



St John's College Junior Common Room

Agenda - 4th Meeting, Michaelmas Term 2020
Friday 27th November 2020, via Zoom, 7.30 pm

The meeting was chaired by Alfred Dry, 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

Following an online ballot, all motions from the previous meeting had passed.

3. Reports from Officers, Reps and Committees

Written reports are available [here](#).

Verbal reports requested from:

- **Secretary** Lachlann Hinley

Lachlann has said that three new laptops had been obtained for the use of JCR members on a short term basis. The JCR had offered to pay for these laptops, but College did not appear to be willing to accept any payment.

- **Academic Affairs** Milo Mallaby

Milo has assisted Phil Fernandes (President) with surveying. Milo wished to thank Phil and the rest of the JCR Executive for their work over the year.

- **Discounts** Dara Sanwal was not present

- **Women's Officer** Ava Mitchell was not present

4. Positions Requiring Ratification

Termly Rep Re-Ratification

All Reps were re-ratified, except Alex Foster (Social Media Rep), who resigned, but would continue to live-tweet the meeting.

JCR Auditors MT20 (2 vacancies)

Shuichi Chiba expressed interest and noted they'd audited the accounts three times and enjoyed doing so. Shuichi Chiba was **ratified** nem. con.

JCR Meeting Chair HT20

Alfred Dry handed over the Chair to Lachlann Hinley (Secretary)

There were two candidates:

- Zara Hussain (Vice President) said they would soon no longer be Vice President. Zara said they'd "got the chairing bug" after having to Chair in Trinity Term. Zara didn't just want to be acting Chair, but wanted to be "the real Chair" with a "nice, chill vibe", "laughs but some order", and lots of attendees and lots of food and alcohol.
- Alfred Dry (current JCR Chair) said they had also caught the "chairing bug". Alfred said that they arrived thinking they knew how to Chair having had previous experience, but felt they had learnt a lot this term, become experienced and really enjoyed it. Alfred would especially like the opportunity to chair a meeting in-person, if that becomes possible.

Following an online ballot, Zara Hussain was **ratified** as JCR Meeting Chair for Hillary Term 2020 (full results available on request).

Lachlan Hinley handed over the Chair to Alfred Dry.

Charities Rep (1 vacancy to join Freya Allery)

Suzanne Kapelus (Welfare Officer) said they'd like to continue to be part of the JCR and said they thought the Charities Rep role was important. Suzanne was **ratified** nem. con.

Facilities Rep (1 vacancy)

Lachlann Hinley (Secretary) said they wanted to be Facilities Rep because they "couldn't let go". Lachlann added that facilities were very important and that it was important to try and ensure that as many JCR facilities were open as possible. Lachlann Hinley was **ratified** nem. con.

Oxford SU Rep (1 vacancy to join Korben Bailey)

Phil Fernandes (President) felt that the last few Oxford SU Student Councils had been the "highlight of my week". Phil believed that the JCR needed strong representation on the Student Council. Phil Fernandes was **ratified** nem. Con.

Social Media Rep (1 vacancy to join Issy Stephens)

Rachel Pindar wanted to create positivity among current JCR members and to help inspire potential students.

Alex Foster and Issy Stephens had proposed doing a "humans of St John's" feature on the JCR social media channels involving an interview with a different JCR

member each week to try and highlight the diversity and “entertaining nature” of JCR members. Rachel Pindar committed to continuing this project.

Rachel Pindar was **ratified** nem. con.

Class Equality and Diversity Rep (1 vacancy to join Dan Hubbard)

There were no candidates.

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

There were no candidates.

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

Noam Rosenbaum said they’d suspended last year and, while suspended, had not been contacted by the College. Noam thought that, although suspension takes many forms, it would be nice to find ways to keep in contact with suspended students, if they wish to be contacted. Noam was **ratified** nem. con.

5. Items for Discussion

Farewell (Phil Fernandes)

Phil Fernandes (President) congratulated everyone elected in the most recent committee elections, noting that the number of candidates increased, as did the number of freshers participating. Phil hoped that all candidates would stay involved with the JCR, especially after the exciting ideas expressed at hustings. Phil also thanked Joe Sisson (Returning Officer) for ensuring the election ran smoothly.

Phil said they'd not expected to run for JCR President in first year and hoped that, by becoming President, it highlighted that the JCR is accessible to all members, not just those who are already involved in the committee.

