

Churchill College MCR Termly General meeting

Minutes of the meeting held in the Sandy Ashmore Room, on 5th June 2012

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence: Lorna, Anna, Fred
 2. MCR concerns
 - a. Borrowing of equipment – Christopher
 - b. Magazine subscriptions – Carl
 - c. Alex Mischenko Prize plaque
 3. Socials
 - a. Update on guest-night
 - b. Organising a trip to support May bumps
 4. Any other business
-

1. Mike and Steve were also absent. 3 members of the general MCR were present.

2.

a)

Christopher wants to know what we should do about missing bits of kit. We're missing a couple of gowns and board games. According to him, based on previous trends, the equipment tends to show up towards the end of term/year when people realise they have it with them and haven't yet returned it. Essentially he believes most people are honest, but just don't have returning items as a priority.

The system as is is great because it's simple. But it does mean people can take liberties. At the same time we don't want to introduce any system that scares people away from borrowing items as a result of excessive bureaucracy.

People already sign out keys – Electra and Carl suggested that an additional sheet could be handed to the Porters to get people to sign out what they've taken. Hilary and Christopher disagreed as they thought the Porter's wouldn't be very happy with having to look after more lists. Instead, Christopher suggested we just have log sheets in the cupboard so people sign out items as they take them – still entirely trust based, but at least if most people's names are listed we can contact them for the item if we need it.

b) Carl reminded people that at the last TGM he had recommended that Glamour and Men's health subscriptions be cancelled to save the MCR money because he felt no one was reading it. This was passed. However since this change there has been an uproar in favour of Glamour, with claims that it is the most well read magazine in the MCR. Carl suggests it be re-subscribed to as a result.

Farooq thinks it would be a waste of money to reinstate it and we should see how people get on without it. Carl replied that it isn't that expensive, and even so if it is something that is serving the MCR then it is worth the expense, even though he personally didn't think much of it.

A vote was called for asking if people were keen to resubscribe to Glamour. It was passed with 4 in favour, 1 against and the majority of the people abstaining.

c)

Sam repeats the history about the Oxford vandalism. He claims this is a part and parcel of the history of the prize, and even though people may not know it, having the vandalised plaque on the prize encourages questions about what happened, which keeps the folklore alive. Christopher believes that this spoils the symmetry and should be removed – to maintain history the plaque could be donated to the Archives centre. Carl responds that doing so will cause it to be lost in the rubble, as out of sight is out of mind. It was suggested that perhaps the history could be documented on the website so that people can come across it even when the people who knew the tale are long gone.

Hilary poses the question do we remove the plaque and replace it if possible with a similar design? 1 in favour, ~16 against, 1 abstention.

Motion not carried – the plaque will remain. Christopher has been tasked with documenting the story.

3.

a)

Carl and Dave update people on guestnight.

2 potential band slots, one filled while the other could be filled by DJ Karthik.

Silent Disco has been booked, but Mike still needs to pay for it for it to be confirmed.

Karaoke mic needs to be replaced – Rob was meant to look into this, and is now reminded to do so.

Rooms booked and Dean's form sorted.

Booking system has now been altered. College also seems fine with the idea of this being used by the MCR to manage MCR event bookings. Carl has sounded Steve out about this, and costs would be transferred directly to the MCR termly bill. Steve needs to pursue this with Giles.

Raffle prizes have arrived and games ideas for the Tizard room are coming along. Dave to check with the JCR about the possibility of borrowing inflatables and games. Musical chairs was suggested by Carl, but people thought that could be dangerous if people are drunk, and also isn't easy for people to get involved in half way through. A bouncy castle was thought to be a fun idea. Expenses for such items could easily be treated as what would have otherwise been budgeted for the Casino.

Still needs to sort out decorations.

Jordan and Carl mention previous problems with Ipod mini/nanos. Yvonne has volunteered to make playlists for the silent disco, but will need some Ipods to avoid the problems encountered last time. Jordan has volunteered hers.

Might repeat the drawing competition as that seemed to work well. Jordan reminds people that someone needs to be monitoring it to ensure the supplies are continuously available.

By way of decorations/entertainment Tim suggested using the projector to watch old cartoons in the TV room. Carl mentioned we should probably check the projector still works before we do this. Everyone agreed this was a very good idea.

b)

Hilary say that last year someone led a crowd to the May bumps and this was good fun – Sam said he thinks it was Rob. Ideally people will want to go on the Saturday, and all we need is someone to lead it. Hilary and Jordan have volunteered.

