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**TREVELYAN COLLEGE JCR MINUTES**

**JCR Executive Committee Bonding 2023**

18/04/23 – 21/04/23

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**PRESENT**

Dorian Held **President**

Hugo Fung **International Rep**

Alysia Orbell **Welfare Officer**

Matthew Hall **Welfare Officer**

Patri Moreno-González **Social Chair**

Tennyson Godsell **Publicity Officer**

James Taylor **Buttery Chair**

Akshita Singh **JCR Chair**

George Little  **President-elect**

**Apologies**:

Thomas Hewitt **Vice President**

Kush Pandey **Treasurer**

George Scholey **Bar Sabb**

**AGENDA 1: INTRODUCTIONS**

**INTRODUCTIONS**

1. **Who we are, what are our roles?**

DH: I’m Dorian, in 5th year, studied Maths and Chemistry, French and Dutch international student and I am the outgoing president, favourite ice cream flavour is mango/lemon

.

GL: Third year psychology student, former treasurer, incoming president, from England, favourite ice cream flavour is mint choc chip.

JT: Second year Physics student, buttery chair for the next year, also from England.

MH: Second year Maths student, one of two welfare officers, favourite ice cream is oreo.

AO: Second year Engineering student, pronouns are she/her, co-Welfare Officer, also from England.

TG: Second year English Lit student, pronouns are he/him, Publicity Officer, also from England, favourite ice cream flavour is strawberry.

AS: Second year law student, former PoC rep, leading exec as chair, favourite ice cream is cookie dough/strawberry.

HF: First year marketing and management, international rep, favourite ice cream is chocolate.

PMG: First year Liberal Arts student, Social Chair, favourite ice cream flavour is wildberry yoghurt.

**b. What is our understanding of our individual roles?**

DH: As president, I’m here to steer the JCR and the exec in a certain direction over the year. As a member of uni staff, my role is to ensure the smooth running of the JCR. I need to update staff. Here to ensure the exec can work well together towards a common goal.

GL: General figure, here to help the rest of the exec achieve their goals and ensure we are doing our jobs properly and comfortably. General figure of support.

JT: Anything to do with the buttery, come to me (e.g. HF for events). Ex-officio, so a slightly different role. More separate, not as much interlinking.

MH & AO: As welfare officers, in charge of welfare committee/Tier 2 members (e.g. POC rep) and ensuring the get on with own commitments. Also work with Hannah to help run campaigns, restock welfare room, manning welfare email.

TG: Key goal of Publicity Officer is to maintain communication between the JCR exec and the student body it represents. Role entails manging social media accounts, noticeboards, and the website to ensure all students are as in the loop as possible. Also minuting exec and JCR meetings.

AS: As chair, first and foremost role is maintaining democracy, conducting elections and JCR/exec meetings and being a point of contact for all exec members should they have any concerns or grievances. Steering committee to advise on any issues.

HF: Helping international students with the transition to uni life, as well as running international, multicultural events such as the language cafes and cultural festivals.

PMG: In charge/overseeing all events in college (not limited to just big ones, e.g. can assist with language cafes/freshers week).

**THE EXEC**

1. **What does the exec do? (individual mindmapping activity)**

MH: The face of the JCR – a visualization of people they can go to.

PMG: More familiar than staff.

GL: Representing student voices in Trevs to get things done.

PMG: Enhance student experience, offering guidance, throwing events, etc.

JT: Group of people to advise the president and hold him accountable.

MH: Allows independence from college staff.

DH: One of the big things is that it is student organised and run.

PMG: Ensure that Trevs is a welcoming, inclusive space for everyone.

MH: Just keep the JCR working.

GL: Covers all the smaller parts of the JCR to make sure they’re done effectively.

DH: What is the exec’s image?

PMG: Quite welcoming.

MH: Some people think of it slightly as a cult.

GL: During COVID, it felt basically non-existant.

DH: We’re on the tailend of it, still feeling the affects of it.

AS: From first-year, the exec didn’t really feel like execs, just as freps, which was good in terms of making them feel approachable and helpful, which is particularly important for freshers, especially international students. Good at making people feel comfortable in a new environment.

MH: Role models, hopefully inspire others to want to be a part of the community.

AS: You’re proximity to the exec affects your perception; the more distant you are, the

DH: What are some of the pitfalls this exec could run into in terms of how its is run/its image? One example being the exec seeming like a clique. What can we as an exec do to overcome this?

PMG: Making their roles clearer to students. It can be a bit unclear during fresher’s week, important to maintain approachability.

MH: More transparency (e.g. where money is going).

AS: Unsure if we advertise ourselves well enough to the student body, especially on a more individual level. Done better in recent years, but still can come across as detatched. Need to highlight that we are also students, doing our degrees.

DH: Agreed, sometimes non-exec students see the president/VP/exec as a whole being the JCR and not themselves. Important to highlight that we are individuals and students outside of our roles.

JT: I know from my experience over the past few weeks that some people think of my as an employee, not a student. Make it clear to staff that you are also a student. It helps to develop a relationship with them.

DH: It’s a lot better now.

JT: Yes, I can see it’s improved.

AS: A lot of people don’t understand that the exec help to run basically all events in college, often think the college are organising it and overlook how much we are giving to help enhance the student experience. We are by students, for students, but sometimes this is taken for granted.

JT: A lot of the time, people seem to think stuff just happens.

DH: Is that a big deal? It would be great if people understood our roles and what we contributed to college, but it isn’t necessarily a priority.

AS: People knowing the importance of the JCR would encourage engagement.

PMG: Yeah, I can see that with Events Committee, as it offers an opportunity for students to contribute their own stamp on events.

DH: Boundaries important with students - especially front-facing roles like Welfare Officers, International Rep, and Social Chair. I would recommend settings boundaries as to how and when you are accessible or you may become overwhelmed with work. It is paramount to preserve yourself and your mental health. If you have any worries, you can lean on me or each other.

MH: Former exec members have advised us to tell people to tell people to communicate us via the delegated emails.

**COMMUNICATION**

1. **Internal Communication**

DH: Slack is what has been traditionally used. Slight issues with it archiving messages after 90 days (need to pay to access). Any ideas for alternatives?

GL: Discord.

DH: Slight issue with potentially blending with personal life.

MH: Messenger?

