



# St John's College Junior Common Room

Minutes - 2nd Meeting, Trinity Term 2020  
Sunday 11 May 2020, via Zoom, 7.30pm

The meeting began at 7.35 pm, with Zara Hussain (Vice President) chairing and Lachlann Hinley (Secretary) as minute taker. Zara introduced the format of the meeting and noted that questions could be asked via the chat.

## 1. Minutes from the Previous Meeting

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

## 2. Matters Arising from the Minutes

### Online Ballot

Zara Hussain (Chair) said that two motions from the previous meeting had been put to an online ballot. These two motions were b) The "There's a hole in my Punt Club Budget!" Standing Policy Motion and c) The "Get Suspended Students Representation" Constitutional Motion. There were 47 votes. Both motions had been agreed.

### Coronavirus Constitutional Changes

Tom Ritter asked whether the "Keep the JCR Zooming Along" Constitutional Motion required ratification. Lachlann Hinley (Secretary) said it did not, given it solely amended the Standing Orders. Lachlann said that the Constitution only required Constitutional Motions to be ratified if they altered the Constitution's Articles.

### Quorum

Tom Ritter asked how quorum had been counted at the previous meeting. Phil Fernandes (President) said that the Chair would be deeming quorum as the number of participants in the online ballot; this was the practice followed by other JCR's that had implemented online ballots and made sense due to the impact of the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. This approach appreciated that the purpose of quorum was to ensure the JCR maintained scrutiny and engagement, both of which were achieved through members reading the minutes

Tom asked whether Phil's interpretation of quorum had been passed as part of the Constitutional changes. Lachlann said that, while the previous meeting's constitutional changes did not amend procedures relating to quorum, Standing Order Table One §3 puts the onus on members to raise any objections they may

have with quorum. Lachlann asked for understanding and leeway on the issue of quorum, given the extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic. Tom said that they were happy leaving quorum to the discretion of the chair subject to challenge in the event that a motion was felt to need more scrutiny.

### **3. Reports from Officers, Reps and Committees**

No Officer, Rep or Committee decided to give a verbal report.

### **4a. Constitutional Motions Requiring Ratification**

#### **i) The “Get Suspended Students Representation” Constitutional Motion**

Proposer: Jahnvi Kalayil, E&D Officer

Seconded: Phil Fernandes, President

The motion was **ratified nem. con.**

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### **4b. Ratifications**

#### **Returning Officer (1 vacancy)**

No one stood for the position. Zara Hussain (Vice President) remained Acting Returning Officer.

#### **Chair for TT20 (1 vacancy)**

No one stood for the position. Zara Hussain (Vice President) remained the meeting chair.

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

No one stood for the position.

#### **Suspended Students Equality and Diversity Rep (2 vacancies)**

No one stood for the position.

#### **Facilities Rep (1 vacancy)**

No one stood for the position.

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

Amelia Holt stood for the position. Amelia said they would be serving as an Oxford SU Sab Officer for 2020/21 and felt they could get valuable experience from being SU Rep. Amelia was **ratified nem. con.**

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## **5. Items for Discussion**

### **a) Moving the JCR to the P&L rooms - update (Phil Fernandes)**

Phil Fernandes (President) said that the idea of using the Prestwich and Larkin Rooms as a JCR space had been raised in Hillary and, following a successful consultation, it had been raised with the College Domestic Committee. College seemed generally favourable of the solution but had some concerns on the access-side, given the present use of the P&L Rooms for events.

Issy Stephens asked for the rationale for moving the JCR to the P&L Rooms to be set out. Phil said that there was a general belief that the current JCR space was inadequate and that the P&L Rooms seemed better suited, given they were brighter and more of a “natural social space”. Phil said that their preference would be for a purpose-built JCR space; however, this was unlikely to be possible in the near future. College had a long-term plan to join up the ground floor of TW, including the P&L Rooms, although given the suspension in College development owing to the Coronavirus pandemic, this too looked unlikely.

