



JCSU OGM LENT 2020

Minutes of an OGM of the JCSU held on Thursday 13th February in the Webb Library.

Executive Members Present: the President (Aurelio Petrucci), the Vice-President (Octavia Rooks), the Treasurer (Will Davison), the Secretary (Sameer Aggarwal), the Ents Officers (Ollie Dennis and Matt Griffiths), the Male Welfare Officer (Tom Cay), the Female Welfare Officer (Honor Abery), the Women's and Non-Binary Officer (Jess Molyneux), the Environmental & Ethical Affairs Officer (Zak Coleman), the Freshers' Officer (Libby Bryant), the Ethnic & Religious Minorities Officer (Bobby Mugo), the Mental Health & Disabilities Officer (Sophie Baldwin) and the Communications Officer (Jacob Powell).

Executive Members Absent: the Access Officer (Cormac Parks), the LGBT+ Officer (Ben Gibson), the International Students' Officer (Satya Amin) and the Services Officer (Heather Jones).

Chair: Jess Molyneux

The meeting opened at 18:39.

MINUTES

Disclaimer: *These minutes aim to capture the spirit of what was said – they provide an official record of the meeting, not a verbatim transcript.*

1. Executive Reports of Actions Since Last OGM

AP: Worked on getting College to take action on the climate with ZC. Pushed on Living Wage Campaign. New washing machines incoming in Chapel Court. Behavioural policy to be changed to reduce instances of fine, KFC reform on the cards. Working to change Formal dress code.

OR: Organised Halfway Hall and attended CUSU Council

WD: Updated and modernised reimbursements into Google Form system. Liaising

SAg: Taking minutes of meetings. Managing bookings of the JCR, which are now viewable on the website.

OD/MG: Elected. Put on silent disco, and very popular ceilidh.

TC/HA: Been running welfare cake and drop-ins. Organised

JM: Been organising Week of the Woman. Increased Women's Hours at the gym. Reviewing sexual misconduct policy.

ZC: Sending reminders on composting. Lobbying on divestment and climate emergency.

LB: Organised Refreshers' Week.

SB: Setting up a prescription fund and working on getting a second counsellor.

JP: Writing bulletin every week, preparing website for refresh.

2. Members' Questions to the Executive

N/A

3. New Ordinary Motions

a) JCSU Official Stance Against Drinking Societies

ZC: Would like to clarify motion. Not about banning them – we can't do that. About allowing JCSU to have a stance and discuss them in Freshers' Week. See them as inherently exclusive and shrouded in confusion and mystery – there are no official criteria, all a bit ambiguous. Everyone has friendship groups, but unsure about formalising them. Also plays into negative preconceptions about Oxbridge, hampering access work. Also represents a source of alienation – where we can eliminate it, we should.

AP: As ZC said, not planning to ban, just want to take a stance. Want to create a culture where they just don't exist as people don't see the need for them – e.g. at King's this is the case. Arguments can be made about Jesus ones compared to the other college ones, but important to inform early on as people will encounter the ones from other colleges. People currently only get one side of the debate when they arrive and falls on older students' shoulders and their own research to learn more about them.

ZC: Understand there's not much financial exclusivity for the Caesareans, but there is more so for the Natives.

JM: Invite speech for opposition.

Joe Jollans (JJ): I'm the President for the Caesareans for 2019-20. We're approximately 20 undergraduates at Jesus, all self-identifying men. We meet around 6 times a term – we go on swaps, have dinners, just hang out etc. We're essentially the talentless social arm of the sports teams. We're not an affiliated society, and there are aspects people don't know about. We know people find it distasteful, so we try and operate outside of college. Important to recognise that in the past drinking societies have been very bad – misogynistic, homophobic, horrible to freshers etc. But we've come a long way - I'm perhaps not your archetypal drinking society member. Many freshers misjudge the tone of swaps and come out with offensive comments – they are not invited again as we recognise the issues and need to change. Will now address "The JCSU believes" section of the motion. Agree with paragraph 1. On paragraph 2 – we do invite people, but it's essentially people who we think we'd like to spend time with. Often people come and decide they don't like it and don't come back. We try and give everyone who wants to go the chance. I think it's a very welcoming environment – would be happy to invite any member of the JCSU or anyone from the College's student body to come to any of our events at some point to see what we're about.

ZC: Do you ever say to people they can't be a part of the society, e.g. are people made to go through trials?

