

RCSA OPEN MEETING MINUTES

**7.30pm, 12 Oct 2008, Michaelmas Term
JCR**



1. Apologies for absence or lateness

There were no apologies: the entire committee was present.

2. Announcement of the presence and purpose of guests

There were no guests.

3. Approval of the order of the agenda

The order of the agenda was approved.

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.

There were no amendments; the minutes from June 12 2008 were approved.

5. Matters Arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

6. Reports from the Committee

a. New RCSA Treasurer and Budget procedures

Tom Kelly (TK) [in the Chair] announced that there would be a by-election for the vacant Treasurer's position, at the same time as the May Ball presidential election, on Wednesday.

In the absence of a Treasurer, TK continued that the budget meeting is scheduled for November 9. Societies with bank accounts, who were allocated money last year, must post their budgets on the JCR notice boards, 4 days before the meeting. All societies will need to have submitted their budget to the new treasurer by a specified deadline, which is likely to be about November 1. A pre-budget meeting is again being planned, in order to shorten the actual budget meeting.

TK also said that he understood that societies and RCSA officers had not been paid owed amounts for a while due to Chris' departure. Iain Barr (IB) said that Chris was hoping to come to the college later in the week to sign cheques and that the change of signatory forms could also then be completed to handover to the new Treasurer. TK reminded the meeting that spending for 2007-08 had to be claimed back from the Treasurer before the 2008-09 budget meeting.

b. Sponsorship

TK said that the RCSA was grateful that KPMG had agreed to sponsor it during the summer, as demonstrated by their logo on the hoodies. In the end, the RCSA had negotiated a deal to bring in sponsorship in excess of the amount forecast in the budget.

c. Corruption and RobinsonEnts

Luke Snell (LS) said that he and Shiama Balendra (SB) replaced equipment in party room including a new smoke machine etc. He added that they probably got them for free

LS said that we likely made a profit from Corruption. Members had enjoyed the event.

IB thanked LS and SB for organising Corruption and the rest of the committee for making it happen

d. Freshers' Week

Claire Horrocks (CH) said that Freshers' Week was very successful generally.

Peter Wood (PW) added that after Freshers' Week the bar would return to glass glasses

e. Alternative Prospectus

Ben Henriques thanked everyone that had contributed to the alternative prospectus. It had been ready in time for the Open Days in July and was positively received by college officials.

7. Questions to the committee

There were no questions to the committee

8. Amendments to Appendix I of the Constitution

TK said that this appendix lists which societies can claim money at a budget meeting. This open meeting was the last chance for new societies to register for the next financial year. The amendment corrected and updated the Appendix passed last year as part of the constitution - it was simply a tidying-up exercise as motions to create new societies remained valid.

The amendment was passed unanimously.

9. Extraordinary motions

i. Rugby budget reallocation

TK said that he had received a motion, signed by two-thirds of the committee, which resolved to reallocate elements within the rugby club budget.

Chris Oulton (CO) said that money in the rugby budget meant for the rugby tour was not used in the previous year and therefore they would like to reallocate it towards kit, which would reduce their budget request.

For: 35

Against: 0

Abstention: 1

Extraordinary motion i. passed.

10. Ordinary motions

a. Changes to kitchen facilities

IB said that all the cookers in the main college building have been ripped out and replaced with two hobs with ten minute timers. Some of the kitchens were unusable for a few days. No one in the RCSA was consulted and no one was told that these changes were taking place and it never arose in meetings with college in the previous year. The decision to remove the ovens was colleges although they were advised to do so by the council. College is currently considering a decision regarding the hostels.

David Grundy (DG) asked if we just accepting the removal of the ovens

IB said that we would be trying to get the ovens back but it was unlikely due to the money that had been spent ripping them out

Chris Land (CL) said that a similar thing had happened in King's the previous year and asked what was done then

IB said that in that case the student body received compensation from the college which was spent building communal kitchens

TK said that King's had paid out £10,000 to the JCR. When this had been put to the Warden he was unenthusiastic about Robinson following their lead, suggesting that King's students had been deprived of any cooking facilities for some time.

PW asked if the hobs were any good

Catherine Watts (CW) said that the hobs are fine but it would be more useful to have four rather than two

Rebecca Yeoh (RY) [minuting] asked if it would be possible to extend the length of time the hobs could be left on.

