



## JCR General Meeting 4 - Minutes MT20, Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November

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### General Announcements (Sanaa):

- Reminder to attend the Internal day of Persons with Disabilities talk with Livvy Breen this Thursday ([Facebook event can be found here](#))
  - The Sustainability Strategy Consultation survey is still open for entries. Fill in short survey for a chocolate and the long survey for an advent calendar!
  - Reminder of BME dinner and online discussion event taking place next Wednesday. A chance to hear from Tom Ilube and (look up author) as well as an opportunity to network. If you haven't signed up, then you can still come along (you just won't receive the free take-away dinner).
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**Motion: To amend the constitution to include environmental considerations in the procedure of the General Meeting.**

**Proposed by: Emily Carr**

**Seconded by: Pippa Noble**

***This JCR notes that:***

- We are in a Climate Emergency and should make all decisions in light of this.
- Councils across the UK have introduced measures to ensure environmental cost is discussed before any of their motions can be voted on.
- Many motions brought to the JCR have environmental implications

***This JCR believes that:***

- We should make it as easy as possible for members to bring up environmental issues and ensure there is always a space dedicated to raising these concerns; it's less intimidating to speak up if you've been given the space to do so.
- Having the Chair explicitly ask the question will encourage people to reflect and raise concerns when they might otherwise have not thought about it.
- People are more likely to keep environmental concerns in their minds when voting if this has been discussed in the meeting itself.

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

Amend Section 2.4.b of the Constitution as follows:

- i. The Chair will read out the motion in its entirety
- ii. The Chair will then ask the Proposer to speak in favour of the motion
- iii. The Chair will ask if the Secunder wishes to add something
- iv. The Chair will then ask if there are any purely factual questions that the floor wishes to ask the Proposer and/or Secunder. The Chair may reject any questions deemed to be inappropriate (such as relating to financial status of the Proposer or anything else that might conflict with Part 1, Section 4)

**Add new clause here reading:**

- v. **The Chair will then ask if anyone wishes to raise an environmental concern**

(Subsequent clauses remain the same)

#### **PROPOSER:**

- When we make decisions in the JCR there is always some kind of environmental cost, even if it's not an obvious one.
- We need a designated opportunity to consider these costs, rather than relying on someone to bring it up.
- The question may be met with silence (the same way that sometimes JCR meeting participants have no purely factual questions about the motion), but the question still needs to be asked.
- Will make people less anxious about raising environmental concerns.
- Help people to be more reflective when voting, providing a new angle to consider the argument in.
- Motion writers will know the question will be asked so may be more inclined to consider environmental impact in their motion

#### **QUESTIONS:**

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#### **DEBATE:**

1) Supporting the motion:

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2) Against the motion:

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## VOTE:

For: 32

Against: 0

Abstain: 1

**The motion has passed**

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**Motion: This JCR encourages its President to sign a letter to the SU opposing its decision to ban beef and lamb from University canteens.**

**The Original SU vote that this motion refers to can be found, in its entirety, [here](#).**

**Proposed by: Tom Wood**

**Seconded by: Tom Barrett**

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

#### *In relation to the Student Union motion:*

- On the 12<sup>th</sup> November, the Student Union passed a motion to ban beef and lamb from University canteens.
- As the SU has no direct influence over college or departmental policy, this motion suggested that the Union undergo fortnightly meetings to encourage the removal of beef and lamb from canteens within the university.
- This motion was passed as an attempt to show Oxford as a leader in climate mitigation policy.
- Only 31 SU members voted to approve this motion, and thus is not a valid representation of the entire university population.

#### *In relation to the UK's agricultural situation:*

- 69% of the UK land area is used for agriculture, and of this, 65% is better suited to the growth of grass to be grazed, rather than the production of crops (DEFRA).
- Abandonment of this land would affect both the UK economy, biodiversity and CO<sub>2</sub> storage potential.
- Emissions from UK livestock account for 5% of the UK's total GHG emissions, much lower than the global total of 14.5% (UN FAO), and are predominantly methane which has a short atmospheric retention time.
- UK agriculture is one of the only industries that acts as both a CO<sub>2</sub> source and a sink, and British farming is ambitious to reach net-zero GHG emissions by 2040.

