**GENERAL MEETING**

**ST EDMUND HALL MCR**

**MCR Zoom, 7PM 21st October 2020**

Committee present: Ben White (BW, President), Julia Carver (JC, Vice President), Thijs van der Plas (TVP, Steward), Fernando Jimenez-Gallardo (FJG, Steward), Andrew Gibson (AG, Treasurer), Yana Lishkova (YL, IT Officer), Julie Hechler (JH, Welfare)

Absent: Raggy Ravichandran (RR, Welfare)

Quorum met: 18 in meeting

**Approval of minutes of last MCR General Meeting (Trinity 2020)**

Approved

1. **Nomination of Independent Chair**

The following individual(s) have been nominated to stand as independent chair for the academic year 2019/20. Nominations are made by the President and voted in by majority vote:

Ronald Guthrie (RG)

VOTE:

Approved: 16

Abstentions: 2

Ronnie now leads the meeting.

1. **Reports from MCR Committee Members**

President

BW:

* The MCR Committee will be handing out Teddy Hall masks, with times TBD, this week and the following week.
* Requests about college refunding people for quarantine rent time was replied to by College, and College is unable to reimburse everyone for this. But you may apply to the College Hardship fund for COVID-related issues.
* Dinner fees: Currently undergoing discussions with college about this; MCR members will be able to opt out of them once it is implemented.
* MCR Committee positions: 3 elected positions (Sports Rep, NSE Rep, Academic Rep) are opening for application on Friday, October 23. Hustings (elections) will be held on November 4. Ancillary positions (which entail slightly less responsibility) will also be open for nomination; the positions do not have elections. Instead, you need to email Ronnie about the reasons why you want this position and why you would be suitable for it, and the MCR Committee will consider the application.
* Working group: Decided by the previous Committee in TT 2020, this was established as a way to regulate ourselves as a college and help combat systemic racism.

RG: Relays a message from Freddie Soerensen, who was the previous Teddy Hall President:’I’m sorry to inform the GM that between the ton of work related to implementation of COVID-restrictions in College, relocating to Denmark, and my Confirmation of Status, I dropped the ball on the BLM-working group that was agreed in the previous GM, in spite of Ben W chasing me multiple times. I will be back in Oxford on Monday, at which point I will liaise with the new committee on how to send out information to anyone who wishes to be a part of the working group, and I suggest that we report back to the MCR for the GM in week 7.’ Freddie will update the MCR with how to get involved in this BLM Working group in the coming week.

Question/Statement from MCR member Sally Blumenthal: There was also the Teddy Hall access school, which was completed today and was related to access and diversity.

Vice President

JC: I will be putting out the Teddy Hall Weekly News from now onwards.

Stewards

TVP and FJG: The Stewards have run a few events during induction week, and normally there would be a term card with a schedule of the events during Michaelmas term, but we will not be providing one at this time due to the fast-changing regulations. Activities will be decided on a weekly basis, and there will be one activity per week at minimum. Maximum capacities are limited, so please RSVP about whether you will be able to attend the events you have signed up to. Events will be run primarily out of Norham Gardens, and you need to have access to the Common Room in 17 Norham and the gate to the NSE garden, next to 19 Norham Gardens. Upcoming events include pizza night and movie night, among others.

RG: What is happening with formals this term?

FJG: There are a limited number of spaces you can book for dinner; if you live with other Teddy members, you can book it together. Same-household members can do so by booking on separately, but then email Sue McCarthy to notify her that you are a household and are sitting formal at the selected date and time to ensure you will be seated as a household.

Treasurer

AG: Battels preferences will be collected by the Treasurer for this term, but is aiming to establish with college that battels preferences can be collected directly from college in future.

The previous year, the MCR account had some unclear charges on it, and a meeting was initiated with college to address some existing financial questions with the MCR account.

Blues Fund: An email will be sent out soon for the Blues Fund, to which MCR members who are on a varsity team may apply for costs of kit.

Welfare

JH:

* We are in the process of ordering condoms and sexual health-related items for the MCR.
* We are currently setting up the drop-in sessions for welfare (to chat), so that it occurs twice during the week and once on the weekend so anyone can drop in online, no appointment needed.
* We are also meeting with the Dean for general welfare, and if anyone has questions or concerns to raise to the Dean, they can be brought up with him then.
* We are currently looking into running High Tea, potentially with two different groups, and we are endeavoring to make it work during COVID restrictions.

IT Officer

YL: I have been liaising with college regarding IT safety, and currently updating the MCR website. Once I have administration rights over receiving mailing lists, people can contact me and I will take you off the relevant list once I have access.

RG: Will the minutes be available on the website?

YL: They will be up in about 2 or 3 weeks.

Additional Comments

Paul Röttger: On Academic Rep—if anyone wants to apply or has any questions about the role, please don’t hesitate to contact me.

**4. 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** |
| Aleksei Malyshev | Emily Cooke  (Approved, no objections) |
| Lara Scheibli | Toby Lowther  (Approved, no objections) |
| Margaret Neil | Alberto Lo Bue  (Rejected, because not present at meeting) |
| Sumali Bajaj | Raghav Khaund  (Approved, no objections) |
| India Brough | Sophie Gray  (Approved, no objections) |
| Frederik Soerensen | Aksel Saukko-Paavola  (Approved, no objections) |

1. **Motions for Discussion**
2. MCR capital and contingency funds

Proposed by: MCR committee

Seconded by: MCR Committee

The constitution states (article 9.5.1) that the MCR must hold a contingency fund of no less than £5000 (inflation indexed by the UK CPI to 2005 - £7522.12 as of 2019).

