



## **Trinity Hall MCR**

Open Committee Meeting  
6.30pm, 26<sup>th</sup> July 2018  
MCR Blue Room

### **1. Matters arising**

- i. Accommodation panel with Ramji**
- ii. Accommodation issues**
- iii. Legal letter**
- iv. Fresher's week planning**

### **2. Any other business**

**Present: Verity Smith (VS), Alice Roullière (AR), Aime Rankin (ARa), Jules O'Dwyer (JO), Jack Smith (JSm), Joseph Reid (JR), Ramji Venkataramanan (RV)**

**Apologies: Oded Rimon, Stephen Rainbird, Emma Venter, Pippa Carter, Sebastian Fica, Lucy McDonald, Lucy Mackie, Ashley Clark, Holly Dayton, Daniel Ott, Josh Smeltzer, Eduardo Corredera, Tony Seston, Melanie Jensen, Ben Cooper, Rhiannon Clapham**

### **1. Matters arising**

#### **i. Accommodation panel with Ramji**

ARa read an email from a student on fieldwork asking if College to intended to work with us as individuals to help find accommodation in other colleges. RV said that the Junior Bursar had emailed the Bursars of other colleges to inquire about accommodation availability but that these college probably have very similar deadlines to our own. RV said that the Junior Bursar will email us with any news as it comes in.

RV said that he will ask Charlotte Moss if it is possible for students to stay in their rooms for part of September.

VS asked if it would be possible to move the fresher's deadline forward in future years so that continuing grads could find out whether they have been allocated a room sooner. RV said that he would ask Charlotte Moss.

VS asked that if there was a shortage of rooms next year, if the priority list could be used to allocate rooms from the beginning. RV said would ask Charlotte Moss.

JR discussed the recent email from Sasha Turchyn regarding the four week notice period. JR noted that in this email, Sasha had said that the Bursar had said no to waiving this notice period and fee. JR asked if the bursary could lend money to students for deposits, maybe splitting it over their college

bills. JO mentioned that college perhaps has discretionary fund that could be tailored for this purpose. RV said that he would ask the bursar.

JR said that it might be better if the accommodation interest form was closed before the thirtieth of June. This would allow students to learn about shortages of rooms sooner. It would require the freshers deadlines to also be moved. Ramji said he would ask someone about this.

A member said that the accommodation interest form needed an overhaul as students were not notified once they had filled it in. Another member said that sending an email receipt after filling out the form would be a good idea. RV said that he would ask Charlotte about this.

JR asked if College intended to increase the MCR's membership next year. RV said that they did not. RV said that last year College did not meet its targets. RV also said that some colleges such as Hughes Hall were obliged to accept applicants the university sent its way and that by taking on more grads, College was doing its bit.

JO and a member asked why we were quoted a figure of six students not being allocated a room by Charlotte Moss. It was asked why this number was based on figures from the previous year when College knew it was aiming to accept more graduates this year.

A member asked if freshers were now given priority over continuing students as regards to room type. For example, if a fresher has preference for an ensuite room, a continuing student would be moved out of their ensuite room to accommodate their preference. They noted that this was a recent policy change that we were not made aware of. A different member commented that College had said in its communications that they aimed to try and keep continuing students in their original rooms. RV said that he would ask Charlotte Moss for transparency.

A member asked for transparency as regards to the incorporation of kitchen fixed charge (KFC) into our rent. AR said that we would not be charged 'KFC' but that our rent would go up. The member commented that some rooms had gone up in rent differentially and why was this the case. AR suggested that they were perhaps rounding rents up to the nearest five. JR asked if there would be two price bands. VS said there would be. A different member said that some rooms had increased in rent by ten percent and that this was extreme. AR said that she would ask the bursary for clarification as they don't provide a breakdown of the rent.

JO commented on why transparency might be being lost. We talk to the tutorial office, who then talk to the bursary, who then reply to the tutorial office, who pass it onto us. This was compared to Chinese whispers and a possible reason why we haven't been able to find out the breakdown of our rent.

