

Minutes for the MCR Exec. Meeting

Wed 15/02/2017

Old Library 19:00 – 20:00

Present at the meeting were:

President (MK), Vice President (SG), Secretary (RM), Welfare (HG), Soc Secs (MC, CB), Postgrad Tutor (ML), Website Editor (MM), Treasurer (MMa), Representatives Officer (PR)

Action points:

Please check for the items in bold in the minutes below to see action items.

1. Apologies for Absence: None.

2. Announcements.

ML: Crowdfunding for PG symposia is going well. £100 already raised.

3. Reports of Officers

MK:

From MCR Pres. Comm.

DSU Academic Affairs Officer says PG that teach may get better pay.

DSU Elections. PG is running for DSU president. [Secretary: Vote for someone!]

Treasurer:

At start of term, we had £1335.20

In: £408 (£34 x 12 for inter-MCR formal)

Out: £43.78

Current: £1699.42

(CB Social Sec has spent £420 that she hasn't claimed back.)

So £1100 can be spent. **[These numbers are not official and need confirmation.]**

MCR Website Editor will be purchasing a new projector bulb. To be paid for by the JCR because it is a maintenance issue.

Note: For other Exec members, please take receipts to MCR Treasurer.

RM: Some of the mailing lists are not working. MM will contact CIS to inform them of the problem.

4. Minutes

Confirmed: minutes of the meeting held on Thurs 15/12/2016. No matters arising from the minutes.

5. Agenda Items

1) Accommodation fees.

MK:

MK and DJ met with DSU who are trying to negotiate on the accommodation fee increase. Last year fees only went up according to inflation. But it has gone up by 9% in the past. Not clear why.

Options:

1. Push to freeze fees.
2. Grants
3. Increase at inflation
4. A wider range of options regarding choice of rooms. (We need a lower end price.)

What should we push for?

(Room sharing is not well compensated.)

If 3 not possible, 4 is better than no change?

But with 4, will there be segregation into 'rich' and 'poor'?

Maybe but it is better than certain people not being able to live here at all if all accommodation is somewhat expensive.

University has been asked for more clarification on where the numbers are coming from. Freedom of information request?

Private renting market is too expensive but University may not address this. However, if University made college accommodation cheaper, landlords would have to reduce their rents to compete.

What criteria should be used to determine how much to pay for rooms? Many rooms are similar size. So size can't be enough of a discriminant.

Related issue: Food prices have gone up considerably.

Self-catering is difficult because of not enough kitchens. £10 per day for catering. 2 meals a day option would be useful. Pay as you go? Could catering credits be used elsewhere?

2) JCR referendum and relevance to the MCR.

JCR votes every 3 years on whether JCR remains an independent charity

or

DSO (Durham Student Organisation)

Referendum coming up soon.

(MCR had a similar referendum which is why the MCR is now overseen by JCR.)

As an independent charity JCR has more freedom (which would transfer to freedom for the MCR.)

Go to this Sunday's meeting on this issue!

JCR is unlikely to become a DSO.

3) Exec / MCR stash.

RM has been in contact with Phoenix Print. We will get same prices as JCR. We need to order separately. £2, £5 .

'Grey College MCR' will be on stash. Conduct FB poll to find out if anyone want MCR stash? No Exec. member apart from the President wants stash.

4) Replacing broken furniture in the MCR.

Can we buy some new chairs?

only 3 bouncy chairs out of 5 are left.

HG will look into how much furniture will cost. Should we get IKEA items or more expensive furniture? Stackable stools from Argos, so people don't have to sit on floor.

Bean bags? But if they break, beans will be everywhere. There will be a bean bonanza. (But you could have a double cover.) Fire safety problem.

5) Fourth Year Representative.

JCR mature students' rep will possibly fulfil both roles.

CB knows someone who is interested.

6. Any other business

Grey Inter-MCR formal. Can band drink on formal? Yes.

We need volunteers to sell wine between 7 to 7.15. We have 4 people from Exec who will do it (SG, HG, MM, ML).

CB is happy that plans are fine.

We need 8 MCR people on high table. 7 SCR people on high table.

Band from 9.30 to 10.30 in JCR.

Bar needs to be open afterwards.

Initials stand for:

AN: Allison Norenberg , CB: Camilla Bole, HG: Helen Gienger, MC: Mike Cheung, MK: Matthew Kirk, MM: Martin Moxon, MMA: Maciej Matuszewski, PR: 'Pup' (Pup Rusby), RM: Renju Mathew, SG: Sarah Gray