

MCR Committee Meeting (Minutes).
24th April, 5pm, Memorial Room.

Present: Tim, Miles, Sarah, Nicole, Guillaume, Dan, Andre, Kathryn, Drew, Iris (eventually), Joe, Bill

Tim: So, rent negotiations have been moved from 5th week to this week; I have to submit a proposal by Wednesday.

Miles: Tables, but no graphs?!

Tim: There will be graphs!

Motions.

Guillaume: Guest dinners and Summer Dinner are pretty expensive, so I've proposed the 'MCR Dining Fund'. Only supposed to be for people who really need it, i.e. not people who come every week and then ask for the last one to be free. Various options: a half price ticket for one guest night; a fully paid ticket for one guest night; or a half price ticket for Summer Dinner. Three people on the decision committee reduces the possibility of a tie, and ensures that the decisions will be as quick as possible. Let me know before Week 1 if you want to apply for any guest dinner.

Miles: This is just for MCR members, not their guests?

Guillaume: Yes, only for MCR members.

Miles: Once the money's been put into the budget, not sure that the Treasurer would be that helpful to make decisions.

Tim: The three idea is good. Maybe five?

Sarah: I think five is probably too many. It's likely to be quite simple decisions.

Tim: How am I supposed to judge?

Andre: I agree, but the idea is good!

Guillaume: My idea is that people would be honest.

[Sarah and Nicole agree, having faith in human kindness.]

Nicole: This is just once a term?

Guillaume: No, this should be just once a year. It's difficult to implement for Matriculation Dinner, so Summer Dinner works better.

Sarah: Get people to submit a brief statement of why they need the money; we can anonymise the statements.

Kathryn: Get people to submit at statement at the beginning of Trinity, only if they've not been to any guest dinners.

Guillaume: That makes it a bit more systematic, easier to decide.

Andre: Too many rules might put people off.

Sarah: Give priority to people who haven't been to any guest dinners at all, then other people can be given what's left.

Andre: Also, people's financial situations change.

Tim: Two separate funds? One guest dinner, one Summer Dinner. One guest dinner ticket at any point in the year, one Summer Dinner ticket in TT.

Nicole: Would those ticket types continue?

Guillaume: Maybe scrap the full price ticket and just do half price ones.

[General agreement.]

Tim: No maximum budget; see what happens.

Miles: Trial it for TT.

Guillaume: Some terms maybe no one will apply but we still put money in the fund, then it can be used up other terms.

Nicole: A recurring item within the termly budget allocated to the Dining Fund.

Guillaume: Recurring but also flexible, as some terms we spend a bit more than others.

Tim: Another idea about Summer Dinner. How to make it cheaper for everyone, because we have a surplus for this time, it might be nice to pay for all the drinks at Summer Dinner, i.e. all the wine and also something nicer for non-drinkers. Maybe £350 in total?

Sarah: That's assuming people only drink half a bottle of wine...

Guillaume: You're planning to make it cheaper for everyone, whereas this is for specific people.

Guillaume: Let's clarify some details.

Miles: "Each term, a small amount of the MCR budget should be added to the dining fund... at the MCR Committee's discretion."

Guillaume: Scrap the thing about the fully paid ticket. Two funds: One for just guest dinners; one for Summer Dinners.

Guillaume: I think the Treasurer should be there?

Tim: Maybe the Welfare Officer?

Andre: I'd always be there for giving money to poor people.

Kathryn: Shouldn't we have someone cold-hearted to balance Andre...

Andre: Shall we come back to the option of a full-price ticket as well, if this goes well?

[General agreement.]

Guillaume: Let's swap Welfare for Treasurer.

[General agreement.]

Sarah: So for this term, set a deadline of 2nd Week?

Guillaume: 2nd Week for guest dinners; Summer Dinner, after the sign up.

Miles: When is Summer Dinner?

Guillaume: Tuesday of 5th Week. 23rd May.

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Tim: The photograph hasn't been included in the permissions for Summer Dinner. Have we had confirmation from the Provost/Simon Aldridge yet?

Guillaume: Not yet.

Tim: I think there have been some mistakes here. I'll chase it up.

Sarah: I will type up the changes!

