

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCRUTINY

MINUTES

Monday 5 June 2023

12.30pm in the SCR at Christ's College and via Teams

Present:

Professor Richard Mortier (Chair), Mr Graham Allen (Secretary), Mrs Rachel Rowe (Support Officer), Dr Seb Falk, Dr Orsola Rath Spivack, Dr Mark Purcell, Dr Charles Read, Dr Rob Doubleday, Dr David Butterfield, Mr Rob Hopwood (via Teams), Dr Gilly Carr (via Teams), and Dr Nazia Habib (via Teams).

The meeting began at 12.35pm.

1. Apologies and welcome:

Apologies were received from Rev Dr Andrew Hammond.

2. Declarations of Interest:

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 5 May 2023:

The minutes were confirmed as a correct record.

4. Matters arising:

- a. Election – The Board noted the deadline for nominations for three places in class c(ii) and one place in class c(i) is 12 noon on 15 June 2023.
- b. Access to papers – Following a query raised with the University, the practice of the Proctors to make Council papers available on request to members was confirmed. The Board's expectation was that this would be followed by future Proctors.
- c. Emergency Examinations Task Force – The Chair reported that he had requested more information be provided in The Reporter on the composition, remit and powers of the Emergency Examinations Task Force.
- d. Cambridge Advance Online – The Secretary had previously circulated documentation received from Professor Andy Neely relating to Cambridge Advance Online. These would be considered by the Education Working Group.

5. Report from Proctors:

The Board were updated on the areas of discussion raised at the last Council meeting.

6. Guest – Dr Anthony Freeling, Acting Vice-Chancellor:

The Board welcomed Dr Anthony Freeling and the following topics were discussed:

- i.) What Dr Freeling felt his main achievements in the role to be, and any particular challenges;
- ii.) The principal elements involved in the handover with the incoming Vice-Chancellor, and any anticipated difficulties she may face;

- iii.) The recent debates over funding from companies with links to fossil fuels and the review of the EJRA;
- iv.) Concerns over the University's ability to implement change programmes;
- v.) The effectiveness of the University's senior management structure and staffing;
- vi.) The balance between "centralisation" and the devolution of powers and processes;
- vii.) The level of engagement of the Regent House in University governance;
- viii.) The recent controversy regarding the Sackler family.

7. Updates from Working Groups:

The Board received updates from the Education Working Group.

8. Annual Report:

Board members were asked to review recent discussions and consider items to include in the upcoming Annual Report.

9. Any Other Business:

Board members briefly discussed a recent communication received by the Chair relating to HR-related matters, e.g. the University's response to stress in staff and working conditions.

10. Future meetings:

A whole Board meeting has been arranged for Tuesday 5 September to meet the incoming Vice-Chancellor, Debbie Prentice. Further dates will be arranged by email circulation.

Working Group meetings:

- Friday 9 June, 2 – 3pm, in the Student Services Centre room A329, with Natalie Acton, Head of Student Support (Education Working Group)
- Thursday 22 June, 10 – 11am – Governance online meeting.
- Wednesday 5 July, 12 – 1pm, in the Student Services Centre room B201, with Mike Nicholson, Deputy Head of Education Services: Admissions and Participation (Education Working Group)

The meeting closed at 2.35pm.

Rachel Rowe
Support Officer