



St John's College Junior Common Room

Agenda - Extraordinary General Meeting, Michaelmas Term 2019
Thursday 17th October 2019, North Lecture Room, 4.30pm

1. Minutes from the Previous Meeting

Available on the website [here](#).

2. Matters Arising from the Minutes

None arising

3. Ratifications

- Alumni and Development Rep (2 vacancies)
- IT Rep (2 vacancies)
- SJCTV Rep (2 vacancies)
- Staff Liaison Rep (1 vacancy to serve alongside Safi Lewis)

4. Items for Discussion

Harry outlined the plan for the meeting. He noted that if Motion A passed, Motion B is not put. Alfie will take the chair shortly, so Harry can express opinions on the Motion. Lachlann introduced the motion. Alfie burst into the room, in great style. The room broke into applause.

a) The Ball for All Plan (Lachlann Hinley, Ball Secretary) - [Appendix 1](#)

Minutes:

Lachlann noted that he hoped the majority of the room could agree on the sentiment of subsidising tickets for those who cannot pay and the College and Ball Committee agree on the principles. The mechanism is what is to be discussed. Lachlann noted the two motions do the same thing, in that they fund for the Ball for All scheme. He noted that the Committee prefers the first option, but the Ball for All Scheme will continue in either setting. He is seconding Motion B, which is the Committee's less preferred option. He noted his preference for Motion A.

b) The Ball for All Plan (Harry Sugden, JCR President)

Minutes:

Harry spoke on the motion. He noted his agreement with Lachlann's sentiments that the Ball for All Scheme is very worthwhile venture. He noted that while he is in agreement with the purpose, he noted his opposition to the way it the funding is proposed. Harry said that he believes it is best for both the JCR and the Ball Committee that the funds for the scheme is funded by Ball attendees. Harry said that this Motion requests funds from the Financial Motions Budget, about which Harry noted he has made his feelings clear, feeling not all uses of the money from said Budget are wholly worthwhile. However, he expressed concerns that it could one day affect the budget of the JCR for wider-reaching activities, like Welfare events. He also noted that this would disproportionately affect one in every three JCR annual budgets, with the Commemoration Ball falling once every 3 years. Harry said that the daily life of the JCR is more important than funding the Ball. Harry noted the College were unhappy to sponsor the scheme directly, as they spend a lot on Access elsewhere. Harry noted that JCR funds could also be used to better Access events, rather than the Ball for All. He said that he thought that it was wrong for the JCR to take the responsibility for funding Ball for All tickets long term, and sets a long-term precedent that the JCR will pay. Harry argued that students have a personal and moral responsibility to pay the minimal extra amount to fund the scheme, equating it to a few extra pints. He said that anyone who is concerned about the extra price difference is someone likely to be eligible for the scheme, and those who can make up the difference should be willing to pay that difference. He advocated for students who can afford to pay to help out their friends and the student body as a whole.

Leo Nasskau (Ball Treasurer) asked about the precedent about paying for JCR items. He noted that in the first General Meeting, Harry suggested that an increase in the charity levy would not set a precedent. Harry disagreed with the comparison, because the levy is controlled by a JCR vote, whereas the level of accessibility of the Ball is outside of the control of a JCR, and cannot be voted on.

Zara Hussain asked if the same amount of money would be set aside in both the Ball for All schemes where the JCR pays, and the increased ticket price scheme. Harry noted that the added price on tickets would be dependent on ticket demand from John's students. The Ball for All scheme would be a cap of £2000.

Discussion extended to 30 minutes.

Gemma Robson asked if a precedent could be set in the other direction in increasing the ticket price for John's members becomes the long term setup. Harry suggested that this solution refers to this year, and that in the long term an alumni donation scheme should be set-up to ensure long term sustainability of the scheme. Harry noted that Motion B was a measure for this Ball, with the Motion only being presented to him two weeks ago.

Tom Ritter asked if Harry has spoken to other JCR Presidents about the issue. Harry noted that he hadn't done so and didn't want to, due to the limited time from him receiving the motion to the Extraordinary General Meeting. He noted this could be done in the future.