Nia Evans asked whether the current JCR could be upgraded as an alternate proposal. Phil said that the preference would be for College to authorise use of the P&L Rooms, although refurbishment of the existing space could be a backup plan. Phil noted that the JCR was expected to spend less this term owing to the pandemic and these savings could be spent on refurbishments. Phil said they would wait for some more clarity from College over their willingness to support a move to the P&L Rooms.

Marco Fabus (former Access and Admissions Officer) asked about College’s current position, given College used the P&L rooms for access events. Phil said that College was increasingly moving access events to the Mark Bedingham Seminar Room and College’s main concerns were around other events such as ‘arts and crafts study days’. Phil said, despite concerns, College were generally supportive of centralising and expanding the JCR’s space.

Issy Stephens said that there could be limitations to the P&L Rooms serving as a TV Room, given the size of the windows. Phil said that, as a first step, the current TV Room would be retained.

Tom Ritter asked where drinks would be held for Guest Dinners and asked whether Phil had consulted with the Domestic Officers. Tom also asked if adding sofas to the P&L Rooms would limit its use for subject drinks and related events. Phil confirmed that the Domestic Officers had been consulted; it had been agreed to support a move of Guest Dinner drinks to Garden Quad, given the P&L Rooms were often cramped on Guest Dinner nights. In terms of other events, Phil said that part of the proposal suggested that the North Lecture Room could be used for events currently held in the P&L Rooms.

### **b) Written reports (Lachlann Hinley)**

Lachlann Hinley (Secretary) said that the submission of written reports had declined since the Coronavirus pandemic. At present, every Officer is required to submit a written report in advance of a JCR meeting. Lachlann asked whether written reports were useful or whether there was an appetite for an alternate mode of giving updates about the JCR.

Tom Ritter (former Entz Officer) supported written reports, adding they kept Officers accountable. Tom noted that there were only four Officers at the JCR meeting and, without written reports, it was hard for members to be assured of the work of Officers. Tom suggested, in the absence of written reports, alternate solutions could involve Officers joining the meeting or sending a video message.

Phil Fernandes (President) agreed with Tom, although said that — for Trinity — the reality meant Officers were doing less. Phil nonetheless supported the continuance of written reports to give Officers the opportunity to provide updates.

Lachlann said, in light of feedback, Officer reports would continue in the traditional form. Lachlann apologised for there being no written reports for the present meeting.

## 6. Charities Motions

### **a) The “Support the Reading List Foundation!” Charities Motion**

Proposer: Lydia Ludlow

Seconded: Sofia Henderson

#### **This JCR notes that:**

- a. Life for students from lower income households can involve constant financial pressure. 79% of low-income students in England have had to cut back on essentials due to financial pressures.
- b. Textbooks can be prohibitively expensive. Low-income students are often faced with buying the textbooks they can afford rather than the ones they need for the course.
- c. The Reading List Foundation funds scholarships for students from low-income families studying at UK universities, where they buy the essential textbooks for a student’s course.

#### **This JCR believes that:**

- d. The Reading List Foundation is a charity doing valuable work, and one that is particularly relevant to us as students.
- e. Recent events have exacerbated inequality among students; loss of library access highlights the importance of owning textbooks.
- f. Passing this motion will be enough to sponsor a student’s whole scholarship (£250) for a year. This means we will know the money is making a real difference.

#### **This JCR therefore resolves to:**

- g. Donate £250 to The Reading List Foundation.

**Agreed nem. con.**

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### **b) The LIV Village Charities Motion**

Proposer: Samuel Saunderson

Seconded: Leo Nasskau

#### **This JCR notes that:**

- a. This charity adopts a long-term foster care model, housing, educating and caring for over 200 children, with the aim of providing a stable home for children from very difficult backgrounds.
- b. LIV Village houses roughly 4-8 children in each house accompanied by a 'mother' who is a full-time carer.
- c. Every child receives education, largely from the on-site LIV Village school – the most recent matriculants (A-level equivalent) achieved a 100% pass rate.
- d. The Village commits to eco-friendly goals already using solar water heating systems in every home, boreholes for irrigation and rain tanks. It also aims to create a sewage purification plant and to become sustained on solar electricity.

