



Sunday 25th January 2009



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 Reports from the Committee
 - a) Mascot Name
6. Questions to the Committee
7. Extraordinary Motions
8. Ordinary Motions
 - a) Bouncy Castle
 - b) Senior Scholarships
 - c) Discrimination in Scholarship Lists
 - d) Budget Reform
 - e) JCR Refurbishment
 - f) JCR Year Group Photo
 - g) Newspapers in JCR
 - h) Computers in JCR
 - i) Overhead Lockers
 - j) Bicycle Pumps
 - k) Twister Mat
 - l) Squash balls
 - m) Hockey Kit
 - n) Digital Crest
9. Any other RCSA business

5. Its aims: to provide facilities which are of recreational or social value to Members, and to advance the welfare of its Members.
6. A bouncy castle would be useful for Corruption and garden parties.

RCSA Believes:

1. Owning a bouncy castle would improve the welfare of its members, by reducing stress, especially during exam term.
2. The bouncy castle would be an excellent addition to the chill-out cafe.
3. A bouncy castle would provide a facility of lasting value to the RCSA, and therefore it would be appropriate to use reserves to purchase it.

RCSA Resolves:

1. To allocate £1400 from Reserves to purchase a bouncy castle and necessary accessories, in line with the accompanying and constituting report in the addendum.
2. To mandate the RCSA Executive to carry out the purchase in Resolves 1.
3. That Iain Barr shall negotiate with College about the positioning, supervisor training, and safety/general arrangements for the bouncy castle, reporting back to the RCSA before any money is spent.
4. To make the bouncy castle available to groups or associations of members in College for a nominal fee or deposit.

Proposed: Iain Barr, came to get down

Seconded: Dave Bewicke, jumped around

Ordinary Motions

- a) Bouncy Castle

RCSA Notes:

1. It does not currently own a bouncy castle.
2. Bouncy castles reduce stress.
3. There are blue brick bouncy castles on e-Bay for about £1300.
4. The Association has excess reserves.

- b) Senior Scholarships

RCSA Notes

1. That College prizes are divided up into different categories of scholarship.

2. That a senior scholarship is awarded to a student who has achieved first class results in all Tripos exams.
3. That students who graduate after three years with first class results in each year become senior scholars.
4. That students who choose to do a part III and have achieved first class results do not become senior scholars until they finish their part III.
5. That I can't find anyone who knows whether it is necessary to also get a first in your part III to become a senior scholar.
6. That senior scholars get extra perks like free formals, extra money for continuing to study at Robinson and staying free for three nights a year in college.

RCSA Believes

1. That students should not be penalised for doing a part III.
2. That students who get first class results in their first three years, but choose to undertake a part III (and also not to graduate) should also become senior scholars.
3. That it would be better for students to become senior scholars as soon as they are entitled to, rather than waiting until they have graduated.

RCSA Resolves

1. To mandate the Academic affairs officer to clarify the current position on election into senior scholarships.
2. To appoint an appropriate committee member to lobby college to change the process for election into a senior scholarship such that students can become senior scholars as undergraduates in their 4th year.
3. Or failing resolves 2) to appoint an appropriate committee member to lobby college to change (if necessary) the process for election into a senior scholarship such that students with first class results in their first three years become senior scholars after graduating independent of their part III result.

Proposed: John Mott

Seconded: Richard Thomson

c) Discrimination in Scholarship Lists

RCSA Notes:

1. On the scholarship list men's names are published by their surname followed by their initials.
2. On the scholarship list, women's names are published by their surname, Miss and then their initials.

RCSA believes:

1. The use of 'miss' creates an unnecessary distinction between the sexes.
2. This distinction does not promote equality.

RCSA resolves:

1. To attempt to get the 'miss' removed from the list in future years.

Proposed: Lana Whittaker

Seconded: James Kemp

d) Budget Reform

RCSA Notes:

1. The RCSA receives the majority of its funding from college.
2. Recent discussions between the RCSA Treasurer, Finance Bursar and Chief Office Clerk have suggested that the way college currently provides income for the RCSA is not efficient.
3. The RCSA currently holds a large quantity of so-called 'reserves', which are essentially unspent funds from budget years past, but are not allowed to hold such a stockpile of funds for no particular purpose.
4. Around half of the 2008/09 Budget has been allocated to pay rents for various sports facilities, the bills for which are passed onto the RCSA from college.