Leo asked why the alternative use of the Financial Motions Budget for access schemes has only been discussed now the Ball for All Scheme is being tabled. Harry

disagreed with this characterisation, noting he has long expressed his issues with Financial Motions Budget. He said the Ball has the responsibility to be accessible independently of the JCR.

5. Agenda Items

a) "Ball for All" Motion

Proposer: Lachlann Hinley, Ball Secretary

Seconded: Cas Burton, JCR Treasurer

This JCR notes that:

- a. St John's College will host a Commemoration Ball on 26th June 2020. This is being arranged by the Ball Committee, which is a committee established under the JCR Constitution.
- b. Commemoration Balls are triennial and expensive. In June 2019, the lowest priced ticket at New College Commemoration Ball was £195, whilst the lowest price ticket at Queen's College Commemoration Ball was £170.
- c. The Ball Committee has strived to keep ticket prices as low as possible (under £170). This is likely to be less than comparable Balls and will be one of the cheapest commemoration balls in Oxford in 2020.
- d. Among the charitable objectives of the JCR is a general commitment to further the well-being of undergraduates.
- e. In general, Balls are seen as one of the key non-academic elements of the Oxford experience. Due to their cost, they can be inaccessible to certain students for financial reasons.
- f. In 2017, the JCR financed a 'Ball for All' scheme with £1,350. This scheme was a step in the right direction; however, the 2017 Committee have reported that they faced difficulties from poor advertising and short notice.
- g. The Ball Committee want to repeat the intent of 2017; however, make the scheme more successful through better preparation and advertising.

This JCR believes that:

- h. Attending an Oxford ball is a key part of the student experience.
- i. The expense involved in attending a ball makes doing so inaccessible for some students.
- j. The JCR should repeat its 2017 efforts and make the 2020 Ball accessible to students who may not be able to afford to attend.

This JCR therefore resolves that:

k. Budget reallocation

- a. For the purposes of article §58, this clause shall be read as if it was a budget reallocation motion as brought from time to time usually by the JCR Treasurer

- b. A 'Ball for All' budget shall be created, and the JCR Treasurer shall:
 - i. Decrease the Financial Motions budget by £1
 - ii. Increase the 'Ball for All' budget by £1
- c. Immediately before the end of the JCR's financial year (that is, immediately before the first Ordinary General Meeting of Hilary Term), the JCR Treasurer shall:
 - a. Transfer from all budgets all remaining money to the 'Ball for All' budget
 - b. Authorise any valid request from the Ball Treasurer to use money from that Budget for the purposes of 'Ball for All' in accordance with clause m(b)(vi)(1).

I. Financial motion

- a. For the purposes of article §58, this clause shall be read as if it was a financial motion under article §49b.
- b. The specific expenditure authorised in subclause (c) below shall be subject to the provisions of clause m(b)(vi)(2), specifically relating to the duty of the Ball Committee to repay any unused funds.
- c. The amount calculated using subclause (d) below will be given to the Ball Committee for the purposes of running the Ball for All scheme from the Financial Motions Budget.
- d. The amount shall be calculated by taking £2,000 and subtracting from it the amount (if any) transferred into the Ball for All budget under clause k(c)(a) so as to ensure that the maximum the Ball for All scheme receives from the JCR is £2,000.

m. Administration

- a. For the purposes of article §58, this clause shall be read as if it was a standing policy implementing resolution under article §84.
- b. The Ball Committee is mandated to
 - i. Open applications for eligible members of the JCR to get subsidised tickets to the Ball
 - ii. Advertise the 'Ball for All' ticket option
 - iii. In consultation with the Welfare Dean, receive applications for the Ball for All scheme ensuring that the personal details of applicants contained in their application cannot be associated with the names of applicants by any student member
 - iv. In consultation with the Welfare Dean, assess whether an application convincingly demonstrates that, without a subsidised ticket, the applicant would be unlikely to be able to attend the Ball for financial reasons

