



MINUTES

*of a meeting of Governing Body held
at 8.30 pm on Tuesday 4 November 2025*

There were present the Master, Dr Al Azmeh, Dr Armitage, Dr Bardhan, Dr Beauregard, Dr Bitney, Dr Briggs, Professor Cant, Professor Chu, Professor Dicks, Dr Eves, Dr Filimonova, Mrs Fraser Butlin, Dr Gardner, Dr Halina, Professor Haustein, Mr Helm, Dr Hopkins, Dr Howard (Secretary), Dr Jenkins, Professor Keeler, Dr Kim, Mr Kitov, Ms MacDonald, Dr B McDougall, Dr K McDougall, Professor Meer, Revd Dr Milbank Robinson, Professor Moultrie, Mr Nicholson, Professor Nikiforakis, Dr O'Donnell, Professor O'Sullivan, Ms Phillips, Dr Reinbold, Professor Sage, Dr Sewell, Dr D Smith, Dr T Smith, Dr Soderman, Professor Stewart, Professor Summers, Professor Tasker, Dr Tavakkolnia, Professor Velu, Dr Venkateshvaran, Dr Viejo Rose, Dr Whitler, Dr Woodford and Dr V Young; the MCR President, Mr Jeffrey Pendleton, and Treasurer, Ms Zofia Dziekan, and the JCR President, Ms Sophie Jacques.

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

gb2025.44 Starred items

It was confirmed that starred items would not be discussed.

gb2025.45 Statement of conflicts of interest

There were no conflicts of interest arising from the unreserved Agenda concerning any of those persons present.

gb2025.46 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Dr Balakrishnan, Dr Button, Ms Domenici, Dr Lee, Dr Vargas Weil and Dr Wilcox; and from the JCR Treasurer, Ms Lea Fink.

gb2025.47 Minutes of the unreserved Governing Body meeting held on 24 June 2025

The minutes were received and signed.

gb2025.48 Matters arising

There were no unreserved matters arising.

gb2025.49 Accounts for the year ending 30 June 2025

The Bursar presented the College Annual Accounts (**GB2025/17**), reminding those present that while Council would ultimately approve the Accounts, presentation to Governing Body enabled it to inform Council's

subsequent consideration of whether the charity was managing its resources responsibly, using its assets in support of its aims, managing risks prudently, and declaring its financial position clearly. The main headline was a slight growth in income—though considerably steadier than in the previous three years, reflecting a plateauing of conference income after several years of healthy post-Covid recovery. This was set against a general trend of rising expenditure, mainly related to staffing costs including the increases in employer NI contributions and the Real Living Wage. Expenditure had risen slightly more slowly than expected in 2024–25, but some of the savings resulted from difficulties in appointing new staff to vacant positions. College was likely to remain reliant on unrestricted donations to balance the books for the foreseeable future. Donations in 2024–25 had again outstripped expectations by a large margin, but this margin had decreased from the previous year; in general the volatility of donations meant that it would be better to view these numbers over a longer period in future. Taking all this into account, the achievement of a surplus for the second year running was a genuine success, though this was tempered by the significant reduction in that surplus (to about a quarter of that in 2023–24) and the forecast of over £1m deficit in the 2025–26 budget. In cash generation terms, a surplus remaining over £1m meant that College able to meet its obligations; the Bursar reminded Governing Body, however, that the £6m loan taken out to fund the hostels refurbishment project would become repayable in a year’s time, and the cost of servicing that debt would be likely to increase considerably, necessitating careful consideration of whether it should be repaid. The Master congratulated the Bursar and her team on the clean Audit. Governing Body agreed to recommend to Council that the Accounts be approved, and likewise endorsed the accompanying letter of recommendation to the Auditors.

gb2025.50 *JCR and MCR Accounts*
Governing Body received and noted the JCR and MCR signed accounts for 2023–24 (**GB2025/18**).

gb2025.51 *Refurbishment of 21 and 23 West Road*
The Bursar introduced **GB2025/19**, detailing progress on the plans for the refurbishment of 21 and 23 West Road. The main aims of the project were to refresh and renovate student rooms, increase the sustainability of the accommodation (especially in relation to thermal resilience and heating efficiency) and improve the range of accessible accommodation; to this had been added provision of a common entrance to the buildings, thereby improving security and providing better visual consistency from within Ann’s Court, as well as creating new group-working space for student use. In relation to the increase in the Budget from the original £2.5m to almost £4m, the Bursar noted that the expansion of scope had been prompted by the involvement of the Development Office; Mr Nicholson confirmed that plans for fundraising to cover the additional expenditure, and perhaps even free up some of the original earmarked funding, were well under-way, with every sign of success. It was also noted that some of the original



aims of the project in relation to sustainability and accessibility would not in fact have been financially viable without this expansion of scope. The matter will now be referred to Council on 11 November for a final decision on submission of the planning application; Fellows with further questions or observations were encouraged to share them with members of the working group (the Bursar, Senior Tutor, Operations Manager, Head of Buildings & Maintenance, Professor Moultrie, Professor Haustein and Dr Howard).