RCSA Discusses:

1. The possibility of giving some of the current reserves to the college bursary scheme.

RCSA Believes:

1. Letting college pay the bills for sports facilities rent (as outlined in the addendum) would prevent any future increases in these rents from detracting from the budget available for other

- purposes e.g. allocations to clubs and societies.
2. That having a 'student development sinking fund' would be a suitable alternative to the current system of 'reserves', and one which has the backing of the Finance Bursar.
 3. That this student development fund would act in much the same as the current reserves, except that any allocations drawn from the fund would have to be justified as in some way falling under the category of 'student development'.
 4. Having this fund would remove the need to 'get rid' of a large quantity of the funds that currently constitute the 'reserves'.

RCSA Resolves:

1. That from the Budget for the year 2009/10 the rent for Queens' Sports Ground, LMBC Boathouse, the squash courts and the badminton courts will be paid directly by college.
2. That the 'student development sinking fund' is implemented from the 2009/10 Budget year, and the base level of this fund set at £40,000.
3. The use of any funds surplus to this level should be considered at a later Open Meeting (for example for use in JCR refurbishment after the cost of this has been worked out).

Proposed: Barnaby Mollett, Budget the Little Helicopter

Seconded: Rahul Mansigani

e) JCR Refurbishment

RCSA Notes:

1. The RCSA has sufficient funds to support the redecoration/refurbishment of the Junior Combination Room (JCR).

RCSA Believes:

1. The JCR is a resource that all members should be able to benefit from.
2. Funds from 'reserves' could be used to improve the JCR and the potential benefits of this resource to members, thus bettering the recreational, intellectual or social value of the JCR to RCSA members.

3. The details of the JCR refurbishment should be a topic for discussion by all RCSA members, and suggestions from all welcomed.
4. That a 'JCR Refurbishment Sub-Committee' would be needed in order to allow the process of suggestions, discussions and ultimately refurbishment to be co-ordinated smoothly.

RCSA Resolves:

1. To create a 'JCR Refurbishment Sub-Committee', headed by the RCSA President, RCSA Treasurer and RCSA Catering & Amenities Officer who will be in charge of co-ordinating JCR refurbishment.
2. In line with article 54b) of the RCSA Constitution, the sub-committee will be specifically mandated to be in charge of the JCR refurbishments for an operational period until the election of the next RCSA Committee (in Michaelmas 2009).
3. That a representative of this sub-committee propose a motion at the next Open Meeting in Lent Term detailing the changes to the JCR that have been proposed as a result of the progress of the sub-committee.
4. That this same motion will request the allocation of funds from the 'reserves' in order for the planned refurbishment to take place.

Proposed: Rahul Mansigani,

'Redecoration Action Station'

Seconded: Barnaby Mollett, used to watch 'Changing Rooms'.

f) JCR Yeargroup Photos

RCSA Notes:

1. It has had policy in favour of displaying matriculation photographs in the JCR since October 2005.
2. In February 2008, £100 was allocated by a RCSA Open Meeting for the purposes of fulfilling that policy.
3. There are still no yeargroup photographs in the JCR. The process of acquiring them was not straightforward and the allocated money went unspent.
4. The Law Society has photographs of its members in the Law Library.

5. The Porters' Lodge and Library have matriculation photographs of current students but they are not on display.
6. Halfway Hall, the Third Year Dinner and the next matriculation will all take place before the next budget meeting

RCSA Believes:

1. Photographs of members would make a worthwhile addition to their combination room.

RCSA Resolves:

1. To mandate the Catering & Amenities Officer to acquire yeargroup photographs for the JCR.
2. To allocate £120 from the budget of this Open Meeting for this purpose.
3. If possible these should be matriculation photographs from 2006, 2007 and 2008.
4. Alternatively, to purchase the forthcoming Dinner photos in place of the 2006 and 2007 pictures.
5. To use either remaining funds from this allocation or money from the Freshers' Week budget to purchase the 2009 matriculation photo in October.

Proposed: Tom "Kodak" Kelly

Seconded: Jas "Fujifilm" Lee

g) Newspapers in JCR

RCSA Notes:

1. We don't get the Observer. This is the equivalent of the Guardian on Sunday.
2. We get all the other weekday broadsheets' Sunday editions.
3. That a subscription to both the Saturday Guardian and the Observer costs £74.88 for 6 months on the guardian website. So it should be about £30 to get the Observer for the rest of the academic year from wherever we get the other papers.

