

JCR Meeting (Closed) 17.01.15 Minutes

1. Apologies

Apologies: Max (Ents Officer)

Unapologetic absences: Clinton (Publications Officer) and Joe (LGBT+ Officer).
http://youtu.be/ZSM3w1v-A_Y?t=49s

2. Renovation of the JCR

The JCR renovations are for the most part funded by the JMA, but we have also been generously given £500 by the Fitzwilliam Society. The previous committee suggested spending this on a projector, table football, a sports board, wall decorations and an Oxford Road barbeque.

The current committee agree with these.

There is also some uncertainty as to whether the quiz machine is used, or whether it's working this year. Or whether anyone cares.

Actions to be taken: Alex will discuss this at the development meeting he has with Dr Helen Bettinson (Development Director) on Monday 19th. He will report back to the next full committee meeting. Will also check the quiz machine.

3. Vacation Stay

College have reported a problem where people want to stay over the vacation but can't afford the rent. This seems to be a particular problem with students who have a high-ish household income but low personal income. One proposed solution is to reduce the Fitz bursary, and use it for supporting this purpose. The committee generally either thinks this is a good idea or isn't sure and the general consensus is that we need more information.

It was queried how many people currently receive the bursary. We don't know, but a lot, and predominantly international students who aren't eligible for the EU bursary.

Another issue is the process by which this money would be distributed. Would people have to present their finances to the Senior Tutor? Alex will discuss it with Paul Chirico and try to get a full proposal to be presented at a later meeting.

A third problem is that people who prolong their contract are moved to other rooms due to conferences. This is not a problem if they ask for a longer contract at the beginning of the year. Conferences get booked a long time in advance, so it's hard for college to organise them around people.

Actions to be taken: Alex will discuss this with Paul Chirico at some point during the week and try to get more information to be presented at the next full JCR meeting.

4. Porters' Lodge

Normally the porters' lodge sells merchandise, whereas the library sells academic goods (and the café may soon be selling Lemsip).

But perhaps stationery and tissues could be sold at the porters' lodge as well, so that they're still purchasable when the librarians are out. Damiano has briefly discussed this with the

porters, and they didn't seem averse, but it was a very informal conversation. More importantly, **we should let people know what they can buy from the library.** (Tissues?!)

Another popular idea is moving the vending machine to the JCR. This will have to come after the rest of the renovations.

Actions to be taken: Eleanor to ask Christine for a full list of merchandise available in the library as well as the prices. This will go on the website. Also to ask both Christine and the Porters if some supplies could be moved to the Porters Lodge so they are always available.

The moving of the vending machine will be pitched to College after the JCR is rule renovated.

5. Minimum Room Standards

People don't always know what they should expect from their rooms: we need to come up with a list of minimum standards to propose to maintenance. A number of problems were raised and a number of suggestions were made. We also need to check which things fall under the remit of Domestic and which are Maintenance. As for décor, Estates Committee are going to crack down on sticking things on walls etc. once the rooms have been renovated. Hopefully we can then get bigger noticeboards (and rooms that don't currently have them can get them). Questions were raised over the value of the linen service. In addition, there was a call for redistributive socket justice. In the short term however, the answer is asking prospective students to bring mains extension cables, a common feature amongst all Colleges.

Damiano however pointed out that we shouldn't get too disheartened, as the problems mentioned aren't widespread. The committee agreed.

Issues discussed with maintenance: They ignore tickets. Domestic: "They just lie". Going to maintenance in person tends to be more effective, but this is not universalisable, so Kant would disapprove (philosophy banter).

Actions to be undertaken:

We need to check which things fall under the remit of Domestic and which under Maintenance and address our complaints to the relevant department.

Damiano will make a document so we can compile a list of minimum room standards to be presented to them.

The JCR will issue advice on the website to Freshers about the importance of bringing mains extension cables.

The website will contain forms where people can complain if having a problem with maintenance/domestic.

6. JCR 2015 Budget Assessment

Treasurer - "Umm, yeah, it's looking good." Generally seems fairly reasonable, except the Goat Post – the committee feels the suggested value is rather excessive, particularly if it's no longer being printed. But the JMA wishes to ensure value for money, so people shouldn't expect to get everything they ask for. Also, there's a mid-year budget review, so we can potentially top ourselves up if we need a bit extra (although that doesn't mean we should throw money around thoughtlessly).

Actions to be undertaken:

Max and Alex need to prepare the budget to be presented to the Executive Trustees on February 10th.

7. Environmental Policy Petition

A student-run organisation has drawn up a document with environmental promises for the university, e.g. being carbon neutral by 2015. We have been asked to sign the petition as a JCR.

Actions to be taken: Tessa will post it on the Facebook page, and people can opt out by commenting on the post. We'll go with the majority vote.