GL: What makes Slack good is the different channels in one chat.

AS: Does Telegram do channels?

PMG: Teams allows channels.

GL: We could look into that.

DH: Last year, we used Slack for general stuff and Teams for files. Teams is more popular with staff, but is unpopular with students. What do people prefer for social and professional communication?

PMG: I used Teams at Sixth Form, and the different channels made it very well organised.

MH: It is university monitored. Is it worth paying for Slack?

GL: We have quite a lot in that budget.

DH: Just for the time being, with a lot of stuff coming up, what do we wanna use?

JT: In the short term, Slack is a good solution.

DH: Record-keeping is worth doing, which using Slack might problematise.

MH: Could it be worth copying messages into a document?

JT: It sounds like it would be very time-consuming.

DH: Slack is very awkward to copy/paste from. Are we all agreed on Slack for formal messages for the time being?

*(General agreement)*

GL: We can use Messenger for more informal stuff.

1. **External Communications**

DH: With student body, mostly Tenny’s role but we can all contribute. Any thoughts?

MH: If anyone wants contact regarding welfare concerns, send them to Trevelyan.studentsupport@durham.ac.uk

GL: Same with Treasurer, send them to Trevelyan.treasurer@durham.ac.uk

DH: JT and GL, as former exec members, any thoughts on how external communications are operated?

GL: You can send JCR-wide emails, which are the best way to get information across. Try and get stuff out as much as you can, some people need to read things three times to comprehend it. Communicate with TG about this.

JT: Use a variety of media, both physical and social. Can use posters, for example.

DH: Send stuff to me for free printing.

JT: Please don’t just stick stuff on buttery doors, ask me beforehand.

DH: There has been a shift away from Facebook. Looking forward, how do we want to display the information we have, how do we want to use Instagram/email while Facebook is dying. Previously publicity officer is working on app which can hopefully be used in the future. Any questions, ask Roshni. An app should make things easier to communicate. Issue of funding. Also important to communicate communication issues with each other. Be considerate of each other, give each other time.

TG: The way I’m envisioning the various uses of social medias is having Instagram be used as a more informative device, where Snapchat and TikTok are more informal and light-hearted. If people want stuff created, Roshni and I have made a Google Form for people to request thigns to be publicised – still need to determine if we keep this to just Tier 1s and Tier 2s or everyone. I’ll share the link with everyone in the future. Would just like to foreground that the Publicity Officer’s job is publicising posts, not necessarily creating them, as this took up a lot of my predeccessors time, so where possible, if you could make your own posts that would be great.

AS: From welfare experience, we can make a lot of our own posts. Tier 2’s or Tier 3’s can use the GoogleForm to upload their own posts. Streamline.

MH: Can tag other Instagram accounts to story to make it easier to share.

GL: Can also post in collaboration to show union among Instagram accounts.

DH: Can also add mentions on stories.

AS: Can also look into non-online promotion. A lot of small events get overlooked, so potentially having more physical promotion could be good.

MH: The whiteboard outside the exec office is very effective.

DH: The new health and safety officer has highlighted various issues regarding previous methods of publicity (posters and such).

TG: How does this impact the noticeboards?

DH: Double-check with Janice, but as its behind glass I think you’re fine to pin things up. Laminating does not mean fire-proof, however. If its around college, you may have to firespray it (drapes/banners/cardboard), moreso for social things. Laminating is also not firesafe. New rules dictating we can’t put anything on the walls or attach anything (e.g. ribbons) to the Cobbles. We are a team, we can lean on each other and help each other out when we’re overwhelmed.

1. **College communication**

DH: Improved a lot over the last few years. The new staff are lot more communicative. We will have an introductory meeting. Do not be afraid to contact college directly, they are there to help the JCR, we are working towards the same goal as them. President is the main link to staff so can communicate through them. The college are also working on a mentorship programme in which the exec members are assigned to a members of staff (Kunle, Martin, Hannah). This could be a means of maximising communication. You mostly learn it as you go along. We have received an updated staff list.

**WORKING AS A TEAM**

1. **How we work & stress**

DH: We will be spending a lot of time with each other and the President, especially. One fo the important parts is understanding each others communication style and how we operate, how we are motivated/function. I’ll go first. I work in waves, have struggled with motivational issues, can have two really productive weeks and them find myself burned out. I operate very structurally, require all the information to get going. When stressed, I close in on myself and may cut myself off as a means of coping.

GL: Fast-paced, multi-tasking. Take on a lot at one time then lull. When stressed, I can cut myself off.

JT: Work flow is fairly consistent so not really in waves. When stressed, can become a bit stroppy, like a rant.

MH: When overwhelmed, I prioritise group work where other people are relying on me, so I generally prioritise exec duties as other people depend on me for them. I also tend to focus on one job at a time.

AO: If I find something boring, I will procrastinate with other jobs. Delegating (e.g. Tier 2’s, shared role, Committee) has been a big help.

TG: I’m motivated by deadlines and am generally more productive when stressed. For me, I would prioritise my degree over my exec duties, which might be a bit selfish, but just how I operate. When stressed I can become a bit bitchy, but I don’t normally hold on to things for longer than a day.

AS: Also motivated by deadlines, can cause me stress but also more productive. I’m not great at responding to texts, but WhatsApp best means for anything needing immediate attention. Working for the exec helps keep me accountable. As Chair, I am a neutral impartial space but opens me up to welfare.

GL: You guys are volunteers. Put your degree first. Reach out to the President for support.

DH: As a general rule of thumb. prioritise personal well-being, then education, then exec responsibilities.

MH: Feel free to speak to welfare officers if you’re in need of support.

HF: I also prioritise academic responsibilities. Will communicate issues in advance. When stressed, I listen to music and rely on friends.

PMG: I may have ADHD, and also like clear deadlines/instructions to minimise procrastination. I work better with plans. Can be quite anxious regarding texts, but highlight urgency and will respond ASAP. When stressed, more likely to cry.

DH: Have a think about ways the exec can support you when you’re feeling overwhelmed.

1. **Team Structures and Leadership & c. Setting expectations**

DH: Lets talk about different team structures and individual roles within that. On this exec, we are moreorless on the same level in terms of authority. Does anyone have any alternative ideas?

GL: I would want to keep that kind of structure, easier to operate and interact on a more equal playing ground. Important to keep people in the loop.

