



## RCSA Open Meeting Agenda

Sunday, 7th October  
2pm  
JCR



### Agenda

1. Apologies for absence or lateness
2. Announcement of the presence and purpose of guests
3. Approval of the presence and speaking rights of guests
4. Approval of the order of the agenda
5. 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.
6. Matters Arising from the minutes
7. Committee Reports and Resolutions
8. Questions to the Committee
9. Extraordinary Motions
10. Ordinary Motions
  - A) Reallocation the Film Society budget
  - B) Motion to allocate budget for squash court booking fees
  - C) Establishment of 'Robinson College Yoga and Mindfulness Society'
  - D) Establishment of 'Robinson College Gardening Society'
  - E) Establishment of 'Robinson College Vegan Society'
  - F) Replacement of the TV room DVD player
  - G) Creation of the 'Robinson College French Society'
  - H) Request for funding for the Cut the Rent campaign to continue activities within the college
11. Any other RCSA business

### Ordinary Motions

#### **A) Reallocation of the Film Society budget**

RCSA Notes:

1. Film Society has a budget for filmmaking.
2. Film Society has not partaken in filmmaking for a great deal of time, and there are no plans for it to do so.
3. Film Society will be running weekly film nights this year now that it has new leadership.

RCSA Believes:

1. The money in the filmmaking budget would be put to better use in purchasing films for the society.

RCSA Resolves:

1. To reallocate that money to the film purchasing budget to help fund the weekly film nights.

*Proposed by: Samuel Sully*

*Seconder: Samuel Clements*

## **B) Motion to allocate budget for squash court booking fees**

RCSA Notes:

1. College members used to benefit from free squash courts and equipment, but no longer have access to the free courts.
2. The college had a court rent budget, but it is now used for the USC deal and we are expected to use their courts - although there is no discount for squash unless both players are paying the full gym membership (£99). (Peak court bookings £7.50)
3. The college has at least two squash teams who would have to pay to train.

RCSA Believes:

1. There has been good interest in squash at Robinson, both competitive and casual.
2. Players, especially occasional players, are likely to be deterred by the court fees that must now be paid.

RCSA Resolves:

1. To merge the squash budget categories from 'Equipment' and 'League Fees' to a single general use budget (available to reimburse any college member)
2. To allocate £50 from the open meeting budget to supplement the squash budget for additional bookings.

*Proposed by: Bradley Sawyer*

*Seconder: Thomas Hammond*

## **C) Establishment of 'Robinson College Yoga and Mindfulness Society'**

RCSA Notes:

1. That there is no yoga and mindfulness society within the college at present
2. That the regular practice of yoga and mindfulness is scientifically proven to reduce stress and anxiety

RCSA Believes:

1. That the establishment of a formal society would introduce people to and encourage the practice of yoga and mindfulness, enabling more college members to gain the physical and mental benefits of regular practice.

RCSA Resolves:

1. To establish 'Robinson College Yoga and Mindfulness Society' as a recognised society by the RCSA, binding by its own constitution (see [Appendix A](#)) and also the society in turn will agree to be bound by the Constitution and Policy of the RCSA.
2. Permit an annual budget, to be confirmed in the budget meeting (the costs of the society shall be limited to basic yoga equipment, such as yoga mats, blocks, and exercise 'flex' bands).

*Proposed by: Alana Cutland*

*Seconded by: Hazel Nicholson*

#### **D) Establishment of 'Robinson College Gardening Society'**

RCSA Notes:

1. Robinson College does not have a Gardening Society.
2. Some other colleges, such as Pembroke and Churchill, have gardening societies.
3. Many students at Robinson college suffer from poor mental, physical or social well-being at some point during term time.
4. That "regular involvement in gardening ... can: Increase overall levels of physical activity and fitness...; increase healthy fruit and vegetable consumption...; contribute to improved social interactions and community cohesion...; reduce the occurrence of episodes of stress, and the severity of stress and associated depression...; reduce reliance on medication, self-harming behaviour, and visits to psychiatric services...; improve alertness, cognitive abilities and social skills. ...; help people manage the distress associated with addiction, mentally or physically challenging circumstances." ( Davies et al., 2014)

RCSA Believes:

1. That the fact that Robinson College does not have a Gardening society means Robinson students are missing out on the vast number of positive effects of a gardening society. This is damaging Robinson students' mental and physical health and also preventing students learn valuable life skills and knowledge related to Gardening.
2. The fact that other Cambridge Colleges do have gardening societies makes Robinson College appear deficient in satisfying the needs of its students. This is greatly distressing for all associated and any applicants to the college.