8. International Storage

Last year college provided international storage for free. They have now proposed constructing new facilities on Wychfield Lane but propose to charge international students around £12.76 a week. Full proposals can be found on the JCR website as for the arguments for and against.

Sebastian sent a survey round and of 80 international students who responded, only 2 agreed that they would use this service.

The Domestic Bursar says we could use an external firm instead which might be cheaper.

International students have supported the continued use of the squash courts as in the summer. College is unlikely to support this as one of the courts is being turned into a swanky new gym, funded by a generous benefactor, so they'll want the other courts to stay free (because of their high quality they're used by non-college people, such as the university team, as grads). Sebastian asked other colleges about their storage provisions, and all five who answered said theirs was free. It seems unlikely that there's nowhere in college it could be put for free – we should come before conferences!

The JCR ultimately agreed that International Students pay enough in fees etc. and storage should continue to be free.

Actions to be taken: Alex will express these views to the General Purposes Committee and the Domestic Bursar and will keep everyone updated.

9. Term Card

Damiano wants to sort out a plan of who's helping with which events over the term, which will be done using a document where sub-comms can fill in more information on their events. We need to make sure the burden is shared. Ents are keeping tabs on who's been helping. Volunteer to help – makes it less awkward.

Actions to be taken: The term-card should continue to be updated and all committees should let the JCR know far in advance when things are required.

The burden for set-up/set-down needs to be shared and the Ents rota will make this so. If anyone feels aggrieved just say!

10. JCR Website

Oooh, pretty! Looking good. We won't launch it till it's full of useful stuff. Should be a) useful for current students and b) attractive to prospective students. We will post a link on Facebook, and people should look at their pages and comment with what they want. This should be done enthusiastically, not dismissively!

Actions to be taken: Tom will post a link on Facebook, and people should look at their pages and comment with what they want. This should be done enthusiastically, not dismissively! The aim is to launch by the end of term.

11. Freedom of Information Requests

If you get a freedom of information request, draft a response, send it to Alex and Damiano and they'll look over it and send it to Paul Chirico. We need to be careful with any media relating to the college, as a certain video has had a rather negative effect on our image. Amelia is also now going to hold a pool offer holder's open day which should help people see how fabulous we are. A slightly less cringey 'Fitz Rocked My World'-esque video would also be fab.

Actions to be taken:

Keeping an awareness about what media we publish to the wider community and caution when it comes to FOI requests.

Target and Access should enlist the help of students to make an updated 'Fitz Rocked My World' video.

12. CUSU

Alex has told Helen (CUSU president) that we're planning to hold a disaffiliation debate and has sent her Robinson's report to be updated. We will then vote on whether to hold a general meeting on CUSU.

Alex and Damiano have both received the gloriously self-involved document that is the CUSU agenda. It tends to be all CUSU CUSU CUSU but one interesting motion was the End Week Five Blues initiative, which suggests we make a stand and leave the fellows quaking in their boots by not handing work in during week five (although still doing the work).

Shockingly, no one thinks this is a good idea. We acknowledge that there is a problem, but really CUSU should focus on improving mental health facilities rather than trying to scrap week five. An alternative is to extend term and have a reading week in the middle, which prima facie sounds good, but let's face it they'll use the opportunity to give us more work, and anyway it'd be so much more expensive all round if we had an extra week of term, so basically nah m8.

Damiano wants someone to compile a list of all bursaries and scholarships available to Fitz students – Target and Access have a document that might be a good starting point – and Maximilian has volunteered to do this. That's the only useful thing that came up at CUSU. Damiano was so angry at the ridiculousness of the meeting (an impassioned call to arms that lacked any substance whatsoever) that he wrote an angry article about it during the meeting.

Actions to be taken:

Alex will send another email to Helen reminding her that the report needs to be filled.

Fitz' opinion will be conveyed at the CUSU meeting.

Maximillian to compile a list of all bursaries and scholarships available to Fitz students.

13. JCR 2015 Stash

Alex's proposal was widely trashed, which provided a good incentive for people to suggest their own ideas. Several camps sprung up, including the hoodies vs. the crew necks, and the maroons, vs. the burgundies. The decision will be made by which post receives the most likes on Facebook, so don't like for a joke. What's the actual point of the stash? Partly for identification purposes, but mostly for flauntation purposes.

Actions to be taken:

People to suggest options for stash and the Facebook group and vote for what option they like.

14. Any Other Business

- Some sort of subversion went on but basically there'll be a folder-ful GoogleDoc where we can keep tabs on our progress over the year. Damiano to do.
- Welfare fliers were handed out to be put up in corridors.
- Joe's name has been put forward as JCR photographer; Sebastian also has a good camera and might be up for it if Joe isn't.
- People should update the Doodle poll so meetings can be scheduled.
- Allan asks that people check food bank stuff when they're putting up fliers.