- v. Distribute subsidised tickets to those people simultaneous with the release of non-subsidised tickets to St John's students
- vi. Make two requests to the JCR Treasurer for money to pay for distributed tickets
 1. The first request shall be made to the JCR Treasurer for funds out of the budget established by clause k(b) and shall be made at the end of the JCR's financial year.
 2. The second request shall be for the money allocated by clause l(c). This request shall only be made in the event that the money allocated by subclause (vi)(1) above is inadequate. Any money received from clause l(c) not used must be immediately repaid.
- c. The JCR Treasurer is mandated to:
 - i. Assist with the processes set out in subclauses (vi)(1) to (2) above.
 - ii. As far as possible ensure that — in funding the Ball for All scheme through the mechanism provided for in clause l (financial motion) — the money used would be money ordinarily used for financial motions by the JCR and, in consequence, the impact on the other budgets of the JCR is negligible
- d. The JCR President are mandated to:
 - i. Assist in the advertising of the Ball for All scheme
- e. The JCR Secretary shall remove this clause from Standing Policy on 31 January 2020.

n. Future funding

- a. For the purposes of article §58, this clause shall be read as if it was a standing policy motion under article §83. Subclauses (b) and (c) shall be added to the 'Beliefs' section of Standing Policy and subclauses (d) and (e) shall be added to the 'Implementing Resolutions' section of Standing Policy.
- b. The JCR believes that a scheme to provide subsidised tickets to the triennial ball for those who are not able to afford a ticket is important.
- c. The JCR believes that, in consultation with College and future Ball Committees, a sustainable funding source should be investigated for such a scheme.
- d. The Ball Committee are mandated to discuss these issues with College.
- e. The JCR President is mandated to discuss these issues during the Rents and Charges process.

o. Progress of other motion

- a. For the purposes of article §58, this clause shall be read as if it was a procedural motion under article §39a.

- b. Motion B (“We All Should Pay for Ball for All” Standing Policy Motion) be not put.

Minutes:

Lachlann set out the Ball for All Motion, written above. In 2017, the Ball for All Scheme was given £1350 by the JCR to subsidise tickets. The 2017 Motion came from the Financial Motions Budget. The current Financial Motions Budget for this year is depleted, to the point where this is not possible to ask for the required funds for the current financial year. Lachlann noted his belief that the Ball for All scheme is not as important as daily welfare events, but the benefits from ball access are more important than other JCR activities, notably some of those funded from the Financial Motions Budget.

Lachlann laid out the plan of this motion. The plan (clause b), designed to reduce financial costs on the JCR, is that money left at the end of the year from the JCR will go to Ball for All rather than the College reserves. However, the JCR won't be certain of how much is left, hence clause (l), which will top up whatever is left over from this financial year up to £2000 from the Financial Motions Budget from the JCR's next budget. Any money not used from this Financial Motions Budget will be returned to the JCR.

Lachlann moved on to explain how the scheme will work, laid out in clause (m) above. This is a standing policy motion setting out what Harry raised a point of information that the words 'as far as possible' in clause m(c)ii, left some flexibility within the Standing Policy mandate, though Lachlann replied that this is a Standing Order mandate, with this being constitutionally binding.

Tom Ritter asked how many Standing Orders are successfully completed, noting few seemed to be completed. Lachlann noted that this resolution is internal, in the sense that it doesn't require any external agent (such as College) to approve the move. This distinguishes it from other Standing Policy mandates, which require College to change a policy, such as asking free laundry. Lachlann noted that College do not have to listen to JCR Standing Policy, but JCR Officers do. Lachlann argued that within the JCR's funding remit, the Ball for All is more important than many other motions, such as PRAT provisions. Cas Burton noted that this Standing Policy was to ensure that the next Treasurer is on board.

Tom Ritter asked whether this change would make the Ball for All scheme a product of the JCR Treasurer, or the Ball for All Committee. Lachlann noted that the Ball Committee is a Committee of the JCR and so is bound by the Standing Policy.

Lachlann said that while he did believe this scheme was sustainable, clause (n) states that going forward, the Ball Committee will work with the College to consider the sustainability of the scheme and alternative funding methods.

