



St John's College Junior Common Room

Minutes - 1st Meeting, Michaelmas Term 2020
Sunday 11 October 2020, via Zoom, 7.30 pm

Zara Hussain (Vice President) chairing, with Lachlann Hinley (Secretary) as minute taker.

1. Minutes from the Previous Meeting

Available on the website [here](#). There were no objections.

2. Matters Arising from the Minutes

All motions from the last meeting had passed after an online ballot. Full results are available in the minutes.

3. Reports from Officers, Reps and Committees

Written reports are available [here](#).

Verbal reports:

- **Vice President** Zara Hussain said they'd organised Freshers' Week and hoped everyone had enjoyed it.
- **Access and Admissions Officer** Ankit Kapoor gave an update as part of the 'Meet the JCR Committee' discussion (see below).

4. Positions Requiring Ratification

Returning Officer (1 vacancy)

Joe Sisson had submitted a written hust, which was read to the meeting. Joe had noted their desire to serve the JCR, having previously been Secretary and President. Joe had added that "the best JCR election is the one that proceeds smoothly and entirely without incident". Joe was **ratified** nem. con.

Chair for MT20 (1 vacancy)

Zara Hussain (Vice President) said they were acting as Chair, because nobody wanted the job last term. Zara said they'd happily give the job to someone.

There were two candidates, who both gave a short hust:

- Aoife Hegarty thought they'd enjoy the role and that chairing would be fun. Aoife thought they could run a very happy and lovely JCR meeting.

- Alfie Dry said they were used to keeping order, having previously been the chair of a school council. Alfie said meetings should be focussed, so that people leave “feeling like they’ve got somewhere”.

Both candidates confirmed they would be free during JCR meetings. Following an online ballot, Alfie Dry was **ratified** as Chair. Full results available on request.

Bike Rep (2 vacancies)

Ozan Erder submitted a written hust, noting they were organised and wanted to get involved with the JCR. Ozan was **ratified** nem. con.

Bridget Stuart submitted a written hust, saying it was an important scheme and Bridget was keen to keep it going. Bridget was **ratified** nem. con.

Oxford SU Rep (1 vacancy to join Emmet O’Leary)

Korben Bailey said they’d really like to get involved. Korben was **ratified** nem. con.

Social Media Rep (1 vacancy to join Issy Stephens)

Issy Stephens (Social Media Rep) outlined the role and said they wanted someone to help run the JCR’s social media channels. Although the Instagram was being run very successfully (with 2,400 followers), the Twitter needed more engagement.

Alex Foster said they were very good at using social media, including experience coordinating with the JCR. Alex said they had a “successful personal Instagram”. Alex was optimistic of including wider members of the St John’s community on the Instagram.

Issy asked what sort of image Alex would want to project of St John’s JCR. Alex said there was a sense of Oxford colleges as being “up tight and not casual”, and wanted to add pictures of people having fun. Alex thought this was still possible, in spite of restrictions on gathering. Alex also noted the importance of striking a balance between a ‘personal’ feel and an ‘institutional’ feel; this is something Alex would bear in mind when considering a St John’s TikTok account.

Alex was **ratified** nem. con.

Disabilities Equality and Diversity Rep (1 vacancy to join Alice Hackney)

There were no candidates.

International Students Equality and Diversity Rep (1 vacancy to join Michal Karlubik)

There were no candidates.

Suspended Students Equality and Diversity Rep (1 vacancy to join Yvonne Clark-Lewis)

There were no candidates.

5. Other Ratifications

Trinity Term 2020 Audit

[Appendix 1](#) - Trinity Term 2020 Audit

Shuichi Chiba (TT20 Auditor) noted the low expenditure in Trinity Term, but praised Ben Robinson (Treasurer) for doing a good job. Shuichi noted that College had paid full the JCR's capitation for Trinity Term in full. Shuichi hoped officers would be creative in spending money going forward. Finally, Shuichi thanked Talav Bhimnathwala for being the other auditor.

6. Items for Discussion

Meet the JCR Committee

Present members of the JCR Committee introduced themselves and their role on the JCR Committee.

Phil Fernandes (President) said the role of President was very varied, and included liaising with College and running the JCR generally.

Zara Hussain (Vice President) said their role mainly involved running Freshers' Week and the Room Ballot, although they also attend college committee meetings.

Lachlann Hinley (Secretary) said their role involved facilitating meetings, taking minutes and reading the JCR Constitution.

Ben Robinson (Treasurer) said they looked after the JCR's money and reimbursing officers. They also usually run the punt club, but the pandemic meant it was running at present.

Suzanne Kapelus (Welfare Officer) said they, along with Grace Goodier and Maksim Richards, had made a poster explaining what they do. The job of Welfare Officer involves running drop-in sessions, where anyone can come and talk about welfare, as well as running schemes for distributing sexual health products and contraception. They are also the first point of contact to communicate welfare matters with College.

Ava Mitchell (Women's Officer) said they ran women's lunches, and although Coronavirus means events will be different this term, there will hopefully be virtual women's lunches with alumni this term. Ava also runs the sanitary product scheme.

Wil Anderson (Domestic Officer) said they, along with Benny Clinch, took care of the domestic side of the JCR, including running guest dinners (suspended this term) and the air bed scheme (suspended). The Domestic Officers are planning different events to make up for the lack of guest dinners later in the term.

Bridget Stuart (Environment and Ethics Officer) said they tried to make the College more environmentally friendly, as well as providing outreach and information about the environment.