RCSA Believes:

1. Some students would like to have a copy in the JCR.

RCSA Resolves:

1. To allocate £30 from the budget of this open meeting for the purchase of a subscription to the Observer.

2. To mandate the treasurer to carry out this purchase.

Proposed: Peter Wood (Wants to read David Mitchell's column)

Seconded: Iain Barr (Gets off on seconding motions)

h) Computers in JCR

RCSA Notes:

1. The JCR used to boast a PWF computer and an email kiosk for the use of RCSA members.
2. One of these machines exploded (delaying the start of an Open Meeting!) on 12 October 2008. Neither machine subsequently worked and have not been replaced.
3. The college's handbook '**Information for Junior Members 2008 – 2009**' states that all students are required to check their email regularly.
4. This handbook and the college prospectus advertise the computer facilities previously available in the JCR.
5. There are three PWF terminals in the MCR.

RCSA Believes:

1. RCSA members found the JCR computers useful for educational and social purposes.
2. The location of these PCs was particularly convenient for students frequenting the garden restaurant, bar or red brick café, not least for members who live on the other side of the gardens, on Herschel Court or elsewhere in Cambridge.
3. The college should replace its machines which malfunction.
4. The college should provide the computing facilities that it advertises.
5. Amongst annual expenditure of over £5million the college can probably afford a couple of PCs, or at least shuffle its existing resources around.

RCSA Resolves:

1. To mandate the RCSA Computer Officer and other relevant committee members to lobby college authorities to replace the JCR computers as a priority.
2. That if RCSA Resolves 1 is not speedily forthcoming to promote the transfer of a computer from Teaching Room 1 to the JCR at IT Committee or another appropriate forum.

Proposed: Tom Kelly
Seconded: Lewis Hemens

i) Overhead Lockers

RCSA Notes

1. The only vacation storage in rooms is the over head lockers
2. That there is no mechanism to hold the locker door open except for balancing it on your head or using a hand.
3. Head aches hurt as does falling off chairs
4. It is very dangerous particularly for short people to stand on tip toe on a chair and balance the door on your head whilst putting heavy things in the locker.
5. The afore mentioned method is the only way to put stuff in the lockers

RCSA Believes

1. That it would be safer to have the doors stay open.
2. The lockers pose an unacceptable safety risk

RCSA Resolves

1. To mandate the catering and amenities officer to petition College to install a suitable mechanism on the cupboard doors so that they stay open without being propped up by bodily parts.

Proposed: Claire Horrocks
Seconded: Anna Waghorn

j) Bicycle Pumps

RCSA Notes:

1. There are two bicycle pumps in the Porter's Lodge, for use by JCR members
2. The Porter' have requested more pumps in case some get lost or multiple people want to use a pump at once
3. Lots of people have bicycles and bicycles need pumped up tyres
4. Three pumps cost £8.89 from Pentagon Direct, including postage and packaging

RCSA Believes:

1. There should be enough bicycle pumps available for use by JCR members
2. It is a good use of the money set aside for spending at open meetings
3. There may be a case for using money from the Reserves to purchase the pumps

RCSA Resolves:

1. To spend £8.89 from the monies set aside for the open meeting to buy 3 new bicycle pumps to be stored in the Porter's Lodge and lent out to JCR members as necessary

Proposed: Matt Willis
Seconded: Nick Williams

k) Twister Mat

RCSA Notes:

1. There was a Twister mat in the JCR but it is now missing
2. Twister is very fun
3. It is hugely disappointing to want to play Twister but find that the mat is missing
4. Twister mats are available for £5.38 from Amazon, including postage and packaging

RCSA Believes:

1. There should be a Twister mat in the JCR
2. It is a good use of the money set aside for spending at open meetings
3. There may be a case for using money from the Reserves to purchase a Twister mat

RCSA Resolves:

1. To spend £5.38 from the monies set aside for the open meeting to buy a new Twister mat, to be stored in the JCR

Proposed: Mark Willis
Seconded: Nick Williams

l) Squash Balls

RCSA Notes:

1. There were squash balls in the porter's lodge which can be borrowed at anytime by JCR members and used to play squash with in the nearby court
2. There is currently only one ball left
3. A dozen squash balls cost £18.94 from Millet Sports including postage and packaging and would be used by JCR members far into the foreseeable future

RCSA Believes:

1. There should be more than one squash ball available for use by JCR members and

- it is worth having a dozen because they can be lost quite easily
2. It is a good use of the money set aside for spending at open meetings
 3. There may be a case for using money from the Reserves to purchase squash balls

