

## **MINUTES**

### **GENERAL MEETING**

#### **ST. EDMUND HALL MCR**

**MCR, 7pm 19 October 2016**

**Apologies: None**

**19 Ordinary Members present before guest nominations**

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#### **Nominations of Independent Officer/Chair**

The following individuals have been nominated to stand as independent officer/chair for 2017. Nominations are made by the President and voted in by majority vote:

Beatrice Tyrrell

18 in favour

1 abstention

0 objections

Beatrice elected.

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#### **Reports from MCR Committee Members**

##### **President**

- MCR research blog; to be discussed a bit later
- MCR equality week in collab with Tim Dyer
  - o Cherelle Dacon is BME rep
  - o Racial, LGBTQI+, Mental health awareness events
- 3000 women in the Hall events
  - o Talks by successful women from Teddy
  - o Everyone welcome to attend/encouraged to attend
- Academic committee meeting
  - o Prize money for MCR research blog
  - o Linde raised issue of charges for continuing students
    - Website to be updated to prevent confusion about the charges (and when you don't need to pay any longer)
- Shut up and write sessions are back
- Governing body meetings

- Change in statues of college
  - College wants more freedom to make changes, particularly regarding purchasing property

### **Vice President**

- Punt
  - Repairs; No progress to date
- Sports
  - Gym inductions are through. Only if there is demand will more inductions be arranged.
- Refurb summary provided

### **Treasurer**

- Gave a breakdown of her role in the MCR (as per the constitution)
- Break down of the budget for the term.

### **IT**

- MCR website was redone
- MCR research blog is ready to roll out

### **Welfare**

- Fresher's week went well
- Only 8 people attended the consent workshop
  - More than last year
- Family bake off and high tea events planned
- Peer support schedule will be up soon

### **Stewards**

- Freshers' week was successful
- MT plan is in place

## **Nominations for Guest Membership**

The following individuals have been put forward as nominees for Guest Membership of the St. Edmund Hall MCR:

<u>Ordinary Member</u>	<u>Nominated member</u>	
Olivia Payne	James King	No objections/No abstentions
Ryan Daniels	Alessandro Raveane	No objections/No abstentions
Ryan Daniels	Serena Aneli	No objections/No abstentions
Ryan Daniels	Marie Wong	No objections/No abstentions
Kelly Bridges	Andres Alvarez	No objections/No abstentions
Sarah-Lea Effert	Nils Hohenstein	No objections/No abstentions
Jennifer Bunselmeier	Angela Fluegel	No objections/No abstentions
Jennifer Bunselmeier	Timo Buelters	No objections/No abstentions
Ritwika Sengupta	Gemma Robson	No objections/No abstentions
Anthony Mahira	Naomi Wangari	No objections/No abstentions

Jarryd Brogden	Athena Kitching	No objections/No abstentions
Toby St Clere Smithe	Linda Briggs	No objections/No abstentions
Laura Brace Rochford	Devin Rochford	No objections/No abstentions
John Logan	Emily Grey	No objections/No abstentions
Amelia Huggan	Ashley Rogers	No objections/2 abstentions
George Spill	Rebecca Preece	(switch from G. Prata)
Melissa Bedard	Evie Foster	No objections/No abstentions
Alexander Fischer	James Cook	No objections/No abstentions
Linde Wester	Federico Pulverenti	No objections/No abstentions
Linde Wester	Emma Powel	No objections/No abstentions
Jennifer Bunselmeier	Sebastian Kleinschmidt	No objections/No abstentions

### **Motion to amend the MCR constitution**

Brought forward by: MCR committee  
Presented by: Linde Wester

The motion has been brought forward to amend the constitution of the MCR to reflect two minor changes:

To extended job description of Academic rep to include: Addition of the point "Academic Representative: point 5.8.

(g) Administering the MCR 50th Anniversary Grant, in liaison with the tutor for graduates, the MCR president and the treasurer.

(h) Take an active role in the running of the biannual research expo which is to take place in 'even years'

(i) Manage the MCR Research blog"

This has been through a committee meeting without objection. The changes will be voted on in the next General Meeting. Amendments shall be subject to the subsequent approval of the Governing body.

Vote in favour:28    Against:0    Abstention:0

### **Motion to Maintain the Atmosphere of the MCR**

Brought forward by: Will Harvey and Zafar Khurshid  
Presented by: Will Harvey

The proponents of this Motion recognize the invaluable work that the MCR Committee and Refurbishment Team have done for, and on behalf of, the members of the MCR. We welcome a spirit of improvement and advancement in

the space and life of the MCR, however, it is hoped that improvements to the MCR space would appropriately honor the spirit and atmosphere of the MCR.

The St. Edmund Hall MCR, while not being the most spacious or well equipped, has always maintained a warm and friendly environment. This comes through from its members, but also the common room at NSE, and particularly, the College site. It is hoped that future refurbishments will not change that atmosphere.

