**Minutes for JCR Meeting, 7.30 p.m., 20th October 2013**

**Chair: Patricia Stephenson**

**Secretary: Harry Begg**

**Returning Officer: Olivia Thompson**

Committee Members Present

Patricia Stephenson – President

Harry Begg – Vice-President

Gege Parthasarathy - Treasurer

Ian Headley – Arts Officer

Thomas Heaps – Clubs & Socs Officer

Amy Jones – Academic Affairs

James Wells – Welfare (Male)

Victoria Halsall – Accommodation Officer

Erika Pheby – International Students Officer

Blessing Inyang – Access & Admissions Officer

Abigail Burman – Equal Opps President

Grace Holland – Careers Officer

Hannah Murphy – Welfare (Female)

Nam Phuong Dinh – Charities

Not currently in office:

Entz, Domestic and OUSU Officers

Apologies: None

Introduction from Trish

Rachel from OUSU: VP for Access & Academic Affairs – welcome note.

Alexander Law, Poet Laureate gives poetry reading (see subsequent e-mail to JCR).

**Ratifications from previous meetings (Constitutional)**

**1. Into the Valley of Democracy (2nd reading)**

**This JCR Notes:**

- Currently the R.O. is an unelected position in the JCR

- That the JCR constitution places particular emphasis upon the importance of the democratic process

- That previously the role of R.O. was fulfilled by the V.P. in his role as secretary in JCR meetings and as primary administration handler, and that there was efficient running of the JCR under previous incumbents of this R.O./V.P. position.

**This JCR Believes:**

- In democracy

- That it is a fundamental flaw with the way in which the JCR works for the constitution to be enforced by an unelected official who is not accountable to the JCR through the ballot box

- That this flaw should be resolved to increase the democratic principle of the JCR

**This JCR Resolves:**

- To combine the roles of the R.O. and the Vice-President, with the Vice-President formally taking on both roles with the passing of this motion. To make the R.O. an elected position, with no NOTA option on the ballot. If no-one stands for the position, the duties of R.O. pass to the Vice-President.

- To mandate the V.P. to amend the constitution and standing orders appropriately, including introducing a Trinity election for the R.O., amending the constitution under Section Heading “Nominations”, Articles 9, 10 and 11, to add exact times and days of the week e.g. by 12pm on Thursday 6th week, and amending Paragraph 36: “including a complete breakdown of every election.”

Proposed: Thomas Heaps

Seconded: Aled Jones

Tom: Motion withdrawn.

All: Why?

Tom Heaps: Unelected position; RO arranges election of their successor which could create issues. Better to keep unelected.

**Constiutional Amendments**

**2. Emergency Motions**

**This JCR notes:** That currently emergency money motions require 35 signatures to pass through after the deadline. This is often tedious for such motions of small expenditure

**This JCR believes:** In simplicity, and err err err efficiency

**This JCR resolves:** To change paragraph 6, article 6 of the constitution to read

“All emergency motions involving expenditure of over £50 of JCR funds must be backed by a petition of the signatures of 35 JCR members.”

Proposed: Dan Shearer

Seconded: Joel Casey

Amendment, Tom Heaps:

Amend JCR believes to remove “err err err”

Amend JCR resolves to: “Certain emergency motions must be backed by a petition incorporating a specified number of signatures from JCR members:

for motions involving expenditure of over £50 or regarding constitutional amendment, the signatures of 35 JCR members are necessary;

for motions involving expenditure of under £50 the signatures of 20 JCR members are necessary."

Debate for amendment:

Dan Shearer: Having 35 signs for every constitutional motion is inefficient.

Tom: Only if you miss the deadline does this count. Make sure people aren’t trying to rush through constitutional amendments. 20 signatures for everything that does not affect the constitution is easy for e.g. welfare amendments.

Amendment taken as hostile.

Jamie Wells: Needing lots of signatures is a form of punishment for a late amendment – inconvenient for VP to deal with amendments at late notice.

Steph Cherrill: Emergency amendments don’t give everyone a chance to see the motion – only 35 people know it’s happening.

Hannah Murphy: 35 is a good number.

Dan Shearer: 20 people seems too many.

Move to vote; overwhelming majority; amendment passes.

Move to vote; overwhelming majority; motion passes.

**3. Anonymous Motions**

**This JCR notes:** Currently the JCR has limited information in its constitution about anonymous motions.

**This JCR believes**: Anonymous motions are a good thing to have and promote a wider atmosphere of participation in the JCR.