Lachlann reiterated his belief this was valid JCR exercise. Lachlann addressed Harry's concerns on sustainability, noting their commitment to explore sustainable routes in the future. He said that the whole JCR relies on future funding from

College, and the threat of the JCR budget's reduction is not sufficient to warrant not using the funds. Lachlann moved on to his problems with Motion B. He said that the 2017 Committee attempted to gain alumni funding, and College declined to help with this venture. When considering raising ticket prices, due to the existing subsidy for John's ticket prices (as they are cheaper than standard tickets), and because non-John's tickets need to be competitive on the Ball market, John's members would bear the additional cost. The lower cost is due to the higher capacity allowed by College, meaning competitiveness is an important factor. Therefore, ticket price rises would have to come from John's students. Lachlann saw this as counterintuitive. He noted his concern that those just outside the remit of Ball for All would be unfairly penalised by a ticket price rise. He noted that he urged members in the room to vote for Motion A.

Alfie asked Lachlann to give a short one minute summary, which is covered inclusively in the minute above.

Natalia Sudol asked if it was calculated whether more money could be generated through ticket prices being raised, against the £2000 asked for from the JCR. Lachlann noted that they have calculated a comparable scheme to 2017, with a raise of £5-10 possible. He said that he didn't want to leave Ball for All applicants waiting on a ticket, so would have to commit early. This means a ticket price rise would be implemented without knowing demand, making it a less flexible option for the Ball Committee.

Chris Hughes noted that a concern with raising ticket prices was given on the basis on Ball competition, and the 2017 market, and asked if any statistics or models had been used to reach this concern. Lachlann said they hadn't.

Tom Ritter asked a series of questions about the ball. He started by asking about the percentage budget of the Ball and JCR of the potential schemes. Leo noted 0.7% of the Ball and Harry noted 4.34% of the JCR budget. Tom asked how many members used the scheme in 2017, to which Leo replied 13. Tom asked for expected ticket applications, to which Lachlann replied that it is very unpredictable based on need profiles. Tom asked why the motion has been brought now, rather than when the Ball budget was being set. Lachlann noted they thought that the precedent of the 2017 would make the request uncontroversial. They noted this was requested a week earlier, and it was their original intention to bring it to the first meeting of Michaelmas term. Tom asked who would run the scheme. Lachlann noted this was the Welfare Dean, JCR Treasurer, other Ball Committee members and him as Ball Secretary.

Amelia Holt asked what the total budget. £291,000 was the answer, with 10% in reserve, and asked if the contingency could be used. Leo noted that College were strict on the contingency being at 10%. Lachlann added the high risk profile of the Ball made this unfeasible, with thefts recorded last year.

Siobhan Pebody asked how much of a price difference between the John's Ball and other Balls is desired. Leo noted it was difficult to predict Ball demand.

Harry expressed his opinions on Motion B, listed below. He informed the room that Motion A would make Motion B fail. He noted he had changed the wording from its

originally submitted version, to reflect the JCR's wishes to support the Ball for All campaign, but not through JCR funds, but through JCR members (and therefore John's members) paying through tickets). Harry summarised his belief that Motion B should pass.

Move to Vote Called and Passed (20 for, 8 against, 3 absentions)

Call for a Secret Ballot heard.

Lachlann summarised his arguments, written above.

Harry summarised his arguments, written above.

Point of Information from Lachlann noted that this is an either/or vote, hence why Motion B is not put if Motion A passes. They are mutually exclusive.

Point of Information from Chris that a referendum for the whole possible JCR was possible. It was noted that after the move to vote, the vote would be taking place.

Georgie Cockburn asked what happens if both fail, and Alfie noted the Ball Committee would have to bring the Motion again at another meeting.

Returning Officer Assistant needed to be nominated. Gemma Robson gave a short hust, noting her dream to count paper. Gemma ratified as Returning Officer Assistant, with no objections heard.

Ben told a bad joke. Nobody laughed. (Cas laughed, regretfully).