VS said that next year, we would like a list of rooms and their rents whenever we had to apply for accommodation.

A member said that they wanted to find out if an undergraduate paid the same rent for a room as a graduate was.

JO said that we had asked to not share communal facilities with undergraduates, when being consulted on which rooms College was giving to the JCR room ballot. The JCR ballot however had rooms on it in Walter Christie that shared communal facilities with graduates. Charlotte Moss had said that it was likely that these rooms would be occupied by fourth year undergraduates, some of whom are MCR members. ARA mentioned that we asked for a split of Walter Christie into two halves during the GSPDRA meeting in May. Charlotte Moss said that College would take this into

consideration but it was found out that rooms for the JCR ballot had already been decided in January. ARa asked why we were told that our request would be considered if this decision was already made some time previously.

AR said that we were not having much success in arranging a meeting with the bursary. However, the Bursar had previously said that we could meet with him directly if we had issues. AR said that the tutorial office preferred us to go through them.

A member mentioned that according to the accommodation licences, the graduate tutor has the power to waive fees. They said that the graduate tutor should not delegate their responsibility to the bursary and that they should give their reasons why they did not consider it to be an exceptional circumstance.

A member discussed the no-communication of licence extensions after the thirtieth of June. They commented that silence is not the same as saying 'yes'.

#### **ii. Accommodation issues**

VS said that we should think about what we wanted for next year and then tell the junior bursar in a meeting. A general discussion followed this and the following points were raised

- Price list for rooms when we apply for accommodation
- Move fresher's and continuing students accommodation interest form deadlines forward if there's likely to be another shortfall

#### **iii. Legal letter**

VS said that two members had written a letter outlining legal issues with the accommodation licences used by College. AR said there were strong arguments to convince Sasha to use her power to waive fees. AR also suggested that the letter shouldn't come from the Committee or an individual. A member asked if we were prepared to be sued by College we presented them with legal arguments. A different member that they didn't want to take legal action against College, rather to ask them why they are doing what they are doing give the legal issues. A different member suggested that the letter might encourage non-legally trained staff to seek the help of more trained personnel to answer our questions. VS said that we could perhaps give Sasha excerpts from the letter which would apply to her powers over the matter. VS said we should also reassure her that we only wanted the waiver for the 30 or so students that were affected. VS said that other arguments could be presented face to face with Glen.

#### **iv. Fresher's week planning**

VS said that she had created a timetable based on last year's events. JO offered to organise 'be our guest night' (BOGN). AR suggested doing BOGN by buildings. JO said that it would be better to give people cash for food rather than reimburse them. ARa mentioned that Daniel Ott wanted to conduct historical tours. VS said that we could ask him to set up a swap. JO wanted to ask about an Old Library tour. VS said she would distribute the timetable and ask for volunteers. ARa said that Stephen was happy to help book things. VS said that she had acquired 16 tickets for footlights, with a discount of £3pp.

## **2. Any other business**

JR said that under band A, grad hall would be £6 and that we should consider spending our subsidy money on other things. AR said that we currently subsidise it by £4.90. JR said it would be unfair for those paying KFC to subsidise the cost of grad hall for those who live out.

JO said that the coffee machine was the best thing to happen to the MCR all year. A general discussion ensued about mug thefts.

JO said that we should try to encourage as many JCR and MCR overlaps as possible at events. It was pointed out that the JCR member came mainly for the free food rather than meaningful interaction.

AR said that we needed to make more of an effort to integrate Lent and Easter starters. AR asked College to send us a list of those who started late. A member asked if we could get a list of the 4<sup>th</sup> year undergrads joining. A different member asked for 4<sup>th</sup> year cards to be activated. JO said that we should recognise the porters with chocolates with a porter of the year award.

Meeting concluded 20.33.

Respectively submitted by,  
Aime Rankin  
MCR Secretary