

General Meeting Minutes - 24/10/20

Present - Andrew Salkeld, Apriya Millan, Ben Tudor, Beth Brown, Jack Bailey, Kesavan Sivanesan, Tom Noden, Leona Kuame, Alexandra Nikolin, Tolu Mustapha, Priya Kaler, Joanna Neve, Daniel Carter, Alex Jarvis, Etien Jasonson, Ellie Fox, Tomas Andre, Elizabeth Torley, Mayuran Visakan, Cerian Craske, Daisy Green, Ayan Addow

Apologies - Tami Briggs, Dana Skotarenko, Kirstie Goodchild, Stefan Vintila, Maise Mathews, Hassan Akhter, Craig Stewart, Hebe Robinson

1. COVID

AS - Only about four or five households in isolation so far at a time

Deans email - Kirstie brought up concerns; working on communicating this with the dean

Reassurance that minor infractions will not lead to band 3 disciplinary tribunal etc. -

Nothing has changed unless a large party has been organised, for example

EJ - Deans email may not be written in accessible language

AS - Visitor Policy; established partners will not be exempted due to worries about the increasing case numbers around college

2. 4th Year Undergraduate housing

AS - MCR would like to change the way 4th Year undergraduate housing is dealt

Would like to MMLers to be in undergraduate housing, 4th year confirmed (e.g.

Engineers) to be in undergraduate housing, Unconfirmed 4th years would be in postgraduate housing

Distinction necessary for dinners since money is involved

Social aspect of confirmed 4th year students being friends with unconfirmed 4th year students means we should not force them to be divided arbitrarily

Aim to give 4th year students the choice of which ballot to enter - same as in the past

JB - Subject to capacity?

AS - Fair bit of flexibility in the housing

3. Marquee

BB - Encourage students to use the marquee as it is expensive to have

AN - Move plant sale to the marquee due to uncertain weather, events have approved

AS - Use of marquee for plant sale approved

4. Wednesday Formals

AS - will aim to see wednesday formals being reinstated as the demand increases

Agenda Points:

5. CUSU Council Agenda

(https://drive.google.com/file/d/1J2O1F_DrUa_RZIK9CBwppxfQiDU8aovr/view?usp=sharing)

AS - Encourage members to join democracy committee

Motion 8a:

Motion to challenge SUs support for moving all non-essential teaching online written by all JCR and MCR presidents

Announcement that SU will campaign against face-to-face teaching, SU claimed that #DemandSafeCambridge consultations gave the SU mandate to campaign against face-to-face teaching

Cambridge SU Resolves section gives reasoning for move - key points: campaign for better online teaching, allow people to do all study to be done online, allow students to go home.

Unclear why the SU cannot campaign for these three points alone

Feeling that university online provision should be improved and the option to do all studying online

Wrong to imply that all face-to-face teaching is inherently unsafe

AN - Is there provision for students to work from home?

AS - Current understanding - in michaelmas you must keep term unless overseas and cannot travel here

AN - May be beneficial for some students to be able to work from home?

AS - SU is looking at campaigning for ability to work from home, unlikely to have rents refunded

CC - Disabled Students Officers were overwhelming against forcing all teaching online.

More nuance is needed in this campaign, a more compassionate response is needed. Supervisors and students should have an open discussion on what is comfortable for them

Opting for online supervisions for both the students and supervisions must be available

Having mandatory reason for people to leave their room may be beneficial for many

JB - Anecdotally, supervisors have been accommodating and open. Online supervisions have worked well online and there are limitations with in person supervisions e.g. with regards to masks

However some students do have a preference for face-to-face supervisions

CC - There has been reports of some supervisors being difficult in organising online supervisions; this might be something that will have to be dealt with on a case-to-case basis

AS - Argument that face-to-face teaching is inherently dangerous while not campaigning against sports activities and night clubs is a difficult position

BT - Query on current expectation of staff who are running teaching

AS - Staff would have same choice that students do, no penalties for staff who do not choose to teach in person

Vote - Unanimous vote to challenge the SUs current position to campaign for all teaching to be moved online

Old CUSU motions that have been brought forward to SU - no opposition so not raised for debate

Emergency Motion to support defend the jobs campaign - supported

6. AOB

AS - Outlook for term - looking at how we can support people throughout the term
Looking to put on a Fitz Sessions - possibly in the buttery

MV - Put out a poll regarding the jumpers, cost around £20 for officers

EJ - Proposed rent changes may need to be followed up?

AS - We should raise this issue with college as next term will be too late to have it in place for next term

Bursar is also looking at running a survey of all college property, he is aware of the peculiarities of the rent system and the clear issues with some of the houses (especially regarding mould)

College houses are treated as an investment, the value is only that they provide student housing

Bursar has been made aware that students do like the option of having housing

The cost of fixing the core services (e.g. electrical and plumbing) of some houses is very high (~£300k) so this is a tricky problem to solve

Feeling that maintenance of houses in the past has been poor, the problems in some houses are chronic and should've been dealt with well before reaching this stage.

DC - Concerns over amount of housing

AS - Current surplus of undergraduate housing, should be okay despite D,E,F returning fewer rooms to the housing stock

JB - Unlikely to have a perpetual swell in fresher intake in the future

Fitzmas

AS - 8 Fitzmas meals in november

Plan to have JCR sort out a seating plan so we can seat households together to increase capacity in the hall so we will need fewer dinner and allow for a better experience

DC - Concern of date choice for household

AS - Will have sort out some system to enable households to choose available dates to accommodate all

Many freshers missed out on Halloween formal as there was reduced capacity and high demand

Aim to have Fitzmas provide space for each household

Wolfson court

Aim to have a printer put in at Wolfson court

COVID signage and other aspects have been fixed at Wolfson Court to prevent any ambiguity and make the experience more like college as far as COVID is concerned

EJ - Chicken Night Opinions?

General feeling that this was a good buttery meal

Aim to have the JCR support the Buttery, Cafe and Bar in advertising new and existing options to students e.g. Cafe now serves hot food items