BH said that there are only two hobs per staircase

Lewis Hemens (LH) asked what would happen to the hostels

IB said that generally they were considered safer as the kitchens are bigger

Jim Arnold (JA) asked if this was a breach of occupancy agreements

TK said that this was probably not a breach of the occupancy agreement. Members don't sign occupancy agreements until we arrive and college can make them fairly watertight and non-committal. TK said he believed that the college was exempt from much housing law related to multiple occupancy housing, as an education establishment. This meant that they hadn't been forced to remove the ovens, it was their decision, but also the RCSA had little legal grounds to demand that better facilities were reinstated. TK also referred to the UUK Code of Practice on Student Housing, of which the college is a

signatory, suggesting that they should have told members about intentions to change at least as early as the Room Ballot.

CH said that in agreeing to take a room in the ballot was equivalent to signing an agreement for it.

For: 36 (including 1 vote by proxy)

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

Motion a) was passed.

b) Condom Machine

JT said that the money allocated previously did not sufficiently cover the cost of the machine and as there was already college support, he asked if he could have the additional money to buy the machine

For: 33 (including 1 vote by proxy)

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

Motion b) was passed.

c) Turning off lights

John Crook (JC) said that Thomas Acland wasn't present as he was having a curry. He said that they were investigating the necessity of leaving lights on at all times during the holidays even when there were no students present.

LS said that the library wasn't open 24/7 in summer so the lights were turned off sometimes

Fi Wright (FW) said that when she was here in summer and they were on all the time

CW said that during the period when it was not 24 hours they did turn the lights off

David Bewicke (DB) said that it would be ugly and horrifically expensive to install light switches everywhere.

JC said that it was primarily something to investigate the possibility of

PW said that he had looked into it previously and that the lights in the library had to be on all the time when open for safety reasons. Also, a light switch would cost £400 to install so they couldn't bring in massive changes all at once. He said that the cash flow rather than the actual amount was the problem.

BH said that the motion should be passed despite imperfections in wording to show we care

PW asked for the amendment to take out the phrase “at worst” regarding automatic sensors. JC accepted the amendment

For: 26
Against: 1
Abstentions: 0

Motion c) was duly passed

d) EpiPen in the Porters Lodge

CH said she was talking to the Warden the other day and he said that he was trying to get the college to get an EpiPen for college but required student support. CH added that EpiPens are good and save lives.

CL asked if anyone actually knew how to use an EpiPen

BH said that they're very simple to use and that most people that would require one would know how to use them. It was suggested that their use might be at the suggestion of a 999 operator.

TK asked if we needed a prescription
CH said she did not think so

PW asked if he couldn't just ask the nurse for one

CH said that she would just give us lemsip

For: 34 (including 1 vote by proxy)
Against: 2
Abstentions: 1

Motion d) was duly passed

e) RCSA donation tick-box account

TK prefixed the motion by commenting that the RCSA had been informed last year that there was £1100 in an account, which had been built up through student donations. There is RCSA policy that any money in a so-called 'Charities Account' should be donated to RAG, unless determined otherwise by an Open Meeting, at the annual arrangement of the RCSA Treasurer. TK continued that he was unaware of this transfer happening in recent years.

DB introduced the motion saying that there is ambiguity regarding where the money that we give goes

TK said that some confusion arises because the money in the account had been donated under different circumstances. In 2004, RCSA records indicate that the RCSA item on

college bills was described as going to wide variety of charities via the RCSA, but this description had disappeared by Michaelmas 2006, possibly earlier, and bill payers may have wanted to increase the RCSA's own budget.

LS asked what DB thought the percentages should be

DB said that it should reflect what people thought that they were donating to

IB said that we could find out when the last amount of money was removed from the account and from that we can figure out what percentage should be donated to charity

CH remarked that she didn't like being compared to Sarah Palin in the agenda

DB amended the motion removing RCSA Notes 3, regarding existing policy

TK said that as the policy stands, it appears that all money would go to RAG.

JA said that given the confusion regarding what we're donating to, he would like to amend the motion to mandate to RCSA to investigate where the money's going.

LS said that we've done this before and nothing had been found out so we should do something concrete now.

IB said that it shouldn't be too difficult to find out and we should just decide what we want to do with the money.

BH said that given the money was initially intended for charities at one point so we should give it to charities

TK clarified that this was not the case for all of the money

CH said that it would be nice to give it to charity

TK said that he would take an indicative vote with different percentages of the money going to charities.