Hilary Term

Phil gave an overview of Hilary Term, noting the creation of the St Giles' Society for the Homeless, proposals for enlarged JCR social spaces as the start of Phil's "big project" and the divestment protest. Overall, Hilary had been a fairly standard term for the JCR.

Pandemic

Phil noted the transformation brought about by the Coronavirus pandemic. Recalling the College's rushed decision that gave members 72 hours to leave residence, Phil quickly concluded that the pandemic would dominate the JCR's work for the rest of the year.

Phil believed that the experience of Trinity Term away from College reminded people what they most value about College life. Noting the unfortunate cancellation of the College Ball, Phil was pleased that College agreed to provide full refunds, albeit only after a plea to the College Governing Body.

Despite the disruption, the pandemic had some positive benefits for the JCR:

- Card payments in the bar and hall had finally been introduced. This had been a long-term goal of successive JCR committees.
- Online Bod card top-up would be introduced shortly (according to College), which was also a long-term goal for the JCR.
- The process for College grants was now paperless.
- The JCR had introduced online voting, which had increased democratic engagement.

Phil also recalled the Trinity Term Extraordinary General Meeting, in which 100 JCR members attended to discuss motions relating to race and equality in Oxford.

Michaelmas Term

Despite the resumption of residence, Phil said Michaelmas was not a normal term for the JCR. Although pleased that College was persuaded to keep kitchens open, Phil was disappointed with the lack of progress in other areas; for example, the

gates, the restrictive VacRes scheme, and the pre-lockdown restrictions on mixing between households.

Ambitions

Phil encouraged the next committee to continue pointing out areas where college policy does more harm than good. Although pleased that College are gradually improving their communication with students, Phil said the next committee could continue to encourage better communication.

Concluding, Phil thanked Maksim Richards, Grace Goodier and Suzanne Kapelus (Welfare Officers) for their enthusiasm and creativity to adapt to the pandemic, Lachlann Hinley (Secretary) for coordinating move to online voting, and Zara Hussain (Vice President) for both successfully organising Freshers' Week during the pandemic and assisting Phil throughout the year. Phil ended by emphasising the importance of the JCR as a link between the student body and college, "giving us a voice when we need it most".

Thanks to Phil

Suzanne Kapelus (Welfare Officer) thanked Phil for their work and dedication to the JCR.

6. Motions

a) The “Get the JCR Cycling” Budget Reallocation Motion

Proposer: Ben Robinson, Treasurer and Bike Rep

Seconded: Phil Fernandes, President

[Appendix 2](#) - “Get the JCR Cycling” Appendix

This JCR notes that:

- a. The JCR has a bike scheme
- b. Currently, the JCR rents these bikes for 8 weeks at the start of every term
- c. Bike rental is typically one of the JCR’s biggest annual purchases
- d. A more cost-effective alternative would be to buy the bicycles to last several years
- e. College has already authorised spending on bikes (as per §9 of the JCR constitution)

This JCR believes that:

- f. Purchasing bicycles has a number of advantages over the current system of renting:
 - a. Having our own bikes would be more cost effective in the long term, even when costs associated with repairing and servicing the bikes are taken into account (see appendix)
 - b. We would be able to use the bikes year-round rather than just in term-time, allowing use of the bikes for those who stay in College over vac
- g. The JCR should find ways of spending its 2020 budget allocation which would otherwise end up in JCR reserves

This JCR therefore resolves to:

- h. Mandate the 2020 Treasurer to establish a “Bike Purchase” budget
- i. Set the initial value of the “Bike Purchase” budget to £3000 by making the following budget reductions:
 - a. Reduce the Arts/Themed Week budget by £1000
 - b. Reduce the Newspaper Subs budget by £1800
 - c. Reduce the Repairs budget by £200
- j. Mandate the 2021 Treasurer to carry forward the “Bike Purchase” allocation from the 2020 to the 2021 budget, thus increasing the total Budget Allocation for 2021 by £3000
- k. Allocate this budget item to the Bike Reps for use in 2021, who will use this budget to purchase ten new bikes and other necessary accessories, including lights and locks
- l. Add points h., j., and k. to JCR Standing Policy, under “Implementing Resolution”

Minutes: The JCR currently operates a bike scheme that allows members to borrow bikes for a short period of time. This scheme currently uses ten bikes rented termly and Ben Robinson (Treasurer and Bike Rep) said the motion would allow the JCR to purchase its own bikes instead, which would be more cost efficient.

