

# Constitutional Amendments 2013

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## 1/ The Change the Charities Procedure Motion (Constitutional) 18/11/12 (ratified 13/1/13)

Proposer: Maddy Ward                      Seconded: Ruth Evans

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

- a. In the JCR Charities Meeting, we discuss and vote on all charities individually (as opposed to voting when we have heard about all the charities we choose to discuss).
- b. People find it hard to vote to reject Charities Motions, perhaps because they don't want to seem mean.
- c. There are limited Charities funds so that in general, the more charities we support, the less each receives.
- d. In some parts of the constitution, what counts as an appropriate organisation to receive our money is not made clear.

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

- e. The process would be fairer if people heard about all the Charities that we chose to discuss before making a final vote.
- f. The process would be fairer if people voted with their eyes closed.
- g. The Constitution should be consistent.

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

- h. Insert point v. into Clause 13h. to read "Voting will only occur after all requested discussions concerning Charities Motions have taken place, in accordance with Standing Order Table 1, clause 12."
- i. Change "If there is an objection, then the motion shall be debated as normal at the appropriate stage of the agenda." in Standing Order Table 1, clause 12, to read "If there is an objection, then the motion shall be debated as normal, and voted on once all requested Charities discussions have been heard. Votes shall take place with eyes closed, apart from the Chair and the Secretary, who shall keep their eyes open to count the votes."
- j. Replace "charitable bodies" with "charities" in Standing Order 5, clause 4.

## 2/ The "I Love the Smell of Constitutional Amendments in the Morning" Motion (Constitutional) 10/2/13 (ratified 24/2/13)

Proposer: Andrew Riddles                      Seconder: Shaahin Pishbin

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

- a. We have a Constitution.
- b. There are references in the Constitution to sections and practices which no longer exist, or have changed due to later amendments.
- c. JCR Committee members represent the JCR on more college committees than are currently mentioned in Appendix II.

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

- d. The Constitution should be factually correct, up to date, and easily interpreted in an unambiguous way.

This JCR therefore resolves to:

- e. Delete “...and Appendices” from §17.
- f. Insert “under the election procedure contained in Table 3 of the Standing Orders,” into §18i after “all full members of the JCR”.
- g. Delete §19c.
- h. Add “or Rep(s)” after all instances of “Officer(s)” in §13f.
- i. Rearrange the list of Officers following Treasurer in §21 and Standing Order Table 2, §1 in alphabetical order, and update any references to these clauses as appropriate.
- j. Change §22 from “it shall also generally...” to read: “...shall also ensure that the running of procedure at General Committee meetings is in accordance with the Standing Orders”.
- k. Change the reference to “§23” in Standing Order Table 1 to “§21”.
- l. Delete “and Educational Policy Committee” from the role description of the Access and Equal Opportunities Officer in Standing Order Table 2B, §1f.
- m. Rearrange the list of Reps in Standing Order Table 2B in alphabetical order, and update any reference to these clauses as appropriate.
- n. Delete “to be decided in that meeting by a simple majority vote” from the role description of the PRAT Rex/Regina Regni Fabarum in Standing Order Table 2B, §2c.
- o. Amend the role description of the Returning Officer in Standing Order Table 2B, §2h. to read: “The Returning Officer shall report to the Vice-President. S/he shall act in accordance with §43 of the Constitution.”
- p. Change the reference to “§51b” in Standing Order Table 3 to “§52b”.
- q. Delete “as set out in Section 13 (h) of the Constitution” from §4 of Standing Order Table 4.
- r. Change “Junior” to “JCR” in Standing Order Table 6, §8d.
- s. Change “in the Remainder Ballot” to “in their respective ballots” in Standing Order Table 6, §11d.
- t. Add the following to Appendix II:
  - a. **Equality:** President, Vice-President, Access and Equal Opportunities Officer and Women’s Officer
  - b. **Music and Visual Arts:** President, Vice-President and Art Rep
  - c. **Web:** President, Vice-President, Secretary and Computer Rep