Miles: Are we paying for the guests that we invite to Summer Dinner? I.e. the Provost and Simon Aldridge.

Tim: Yep.

Drew: Are we on High Table?

Sarah: Yep!

Rent Negotiations.

Tim: It's happening now! I'm doing one separately from the JCR because they didn't tell me that it was happening this week, and because I don't agree with their line of argumentation. I'm making an economic argument. College are currently looking at about a 3% increase; the JCR is looking at a 1.5% increase, but they're unlikely to get that. GDP is at 1.8%, retail price (CPI) 2.3%, Oxford inflation rate 2.8% – so below all of those is very unlikely to happen. My proposal (in brief) is that rent should not increase by more than 2.3%. Graduate loans increase by GDP, not CPI, so graduates are losing money in real terms – which means that, if college increases rent by 3%, then graduates are losing even more money. Over the past few years, a larger proportion of the stipend has had to go on rent. My proposal is not to reduce the rent to what it would have been three years ago, but to slow increase so that stipend will eventually catch up.

Sarah: This is all assuming that there is no nuclear war.

Tim: So, appropriate increase of 2.3%, lower than last year but higher than the year before.

[A lot of numbers here for a Classicist to write down. Apologies if some of them are wrong.]

Drew: Where does Queen's stand in relation to other colleges?

Tim: Difficult to tell for graduates. For undergrads, we're towards the more expensive end, but not that expensive.

Tim: If anyone has any concerns, chat to me. But this has to be submitted by Wednesday.

Scheduling!

Tim: Things that are done. MCR is open early on May Day; permission for pastries and prosecco. Do we have any prosecco?

Guillaume: When is May Day?

Everyone: 1st May.

Guillaume: How much?

Tim: Four bottles?

Guillaume: I have enough for the first five guest dinners.

[Guillaume will sort it out.]

Tim: Open at 6/6.30am? A porter may not be here because he'll be stuck in the hordes of people on High Street.

Tim: Voting! Maybe it's worth postponing it until later in the term, for the Chemists who might not know if they're staying or going.

Joe: They already know.

Tim: Open nominations on Monday 8th (3rd Week). Then voting on Monday 15th (4th Week).

Tim: When's the AGM?

Miles: Has to be 8th Week in TT?

Tim: Well, yes and no. AGM is 30th May, 6pm. Voting then happens on the 29th May; nominations open on 22nd. I'll email about positions in a few weeks.

Tim: Parties!

Drew: Every other week?

Iris: May Day counts as a party, I think.

Drew: Okay, so May Day doesn't count as a party. And we don't know how many people will want to do May Day. So, party on the 5th May. Margaritas! It'll be very tasteful. Then the 20th. Then the 3rd. June. Then 16th June.

Sarah: Welfare teas?

Andre: On every other weeks. I can't make 7th May, but apart from that. So 7th, 21st, 4th, 18th.

Iris: I'll do movies on even number weeks. So starting next week. 3rd, 17th, 31st, 14th.

Kathryn: QCS, 1st Week, 3rd, 7th. Wine tasting: Thursday of 7th.

Sarah: Part-Time Pets. 4th and 7th weeks?

Nicole: Can we do later? 5pm?

Sarah: I will check with Florence.

Miles: Budget. Same as last term. Andre, give me receipts for last term.

Andre: I will!

Miles: I'll transfer people membership money.

Tim: There are new associate members!

Drew: Should we organise some outings? Like Isis Farmhouse at the end of term. Ooh, what's going on with punting?

Miles: This term, the JCR has organised it. I forwarded an email from Guy Ferguson, the JCR Treasurer, with a link to a sign up form.

Joe: People have been signing up. It's very annoying.

Kathryn: I've had an email from a JRF saying that they feel like they're a little out of the loop. They don't automatically get our emails.

Drew: Can we just add them to the mailing list?

Andre: They might not want to get the emails...

Tim: Mention it to Joyce/Elaine, sort it out that way.

Miles: I was thinking about opening the punting up to people who are here over the summer who aren't MCR members, e.g. JCR members who are here with projects.

Iris: I was thinking about calling theatres in London and seeing if we could get discounted tickets.