JJ: We've never had trials in my time – we try and invite everyone who would like to go. People who enjoy it want to come back and do.

ZC: So no one has ever been barred from joining?

JJ: People have been kicked out for unacceptable behaviour.

Joe Smallman (JS): Please revert to intended debate structure of proposition and opposition - not a Q&A.

JJ: With regards to paragraph 4, have some statistics showing that the Caesareans have similar diversity in terms of race and state/private school divide as the College as a whole. We are exclusive in the sense that we invite people who we want to come, but we aren't excluding on basis of race, religion etc. We don't care about your gender, it's about you want to spend time with us. Paragraph 5 is not applicable to us.

Zannah Lindley (ZL): How much was Caesareans brunch last year?

Nabil Haque (NH): £25, down from £40 in my first year.

JJ: We also generate revenue and have old boys donate money.

JS: Drifting from format again.

JJ: Even if I agreed with the motion would not vote for it – moving things underground is a step in the wrong direction. Clear we are improving. Unless you had a parent or sibling who attended Oxbridge, likely you wouldn't have heard of drinking societies anyway. By driving them underground, you may make people feel apprehensive about Oxbridge, thinking "what have I got myself into". Finally, we're adults, we don't need to be told what to do, and I think it is inappropriate for JCSU to intervene.

Robyn Briggs (RB): It's a motion to have a general stance – not an attack on any specific society or member. It's about the image that they perpetuate. It's inaccurate to say they'll be driven underground – to talk to freshers about them would increase visibility and encourage discussion. Important to understand we're not against the individuals and friendships, but against institutionalised friendships. We all know our friendly neighbourhood Caesarean, but from outside, my only prior knowledge of these kind of societies is the Bullingdon Club and the Riot Club – finding out they actually exist when I got here was very alienating. Perpetuates idea of Oxbridge as a rich boys' playground – even if we know that's not the case from the inside. If we want to make Jesus an access friendly institution this is a good proactive step we can take, and making an active step away from the history and cultural narrative around the societies - search the internet for them and you see the problematic reputation they have.

Adam Goldney (AG): Can see the issues surrounding the societies, but don't believe this motion will help. Will be more productive to develop a code of conduct for these societies to hold them account for their behaviour – like what a lot of sports clubs do. I feel we're well behaved now, but aware that this hasn't always been the case.

AP: Are you proposing any amendments to the motion?

AG: Perhaps to "The JCSU resolves" add a 3rd paragraph that states "To develop a code of conduct for these societies to hold members accountable for their behaviour."

Posy Putnam (PP): In 2018, Jesus drinking societies signed up to a CUSU pledge: "As the President of my Drinking Society, I commit to creating a Code of Conduct with our members in Michaelmas Term 2018. I recognise that Drinking Societies have been involved in worrying incidents of misconduct and I want my society to be part of making a change." (<https://www.cusu.co.uk/2018/07/13/drinking-societies-pledge-to-make-a-code-of-conduct/>)

Anna Vassiliades (AV): If you were aware it had been signed and had been followed, you would have mentioned the code of conduct you ought to have.

JS: Also come from access background. I hear JJ's statistics, but a lot of state schools are also very good schools so not convinced that it's that greatly demystifying. I considered not applying and not accepting my offer because of images perpetuated by drinking societies. I live, get on with and am friends with members – but we as a college need to have a more open discussion and conversation around them. Would like to propose an amendment: In paragraph 2 of "The JCSU resolves", delete "discouraging participation" and instead insert "open discussions around them".

ZC: Disagree with amendment – should be explicitly discourage participation as they go against the values of the JCSU.

JS: Could I ask you to consider PP's statement.

AV: Can I ask how you reconcile been against drinking societies and allowing members of them to be elected onto the committee?

ZC: I would back an amendment saying you shouldn't be members of both the JCSU committee and a drinking society.

JS: There's a history of a convention of committee members saying they've quit drinking societies once elected – don't think this should be codified.

JM: Moving JS's amendment to a vote.

Vote on JS's amendment: In paragraph 2 of "The JCSU resolves", delete "discouraging participation" and instead insert "open discussions around them".

For: 46

Abstain: 0

Against: 12

Amendment passes. Debate resumes on amended motion.

ZC: To clarify, JCSU take a stance against drinking societies but don't explicitly discourage participation?

JS: Yeah.

AG: Would like to propose amendment that JCSU resolves to develop a code of conduct for drinking societies.

ZC: So not deleting anything?

AG: No.

AP clarifies motion as currently amended.