RCSA Resolves:

1. To create a Robinson College Gardening Society for all people currently associated with Robinson College (see [Appendix B](#) for written proposal). This Society will be eligible for funding from the RCSA (exact amounts will be decided in a separate motion). All members will agree to be bound by the constitution of the RCSA.

*Proposed by: Clara Bayley*

*Seconder: Jess Henderson*

### **E) Establishment of ‘Robinson College Vegan Society’**

RCSA Notes:

1. That there is no college-based society for people interested in exploring a lifestyle free of animal products.

RCSA Believes:

1. That such a society would benefit those who are interested in veganism.

RCSA Resolves:

1. To form a society for this purpose, namely the ‘Robinson College Vegan Society’. We agree to be bound by the constitution and policy of the RCSA.

*Proposed by: Sarah Beck*

*Seconder: Ethan Davies*

### **F) Replacement of TV Room DVD Player**

RCSA Notes:

1. The DVD player in the TV room does not appear to work.

2. The DVD player in the TV room makes an unpleasant noise when you try to make it work.

3. Working DVD players aren’t very expensive.

RCSA Believes:

1. That a good TV room should contain, at all times, a functioning DVD player.

RCSA Resolves:

1. To replace the broken DVD player.

*Proposer: Samuel Sully*

*Seconder: Samuel Clements*

### **G) Creation of the ‘Robinson College French Society’**

RCSA Notes:

1. There is currently no society which promotes French culture and language.
2. The number of French students in College has increased a lot over the last year.

RCSA Believes:

1. That such a society would benefit all Francophiles and French students in College.

RCSA Resolves:

1. To found such a society, namely the Robinson College French Society (see [Appendix D](#) for the constitution)

*Proposed by: Joseph Townsend*

*Seconder: Victor Ellwood*

#### **H) Request for funding for the Cut the Rent campaign to continue activities within the college**

RCSA Notes

1. Robinson has significantly higher living costs per person than most colleges, as detailed in a Varsity report.
2. 199 undergraduates and a number of previous RCSA presidents signed a petition demanding a 15% rent cut
3. The concessions given by college do not amount to a real terms rent cut, and have no commitments to future students of the college.
4. Along with the RCSA, Robinson Cut the Rent were integral to getting signature on the petition and gaining concessions from the college.

RCSA Believes

1. College management have failed to take action in the face of evidence that living costs are significantly more expensive at Robinson than at other colleges and universities countrywide.
2. The Robinson Cut the Rent campaign has a mandate to press for the demands outlined in the petition.
3. The campaign should be granted funding to print educational materials on rent issues in college.

RCSA resolves

1. To provide funding of £100 to the campaign to continue activities within the college educating students on issues of living costs and conditions within the college.