#### **This JCR believes that:**

- e. LIV Village is an important cause because it provides long term stable homes for some of the most vulnerable children in South Africa, whilst educating them in such a way as to give them a brighter future.
- f. Money would likely go towards the school (equipment and wages), towards improving housing facilities (washing, cooking, cleaning etc.) or towards bringing in new staff so as to increase the village's capacity to look after children.

#### **This JCR therefore resolves to:**

- g. Give £300 to the LIV Village UK fundraising office.

Neither the proposer or seconder were present and the motion was moved to the end of the meeting per Standing Order Table One §45. The motion was then **agreed nem. con.**

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### **c) The "Kite Oxford-Nairobi" Charities Motion**

Proposer: Madeleine Leggett

Seconded: Gabriella Latham

#### **This JCR notes that:**

- a. Kite is a student-led, international development charity working in Kenya. It is run as a partnership between students at Oxford University and Nairobi universities.
- b. They have been forced to put their usual projects (such as a mentoring scheme for vulnerable children in Nairobi) on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- c. Instead, they are focusing on distributing essential supplies to the most vulnerable mentees and their families. These supplies include food, cleaning products, and re-usable sanitary pads.
- d. This is vitally important as many of the mentees' parents depend on casual work and will struggle to earn any income during the pandemic - especially as Nairobi is now on lockdown.

**This JCR believes that:**

- e. Kite has established strong links with many families in Kenya and is well-placed to distribute essential supplies. This would make a significant impact during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- f. A donation of £200 would help fund this project and ensure the students and their families have food, menstrual hygiene products, and soap.

**This JCR therefore resolves to:**

- g. Donate [£200] to Kite Oxford-Nairobi.

Neither the proposer or seconder were present and the motion was moved to the end of the meeting per Standing Order Table One §45. The motion was then **agreed nem. con.**

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**d) The 'Mind' Charities Motion**

Proposer: Nia Evans

Seconded: Aura Schonfeld

**This JCR notes that:**

- a. Mind offers support and reliable information to those experiencing a mental health problem
- b. An Infoline has been set up providing confidential help to those who call
- c. Mind aims to continuously raise awareness on Mental Health and aims to reduce the stigma associated with it, including making sure that mental health and physical health are treated equally by 2020
- d. Mind pledges to ensure organisations improve workplace wellbeing
- e. Mind aims to develop a new strategy for suicide and self-harm prevention for Wales.

**This JCR believes that:**

- f. Mind is an important charity with statistics showing 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem in any given year.
- g. The money donated will enable help and support to be provided through therapy, peer support and the call line.

**The JCR therefore resolves to:**

- h. Donate [£300] to Mind

**Agreed nem. con.**

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### **e) The “SolidariTee” Charities Motion**

Proposer: Aura Schonfeld

Seconded: Nia Evans

#### **This JCR notes that:**

- a. SolidariTee is the largest entirely student-run charity supporting the international assistance of refugees and asylum seekers
- b. The make-shift refugee camps scattered around Europe are severely over-crowded and dangerous with there being 25.9 million refugees in the world.
- c. The overcrowding and unsanitary conditions in overstretched refugee camps such as Moria, Lesbos, make them rife for the spread of COVID-19 whilst the refugees inside them are left without access to healthcare or even shelter to isolate in.