AG: Actually, would also like amendment to delete paragraph 1 of "The JCSU resolves".

Rowan Fox (RF): This is a substantially different amendment so there should be further discussion.

AG: Reiterate that if something happens on a drinking society swap, people may feel uncomfortable turning to the JCSU for help if an official stance against the society has been taken. Therefore would be more productive to have a code of conduct.

RF: For all ZC's reasons, drinking socs as non-JCSU overseen entities are inherently exclusive and alienating, and reproduce negative experiences students may encounter. It's only right the JCSU takes an official stance against them as they're a fundamental detriment to college being a cohesive and inclusive environment.

Jamie Brannigan (JB): Would like to remind people that the issue is smaller than we think. Disappointed by rhetoric tonight. Have talked to hundreds of students and they have never been brought up as an issue.

ZL: Do you not think access is fundamentally much more about when you're here, and alienation once you're a student. Struggle to go back to my own school and say Cambridge is inclusive if they exist. Access is not just before you get here, but the atmosphere you're subject to while here, as JCSU and CUSU recognise.

Madeleine Olver (MO): Can we split AG's amendment into two parts: one removing paragraph 1 from the resolutions section and one adding a code of conduct?

JS: Removing paragraph 1 from the resolutions section guts the motion. Voting against final motion would have same substantive effect.

JJ: Agreed.

JM: So, AG's amendment is only to add a code of conduct. Moving amendment to vote.

Vote on AG's amendment: In "The JCSU resolves", add paragraph 3 stating "To develop a code of conduct for drinking societies so their members are held accountable for their behaviour while they exist."

For: 52

Abstain: 3

Against: 2

Amendment passes.

JM: Now move to a vote on the amended motion.

Vote on motion:

For: 29

Abstain: 9

Against: 19

Motion passes and becomes JCSU policy.

b) Declaration of a Climate Emergency

ZC: Sorry but I'm proposing all of them. Pretty catastrophic the way things are heading. We have a responsibility to lead. Could be seen as performative, so concretely means trying to implement something similar to what Hughes Hall have announced. Would be zero carbon for Scope 1 and 2 emissions: 1 is onsite and 2 is energy we buy in, Scope 3 is all other external emissions, e.g. flying, which is harder for us to monitor. Scope 3 would be carbon neutral. Hughes Hall who are much less wealthy have agreed on this, why shouldn't we. Also would be a reputational boon to the college and may encourage other colleges to take similar steps. We think official declaration is necessary to accelerate work of all college departments towards the goal.

AP: I'm seconding. Want to show College that students care about this issue. On agenda for College Council. Really important to show people are behind me when I'm taking it to them. Would be good press for the College as well. Hope you support.

Jakub Priban (JP): Point about Scope 1 – does that preclude May Ball using for example a combustion generator?

ZC: Not 100% sure.

AP: Suspect there would have to be some infrastructural change – College operating almost at limit.

ZC: One of College's pushbacks is they'll get negative coverage for what they don't do already. But plan is to achieve goals by 2030, so doesn't affect immediate projects.

Vote on motion:

For: 50

Abstain: 0

Against: 0

Motion passes and becomes JCSU policy.

c) Divestment from all College's Indirect Investments in Fossil Fuel Companies

ZC: Currently college manages most of its money through an investment fund manager, so it's very difficult to get concrete data, but fact that it's difficult to find is in itself bad. Paradise Papers revealed that college is definitely invested in fossil fuel companies though. Will also reflect very badly on college in the future. By investing in these companies, we legitimise them. Possible to do - Fitzwilliam already have a set of criteria for indirect investment. There is so much scope to make the moral and brave decision to put our money where our mouth is.

OR: Fitzwilliam have adopted principles prioritising environmental, social and governance behaviour for investments. People sometimes question whether this is an effective strategy – it is. BP released a statement yesterday aiming to be net-zero by 2050; definitely feeling the pressure. Divestment may not cripple these companies but sets out a moral standpoint and attaches a stigma to investing in fossil fuel companies.

AG: ESG funds already exist, so it shouldn't be anymore difficult to invest using them.

Vote on motion:

For: 34

Abstain: 0

Against: 0

Motion passes and becomes JCSU policy.

4. Any Other Business

AP: There will be an OGM as usual next term – we'll be back maybe with a Living Wage Campaign motion

JP: Firstly, my congratulations to ZC on his work so far. As many are aware there are Vegetarian Tuesdays in Caff. In light of this, would the wider student-body be informed any further movement in this direction?

