



Open Meeting

Sunday 24th February 2008

Agenda

- 1) Apologies for absence or lateness
- 2) Announcement of the presence and purpose of guests
- 3) Approval of the order of the agenda
- 4) Reading by the secretary on request by any Member, amendment if necessary and approval of the Minutes of any previous Open Meeting not yet accepted by an Open Meeting
- 5) Matters Arising from the minutes
- 6) Reports from the Committee
- 7) Questions to Committee
- 8) Extraordinary Motions
- 9) Ordinary Motions
 - a. RCSA Bank Accounts
 - b. Medical Resources Room
 - c. 'Educational Outreach' & 'Access'
 - d. Fairtrade
 - e. Written Reports from Officers
 - f. Fairtrade Society
 - g. Cheese Society & its Constitution
 - h. JCR Yeargroup Photo
- 10) Any other RCSA business

Ordinary Motions

a. RCSA Bank Accounts

RCSA Notes:

1. The RCSA holds more than £60,000 in reserves
2. All RCSA accounts are with the Co-operative bank earning interest of between 1.8% and 2.1%.
3. The co-operative bank is no longer the only ethical banking provider known to the RCSA.
4. That Triodos Bank is as ethical as the co-operative bank, with a higher rate of interest.
5. Transferring funds has been under investigation by the RCSA for more than two years.
6. That at the 2007 budget meeting a variety of societies had to make substantial cuts to their budgets.
7. That policy passed in November 2007 states that a higher interest account would be beneficial to members.
8. Since the treasurer's report to the last meeting interest rates have decreased across the market.

RCSA Believes:

1. That after investigation by the Treasurer and the Green Officer a better alternative has been found in a combination of the "Triodos 33 day notice period

deposit account" (3.91% AER)

and a Natwest Current account (2.78% AER).

2. This is because although Interest rates are highest in some of the commercial fixed term bonds, the inflexibility of these fixed terms prevents them from being appropriate choices for the in relation to the RCSA's yearly structure of payments.
3. The flexibility of Triodos account, combined the highest non-bond interest rate means that it the financially appropriate account for the RCSA's reserves and is also an ethical bank account.
4. The RCSA has encountered repeated difficulties in banking with the Co-operative bank in both customer service and branch accessibility. The Natwest bank offers better customer service for day to day banking, whilst the Triodos bank account will hold the larger proportion of the funds according to its ethical banking principles.

RCSA Resolves:

1. To transfer the RCSA reserves out of the accounts with the co-op.
2. To split funds between a Triodos 33 day notice period deposit account and a NatWest current account, with the precise division at the discretion of the RCSA Treasurer and RCSA President in consultation with the executive.

Proposed: Chris Thistlethwaite, RCSA Treasurer

Seconded: Peter Wood, RCSA Green Officer

b. Medical Resources Room

THIS MOTION REQUIRES TWO-THIRDS SUPPORT TO PASS

RCSA Notes:

1. Medical students at Robinson are underprovided compared to medical students at other colleges.
2. Recent RCSA Executive Committee and Senior Treasurer support for expending a large amount from Reserves funds, which are not being used and threaten our status as a Charity.

RCSA Believes:

1. Medical students would benefit greatly from a medical resource room.
2. Resources provided would be an extremely useful investment, lasting for upwards of 20 years.

RCSA Resolves

1. To spend £1000 from RCSA funds for the above purpose, in line with the proposal document accompanying and constituting part of this motion. (in the Addendum)

Proposed: Luke Snell, Co-President of Robinson Medical Society

Seconded: Jasmine Lee, Co-President of Robinson Medical Society

c. 'Educational Outreach' & 'Access'

RCSA Notes:

1. That the term "Access" is not widely known outside Cambridge and Oxford
2. That the RCSA "Access" Officer has to work with schools in Wandsworth and other organisations outside Cambridge
3. The terms "Educational Outreach" and "Widening participation" are more widely understood and mean essentially the same thing as "Access"
4. That, since the title "Access Officer" is specified in the RCSA Constitution it would take a formal referendum to officially change the name of the post
5. The current CUSU Access Officer uses the terms "Educational Outreach" and "Widening Participation" to describe her work with outside organisations

RCSA Believes:

1. That it is important for the Access Officer's role to be understood by organisations that officer works with
2. That using a term which is insular (such as "Access") when doing work aimed at tackling insularity is a bad idea
3. That if the Access Officer was to use the title "Educational Outreach Officer" and use the phrase "Widening Participation" to describe their work in communications with outside organisations this problem would be solved
4. No one in College wants a referendum on such a small and issue.
5. It would be perfectly legitimate for the RCSA Access Officer to use the title "Educational Outreach Officer" in their communications with outside organisations without changing the actual title of their office

RCSA Resolves:

1. To endorse the RCSA Access Officer's use of the title "RCSA Educational Outreach Officer" and the phrase "Widening Participation" in any communications they may have with outside organisations
2. To confirm that the actual title of the position shall remain as "Access Officer"

Proposed: Ben Henriques, Down wiv d kidz.

Seconded: Ronke Fadipe, RCSA Access sub-committee

d. Fairtrade

RCSA Notes:

1. Millions of landless labourers and small farmers in the economically developing world do not earn a fair and reliable income that guarantees enough to feed their families, send their children to school and invest in a sustainable livelihood.