#### **This JCR believes that:**

- d. SolidariTee provides legal aid which minimises the risk of an individual who has a legitimate claim to asylum from being deported unjustly and brings family members, scattered across Europe, back together again.
- e. SolidariTee also helps to provide translation services to ensure the voices of the refugees can be heard.
- f. In response to the pandemic, SolidariTee is providing an emergency grant to the NGO Kitrinos Healthcare, which will work to provide medical care in Moria, Lesbos, which is one of the most unsanitary and densely populated refugee camps in Greece.
- g. Supporting initiatives to protect those who are both legally and physically unassisted by much of the work that governments are doing to tackle the pandemic is essential in these dangerous times

#### **This JCR therefore resolves to:**

- h. Donate [300] to SolidariTee

**Agreed nem. con.**

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### **f) The GiveDirectly Charities Motion**

Proposer: Ava Mitchell

Seconded: Maya Humphries

#### **This JCR notes that:**

- a. GiveDirectly is a charity that distributes cash directly to very poor households in developing countries
- b. It is one of GiveWell’s top charities as it has a strong track record, ensures cash is well targeted and reaches the intended targets, is highly transparent and has significant room for extra funding
- c. It has been estimated by GiveWell that GiveDirectly could productively use several hundred million more dollars than they are currently expected to receive.

**This JCR believes that:**

- d. GiveDirectly is a highly effective charity that helps the very poorest in society
- e. It gives these people the agency to choose how to spend their money and how it will benefit them most

**This JCR therefore resolves to:**

- f. Donate £300 to GiveDirectly

**Agreed nem. con.**

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**g) The Living Goods Charities Motion**

Proposer: Ava Mitchell

Seconded: Megan James

**This JCR notes that:**

- a. Living Goods is a charity that supports a network of community health promoters in Uganda
- b. They sell health products door-to-door and provide basic health counselling in sub-Saharan Africa
- c. It is one of GiveWell's standout charities and a recent randomised controlled trial measured a 27% reduction in childhood mortality as a result of its programs

**This JCR believes that:**

- d. Living Goods is a highly effective charity that helps to improve the health and reduce the mortality of its beneficiaries

**This JCR therefore resolves to:**

- e. Donate £300 to Living Goods

**Agreed nem. con.**

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## 7. Other Motions

**a) The "We Need More Scots at Oxford!!!" Financial Motion**

Proposer: Grace Molloy

Seconded: Naomi Reiter

**This JCR notes that:**

- a. The Clydeside Project is a free online mentoring programme for Oxbridge applicants at comprehensive schools in Scotland with a focus on those in disadvantaged communities. It has previously mentored applicants from across Scotland, from Orkney to the Broders. One school in Glasgow



mentored through Clydeside received 3 offers from Oxford this year despite no previous Oxbridge acceptances.

- b. Scotland is hugely underrepresented at Oxford, with 13 public schools (Eton, Winchester etc.) each sending more students here than every Scottish state school combined (of over 200!).
- c. The Clydeside Project does not meet the required £5000 income threshold to be a registered charity so cannot apply for funding through a charities motion.

**This JCR believes that:**

- d. The Clydeside Project wants to expand its mentoring scheme for 2020. With schools closed it is now planning to offer mentoring immediately over Bramble (an online video tutoring site).
- e. The Project has mostly been self-funded up until now. It has a lot of overheads: website/IT services, printing literature to advertise effectively to schools, doing 'inreach' work such as running events in Oxford and paying for safeguarding checks for mentors.
- f. It is run entirely by student volunteers at Oxford and is an access initiative that members of the JCR could be involved with.
- g. The Clydeside Project is an access initiative that has the potential, through encouraging applications to Oxford from underrepresented groups, to benefit the JCR through creating a more diverse student body.

**This JCR therefore resolves to:**

- h. Give £300 to The Clydeside Project from the Financial Motions Budget
- i. Require a written report from the Proposer, to be uploaded to the News section on the JCR website

Grace Molloy said that Scotland was the most underrepresented region of the UK at Oxford. This is because many students at Scottish state schools don't apply and were dissuaded by the fees. Additionally, the entrance tests for Oxford often proved to be a barrier for Scottish students, given they often rely on the A-level syllabus, which Scottish students don't study.

Grace said that the money would help fund the Clydeside Project's mentoring scheme. The mentoring scheme provides opportunities for Oxford students to mentor Scottish students. Costs include DBS checks for mentors.