ZL: They did: a plan was explicitly set out, and nobody contacted me with any issues.

JJ: Was there a reason why they weren't Meat-Free Mondays?

ZL: Trinity did this and had an explicit campaign against Meat-Free Mondays across the university set up as a result.

AP: Also they use Carvery leftovers on the Monday, reducing food waste.

The meeting closed at 19:48.

APPENDIX

AGENDA

1. Executive Reports of Actions Since Last OGM

2. Members' Questions to the Executive

3. New Ordinary Motions

a) Declaration of a Climate Emergency

The JCSU notes:

1.1 Atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations are at their highest level for three million years.

1.2 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has recommended that organisations become carbon neutral by 2050 in order to limit global heating to 1.5°C.

1.3 Climate impacts are already causing serious loss of life, damage to communities and displacement. For example, over 27.2 million acres of bush, forest and parks burned down in Australia's 2019/20 bushfire crisis.

2 Humanity is facing a climate emergency.

3.1 A large amount of work is already being done by College to progress toward zero carbon. For example, ground-source heat pump and secondary glazing installation.

3.2 The JCSU and MCR have also put forward, and are planning many more, initiatives to reduce waste in College and encourage more sustainable behaviours.

4 Other universities and institutions have declared climate emergencies, with significant positive reaction from students and the press.

5.1 Climate emergency declarations are made to recognise the scale and importance of the climate crisis and acknowledge that measures taken up to this point are not enough to limit the changes brought about by the man-made climate crisis. They accelerate institutional processes to ensure that the response is consistent with the scale of the problem and fulfils our social responsibility to act.

5.2 A climate emergency declaration is intended to justify measures taken to reach zero carbon and focus our attention on the necessity of taking action.

6.1 Jesus College is seen as a leader on climate issues by students in other colleges, prospective students and fellows, following its announcement on divestment last year.

6.2 Jesus College would be the first college in Cambridge or Oxford to declare a climate emergency.

7.1 Hughes Hall - a college with far more modest resources - has recently announced an ambitious carbon reduction plan, which commits it to achieving carbon zero on scope 1 and 2 emissions and carbon neutrality on scope 3 emissions by 2030.

7.2 Such a plan is therefore possible on a college scale.

The JCSU believes:

1 The most appropriate way for Jesus College and the University of Cambridge to respond to the climate crisis is to declare a climate emergency.

2 Any declaration of a climate emergency should be accompanied by a concrete commitment to reach zero carbon (for scope 1 and 2 emissions) and carbon neutrality (for scope 3 emissions) by 2030, as Hughes Hall has done.

3 There is a significant opportunity for College to gain reputational capital from such a declaration, given the positive coverage of the decision to divest from direct investments last year. If we declare a climate emergency accompanied by a plan of action now, it will be something that College has had the courage and foresight to choose rather than being forced into it.

4 We have a moral duty to use our position of privilege as a wealthy institution in the Global North to adequately respond to the climate crisis.

5 College also has the opportunity to set the standard for other Oxbridge colleges that declarations of climate emergencies should be accompanied by a specific plan of action (i.e. carbon Zero and neutrality targets).

6 Declaring a climate emergency is something that involves thoughtful, humble reflection about how our actions contribute to the climate crisis. It does not mean that we are already doing everything perfectly, but is an opportunity to take stock and engage everyone in the College community about how we can get to zero carbon (scope 1 and 2) and carbon neutral (scope 3). It is a commitment to do so within a 10-year timeframe.

7 The climate crisis is the greatest struggle of our time and failure to act will not be remembered in a good light by future generations.

The JCSU resolves:

1 There is a climate emergency, and College should formally recognise this.

2 Any declaration of a climate emergency should be accompanied by a concrete, holistic plan of action. The Domestic Bursar's recent report on the sustainability of the College site, alongside work being done by the Environment Committee, must tie itself to the targets mentioned above. The JCSU is also happy to work with the MCR in developing a climate strategy which could accompany any declaration.

3 The JCSU is happy to work with the Communications team to maximise the undoubtedly positive impact that a declaration of a climate emergency could have.

4 The JCSU will continue to campaign on this issue until real concrete action of the type outlined above is taken.

Proposed by: Zak Coleman

Seconded by: Aurelio Petrucci

b) *Divestment from all College's Indirect Investments in Fossil Fuel Companies*

The JCSU notes:

1 Jesus college has a mission statement which promises to ensure 'that it operates in a way that is ecologically and environmentally responsible'.

