

St Catharine's College MCR open meeting minutes, 5<sup>th</sup> of November 2020

Present:

**Callum Watson**, secretary  
**Souradip Mookerjee**, co-president  
**Charlotte Guffick**, welfare officer  
**Aisling O'Kane**, education officer  
**Dora Robinson**, green officer  
**Moritz Müller**, formal hall officer  
**Nathaniel Tye**, computing officer  
**Anna Hutchinson**, social secretary  
**Polly Machin**, social secretary  
**Eilidh Rivers**, fourth year officer  
**Jess Forsdyke**, co-president  
**Beth Cooper**, women's and non-binary officer  
**Than Dar**, black, minority and ethnic student officer  
**Felix von Horstig**, food and drink officer  
**Alex Eaton**, treasurer  
**Nadene Dermody**, green officer

Apologies from:

**Frey Kalus**, LGBTQ+ officer

No non-committee members attended.

### Women's Officer:

**Beth**: We've got the reusable period products now.

### Formal Hall Officers:

**Moritz**: We had a meeting with college yesterday. They want to continue with formals, but only within households. This requires more optimisation. We could email households with a voucher code or something to book together.

**Souradip**: It might be easier to set it up so that one person per household makes the booking.

**Jess**: It would be good to have everyone's names so that we can bill them.

**Felix**: They're not going to be called formals – no gowns. We don't want to have it be 'as normal'. We will add another one each week.

**Dora**: Will it be possible to attend a formal with your partner if you live with them?

**Moritz**: College say no, unfortunately.

**Jess**: We could maybe get some sort of college membership for partners in future.

**Moritz**: They're thinking of setting up an online shop where you can buy food

or ingredients at cost price. Their goal is to ensure we're all fed.

**Felix:** We have moved to a meat opt-out system temporarily, but will revert to meat opt-in soon. If you live off-site and don't have a large common area or kitchen to eat in you can eat in hall as normal. Likewise if you're at Catz anyway because you're living or working there. This will count as workplace catering or household catering.

**Souradip:** Maybe kitchen fixed charge should be cut further because of this.

**Jess:** At the moment they're charging £50 per term for facilities we can't use.

**Souradip:** We only got half a term of use.

**Aisling:** A lot of the things available to students in college accommodation aren't available to those outside college.

**Jess:** College argue it covers things like the cost of mail to the college. We think this is still a bit unreasonable.

**Aisling:** College sent out an email earlier this term asking to avoid having things posted there.

**Jess:** We have also heard from some students who are unhappy with the charge.

**Souradip:** If you live far away you're unlikely to use the facilities you have to pay for.

**Dora:** I get the impression that college don't provide anything for the charge. They gave freshers a load of free stuff when they started. I feel we're paying and not getting anything back. If they did more to reach out to those of us living in private accommodation I think people would be less upset.

**Jess:** Some colleges don't charge people living off-site.

**Beth:** Some are very bad though.

**Souradip:** There's also the tuition fees we pay to college. Where do those go?

**Jess:** Some students are physically unable to use college facilities so do have good reason to be upset.

**Nathaniel:** It does sometimes work the other way: some people do get a net benefit.

## Presidents:

**Souradip:** Initially CSU said they wanted all teaching to be online, but this was unpopular.

**Jess:** They changed it to make in-person teaching an opt-in. The uni's position is more opt-out. From our polling of the MCR about 55% of people opposed the official motion.

**Souradip:** So CUSU slightly changed their position.

**Jess:** The JCR adamantly opposed CSU's position.

**Souradip:** I voted for the motion to cancel the original motion.

**Jess:** There is some feeling that CSU's a bit disconnected from students.

**Jess:** Lockers: 14 members of catering staff needed lockers so they're using some of ours. Anyone losing their locker can get a free formal in exchange. Do you think it's worth putting out an advert for people who need one.

**Eilidh:** I was unaware they existed.

**Jess:** In the past space has been tight, so we've not often offered them to fourth years. I guess they're unlikely to be used heavily this year. I guess new grads

might not have heard of them either.

**Action to be taken:** **Jess** send an email about lockers

### Welfare Officer:

**Charlotte:** There's a new proposed MCR position for access, which will cover both people with disabilities and those from backgrounds that are less likely to go to Cambridge.

