

18/5/17

EASTER TERM OPEN MEETING

Chair: TCSU President - Toby

Minutes: TCSU Vice President - Dante

- 43 people are present and entitled to vote, and so the constitutional quorum of 20 attendees is met.
- *JCR renovation ideas*

Toby notes that the process of renovation of the JCR is ongoing, with the Works' Department and an experienced interior designer expected to complete the renovations by the start of Freshers' week. He further outlines the new design of both JCR rooms, stressing that, among other features, the lower one will have a television, coffee table and board games, while the upper one will certainly have a pool table.

On the issue of consoles and videogames to be purchased and kept in the JCR, TCSU will launch a survey to shed light on what students' preferences are.

Toby also states that the JCR rooms are currently significantly underused, as shown by the fact that societies often use them for their meetings knowing that they are likely to remain empty.

Regarding JCR rooms' usage, James stresses that it should be ensured that BAs do not enter them, seeing as undergraduates are not allowed to enter the BA room.

Becky emphasizes that the welfare team routinely uses the lower JCR room for weekly drop-in sessions

A dartboard, blackboard and water dispenser(s) are all mentioned as desirable potential additions to the JCR.

The pricing options for using the pool table are discussed, with Toby noting that a free service would make pool more accessible, but then balls would be more likely to be misplaced and go missing. On the other hand, he suggests that a token charge could be in place to prevent misuse and extend the lifetime of the pool table. The revenue from this small charge would then be spent entirely for the upkeep of the pool table.

Petr however notes that it is now rare for people to carry coins with them, and so the payment in coins for pool matches may not be practical.

Other options are discussed, and leaving the balls for the bar to keep is ruled out as impractical due to it being an additional burden for the bar staff and to the bar's closing times, whereas the option of maintaining a SALTO locked cupboard where the pool equipment should be kept appears to be a consensual solution.

Petr recommends an inquiry into how other Colleges regulate the usage of their pool tables; it is further suggested that he look into it, potentially via the appropriate TCSU+ sub-committee.

Concluding the discussion on JCR renovation ideas, James informs meeting attendees that the argument of the College for forbidding parties in the JCR is the safety risk posed by the low handrails - he suggests that they should be raised, so as to allow parties to be held there.

- *Need for quality communal spaces for socializing*

18/5/17

Becky notes that the Blue Boar Common Room is currently underused.

Several meeting attendees note that the pianos present in College are currently poorly maintained and that they are frequently out of tune - a consensus emerges on improving the situation both in terms of quality and quantity.

Toby stresses that the Butler House Party Room in Burrell's has been booked until the end of Easter Term for students to revise in while being able to have conversations and eat and drink.

Seeing as Wi-Fi connection is currently missing in the Burrell's Field TV room, Toby will raise this issue with the Works' Department.

Toby also stresses that the currently unused wine cellar under Whewell's Court will soon be renovated, and that TCSU will conduct a survey on its preferred uses for students.

Among the meeting attendees a consensus emerges that this space should be used to host parties and Ents rather than art exhibitions.

- *Creation of action teams for larger TCSU projects*

Toby emphasizes that the involvement of a greater number of students in the various initiatives of TCSU, e.g. through TCSU+, would be very beneficial for the community. An example of an area in which greater engagement would be particularly desirable is in investigating possible future changes to the room ballot system, in that it will be soon reformed by College.

- *President's stay in College for five weeks of the Long Vacation for TCSU work*

Toby says that the TCSU committee supports his intention to spend all of September and the last week of June in College in order to undertake the necessary research for several of the initiatives of TCSU and to write reports for proposals to College. This would allow him to do TCSU work full-time rather than during the hectic, last weeks of Easter Term.

The rationale behind this stay is to have meetings with members of the Fellowship in person to advance the causes of TCSU at a very low cost, as Toby would only require his expenditure on accommodation in College and on food to be funded by TCSU. Relative to the size of the TCSU budget, it is stressed that the amount of money required for this plan to go ahead is not substantial. Furthermore, Toby emphasizes that since the last College Council will be held in mid-July and since September usually features significant planning for Freshers' week, both portions of his stay in College could be very effective.

Rebecca notes that what Toby could achieve during said weeks is constrained by him being on his own, without the rest of the committee, and that food expenses need not be funded for him, as he would face a similar expenditure regardless of whether he is in College or not.

Petr adds that the members of the Fellowship that Toby would want to meet with may not be available as frequently as he is during the weeks he would spend in College.

Nevertheless, Toby emphasizes that the logistical side of some projects, including the JCR renovation, could be improved and quickened thanks to his stay.

Nicholas and James argue that judging from the examples of past committees, 2-3 weeks seem a sufficient amount of time.

18/5/17

Ben suggests that Toby may want to travel back and forth between home and Cambridge, but it is acknowledged that this would be too disruptive for him, due to train costs and travels' duration.