We would like acknowledge the efforts by the MCR Committee inviting members to participate in the decision making regarding these refurbishments, and thus the MCR Committee and Refurbishment Team may be frustrated by the nature of some of the comments herein. However, it is hoped that the MCR Committee and Refurbishment Team will recognize that the MCR is a space fondly remembered and often visited by former members as well. Persons who are enthusiastic to remain in touch with the College and their former colleagues. It is hoped that this MCR, and future incarnations, will thus note the importance of maintaining some continuity in the space of the MCR.

In particular, we are somewhat troubled by the following developments:

- The removal of the pins from the map located in the MCR – This act, while seemingly insignificant, seems to send the message that the past generations, even if not many, who left their mark in the MCR by placing their pins have already been forgotten. While it may not be missed by many, the few who have taken notice and those that visit may not be so much in favour of what little they left behind of themselves in the MCR being so summarily disposed of.
- The placement of a large flat screen TV in the MCR as a digital notice board – While this may have seemed like a convenient way to display notices has it not further limited the wall space available in the MCR? To this regard, could the Vice-President please clarify whether this TV will completely obviate the need for a notice board? Or will a soft board still be available for notices?

We understand that many of the changes made are not reversible, or at least not immediately so. Also that for many it may not be desired by the larger body to revert to the prior setup. It is only hoped that future changes will be less disruptive to the atmosphere and sense of community of the MCR space.

Where rectifications can be made, and may be welcomed by members present, it is hoped they will be – For example, could the MCR contact past members through the College development office (at least for say the past 3 years, which I believe is the duration for which the Map has been the MCR) and attempt to replicate their pins?

Finally, before putting forward the motion the proponents would like to emphasize once again the following:

- This MCR Committee and the Refurbishment Team have worked tirelessly through the summer to provide the MCR with a better space and better utilities. For this they should be and are thanked.
- We applaud the spirit behind each of the measures taken, even where we do not support their execution.
- We thank the MCR for its continued work as our elected representatives and for the time and space to share our concerns here.

The Motion is now put forward thus:

The MCR Committee and Refurbishment Team will make efforts in the future, and advise future MCR Committees also, to take heed of the atmosphere and ambience of the MCR and do their best to maintain the same in the future.

Vote in favour: 18    Against:6    Abstention:7

Motion passes

Comments:

Monitor

- People got a chance to take part; emails were sent out and a refurb team formed
- Screen happened very fast; not much involvement of the refurb team

Map

- Restore the pins if possible
- People who included their pin felt offended by removal of the pins
- All members are important not just because of the pins; their contribution to the MCR is more than just a pin in a map
- Electronic polling as an alternative to dealing with decision making during holidays
- What is the atmosphere that we are trying to preserve?
- We should specify some points of what the atmosphere constitutes before voting on the motion
- Rules for the use of the map should be clear for the following years
- Motion was not amended.

**Motion to purchase a Karaoke Machine for NSE**

Brought forward by: Welfare Team

Presented by: Theresa Scharbert

In previous years the MCR has purchased a pool table, ping pong table, TV, a wii, and speakers for the NSE Common Room. We think a Karaoke Machine would be a great addition to many MCR events and it will make the NSE common room

attractive to a more diverse group of students. In the long term run it also allows welfare to put on karaoke nights without great spendings.

Amazon currently offers a good looking Karaoke Machine for GBP 84.99 with a great lists of songs from singers and bands like ABBA, The Beatles, Katy Perry, Bruno Mars and songs like Wrecking ball, Let it go, Royals and many more.  
[https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/B00GOFCIKU/ref=ox\\_sc\\_act\\_title\\_1?ie=UTF8&psc=1&smid=A2VA0SQXAO7QN3](https://www.amazon.co.uk/gp/product/B00GOFCIKU/ref=ox_sc_act_title_1?ie=UTF8&psc=1&smid=A2VA0SQXAO7QN3)

Vote in favour: 21    Against: 2    Abstention: 2

Motion passes

Comments:

- Rules are needed for use to prevent issues at NSE regarding noise etc
- Maybe consider a non-CD option... eg. USB or online update.
- Proposed an amendment for the price; GBP200 as long as it is 'future proof'
- Stored away and requires booking

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### **Motion to shorten the fireplace bench**

Brought forward by: MCR committee  
Presented by: Ryan Daniels

As part of the refurbishments to the MCR, the committee would like to try to free up some space in the MCR.

The seating around the fire place in the MCR has been identified as a possible avenue. The bench takes up space during events when there are many people, particularly if people are standing.

We propose to have the bench shortened so that it fits more snugly against the fireplace. We would like to consider having it split into three separate sections that can be moved around independently.

Failing that (if the college's maintenance team says its not possible), we propose to have the bench replaced with several short, portable cushioned stools which can be moved and stored out of the way during events.

