



HUGHES HALL  
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

MCR Committee  
Wednesday, 13 November 2019, 5pm  
Maletin Room

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**Present:** A Entwistle-Thompson (President); PS Perillo (Secretary); A Kölle (Treasurer); I Yu (Academic Affairs Officer); PR Librizzi (Social Secretary); N van der Steen (Social Secretary); R Hosking (Female Welfare Officer); M Egle (Male Welfare Officer); N Gorringe (LGBT+ Welfare Officer); J Deokiesingh (Equality Officer); M Tang (IT and Infrastructure Officer); L Collas (Green and Ethical Affairs Officer)

**Apologies for Absence:** C Kazamias (Vice President); K Bartsch (Accommodation Officer); A Gablier (Sports and Societies Officer)

### I. Introduction

#### I.A. Declaration of Members' Interest

No declaration was received.

#### I.B. Senior Tutor's Matters: Prevent and Other Matters

Dr P Johnston, the College's Senior Tutor and Prevent Lead, met with the MCR Committee to discuss Prevent. Dr Johnston began by thanking the MCR Committee on behalf of the College for their hard work for the period of September and October, which is vital for a good college year.

Dr Johnston stated that measures regarding Prevent would not work without a considerable amount of hard work from the MCR's side. He thus took this opportunity of meeting the Committee to discuss Prevent, including the University's and the College's measures regarding this matter.

Prevent, which started around 2010–2015, is an umbrella term used for what to do about people in general who are susceptible to radicalisation. Previously, radicalisation referred to Islamic jihadism. But it has now grown into other aspects, including animal rights

movements and extreme right-wing movements. There is currently a variety when it comes to radicalisation.

The Government has programmes to identify the people who are being radicalised. And the University and the College are also doing their part. The College advises the MCR Committee and the students to flag to the Senior Tutor those who are radicalised or are being radicalised. The College understands the issue with freedom of speech and so it has agreed to a freedom of speech statement which is re-asserted every year by Governing Body.

Within the College, Dr Johnston is the Prevent Lead Officer. The Prevent Committee meets every term and has two MCR representatives. The MCR Committee must also have an idea of what is happening. If someone thinks that a student is in danger of radicalisation, that person must alert somebody. The alert comes to Dr Johnston and he acts as appropriate.

If a student is more withdrawn or adamant in their perspectives; or if there is reason to believe that they might be coming under radical influences, such must be noted and it would be prudent to alert Dr Johnston under these circumstances. Dr Johnston noted that he has only been aware of one Prevent alert involving a student in the past years. And the student has already left the University. He personally does not think it is a particular danger at Hughes Hall or at Cambridge University but he nevertheless advised for students not to be complacent. As well as the freedom of speech aspect, Dr Johnston noted that events now need to be monitored, especially when speakers from outside of the University are invited. Examples of prevent-related issues have included speakers that have gone to events relating to religious groups, green week, direct action, and Middle Eastern and North African forums. Prevent is merely a fairly light touch framework for checking that everything is in order. If there is any difficulty faced in a given situation, Dr Johnston noted that the parties concerned could be engaged into a dialogue. There may also be other management issues that are not necessarily related to Prevent. In such cases, a porter may be made available.

Mr M Egle sought to clarify the definition of Prevent. Ms Entwistle-Thompson proposed circulating Dr Johnston's PowerPoint Presentation on Prevent, with the latter's permission.

Dr Johnston also took the opportunity to remind the MCR Committee about the new harassment procedure at College, which first tries to pursue resolution without going into a formal disciplinary process. Dr Johnston noted that this is an option available to a student wishing to file a complaint, but that it is the right of the student to request for a formal disciplinary process if they so prefer. Mr J Deokiesingh commented that the current updated harassment procedure is rather superficial in terms of addressing racial issues. He noted that this area was only discussed lightly in the rules, which appear to focus on addressing issues of sexual harassment. Dr Johnston remarked that this is a correct observation as most of the recent efforts by the University and the College are on sexual misconduct. But the University is aware that racial discrimination has been under-

addressed. Accordingly, there has been increasing work towards racial awareness in the last year or two. The next stage of documentation is thus likely to address this matter. The University's Office of Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals (OSCCA) was able to pinpoint ten general issues, with three being the key issues. Sexual misconduct is at the top of the agenda at the moment. Dr Johnston, however, noted that racial issues are also high on the list and he suspects that it will be the next issue that will be discussed in greater detail. Finally, the College policy on harassment is a work in progress and will be improved and tweaked. The idea is to identify where it is deficient to understand the ways that it could be reconsidered. There is therefore an open invitation to see how deficiencies should be addressed.