When highlighting criteria for potentially shortening the period of time that Toby would spend in College during the holidays, Ruth says it would make sense for Toby to have one-on-one meetings via Skype for example, and only multilateral ones in person. Furthermore, Rebecca suggests attempting to schedule such meetings in advance to clarify which weeks would be particularly useful for Toby to be in person in College. Toby clarifies that after the period(s) of time spent in College during the vacations he will publish a report on his work and contributions, so as to make the whole process as transparent as possible.

The motion to endorse Toby's stay in College with TCSU funding for the last week of June is put to a vote, and it passes with 42 votes in favour and 1 abstention.

The motion to refund him for his food expenses during said period(s) of time is put to a vote, and it passes with 33 votes in favour, 2 against and 8 abstentions.

- *Updates from CUSU Councils of term*

Toby and Dante brief the meeting attendees on the recent budgetary difficulties faced by CUSU, on their causes and proposed solutions. It is stressed that said difficulties do not affect TCSU's finances, which remain sound.

- *CUSU Women's officer's petition*

Rebecca briefs meeting attendees on the petition put forward by the CUSU Women's officer to 'give sexual assault survivors better support at university'.

- *Vacation storage options*

The implementation of the option of placing lockable cupboards or boxes in every room has been deemed as too expensive and logistically burdensome by the Works' department, notes Toby. Hence, another possibility might be to use the services offered by a private company that is already working with several other Colleges in Cambridge. The company offers to collect, store and then return a great deal of boxes, with a fixed price being paid per box per month. Toby adds that the system of collection and delivery is flexible and could then be arranged on an individual basis online.

Toby stresses that while it is as of now unclear the extent to which the College will fund this means of storage for the individual, he notes that it is likely that the full cost of insuring the objects in the boxes will indeed be covered by College. Nevertheless, it is stated that this would not in any way affect the existing storage space that is currently reserved for international students.

Farzana and Petr note that eventually the total expenditure on box storage through the company will be equivalent to, if not higher than, the cost of installing lockable cupboards in every room.

The attractiveness of the storage option through the company is its rapid implementation and its flexibility - both because it can be attempted once and not repeated again, and because the number of boxes stored is easily adjustable.

18/5/17

Seb, Ali and James note that all those needing to leave boxes behind should be able to leave them in the rooms that are vacated during the holidays, although it is acknowledged that even though the accommodation office might well know in advance which rooms will indeed be left empty, the manpower and logistics required could be substantial.

Toby informs the meeting attendees that he will share with them a 'decision matrix' provided by College pertaining to the costs and benefits of the various storage options. Toby concludes the discussion by stating that TCSU will make its voice heard on reforming the room booking and room balloting systems, and that doing so by providing practical suggestions and solutions will make TCSU's action even more effective.

- *Outcome of BT subscription survey*

Having acknowledged the outcome of the survey and briefed meeting attendees on its details, Joanna notes that TCSU will maintain the subscription as it is, in that it is a service that is beneficial for students' welfare and because it can be easily afforded by TCSU.

Regarding what can be afforded by TCSU, Adam requests clarifications on the LGBT officer's allocated funds for events, and it is acknowledged that the reserves of the 1TQ society may also be used for such initiatives. Rebecca then raises the matter of the need for a Sky+ subscription, the negotiation of which would happen via CUSU, notes Joanna. Petr finally stresses that it should be clarified exactly which programs and videogames one is able to access from the JCR, especially for freshers.

- *Discount deals*

Joanna has been in contact with several local companies for the obtainment of discount deals for Trinitarians, and these will be struck in the coming days. James suggests considering the companies with which other unions already have similar deals in place, as they are likely to offer similar offers to TCSU too.

- *Welfare events*

While puppy therapy events may not be held in College due to regulatory reasons, an event such as 'welfare gelato' on the Backs is much more likely to be approved by College.

- *Waste disposal in gyp rooms*

There are currently no recycling bins in gyp rooms. While these may represent an additional burden for bedders, it is seen as beneficial to have recycling bins in as many places in College as possible. Becky stresses that a lot of waste is created in gyms, and most other Colleges have recycling systems in place that are far more advanced than Trinity's. Mia could look into this issue and suggest improvements on this matter.

- *Motion for TCSU to conduct a survey regarding views on Scholars' privileges*

James stresses that there are numerous privileges that Scholars enjoy, and that are not simply limited to an advantageous position in the room ballot. Both Rebecca and James

18/5/17

detail the numerous ways in which the current system is blatantly unfair, and of how it penalizes certain individuals - or needlessly benefits others - depending on one's subject, gender and ethnicity.

Harry raises the issue of what the practical repercussions would be of an abolition of the Scholars' ballot, and specifically of those on fourth years.

The motion for TCSU to conduct a survey regarding views on Scholars' privileges is put to a vote, and it passes with 35 votes in favour, 3 votes against and 5 abstentions.

After Rebecca and Becky's suggestion that the survey be held in Lent Term, so as to allow Freshers to become aware of the issues involved and of the current situation, a motion to hold the survey then is put to a vote, and it passes with 41 votes in favour and 2 abstentions.