Ben Robinson added that the JCR was currently “paying over the odds” for bike rental and, by purchasing bikes outright, the JCR could reduce annual costs from £3,000 to £600. More information was provided in the motion appendix.

One of the benefits of renting bikes is the provision of bike maintenance from the bike rental company. Ben Robinson assured the JCR, however, that fixing bikes was a task that many Bike Reps might find interesting. Also, at present, the bike rental company charges the JCR for any damage to the bikes and, if the Bike Reps were unable to fix the bikes on their own, they could still pay for repairs, whilst still reducing costs overall.

As this was a large-item purchase, Phil Fernandes (President) confirmed that the College had given permission as required by Article §9 of the JCR Constitution. Generally, the JCR had significantly underspend in 2020, meaning there was £14,000 remaining in the unrestricted budget; although some of this would likely be spent before the end of term, any remaining funds would usually go into the JCR Reserves.

In discussion, the following points were raised:

- There was concern about the added workload the motion would create for the Bike Reps and the potential to make the role less accessible. Ben Robinson responded by noting many Bike Reps would find the additional responsibilities of bike maintenance enjoyable and, in any case, maintenance could still be delegated to the bike firm.
- There were also concerns over the security of the bikes over the vacation. Ben Robinson said that part of the proposed funds would go towards buying better bike locks. Ben was also confident that the Kendrew bike rack was secure.

*The motion was **agreed** (58 in favour, 2 against, 8 abstentions)*

b) The “Jazz up the JCR!” Standing Policy Motion

Proposer: Phil Fernandes, President

Seconded: Emmet O’Leary, President-Elect

This JCR notes that:

- a. The JCR has a number of social spaces, namely the JCR Lounge, TV Room, Games Room, and DVD Room
- b. The JCR Lounge in particular is currently underused by students, being used primarily for printing rather than its intended purpose as a social space
- c. The 2020 JCR President has previously proposed moving the JCR Lounge to the P&L Rooms as spaces that are more conducive to socialising

This JCR believes that:

- d. Irrespective of any potential move of the JCR, current students would benefit from investment in current JCR social spaces
- e. Despite the restrictions on socialising currently imposed by the pandemic, spending on social spaces is still a worthwhile investment for the long-term benefit of JCR members
- f. The JCR should find ways of spending its 2020 budget allocation which would otherwise end up in JCR reserves

This JCR therefore resolves to:

- g. Mandate the 2020 Treasurer to establish a “Social Space Improvement” budget, transferring all remaining unrestricted budget allocation to this budget at the end of the JCR financial year (i.e. immediately before the 2021 budget is passed)
- h. Mandate the 2021 Treasurer to carry forward the “Social Space Improvement” budget from the 2020 to the 2021 budget, thus increasing the total Budget Allocation for 2021 by the amount unspent in 2020
- i. Allocate this budget item to the JCR General Committee for use in 2021, who will use this budget to make improvements to the JCR social spaces with the aim of increasing the appeal of these spaces for socialising
- j. Add points g., h., and i. to JCR Standing Policy, under “Implementing Resolution”

Minutes: The pandemic meant that the JCR’s spending in some areas was lower than expected; if money is left unspent, it is usually transferred to the JCR reserves, which remain in a healthy state. Phil Fernandes (President) had tried to think of ways to spend the remaining funds and thought that JCR social spaces could benefit from investment.

Although the pandemic has limited the potential to use the JCR’s social spaces for the time being, Phil and Emmet O’Leary (President-Elect) felt it made long-term sense to use the excess budget to improve them. The current JCR Facilities Budget often gets used to replace broken equipment, while the new funds would be used to add new items to the JCR social spaces. It would be up to the new committee to decide how exactly the money would be spent. Alex Foster asked Phil about plans to move the JCR to the Prestwich and Larkin Rooms. In response, Phil said that the pandemic had made this move unlikely for the foreseeable future and, in the meantime, it was worthwhile improving the current JCR spaces.