2 The college Environment Committee recently approved a sustainability vision in which Jesus College would be "recognised globally as a leading academic institution where sustainability is intrinsic through engagement, collaboration and innovation. Every member of our community will understand and embrace the principles of sustainability and act as a catalyst for positive sustainable change for generations".

3 This mission statement is at odds with the fact that Jesus has an undefined amount of endowments, as revealed in the Paradise Papers, in fossil fuel industries.

4 The 2018 report from the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) made clear that to avert the worst effects of the climate crisis, global heating had to be limited to 1.5 degrees above preindustrial levels by 2050.

5 Jesus College is highly influential within Cambridge University and any decision concerning its investments in fossil fuels is likely to impact the University which decided last year not to divest from fossil fuels.

6 A Jesus Fellow, Professor Simon Redfern, was recently implicated in a Guardian exposé that showed when involved in the University's Divestment Working Group, he was involved in a conflict of interest as was handling donation proposals from BHP Billion and BP.

7 Two Cambridge colleges, Queens College and Downing College, have already committed to full divestment, meaning this is an achievable goal for Jesus College. Numerous studies have also shown that divesting from fossil fuels does not impair portfolio performance.

8 The decision, made last year, to divest from college's directly held investments in fossil fuel companies is a great step in the right direction.

9 But college's most significant investments are managed indirectly, and there are no plans that the JCSU is aware of to divest from our investments in fossil fuel companies.

The JCSU believes:

1 Investments made by the college into fossil fuel companies are socially irresponsible as they fuel the climate crisis, conferring legitimacy to these companies' destructive practices. These investments are therefore inconsistent with the stated objectives of the college.

2 Divestment is an effective means of protest against unethical corporate behaviour, which Jesus College should fully support.

3 Actions taken by this college will help to persuade the University and other colleges to take adequate steps towards addressing the climate crisis. Jesus College fully divesting will aid the actions of the University Zero Carbon Campaign, which has been campaigning for Cambridge University to divest for the last 5 years.

4 To ensure the long-term future of the College - which relies on the existence of a habitable planet - we must mobilise our considerable economic resources and international reputational clout to accelerate the global transition away from fossil fuels, not prop up an industry which is fuelling the climate crisis.

5 We have a moral duty to act to ensure the existence of the college for future generations.

The JCSU resolves:

1 To re-affirm the JCSU's official stance in support of full divestment from all indirect investments in fossil fuel companies.

2 Support the actions of a Jesus College Divestment Working Group, in persuading and pressuring College to commit to full divestment.

3 To campaign vigorously for college to reconsider its position and either instruct its fund managers to pull out of investments in fossil fuel companies or switch to a fund manager which complies with Ethical and Sustainability Guidelines (ESG), ensuring that college investments are consistent with its stated values.

Proposed by: Zak Coleman

Seconded by: Octavia Rooks

c) JCSU Official Stance Against Drinking Societies

The JCSU notes:

1 The JCSU has never taken an official stance on college drinking societies (including - Jesus-specific - Caesareans, Black Widows, Natives), despite the controversy surrounding them.

The JCSU believes:

1 College should be an inclusive and welcoming environment.

2 Drinking societies are exclusive groups which recruit members based on ambiguous criteria. This selection process is inherently unaccountable and exclusive and therefore has the potential to exclude those who do not meet these murky standards for admission.

3 Drinking societies form part of an outdated culture which sustains the image of Cambridge as an exclusive, elitist institution. This is something consistently cited by students from disadvantaged background as a reason for reluctance around applying to study at Oxbridge.

4 Drinking societies also contribute to a hostile environment for current students, particularly those from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds. This is especially pertinent for freshers trying to settle into university life. These societies are also gender-based, and so exclude non-binary students.

5 Some drinking/dining societies, Natives for example, charge extremely high prices for some elements of participation. This has the potential to exclude those from more socially disadvantaged backgrounds.

6 For these reasons, the JCSU opposes drinking societies on the basis that they constitute a barrier to access and reproduce an exclusive elitist culture which is at odds with the JCSU's core aims.

The JCSU resolves:

1 To adopt an official stance against the existence of drinking societies for the reasons listed above.

2 To include information in freshers' workshops detailing the JCSU's rationale behind this position and discouraging participation.

Proposed by: Zak Coleman

Seconded by: Aurelio Petrucci

4. Any Other Business