Vote in favour: 2    Against: 15    Abstention: 6

Motion does not pass

Comments:

- it may not make much of a difference to the spatial setup in the MCR

- Footstools could emulate the bench
  - Proposed to move the bench to the computer room;
  - The bench is part of the atmosphere of the MCR
  - Cramming more people in might be a bad idea; health and safety
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## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Items for Discussion**

#### **A Platform for Academic Writing**

Brought forward by: MCR committee  
Presented by: Trent Taylor/Tim Donnison

Academic writing may take many forms during the course of one's degree. Writing opportunities range from the presentation of papers and consistent chapter writing in humanities, to abstract and manuscript preparation in science degrees. Most current opportunities only allow for limited writing styles and directed towards a specialist audience.

The ability to write for a non-specialist audience is looked on favourably on by University departments and enables graduate students to develop a well-rounded writing and editing skillset. For example, public writing in the Medical Science Division (MSD) is considered a good avenue for public engagement – a practice that is encouraged when all MSD students enroll. Current writing opportunities for a non-specialist audience are few and far between. Those that exist are often not easily accessible or promoted to those who wish to write about their research in Lehman's Terms.

#### **Proposal**

1. An online platform that enables MCR members to write about their work for a non-specialist audience (word length TBD but approximately 500-1000 words);
2. The content may include current or past research taken by a member of the Hall. Entries would aim to answer questions such as: *Why is my research important? What impact does my research have on the general public? Or What does my research contribute to my field?* These may take the form of '*bigger picture*', proof of principle or conceptual articles.
3. An editor or team of editors (depending on demand) to oversee the submission, editing and publishing of the articles. Possibility to meet with the author to ensure accuracy of the article yet retain its accessibility, if necessary.

4. A new article is released regularly subject to the number of articles submitted. This can be during term only or out of term-time too;
5. The MCR writing platform can be linked to the biennial Research Expo to further promote the academic outlook of the Hall, and to the social media accounts of the college to reach a wider audience, particularly current and potential students.
6. The online platform may take the following forms:
  - a. A page on the MCR website;
  - b. A page on the College website;
  - c. An independent website (URL), linked to current MCR/College website;
  - d. A combination of the above.
7. Prize
  - a. Ticket to extra curricular achievements dinner
  - b. Monetary prize of 500 pounds
  - c. Notice on the college website, social media and in Teddy Hall Magazine.
8. Selection procedure
  - a. Committee: A group of 3 or 5 people consisting of college staff and academics. For instance: a porter, SCR members, College communication officer.

Comments:

- It is a really good idea
- What is the public that this will reach?
  - o Partially for potential applicants to the college
- Links to the research expo
- Include a list of publications with the blog
- Don't need to provide the actual publications, just a link to the webpage of the publisher
- Still need a name for the blog
- Could expand beyond the MCR to include the JCR
- We should be clear on whose responsibility this will be
- Can people cross reference to other blogs they host? It might increase participation
- How will the winner be assessed for the prize money? 500GBP s a large amount of money. It will create a competition.
- Invite external people to have a judge the pieces, e.g. OU Press, journalists, authors
- Include web analytics to judge the best piece (e.g. page visits).
- Include non-academics as judges to increase reach to the public e.g. porters, Chaplin
- Split the 500GBP into 3 prizes?
- Provide examples of blog style that would be included. E.g. transcripts of the academic expo.



- Send out google doc/doodlepoll for signups so that there is a line up of which blogs will be published and their dates for publishing

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## APPENDIX I

### **Amendment to the MCR Constitution: Change to job description academic representative**

#### **5.8 Academic Representative**

The Academic Representative represents the academic interests of the MCR. The office is a non-executive position that reports directly to the President. The Academic Representative shall be elected in accordance with Standing Orders and shall hold office from 5<sup>th</sup> week of Michaelmas Term until 10<sup>th</sup> week of Trinity Term.

The Academic Representative's duties include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Attending Academic Committee and Library Committee;
- (b) Discussing any graduate students' academic concerns that might arise with the Tutor for Graduates, and meeting with them on a regular basis;
- (c) Soliciting volunteers from the MCR for academic events at their own discretion, including the Termly Graduate Seminars;
- (d) Encouraging the academic participation of the graduate community in college;
- (e) Being involved in the formulation and implementation of Collegiate structures to ensure MCR academic community, such as disbursement of College funds for convening MCR/SCR seminars, and organising events jointly with the SCR;
- (f) Liaising with the JCR Academic Affairs Officer or Representative on academic matters and issues affecting MCR and JCR members.
- (g) Administering the MCR 50th Anniversary Grant, in liaison with the tutor for grads, the MCR president and the treasurer.
- (h) Take an active role in the running of the biannual research expo which is to take place in 'even years'
- (i) Manage the MCR Research blog