*Proposed by: Ben Margolis*

*Seconder: Alice Gilderdale*

## Appendix

### Appendix A - Proposed Constitution of the 'Robinson College Yoga and Mindfulness Society'

1. Name
  - a. The name of the society shall be 'Robinson College Yoga and Mindfulness Society'.
2. Membership and subscriptions
  - a. All members of the college shall be full members of the society
  - b. No subscription or minimum payment is required for membership of the society
  - c. All members agree to be bound by the constitution of the RCSA
3. Definitions
  - a. In this constitution, unless explicitly stated otherwise,
    - i. AGM shall refer to the Annual General Meeting which takes place at the end of Easter Term
4. Composition and Election of Committee
  - a. The following shall be officers of the committee:
    - i. Co-presidents (2)
    - ii. Secretary
  - b. Responsibilities for the running of the society shall be divided up by the committee
  - c. Nominations for officer positions shall be presented to an officer of the committee no less than 24 hours before the AGM
  - d. In the case of unfilled positions, the responsibilities of the vacant role shall be split between members of committee
  - e. Voting will be done during the AGM
  - f. In the event of a tie there will be a 'Yoga-off' whereby the winner will be decided by seeing who can hold the tree position for the longest
  - g. Leaving committee members will remain in their posts after the election until July 31<sup>st</sup>. The new committee is effective from August 1<sup>st</sup> onwards. It is the responsibility of individual officers to ensure there is a smooth transition during the change of committee.
5. Finance
  - a. The financial year shall be kept from August 1<sup>st</sup> to July 31<sup>st</sup>
  - b. It shall be the duty of the secretary to keep accurate details of decisions, correspondences, accounts, and all expenditure by the society, which may be inspected by the committee at any time
  - c. The society shall be funded by Robinson College Students' Association
  - d. All society-related expenditure is under the authority of co-presidents
  - e. The co-presidents are responsible for preparing the budget proposal to be submitted to the RCSA each year
6. Meetings
  - a. An AGM shall be held once every year at the end of Easter Term
  - b. Reasonable notice of the AGM shall be given to all members
  - c. Attendance of all members is permitted at all general meetings
  - d. It is the responsibility of the co-presidents to convene meetings
7. Constitution
  - a. Amendment of the constitution can only occur via majority vote of the committee members at the AGM
  - b. A copy of the constitution is kept by the secretary and is available to view by any member of the society upon request
8. Affiliation

- a. The society has no affiliation with any other society (other than the RCSA)

#### Appendix: Aims and Objectives

- a. To create a safe, supportive, and non-judgemental space to practice yoga, mindfulness, and meditation in college regardless of previous personal experience in these areas
- b. To provide a low commitment way to escape the stress and pressures of university life
- c. To provide a low intensity, weekly form of exercise for all members of the college
- d. To create a community supportive of the spirit of yoga where everyone feels welcome and at ease

### [Appendix B - Written proposal for the Robinson Gardening Society](#)

The aim of the Robinson Gardening Society, called the Robinson Planting Plants Society, is to increase the mental and physical health as well as the social well-being of Robinson members through gardening. Planting plants also aims to increase the knowledge and gardening skills of its members through its activities in the garden. The method of gardening will mainly be eco-friendly permaculture based, with some conventional gardening too. Plants planted will have to require minimal pruning (and of course, be suitable for the Cambridge climate). Alongside wildflowers, shrubs and bee-friendly plants, fruit, vegetables and herbs will also be planted, and may be harvested by anyone in the society (with the head of the society's permission). If there is any excess harvest, it may be sold to raise additional funds for the society.

All members of the college will be allowed to join the society and there will be a zero-tolerance of abuse (both to people and plants). The society will hold sessions as and when necessary throughout the year. These are likely to be around 2-3 hours long and people may come and go as they please. As a rough idea of the frequency of the sessions, in spring (the busiest period) we are likely to meet fortnightly. Outside of term time, anyone (postgraduates in particular) will be welcome to tend to the plants when they are in Cambridge if they let the head of the society know beforehand.

The society will store its own tools/equipment for gardening in a purpose-built box in the gardens. Equipment is likely to include things such as shovels, forks, trowels, pruners, clippers, gloves etc.

### [Appendix C - Proposed Constitution of 'Robinson College Vegan Society'](#)

#### **Chapter 1**

##### **SECTION 1**

The Society shall be named and also referred to as "Robinson College Vegan Society".

##### **SECTION 2**

The objects of the RCVS shall be:

- To enjoy vegan food and discuss the associated ethics at Robinson College.
- To organise vegan social events for its members.
- To organise an annual vegan formal

### **SECTION 3**

The conduct of General meetings, Council meetings, and other society activities shall be governed by the following sections.

### **SECTION 4**

A member of the society shall be a member of Robinson College. A society member also will have participated in an activity organised by the society within the previous 24 months. A society member will be sensitive to vegan beliefs, and shall also be tolerant of differing opinions.

### **SECTION 5**

To amend this constitution, the assent of 60% of society members present and voting at a general meeting must be obtained.

### **SECTION 6**

In case of doubt, interpretation of this constitution rests with the society president and committee.

