**GENERAL MEETING**

**ST EDMUND HALL MCR**

**MCR, 7PM 27th November 2019**

Present: President (FS), Vice President (HS), Stewards (BW, RS), Welfare (KM, HB), IT officer (JH)

Apologies: Treasurer (AG), Academic rep (PR)

Quorum reached: 12+ (25+)

**FS nominates AR to be independent chair in place of RG for this meeting**

*Approved*

1. **Approval of minutes of last MCR General Meeting**

*Approved*

1. **Election of a Sports representative**

The following individual(s) have been nominated to stand as sports representative for the academic year 2019/20. These individuals have been nominated:

Thomas Woodhall

* Likes sport – has always been involved in sport and is important to him
* Is a PGCE student
* Keen to improve the gym following on from the current sports rep
* Will run gym inductions on Saturdays
* Encourage inclusiveness and accessibility (sport is fun and can be a way to meet new people)
* (slide show of various sporting successes)

Oliver Bramley

* Chemistry student, came to sport late in life
* There is an important social side to sport
* Will run regular events – e.g. mental health aspect, walks into the countryside, give it a go sessions for new members, funds for niche sports, sports speed dating, MCR sports day, weekly updates of college events, watching sport together
* Has been on 3 committees prior so has organizing experience

Questions:

Q: With JCR sports there is an active environment. What are the plans to make a more active/welcome environment in the MCR?

* TW: bridging the gap to get people involved, will organise group events
* OB: Give it a go sessions to get people involved, will focus on less serious sports

Q: Do you think at Teddy Hall there is a male-dominated sports environment with a ‘lad culture’, how would you tackle this and make women feel more comfortable?

* TW: encourage meetings to become more considerate (Good lad workshop)
* OB: talk to relevant captains regarding this issue, gym upgrading could include female-only sessions, or booking the gym, reporting system

Q: It would be good to have more sports publicity (e.g. on Instagram), do you have any ideas how this could happen?

* TW: Instagram advertising sporting events, send out reminders of different events going on
* OB: Use social media, teddy hall website, weekly email of sport achievements

Q: The majority of sports captains are JCR: how would you encourage the JCR to get more involved with MCR sports?

* TW: make points of contact, establish meetings rather than chat
* OB: building points of contact, MCR vs JCR sporting events, talking to sports reps in JCR about what they are doing.

Q: A sports day with Queen’s college used to be done but was stopped due to low involvement. How would you improve this?

* OB: open to all colleges on Queen’s lane (E.g. new college, Hertford). Have a trophy.
* TW: Get organized early and get incentives to go

Voting will be sent out Friday by RG

1. **Charities nominations**

DKMS foundation

* Proposed by Fernando Jiminez Gallardo
* Blood cancer research charity
* Based in the UK – they facilitate fundraising, awareness, volunteers, stem cell donors, and create a global registry
* Asking for £500 of fund
* FJG Volunteered previously in London and is now the student ambassador for Oxford

Voting will be sent out online within the next few days by Maria (Charities Officer)

1. **Reports from MCR Officers**

**President**

* We have almost survived term! Had diversity and equalities week, hope they were enjoyed and looking into ways to improve awareness
* We currently don’t have a diversity officer, please get in contact if you would like to apply.
* You will have received an email with elected ancillary positions, thank you to everyone who applied.
* There were career events running last week, however the turnout for MCR was very low. There will be better advertising in the future, but are there any comments on how to improve this? Comments:
	+ Several students are 1st year of a 4 year DPhil – might be too soon for some people to consider careers
	+ Most people had heard of the events, but they might need more description in the future to explain what they are and encourage people to attend.
	+ They could be advertised in ways other than ‘career events’ to encourage attendance
	+ Could be held at a different time of the term/year. Also at same time as regular college dinner.
	+ Send Freddie an email if you have any suggestions, or would like to know about any alumni in certain careers to be put in contact with.
* Working with treasurer to figure out MCR financial situation
	+ Hopefully will be sorted soon

**Vice President**

* Please send me talks/events/achievements/notices to include in the weekly emails

**Stewards**

* Linacre bop and St Peter’s bop this Saturday- contact Ben for tickets
* Christmas dinner next Thursday
	+ Send seating plans, and please check with the people you include first
		- Please send table plan by Friday 12pm otherwise you will be assigned a seat
	+ There will be a night out afterwards in Fever
	+ Dress code is Black tie
* Next Saturday after Christmas dinner: Christmas party in the MCR, wristbands for another night out afterwards
* People will be around during the break, so some events will be run that will be low key and informal. Send Robin and Ben suggestions for events
* Please clean up after yourself in the MCR, including tea cups and tea bags in the sink

**Welfare**

* Compiling a list of people who are here on Christmas day to organize a lunch/dinner. Please contact if you know anyone who will be here
* Thank you to everyone who came to high tea
* Doing a Christmas event on Sunday involving a tree and decorations in the MCR.

