

Presidential Election Hustings Minutes

Meeting on 16.11.2022 at 20.00 UK time

List of Committee Members

Names, initials, pronouns	Role
Jamie Charles, JC , she/her	President
George Stokes, GS , he/him	Vice President
James O'Garro, JO , he/him	Treasurer
Jacob Hougie, JH , he/him	Secretary
Keelan Shorten, KS , he/him	Welfare
Vasilisa Grachova, VG , she/they	Welfare
Ben Palmer-Welch, BPW , he/him	Welfare
James Walker, JW , he/him	Academic and Access
Kitty Joyce, KJ , she/her	Green
Yifei Zheng, YZ , he/him	Catering, Accommodation and Facilities
Matthew Wadey, MW , he/him	Sports and Societies
Gosia Szakowska, GoSz , she/her	Ents
Muhammad Mahmoud, MM , he/him	Ethnic Minorities
Neve Baskar, NB , she/her	International Students
Emma Gibson, EG , she/they/he	LGBTQ+
Lucy Trusler, LT , she/her	Gender Equalities
Malachi Gee, MG , he/him	Disabled Students
Dylan Mankin, DM , he/him	Computing (non-voting)

Agenda

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Summary of Key Points

Neve Baskar, the candidate for JCR President, gave a speech, followed by questions outlining why the case for her election: seeking to extend fresher's week, a vending machine near the library, cleaning Benet the bear, yearbooks, expanding participation on JCR meetings, superhalls and the possible election of a Michaelmas president.

This speech was followed by further questions.

0. Administrative Matters

Meeting begins at 20.06.

Apologies were received from **LT, MW, JOG** and **JW**.

JC, as returning officer, welcomed everyone to the Hustings for the 2023 JCR Presidential election and explained the procedure for the event.

1. Presidential Candidate – Neve Baskar

1.1 Speech

NB: I'm going to keep this short and simple and discuss my ideas, desire for the role and why you should pick me.

This is my elevator pitch – not promises – big ideas I want that represent what I want to see, but may have financial constraints on them. I'd like to work with the committee on these and use student support to get these done.

Extended fresher's week: I got to help with fresher's and Early Arrivals and one thing I've heard lots of people say is that 3 days of normal freshers is not enough. Ideally, it should be extended. This is in line with how International fresher's said how nice it was to arrive early.

The 24 hour library: this has pros and cons – we're there for a long time, but the food is limited. A vending machine could help with this. Of course, there are practical considerations, but it ought to be possible to bring about if there was sufficient student support.

Clean Benet the Bear: ¹ everyone knows its necessary, especially after Corpus Challenge 2022. Last year there were financial reasons not to, but it might be possible this year.

Yearbooks: last Michaelmas, I didn't really know what I was doing. Therefore, it doesn't really make sense that matriculation photos should not be the only formalised memento we had. But a year book (virtual or printed) done by the JCR would be great.

Widening participation: I had to cancel my first meeting with my tutor, I because it was too cold outside, I was tired and I didn't want to leave the room. This reveals some of the reasons JCR meetings are poorly attended and hybrid meetings are the sort of thing that can help with people not wanting to come. Equally, snacks for Open Meetings could encourage participation.

Super halls: These would be halls with pres and posts provided by the JCR, as happens at Magdalene.

Finally, I'm applying for a year abroad, which means that if I get it there would have to be a by-election.²

1.2 Questions

MG – in the scenario a candidate got a year abroad, what would they do?

NB – I'd arrange a byelection in Easter to help with fresher's week and ensure the new president gets integrated and prepared.

¹ The Bear in the JCR – we love, but they are very very dirty. Please avoid touching them for extended periods.

² Due to a shortage of time, **NB** asked that someone raise this point further as a question

Joe Philbrook – what is your favourite piece of media and how will you apply lessons from it?³

NB – Harry Potter, which I'm rereading. First, Corpus looks like Harry Potter so that's one application. Second, I was a Gryffindor, then a Slytherin, then a Gryffindor again; as a Gryffindor, I have the bravery needed to talk to college.