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

- Climate change is the most pressing issue to be faced by our generation, and Oxford should be at the forefront in mitigating its effects and causation.
- While beneficial to reduce global meat consumption, encouragement to source local beef and lamb is optimal in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
- The blanket-ban passed by the SU, while in good faith, was misinformed and irreflective of the student population for a number of reasons:
  1. While deforestation for livestock cultivation in countries such as Brazil is a primary factor influencing global GHG emissions, the grass-fed nature and sustainable management of livestock in the UK produces emissions well below the global average, and further acts as a CO<sub>2</sub> sink.
  2. The majority of land used for livestock in the UK cannot be used alternatively for crop production, so plant-based alternatives will need to be imported from other countries, increasing the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the transport procedures.
  3. The freedom of choice of students has been removed, and students are unable to make their own decisions regarding the consumption of beef and lamb.
  4. In certain religions such as Judaism and Islam, consumption of pork is forbidden, and thus this motion only further restricts the diet of individuals that have chosen to eat meat.
  5. This motion was only approved by 31 individuals, which is one in every 774 students, and thus is not representative of the student population.

**This JCR therefore resolves to:**

- Encourage its President to sign a letter to the Student Union expressing its opposition to the recent motion.
- Outline the reasoning why this decision has been made, as above.
- Encourage the St Annes' Catering department to improve and continue to source local grass-fed beef and lamb for provisions to its students.

**PROPOSER:**

- In complete agreement that global agricultural creates devastating CO<sub>2</sub> emissions
- But more sides to this story – UK has different emissions rates from the rest of the world.
- The motion set by SU, though in good faith, was misinformed. Wanted to represent Oxford at the forefront of the fight against global warming
- We need to set policy that is feasible and sustainable for the rest of the UK
- We need a better solution which supports UK farmer's zero net emissions aim.
- If make locally and sustainably sourced British meat available, then there is less demand on imported meat.
- Supports the economic advantages of the UK farming industry

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Most of these statistics come from the NFU (National Farming Union) which is potentially bias. Did you fact checked the numbers?
  - a. The statistics were used by the NFU but originated from other sources. For example, DEFRA and the UN Farming and Agriculture Organization.
  
2. Did you read the report itself? The DEFRA report is descriptive (what it is used for rather than what it can be used for). The 65% is a misquoting, this is the percentage of land not suited to agriculture, rather than specifically the land 'suited to the growth of grass to be grazed'. The number also includes the land for woodland development, etc.
  - a. Acknowledges that this could be a misinterpretation of the figures. However, the fact remains that a large part of this figure is still attributed to grazing land. It would be great if it grew back into its original woodland, however the farming industry often supports the economic livelihoods of the local area.
  
3. Why is the motion so focused on the UK? Do you have statistics for the demand in college or comparative figures in relation to other parts of the world?
  - a. No statistics at the moment. Contacting Natalie Smith for more college-based information on this. Most colleges (TBC) have been known to get meat and produce from local, Oxfordshire farms. By taking away meat that we serve in canteens, students are more likely to buy their meat cheap at the supermarket without looking at its source.
  
4. How can you simultaneously argue that we are restricting student choice and that we should encourage students to eat in the canteen instead of buying their own meat?
  - a. This is more about supporting the catering staff and taking away some of the pressure from students to source their own meal.
  
5. The original motion does not apply to college canteen food. Only departmental canteens.
  - a. Proposer quotes from the minutes of the SU meeting, section 1.a, ii "The university to issue advice to faculties, departments, and colleges on how they may follow suit in removing beef and lamb."
  - b. Still up to the colleges on how 'they follow suit', the college is not obliged, nor is currently considering, removing beef and lamb products from Hall.
  
6. Only 33 people voted. Is there any representation from St Anne's students in this vote?
7. 31 votes for 9 against 13 abstentions. Does not know if a St Anne's student was present. Was not aware that this vote was taking place.
8. JMB – the JCR used to have a designated SU rep who would go to all the SU meetings. They would bring SU motions to college JCR meetings, discuss and relay this college majority vote in the SU meeting. Removed from JCR constitution a few years ago – perhaps we ought to consider reinstating this role?

#### **DEBATE:**

- 3) Supporting the motion:

- a. Coming from a heavily farmed area, this participant believes we should focus on supporting local farmers. Can't change land into produce production as most of our in-demand fruits and vegetables are imported (as we do not have the correct atmosphere in the UK). There are many farmers' livelihoods at stake.
- b. A blanket ban on British beef is not the way forward, we need to open a more nuanced discussion about how to better tackle our CO2 emissions.

4) Against the motion:

- a. There are 56 items on the canteen menu, only 6 of which contain beef or lamb. The removal of choice is relatively insignificant. Additionally, this motion is more specific to one-off university events, rather than a widespread college change.
  - i. (Proposer) Has been interpreted by the media in as a more long-term implementation – we need feasible
  - ii. (Opposition) But there will be an official statement from the SU at some point to clarify the implementation of the motion, rather than the current mass of student journalism.
- b. Admittedly a small sample, but it still reached quorum. This is legitimate according to a constitution that you agreed to and if how the SU counsel democracy system works. All students regularly receive emails from the SU with all the motion details (including first drafts) prior to the vote, which you are free to attend. There were legitimate opportunities for you to raise these concerns to the SU.