2. The FairTrade foundation guarantees "fair" prices for produce it purchases, and can help to ensure farmers and labourers in the developing world earn a decent and sustainable sum to live on.
3. For purchases within college, consumer choice is limited by what is readily available, and providing Fair Trade options within colleges can increase consumer choice.
4. Many other institutions have already achieved 'Fairtrade Status', including St Catherine's, Kings and Pembroke Colleges, Cambridge, and the Universities of Bristol, Edinburgh, Warwick, Nottingham, Glasgow, York, Leeds and the LSE.

RCSA Believes:

1. Many Robinson students are supportive of the promotion of Fair Trade.
2. Students of the college desire greater access to FairTrade products within the college, as recorded in the Fair Trade Questionnaire (results on the Green Notice board).

RCSA Resolves:

1. To endorse and actively support the campaign to achieve official 'Fairtrade status' for the college from the Fairtrade Foundation (see appendix).
2. As part of this campaign, the RCSA commits to serve Fairtrade products at events it hosts wherever possible e.g. tea, coffee, chocolate, wine, fruit, fruit juice, RCSA executive clothing (i.e. Freshers' week hoodies) and to promote Fairtrade by putting up posters and other sources of information in college.
3. To encourage college authorities to include Fairtrade products in food prepared on site, and to look in to the possibility of having regular 'Fairtrade formals'.
4. To encourage college authorities to sell more Fairtrade supplies within college, but with no intention of removing all other options
5. To support the campaign to achieve Fairtrade Status for Cambridge University.

Proposed: Peter Wood, enjoys his coffee

Seconded: Stefan Milde, partial to a bit of chocolate

e. Written Reports from Officers

RCSA Notes:

1. That no formal system exists for the reporting of RCSA activities to the student body
2. That while ad hoc reports by particular Officers to Open Meetings is better than no reporting, it does not constitute a comprehensive or detailed report of the activities of RCSA Officers
3. RCSA Officers are elected to fulfill particular functions (as specified in the Constitution) and represent the student body in a broader sense
4. That many students in Robinson are unaware of the contributions made by RCSA Officers to College life

RCSA Believes:

1. It is important that RCSA Officers fulfill both their Constitutional obligations and more general RCSA duties as they arise
2. The student body should be aware of RCSA activities.
3. A system of reporting that would allow members of the RCSA to see what was being done by RCSA Officers would allow members of the RCSA to engage with RCSA activities more, combating any apathy.

RCSA Resolves:

1. To mandate the whole RCSA Committee to submit a report at the end of Lent Term and by the division of Michaelmas Term each year.
2. That these reports should detail activities and plans (as appropriate) of each member of the committee and that contributions need not be in continuous prose.
3. That the RCSA President, RCSA Chair or any other Officer, that the deem appropriate, should organise the compilation of this report.

Proposed: Ben Henriques, Reporting for Duty!

Seconded: Pete Cary, Planning for Coffee!

f. Fairtrade Society

THIS MOTION REQUIRES TWO-THIRDS SUPPORT TO PASS

RCSA Notes:

1. A large number of students are supportive of Fairtrade, and would like more Fairtrade options available for purchase in the college.
2. That the Fairtrade Foundation insists upon colleges having a Fairtrade society to become an official "Fairtrade College". It cannot wholly be absorbed by the Green officer role.

RCSA Believes:

1. That a FairTrade society would help to achieve both of these aims.

RCSA Resolves:

1. To set up a Fairtrade society.
2. The Fairtrade society agrees to be bound by the constitution and policy of the RCSA.

Proposed: Pete Wood, Green Boy

Seconded: Emma Irving, Green Girl

g. Cheese Society & its Constitution

RCSA Notes:

1. That the Cheese society has not had elections since its first meeting in 2006.

RCSA Believes:

1. That this is a serious breach of democracy. It possibly heralds the beginning of a cheese based coup of the RCSA.
2. Since the graduation of Jacob Bard-Rosenberg, Goats cheese officer, goats cheese has been underrepresented in the lactose-based sphere of college life. This may be an access issue.
3. That cheese society's flagrant disregard for the constitution and policy of the RCSA must be made an example of.

RCSA Resolves:

1. That Cheese society must have elections.
2. That if an election is not arranged for the nearest opportunity, members of the RCSA executive (probably the President and Green officer) will buy some really expensive cheese and make cheese and ham toasties. Or some other heinous breach of Cheese etiquette, like Branston pickle.

Proposed: Iain Barr, Lactose intollerant

Seconded: Peter Wood, Democracy's Homeboy

h. JCR Yeargroup Photo

RCSA Notes:

1. That current RCSA policy is in favour of matriculation photographs being on display in the JCR.
2. That there is no money currently allocated to this purpose
3. That the matriculation photo of students who matriculated in 2006 may be difficult to obtain but that the Halfway Hall photo, of that year group, is currently on sale.

RCSA Believes:

1. Photographs of year groups make a positive addition to the JCR and to the college atmosphere

RCSA Resolves:

1. To allocate £35 from this Open Meeting in order that the Catering & Amenities Officer can procure a framed Halfway Hall photograph for the JCR while they are still on sale.

Proposed: Peter Cary, likes nostalgia

Seconded: Fiona Wright, needs reminding