

TCSU Annual General Meeting 2018

Date: Wednesday 28th November 18:00

Chairperson: Molly O'Brien (TCSU President)

Minutes: Becky Shepherdson (TCSU Vice-President)

Objections to the minutes of the previous meeting.

None

Matters arising.

None

Committee reports.

Frankie Postles + Ruth Warner (Welfare Officers)

- Update on the reallocation of the Welfare Room: The Welfare Room (an allocated room in college to host Welfare events and confidential talks in a neutral space) was reallocated to the Mental Health Advisor, Juliet Bristow for logistical reasons. There were unexpected delays getting a new room, but as of this week, the new room has been made available and TCSU will be moving in.
- The condom vending machine is now working
- Frankie (Male Welfare) is sitting on the new Burrell's Light Committee. Evidence put forward by TCSU from the survey has triggered a move in policy stance and there is positive action being proposed by college already to install lighting along the walk.
- Other matters being discussed with college staff: Dean's Meetings (students who receive 3rds) and the implementation of Prevent procedure.

Question: where is the new Welfare Room?

- Angel Court D, next to School's Liaison Office.

Kerem Ergene (Computing and Publicity)

- The issue of Wifi quality is difficult to resolve, but the IT department is actively trying to solve the solution.
- The Intranet working party is still ongoing

Areeg Emarah (International Welfare)

- Halal Food in hall has been taken to Senior Tutor as a Welfare issue. This will hopefully be resolved next term and a solution will probably involve students pre-ordering meals.

- Reflection room: This has been established and is available to all students in Whewell's B3. The door does open – there are two door knobs.
- International storage: the porters have reported that Trinity students have been storing luggage for other students at different colleges, which is caused frustration. In order to keep the right to use storage, international students are asked to adhere to the rules and not disadvantage other members of college.

Anna Cardoso (Women's welfare)

- There will be an academic welfare survey to be sent next term to help college understand attainment gaps.
- Bi-weekly women's forum will hopefully be established to meet in the new Welfare Room next term

Naemi Melvin (Junior Steward)

- Society funding grants have been allocated
- Lack of Tuesday formal: this is because it was financially unsustainable to keep a team of staff for Tuesday formals which were selling very poorly. Discussions are underway to open 40 more tickets on Thursday and Saturday. Catering will be reviewing the sales from this term to decide.
- Themed formals have been going well and there will be more next term.

Cameron Osborne (Green and Domestic)

- Recycling bins in gyp rooms: Cameron and Becky held a meeting with the Head of Housekeeping who has said for lack of space this will not be possible. Students are encouraged to take recycling back to the blue bins in their bedrooms.
- Trailing baths to showers in Whewell's Court, K staircase, due to feedback from the student survey and feedback.
- Green Formal was held successfully, and another will happen next term.
- Working on NUS Green Impact over Christmas

Kiran Jolly (BME)

- A BME Fellow has been appointed and College are currently working out what role entails. TCSU will get a formal introduction next term.

Anna Dimitriadis (LGBT+, prepared statement)

- The results of the LGBT+ survey were compiled into a report and supplemented by a formal proposal for Trinity to fly the Pride Flag during LGBT+ History Month.
- Both documents were presented at last week's Liaison Meeting and had mixed reception. Some fellows were very sympathetic to the amending the constitution and flying the flag on the main flagpole - or, if this turned out not to be possible, flying it elsewhere in College - but others, notably the Dean, objected to the idea as 'too political'.

- The Fellows' Committee will vote on the issue soon. Obviously, my ideal result would be that the proposal is accepted; however, even if it doesn't happen this year, I'm hopeful that we have demonstrated enough student support to get the ball rolling. If next year's LGBT+ rep brings up the issue again, it's likely that they will have better chances of success

President

- Non-Trinity student: The Head Porter has been asked to clarify the rule regarding other students visiting Trinity to look around.
 - o *The following statement is read "Any University student is allowed to visit the college free of charge with a maximum of three guests, as long as they can provide their University card. They are restricted to visit during tourist opening times and are only able to access the same areas as members of the public"*
- Library: blankets, oil radiators, stand up desk, pushing for comfortable seating
- Second pool table in Burrell's Field: permission has been gained from college for funding, the final step is to discuss practicality of storage of equipment in the Burrell's Field Porter's Lodge.
- Laundry: will stay free, with no need to sign the register. Molly emphasises not to abuse the system.
- Non-silent working space: Junior Parlour to be used in Easter. The Junior Bursar has taken up the issue but is having to cancel Fellow's bookings. However, this will happen.
- Benches in New Court: Catherine Barnard (Senior Tutor) has encouraged students to use the benches, as she had to push hard to get permission for the facility.
- Unpleasant mess: As reported in the Tab, TCSU paid £600 in fines forcing TCSU to sacrifice a bop. Students are encouraged to ask the Porter's for cleaning equipment, who will show infinitely more respect than if they come across the mess.
- College survey: as agreed, this will include to a section on Scholar's Benefits. Molly has managed to gathered the information from College, and is in the process of meeting with Senior Tutor and Junior Bursar to discuss how best to phrase the questions.