## **Chapter 2**

### **SECTION 1**

There shall be an annual general meeting called by the society president during Lent or Easter Full Term. All society members shall be given at least one week's written notice, and all society members are entitled to attend. The general meeting shall be called no more than 15 months from the date of the previous general meeting.

### **SECTION 2**

An extraordinary general meeting shall be called by either the decision of the committee, or by a petition to the secretary signed by more than 60% of the society's members. All society members shall be given at least one week's written notice, and all society members are entitled to attend.

### **SECTION 3**

All general meetings shall be held in Robinson College.

## **Chapter 3**

### **SECTION 1**

The committee shall consist of the following roles, in order of seniority:

President  
Secretary  
Treasurer

### **SECTION 2**

Each officer shall serve from their election by the president until the earliest of the following conditions:

1. The next annual general meeting
2. They cease to be a society member
3. Their resignation from the society



4. Their position has been challenged by a letter to the secretary, signed by at least 60% of the society's members
5. They are dismissed by the president and one other committee member

### **SECTION 3**

Elections shall be held only at general meetings. There shall be an election at each annual general meeting. A by-election can be held at an extraordinary general meeting one or two weeks' time from the resignation, dismissal, or successful challenge to a committee member's position.

### **SECTION 4**

The RCSA shall be notified of committee members' names after each election.

## **Chapter 4**

### **SECTION 1**

A council meeting shall be held at least twice every full term. Any council member may call a council meeting.

### **SECTION 2**

The president's role:

1. Organise society meetings
2. Take responsibility for the smooth running of the society
3. Organise general meetings
4. Organise elections

The secretary's role:

1. Take minutes at general meetings
2. Send emails at their discretion during full term
3. Book the venues for meetings
4. Organise elections if the president is indisposed

The treasurer's role:

1. No embezzlement.
2. Keeping track of expenditure
3. Getting the society reimbursed through liaison with the RCSA treasurer
4. Organise the annual vegan formal

## **Chapter 5**

### **SECTION 1**

Society members can submit themselves for election no less than 7 days and no more than 21 days before the election. They shall give a short (no greater than 1 side of A4) manifesto to the president. All offices shall be open to election or challenge at an annual general meeting.

### **SECTION 2**

Society members may be re-elected for a position. Society members may not hold more than one committee position at any one time.

### **SECTION 3**

The president shall circulate the written manifestos amongst the society members no less than 6 days before an election.

## **Chapter 6**

### **SECTION 1**

The society will spend their funds in the best interests of the society's aims in accordance with the wishes of the treasurer. The treasurer's decisions may be challenged by either the other two committee members in agreement, or greater than 60% of the society's membership's agreement.

## **Appendix D - Constitution of the Robinson College French Society**

### **SECTION 1**

The name of the Society shall be "The Robinson College French Society »

### **SECTION 2**

The objects of the RCFS shall be:

- To promote French culture and language to all Robinson students
- To organise termly events with French and Francophiles members

### **SECTION 3**

There shall be standing orders for the conduct of general meetings, Council meetings and any other activities of the Society. Their amendment shall be the province of the Council.

### **SECTION 4**

A Member of the society shall be a Member of Robinson College who shall have satisfied the Council of her or his qualifications for membership specified in the standing orders. A Member of the society shall also be a person who is participating in, or has participated in an activity organised by the Society within the previous 24 months.

### **SECTION 5**

Amendment of this constitution of the Society shall require the assent of the Chair of the Society and 20% of the Members of the Society present and voting in a general meeting or 80% of the Members of the Society present and voting in a general meeting.

### **SECTION 6**

In case of doubt, interpretation of this constitution of society shall rest with the Chair and Council of the Society.

## **CHAPTER II: GENERAL MEETINGS**

### **SECTION 1**

There shall be an annual general meeting called by the Chair during Lent Full Term or the Easter Full Term at any time not exceeding 15 months after the previous annual general meeting. Every member of the Society shall be entitled to attend and shall have been given two weeks written notice.

### **SECTION 2**

There shall be an extraordinary general meeting at the call of the Council and Chair or on petition to the secretary signed by two thirds of the total number of members of the Society.