**VOTE:**

For: 16

Against: 17

Abstain: 5

**The motion has not passed**

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**Motion: To give Pink Week £200 from the JCR charity budget towards fundraising and events.**

**Proposed by: Iliana Pearce**

**Seconded by: Alexandra Holmes**

***This JCR notes that:***

- Breast cancer affects thousands of people every year, with 1 in 7 women likely to be diagnosed with it in their lifetime.
- Pink Week, running in Hilary 2021, is an Oxford University initiative which raises money for three breast cancer charities (Breast Cancer Now, Coppafeel!, and Walk the Walk).

- As well as fundraising, Pink Week runs events and raises awareness amongst the student body.
- Pink Week is aiming to raise as much money as possible this year under extraordinary circumstances, but this is entirely reliant upon external funding to organise all its events and other fundraising initiatives.

***This JCR believes that:***

Breast cancer is the most common cancer, affecting many people worldwide, therefore we should support the important work of Pink Week and the charities it fundraises for by donating money to Pink Week.

**This JCR therefore resolves to:**

Give Pink Week £200 from the JCR charity budget towards fundraising and events.

**PROPOSER:**

- A week of events run across the University to raise both funds and breast cancer awareness.
- This donation will act as start-up capital for these events.
- The donation will be taken from the JCR charities budget.
- This same motion for the same amount of money has been passed by the St Anne's JCR for the last few years.

**QUESTIONS:**

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**DEBATE:**

5) Supporting the motion:

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6) Against the motion:

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**VOTE:**

For: 23

Against: 0

Abstain: 2

## The motion has passed

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### Charities Vote:

- Every year, during Michaelmas Term, the St Anne's JCR selects a charity to support for the rest of the academic year.
  - The students have had a week to nominate their preferred charities.
  - The nominations are as follows (all hyperlinked to their corresponding website for more information)
    - [Mermaids](#)
    - [Help Belarus](#)
    - [Period Poverty](#)
    - [Oxford Gatehouse](#)
    - [Brain Tumour Research](#)
    - [Branch Up](#)
  
  - Jenna Colaco, speaking on behalf of *Branch Up*.
    - Run activity days for children referred to the organization by social services
    - Not only a chance for them to have a fun day out, about also provides one on one support by paring each child but with a mentor for the day.
    - Have been running online activities during lockdown.
    - Have supplied children with equipment, such as iPads, so that they can participate in online events.
    - Delivering activity pack, worksheets, newsletters, etc, to their homes. This accumulates costs.
    - Organizing days out has become more complicated and expensive:
      - Need to book both an indoor and outdoor space
      - Need to transport the children safely
      - PPE, sanitizing products and other COVID safety measures are expensive.
    - Branch Up really needs funding, and we are in the privavleged position to help the organization and the children they support.
    - The organization also runs 'Branch Up Beyond', supporting graduates of the program.
    - If you have any questions, contact Jenna.
  
  - Results of vote are pending
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### Hustings for Freshers' Rep:

- Speeches from Vivian Abrokwah, Kelsey Monteith and Chloe Glynn.
- Challenge: To take a Christmas themed photo with your household and post it in the comments of Orly Welch's Christmas Activities post on the JCR Facebook page by Midnight, Monday 30<sup>th</sup> November. If you are from the same household, take two

separate photos. Be as fun and creative as you like, this is a chance to show yourself off to the JCR.

**Questions:**

1. Can only Freshers vote for the Freshers' Rep?
  - a. From the St Anne's JCR Constitution: "First years are especially encouraged to vote for First Year Representative"
  - b. In short, any member of the JCR is free to vote, but first years are especially urged to vote as they will be affected the most by the decision.
  
2. What social events would you organize on for the next Freshers' Week if social distancing measures are still in place?
  - a. Kelsey:
    - i. An event that allows new students to learn about the city, combined with an active quiz of sorts.
    - ii. Perhaps a scavenger hunt that spans across the city.
    - iii. This would double as an opportunity to cross paths with other households.
  - b. Chloe:
    - i. More activities based in the city itself (which was missing from this year's Freshers' Week)
    - ii. Suggests a household pub visit.
  - c. Vivian:
    - i. A socially distanced silent disco!
    - ii. This may be a good idea to implement later this year as well.

**The Freshers' Rep Election will be taking place Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 8:00AM – 8:00PM on the SU website. A link will be sent out before and on the day.**

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