PMG: Regarding Events Comm, I might add Welfare Officers and Treasurer to the group chat.

DH: What are the kind of roles/dynamics people take on in a team?

PMG: Often a second-in-command. I’m not very assertive, more conscious of the wider group is feeling.

MH: The dynamic of Welfare Officer has changed in it now being a shared role.

**di. Leadership: Define leadership, and what a leader is.**

**EXERCISE:** jot down our understanding of leadership

PMG: Collaboration – must be decisive and able to delegate well. Must be receptive to feedback and self-aware.

MH: Reduce the gap – yes there a leader but also a member of the team.

GL: The leader is ultimately responsible and accountable for the team, so its important to understand where they might have more pressure.

JT: A lot of this is role dependant, some people have smaller/bigger teams. Some decisions are made unilaterally. Leadership style varies massively by role.

DH: Very true. Each of you are now student leaders and will have your own leadership style. Try to look internally and reflect on the way you work/lead and recognise areas for development. An other opportunity for you guys is the Leadership Academy. You get a lot of support, both from college and myself. Any other points?

AS: Another important aspect is being able to explain your decision. It helps the other team members empathise with their leader.

**dii. Leadership: What kind of leaders are we?**

**EXERCISE:** Personality Model - sort yourself into which you identify with.

Driver (task-focused, tells)

Analytical (task-focused, asks)

Amiable (people-focused, tells)

Expressive (people-focused, tells)

5. Goals for Easter Term

**EXERCISE**: Write down collective mind map of our goals as an exec.

**AGENDA 2: THE JCR**

**THE EXEC**

**a. Exec Meetings: Arrangements, procedures and expectations**

DH: The previous exec did Tuesday 6:15. With exams, we could potentially make them fortnightly. Do we want them weekly?

GL: I think weekly meetings are useful for staying in the loop.

MH: During exams we can be a bit more forgiving with absences.

AS: We can always adapt it when the whole exec are present/elected when we’re back in Durham.

AS: DH, JT, and GL, do you have any insight as previous exec members?

DH: We have introductions. Tier 2 reports, tier 1 can report on their behalf. We found communication among tier position was a bit of a struggle. Questions for the President, as they are often doing things on the side, good chance for exec to ask questions back. Then typical meeting followi. Chair creates agenda, President has in past. One piece of advice I have is to respect the Chair, they control the direction of the meeting, keeps things running smoother. We can develop whatever structure works best for us.

JT: Occasionally we have other people come in with motions (e.g. Environmental Rep) to open up discussion.

GL: Good to know what everyone else is doing and having an awareness of whats going on in the JCR.

JT: Don’t need to do masses of preparation. Good opportunity to see where you can get involved and help others.

DH: Action points – things people have to do, reviewed at next meeting. The Chair also sends out a call for agenda points before the meeting if anyone has anything they want to talk about.

AS: Also a good opportunity to get exec’s opinions on what you’re doing/events/etc., so please feel free to submit agenda points.

AS: What do the newly-appointed people’s expectations of the exec and exec meetings?

MH: Could be good to have a mental check-in along with work check-ins, especially during exams.

**bi. JCR Office:** Use of space

DH: We all have acces ,and we are responsible for cleaning it. Last year it got quite messy with events and things, so try to keep the space clean and respect it. Can use it for meetings/personal space. We now have a mini-fridge, mainly used to store milk for tea and coffee service. Try not to leave alcohol around the office for months and months.

**bii. JCR safes**

GL: There are three safes: mini-safe (number code – accessible to all, use for stuff to be taken out soon), drop safe (drawer for cash). Other than mini, only Treasurer and Presidernt can access these safes.

**biii. Lending equipment**

DH: The JCR provides equipment/opportunities (e.g. camp bed, tabletop games, sports equipment, etc.). We must maketake deposit – student ID if student, something else if liver out. Keep these in the safe.

MH: Does the Sports Rep need to sign stuff out as well?

DH: Yes.

**ci. What makes an exec role an exec role? (Drop-ins)**

DH: Normally publity officer’s job to organise. We can use

JT: Some people do more than others, enjoy the quiet/focused time.

DH: Should we start in second week of term?

AS: Not as much pressure during exam period.

MH: AO and myself also have to run Welfare Drop-Ins,

DH: Demand for drop-ins isn’t as high at this time of year. Generally there as a point of contant, making ourselves visible, lending equipment, etc.

**cii. What makes an exec role an exec role? (Representation)**

DH: As exec members, we are held in a higher regard and a representing our college and university. Be aware of you are acting, maintain a good work-life balance and don’t do anything outrageously stupid. Keep in mind you now have extra responsibilities.

AS: Especially during events. You are working them, you can obviously enjoy them but keep in mind you are volunteering. Keep in mind how we want to be seen as student leaders.

1. **What makes an exec role an exec role? (Exec training)**

DH: General training and responsibilities. I insisted last year that all exec are vom trained, I suggest we do that again. With events like Trevs Day, Trevs Stock, and Fresher’s Week, better to be safe than sorry.

MH: Could be worth training Welfare teams for extra support.

DH: Ladder, manual handling, fire safety training all available through college. Other big one is confidentiality. Everyone must sign confidentiality agreement, student may come to us with sensitive information. That information cannot be shared further unless we are worried they are a danger to themselves or others. In some cases, you have to divulge. You cannot guarantee confidentiality. Go to Welfare Officers or Hannah.

AS: If you want me to send out the Welfare Confidentiality Agreements, I can do that. In terms of confidentiality, it is also important we don’t disclose what happens within the exec. Of course issues are bound to crop up, but I would always encourage you to approach me as Chair if you have any issues or have welfare concerns. Can also go to Welfare Officers or President. Sensitive issues/controversies are better resolved amongst us.

DH: Anything said in exec meetings regarding personal information or future JCR plans (dates/themes/anything that may compromise attendance) must stay within exec. Also goes for minuting – ask TG not to minute.

**di. Work ethos (Prioritisation and communication)**

DH: Lean on each other. If you’re feeling overwhelmed with exec duties/academic responsibilities, talk to someone, friends, Chair, President. General order of prioritisation is self > academia > exec. There have been issues this year with communication between exec and Tier 2/3s. Keep in mind that if you do have an issues, Chair, President, college staff and others are available.