Question: Farzana Huysman: can the Field Club Work with TCSU on the exact design of the Pool Table?

- Molly confirms they are already working in tandem.

Lara Jenkin (Access)

- Setting up the Trinity Ambassadors scheme; a more formalised system of trained volunteers, rather than through FB group or mass email.
- Development of a student newsletter: this is aiming to encourage a better online presence. The system worked well with Law residential where those who were not able to be given a space were sent a newsletter from a Law fellow. This will contain lots of student generated content, largely free form college checks.

Statements.

1. Presentation of audited accounts (representative of the Treasurer)

The accounts of 2017/18 are circulated to the meeting. Any members wishing to see these are advised to email the Treasurer.

Questions to committee.

Nadia Ní Hanradháin: International storage is located down flights of stairs, which is difficult for all students and a disability access issue. Is the committee able to help with this?

- Molly will discuss with the Head Porter to make sure help is available for those who need it and advertise this.

Alex Watson: are bins actually sorted?

- Cameron and Becky asked this in the meeting with housekeeping and were assured that bedders do sort the rubbish. Often they are carrying too many bags and so put the recycling bag inside the large black bag to be able to carry it.

Peta: regarding cleaning equipment in the Porter's lodge. He has asked before, but told there was nothing.

- This is not general cleaning equipment, but a special vomit kit. Molly will check with the Head Porter that this is still there.

Peta: regarding non-Trinity students allowed into college, why is this only public areas?

- Molly clarifies firstly that supervisions are different. The Head Porter has said this is due to student safety and privacy, as outside public areas, visitors have free access to student staircases.

Questions to representative of CUSU.

A statement from the president of CUSU is read:

Hey everyone! Sorry I can't make it tonight, I'm on a train back from an NUS Conference and then heading straight to our CUSU Trustee Board Meeting this evening. I hope you've all had a lovely term and I thought I'd just provide a few quick updates on how things are going at CUSU. Specifically in relation to JCRs and MCRs lots has changed! Firstly CUSU affiliation fees have been scrapped, this means there is now no longer any cost associated with the political affiliation of the JCR to CUSU! This is an important step in stabilising CUSU finances and us working with JCRs. We've also launched CUSU Connects (forums for all the JCR and MCR Officers) to make it easier for interaction across colleges. In response to the criticism that Council doesn't address college issues we have created 'PresCon' a forum for JCR presidents to meet and discuss college level issues. We've also supported JCRs running rent campaigns through training sessions and survey data which they can lobby colleges.

In terms of uni wide policy we've been doing lots of work with the University on its bursary scheme (information about which will come next term), tackling the University's implementation of the Prevent policy and on physical accessibility in Cambridge.

The liberation campaigns are still going strong, we're working hard to prepare for the shadowing scheme and we're also reviewing our democratic structures at the moment to make sure we are really listening to students so do fill in the survey (circulated in this week's bulletin) and have your voice heard!

There is lots of work still to do at CUSU but I hope you can see there are lots of improvements being made and that lots of my manifesto pledges have already come to fruition. If you have any questions or thoughts on anything at all please do feel free to message me or contact your CUSU Council reps!

Motions submitted.

- 1. Motion for TCSU to support Trinity College Living Wage Accreditation: Proposed by: Elizabeth Huang Seconded by: Mia Watanabe**

TCSU notes:

1. That the Living Wage rate is based on the cost of living, calculated independently by the Living Wage Foundation, in order to ensure workers are paid a wage which they are able to live off.
- ~~2. That the UK rate is currently set at £9.00, significantly higher than the government's National Living Wage of £7.83, which does not take living costs into account.~~

AMENDED

- a. That the Living Wage Foundation's "real Living wage" which applies to workers over 18 is currently set at £9.00/hour, significantly higher than the government's National Living Wage of £7.83, which does not take living costs into account and the National Minimum wage for all age brackets.*
3. That Trinity College is not currently an accredited Living Wage employer.
4. That the University has recently committed to becoming an accredited Living Wage employer.
5. That over 3,500 employers pay the Living Wage in the United Kingdom, including several Oxford and Cambridge colleges.
6. *That Cambridge city Council is currently working to calculate a Cambridge Living Wage, taking into account higher costs of living in Cambridge*

TCSU believes:

1. That the College has a responsibility to ensure its workers are paid a wage which they are able to live off.
2. That College staff support students in our day-to-day lives at Trinity College, whether working in catering, housekeeping or other departments, and deserve our support in

ensuring they receive a wage which genuinely reflects the cost of living in Cambridge.

3. That paying College staff a real Living Wage could help to improve productivity and foster a friendlier working environment within College.