*The motion was **agreed** (66 in favour, 0 against, 2 abstentions)*

c) The “Women’s Reps and Women’s Network” Motion

Proposer: Issy Stephens

Seconded: Ava Mitchell

This JCR notes that:

- a. The women’s officer currently has two rep positions that help her with her job
- b. Issy is currently an unofficial JCR rep to the Women’s Network

This JCR believes that:

- c. This position may not be filled when Issy graduates
- d. In order for the women’s network to be useful to JCR members it needs to stay in touch with the JCR
- e. The women’s rep on its own is not a large enough workload to require two positions on the JCR and should instead be replaced by this role

This JCR therefore resolves to:

- f. Replace women’s reps with women’s network rep.
- g. Insert in Standing Order Table 2, Section 2, after part h, a new section “
- h. The Women’s Network Rep(s):
 - I. Assist the women’s officer as required
 - II. Attend quarterly Women’s Network meetings
 - III. Coordinate the yearly ‘Not the Milk Round’ event with the Women’s Network and with the Alumni office
 - IV. Be an admin on the Women’s Network Facebook page, and post anything relevant from the JCR women - including but not limited to sports results, individual achievements and JCR women’s news
- i. Mandate the Secretary to renumber and re-reference the Constitution accordingly.

Minutes: Issy Stephens

Ava is women’s officer; Ava has two Women’s Reps; they assist her, but their role is unclear. Issy Stephen represents the Women’s Network Reps.

Lachlann Hinley (Secretary) asked whether the current Women’s E&D Reps had been consulted about the motion, as it abolished their positions. Issy Stephens said they were unaware who the current Women’s E&D Reps were.

Lachlann Hinley suggested postponing discussion of the motion until the following meeting and expressed concern about abolishing a position without the people affected being present. Lachlann also worried that the motion would remove the Women’s Reps from being Equality & Diversity Rep, which had consequences for the structure of the Women’s Equality and Diversity Rep. Finally, Lachlann said that, because Article §23 of the JCR Constitution would require amendment, the motion was not able to pass until the first meeting next term, due to the requirement for Constitutional Motions to be ratified twice.

Issy Stephens said, regardless of whether the Women’s E&D Reps are abolished, they were keen for the Women’s Network Rep to be separate in the JCR Constitution. Issy was

worried if the Women's Network was added to the responsibilities of the current Women's E&D Reps, it wouldn't be taken seriously.

Sofia Henderson (Women's E&D Rep) joined the meeting and agreed that the current Women's E&D Reps were not high-commitment roles, but nonetheless added a valuable voice to the Equality & Diversity Sub-Committee. Sofia agreed that there could be more communication between the Women's Officer and Reps, but still believed the current position of Women's E&D Rep was valuable.

Phil Fernandes (President) asked about the current mechanism for filling the Women's Network role. Responding, Issy Stephens said that the current role was not "officially" on the JCR Committee and was filled relatively informally. Issy added that the Women's Network was a relatively new creation and had various Reps representing different communities of St John's women, including the JCR.

Zara Hussain (Vice President) said they were skeptical about some of the current Rep positions and the work required. Zara said it was helpful for positions to be obviously sign-posted to ensure people who sign-up know what they're responsible for. Lydia Ludlow added that it was helpful to separate Reps responsible for women's activism and services from a more career-focussed position.

Noam Rosenbaum asked whether it was better to suspend the discussion until next term, when a new motion could be brought. Lachlann Hinley agreed, but thought it was also useful to hear people's ideas, which could then feed into the new motion next term.

Jack Hatton suggested that a "visiting" position on the JCR Committee be created for the Women's Network position. Lachlann Hinley worried that would make understanding the Rep system more complex and add more peculiarities to the JCR Constitution. Lachlann said they'd probably oppose any further complexity being added to the Rep system.

Lachlann Hinley suggested making it JCR Standing Policy that the JCR ensures that a Women's Network Rep was always appointed, while leaving the position out of the main JCR Constitution. Lachlann compared the position with the Divestment JCR Rep, who represents the JCR on the Divestment Working Group, but is not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution. Lachlann was confident that, if it was JCR Standing Policy, the position would be filled.

Zara Hussain and Issy Stephens were worried that JCR Standing Policy was relatively short term, and wanted to ensure the position remained permanent.

The motion was not put

d) The “Making Films is Fun’ Financial Motion

Proposer: Gigi Williams

Seconded: Bridget Stuart

This JCR notes that:

- a. Making Films is expensive and St Johns has a history of supporting the arts.
- b. St John’s has heavily supported Student plays and films in the past, and gave £300 to the student play ‘The Ruling Class’ in 2019.
- c. St John’s traditionally does great stuff to support the arts.
- d. Other college JCRs, such as Balliol, St Hilda’s and Magdalen, have supported projects in the past; many more colleges widely support student-run endeavours.