AS: Please don’t be intimated approaching President or staff or myself. Rely on each other, maintain own mental health, check up on others.

**dii. Work ethos (Delegation)**

DH: Important to learn, especially for those with Tier 2s and new roles.

**diii. Work ethos (Personal health)**

AS: Maintain your welfare. If anyone has any ideas on things we can do as an exec to become comfortable with each other, especially when more exec members join.

**ei. Job description changes (Changes to role of those present)**

AS: There were updates to a lot of Tier 1 and Tier 2 job descriptions made in the last year.

DH: I just want to make sure everyone is aware of any changes. Publicity Officer’s role has changed, Welfare is now split, and there lots of new Tier 2s.

AS: I would encourage everyone to read their job descriptions. Obviously you are all aware from handover what your job entails, but being aware

**eii. Job description changes (DSU Rep)**

AS: We don’t have one anymore, the university doesn’t seem interested in continuing the role.

DH: As we’ve had quite strong DSU reps over the last few years, I think its worth trying to rework the role. A first draft achieved, unsure where that stands now. There will be a Memorandum of Understanding between DSU, with the role being reworked into a College Placeholder. The options discussed last year were obilishing the role, making it ex-oficio, or reworking it.

AS: Could you elaborate role of college placeholder?

DH: Main role of the DSU rep was to represent the college at the DSU assembly. The DSU voted to stop this and instead have a college placeholder voted by the DSU and not the JCR. The JCR has lost democratic voice in the DSU assembly. A lot of JCRs have given up, we’re holding out to see

JT: From what Will Brown was saying last term, the DSU is run very clunkily. I don’t think we’re missing out on much.

DH: The issue is that the DSU is the official legal representative for students in Durham. This issue will likely come up again next term, just a heads up.

**eiii. Clubs and Societies Officer**

AS: A new role linking the clubs and societies with the JCR – TG could you update job descriptions on the website? I would encourage you guys to see if anyone interested in the role to run for it, but as exec members we cannot officially support a specific candidate. I will be strict on that – encourage people to stand.

DH: Interest has already been shown in the role. We could try to brainstorm how we each see the role. The general idea is the representation of clubs and societies and to have a chain of communication with them. Any ideas on how the role could work?

MH: Obviously Stress Less Week is too soon, but at the moment the Welfare Officers have to reach out to all

GL: I’m assuming the role will be more Tier 2 focused compared to our roles. They’re spending more time delegating and working with them.

DH: We can talk about this again closer to election.

**JCR GOVERNANCE**

1. **Tier 2s**

AS: I would definitely encourage having an open line of communication with them. Encourage them to be open with you, check on how they are functioning, ensure the work is being done properly. A lot of new roles will need to develop how they work.

DH: As a Tier 1 position holder, you’re Tier 2s are accountable to you. You are there to support and help them were needed, and need to stay updated as to how/what they’re doing. Reach out to them if you haven’t already done so.

AS: Tier 2/3s are also more likely to run for Tier 1 positions in the future, so its worth encouraging that to ensure all exec roles are filled in the future to make the transition period smoother.

1. **Committees**

AS: The committees are the a lot of fresher’s first steps into the JCR, so be sure to encourage students to participate in the committees. Highlight their responsibilities but also the reduced work load.

DH: Something I’ve learned in my experience is that what makes a good exec member is their analytical approach, organisation and leadership of committees. There is a lot of flexibility as to how you do things within their roles, lots of room for innovation.

AS: Yes, for example, the Welfare Awareness Committee was renamed last term to better reflect its values and role. Be analytical. Committees are great way to get involved without giving up too much.

DH: As Tier 1s, you will likely have to chair committee meetings. How are people feeling about this?

MH: For Welfare, the Assistant always minutes the meetings.

DH: Have you guys discussed how are you’re going to lead things jointly?

MH: Not specifically, but so far we’ve not had any issues.

GL: FinComm and EventsComm were all very casual last year. Work out your own style.

DH: If you are worried about leading a team, reach out. I have experience, JT has experience, GL has experience. Lean on the rest of the exec. It’s a really great opportunity and great for the CV ☺

1. **Chains of communication**

AS: The Tier 2/3s are responsible to you. It is important to have these lines of communication open, also with the student body and amongst ourselves. Check in with people.

DH: Try to CC the President in with anything important regarding college, as they are their first point of call. Make sure the President is in the loop. Secondly, there are a lot of parts of college that we, as an exec, don’t know a lot about. Hopefully Clubs and Socieites Officer will help resolve this, especially as sports has been as difficulty. Consider what you should share with your team/President/college. If the entire exec knows what everyone is doing, it makes things a lot easier. It should develop throughout the year naturally.

AS: It is important to keep each other in the loop in case anyone is approached with a query.

**WIDER JCR COMMUNITY**

1. **Student engagement**

AS: Any ideas as to how to increase student engagement?

DH: Good for freshers to talk about, so you’re seeing things with fresh eyes. Any ideas as to how JCR could improve engagement and communication?

HF: I think the JCR could engage better with international students, as they it can be more difficult to develop a sense of belonging in college. We could reach out to them more directly to help resolve this.

DH: Any suggestions on how to do that? One MCR suggestion was to set up group chats for Chinese students, but obviously this doesn’t include everyone.

HF: A lot of international students use different forms of social media. Chinese international students often use WeChat, for example.

GL: Obviously International Freshers Week is a great start in terms of engaging international students, but its important to not forget about them and try to maintain this engagement.

AS: Also holding more international events could be a good way to engage with international students. Could potentially brainstorm later in the year as an exec?

DH: Any ideas as to how we as an exec can boost student engagement during the exam period specifically.

MH: The main thing for welfare is Stress Less Month. The exec could come along to various events to introduce themselves to students.

1. **Student welfare**

AS: We have a welfare team and student support from the college, but a lot of people don’t know what kind of welfare is available to them. Any ideas as to how to make the information more accessible?

DH: People may come to us with welfare issues, not just Welfare Officers. In terms of signposting, first port of call is the welfare officers. Don’t be afraid to ask the student if they are comfortable with you signposting them to Hannah/Welfare Officers if you don’t feel suitable to approach.

AS: We should collate all the information into one place.

MH: Theres a welfare handbook with everything collated, we can make that more accessible. We were also thinking of making a link tree/poster with all the updated information.