### 3/ The “We RON This Town” Motion (Constitutional) 10/2/13 (ratified 24/2/13)

Proposer: Andrew Riddles      Seconded: Tom Finch

This JCR notes that:

- a. §18iii. Of the Constitution describes a means of electing Officers subject to successive victories of RON in by-elections, but there is no mechanism in the Standing Orders to invoke this.
- b. §45j. of the Constitution bans the “canvassing, advertising or advising of voters in the general Committee election” in Michaelmas by the President-elect and Vice-President elect.
- c. In current practice, the incumbent Committee also refrain from supporting election candidates to remain impartial, despite this not being described as electoral malpractice in §45.

- d. The first OGM of Hilary term is normally Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> Week, but SO Table 3A §1a-b requires that by-elections be held *“between Wednesday of 1<sup>st</sup> Week of Hilary and the first OGM of Hilary Term”*.

**This JCR believes that:**

- e. It is in the best interests of the JCR that Committee positions are filled by the end of Hilary term at the very latest.
- f. Incumbent members of the JCR Committee should not be permitted to back a given candidate in a JCR election or by-election, in the interests of impartiality and fairness.

**This JCR therefore resolves to:**

- g. Change *“first OGM of Hilary Term”* in Standing Order Table 3A, §1a. to *“second OGM of Hilary Term”*.
- h. Insert *“election or...”* before each instance of *“by-election”* into §1c of Standing Order Table 3A.
- i. Change §45j. of the Constitution to read *“Canvassing, advertising or advising voters for any Committee election or by-election by an incumbent member of the General Committee, the Returning Officer, the President-elect, or the Vice-President elect.”*
- j. Change §18iii. Of the Constitution to read: *“Elected by the vote of full members present at a General Meeting, or female full members present if the election is for the position of Women’s Officer. This procedure shall be followed in the event of two consecutive victories for re-open nominations (RON), or two consecutive elections in which no candidates stand, in by-elections held under the procedure in Table 3A of the Standing Orders.”*

#### 4/ The “Abduwhat now?” Motion (Honorary Membership) 5/5/13 (ratified 19/5/13)

Proposer: Andrew Riddles

Seconder: Isobel Priest

**This JCR notes that:**

- a. Appendix III of The JCR Constitution lists a number of Honorary Members of the People’s Republic of St. Giles.
- b. One of the members listed is Abdullah Öcalan, a founding member of the Kurdistan Worker’s Party (PKK).
- c. The PKK is internationally regarded as a terrorist organisation, including by the UN, NATO and the EU.
- d. A previous Constitutional amendment (10/02/2013) affirmed this JCR’s belief in an apolitical JCR, and withdrew Honorary Membership from Barack Obama for this reason.

**This JCR believes that:**

- e. Abdullah Öcalan is clearly a controversial political figure.
- f. Bestowing Honorary Membership on such figures impedes our desire for a college society encompassing all political views.
- g. Honorary Members should embody the principles of mutual respect, witty banter and general badassery that we all cherish as members of this People’s Republic.

**This JCR therefore resolves to:**

- h. Withdraw Honorary Membership of the JCR from Abdullah Öcalan.

- i. Mandate the JCR Committee to hold a poll of JCR opinion to suggest up to two new Honorary Members, to take the places vacated by Obama and Öcalan.

### 5/ The Flexible Budgets Motion (Constitutional) 5/5/13 (ratified 19/5/13)

Proposer: Peter Blenkarn      Seconded: Jake Savile-Tucker

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

- a. Currently the Treasurer proposes a budget based on projections made on the basis of the previous year's spending and the incoming officer's estimations of how much money will be required.
- b. Unfortunately, this is not an exact science and inevitably budgets are over-estimated and underestimated.

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

- c. If there was the capacity to amend budgets during the year finance could be re-allocated in accordance with changing plans and inaccurate projections at the start of the year.
- d. This would ensure that money is not wasted/unspent, in turn benefiting the JCR.