**Sports rep**

* Funding confirmed for gym upgrade and is currently underway to start.
* Will email out detailed description of upgrades.
* Blues fund deadline on Friday, please apply if eligible.
* Please wear shoes in the gym (flipflops aren’t acceptable for using weights)
* Blades in bar have now been sorted

**Treasurer**

* Update in President’s report

**IT rep**

* Website is working
* Ex Aula editor (Vance Tan) is looking for submissions for the online blog.

**Academic**

* Academic seminar went well
* Remember to apply to the MCR 50Th anniversary fund if you have used your £350 from college

**NSE rep**

* Brunch is still happening, 11am on Sundays
* Lots of things left behind in the common room – take your things otherwise it will be thrown away on 7th December
* This also applies to the MCR, please remove your things from the MCR otherwise they will be removed
* Ground floor 17 kitchens has many problems, would have to give up a fridge to get a dish washer
* If you come to the brunch, please don’t take things from the kitchen
* Showers should be repaired this week or next week

**5. Nominations for Guest Membership**

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Ordinary Member** | **Guest Member** |
| Daniel McAteer | Jean Squires |
| Rassin Lababidi | Rowie Borst |
| Linnea Bartlett Stewart  | Austin Irvin Sherman |
| Elizabeth Brown | Ioana Grigoras |

Jean Squires is admitted as a guest member, no abstentions/objections

Rowie Borst is admitted as a guest member, no abstentions/objections

Austin Irvin Sherman is admitted as a guest member, no abstentions/objections

Ioana Grigoras is admitted as a guest member, no abstentions/objections

1. **Motions for discussion**

**Motion title: On the creation of an access officer position on the MCR committee**

Proposed by: Benjamin Fernando

Seconded by: Olga Mun

**Description of motion by BF**: Oxford is criticised for diversity, especially at undergraduate levels. Improvement is occuring at undergrad levels but not at the same rate at post grad levels. All the post grad access work in the college has been taken on mostly by Ben and a few other MCR members, involving a summer school which was a success.

The JCR have been on board with an access officer for a long time, and the college is on board with it too. However, these people are not as capable to speak on post graduate access problems as we are.

It cannot be denied that doing a degree at Oxford will be beneficial for everyone, especially if you are from a less diverse area of the population. One way to deal with this and solve access problems is to create a position to promote access within the MCR.

The motion proposes to start with an MCR ancillary position for an access officer. The roles for this position are outlined in the appendix and are based on other positions in other colleges and MCRs. The budget proposed is relevant for how much outreach costs and could be used in a variety of ways.

Questions and comments (summarised from discussion):

**Q:** What is the Summer school run by college, where is it, what is involved with it?

Undergrads have UNIQ which is aimed at prospective students from disadvantaged backgrounds. There was no postgrad equivalent course until recently. This summer school brought potential graduate students into the MCR for a day to experience the MCR and college, and gave advice for interviews, applications for funding etc.

**Q:** How will you measure the success of this role? Also, if it can be removed after a year, how will the success be measured in this short space of time?

Primarily success is measured through surveying participants. The summer school was a success and received positive feedback. Feed through can also be monitored to see if people apply to post grad courses.

**Comment:** There are pros and cons: it’s not an MCR role to do this, the university should do more about improving graduate access. However, the student voice is very important, and if students remain silent then the university is less likely to change. It is also hard to promote something for people who are not here, so MCR could champion inclusion and access.

**Comment:** FS doesn’t think motion is something we can technically vote on. Ancillary members can only be decided on by the MCR committee, and not in a GM, so we cannot vote on it today. However, agrees that more outreach and access is fundamentally really good and should be encouraged.

However, this is the only position which has a budget designed in writing, currently neither the stewards nor welfare have a written budget. We are already a college which doesn’t have much money, the amalgamated clubs currently have a lot of financial input into the MCR, and that significant proportions of our funds are designated to things already and can’t be changed. What the GM can decide is to create elected positions on the committee. This could potentially be decided in the future.