**Callum:** Having typed this up I also suggest that we replace 'he or she' with 'they' in the constitution, and that we explicitly allow committee roles to be shared.

**Jess:** We'll need to vote on this in this meeting.

[**Unanimous vote of approval**]

**Charlotte:** I have some spare coffee vouchers from freshers' week. If anyone wants them for an MCR event let me know.

**Charlotte:** We've been putting a self-care pack together with Mary. Does anyone have a suggestion for things to include.

**Charlotte:** Also restarting welfare tea again.

**Jess:** Maybe we should drop the 'welfare' from 'welfare tea', so as to avoid putting off people that assume it's only for people in dire need of welfare.

**Charlotte:** That's a good idea. I was thinking weekends would be a good time.

**Jess:** Something like craft sessions would be nice for the care pack.

**Beth:** Origami?

**Charlotte:** Or film-watching sessions.

**Aisling:** Morning tea-time would work well in the week.

**Beth:** We always do 3pm in my department.

**Charlotte:** Some lab schedules could even mean weekday evenings are best.

**Charlotte:** Yoga is still going strong too. We've been getting at least 15 people viewing the recordings each week.

**Aisling:** Origami can be hard over video calls.

**Nadene:** What about writing groups?

**Jess:** Running in pairs would be good too.

**Nadene:** There are first years in private accommodation who are isolated.

### Treasurer:

**Alex:** Next week we should finally know what our revenue is. If we do want to do expensive things we have plenty of budget. Send any ideas my way if they require funding.

**Jess:** How much money do we need for coffee this year?

**Alex:** I need to work out exactly, but it's hard to tell.

**Jess:** We may lose the MCR in the lockdown. It's hard to class what it is. We have a discussion with college tomorrow.

**Alex:** The porters said the JCR was locked.

**Jess:** I thought it was open.

**Charlotte:** College are giving us money towards yoga.

**Nadene:** How much detail do you need for funding proposals?

**Alex:** As much or as little as you want.

### Green Officers:

**Nadene:** We've been trying to do some ground work for initiatives. Catz hasn't been involved that much with Green Initiative.

**Dora:** We're writing a new page for the website, and thinking of sending out green emails every now and then.

**Felix:** Our food preparation is actually quite green: Catz prefer to get their food locally unlike a lot of other colleges. We were thinking this could be advertised. Also thinking of going for reusable containers.

### Social Secretaries:

**Polly:** People thought the pub trips were really good. We look forward to more after the lockdown. Wanted to do walks as well but not now because of lockdown.

**Anna:** Feedback was good for the pumpkin carving. If anyone has any ideas for events during lockdown, let us know.

**Souradip:** Should we spend our money on getting prizes for things?

**Anna:** Treasure hunt around Cambridge?

**Jess:** We could steal an idea from Queens' and do a chocolate tasting.

**Polly:** A friend did something like this and it cost quite a lot.

**Jess:** At Queens' it cost £20 for a cheese tasting.

**Felix:** A friend of mine did a tea tasting. We could ask how they did that.

**Polly:** We could do something every week. Wouldn't take that much organisation.

**Felix:** I organised a treasure hunt with friends so have some experience I could apply.

### Education Officer:

**Aisling:** We've had about 15 people at seminars each week. Mostly the same faces week-to-week though.

**Aisling:** People are less likely to sign up for a talk for the Graduate Symposium next year if it is virtual. We could use the leftover vouchers from the recent workshops as an incentive to get people to sign up to give a talk at the Symposium next year.

### BME Officer:

**Than:** We were thinking of making the racial equality workshops mandatory.

**Than:** Diwali formal's been cancelled.

### Secretary:

**Callum:** We have a newly-elected fourth-year officer.

**Callum:** Will need a referendum for the proposed constitutional changes.

**Callum:** And some by-elections to do.

**Souradip:** **Eilidh**, would you like to introduce yourself to us?

**Eilidh:** I'm a fourth-year NatSci student. Was never on the JCR committee so this is all a bit new to me.

**Computer Officer:**

**Nathaniel:** I've been having difficulty getting catering info onto the website.

**Nathaniel:** I've been setting up the BME page, so if liberation info needs to go online it can go there soon.

**Other items not on the agenda:**

**Souradip:** Bridgemas is coming up soon so we'll have to do something.

**Charlotte:** Committee secret santa?

**Felix:** MCR Christmas Dinner after lockdown?