***Agreed (34 in favour, 2 against, 2 abstentions)***

## 8. Any Other Business

### Charities Budget

Maddie Leggett said they'd submitted a Charities Motion in Hilary and were unsure whether it had ever been paid. In response, Phil Fernandes (President) said that College had yet to give the JCR the charity levy revenue from Hilary or Trinity and this left the Charities Budget empty. Phil said they'd investigate the issue further.

Nia Evans (Charities Rep) asked how much charities would be getting this term. In response, Phil said that this was hard to predict given the absence of a Charities Budget and uncertainty around the 'scale-down' mechanism.

Ava Mitchell (Women's Officer) asked what happened with unspent funds in the Charities Budget. In response, Phil said that there was usually no unspent funds in the Charities Budget and, in fact, Charities Motion allocations usually had to be 'scaled-down' to match funding levels. In the event there were unspent funds, these would be rolled over.

### Motion Deadlines

Tom Ritter said they'd submitted a Charities Motion earlier in the day. The motion would have donated money to a fundraiser organised by the Tingewick Society. This motion had not been accepted as it had been submitted after the deadline. Tom asked whether the motion deadline could be made more explicit.

In response, Lachlann Hinley (Secretary) said the Constitution only applied a 48 hour deadline to certain types of motions. Generally, a 48 hour deadline was in place for Constitutional Motions and motions that couldn't be "undone". Lachlann said the deadline was advertised clearly in the email but that they'd investigate ways to make the deadline more explicit. Phil Fernandes (President) added that the Charities Reps are supposed to advertise details about the Charities Meeting on Facebook.

Tom asked if there was any way for the proposed Charities Motion to be considered despite the existence of the deadline.

In response, Lachlann said that the basis for the deadline was to allow members notice of what charities were receiving money. If Tom's motion was passed without being on the agenda, it would not be validly passed and this could present problems as the Treasurer would not be legally able to make any payment to the charity.

Tom asked whether a Financial Motion could be used to allocate funds for solely operational elements of the Tingewick fundraiser.

In response, Lachlann said that Financial Motions could only let the JCR spend funds in a way that was in line with the JCR's charitable objects. The JCR had to evaluate Financial Motions on a case-by-case basis to determine whether they meet this criteria.

Tom said that, under the meeting procedure, a JCR meeting technically did end until all votes were received. Tom asked whether — if he objected to a Charities Motion

and it was sent out for voting — the delayed end of the meeting would give him leeway to submit his charities motion, thereby meeting the 48 hour deadline

Lachlann noted that all Charities Motions submitted for the current meeting had passed and that, in any case, the submission deadline is deemed in relation to the 'start' of the meeting. While the President could issue an interpretation, Lachlann said it would be difficult to interpret the meaning of 'meeting' as being the end of the meeting.

Tom asked whether, if they had objected to quorum at the beginning of the meeting, the meeting would not have begun, thereby allowing a delay in the deadline for motion submissions.

Phil Fernandes (President) explained that, for online meetings, quorum was being deemed to be the number of members engaging in the online ballot. Phil further added that, if a member felt quorum was absent, the onus was on the member to raise the matter with the chair. Lachlann said that the meeting had begun and there were no formal objections to quorum, although in any event the absence of a quorum may not – in the language of the Constitution — prevent the meeting from *beginning* only prevent the meeting from *continuing*.

Phil asked whether an Emergency Charities Motion could be used. Lachlann said that, at present, Emergency Charities Motions could only be used to allocate money in cases when the 'Disaster Emergency Committee' declared an emergency. The Disaster Emergency Committee was a group of UK Charities and usually only declare an emergency exists for events such as natural disasters.

Tom asked whether the guidance on meeting could be made more clearer and specify the deadlines. Lachlann (Secretary) said that the deadline had been emphasised in the meeting in the 'call for motions' email, although they would explore ways to further emphasise the motion deadline.

## **Photo**

Issy Stephens (Social Media Rep) said that a former member of the JCR (John Gillibrand) had been following the JCR's twitter feed enthusiastically. A photograph was taken to [post on the JCR's Twitter account](#).

*The meeting ended at 9.40 pm.*