RCSA Resolves:

1. To spend £18.94 from the monies set aside for the open meeting to buy a pack of 12 new squash balls to be stored in the Porter's Lodge and lent out to JCR members as necessary

Proposed: Mark Willis

Seconded: Nick Williams

m) Hockey Kit

RCSA Notes

2. At the last budget meeting, the Hockey Club was allocated £130 for new kit and £300 for a team tour.
3. Since this time, it has been discovered that £130 was insufficient to purchase shirts for both the men's and women's teams.
4. In order to have the shirts available for the new term, the club has ordered 30 shirts at a cost of £400 (£13.33 per shirt). The captain (Ed Pearson) recognises that this fact may render the motion slightly presumptuous and apologises for his error.
5. The aforementioned shirts are not intended to be kept by the individual players but rather retained for college use during the coming seasons.

RCSA Believes

1. That the Hockey club needs new kit.
2. That if the Club do decide to embark on a tour, it can be paid for with the participants' own money and would require no further funding.

3. That it would be nice for players to be able to buy their shirts from the RCSA if they so desire.

RCSA Resolves

1. To reallocate £270 from 'Tour' to 'Kit', leaving an allocation of £400 in 'Tour' and £30 in 'Kit'.
2. To allow hockey players to buy their shirts from the RCSA at a cost of £X.

Proposed: Ed Pearson

Seconded: John Crook

n) Digital Crest

RCSA Notes:

1. That the Hockey Club had to spend £74 for a digital copy of the College crest that was required for the purchase of new hockey shirts.

RCSA Believes:

1. That this file could be used again in the purchase of other items of "College stash", thus avoiding this rather large cost in the future.

RCSA Resolves:

1. To allocate £74 from the budget of this open meeting to reimburse the Hockey Club for the 'Digital Crest'
2. To make said crest available for the future use of clubs, societies and RCSA members.

Proposed: Ed Pearson

Seconded: John Crook

Addendum

Bouncy Castle Report

Definition: (n) a large inflatable structure, resembling a castle etc., on which students jump and play as on a trampoline

A bouncy castle would be profoundly useful to the RCSA. For a relatively small investment, it has the potential to be a permanent attraction at College events, such as Corruption. In the long run, it should save costs on hire, and possibly be of use to societies when organising garden parties. Regardless of this, **its main use would likely be de-stressing during exam term!**

The allocation proposed is: £1400 from Reserves.

The money was not requested at the Budget Meeting for the following reasons:

- Support for the bouncy castle was especially strong at hustings, with regard to the Ents Officer discussion; hustings took place after the Budget Meeting.
- With the timing especially tight at the Budget Meeting, given the limit of responses to 30 seconds, despite an overall limit to discussions, it was felt that this discussion was best left until after the Budget Meeting.
- The Budget Meeting is typically designed for annual recurring expenditure, rather than to allocate money from reserves.

This investment is aligned with the RCSA's aims:

- to provide facilities which are of recreational, intellectual or social value to its members and/or increase their quality of life; and
- to advance the welfare and security of its Members.

The exact extent of RCSA reserves is currently unknown; however, from RCSA Open Meetings, the figure has been estimated to be “about £60,000”. Given an absence of other ideas, and that the RCSA Treasurer's target for Reserves is “£30-40,000”, this seems like a good place to allocate some money for lasting benefit. Also noteworthy is that some of the main reserves were intended to upgrade the Bassment, however another Ents account contained “about £14,000”, which will cover those costs.

VAT will be at 15% starting from Monday; so now is a good time to buy!

There are a number of important qualities that the Ideal Bouncy Castle will have:

- Fire-proof/resistant
- Reinforced – for adults.
- Include a mat, and blower (to inflate it).
- Be of suitable dimensions to fit in College.

The RCSA will also need to determine policy on the use, safety precautions, supervision, and rental/deposit for societies and others. Rental and deposits may need to be reflective of the Constitution, article 3.g.i. “Every resident junior member of Robinson College is entitled to Share use of RCSA facilities and equipment provided for Members.” Commercially, day hire is typically £50-100 for a bouncy castle. A small amount of money may need to be allocated from time-to-time on repairs/replacements or electricity, should college charge; however this could be funded by rental.