gb2025.52

Investment Committee

The Investment Committee's annual report for 2024–25 was received and noted (**GB2025/20**). After a strong performance in 2023–24, overall growth of College's invested funds had been more subdued in 2024–25, with a total return of 2.5% on the Cazenove portfolio and an increase of 2.7% in the College's total investments. Despite the improvement in net assets in recent years, it was important to note that the growth of the portfolio by 19.7% since 2020 coincided with a period in which CPI had risen 27.9%, leaving the portfolio 10.2% under in terms of real economic value.

gb2025.53

College Statutes

Governing Body noted that the Privy Council had approved the revised Statutes (see *cc2025.8*, *gb2025.9*; **CP2025/03**, **GB2025/03**) on 15 October 2025.

gb2025.54

Senior Tutor's report

The Senior Tutor introduced **GB2025/21**. Academic performance had been excellent in the 2025 examinations, Selwyn's second place in the Baxter Tables coming close to its best ever performance. It was pleasing that the College's gender attainment gap was negligible both among Firsts and among those achieving Good Honours (I or 2i). Dr Sewell paid tribute to the Development office for their support of the College's various travel and summer project funds, which fed directly into this academic success by facilitating ambitious project and dissertation work for many students.

Attention was drawn to the College's obligations under the new Freedom of Speech guidelines, and the need to balance these carefully with its duties to prevent harassment and sexual misconduct under the OfS's registration condition E6. In particular, some students may now encounter views which they consider discriminatory or even experience as harassment, but which nevertheless constitute protected academic free speech. The practical implications of such situations may become clearer over time, but more immediately, Tutors and others engaged in pastoral support should be prepared for difficult conversations with students should such cases arise in College.

Fellows were reminded of the changes to the arrangements for exam allowances. Many allowances previously available at Parts IA and IB were no longer offered, with a preference instead for intermission to permit otherwise struggling students to progress. Reforms for graduating students included the introduction for the first time in most subjects of limited opportunities for the resitting of examinations, with similar provisions also in



place for taught postgraduates. Students may need more help than usual navigating the new systems.

Governing Body briefly discussed expectations for support of students undertaking resits. Dr Sewell reported that numbers were expected to be very low, and generally resits would take place either alongside the next year's cohort or through alternative means of assessment, with no obligation on academic staff to provide additional support and students not expected to be in residence. Measures had been taken to avoid resits eating into academics' research time. Further discussion centred on the reasons for Selwyn's strong examination performance this year; however, it was difficult to draw firm conclusions given the number of factors involved, and the extent to which positioning in the Baxter Tables depended on the performance of other Colleges as well as Selwyn's own.

gb2025.55

Admissions matters

Dr Beauregard reported that in the 2025 admissions round Selwyn had received about 770 applicants, broadly in line with the last 4 years. College had 120 rooms available for freshers; as was usual about 450 candidates were interviewed, giving a ratio of approximately 3.5–4 applicants per place. 2025 had been a successful round, and College had met or exceeded all of its Widening Participation targets.

Dr Tom Smith then updated Fellows on the 2026 round. College had received a record 909 direct applications, in line with significant increases across the University. Within this figure there was a still greater increase in STEM applicants, masking what remained worrying trends in several Arts and Humanities subjects whose pool of qualified candidates continued to shrink. The record numbers underlined the need for robust deselection, especially where pre-interview test scores were available. College would only have resources to interview realistically competitive candidates; the Admissions team would continue its successful approaches in recent years to the issuing of tougher offers and judicious use of the Winter Pool. Dr Smith thanked colleagues in advance for their help, including the JCR student ambassadors. He finished by briefly reviewing College outreach activities, including 3 summer schools during 2025, and the Bridging Course (the latter funded by the Dawsons for the next 4 years). Extensive school visits and contact with link schools continued under the Schools Liaison Officers; this year was likely to see something of a transition, with the redesign of some outreach offerings, implementation of a new University Access and Participation Plan; and a desire to develop links with Selwyn's second Link Area, East Berkshire (the other being West Yorkshire). Fellows with ideas for new or improved access and participation initiatives were encouraged to discuss them with the Admissions team.

gb2025.56

Development matters

The Development Director gave a verbal report, reminding Fellows that while fundraising was a core activity of his team, it was only part of a wider picture including a busy programme of events and maintaining communications with alumni and the wider College community. The College Calendar had just been published, with over 8000 copies currently



being distributed; Mr Nicholson thanked Mr Fox and his team for their work on this. He went on to reflect on Communications, noting that the former Master had been well placed to manage and develop both internal and external communications given his official role and social prominence in College. The appointment of the new Head of Communications was a positive step in ensuring continuity in this area, but her position in College would not give her the same automatic level of insight. Fellows were requested to bear this in mind and make additional efforts to share news, events and other items for communication with her regularly.

Mr Nicholson closed by informing Governing Body of his intention to retire at the end of the current academical year. A recruitment process would be initiated in early spring, and it was hoped that College would find this an opportune moment to appoint a new Development Director to work alongside the new Master. Governing Body applauded Mr Nicholson for his service, and wished him well for the remainder of his time in office. Fellows were asked to keep his retirement confidential until further notice.

gb2025.57

College holiday dates

The College holiday dates for 2026 were received and noted (**GB2025/22**).

gb2025.58

Any other unreserved business

There was no other unreserved business.