**This JCR resolves:** To add to the constitution an Article 6, sub article entitled “Anonymous motions” a paragraph 77:

“Anonymous motions should be accepted without a seconder or proposer. They should be as detailed as possible and try to cover all possible amendments JCR members may put forth. They should specify anything that they wish to be amended; examples of this may include variable figures for the expenditure of money or variable positions of officer included in the motion. Something that is not explicitly variable cannot be amended.”

Also, this JCR resolves to add a paragraph 78 to this sub article:

“Amendments of a variable nature are considered to automatically pass, subject to a majority vote of the JCR.”

This JCR finally resolves to add a paragraph 79 to this sub article:

“For all intents and purposes the prosper is automatically considered to be a member of the JCR; if there is any question whether they are or are not a member of the JCR the motion is suspended. A message should then be sent to the entire JCR, this message should explain the need for the proposer to come forth only to the Returning Officer who shall then send contact to the JCR president and Vice President notifying them that the motion is legitimate. The Returning Officer is automatically mandated to keep the identity of the proposer secret from everyone in the JCR.”

As a side note, I infer from this that the JCR President need not step down from their chair during meetings. Amendments are to be automatically accepted as friendly, never hostile.

And finally, on a comical note I thought of submitting this motion anonymously, but decided the irony would be too big for the JCR meeting to handle.

Proposed: Dan Shearer

Seconded: Joel Casey

Short Factual Questions

Sam Hodgson: Anyone could submit an amendment and it would automatically be adopted as friendly.

Aled Jones: How many anonymous motions have we had?

Dan Shearer: 1 – no one knew what to do in that instance.

RO quotes Constitution: we assume that there is doubt that the person is a member of the JCR. Someone in the JCR would have to volunteer to second.

Chris Davies: move to vote – opposed.

Aled Jones: What would happen if the RO didn’t keep a secret?

RO: A motion of no confidence would be passed.

Dan: RO is position of responsibility; one should trust him/her.

Debate

Tom: This doesn’t work at all. Various bits of the motion being amended does not work; it could result in an interminable process of amendment. Also, anonymous motions are unnecessary. Complicated; too complex.

Proposes abolishment of anonymous motions.

Amendment taken as hostile.

Debate for amendment:

Vicki Halsall: not necessary e.g. Welfare Reps can put them forward.

Dan: Anonymous motions needed. E.g. doesn’t feel comfortable going to one of them.

Gege Parthasarathy: Reason they were brought in was because it was passed in another college. Unnecessary.

Abigail Burman: We should know where the anonymous motion is coming from. It causes problems if we don’t know who it is.

Tom Heaps: Concluding points of debate; anonymous motions arose out of a factional JCR.

Dan: Speech in opposition; There may be people who don’t feel comfortable going to the JCR and explaining it.

Vote to amend motion; overwhelmingly majority; amendment taken.

Move to vote; overwhelming majority; motion passes.

**Monetary Motions**

**4. Budget Michaelmas 2013**

This JCR notes

That budgets are important.

This JCR believes

That we should budget.

This JCR resolves

To pass a budget for MT13

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| MICHAELMAS 2013 |  |
| ACADEMIC | £70.00 |
| OUSU/ECO | £10.00 |
| CLUBS + SOCS | £150.00 |
| DOMESTIC | £500.00 |
| NEWSPAPERS | £800.00 |
| WELFARE | £50.00 |
| MEETINGS | £300.00 |
| ENTZ (including cinema curator and games) | £450.00 |
| MALE AND FEMALE WELFARE | £550.00 |
| COMMITTEE | £50.00 |
| COMPUTING | £20.00 |
| ARTS | £50.00 |
| SPECTRUM | £50.00 |
| CHARITIES | £3,000.00 |
| ENVIRONMENT &ETHICS | £150.00 |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | £6,200.00 |

Proposed: Gege Parthasarathy (JCR Treasurer)

Seconded: Erika Pheby

Short Factual Questions

Toby Abbott: Why is the charities budget so big?

Gege: People pay it in their battels.

Steph Cherill: Are there any big changes here?

Gege: E&E budget; less on Arts; £100 less on M&F Welfare.

Chris Davies: What’s our income breakdown?

Gege: - a term, £10,000 in account.

Sam Hodgson: How do we get the figure of £3,000 for Charities?

Nam Phuong Dinh: £10 per term per person, so estimated amount = £3000. An estimate only.

Sam: 239 undergraduates – this is c£610 different.

Gege: Doesn’t come out of the JCR account. Sorted by College.

Debate

Dan Shearer: Money for RO to do Hustings?

Tom: If any is needed, this should come out of discretionary spending?