1. **JCR finances**

DH: We were doing really good until COVID and when the President role became sabbatical. Things are a bit tight at the moment. At an exec level, a lot of you will have your own budget, if you’re unsure what this is, ask KP. Some things we may discuss later when KP is here could be changing the levy. Keep in mind your budget. Turn to KP and the President for support.

GL: I’ve had a few conversations with KP, the levy is unlikely to change. It’s £140 at the moment. In terms of buying things, its probably easiest to get DH to buy them, but KP can also give you an expense form if you want to buy it yourself.

DH: Just email me as in advance as possible, preferably with a link.

AS: Regarding the expense form, can these be made available to Tier 2s? A lot of Tier 2s, especially welfare, get a discount but don’t now how to approach it.

GL: I normally send an email at the start of the year, but most people ignore it. I’ll speak to

KP about resolving this.

AS: Yes, and Tier 1s can talk to Tier 2s about how to get their discounts.

**IMPROVING THE JCR**

DH: Just general feedback, ideas, ways to better how we operate.

*(a profound silence enters the chat)*

GL: Its perfect ☺

DH: Ok, just keep it in mind, if you have any ideas feel free to bring them up.

**AGENDA 3: NON-JCR BODIES**

**COLLEGE STAFF**

1. **College Governance**

DH: We as an exec are part of a common room in college, and interact with other bodies and structures within the university. We have been invited to our first college officers meeting, typically held at the start and end of term (next Friday afternoon). There about six different faculties in college:

* Kitchen (food related, run by Rob Cummins,  catering)
* Janice Ware and Jim Johnson (Janice needs to be aware of everything we do, contact her/Dorian. Jim is assistant of operations, helps porters)
* Kayleann (college admin coordinator, Kunle’s secretary, go to her for information/publicity)
* Student support team (headed by Hannah, student support, accommodation, helps out with admissions, supported by Holly Bainbridge)
* College office, the exec body of college. Kunle’s the overarching leader. Martin as Vice Principal helps things run, is DH’s line manager, and head of college developments. Hannah runs student support.

DH: All of them are available online. Will deal mostly with Hannah for welfare, Kayleann for publicity, and Janice for operations. We will each be assigned one member of the college office to help us develop in our positions.

JT: Is this mentoring scheme new?

PMG: What does it entail? Will they ask us questions?

DH: As it’s new, everything’s still being figured out. I’ve asked Martin but haven’t had a clear answer. It’s more so a way for us to have a person to talk to and go to for advice. If you ever like you’re being pressured, let me know.

1. **Our relationship with college**

DH: This is going very well at the moment. They’ve realised that the JCR and the exec are an asset to college life. They still question a lot of things and actions we take. Obviously we are part of the same college community, but we are also our own body. We’re hoping to keep this relationship positive as both are amending themselves and regrowing – it’s a good opportunity to reintegrate ourselves with them.

**THE DSU**

DH: What are people’s views of the DSU?

PMG: Don’t really know much about it.

GL: Useless

MH: The Welfare and Liberations Officer is in the same group chat as all the other welfare officers.

DH: The SU can be a frustrating organisation. It could potentially be a very good asset to work with as it is very centralised and linked with the university. However, it has become very stagnant with scandals at least once a year.

JT: Everything they do seems very tokenised – they’ll agree to something but won’t fully commit to it.

DH: The thing with the DSU is, as President, we have a lot of communication with them. It seems to attract people who don’t like college life or with extreme political views. It is very good at rallying people, like the Palace Green Cut the Rent protest. PresComm has been trying to mend our relationship with the DSU but it didn’t end too well.

GL: From what I know of the DSU President next year, they are very anti-working with the colleges.

DH: The SU is the official legal entity for student representation according to the 20th century mandate insisting on the need for students unions. Ideally, it would be a central body we could rely on as opposed to a governing body. There’s a lot of talk of disassociating ourselves with the SU, but I don’t know if that’s the best solution.

JT: I think the issue with Durham is it’s a different type of university. In other places, the SU serves a similar to role to what colleges provide.

GL: A lot of the events and things people enjoy are run by the JCRs and colleges, where the DSU is just left with the politics.

DH: The SU is a very contentious topic. There are very helpful individuals within it, but as an organisation it’s ineffective. They offer a lot of training.

**OTHER COLLEGES & THEIR CRs**

DH: What do people know about our relationship with other colleges and how we work together?

AS: We have bilateral agreements with some other colleges. There’s a lot of sharing equipment and exchanging things each other need, but it’s not a relationship where we’re holding events together. There’s no real image of solidarity.

DH: On an exec-wide level, there’s not much communication. There’s meant to be two inter-exec formals a year, though we only had one last year. A lot of them when execs get together, it’s about a specific issue. It’s still useful to understand how other colleges manage things, especially ones similar to Trevs like other Hill colleges. I would encourage reaching out to equivalents for other colleges.

GL: We do a lot of shared international events.

DH: The exception to this is President as we have PresComm, which is a more effective way of conveying information. We make a grid of everyone’s information and contact details, so you can reach out to other exec members if needed.

**THE UNIVERSITY**

1. **‘Central’**

AS: The collegiate system is beneficial having your own community, but it can alienate you from what’s going on in the rest of the uni.

DH: We often refer to them as ‘Central.’

JT: In my experience, people in Central don’t really know what’s going on either. We’re in a weird position where we’re the top of one tree, but at the bottom of another. It’s quite a difficult, unusual position.

DH: The benefit is we can do things with more flexibility. We can be more student-esque. The issue is when college can’t help us. If this is the case, tell myself or Martin and they should know who to contact. Any big updates will go through the President and then they’ll tell you. PresComm is meant to be notified in advance but this doesn’t always happen.

GL: The higher up you go, the worse it gets.

JT: On the middle level, people are really nice, they’re just nold told anything.

1. **Team Durham**

DH: They get a lot of funding from the university with a lot of sabbatical roles, meaning there’s a lot of inexperienced leadership, resulting in difficult communication. It has been brought up multiple times, but it’s a work in progress. You guys don’t really need to deal with them.

GL: Hopefully the Clubs & Societies Officer or Sports Rep can handle most of that.