Members of the MCR Committee took the opportunity to discuss other related matters. Mr Egle inquired about an honorary fellow from the royal family with friends linked to sexual misconduct. Mr N van der Steen also observed that it is an uneasy discussion because the College wants to present itself as an egalitarian institution so having a royal patron does not seem to fit squarely with the College's values.

Dr Johnston mentioned that this matter was also recently discussed by the Fellows, and assured the Committee that the College is doing its best to address this issue. The President is currently in contact with the Palace. And the Duke of York's advisers are keen to say that whatever there is about him should not reflect negatively on other institutions. The College's immediate response is to wait and see. If the various court cases lead to new revelations, and there is evidence of misbehaviour and of misinformation, then it will certainly be reconsidered. Dr Johnston noted that the College shares the students' unease on this matter.

In response to Mr van der Steen's comment, Dr Johnston stated that the Duke of York had been appointed an Honorary Fellow because of his strong support for entrepreneurship, which the College is pushing strongly. It is also hoped that connections with 'the great and the good' would be very helpful at making introductions and bringing in major donors and players. If the link is beneficial to the College, then the balance of argument would tilt in favour of continuing with the link. It is not a yes or a no but a balance of benefits.

The MCR Committee thanked Dr Johnston for his time, assistance and guidance.

## **II. Standing Actions**

### Amendment to the Hughes Hall Punt Club Membership Rules

This is a continuing standing action. Mr M Tang will draft the amendment to present in the next meeting.

## **III. Standing Items**

### III.A. May Ball

The College is currently looking for a May Ball President(s) for the year. Ms Entwistle-Thompson will send an email advertising the call for a May Ball President(s) on 15 November 2019, with applications due in 10 days' time. She has asked members of the Committee to inform anyone who may be interested in the position. Upon inquiry by a member of the Committee, it was clarified and agreed that a former member of the College cannot be a May Ball President or a member of the May Ball Committee.

### III.B. Appointment of the LGBT+ Welfare Officer

Ms N Gorringe was previously appointed by the members of the MCR Committee as the LGBT+ Welfare Officer pursuant to Article 8.9 of the MCR Constitution on Unfilled Positions, as the position was unfilled after two rounds of nominations / votes. Ms Entwistle-Thompson confirmed that 13 out of the 14 members of the Committee participated in the process. Ms Gorringe garnered a total of 9 out of 13 votes.

### III.C. Introducing the LGBT+ Welfare Officer

Ms Gorringe formally introduced herself to the rest of the Committee and provided them with the activities that she would like to share her ideas for the coming weeks and months. This includes creating a safe space for students, games and movie nights, café visits and other social events, Glitterbomb nights, and LGBT+ formal hall in February for LGBT+ History Month, along with potentially other activities spread out in a week.

### III.D. Formal Hall

Mr PS Perillo provided an update on a formal hall issue brought to his attention by Dr A Lockhart, the College's Fellow for Operations. Dr Lockhart informed Mr Perillo that students have been turning up at the formal hall to replace ticket holders without informing the College in advance, which makes guests difficult to account for. He informed Mr Perillo that the College will start strictly imposing the rule that only those who have notified the Conference Office of their replacement by 14:30 the day before the formal hall will be allowed to attend the event. More specifically, "porters have been advised that only those registered by name for a particular formal hall and their guests are permitted to attend".

Mr Perillo offered some suggestions on how to improve this system, as it has its imperfections, and such is adversarial to students and to the environment. He noted that that the cutoff date and time (i.e. by 14:30 the day before the event) appear to be unreasonable in certain situations and thus must be made flexible by the College within reason. For instance, there have been occasions when students become ill at the last minute and/or could no longer attend for other emergency reasons, and that they are willing to give their ticket to another student. Not allowing the replacement student to attend the formal hall only due to the 14:30 cutoff (the day before) would mean that the food goes to waste rather than being enjoyed by another person. Mr Perillo noted that this is not a good outcome or practice, especially as the College prides itself of its

environmental initiatives and with the current state of inequality and extreme poverty in many if not all parts of the world. He clarified that it is not the College's fault that such was the case. But in many circumstances, it is nobody's fault either as it is a fortuitous event (e.g. illness), and he noted that this is where College could reasonably step in to ensure that food is not wasted and is enjoyed by someone else instead. He also informed Dr Lockhart that there has been an instance when the Conference Team has not responded to emails requesting for a name replacement for the formal hall. While the Conference Team eventually changed the name in the records, there was no way for the student to have known this as the former failed to respond to emails, and the student had to risk going to the actual formal hall to check with the Duty Porter if their request had been reflected in the records. He noted that this situation adds unnecessary stress and is more embarrassing to the student compared to the situation proffered above.