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

- e. Grant the Treasurer discretion to amend budgets, subject to ratification in a general meeting, by amending the Constitution as follows:
  - i. Insert into Standing Order Table 2B paragraph 1d. (Role of JCR Treasurer): *"The Treasurer may, at his/her discretion, submit to a General Meeting a proposed reallocation or increase of funds in the budget, to be ratified in that meeting by a simple majority."*

### 6/ The "Fight Against Board-um" Motion (Constitutional) 19/5/13 (ratified 2/6/13)

Proposer: Tom Beauchamp      Seconded: Anna Spearing-Ewyn

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

- a. The JCR has a collection of board games and toys.
- b. These games spend most of their lives in storage, and only ever see the light of day to entertain interviewees in the Christmas Vac.
- c. The JCR has a successful system, managed by the DVD Rep, which allows members to borrow DVDs from the collection.

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

- d. Board games are fun.
- e. The Person Responsible for Alcohol and Toys needs some Toys to be Responsible for.
- f. JCR members ought to be able to play with board games and toys which belong to the JCR (and therefore, to its members).

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

- g. Add to the role description of the PRAT in the JCR Constitution: *“The PRAT shall be responsible for ensuring that the Toys and Games collection is properly catalogued and available for borrowing.”*
- h. Mandate the Computer Rep to set up an online board game booking system along the lines of the current one used for the DVD Collection.
- i. Ensure that the PRAT has an adequate budget to buy new games and replace old ones.

### 7/ The “Domsexual” Motion (Constitutional) 19/5/13 (ratified 2/6/13)

Proposer: Caroline Taylor

Seconded: Rebecca Bowden

**This JCR notes that:**

- a. Currently there is a position entitled ‘Domestic Secretary’ on the JCR Committee.
- b. The Domestic Secretary(ies) is/are responsible for organising JCR Guest Dinners, JCR Desserts and liaising with college on all domestic facilities.
- c. Over the last few years only women of the JCR have applied for this position.

**This JCR believes that:**

- d. This title has connotations of a stereotyped gender image.
  - i. This propagates the image itself.
  - ii. This in turn discourages men from applying.
- e. The title fails to represent the responsibilities of the position fully.

**This JCR therefore resolves to:**

- f. Change the title of the Domestic Secretary position from Domestic Secretary to Domestic Officer.

### 8/ The “Alumni Are Our Friends” Motion (Constitutional) 13/10/13 (ratified 27/10/13)

Proposer: Shaahin Pishbin

Seconded: Will Todman

**This JCR notes that:**

- a. There is currently no designated role in the JCR for working with the Development and Alumni offices, which have grown substantially in recent years.

**This JCR believes that:**

- b. There is a lot of potential for increasing relations between the JCR and the Development and Alumni Office. This could include organising/facilitating/advertising events with Alumni such as workshops, master-classes, talks or even helping out at Gaudies; communicating what sort of SJC merchandise students want to exist (and buy!); increasing student awareness of schemes such as the Student Challenge Fund and more generally the increasing importance of alumni donations; and generally providing student feedback to the Dev/Alumni office.

**This JCR therefore resolves to:**

- c. Create the role of ‘Alumni & Development Rep’
- d. Add to section “Table Two B: Standing Orders for the Roles of JCR Officials” point ‘2.1’ which will read: *“The Alumni & Development Rep shall be appointed by the JCR*

*Committee and ratified by a JCR General Meeting. They shall be responsible for liaising with the Development and Alumni Office at least once a term, aiming to provide them with feedback and students' perspectives, and work with them wherever they can for the benefit of JCR members. S/he shall report to the JCR President."*

- e. Add to the role description of the JCR President in Standing Order Table 2A: "S/he shall be responsible for the Alumni & Development Rep"

### **9/ The Charitable Reform Motion (Constitutional) 13/10/13 (ratified 27/10/13)**

Proposer: Andrew Riddles

Seconded: Sophie Louth

This JCR notes that:

- a. The Termly Charities Meeting is currently required to be held on the last Ordinary General Meeting of term, at the same time as Rep ratifications.
- b. The previous JCR Committee recommended moving the Charities Meeting to an alternative meeting. (COTR 2012)
- c. Charities can currently receive donations from the JCR Charities Fund via the Annual Charities Vote, Termly Charities Proposals, and Emergency Charities Motions. (Standing Order Tables 4 & 5)
- d. At the last meeting (2/6/13) it was noted that some charities are nominated as both Annual Charities (receiving 50% of all JCR Charities Fund plus anything left over) and are also proposed at all three Charities Meetings.
- e. Termly Charities Proposals request a certain amount of money. If the total amount requested by approved Charities Motions is more than 50% of the Charities Fund, all donations are scaled down, in proportion to the original request.
- f. Consequently, if there are number of Charities Motions, each charity receives very little money.

This JCR believes that:

- g. It is a good thing to encourage St. John's students to participate in charitable giving.
- h. JCR Meetings should ideally be as short as possible.
- i. Annual Charities can already do a lot of good with the generous donation from half of the Charities Fund plus what remains of the Termly Charities money.
- j. Termly Charities get less of a benefit from donations scaled down as a result of the constant inclusion of Annual Charities as Termly Charities Motions.

This JCR therefore resolves to:

- k. Amend Standing Order Table 4, §12 to read: "*The Termly Charities Proposals shall only be placed on the agenda of the second OGM of each term...*"
- l. Amend §13h of the Constitution (rules for Charities Motions) according to the following:
  - i. Insert point §13h.vii., which shall read "*A charity chosen by the JCR in the Annual Charities Vote may not also be nominated for a Termly Charity Proposal.*"
  - ii. Insert "*of up to £300*" after "*expenditure*" in §13.h.iii, to read, "*Charities Motions shall only refer to expenditure of up to £300 from the portion of the JCR Charities Fund*".

### **10/ The "It's Why Her Hair Is So Big, It's Full Of Secret Ballots" Motion (Constitutional) 27/10/13 (ratified 10/11/13)**

Proposer: Andrew Riddles

Seconded: Isobel Priest

**This JCR notes that:**

- a. At present, all votes on motions at General Meetings are taken by show of hands.
- b. Some people may feel pressured to vote a certain way on more controversial issues as a result.
- c. Voting by show of hands is often quicker and more efficient than secret ballot.
- d. Other colleges (e.g. Wadham) have a system whereby any member can request a secret ballot as a procedural motion.

**This JCR believes that:**

- e. All JCR members have the right to vote freely in a JCR meeting, according to their conscience.
- f. Making secret ballots available only by request should speed up the voting process.

**This JCR therefore resolves to:**

- g. Introduce a procedural motion to conduct a vote by secret ballot.
- h. Amend "*Clause b. shall require a simple majority if there is an objection to the move to vote.*" in Standing Order Table 1, §13a. to read, "*Clauses b. and k. shall require a simple majority if there an objection.*"
- i. Create point k. in SO1 §13 (Procedural Motions), which shall read: "*k. That voting be by secret ballot.*"
- j. Create point j. in SO1 §14 (Effects of Procedural Motions), which shall read:
  - i. "*If procedural motion k. passes, the Returning Officer, or, if s/he is not present, the Secretary, shall distribute one ballot paper to each JCR member present. These papers shall be collected and counted by the Returning Officer or Secretary and the result of the vote read at the earliest convenient opportunity.*"
  - ii. "*These ballot papers shall be destroyed at the end of the meeting, in a manner to be approved by the Environment & Ethics Officer.*"
- k. Create point i. in SO1 §14, which shall read: "*The effect of procedural motion k. shall apply only to the current item of business.*"
- l. Insert "*unless a procedural motion that voting be by secret ballot has been passed, in which case the procedure detailed in clause 14j. of this Table shall be followed.*" after "*vote by show of hands*" in SO1, §19c.
- m. Disavow any similarity between this procedure and that used at Wadham, from which this procedure was absolutely not inspired.