The constitution states (article 9.5.3) that income remaining at the end of a fiscal year not designated for future capital renewal expenditure shall be rolled into the contingency fund.

As of 2nd week, Michaelmas Term 2020, the MCR Treasurer states that the contingency fund far exceeds the necessary amount in section 9.5.1 of the MCR constitution.

The MCR Committee believe that the excess in the contingency fund above the level defined in article 9.5.1 of the MCR constitution has accumulated through the under investment in MCR capital expenditure.

The MCR Committee believe that holding a contingency fund above the threshold detailed in article 9.5.1 of the MCR constitution is not an appropriate use of MCR funds.

The MCR Committee resolves to transfer the excess in the contingency fund above the level defined in article 9.5.1 of the MCR constitution to the MCR capital expenditure budget.

**Comments:**

AG: I would like to move some of the funds (additional savings) in the contingency fund that will be spent on capital items used for the MCR that can be enjoyed by future generations. We will still have the money for the contingency fund for emergencies and money to ensure that we do not have any cashflow issues, but I would like to spend the excess. MCR members would be able to submit motions to propose what the excess fund can be spent on, and the MCR will vote on this.

**Questions:**

RG: How much money can the MCR transfer out?

AG: Minimum 10,000 GBP. Which provides enough funds for infrastructure improvements around Norham.

Lara Scheibl: Can we donate the extra funds to charities?

BW: The excess funds cannot be given to charities, as this money was donated to the MCR to be used for the MCR. We do have a charity fund which is set up to give money to charity in the MCR.

RG: So is this money effectively moving from our savings account to our current account?

AG: Yes, it will be moved back into the current account. I will advertise exactly how much is there each GM so there is a clear record. The MCR will still have to vote through any decisions on expenditures.

**Vote:**

In favour: 16

Opposed: 0

Abstention: 0

Not voted: 2

Acquire a Nintendo Switch console and Nintendo Switch games for the NSE Common Room

Proposed by: Amanda Steele

Seconded by: Louisa Ellen Grace

We would like the MCR to acquire a Nintendo Switch console and games for the common room. At the moment it is important for people to have a source of entertainment in a safe environment. This console is very simple to use, accessible to all and has a variety of games that fulfill all interests. We would like to request a console, +2 extra controllers and 3 videogames. This would amount to approximately 500 pounds.

**Comments:**

Amanda: The console is very simple and easy to use, it is accessible to all. We want 2 controllers, and approximately two games. The total of this would cost about 450 GBP.

**Questions:**

Caine: What type of games?

Amanda: MarioKart, we can take a poll. We need to connect the Switch to the TV. Games on average are about 40 GBP/game. But to get MarioKart and four-person player, you need to pay more.

AG: In terms of security, how small is the console? Will someone be able to walk out of it in their wallet?

Amanda: It is very small. It is to encourage more common room usage during COVID.

Louisa: It is very easy to use.

Lara: Would there be an issue with continuously disinfecting the consoles?

RG: I do not think so; they are designed to withstand being wiped down. But perhaps you should look into purchasing a warranty for it.

Caine: Is there anywhere else we purchase it except from Amazon?

Amanda: It is 40 GBP cheaper over Amazon.

RG: If you can draw up a list of what you want from a shop or two, Andrew will be able to decide about what is most suitable.

**Vote:**

In favour: 17

Opposed: 0

Abstentions: 0

Motion to extend article 7.4.4. of the MCR Constitution to Ancillary Members.

Proposed by: MCR Committee

Seconded by: MCR Committee

Article 7.4.4. of the MCR constitution currently states that *“Candidates may not be publicly endorsed or supported by other Candidates running for election, or from current or elect MCR Officers.”*

The MCR Committee believes that this rule should be extended to Ancillary Members of the MCR, appointed by the MCR committee and not elected by the student body.

After the proposed change, the article would read: *“Candidates may not be publicly endorsed or supported by other Candidates running for election, or from current or elect MCR Officers or Ancillary Members.”*

For a constitutional change, it is introduced for one meeting, and then it is voted upon in the next GM.

**Comments:**

RG: There is a free speech issue for this, as they are technically not a part of the MCR Committee. The issue that I have about this is that we are not supposed to change the Constitution willy-nilly with every Committee. The MCR needs to know exactly what they want to argue and why.

Motion for purchase of dartboard for NSE

Proposed by: Thijs van der Plas

Seconded by: Julia Carver

Darts is one of the most popular sports in the UK, and is particularly well suited to social distancing guidelines.

College bar is home to Teddy Hall’s dartboard, but its much anticipated reopening, after a closure of 6 months, does not include the darts facilities, leaving MCR dart players and enthusiasts stranded at sea.

Last year, MCR purchased a playstation 4 video game console for the NSE common room, at the expense of over 300GBP.

We believe that a dartboard would be a valuable addition to the NSE common room, providing welcome entertainment in the form of leisurely exercise, which would complement the recently acquired playstation 4.

We believe that the game of darts provides a good form of stress relief and comradery that has been traditionally enjoyed by many MCR members in the recent past.

We propose to allocate a budget of 100GBP towards the purchase of a dartboard and necessary accessories (such as darts, wall protection) for NSE, after consultation with the NG warden.

We propose to install the dartboard in NSE such that other entertainment facilities, such as the pool table and the TV, can be used simultaneously when this to-be-popular dartboard is occupied.

**Comments:**

FJG: Have you thought about buying a blackboard where people can write down their points?

TVP: A scoreboard would be nice, I would definitely be interested in implementing this.

In favour: 13

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

(departure of 5 people from the meeting)

1. **Any other business**

* Next meeting: Wednesday 7th week of MT

Meeting closed at 20:23 pm.