**THE ROLE OF THE PRESIDENT**

**ai. Internal (JCR)**

DH: For us to work most effectively, it’s best you guys understand the position I’m in. My role involves leading the exec and being the main point of contact. I’m also the elected representative of Trevs students. I am very involved in societies, but I can’t deal with the social life of all students as I don’t see much of it now as a working professional. The President is there to support you all, feel free to reach out with any issues. Please try to stick to Slack or email when talking about exec-related stuff as I try to keep Messenger more personal. I recommend you also try to keep things compartmentalised. Please email me to remind if I need to do anything for you or I will forget.

**aii. Internal (college)**

DH: I am also a member of staff. Every week I have multiple meetings with members of staff. On Monday, I have a staff meeting. We discuss general things, it’s an opportunity to bring things forward and receive announcements. Some of you may be asked to fill in on these, most likely the Vice President. I also have meetings with Martin on Tuesday morning every week, as he’s my line manager.

GL: There’s also the Bar Sabb, who are also in the exec, but they are pretty to themselves.

DH: There’s one more new member of college, Rebecca, the college chaplain. She’s in once a week on Monday in the F Flat Office. She seems quite keen on doing stuff that isn’t solely religious or interfaith and is really lovely, so say hi to her if you see her.

**bi. External (Inter-collegiate - PresComm)**

DH: The President role is split into three categories: the JCR, college, and external. Which of these takes up the most time fluctuates. My job is to represent Trevs students to external bodies. PresComm meet every Thursday at 4pm to discuss university-wide issues, so Trevs-specific things aren’t generally brought up. I may involve specific members of the exec on certain issues, but generally don’t need to. We’ve developed a very positive relationship this year, have been good at inviting guests over, and have made substantial changes and progress in terms of showing the university we are to do stuff. Hupefully yhis means the JCRs will be respected a lot more. There’s 16 of us, so it can be hard to et specific things out.

**bii. External (Inter-collegiate - PresForum)**

DH: There’s also a monthly Presidents Forum with Jeremy Cook, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, which is an opportunity for us to bring stuff forward concerning Durham-wide issues, speak with university higher ups. It’s also an opportunity to get advice from other presidents, is a great support network, and just generally an avenue for student representation. Presidents can get projects, so I may disappear because fo this. I’ve been involved in three, such as Durham Global Week, and contacting uni HR and finances to ensure Buttery and bar workers can be paid and registered quickly.

DH: In a nutshell, I’ve got a lot of different roles and am pulled in a lot of directions, so if I seem dismissive, I promise I’m not, I’m just working on other things at the time.

GL: If it’s on the more urgent side, how do we get that through quickly?

DH: Hit me up on Messenger if it’s urgent. I generally don’t look at emails after 5pm. During the day, I’m temporarily moving into F flat as my office.

**AGENDA 4: PLANS FOR EASTER TERM**

**PLANS & GOALS**

1. **Buttery chair**

JT: Not to have a crisis and to make sure events go smoothly. Really just to make sure we’re not under any financial burden. We’re already booked for a lot of events.

1. **Chair**

AS: Elections in the post-exam period. TH and I have looked over dates but need to double check there aren’t any clashes. I’m going to have a meeting with Steering and the President to discuss reorganising the election timeline in hopes of increasing voter turn out. shift some elections to Rpiphany to let freshers settle in a bit more and build more confidence. Working with head freps for interviews and analysing applications. I will also be initating the re-ratification process after exams.

DH: When were you planning on updating mailing lists?

AS: After exams probably.

1. **Welfare Officers**

MH: Stress Less for entire month of May. We also are doing an Instagram stories campaign with anecdotes from the exec and other staff/members of the Welfare Team regarding dealing with stress.

AS: Have you got a schedule for when things are running?

AO: There’s something on pretty much everyday.

MH: We can share the schedule.

DH: Yes please.

AO: We will also start ordering supplies for Fresher’s Week, as well as helping with Frep interviews.

DH: What is the plan for Frep Applications?

AS: Information is planned to go out on May 14th.

MH: Its open during and after exams to keep it available for everyone.

AS: The hand-in for frep applications is planned to be 7th June.

DH: That’s Trevs Day.

MH: Its just a rough timeline, we can modify it. We’ve just had one Zoom call.

DH: Who’s working on Fresher’s Week in terms of communications.

MH: Chair, welfare officers and head freps (James and Clemie).

DH: Keep me in the loop, but sounds good.

MH: Also getting the welfare room sorted.

DH: Make sure you coordinate with PMG.

AS: Can the new Tier 2s do drop ins – do they have training?

AO: Only Sarah can at the moment as she has active listening training – working on getting some for Charlotte so she can help out at Summer Ball/other events.

MH: So to sum up, Stress Less, frep applications, ordering supplies, and working Summer Ball/other events.

1. **Publicity Officer**

TG: Pre-exams, I’m hoping to set up all the key publicity jobs, like the noticeboards, newsletter,This Week in Trevs, and post-request form so I don’t have to worry about them as much during exams. I’ll also be working on updating the website and meeting with Ben to help shape the role of Assistant Publicity Officer. Other than that, it should mostly be keep the various social media channels updated.

DH: What is the timeline for getting the noticeboards set up?

TG: Hopefully within the next two weeks, depending on how long it takes for people to submit their info on the Google Form.

AS: It would be great if we could get more offline promotion, especially for elections. We could get volunteers from steering to sit outside the Dining Hall before dinner time if people have any questions about roles and elections, or have more posters and things.

TG: Definitely, speaking to my predecessor, offline media like posters seems to be the most effective.

1. **International Rep**

HF: MH introduced me to the idea of the Eurovision event, so I’m going to try and organise that. I will try to hold a few more language cafes. I’m leaving for home quite early (7th June) so won’t be around after that.

DH: Just be careful running too many events during exams. Could things be run in coordination with Stress Less?

MH: Works for us.

HF: Could shift some to late May?

AS: One of the exec could stand in for language café in your absence if you ask, or someone from the committee.

GL: Can we have Eurovision toasties?

JT: Being sorted. Same toasties at slightly discounted rate, they’ll drive up sales hopefully.

DH: How receptive were people to that?

JT: It was fun, but not really a seismic shift in sales.

DH: On that note, talking about JCR emgagement, since this is the first year not massively impacted by COVID, if we have any new ideas about how we as an exec can boost engagement that would be great.