4.

Jess:

She has spoken the head porter and the StudentStudent website person. We're going to have a special page for this that only Churchillians can access. It will be advertised to current students to put their bikes on sale on this if they wish, and the weblink will then be advertised to incoming freshers. Any bikes put up for sale will be stored by the porters, even if no one immediately buys them. Money transfers will have to be handled by the individual parties themselves, and we won't accept liability for the quality of the bike, although Jess may (out of the goodness of her heart) test the bikes herself in advance. For bikes that are not sold, the porters will apply the usual bike cull cut off date, and then donate them to charity. We will have to ensure that people who put their bikes up for sale are aware that this is a possibility. Its going to be known as the ReCycle scheme.

We need to ensure its just a facilitator for bike selling, not something that we quality control. As bikes are sold Jess will keep the keys, and reference them appropriately, and she will then pass this on to Rebecca to include in the fresher's welcome packs accordingly.

Angela:

She would like blankets in MCR. It can get cold in the evenings, and would make for a cosy atmosphere when watching films etc. Christopher informs her that there is a sheet that could do in the mean time. Hilary's concern was that if they get dirty there is no one who can take responsibility for washing them. She will check at the next house committee about spare blankets and if they're willing to launder them with the rest of the housekeeping linen.

Laura:

a)

Wanted to discuss rents. She is concerned at the rates at which rents are currently rising, as they've gone up by ~£100 in the year and a half she's been at Churchill. Her concern stems from the fact that the scholarships most PhD students receive are not inflation based, so rising costs can be significant. This is particularly so for people with kids as herself.

Her worry is that increasing prices are beginning to match market rates. This will start to tempt people away from the Wolfson flats although at the moment it is fantastic for the family community and the opportunity for all the kids to interact in a sheltered environment. This would be a bad reflection on college too, as the family flats are something Churchill is very proud of.

Hilary explains that the MCR President and Secretary are involved every year with the setting of rents and that the bursar usually sets something high, and we have to talk this down. She also explained about this year being effectively an inflation based rise with an internet charge rolled in. However Sam reminded everyone that we are not in a position of power when it comes to negotiations, and unfortunately the college usually makes similar arguments to Laura but in the opposite sense (ie, college prices better than other colleges and lower than market rates). Carl also pointed out that its very difficult to distinguish between groups of students within the MCR and that any discussions are generally based on the overall wellbeing.

Nevertheless given that Wolfson flats are a Churchill jewel it was decided that if Laura can make a reasonable case, and get a large number of families to sign it, it would give the MCR a position to bargain from.

b)

They are planning a BBQ for the families who are leaving and wanted to know if they could have money for charcoal etc. Christopher asked Laura to put it on the MCR website as an Event, and said he would then follow it up. In general everyone agreed this was a perfectly acceptable plan.

Carl also mentioned that he would send out a reminder that kids are welcome in the MCR and a note to remind people that the Event/Equipment webpage should and can be used.

Sam:

- a) Can we buy fans as it can get hot in the MCR. Christopher said he would look into it.
- b) Euro 2012 starts on Friday. We need to advertise games. No need to organise anything big except maybe for the final.

Giorgio

He has tracked down the source of missing trolleys – someone was stealing them. Carl suggested Karthik look into this person's wellbeing as some of the discussions suggested he may have been struggling from exam stress.

Karthik

Rebecca has started receiving confirmation of student acceptances, and so it is time to start thinking about the family scheme again.

Actions:

Hilary:

- To check with housekeeping about blankets

Carl:

- Remind people about the existence of the Useful stuff – Equipment/Events webpage
- Inform families that kids are welcome in the MCR

Mike

- Subscribe to Glamour
- Pay for the Silent Disco kit ASAP

Christopher

- Write up a brief history of the vandalism of the Alex Mischenko prize for the website.
- Check the state of the MCR projector
- Buy fans

Rob

- Buy a mic for the karaoke machine.

Steve

- Pursue the idea of an online booking system for MCR events with the computing office, along the lines of the current college hall booking system

Dave

- Look into borrowing JCR inflatables and games
- Look into decorations for Guestnight.