Addendum: Budget Restructuring

The RCSA currently hold around £60,000 in 'reserves', essentially a large pile of savings. However, for two reasons, the RCSA aren't legally allowed to hold such reserves for no earmarked reason. This is due to the fact that the majority of the RCSA's income comes from a ~£60,000 contribution from college each year, and this money is either from:

- 1) A public source (i.e. from government), meaning that it must be spent within the year it was given to college;
- 2) An endowment, in which case the money given is for charitable purposes and cannot be stockpiled as 'reserves'.

Hence, the system of budgeting and financing of the RCSA needs to be altered to allow the efficient use of funds for facilities that enable both current and future students to further their standard of living at Robinson.

Below is the proposal for the changes in how the RCSA will set out their budget in future years.

Proposal for RCSA Budget Reform

The so-called 'reserves' that already exist cannot be kept in the current form. However, it has been agreed with college that there are some very suitable uses for these funds, to enable 'student development'. This would include:

- *JCR Refurbishment/Maintenance*
- *Party Room Refurbishment/Maintenance*
- *Underwriting the finances of certain societies (e.g. Brickhouse Theatre)*
- *Underwriting damage of the bar in the Party Room (see Open Meeting 29/11/08)*
- *To pay bills in periods between each instalment of the college contribution, if the contribution has been used in paying bills/receipts etc. already.*
- *Allocation to other suitable purposes at Open Meetings*

However, given that the RCSA are not allowed to hold 'reserves' as such, a 'sinking fund' would have to be created for student development, which would entail setting a level of 'reserves' in each year's budget. Any surplus funds at the end of the budget year would be returned to college.

Furthermore, the RCSA currently pays for the rent of various sports facilities (£28,228 was budgeted for 08/09). Given that the money being used to pay for this comes directly from college, and the year-on-year increases in the rents can act as a strain on the RCSA Budget (if the college contribution weren't to increase by as much as the rents), it seems sensible to transfer the responsibility of paying for these rents to college. This would enable the RCSA to concentrate on allocating the Budget between clubs and societies, without worrying about the high rent costs of sports facilities.

Additionally, the RCSA should consider the needs of future students. It would be possible to spend the majority of the existing 'reserves' on what current students want (for example bouncy castles). There are many college bursary schemes to which the RCSA could donate a proportion of existing 'reserves' which would enable current and future members, particularly those of a financially disadvantaged background, to receive extra funding to help their studies at Robinson. It has been noted that take-up of these schemes could be a problem; but if the RCSA were to make all members more aware of the existence of bursaries then take up would quite probably increase.

Essentially, the RCSA must decide at an Open Meeting how much of the current reserves will go to:

- The 'Student Development Sinking Fund'
- College Bursary Schemes
- Other

The Level of the 'Student Development Sinking Fund'

To estimate a level of what would be necessary for the 'Student Development Sinking Fund' requires taking into account the various uses it would have. In terms of having funds available for underwriting, this could amount to ~£10,000 or maybe even up to £20,000 to be safe given we do not know what the future holds. It would also be useful to have another £10,000 available for developments to the party room, JCR and other amenities and then a further £10,000 to cover the RCSA in paying bills if it is awaiting a payment in and/or for other general claims from Open Meetings, like the use of the 'reserves' for the Medical Resource Room last year.

Obviously, it would be difficult trying to work out a set amount needed for each category (and the versatility within the fund will be of use to the RCSA), so pooling these totals together gives a total sinking fund of **£40,000**, which I believe would be a sensible amount to set this fund at. Just as an aside, it would be possible, if justified, to keep the sinking fund at a higher (or lower) level, mostly likely on agreement with the Finance Bursar upon presentation of reasonable rationale for changing this level. In the long run, the sinking fund will stay at the agreed level, as college will (periodically) add to this fund to take it back up to the agreed level after large expenditures, if indeed the fund falls below £40,000 (or the agreed level).

Surplus Reserves

Although it is difficult to tell the exact level of RCSA funds that are currently 'reserves' and not required to pay future incoming bills and claims, it would seem that around about £60,000 was the consistent level of RCSA reserves over the previous budget year (07/08). Hence in creating the student development sinking fund, the RCSA would be left with around £20,000 in addition. The Finance Bursar suggested donating some of this to the college bursary scheme (outlined briefly above). An additional option is that any current JCR refurbishment is paid for from this money, effectively setting a proportion of the sinking fund aside for future developments/maintenance of the JCR. Of course, these are only a couple of possibilities, but it is crucial that any use of RCSA money is carefully thought through and planned in line with the RCSA constitution, and, where appropriate, with the relevant college department.

Barnaby Mollett

RCSA Treasurer [23/1/09]