AS: We could have an informal sports session.

MH: We have one for stress less. Back Lawn sports on May 1st.

AS: Could be done post-exams.

GL: Sometimes sports captains do workshops and stuff.

DH: Theres also Festival of Sports at Maidens Castle.

AS: That’s moreso for the teams, could be cute to have something more casual. Hit me up if you have any other ideas.

1. **Social Chair**

PMG: Main concern is TrevsDay, trying to everything ordered by first week of May. Have an EventsComm meeting in the second week of term. After that, main focus is decorations – try to publicise and invite people to help out, although it will be an early morning. I’ll also be helping out with Frep interviews. I’m also meeting with Janice and college in first week of May.

MH: Decorations for Trevs Day could be done as part of Stress Less.

PMG: I was thinking of continuing the theme from Freshers Week, very fantasy, witches, that kind of things. Potential tagline of, ‘I’ll put a hex on you.’

GL: We have donkeys. And a swamp.

PMG: If anyone wants to come to meeting next week, that could be good.

DH: Regarding inviting other exec members to committees, make sure it remains committee focused. Just offer input when necessary.

PMG: I’ll add the relevant people to the group chat.

DH: Because of changes made by JL, you may not be aware of everything (e.g. fashion show). There’s an event document me and Janice work on together for logistics, I’ll send it to you guys.

1. **President**

DH: My plans are to support you guys, and to make sure you’re doing jobs effectively. I would urge you all to be careful and focus on your degree during exams. At the moment, I’, focused heavily on Summer Ball, which is coming along quite well. We’re a bit behind but nothing major. In terms of the JCR, I’ll be doing things here and there behind the scenes, setting things up for a smooth handover with GL. Working to communuicate. Mentoring, meeting next Friday. College are keen to have a strong start like last year which is lovely. Replacing sports team pictures in bar with last terms – taking longer than expected. Working to maintain relationship with SU. Own projects with SU – welfare teams, will contact if we’re needed. A lot of it isn’t necessarily JCR related, but contact me if you need support.

**OUR PLANS**

DH: I included this to highlight any particular things we want to achieve or do well as a collective exec – discussing the how and what specifically. Anyone got any ideas?

AS: As HF was mentioning yesterday, getting more international students engaged in events. Starting this term sets us up well for next year. Could do more smaller events, or develop new means of communicating and engaging with them?

DH: Communicating and engaging with international students has been an issue in the past.

AS: HF, you were mentioning about the We-Chat.

HF: In my experience, face-to-face interaction is the best way to communicate with international students.

AS: We could throw a small scale event for them, though we’d have to fit it in the timeline.

DH: We can use the platforms we use to advertise bigger events and apply that to smaller events. We could generate a buzz with posters and such so it reaches more.

MH: A lot of people don’t realise how many Instagram accounts Trevs has, so collating all of them could be helpful.

GL: Post them all on main – post it at least somewhere else.

AS: Could also do posters. Also tag other Trevs accounts in story posts. Can just repost stories.

MH: TrevsPres and JCR are typically the biggest.

DH: We can discuss our proper action plan later on in term when things are moving more and we have better idea of the picture. One thing I introduced this year has been a free tea and coffee service in the bar. Would be good if you could all help out. Mostly me and Roshni have been setting it up. Set up in the morning, take down in the evening at 7pm – any later risks people coming to the bar and messing it up. If we could help out wherever possible, that would be great. I’ll put a timetable up on Slack/whichever we decide on to sort things out.

GL: Are we planning on carrying it on after exams? Is there still a need for it?

DH: I would say yes, we can see how popular it is and if its not used we can stop.

MH: Also if you’re walking by, check the water levels and fill up if necessary.

DH: To fill up the water, can either take it to the Upper JCR or the water cooler by the inclusive toilets. Can ask the bar for pitchers of water and fill it up that way. I store all the tea and coffee in the JCR office – oatmilk in mini fridge, milk sachets, fruit tea, herbal tea, hot chocolates. If anything is low or missing, tell Kayleann or leave message on office whiteboard. College are kind enough to fund it for us. Especially during exam season, its important to make sure it runs well while also taking time for ourselves.

**TREVS PARENTING SCHEME**

DH: Pre-COVID, Trevs had an academic parenting scheme. Students would send applications to Welfare Officers, pair with an academic mentor whos got at least a 2:1. I had three maths parents shared with my siblings. This died over COVID. I would like to bring it back. It’s not going to be purely academic anymore as people have their own college families, but it would be nice to have it integrated in college life. Timeline – people send in applications at end of year/start of summer (July), we look over applications and decide who we want to be parents, families of all sizes, academic focus, parents don’t have to be same subject, at least one child, parents and children paired based off interests/subject.

GL: Would the current first years be able to be parents?

DH: For now, current students would all be parents. We may be able to open it up so not just first years can be children but that’s quite ambitious. I still need to send documents to college. I’ll send it to you guys and get your feedback, hopefully we can generate a buzz. My idea is to use Trevs Day as an opportunity to raise awareness of the scheme, encourage people to propose to each other. Trevs Day probably the best event for this, but any other ideas are welcome. I think President, VP, and Welfare Officers be involved in scheme, anyone else think they should be let us know.

MH: Would you not deem it necessary to have the Chair there? They are for frep interviews – is this protocol?

DH: I don’t know if its necessary for now – maybe in the future if it becomes more formalised.

AS: I can help in brainstorming.

GL: We could have a wedding booth at Trevs Day.

MH: Could have application forms in the booth.

DH: Do need to highlight its not binding. Could make them official over summer – people can have their families but not recognised by college. I have a whole document, should be able to send it out before the end of next week.

**AGENDA 5: MISCELLANEOUS**

**THE DSO**

DH: Does anyone know what the DSO stands for?

MH: Durham Student Organisation.

DH: From a legal POV, every common room is the same entity. It’s the framework for how common rooms and other student organisations (e.g. Team Durham, Durham Experience) are run. It’s a very abstract concept. For us, it means our bank account is monitored directly by university finance, and we get direct legal aid from the university. It is headed by Jeremy Cook – any big legal documents go through them. The Memorandum of Understanding is between the Common Rooms of the DSO and the SU, signed by Jeremy Cook.

GL: No one, not even President, can sign legal documents on behalf of the JCR.