0%: 3
20%: 0
40%: 7
60%: 4
80%: 4
100%: 9

TK asked the meeting to vote again: who thought all the money should go to charity?

For: 16

Against: 13

TK said that with that in mind would DB like to make any amendments.

DB said that he would amend the motion to transfer all the money to rag as it stands and would therefore withdraw the motion

Motion e) was withdrawn

f) Trunk Room

Daniel Tse (DT) said that when the trunk room was cleared out there were many things left over by alumni and that the clear out last year was very successful and should continue this year so make the room usable

Barnaby Mollett (BM) said that previously this took a long time and very few members of the committee were used - placing too high a burden on those who did show up. He held that the Overseas Officer should be in charge of taking care of the clearing out not the entire committee.

BH said that while that is true, it is a massive job and it is unreasonable to expect any single person to clear out the trunk room. He added that the RCSA already has policy that the trunk room will be cleared and all the motion does is mandate everyone to do it.

Rahul Mansigani (RM) said that we would have to take the timetable regarding the notification of alumni into account. He said that it was very important that if we are going to do this that we make it very clear in the next bulletin via the development office.

IB said that the last clean up left a lot of people bitter with the trunk room, given the packed schedule this term, it is unlikely that there will be time this term so the motion should be amended to have this done in Lent Term.

BH said that we can amend this motion but we have existing policy that says we should do it this term. We should get it done this term by the next committee.

TK asked if DT would accept the amendment to extend the deadline to Easter.

BH asked if we could make it explicit that it would be after handover

TK said he was dubious about specifically mandating a committee that is not elected yet, nor imminent, and while the current committee were still in place.

DT said he did not believe that the job this time around would be massive. He also asked if it would be possible to put it in policy for the time being and put in a motion after the handover.

BH said that it was unclear whether we can do this

DT accepted the amendment to change the deadline to Easter vacation.

BM suggested that the motion be amended to include “any willing volunteers”

DT accepted the amendment and added that the trunk room was C&A’s responsibility rather than the Overseas Officers’

BH said that he has spoken to people who have said that the trunk room is in a really bad state and it is our responsibility to clear it out.

For: 25

Against: 6

Abstentions: 1

Motion f) was duly passed

g) 800th Anniversary prize

CW said that she had read in the paper that the university is giving money away to students to allow colleges to host their own 800th anniversary celebrations and that Robinson should apply for it and have a party.

Andrew Kay asked what kind of party she was thinking of.

IB said that the motion clearly said that it would be a ‘wicked awesome party’

DT asked if he could amend the motion to include a symphony in the party

CW said that while she didn’t want to amend the motion it would be a brilliant idea to bring up when organising.

For: 31 (including 1 vote by proxy)

Against: 1

Abstaining: 2

Motion g) was duly passed.

h) Tool belt

PW said that maintenance doesn’t work on weekends and the Men’s Officer should do some DIY to fill this gap.

Parysa Mostajir (PM) said that while it’s a nice idea she would like to discourage gender stereotypes

PW amended the motion to not specify Men’s Officer

LH said that regarding the actual items included in the belt, he doubted that a chisel or staple gun would be much use. He proposed to amend the motion to include a screwdriver and glue

PW accepted the amendment.

DG said that porters have screwdrivers

For: 16
Against: 9
Abstentions: 1

Motion h) failed (due to an insufficient majority)

i. Judo DVD

IB said that a DVD had recently released about Judo by Putin and that he wanted to watch it, and he was confident that other people deep down wanted to watch it too

For: 22 (including 1 vote by proxy)
Against: 5
Abstentions: 2

Motion i) was duly passed.

j) Rollover open meeting funds

TK said that there was £16 left unspent at this open meeting.

DB said that we should make this motion part of policy rather than having it every meeting, he concluded that £16 shouldn't be wasted.

TK said he hoped to codify a policy for the budget meeting where the open meeting spending for the next year is agreed.

AK asked if it was a coincidence that this motion was always at the end

TK replied that the order motions were presented on the agenda was left to the discretion of the Chair and that this order was approved at the start of the meeting

For: 29 (including 1 vote by proxy)
Against: 1
Abstentions: 0

Motion j) was duly passed

11. Any other RCSA Business

There was no other RCSA Business and the meeting was concluded.