Gege: How to budget this? Bi-elections at different times.

Jamie Wells: Amendment £650 for M&F Welfare. We did Freshers’ packs and there was a big welfare order at the beginning of term.

Amendment adopted; overwhelming support; motion passes.

**Motions as submitted**

**5. Life After Corpus Careers Guide.**

**This JCR Notes:**

- Some students would like more advice on Careers.

- Grace Holland and Patricia Stephenson have spent a lot of time writing a Life After Corpus Careers Guide.

**This JCR Believes**: Good advice on careers is important.

**This JCR Resolves:** To spend up to £70 for printing Life After Corpus Careers Guide.

Proposed: Grace Holland

Seconded: Hannah Lucas – Hannah Murphy

Short Factual Questions

Chris: why can’t we just send around e-mail copies?

Grace: No one would read it.

Amy: If people don’t want to open up a PDF on screen, that’s their problem, and I don’t think they deserve a job if they can’t be bothered to do this.

Grace: It’s something for people to go back to and review. We need to print some anyway for the people who contributed to it (25 people).

Emily: We should have e-mail copies too.

Dan: Does this encompass all of careers or is it for specific years?

Grace: Alumni focussed; their choice on what they want to talk about.

Debate

James Wells: Printed copies better.

Grace: Some should be printed.

Chair: They don’t date; it will be useful for a lon time.

Grace: Leave some in the JCR?

Steph: Amendment proposed: Careers Officer keeps copies. Maximum 100 copies but should not be printed all at once, with £70 being used only if absolutely necessary.

Debate

Grace: If people want a hard copy they should be able to get one.

Sam Hodgson: Put some in library.

Grace: We should do both.

Nam Phuong Dinh: Will some be kept in the JCR?

Grace: Yes.

No opposition to amendment; no opposition to motion; motion passes.

**6. Expression of Objection to tuition fees rise**

**This JCR Notes:**

- That the Vice-Chancellor of University of Oxford was recently quoted as saying “a system of tuition charges more closely related to the true cost of the education provided… is something that I believe in the longer run will have to be considered” and specified that 'true cost' as £16,000.

**This JCR Believes:**

- That a near-doubling of the tuition fee would create many problems for future students at Oxford.

**This JCR Resolves:**

* To express our strong objection to the possibility of this fees rise by the President signing a Joint Statement by Common Room Presidents, with *pro forma* as follows:

**Joint Statement by Common Room Presidents**

The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Andrew Hamilton, set out in his oration for the beginning of the new academic year his apparently new belief that the University and a few other élite universities should be permitted to charge up to £16,000 a year in tuition fees.

As representatives of current students at Oxford, we believe:

- that this is a marked, sudden and disappointing shift from the approach developed collaboratively since the introduction of higher fees in which the financial needs of the University were balanced against a shared desire not to make an Oxford education the preserve of the rich once again and not to concede the idea that education should be priced according to market value

- that a £16,000 tuition fee will deter students from the poorest backgrounds applying to Oxford or even considering doing so

- that Oxford now has, from a low starting point, a lot of excellent work in access and outreach and a very impressive student financial support programme. All this good work would be sabotaged by a near-doubling of the tuition fee

We therefore urge the Vice Chancellor to reconsider his new view and to consult with students and with those working in access and outreach on the consequences of such a course of action.

We note with disappointment that the Vice Chancellor has used this opportunity to shift the focus of the debate towards increasing student fees instead of lobbying for further funding from government and we view this as a serious failure in his duty towards current and future students and Oxford University' opportunity to attract the most able students disregarding their financial background. We affirm that we will work to prevent this proposal becoming the University’s policy and seek to persuade our Heads of House and Senior Tutors to do the same, collaborating with our fellow Common Room Presidents and the Executive Officers of Oxford University Student Union.

Proposed: Aled Jones

Seconded: Adrian Matthew

Short Factual Questions:

Jack Worlidge: In what context was this made?

Aled Jones: A speech at a lunch.

Amy Jones: What did he actually say? Very non-specific and this is not an actual policy adopted by him.

Debate:

Tom Heaps: The Vice-Chancellor didn’t say he is going to do it; just saying this is the reality of tuition fees; passing these motions endorses the current way that OUSU works. It is a reactionary, lazy institution.

Jack: Vice-Chancellor has not issued a statement showing his intention to change the fees. No need.

Steph: Poorly written letter that we would be signing; harms Access because it doesn’t give any reasons; it is just inflammatory and will create bad press.

Dan: Amendment proposed: just show disapproval. Just make a statement to the world.