Mr Perillo therefore suggested encouraging everyone to submit replacement/re-assignment requests via email by 14:30 the day before the deadline, but in exceptional situations where this is neither ideal nor possible, for the person transferring their ticket to ensure emailing the Conference Team anyway, copying the porters at <porters@hughes.cam.ac.uk>, indicating the reason for the late request, so that the latter are aware of the replacement/transfer. This process is similar to situations where the porters require authorisation from another student via email, such as in the case of a parcel collection, so this should not be a logistical challenge. He emphasised that implementing this suggestion would make the College much more appreciated by the students as the policy then becomes more reasonable. And the College will also be commended for ensuring that food wastage is kept at an extreme minimum.

Dr Lockhart understood the points raised by Mr Perillo and has forwarded his suggestions to the relevant staff for discussion. Mr Perillo alluded to the fact that the porters may have been overwhelmed with replacements in recent times because there were two major and very popular formal halls that were scheduled very close to each other: the Halloween and the Diwali formal halls. He noted that he does not see many replacements happening soon as there is no major themed formal hall scheduled in the near future. Accordingly, there is time—and it is more prudent—to hold off the plans for a strict implementation of the aforementioned rules while the discussions are underway. Dr Lockhart proposed to meet in due course to discuss this matter further, to which Mr Perillo favourably replied. Mr Perillo will update the MCR Committee for any developments he receives from Dr Lockhart.

Mr Perillo also informed the Committee that he is in touch with Mrs K Smart, the College's Domestic Bursar, regarding the formal hall and daily dining menus. The College is having difficulty in ensuring that the menu for both daily meals and the formal hall are available to students within a reasonable time. There have also been occasions when the menus have not been put up on the website or made available to students at all. And students have complained about this matter. Mrs Smart confirmed the lack of staffing but nevertheless gave an assurance that they will do their best to put up the menu within a reasonable time.

### III.E. College Environmental Policy

Ms L Collas mentioned that the College currently does not have an environmental policy. The current draft of the College's environmental policy is very ambitious. A couple other colleges are also now setting up similar targets. In brief, the policy is mainly focused on carbon emissions. It has three scopes: (1) things one burns, like heating; (2) energy one buys (electricity); and (3) everything else. The College seeks to achieve the targets by 2045, but with the intention of actually achieving it in 2030. The policy also targets undertaking offsetting measures in the short-term, but with the intention of going zero carbon in the long-term.

Ms Collas circulated a copy of the draft policy to the Committee members via email. She welcomes comments on the draft policy by 15 November 2019, before the College Council Meeting on 20 November 2019.

Regarding the College's Tupperware project, Ms Entwistle-Thompson noted that this project will go ahead as planned. Students are expected by College to buy the Tupperware at a cost of £6.25 each, for which they will get a token. Whenever the student purchases food to take away from the dining hall, the student will give their token to College in exchange for a Tupperware to put their take away food items in. Students who wish to take food away but who do not have any token for the Tupperware will then be charged £0.30 for vegeware. Currently, there is no charge for vegeware for take aways. Members of the MCR Committee expressed some concerns about the College passing on the cost of the Tupperware project to the students.

Ms Entwistle-Thompson will check whether the College will cover the cost of the first batch of Tupperware and inquire where they intend to use the money they will charge for vegeware. She will also ask the College if it is possible to have an 'electronic token' rather than a physical one as the latter is prone to being misplaced.

### III.F. Welfare Matters

#### III.F.1. Mental Health First Aid Training

Ms Gorringer informed the Committee that her previous university provided mental health training for students. The training aims to help key members of the community to spot a change in people's behavior as a result of mental health issues. The training also acts as a mental health first aid. Ms Gorringer proposed having such training for the members of the MCR Committee. College staff and members of other colleges' MCR Committee could also participate in the same training if there is interest. There is, however, a need to know where funding will come from, as training would roughly cost £200 per person.