**Q:** Could college be willing to fund an input into this role?

The committee could be asked to create a role, and a set budget would prevent overspending. A charge could also be added to the termly MCR charity battels to cover costs.

**Comment:** FS: All budgets are at the discretion of the treasurer who is not present, and should go through the MCR treasurer for more long standing positions like this. Difficult for the MCR to make this decision when we don’t have a clear view of the economic decision of the MCR. Should give the committee the chance to check funds and approach college with a plan to see if costs can be matched.

**Comment:** JH: College has just put forward a budget for access and outreach, so they should be keen to be involved. Another member commented that Pembroke college responded well when students put forward money and showed action, and suggested that SEH would respond in the same way.

**JH and HB comment:** College has been approached for money previously and they have been happy to pay for things for the MCR so it is worth approaching college to see if they will contribute towards this role.

**BF**: People already pay for painting budget (which is opt-out), people wouldn’t choose to opt-out of a battel charge if it was added

**Comment**: Get the need to create an access committee – on the battels, however, we pay for things we don’t understand. The people at the meeting are not representative of the MCR, and many people didn’t know this was on the agenda. We should give people time to think and deliberate about the importance of the issue rather than

**Counter argument:** should have it running by Hilary term for possible incoming students

Conclusion of motion

President volunteers to create role, BF asks that President and Treasurer to look into budget to assign how much can be contributed financially from the MCR, and to communicate with college to discuss matters of funding and how much college are willing to contribute.

No vote will be taken on this motion.

**Comment**: Thank you Ben for putting this motion forward and the work you have done for access in the college.

**Motion for discussion: Differentiated rent in Norham Gardens**

Proposed by: The MCR Committee

Change to the motion - £61 per term

**Description of motion by FS:**

There were quite a few comments in the MCR survey regarding room pricing and quality of rooms in NSE. FS has discussed this with college – we (the MCR) can resolve this ourselves following the set restraints outlined in the motion. This is currently just up for discussion, and not to vote on today.

Comments and questions

Current pros: everyone gets mixed up and accommodation is not sorted by subject. There is also no formation of cliques when everyone pays the same rent.

Pros of the proposed change to rent: Gives students from a less well-off financial background the opportunity to pay less for college accommodation.

Comments were raised given the standard of college accommodation in 17NSE currently, and that this should be the focus of change. Concerns were raised that a reduction in rent in these rooms would give college the opportunity to not improve the standard of the rooms.

Comments were also raised about the current assignment of rooms on a first-come, first-served basis, and whether this would affect the availability of rooms if, on a differentiated room rate, more people applied for cheaper rooms sooner on, thus reducing the availability of cheaper rooms to people who confirmed their offer later in the year.

Point of information from FS: College has not imposed this, it is proposed by the MCR committee off the results of the MCR survey

Point of information from AR: New accommodation is currently being built in North Oxford. It is also difficult refurbish 17 all at once as it would mean the majority of accommodation is out of order for a year, so it is being done gradually.

Comments were raised that there are limits with what college can do, as small rooms will still exist even if they are refurbished so the field cannot be completely equalised, and we should be lobbying college to pay less for accommodation generally. We need to think about the long term situation as a differentiation in rent might legitimise 17NSE being ‘worse’ but if it’s kept the same, college will be compelled to change it.

Tying discounts to economic backgrounds is a possibility, and could be part of the access officer role

Some individuals think it is unfair for someone to pay the same amount for a small room in 17 with a shared kitchen as someone in 24/26 NSE.

The point was raised that there are no representative images of some accommodation on the college website, so people do not know what they are signing up for, and that college could do a better job of advertising other university graduate accommodation.

**All comments will be fed back to college**

1. **Any other business**

**Charity formal call for proposals**

Charities officer Maria wants to organize a charity dinner in Hilary term. This is a call for ideas for how to raise money during the event (not from ticket sales), so auctions, ballots etc. All ideas are welcome.

This is also a call to nominate charities. This formal would need a number of people involved, and would also need a lead organizer.

Please send ideas and charity nominations to Maria by 29th November.

**Environmental sustainability**

JH: The MCR has been commissioned by the principal to create a group of students, who will propose a strategy on how to improve student behavior towards sustainability. An email will be sent out about this shortly.

**Hilary term 2nd week – next meeting**

Meeting closed: 20:59