

JCR EMERGENCY COMMITTEE MEETING 21/10/2023

AGENDA

- Apologies and expectations
- Awareness as a committee of our actions
- The motions proposed
- Next steps
- Any questions

RESOLUTIONS

- President's Decision -
- We won't hold an emergency meeting for the motion "Donations to humanitarian aid in Gaza" proposed by Hannah Hopkins and Alfie Davis
 - We will hold an emergency meeting for the motion "Donations to victims of the Israel-Palestine Conflict" proposed by Rosie Jacobs and Ayesha Chakravarti
- The emergency meeting will be in the Danson Room on Monday 23rd October.

GENERAL

Apologies and expectations (copied from Ruby's (President) notes, no deviation in what was said)
 Sorry for late notice, this was just something I wanted to discuss in person with committee members.

May it be clear that this meeting will not be a space for political debate to take place, it is simply to discuss our role as a committee.

If anyone does start to raise their voice or get heated, you will be asked to leave.

I would like to ask that you allow me to say my piece, and there will be time for any questions at the end.

Awareness as a committee of our actions (copied from Ruby's notes)
 This is obviously a very complex and sensitive issue, and I would like the committee to be fully informed as to what our actions mean both in terms of how funding certain organisations actually affects people, and how they reflect on us as a committee.

We must note the appropriate action to take as a committee – please realise that what we do has a wider meaning. If committee passes a motion which may be construed as politically biased, it is not seen as the responsibility of the people submitting the motion, it is the committee who are held accountable – particularly me as I would be responsible for calling the emergency meeting.

Situations like this will likely be picked up by press, especially since no other colleges besides Christchurch have passed a political motion around this topic yet. Media coverage on matter like this something that has occurred in the past where even a joke by a JCR vice-pres 2 years ago got picked up by newspapers, attempting to label him as antisemitic. (explain)

I would like to acknowledge the stark rise in antisemitism recently, and ask committee to consider how sensitive we must be given the current climate.

In passing a politically biased motion in any capacity, I have concerns over the welfare of members of our community who may feel marginalised by this.

This isn't just my opinion, I have spoken to a professor of Israeli studies and Helen King who also were also concerned over the potentially problematic and distressing nature of motions on this subject.

We must recognize that this is a humanitarian crisis, which ultimately means helping humans regardless of political standpoints, so the ultimate goal is simply to donate money as a matter of urgency.

I am in no way trying to suggest that we as individuals must be neutral on the matter, but being apolitical in this circumstance sets a very important precedent for future of our JCR committee.

The motions proposed -

The first motion - "Donations to humanitarian aid in Gaza" - a revised motion proposed by Hannah Hopkins, seconded by Alfie Davis which states:

This JCR notes that:

- There is a humanitarian crisis in Gaza
- There is an urgent need for donations to help save the lives of the victims

This JCR believes that:

- Money raised for these charities will make a significant positive impact

This JCR therefore resolves to:

- Contribute £100 from the JCR budget to the Red Cross and £100 for Palestine Children's Relief Fund.

The second motion - "Donations to victims of the Israel-Palestine conflict" - proposed by Rosie Jacobs, seconded by Ayesha Chakravarti which states:

This JCR notes that:

- There is an ongoing humanitarian crisis as a result of the Israel-Palestine conflict.
- It is imperative that we donate to humanitarian efforts in the region

This JCR believes that:

- We should donate to organisations which are supporting civilians who have been harmed on both sides of the conflict

This JCR therefore resolves to:

- Contribute £250 from the JCR charities budget to the British Red Cross

Next steps -

Reinstating the constitution -

'8.1. An Emergency Meeting can only be called by the President if at least one of the following conditions are met:

- a. The JCR Committee votes it is necessary by a simple majority
- b. If petitioned to do so by at least 15 JCR members'

Following -

- Point B has been met by Hannah and Alfie as they sent round a petition with 15 members asking for an emergency meeting for the first motion
- JCR committee members can vote for whatever they choose - we can bring one motion to an emergency meeting, or both, or none

Clarification: is the emergency general meeting going to be held for just one of the motions or for both?

- A: If the motion is not brought up in an emergency meeting called by the President, then it will most likely come up in a general meeting (it is up to the discretion of those who put forward the emergency motion to then bring it to the general meeting)
- A: Everyone has their own political views, if we have an emergency general meeting the whole of the JCR will be involved - although a motion might appear humanitarian to some, to others it might come across as politically biased towards/against certain groups
 - The emphasis is less on expressing political opinions, as the President believes these should be expressed. The emphasis is instead on the worry that some members of the JCR may feel marginalised by motions brought before the JCR, and thus the

actions of the committee/president in calling an emergency meeting for such motions.

- If the President does call an emergency meeting for a motion that could be interpreted as politically biased then it sets the precedent for all future potentially controversial motions - it creates a culture where the JCR committee must always take a political stance as they cannot be neutral in one issue and political in another, meaning the JCR committee will always have to agree on an approach and as a committee of individuals this is very hard to ensure

Questions -

Q - When will the emergency meeting be?