TCSU resolves:

1. To investigate the current wage structures of the College.
2. To lobby the College to become a fully-accredited Living Wage employer.

Questions are raised about how this would apply to subcontracted labour, which would particularly affect the Catering department. It is clarified that the Living Wage Foundation has policy in place for this, involving the amount of hours that a worker is employed for at an institution.

It is pointed out that a Freedom of Information Request was sent to college this summer, which revealed that Trinity does not pay any worker over the age of 18 less than £8.97. The proposer agrees that this does show that Trinity is already paying nearly the living wage, and points out that the motion is more aimed at getting the College formally accredited, to both show the work that College has done on this matter and pledge to upkeeping the Living Wage.

- Questions are raised regarding accreditation. It is clarified that this is on a rolling basis. As the Living Wage threshold rises, institutions are given a period to adjust. Accreditation is not age sensitive, which is said to defeat the point that all workers should be paid a fair wage.

An amendment is raised to clarify "TCSU notes 2". Proposed: Mia Wanatabe, Seconded: Becky Shepherdson. It is accepted as a friendly amendment.

An amendment is made to add a "TCSU notes 6" Proposed: Gabriel Barton-Singer, Seconded: Frankie Postles. It is accepted as a friendly amendment.

20 for, 1 abstention – motion passes.

Any Other Business.

Discussion on the role of the BME Officer

A statement from the BME officer is read: "I've been thinking about this because of BME formal (which is now being called minority ethnic formal), after having spoken to BME fellow and Fiona

I just want ascertain what my role entails, i.e. who counts as minority ethnic. Definitions of "minority ethnicities" don't hint towards skin colour, but instead just cultural and national backgrounds and traditions, however the role historically has been very much so. I want to decide if people would be happy for me to make the role reflect the definition more.

In any case, I feel like the name Black and Minority Ethnic doesn't help as it gives connotations of status depending on skin colour. I want to change the role title to just minority ethnic as it's more inclusive. Attempts have been made elsewhere, e.g. BAME (black Asian minority ethnic), but this doesn't really solve the problem”

Issues are raised as to the necessity for the change, including what prompted the review and why it is deemed necessary when BME in the general vernacular.

Members of the Open Meeting express concern that the Open Meeting is not the most applicable forum to have a discussion of this nature. It is agreed to set up a forum for BME students to discuss the issue in a safe and representative space.

However, it is reminded that any changes to the constitution must be put to a referendum to the whole college, and so any discussion must go at some point go to the student body at general.

Discussion on the TCSU position regarding Divestment

Molly: Following the article in Varsity, TCSU raised the issue of college investments at the Liaison Meeting last week to get information to present to the Open Meeting. The Senior Bursar explained that College owns the investments, but through tracker fund where investments are made in all of the companies in the index. Trinity owns the small share of the largest 1500 companies in the world. College policy is to invest in a way that is consistent with aims and values. Frankie expresses his impression from the meeting is that tracker fund model is not going to change. He also reminds the Meeting that the issues are complex and more nuanced than simply removing investments as some companies have military and non-military wings

Ollie: raises that there is a spectrum of investments in Trinity. Approximately 60% in land, 40% of that in private wealth managers. On push is to move private wealth investments into ethical tracker funds. He reminds the meeting there have been BA society, TCSU, Fellows which went to council. There will also be a forum at the end of next year – organised by Trinity Responsible Investment Society to look at how college could alter the criteria by which it invests. Their interests are aligned with Zero-carbon. TRIS will be making case that is administratively possible and there is a simple template which has already been rolled out at other institutions. He asks how is TCSU fitting in?

- Molly outlines that currently TCSU policy, as set at the Lent 2018 Open Meeting is to support divestment from fossil fuels, which it will continue to do. It does not have policy regarding arms. Currently they have just been information gathering, but TCSU has a mandate to push hard at meetings regarding fossil fuel investment. Representatives of TCSU will attend the TRIS meeting to present this.

It is raised that divestment is a complex issue with multiple viewpoints, more nuanced than is often presented. It is suggested that the meeting is advertised as widely as possible to avoid becoming an echo chamber. Differentiation should also be clear between the kinds of investment being discussed.

Discussion on updating the Welfare names

An update is requested as to the progress that has been made regarding the creation of a new voting system to enable changing the names of Welfare Officers to become gender neutral.

Kerem outlines that efforts have been made, but that there is no way to use the current STV voting system with all candidates. It could be modified to run two votes, one with all candidates, then remove all candidates of that gender and re-run with the original votes. However, this requires complex coding that would have to be usable by future committee, the Welfare Officers would be ranked and this would also open the possibility that one gender would not be represented.

- The Welfare Officers are asked to ask in the CUSU Connects Facebook page to find out how other colleges have gone about this.

As would require a change to the voting system and the constitution, this will have to go through a college wide referendum. Realistically, there is no way to do this before the next election and so this will probably not change in time for the next election.

Meeting closes at 19:25