This JCR believes that:

- e. Students shouldn’t be limited by finances to create artistic projects.
- f. The cost of hiring professional camera and sound equipment is a barrier to producing high quality films
- g. To hire 2 AKG C414 B-XLII microphones costs £210
- h. To hire a basic clip drone

This JCR therefore resolves to:

- i. Donate £500 to from the [Kendrew Arts Fund] to contribute towards the funding of the film
- j. Require the film to be shared on the JCR website and on relevant arts posts.
- k. [Mandate that the project be conducted in a COVID-secure manner, as per the government guidelines on performing arts]

Gigi Williams and Charlie Shan had done lots of arts projects for St John’s; for example, over the summer, they had run the Oxford Music Collective, which arranged livestreams. Gigi said they wanted to end their finals with an “arty bang” by making a short film, which is expensive. As the equipment required is not available through the Oxford University Film Foundation or the JCR, it will need to be rented separately. £500 will enable the renting of microphones and a small drone (to film over a lake), which partially covers costs of the project. The film would be a modern retelling of the myth of Sisyphus.

Ben Robinson (Treasurer) said the Financial Motions Budget currently contains £560, although this would be re-allocated to the social space fund if the previous motion was agreed. Zara Hussain (Vice President) asked why the funding did not come from the Kendrew Arts Fund and Emmet O’Leary said that there was in excess of £3,000 remaining in the Kendrew Arts Fund, although this reset every academic year.

Lachlann Hinley (Secretary) said there had also been an underspend from the Kendrew Arts Fund. Given the Kendrew Arts Fund is restricted to arts projects, Lachlann said it is the usual policy of the JCR to use KAF first, then fund any other projects (if KAF runs out) using the Financial Motions Budget. Lachlann proposed a friendly amendment to use the Kendrew Arts Fund instead of the Financial Motions Budget, which was accepted.

Noam Rosenbaum asked whether the Faculty of Music’s equipment had been considered as a more cost-effective alternative, although noted this would require investment in

insurance. Gigi Williams said that the Faculty of Music had been unresponsive and had introduced policies to restrict the usage of space.

Tom Ritter asked about the practicalities of filming during the Coronavirus pandemic. Tom asked whether the JCR could have a comprehensive risk plan and assessment to show the mitigating steps taken to reduce risk. Tom wanted to ensure the JCR was covered for any liabilities arising from the project, and thought it would be good practice for the JCR to insist on a risk plan for financial motions.

In response, Emmet O’Leary was concerned about setting a precedent for the JCR assuming the risks of JCR funded projects. Lachlann Hinley (Secretary) added that, although the JCR had some obligations to ensure the financial viability of projects under charities law, the JCR was not in any way vicariously liable for the activities of funded projects, so long as they aligned with the JCR’s purposes.

Tom Ritter encouraged the JCR, as a matter of policy, to ensure the projects it funded aligned with the beliefs of the JCR; for example, a belief in promoting COVID-secure working environments. In response, Lachlann Hinley noted, following amendment, the money would come from College and JCR had simply been delegated responsibility to fund arts projects.

Gigi William noted legal frameworks existed to ensure activities were COVID-secure and committed to following the law. In addition, Zara Hussain thought it was inappropriate to require every motion to mandate projects to follow the law explicitly, given this should be a matter of trust between the JCR and the project receiving funding.

Tom Ritter proposed a friendly amendment to add a new clause k: “Mandate that the project be conducted in a COVID-secure manner, as per the government guidelines on performing arts”. This was accepted by Gigi Williams.

Tom Ritter also asked for more information about the costs; Tom noted that £500 was a significant portion of the available budget. In response, Gigi Williams said that the project had not been fully costed, due to a compressed timescale. Gigi noted preliminary costings predicted expenses above £500 and, given at least four JCR members were involved, believed £500 was a reasonable request.

*The motion was **agreed** (39 in favour, 12 against, 17 abstentions).*

7. Any other business

Thanks to Present Committee

Emmet O'Leary (President-Elect) wanted to note their thanks to the current JCR Committee for the hard work they'd done over the year.

Staff Gifts

Zara Hussain (Vice President) said that, along with Phil Fernandes (President), they were planning to distribute gifts to staff on Wednesday 2nd December. Zara asked for people to assist with this; for example, having an hour slot responsible for distributing gifts.

Issy Stephens (Social Media Rep) took a photo of the Zoom meeting. The meeting then ended.