

Minutes of Churchill College MCR EGM on Changes To CFC

Date: 3 December 2013 - 7pm

Location: **MCR Bar**

Jordan (President) proposed the motion as described in the papers linked below.

- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3qIAKLE47cLTBzWXRTS0JmSXM/edit?usp=sharing>
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3qIAKLE47cbEktcjdhRIJ5Vkk/edit?usp=sharing>

No one in attendance was opposed to the proposed changes. Of the email submissions received, also none had expressed opposition to the changes in principle, although some had called for further reductions. A commonly proposed solution was to make the charge optional, so that people could opt to pay a higher price per meal instead of a fixed charge.

Richard (senior tutor) suggested that he could address some of the questions posed via email:

- The problem with making the CFC optional is that you will reduce demand for catering services if you impose a tariff on meals in lieu of the fixed charge. The catering department cannot recover its fixed costs (such as staff wages) by relying on meal sales alone. This is why the CFC exists - it is a surcharge on college members to allow the catering service to continue running, and will be required as long as hall / buttry usage levels remain at the same level. As we build up further accommodation in college, these costs can be spread across more people, potentially reducing the CFC.
- Richard asked Shelley (domestic / conferences bursar) to re-model the CFC based on people eating in hall once a day - even then, the CFC would remain at £100 per term.
- Richard and Shelley also went to Pembroke to make a comparison with their catering department and noted the following:
 - There were far more people using their hall
 - The food was cheaper
 - The quality of the food was comparable (opinions were mixed)
 - Their fixed charge is higher than ours and their internal billing processes may not be as refined as ours
- Why can't we scale prices to usage? This is technically difficult and draconian to implement. It would probably need to take the form of "meal tickets", and this is something that students at Caius college have not found appealing.
- Where do we draw the line for the exemption? Why are Halifax Road and the Wolfson Flats not exempt from the charge? The charge is essentially for a "local facility". Since the catering services are not local to people at Rock Road, we've excluded those. Any further exclusions will require the cost to be moved to those that still pay the charge.
- The CFC can also be reduced by increasing footfall in hall - one way to do this is to advertise services more heavily in the West Cambridge area, to encourage more students in the locality to make use of the college's catering services. However this would need to be tempered against the need to keep queue lengths down for existing members. Richard suggested a webcam could be used for this purpose.
- Can we implement this sooner? It may be possible - but it may be fairer to save this until the next academic year, given that's when students will be making decisions about where to live. Current students who have signed a contract for their accommodation will not be happy to have an increase in their charges partway through the term of their contract. However, this may be possible if any increase in CFC can be absorbed by a catering surplus - this will

- be discussed at the next Finance Committee meeting.
- The other planned initiative is to include CFC as part of rent, because essentially this is a facilities charge included in your accommodation cost. The MCR intends to advertise room prices in the next ballot with the CFC included. The college believes that rental prices for college accommodation will still be highly competitive even with these charges included.

With no opposition, **the motion carries.**