Every member of the Society shall be entitled to attend and shall have been given one week's notice.

### **SECTION 3**

General Meetings shall be held during Full Term in a Public Room in the Main Building.

## **CHAPTER III: THE COUNCIL**

### **SECTION 1**

The Council shall consist of the following 5 officers in order of seniority:

1. The Chair
2. The Treasurer
3. The Secretary
4. The Ents officer

## **SECTION 2**

Each Officer shall serve on the Council from their election by the Chair, until the earliest of the following conditions:

1. The end of the next annual general meeting
2. He or she shall cease to be a member of the Society
3. He or she shall have published written notice of resignation
4. He or she shall have been challenged by the signatures of one seventh of the total number of members of the Society
5. He or she is dismissed by the Chair with the support of at least 1 other council position.

## **SECTION 3**

Elections shall only be held at general meetings. There shall be the annual election of all officers at the annual general meeting. A by-election shall be held at an extraordinary general meeting neither fewer than 7 Days nor more than 14 days following the resignation or challenge of the officer to be replaced.

## **SECTION 4**

After every election the Secretary of the RCSA shall be notified of the names of each of the holders of all the Offices of that Association.

## **CHAPTER IV: DUTIES**

### **SECTION 1**

A Council meeting shall be allowed to be called for any time and any place by either the Chair or a two thirds majority of the officers. Each officer shall have been given seven days written notice.

### **SECTION 3 : the Chair**

The Chair shall be responsible for organising and hosting annual meetings. The Chair shall make amendments to the Constitution or council at the discretion of the Chair, with the support of at least 1 other council position. The Chair also shall present to the annual general meeting a written report on the activities of the Society since the previous annual general meeting. The Chair shall be in charge of organising the annual polls.

### **SECTION 4 : the Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall present to the annual general meeting a written report detailing the financial position of the Society and explaining income and expenditure since the previous annual general meeting. The treasurer is responsible for the finances of the society.

### **SECTION 5 : the Secretary**

The Secretary shall maintain a list of members of the Society which shall be available for inspection by any member of the Society. The secretary shall be responsible of advertisements and shall give notice of each general meeting; each Council meeting and every other activity of the Society to those entitled to attend. The Chancellor shall keep minutes of each general meeting, each Council meeting and every other activity of the Society which shall be available for inspection by any member of the Society. The Secretary should be responsible for online communication.

### **SECTION 7 : The Ents Officer**

The Ents officer is responsible for organising any events outside of normal activities and for general society advertising.

## **CHAPTER V: POLLS**

### **SECTION 1**

A valid nomination for an election shall consist of a note declaring the office for which the nominee shall be a candidate bearing the signature of a member of the Society indicating his or her willingness to stand and agreement to abide by the constitution and standing orders together with the signatures of the two other members of the Society.

## **SECTION 2**

All electable offices shall be open to election or challenge at the AGM. The Chair shall be decided by selection at the discretion of the retiring Chair and Council. Each position on the council shall convey one vote to the holder of that position.

## **SECTION 3**

Any member of the Society shall be allowed to hold and be nominated for more than one office and retiring officers shall be allowed to stand for re-election.

## **SECTION 4**

The close of the nominations shall be midnight after noon on the third Day before the general meeting at which the election is to be held. At the close of nominations the Chancellor shall prepare ballot papers and shall advertise all the candidates to each member of the Society.

## **SECTION 5**

The elections will be held in the order of seniority of the officers to be elected. A person already elected to an office shall not be eligible for an inferior office at the same general meeting.

## **SECTION 6**

Each nominee shall be allowed to withdraw his or her nomination from any election before the poll for that election.

## **SECTION 7**

The Chair shall count the single transferable votes of each election as soon as every member is present at the general meeting shall have been allowed to cast a vote in that election. The results of each election shall be announced before proceeding with the next election.

## **Section 8**

All elections, electors and elected officers are subject to the approval or dismissal by the Chair and Council before they may take their office.

## **CHAPTER VI: FINANCE**

### **SECTION 1**

The Council shall decide how funds at the disposal of the society shall be disbursed in pursuit of the objectives of the Society.