Motion Failed (14 for, 21 against, 0 absentions)

b) The "We All Should Pay for Ball for All!" Standing Policy Motion

Proposer: Harry Sugden (JCR President)

Seconded: Lachlann Hinley (Ball Secretary)

This JCR notes that:

- a. The meeting at which this motion has been put has considered through considerable Discussion both proposals for the operation of the Ball for All scheme.

This JCR believes that:

- b. The Ball should be made as accessible as possible and the Ball for All scheme is integral in achieving this.
- c. The Ball for All scheme should become a self-funded, sustainable scheme, funded by the ball budget.
- d. The Ball's occurrence is of lesser importance to the events and schemes the JCR runs - there is no watertight way to protect the funding that goes toward these.

This JCR therefore resolves to:

- e. Mandate the Ball Committee to raise the ticket prices by the necessary amount to be able to fund the Ball for All scheme.
- f. Mandate the Ball Committee and JCR President to meet with College to discuss the sustainability of the scheme.
- g. Add items e and f to standing policy as 'Implementing Resolutions'.
- h. Add items b, c and d to standing policy as 'Beliefs'.

Minutes:

Harry noted his support for this motion, noting he felt it fair for Ball attendees to support their peers in attending the Ball.

Tom asked whether that the scheme is open for John's students, but is a JCR scheme. He suggested that the motion should fail and brought back with provisions for both the JCR and MCR. Harry noted that the MCR were likely to follow in a similar motion, after discussions with the President. Leo noted that ball ticket price increases will apply to both JCR and MCR members.

Question asked how to get around the issue of Ball for All applicants having to wait for tickets. Harry noted that this Standing Policy motion doesn't set out how the Ball for All process will work.

Cas asked about the role of Treasurer in this motion. Lachlann noted that the Ball for All Scheme will continue in lieu of Motion A failing, and noted it would be a statement of fact to pass this motion.

Tom asked if it would be possible to raise both general release and St John's students. He noted that the competitive Ball market is much the same as in 2017, and noted he didn't fully agree with the concerns on price raises. Ishta noted that the market was not identical, with Keble and Magdalen both holding Balls. Tom noted that Corpus Christi happened 3 years ago, which would cancel out one of these extra Balls.

Sofia Henderson noted that competitiveness was important, but that keeping prices low is important for access in general. Ishta Sharma (Ball President) agreed. Harry also agreed.

Call for meeting to be extended by 30 minutes.

Amelia asked if optional £1 charge could be added to ticket checkout. Leo noted that this has been pursued for charity. Amelia asked whether an additional tickbox could be added to the ball purchase. Leo noted that it was unfair for other Colleges to additionally subsidise John's above the existing subsidy. Harry noted there would be no expectation on other Colleges to tick this box. He reiterated his belief that the alumni network could be a source of funding.

Cas noted that this Motion does not mandate the Ball Committee to do anything, noting this discussion was largely tangential to the motion discussed. Chris suggested a dual price increase across John's and general ticket price.

Tom noted that buying a ticket contributes to the scheme, and questioned the need for a ticket price rise in the first place. Tom suggested the budget should incorporate this at the existing planned ticket prices. Harry noted he would be happy for this Motion not to be put, noting that now the first motion has failed, the second motion was not necessary.

Georgie Cockburn noted that other Colleges don't have the choice or say in their ticket price offered. She also noted the alumni was not a feasible source of funding in 2017. Harry responded that the actual final price, or alumni funding is not relevant to this Motion.

Move to vote brought. No objections heard.

Closing speech from Tom Ritter, who said that the JCR vote down this motion, so we can have a whole JCR-wide referendum and vote as a community, not as those in the room.

Lachlann urged the room to vote for the motion, noting that the JCR was not involved in ticket price decisions. Lachlann noted that the JCR should express opinions on the Ball for All scheme, which this motion allows.

Motion Passed (26 for, 3 against, 2 abstentions)

6. Any Other Business

Alfie reminded the room to be civil following the meeting, and doesn't that this issue does need to be personal.

Meeting closed at 6.11pm