

# ST. CATHERINE'S COLLEGE MIDDLE COMMON ROOM OPEN MEETING MINUTES

Sunday, May 29<sup>th</sup> 2022 7PM – MCR

Committee Members Present

Co-Presidents: Lucy Bartel and Sam Atwal

Secretary: Felice Wallner

Social Secretaries: Jeremy Sontchi, Dorothy Chirwa, Ilayda Karadag

Treasurer: Benjamin Wagenvoort

Bar Manager: Anthony Rajecki-Doyle

IT Officer: Hashan Punchihewa

Women's\* Welfare Rep: Arunima Cheruvathoor

LGBTQ+ Welfare Rep: Indy Sobol

Academic Officer: Tomajin Morikawa

Merchandise Officer: Sophie Weeden

Environmental Rep: Joey Grostern

Sports Rep: Pit Lee

Catz House Rep: Anthony Rajecki-Doyle

Tea and Biscuits Officer: Jialing Chen

Minutes Taken by Felice Wallner

## A. MINUTES

### 1. **Women\*s only gym hours twice a week for 2 hours**

Proposed by: Felice Wallner (Secretary)

Seconded by: Indiana Sobol (LGBTQ+ Rep)

This MCR notes:

The majority of users of the downstairs section of the college gym are men. They often come in groups, which can be intimidating for women\* and non-binary students who would like to use new equipment. There is a hesitance amongst women\* and non-binary students in college to use the weights area when it is largely dominated by men. Over 78% of women and non-binary students surveyed who currently use Catz gym are in favour of women's only gym hours and over 89%

of those who don't currently use the gym say they would be more likely to if there were women\*s only gym hours. The gym is shared by all members of St. Catherine's College and this motion was passed by the JCR. It would be difficult to enforce this rule if not all common rooms are on board and that the MCR can support the JCR in these endeavors.

This MCR believes:

It would be beneficial to implement women\*s only gym hours twice a week for a 2-hour slot.

This would give women a safe space to work out in the downstairs section without any men present.

This MCR resolves:

To mandate the MCR to implement women\*s only gym hours twice a week for 2 hours each.

These times would be decided by results of a poll of all gym users to determine the most convenient slots for all gym users

To introduce peer led women and non-binary only gym introduction sessions to be organised on an ad hoc basis.

Discussion:

VK: Do we know when these hours would be?

FW: Not yet, but hours will probably be trialed next year.

VK: But doesn't that make no sense if students this year can vote on these hours being introduced but what about students next year?

FW: That is a point, but we believe that the vote would fall the same way, as this has been a motion proposed by students at Catz repeatedly.

DV: But what if I can only go to the gym in those hours?

FW: It will not be every day, hopefully everyone will find alternative suitable slots.

PR: But women can go to the wights area if they want to, we aren't stopping them.

FW: Sure they can, but people may feel more comfortable going when it is not overcrowded and mostly males.

VK: But let's talk about statistical significance. Are there really that many women that want it this way?

FL: It really is just four hours a week, if it helps even only one woman or non-binary person then it's worth it.

Motion called to vote: Passed with a majority (22 for, 4 against and 4 abstain)

## **2. Abolishing Non-Disclosure Agreements in cases of sexual assault and misconduct**

Proposed by: Arunima Cheruvathoor (Womens' Rep)

Seconded by: Felice Wallner (Secretary)

This MCR notes:

The extensive use of Non-Disclosure Agreements at all stages of university complaints processes – whether as a requirement to bring a complaint, a prerequisite to mediation, a requirement for complainants to see their decisions, or as an outcome of settlement – is well established. We are aware that non-disclosure clauses also appear in no-contact agreements between students.

This MCR believes:

This practice is unnecessary and immoral. Victims often seek and deserve confidentiality, but they should not be permanently prevented from speaking about their experiences or forced to agree to protect the offender in exchange for their own privacy.

The use of NDAs allows perpetrators to continue to harm others, either at their own university or another one. It also chills the climate for anyone who might wish to bring forward a complaint, knowing that they will face a demand that they sign on to an NDA at some stage of the process.

This MCR resolves to:

Mandate the Master of St. Catherine's College to sign the pledge promoted by Minister Michele Donelan, Maria Miller MP and the Can't Buy My Silence Campaign, to stop the use of NDAs in complaints of sexual harassment, bullying and other misconduct.

TH: But NDA's can protect the student, professor, and institution. For example, if a case like this is dragged through the mud by journalists that does not give either party a piece of mind. Instead, an NDA will allow the university to deal with it in peace and escalate it appropriately without the media interfering.

*Frustrated and awed silence.*

FW: NDAs are not permissive but restrictive. NDAs are gagging, not freeing. NDAs do not protect victims. Time has proven this.

VK: Have a problem with the wording of mandating the Master to do anything, we can't do that to the Master. I think this motion should be rephrased and proposed again.

AC: This is the last open meeting of the year. We will not hold another one just because the phrasing is bad. This motion is being passed by JCRs and MCRs over Oxbridge, NDAs have no place in higher education anymore.

Motion is called to vote: Motion passed with 19 for, 8 abstain, 3 against

### **3. Charity Motion to donate £50 to The Tingewick Trust in support of their fundraising for Oxford Hospitals Charity and Helen and Douglas House**

Proposed by: Eleanor Ferris

Seconded by: Catherine Foster

This MCR notes:

The Tingewick Trust is a registered charity run by a different group of medical students at Oxford University each year. For the past 82 years they have been putting on fundraising events including bake sales, sponsored cycles and our Christmas pantomime with the aim of raising as much money as possible for our two charities of the year.

This year, their two chosen charities are Oxford Hospitals Charity and Helen and Douglas House. Helen and Douglas House is the world's first children's hospice, helping local families in Oxford cope with the challenges of looking after a terminally ill baby or child who will die prematurely. It's a home from home for these families, providing free round the clock care in a warm and loving environment. Oxford Hospitals Charity helps to transform care locally by funding the best medical equipment, research, training and facilities for our patients and staff.

The MCR believes:

The NHS and its staff have been placed under immense pressure during the course of the pandemic and should be supported.

No family should be without support while caring for a terminally ill child.

Helping The Tingewick Trust fundraise for these charities will further support these in-need groups

The MCR resolves:

To donate £50 to The Tingewick Trust in the form of a one-off donation in support of their fundraising for Oxford Hospitals Charity and Helen and Douglas House.

No questions

Motion called to vote: Motion passed with 27 for and 3 abstain.

## B. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. Presenting St. Catherine's Academic Journal (SCAR)  
Franscesco Feriozzi and Arunima Cheruvathoor

FF: SCAR is short for St. Catherine's Academic Journal and we are a student led journal that publishes other students' articles and reviews. And we are looking for new members. If you are interested in any of the positions, you can contact me via email.