Ankit Kapoor (Access and Admissions) said that their main role related to the 'alternative prospectus', which involves collaborating with other students to put together a document that shows the best of St John's. Ankit thanked Den De Barros for helping with the art, but was looking for people doing science subjects to get in touch.

Other Officers include the Entz Officers, who run events and bops, and the Equality and Diversity Officer who promotes equality and diversity.

COVID-19 update (Phil Fernandes, JCR President)

Phil Fernandes (President) said they'd met with Maggie Snowling (College President), Tim Verdon (Home Bursar) and Matthew Nichols (Senior Tutor) over the summer to discuss the College's response to COVID-19. Phil outlined some current developments and invited feedback.

Communication

- College had been poor at communicating effectively with students during the summer, but Phil said Maggie Snowling had undertaken to send a weekly update this term. This should make
- Phil would be happy to communicate people's concerns to College on their behalf. Additionally, Phil noted that College had set up [an online form](#) to allow people to give feedback on College's response.
- Zara Hussain (Vice President) noted that the form did not allow anonymous feedback, which could dissuade some people from expressing themselves fully. Phil had given feedback on the form to the Senior Dean.

Kitchens

- Initially College planned to close every kitchen, except those in Museum Road. Phil had persuaded them to abandon these plans and, at present, only the kitchens in the Beehive are closed.
- Phil was also working with College to try and give everyone access to microwaves, although this could take time to come to fruition.

Library

- College had launched a booking system for using the library and study centre. Phil was concerned about the lack of spaces, with only 17 slots
- College had justified closing most of the reading rooms in the main library on the basis of 'security', not COVID restrictions. This did not make sense to Phil, but Milo Mallaby (Academic Affairs Officer) was working on getting more spaces made available.
- Suzanne Kapelus added that, from experience, the library seemed under-utilised, even with limited slots. Suzanne suggested that people would need to show demand for the library for more slots to be made available.
- Noam Rosenbaum noted the negative mental effects of working in the same area as you sleep; Noam suggested this would be an argument for expanding the provision of study space in College.

Gym, Bar and TV Room

- The gym was operational, although requires advanced booking and has very limited capacity. Felix Stocker (Sports Rep) was working to try and get the gym capacity extended.
- The bar had opened with a marquee in TW. Although the TV Room and Games Room were currently shut, Phil planned to conduct a COVID-19 risk assessment to enable them to be opened in the near future.

Gates and site access

- College has shut all gates, except the Dolphin Quad gate and TW turnstile (exit only). Phil said College has provided different rationales for closing the gates; recently, College have maintained it was to prevent large groups of people from

entering. Phil would work with Chris D'Urso (MCR President) to try and get more gates open. In particular, it was hoped that the Garden Quad automatic gate could be opened, which would seem safer than the high-contact turnstile.

- The refurbished porters' lodge is due to open in a couple of weeks. Phil was sceptical about it opening to schedule.

Rules

- Phil's first impression of College's visitors policy was that it was unnecessarily strict: going far beyond government's guidelines. Brasenose College have adopted a more lenient policy, but most colleges (including St John's) are sticking to guidelines prepared by the central University. Phil was working with other JCR and MCR presidents to try and get the central University to relax the guidelines.
- In terms of enforcement, Phil had stressed to College that people should not have to live in fear; Phil hoped that College would act with common sense. Phil was disappointed that College's disciplinary document suggested that they would be quick to escalate issues.

7. Any Other Business

a) The 'Thanks Phil' Motion

Proposer: Lachlann Hinley, Secretary

Seconded: Ben Robinson, Treasurer

This JCR notes that:

- a. Phil Fernandes was elected as JCR President in Michaelmas 2019. Usually, the JCR President makes sure the College knows the concerns of undergraduates; they also lead the JCR.
- b. Over the past six months, that job has been upended by the Coronavirus pandemic, which has brought many unforeseeable challenges to students at St John's. Phil has worked tirelessly to make sure student voices are heard by College.
- c. One example of Phil's hard work was getting the College to backtrack on their plans to close every single kitchen in College.
- d. There were no motions submitted for this JCR meeting. Motions allow the JCR to do things and come in different forms. Anyone can submit a motion at any time under 'any other business'.

This JCR believes that:

- e. The JCR should be thankful for the hard work of its President, who continues to try and get College to make life as easy as possible for students.

This JCR therefore resolves to:

- f. Give its massive thanks to Phil Fernandes for all the hard work he's done
[¶ Massive, inserted by Noam Rosenbaum's amendment]

There were no short factual questions or items for discussion. Zara Hussain (Vice President) asked Ben Robinson (Treasurer) if there was a way to further show the JCR's gratitude to Phil Fernandes. Ben Robinson (Treasurer) said they would investigate.

Noam Rosenbaum proposed an amendment to insert “Massive” at the start of clause f. The amendment was **accepted as friendly** by Lachlann Hinley (motion proposer).

Agreed (43 in favour, 1 against, 2 abstentions)

LGBTQ+ Stash (Den De Barros)

Den De Barros (LGBTQ+ E&D Rep) said they wanted to do a fundraiser for UK Black Pride, in collaboration with Naomi Reiter (LGBTQ+ E&D Rep) and Ethan Joseph (Ethnic Minorities E&D Rep). UK Black Pride is a grassroots movement, and the money raised would go to community outreach and their hardship fund.

Over the summer, the E&D Reps had designed a series of logos and would be grateful for expressions of interest via [an online form](#).