

Minutes, MCR Open Meeting
May 8, 2005

1. Call to order

At 8.10pm

2. Review of last meeting minutes

3. Matter arising from last meeting

a. Costs and options MCR photo

Christian contacted professional photographer, but was expensive.

It was noted that possibly, a stage was needed.

Next time, it could be combined with the graduate dinner.

Also, next time, it could be combined with JCR picture

4. Officer reports

a. President (Christian)

-Noted that Bullock seminar took place. Good lectures, not much attendance by the fellowship.

- Film noir Bop was not advertised as before, because of college complaints about last time. At the end of the bop there were around 200 people. No problems.

Everyone was happy. About JCR people not allowed in: they weren't allowed in.

Next time, no poster in JCR noticeboard. JCR members can of course be taken in as JCR guests.

- May morning was huge success

b. President (Mathias)

- Not that much sold during bop, but we have a good stock at the bar now.

c. Treasurer (Abid)

- Just started

- Everyone can have a look if they want at the accounts

- Still £4000 owed by college

- 4.400 still to spend this year

- Lauren notes that garden party will cost £1500-£2000, OUSA £400, and fresher's week has to be taken into account.

d. Secretary (Remco)

- This is first open meeting

- Art appreciation soon

e. Publicity Officer/IT Rep (Dan)

- trying to reduce number of emails

- working of committee list is sorted out

f. Social Secretary (Dunlaith)

- Thanks everyone for a great bop

- JCR members were allowed in after 11.00, which was created good atmosphere

- Exeter, Queen's and LMH exchange dinners coming up.

- Idea of library in the MCR, people can exchange or borrow books.

5. Motions:

a. Committee motions:

[Ammended]:

“This MCR suggest that the presidents and the treasurer of the Executive Committee assumes full responsibility of the financial loss caused by the theft of the MCR cashbox, but not of the theft itself, and will fully indemnify the full amount of cash stolen, and the MCR recognises that safeguards are set in place to assure against future occurances”

- Taken together with motion b.vii by Robert Jubb and Ronan Hanna. Rob summarises it by saying that the theft itself was unfortunate, but the committee should not have had so much money in it, and having this amount of money is negligence on behalf of the committee.
- Mathias tells that 2 days before the theft, the money in the cashbox was counted at £290. At the night of the theft, the committee had a meeting, and remembered checking thoroughly if all cupboards were locked, but did not remember checking if the cashbox was in the cupboard, where it was kept at the time. Papers about what was sold and about stock, etc were in the cashbox and so were stolen too.
- Lauren shows calculations based on the MCR accounts, that the amount in the cashbox was probably (much) higher than the £290. So there is a possibility that there was money gone even before the theft. In any case, the accounts were done badly, because the amount in the cashbox was not known.
- Abid shows alternative calculations, showing a lower number than Lauren.
- Lauren notes that the committee was asked before to keep less money in the cashbox.
- Kathrin notes that the committee learned from its mistake.
- Christian notes that it would be almost impossible to find a committee in the future if they would be financially responsible for any loss in the MCR.
- The discussion that followed was basically a debate between those who thought the committee should pay the money back, and those who didn't. There were several lines of arguments, but basically it boiled down to this.
- During the discussion, Dan Stokeley resigned as publicity officer with the words: 'life is too short for this'.
- **Motion passed 23 in favour, 1 against, 9 abstaining**

i.

b. MCR member motions

- Sending a letter of congratulations to the authors/producers of the song 'San Salvador la la la la' to express our esteem and encouragement in pursuing their talented artistic career. (Alessandro Spina, sec. Luiz Aboim, Tom Finbow, Ben Parsons).**
[motion passed, 23 for, 1 against, 9 obst]
- To voice our concern as an MCR body that the 'punting' facilities have been closed without addressing the student body**

and with no information being given as to plans for reopening. This is to be voiced to proper authorities (Chris Liwski, sec. Alessandro Spina, Luiz Aboim)

- Pete Eleveld closed docks, because they were deemed unsafe.
- Will be passed to student needs committee
- **[motion passed unanimously]**
 - iii. To openly and politely discuss the status of non-graduate MCR members (Chris Liwski, sec. Hari Kumarg, Michael Schueller, Sardar Khan)**
- Noted that there is an atmosphere of 'them' vs 'us'.
- Noted that if there are problems with certain members, they can be individually addressed.
- Lauren raised the idea that at guest dinners, seating arrangements can be mixed (not just group of friends together) to enhance integration and get to know each other better.
- It was noted that especially linguistics students, who have to take a year off to study abroad, don't know many people in the JCR when they come back and so the MCR is a good place for social contact.
- Chris says he never had the intention to discriminate against 4th years and he retracts the statements made in the previous meeting.

[not a real motion, so no vote]

- iv. To finalize the MCR group-photo without further investigation and should be arranged to put a copy of that in the MCR (Sardar Khan, sec. Michael Schueller, Alessandro Spina, Luiz Aboim)**

Discussed at point 3a.

- v. the MCR should have an ashtray available in the Garden (a big one!) (Luiz Aboim, sec. Chris Liwski)**

[motion passed with 27 for, 2 against]

- vi. To approve a 'rule' that smokers are not to throw cigarette butts on the garden grounds**

[motion passed unanimously]

vii.