DH: Requires three roles, President, Treasurer, and Chair. It is a framework on how to build a common room. It also tracks our finances.

GL: It varies by role, but you shouldn’t really get involved with unless President, Treasurer, or Buttery Chair.

DH: The reason I bring this up is that recently we’ve had a lot of controversies. A lot of colleges have recently gone independent. This is not something I see happening for Trevs as we don’t have much need. There was a vote a few years ago, but because of COVID we didn’t reach quorum. What the DSO is supposed to provide is stability – they’re meant to help us out if we’re struggling.

**MONEY STUFF**

1. **eCommerce**

DH: eCommerce is the new online payment system, it is a lot easier to use. If you want to throw a ticketed event, notify the President/Social Chair. It goes through uni finance. I’ve created a document with info regarding what the President needs for eCommerce. With most things, double check with Janice or the Treasurer. I’ll see if I can get the Social Chair and Treasurer access to eCommerce, but they may not allow this as you’re students.

1. **Spending from budgets**

DH: As exec members, we all have our own budgets (Chair exempt).

GL: KP at the start of next year may ask for a rough outline as to your spending.

DH: Keep in mind what your budget it is, and keep the Treasurer in mind when spending. If you do buy something, use the Expense Form, send it to KP (Treasurer) and they’ll process it. All expense forms must be confirmed by President and Treasurer, and takes about 3 working days to transfer to a bank account/process. Regarding Amazon and the like, it is easier to just use the JCR credit card, saving the hassle of an expense form.

GL: When filling out an expense form, include a formal receipt and make sure you include the correct bank details.

DH: We did say that the Treasurer should send out a document with info as to how to fill out an expense form.

**DURHAM-WIDE ISSUES**

DH: People having stopped using Dialogue Signpost. The uni often sends the President information to share to students, which is fine, but annoying. There is a discussion about how to resolve this. The President Committee has also been in discussion with Jeremy Cook regarding welfare, social issues, and student support. One other thing is financial matters. PresComm is constantly asking the university for more funding and asking where all the money is going, such as student admissions, or the housing crisis.

*[break to get on train]*

DH: The things that will really affect the exec are the housing crisis. MH mentioned that the President is a very good avenue to voice any issues you see as a Durham-wide issue, as we can bring in university officials through PresComm.

**NOX TRAINING**

AS: Some of us have already been trained.

DH: Not everyone has to be trained, we have more enough. There will be another session on April 26th if anyone is interested.

#

# **Appendix 1: Bonding Activities**

# **Bonding Activity 1: Fun Fact Hunt Icebreaker**

Each member of the exec submits 3 facts about themselves. One fact per person is chosen and all facts are collated in a table.

The exec spend 15 minutes talking to each other, introducing themselves to and getting to know each other.

The aim is to match each fact to the right person

The activity is rounded up by asking one person to give three facts they know about someone else on the exec. The second person then does the same about someone else and so on and so forth.

Here’s the completed table:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Fact** | **Name** |
| Has flown a plane | James |
| Met David Tenant at a paint a pot | Tenny |
| Had a pet axolotl | George |
| Has had orange juice spilt on them | Matthew |
| Studied GCSE Astronomy and failed | Hugo |
| Was offered to become a model in Japan as a baby | Dorian |
| Did ice skating for 4 years | Patri |
| Fell in the Church Street graveyard and pulled someone in with them | Alysia |
| Can quote mean girls and twilight off by heart | Akshita |

## **Bonding Activity 2: The Human Knot**

The exec stand in a circle, and link hands (right hands with left hands).

The aim is to untangle and finish in a closed circle with everyone holding hands.

This exercise helps with communication and teamwork. People get a feel for how they work together and are forced to work together in possibly uncomfortable positions (literally!).

## **A group of people on a beach  Description automatically generatedBonding Activity 3: Connect-a-limb**

Each person’s limbs are given a number (assuming 4 limbs per person, for 5 people, limbs are numbered 1-20).

Numbers are called out in pairs. Limbs with these numbers have to then connect.

The exec must navigate entangling and not breaking any connections until all limbs are connected.

Like the human knot, this exercise builds communication and teamwork, although it is more of a fun exercise and less team-building oriented. Participating members end up in incredibly close contact with each other, hence the decision to put this at the end of the bonding trip!

**Appendix 2: Activities Resources**

**A: Merrill-Reid Social Types exercise**

The purpose of this exercise was for the exec to reflect on themselves and critically look at how they work and what social style they feel most comfortable in. This is a good exercise to get the exec to think about how they approach individual work and teamwork, evaluating what they’re currently comfortable with and how they want to grow. The exec split themselves up based on which of the four social styles they resonate with more. In their groups, they then write down qualities and common obstacles associated with their social type. Everyone compares what each group wrote down at the end.

Again, this exercise is good for collaboration and communication within the individual groups. It also serves as a quick way to map which quadrant the members of the exec each lean towards and how to work together.



Of course, this representation is very crude and as such is malleable. No one fits strictly within one social style all the time, but it’s an effective way of showing the different ways people tackle tasks in a group.

**B: Post-it Note exercise**

The exec write down messages to themselves on post-it notes. These are things they are excited about, worried about, what they’re currently thinking, things they want to achieve etc… These will be kept by the President-elect, who will give them back to the exec later in the year for them to look back on and see how they’ve grown and changed.

## **C: Extra Games played**

## Werewolf

Played in evenings. Fun game to play together, keeps people on their toes. Rules can be found here: <https://playwerewolf.co/pages/rules>

## The land of Ogg

There is a rule for what may and may not exist in the land of Ogg. Those who know what belongs in the land of Ogg give examples (such as “in the land of Ogg there are sheep but no cows). Everyone else must guess what the rule is, but can only guess by giving an example themselves

## Splat

Well-known game. Good to get people warmed up. Rules can be found here: <https://www.scouts.org.uk/activities/splat/>

## Count to 21

The team must collectively count from 1 to 21 (or whatever number they choose). There are only two rules: 1: If two people say a number at the same time, the whole group has to start again. 2: One single person cannot say two numbers in a row

## The Witch (kudos to The Manglers)

Have you heard of The WitchTM? The what? The what? The WitchTM! Oh, The WitchTM! Oh, The WitchTM! Oh, The WitchTM! Oh, The WitchTM!



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