***Action:***

Ms Gorringe, together with Ms R Hosking, will look into the feasibility of organising a mental health training at College and the possible collaboration with Dr C Roughley, the College's Disability Equality Officer.

### III.F.2. Welfare Messages

Ms Hosking spoke to Dr Roughley about funding for the welfare massages. It was suggested that some funding must also come from the students in the form of a token amount. This will be placed at £2 per massage. Dr Roughley also suggested that the funding for welfare massages must be split between the MCR and the College. Ms Hosking proposed to use the surplus money from stash sales for subsidising welfare massages. This would mean that more students will be able to avail of such welfare benefit. The said surplus money could fund 50 more students with the rest of the massage slots to be paid by the College.

The MCR Committee agreed to use the surplus money from stash sales for welfare massages. The Committee further agreed to use the fund obtained from the bike allocation for the Committee's sip and paint event, with the remaining fund being allocated for welfare activities in Week 5 of Lent Term.

### III.F.3. Bystander Intervention Training

Mr Perillo reminded the Committee that Dr Roughley is waiting to hear back from members who were offered to participate in the Bystander Intervention Training, and encouraged the Committee members to respond to Dr Roughley at their earliest convenience. Mr Egle, Mr Deokiesingh, Ms Gorringe and Mr van der Steen stated that they would like to participate in the training and would reach out to Dr Roughley directly. Ms I Yu and Ms PR Librizzi also expressed interest.

### III.G. Equality-Related Matters

#### III.G.1. Black History Month Review

Mr Deokiesingh thanked everyone who helped and supported the Black History Month events, especially Mr Egle, Mr M Tang and Mr van der Steen.

#### III.G.2. Creation of a BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) Officer

Mr Deokiesingh reiterated his position to have a BAME Officer in the MCR Committee. He reviewed the previous minutes of the MCR Committee Meeting. Mr Deokiesingh is no longer happy with his earlier stance of renaming the Equality Office to BAME Officer, and proposes to have the BAME Officer position separate from the Equality Officer position, and not as a sub-committee position. He proposes the need to prioritise BAME students. It was reiterated that Mr Deokiesingh can propose such change in the Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be voted on by the MCR. Considering the limitation of 15 members in the MCR Committee, Mr Deokiesingh is happy to discuss this matter further

with Dr Johnston. Ms Entwistle-Thompson will also speak to Dr Johnston about adding an additional position in the MCR Committee.

Mr Deokiesingh also sought to clarify the use of the term, multi-ethnic in Article 7.3 of the MCR Constitution. He proposes to change the term to Minority Ethnic at the AGM. Mr Deokiesingh also mentioned that absence of a full-time tutor who is a person of colour at College. Ms A Kölle noted that if Dr Roughley feels that she is not qualified to handle a situation, she would certainly contact Dr Othman Cole. She inquired if this is a feasible option. Mr Deokiesingh noted that while Dr Cole is a Tutor at Hughes Hall, he is not in College all the time owing to his part-time role. Ms Hosking suggested inquiring from Dr Cole if he would be willing to be more visible at College and whether it would help increasing the students' awareness of this visibility should Dr Cole agree. It was resolved that Ms Entwistle-Thompson will discuss this matter with Mrs Espley and will advise her that Mr Deokiesingh is the best person to contact regarding this matter within the MCR Committee.

### III.G.3. Transgender Awareness Week Events

Ms Entwistle-Thompson congratulated Mr Deokiesingh for successfully flying the transgender flag at College. Mr Deokiesingh asked the help of the MCR Committee members to promote the events for Transgender Awareness Week. Ms Gorringe is organising a talk on 15 November 2019 as part of the Transgender Awareness Week. She invited everyone to the event. Ms Gorringe will also look into whether there is interest from students in either organising or going to the Corpus Playroom's sketch-style comedy/satire evening.

### III.H. College and MCR Internal Matters

#### III.H.1. Communication Issues with the College

Mr Deokiesingh expressed his frustration regarding communication issues with the College, particularly regarding the planning of the Black History Month and the Transgender Awareness Week. He inquired about whom to email or liaise with for planning similar activities. Ms Entwistle-Thompson suggested that as the person to contact varies depending on the task or activity concerned, to inquire with her directly and she will do her best to point such Committee member towards the right direction.