Aled: Amendment taken as hostile: The point of the motion is to group sign. It wouldn’t have the same effect.

Dan: Supports Tom’s viewpoint.

Move to vote on amendment; overwhelming opposition.

Blessing: Easy for Vice-Chancellor’s statement to gain traction in people’s minds. Can be twisted. Poorly done by OUSU; but to reject this would suggest we don’t support the spirit of OUSU’s campaign, which would be harmful for access.

Chris Davies: Browne Review – similar situation. Made little impact; the government knows students don’t want to pay higher fees. We can make a statement but at this point in time it is pointless.

Jack: Unlikely to happen – universities are barred by law. Even if the Vice-Chancellor said this it is his opinion. No government is going to consider doing this based on past experience; it would be highly unpopular.

Amy: Moves like this do damage access (cf. Blessing’s argument). The point with it is that our sending a letter increases antagonism. The statement was made in a hurry; our letter would harm.

Abigail: Not going to happen but this was a dumb thing for the Vice-Chancellor to say. Access push for OUSU – this makes it harder for them. The Vice-Chancellor should have known not to say this.

Aled: For JCRs to come together would put a message against the spirit of the Vice-Chancellor’s statement.

Guy: Vice-Chancellor would know the true cost of education; he’s not saying we should increase, he’s just saying that this is the true cost.

Move to vote, 15 for, 15 against.

A recount is requested by the quorate 10 members.

Upon recount 18 for, 15 against.

Motion passes

**7. Mugs for the JCR**

**The JCR notes:**

1. All of the mugs have disappeared over the summer

2. We need mugs for JCR and welfare tea

**This JCR believes:**

1. We all like JCR and Welfare teas

**This JCR resolves:**

1. To buy some more mugs so teas can run more smoothly, up to the cost of £50.

2. If possible these mugs will be sourced from charity shops in Oxford.

Proposed: Jamie Wells

Seconded: Vicki Halsall

Short Factual Questions

Gege: Where did they go?

Jamie: They are broken or people take them.

Dan: Summer schools take them and they aren’t put back.

Gege: How do we differentiate between ours and theirs?

Debate

Chris Davies: Amendment £100 and minimum of 300ml per mug.

Taken as friendly

Sam: Charity shops difficult.

Chris: Amendment £200, 100 mugs.

Taken as friendly

Dan: We should consult with college for a partial contribution.

Tom: Amendment to mandate Erika Pheby to purchase the mugs.

No opposition; amendment passes.

Move to vote; no opposition, motion passes.

**8. Knowledge is power**

**This JCR notes:**

1. That we don't get newspapers in 0th week.

2. That lots of people come back to College at the beginning of 0th week or earlier.

3. That everyone has to be back by Thursday of 0th week.

**This JCR believes:**

1. That news is good.

2. That more news is better.

**This JCR resolves:**

1. To mandate the treasurer to buy all the regular newspapers from the start of 0th week.

Proposed: Tom Heaps

Seconded: Jack W

Short Factual Questions

Gege: budgeting of this?

Tom: From next term’s budget.

No Debate

Motion passes, no opposition.

**9. Ball Funding**

**This JCR notes:**

That balls can be expensive and without money to start with not a lot of progress can be made

**This JCR believes:**

Making a contribution to the next Corpus ball will be very useful

**This JCR resolves:**

To donate £500 to the ball

To attend the next ball

Proposed: Chris Davies (Ball Treasurer)

Seconded: Gina Yea (Ball President)

Amendment: £1,000 from JCR.

Short Factual Questions

Steph: Is this a loan or a grant?

Gina: Grant.

No debate

No opposition, motion passes.

**10. Emergency Motion: Environment Week Budget**

**This JCR Notes:**

* Corpus uses up a lot of energy;
* Corpus does not recycle efficiently;
* That we care about the environment.

**This JCR Believes:**

* That Environment Week would be beneficial for both raising awareness of student attitudes and help move forward environmental policies in the JCR and College.

**This JCR Resolves:**

* To give £200 to the elected Environment & Ethics Officer for Environment Week.

Proposed: Erika Pheby

Seconded: Joel Casey

Short Factual Questions

Gege: Why do we need two different budgets for E&E?

Erika: Money for e.g. recycling bins; general drive for improving environment in Corpus, not just for the one week. The other funding is for Environment Week itself.

Dan: What events are there for Environment Week?

Erika: Environment Fair, Environment Formal, movie, speakers’ accommodation and reasonable travel fees need to be paid. Election for environment charity will be decided.

No Debate

No opposition, motion passes.

The RO then issued election results, which have since been e-mailed to the JCR mail-list.