- A - If the President chooses to call the emergency meeting (she argues she can't decide on this yet as voting amongst the committee members has yet to occur), then it would most likely be Monday evening (23rd October).

Q - If there is an emergency meeting for both motions, what would the approach be? Would we run the motions in chronological order and would this open the possibility for both motions being passed?

- A - The question is difficult to answer without the committee vote being held yet. A petition of 15 JCR members has been brought forward for the first motion, so the president can technically call an emergency meeting for this already. Ruby's personal stance is that she doesn't want to call an emergency meeting for both motions.

Q - Aren't both motions asking for more than the amount of money you can ask for in an emergency motion?

- A - Constitutionally, both of these motions are not actually emergency motions. Emergency motions must be called 2 hours before a GM and these motions have been called almost/over a week in advance.

Q - Which budget will the money come from?

- A - As the motions concern donating money to charity, the money will come from the charities budget

Q - Either way, the motions will come up in a general meeting?

- A - It's likely

Q - (Welfare Reps) How will we be able to make people aware of the potential impacts of the first motion, not in terms of the concerns of those outside college but also those within it and the students that might potentially be marginalised? Express awareness of the intense effects this topic has had on students.

- A - Ruby: Each committee member can attend the emergency meeting and tell the JCR members there of our concerns, but it is up to them what they vote for.
- A - Gaspard: The JCR is working with a limited budget, and with such limited funds we might not be able to give money to both motions

Q - What, in the precise wording of each motion, can be changed/amended to make them more acceptable? I.e. referring to the situation as the Israel-Palestine conflict vs. the Israel-Hamas War for example

- A - Ruby: Does not want to speak on her own personal issues with

each of the motions, reinforces this is not a place for personal political belief. She thinks that if the JCR Committee members read the motions and the wording of them they can come to their own opinions. The question is a valid one to ask, but she doesn't want to single out any individuals and their motions as this isn't fair - it should be down to the committee to make their own minds up about something.

- A - Helen Ross: It is her understanding that when people refer to the conflict as between Israel and Palestine they refer to the long history of the dispute, whereas referring to the conflict as between Israel and Hamas links more to the last 2 weeks and recent events.

Q - What is the charities budget for this term?

- A - Gaspard: Depends on the levies, but it is a little under £900.

Q - What is the standard amount that is donated for such motions?

- A - Gaspard: The charities budget is a budget that is not intended to be used in its entirety as the leftovers go to the JCR Charity of the Year. Last year $\frac{2}{3}$ of the budget went to the Charity of the Year and $\frac{1}{3}$ was donated through motions throughout the year.
- However, if we end up in an emergency meeting with the whole JCR then this is not information that can be disclosed. The new budgets are going to be put to a vote in the next JCR Committee Meeting on Sunday. This is not something that needs to be done according to the constitution, but it is something Gaspard wants to do to ensure all Committee members are ok with the budget. Previous committees have not published their budgets, but it is something Gaspard wants us to do. After this has been done and the final budget has been agreed upon then the final charity budget can be shared with the whole JCR.

Q - Can we amend things in an emergency meeting, i.e. if people want to change the wording of a motion then can they?

- A - Yes they can, emergency meetings run the same as general meetings

[A series of clarifying questions asked about the ensuing Microsoft Poll - omitted due to their nature being cleared up when the Committee saw the poll (ie. how many questions are there, what is the wording of the questions etc)]

Q - Is the vote anonymous? (Committee vote on the microsoft poll about holding an emergency meeting)

- A - Yes

Q - Regardless of the results of the vote, the final decision is still at Ruby's discretion, right?

- A - Yes

Q - What is the difference between having the motions voted on as an emergency meeting vs a general meeting?

- A - Ruby: An emergency meeting is sooner, and it's in the president's power to call the meeting so it's "on her"
- A - Krishh: An emergency meeting would mean we call that meeting just to discuss the one motion, whereas in a general meeting any motion can be discussed
- A - Helen Ross: This is a time-sensitive matter

Q - What is the content of the Christ Church motion?

- A - Ruby: Unsure, but she is aware the Christ Church JCR president is more ok with being "political" and having a sure political stance

Content of the Microsoft Poll -

Title: Preferences on calling an Emergency Meeting

- 1) Do we want an emergency meeting for the amended motion ("Donations to humanitarian aid in Gaza") proposed by Hannah Edwards and Alfie Davis (the first motion)
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
- 2) Do we want an emergency meeting for the motion ("Donations to the victims of the Israel-Palestine conflict") proposed by Rosie Jacobs and Ayesha Chakravarti (the second motion)
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

Results -

Poll results -

- Q1: 14 Yes, 13 No
- Q2: 24 Yes, 3 No

President's Decision -

- We won't hold an emergency meeting for the motion "Donations to humanitarian aid in Gaza" proposed by Hannah Hopkins and Alfie Davis
- We will hold an emergency meeting for the motion "Donations to victims of the Israel-Palestine Conflict" proposed by Rosie Jacobs and Ayesha Chakravarti

Further Questions -

Q - The first motion, will it be brought to the GM?

- A - The motion automatically goes to GM unless those who have proposed it withdraw it