JC – What are your opinions on a Harry Potter super hall?

NB – I just thought of that and it sounds good. I also think the catering department would enjoy it and get into it, as they did for Halloween.

GS – what about the formal representative role of the president, for example meeting with the Master, College Officers, Executive Body and Governing Body? Why would the candidates be suited to this?

NB – it is the biggest element of the president's job. As International Students Officer (ISO), I've had experience with this. It was scary at first, but I valued the fact that staff listened and wanted to make improvements. I've learnt how to show points and how to back it up with student support, while being diplomatic.

BPW, raises a Point of Information (PoI) – there was a problem with a Harry Potter superhall at Girton and it raised issues because of JK Rowling's views. This needs to be considered in the discussion of the Harry Potter Superhall.

NB – We need to consider the problems of artists and their art. The actors from the movies have been able to separate the two – it is worth

³ **JC** noted that this question was in order, after all she was asked about being a swiftie at last year's hustings

separating the stories and characters from the views of the author, regardless of the fact we don't support those views. A Harry Potter superhall could still be fun.

Flori Sharpe – Regarding extending fresher's week, would this be done by starting it earlier or ending it later? These have implications either for leases or academics. How would you deal with this?

NB – We can't end it later because of academic work, but we can allow people to arrive earlier. The older years can already arrive earlier and students in general like arriving earlier. Adjusting arrival within the lease, at least by a few days, would be good, though the finances need to be considered.⁴

Amin Royatvand Ghiasvand (ARG) – I'm confused by the widening participation story about the candidate's tutor.

NB – The problem was that I just wanted to be in my room and this shows some of the problems with JCR meetings in the afternoon which some people just don't want to come to.

JH – What is your achievement as ISO of which you are most proud?

NB – 1. Early Arrivals Week, which had a really high participation rate, and helped the freshers to integrate well. I received lots of positive feedback and I think the international freshers seemed happy. 2 - The Racial Harassment Reporting Form has gone well and we're working on further publicising it.

⁴ Matriculation day varies by college, but Corpus has traditionally had students arrive on matriculation day and had that day on the Sunday

MG – how would the candidates work on social media improvements and spreading information about Corpus on social media?

NB – **JC** did an excellent job. I'd keep going with using popular social media, especially helping the JCR committee to use more Instagram or Tiktok.⁵ We need both current and prospective students to be able to engage with the JCR's social media. We need current students to be told about events happening in college. For prospective students, I'd work with the Access officer, but it would be good for the JCR Committee to do 'day in the life' style content.

KS – There has been recent Camfess discourse about Magdalene getting a peacock. Do the candidates think we could do this?⁶

NB – Seeks clarity

JC – They are getting a peacock.⁷

JH raises a Pol – they are having a meeting on it, to decide on getting a peacock and how.

NB – Seeks clarity: do we want a peacock?

ARG – Could we get a Pelican?⁸

NB – Heidi could get a playmate – a puppy or a Cat. In fact, I've already spoken to Marina about this.⁹

⁵ It is worth noting that there has been a recent change of policy granting more officers access to JCR social media accounts on a trial basis

⁶ I'm glad to know I'm not the only JCR officer who spends too much time looking at Camfess discourse, especially about other JCRs

⁷ Simple as – they're getting a peacock

⁸ This question was not strictly speaking recognised by the chair. But as we descend into chaos this question was somewhat the spark that lit the fuse on the following discussion, see the footnote below.

⁹ The debate, at this point, descends into mild chaos around the big question of what animal is ideal

GoSz – Could we get a corpus horse?

NB – if the budget allows? A horse is good for horse riding and ‘just looking at the horse’.¹⁰

Lucy Robertson – What about the issue of a lack of social spaces (not for studying) available in College?

NB – The Pelican is good for working or socialising and the Harley Mason is only for work (and only in Easter). For just socialising, people’s rooms are ok, but the pelican and JCR need work. I would work with the committee to make further improvements.

JC thanks all attendees for their productive contributions to JCR democracy.

Meeting ends at 20.28

¹⁰ ‘After brunch, do you wanna *just look at the horse?*’