#### III.H.2. MCR Budget

Mr Deokiesingh questioned how the MCR budget for the academic year is being allocated. He understands that Ms Kölle has done a lot to allocate the budget but wanted to further inquire anyway.

Ms Kölle clarified that the budget is planned and allocated at the beginning of the academic year. Once the budget is fixed and allocated, it is no longer changed. Ms Kölle noted that there is of course a difficulty in allocating the budget as the fund is limited compared to the requests that come from each MCR Committee member, society or

sports organisation. Accordingly, sports and societies cannot be given the total amount that they have requested and will need to find additional funding in order to cover their expenses for the year. Regarding funding for the Equality Officer's activities, it will be noted that this year's funding is already bigger than the budget that last year's Equality Officer received. Additionally, the fund for the LGBT+ Officer was put into the Equality Officer's fund at the beginning of the year when the Committee still did not have an LGBT+ Officer. However, considering that an LGBT+ Officer has already been appointed, Mr Kölle expressed that funding for the LGBT+ Officer will now have to be given to her. In any case, the Equality Officer still received more funding this year compared to last year.

Mr Mr Deokiesingh also inquired about the funding being received by the Hughes Hall Pizza Society. Ms Kölle clarified that the purpose behind the funding for such society is not only for eating pizza but to create an environment where students can socialise. It therefore acts as a welfare environment, just like the Tea and Cakes events. He also clarified for which event the MCR Committee's wine and cheese budget is used and whether it is only available to the Social Secretaries. It was clarified that this is not meant for the Social Secretaries' planned events, but for the the AGM and Hustings.

Finally, Ms Kölle advised that if students are willing to make time and organise events, they are welcome to create a society and apply for a budget, preferably at the beginning of term when the budget is allocated.

### III.I. Social and Entertainment Matters

#### III.I.1. Freshers' Week Feedback

Mr Deokiesingh suggested not having the Grantchester Walk in the future. Instead, he proposed having more college tours as this appears to be quite popular. He also mentioned that we should be careful about how we hold the LGBTQ+ night during Freshers' Week to ensure that the community that it should benefit would be mostly the ones prioritised and in attendance.

#### III.I.2. International Christmas / Holiday Food Potluck

Ms Librizzi informed the Committee that the International Christmas / Holiday Food Potluck is already scheduled for 1 December 2019 and that preparations are underway.

#### III.I.3. Pool Ladder Competition

Ms Librizzi proposed offering a prize to encourage students to sign up for the Pool Ladder Competition.

#### III.I.4. Mulled Wine / Winter Open Mic with Alumni

Ms Librizzi informed the Committee that an alumna is interested in reading her poems in an event. The Committee's response was favourable and a suggestion was made to combine it with one of the events being organised by the Social Secretaries. Ms Gorringe also proposed the idea of having an LGBT+ poetry night.

#### III.I.5. Themed Music Nights

The proposal to organise themed music nights came about as a result of the Social Subcommittee discussions. The Social Secretaries will discuss and plan this further.

#### III.I.6. College Bar Swap and/or Pub Crawl

Ms Librizzi noted that there will be college bar swaps and pub crawls planned in the future, including the Bridgemas Pub Crawl tentatively scheduled during the week after the BOP (which in turn is scheduled in Week 9). She noted the challenge that goes into the planning and implementation of these events and that volunteers are extremely needed to make them successful. Ms Entwistle-Thomson encouraged the Committee members to sign up and volunteer for such events.

#### III.I.7. Improving the Social Calendar and Other Matters

Mr Egle informed the Committee that there is a need to update the social calendar to make the events more reachable to the students. The Committee favourably considered this proposition. Ms Entwistle-Thomson will discuss this matter with Mr Tang. Mr Perillo also proposed including a link to the social calendar in the Hughesletter.

Ms Hosking proposed having photos and profiles of the MCR Committee and Subcommittees on a board, which would also include a suggestion box. Ms Entwistle-Thomson will look into this proposal and suggest the best location for the board and the suggestion box.

Mr Deokiesingh suggested having a café crawl. This will be considered by the Social Secretaries.

Mr van der Steen requested for an update on the action to take the incorrectly paid £2,000 to the Graduate Union (GU). Ms Entwistle-Thomson promised to chase the GU within the month.

**The next meeting will take place on 28 November 2019, at 6pm, at the Maletin Room.**