be removed from the schedule;
- l) the updated scheme of delegation (see Appendix Three);
- m) that trustee attendance at Governing Body meetings should be published internally;
- n) (in principle) that legal advice should be obtained on remedial action for trustees who did not perform their duties;
- o) that there should be continued administrative improvements to Governing Body papers and agendas with, for example, more business being moved to Agenda A where possible;
- p) (in principle) that Standing Orders and a Committee Secretaries Handbook should be created to detail, for example, the business that should go into Agendas A, B, and C, what items should go above and below the line (and when), the reservation of a Week 1 meeting for discussion of strategy, and a framework for College Officers to report to Governing Body.
- q) That Statutes Committee should take forward the work on drafting a new Statute for the Visitor and recommending the overall next steps in the process of changing the Visitor.

PRESIDENT

5. Audit, Risk and Governance Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th March 2025 were received.

The Governing Body **agreed** the Fire Safety Policy and Work At Height Policy.

PRINCIPAL BURSAR

6. Educational Policy Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th March 2025 were received.

The Senior Tutor noted the report on applicant and offer numbers for the 2024 admissions process.

The Governing Body **agreed** that, subject to the outcome of discussions at the other participating colleges, the post of German Lektor*in would be reconfigured as a 12-hour Stipendiary Lectureship and advertised for filling with effect from 1st October 2025.

The Admissions Conflict of Interest Policy and Vacation Policy were **agreed**.

The Senior Tutor updated Governing Body on the options for Oxford-only undergraduate admissions tests from 2026 and the request from the University Joint Working Group on Admissions Testing that colleges discuss the issues and take a view in principle, ahead of an advisory vote at the (joint University/Conference of Colleges) Admissions Committee in Trinity Term. []

SENIOR TUTOR

7. Finance and Estates Committee

The minutes of a meeting held by email circulation on 7th March 2025 were received.

The Governing Body **agreed** the purchase of [].

PRINCIPAL BURSAR

8. Masterplan Working Party

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th February 2025 were received.