The MCR notes:

firstly, the unfortunate theft of the cashbox, containing around three hundred pounds, from the MCR during the Easter vacation;

secondly, that where a financial loss to the MCR occurs as a result of the breach of the fiduciary duties owed by executive members to the MCR, those executive members are liable for that financial loss;

thirdly, that in the past, the cashbox has been regularly emptied of excess funds to ensure that a limited sum of money has been kept in it, because of the risk of theft;

fourthly, that members of the executive committee were well aware of the risks of theft from the MCR, given that theft of a camera from the MCR occurred last term, and that money was stolen from the cashbox after the May morning breakfast last year.

fifthly, that as no large event had occurred the night of the theft of the cashbox, there had been ample opportunity to remove excess funds from the cashbox, with the consequence that there was no reason for the sum of money in the cashbox, and consequently the sum of money lost to the MCR, to be as high as it was.

The MCR therefore mandates that the members of the executive who had control of the cashbox should be indemnified by the MCR to extent of the sum which it could be reasonably expected to be maintained in the cashbox as a float plus any takings from the night in question, as they are not responsible for the theft of the cashbox itself nor for the presence of those monies in the cashbox. However, the MCR mandates no further indemnification as it was the part of the fiduciary duties of those members of the executive to minimise any financial loss as a result of thefts, a duty which would have been and has been in the past fulfilled by regularly emptying the cashbox of any excess monies. (Robert Jubb, sec. Ronan Hanna)

Discussed under point 5a.

viii. Recognizing the state of the fishtank, this MCR moves to purchase snails to control the algae (Lauren McGuirl, sec. Robert Jubb)

Motion passed unanimously

ix. To donate our £50 allotment to the Tusk Trust (Lauren McGuirl, sec. Robert Jubb)

[motion passed 27 for, 2 abstaining]

x. This house believes that comments on motions should not be made through personal insults but made in the form of motions, in any case never written over colleague's motions (Luiz Aboim, sec. Rachele de Felice, Maria Khanina)

[motion passed unanimously]

xi. Tax all non-???? Motions (25% rate) that are not of the [logical] form of <<this is not a motion>>* PS <<this motion cannot be discussed>> (Tiago Mendes, not seconded)

[motion ignored, because absence of Tiago]

xii. Following the popularity of the unofficial MCR hunks calendar, this MCR resolves to create an official calendar and mandates 12 of the sexiest specimens in the MCR to pose naked for it (Sha Crawford, not seconded)

[motion ignored, not seconded]

xiii. Ask why minutes about last OM don't mention *anything* at all of the discussion that followed Markus' motion about 'MCR life' (Tiago Mendes, not seconded)

[motion ignored, because absence of Tiago]

- xiv. To ask college (whoever is responsible for that) to provide sufficient number of chairs in staircase 18 computer lab. Currently there are 8 computers and 4 (2 of them slightly broken) chairs (Lena Raubisko, not seconded).
[will be put forward in appropriate meeting]
- xv. Motion by Ronan Hanna sec. Lauren McGuirl

This MCR notes:

firstly, that such supplies of drink as are maintained by the MCR within its fridge, cabinets and other stores are the property of the Common Room. All revenue from the sale of said stock accrues immediately to the Common Room;

secondly, that only members of the executive (whether elected or co-opted) are afforded a power to deal with finances of the Common Room, including such cash as may be identified as forming common property;

thirdly, that to serve alcohol within the Common Room therefore comprises an exercise of executive authority. Only executive members of the Common Room may exercise the authority to sell alcohol from the supplies of the Common Room, or otherwise deal with common property;

fourthly, and for the avoidance of doubt but without prejudice to the foregoing, the following excerpts from the Constitution of the Common Room:

Art III para (b): The functions of the MCR Committee shall include ... management of MCR finances, ...the provision of social activities both in and out of term...

Art IV para (b): The Vice-President... shall be responsible for overseeing the continuous running of the MCR facilities related to food and drinks (including ...the Drinks Fridge and the Wine Cellar);

fifthly, the exercise of such executive authority as is conferred by the Constitution (inter alia the provision of social events and the sale of common property within the MCR) must enure to the benefit of the class of members *as a whole*;

sixthly, that it is the established practice of this MCR to advertise its internal events to members as a whole, by way of the mail-lists made available for this purpose. Notwithstanding the fact that this comprises a rational expectation on the part of members, such requirement is stipulated within art IV para (e) of the Common Room's Constitution;

seventhly, that social events, the details of which are not in advance made freely available to the membership as a whole, cannot plausibly be regarded as having been undertaken for the benefit of that entire class;

eighthly, that social events have of late been conducted in the absence of their having been publicised to the general body of members; and

ninthly, that the exercise of executive authority under such conditions might well be regarded as an abuse of the authority conferred.

This MCR therefore

reaffirms its commitment to the provision of events which may enure, both in theory and in practice, to the benefit of its constituents *as a whole*;

resolves itself to further the stated aims of the Common Room, including the maintenance of a fully open and welcoming environment in which *all* members are accorded treatment commensurate with

their status as members; and

directs the executive to publish, in advance and upon a weekly basis, the full schedule of social events planned for the week in question, including in particular the times during which alcohol may be available for purchase within the Common Room.

[Motion failed, 8 for, 19 against, 2 abstaining]

"Ronan Hanna, as proposer of this motion, requested that it be noted that

this result :

- comprises a vote in favour of arbitrariness and lack of transparency in

the discharge of the executive functions of the Common Room;

- illustrates the extant dynamic whereby certain of the Common Room's facilities are run solely for the benefit of a distinct subset of its membership;

and that

- said vote was carried by the constituents of that subset".

6. New business:

a. What do with the 500-700 pounds?

- still stands

7. Other comments/questions to the executive committee (not motions)

8. Meeting closed