

Ratified Minutes of

THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE BAR STRATEGY COMMITTEE

4th Week Hilary Term 2019

Tuesday 5th February

The Morris Room, 18:00

Present: **The Secretary** (Nicholas Leah, *Lincoln College*), **The Treasurer** (Charlie Coverman, *Brasenose College*), **The Standing Committee Delegate** (Elliot Bromley, *St Edmund Hall*), **The House Manager** (Bridget Gaughan), **The Bursar** (Lindsay Warne), **The Director of Digital Operations** (Hugh Bellamy, *Lady Margaret Hall*)

Apologies:

None

Absent

None

Late

None

The Secretary opens the meeting at 18:22pm

Apologies

Requests to Pass Absences from Previous Meetings

Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

Ratification of Minutes

Business

The Secretary moves to grant Ben Fraser speaker rights, seconded by The Standing Committee Delegate

Motion passes nem. com.

The Secretary moves to grant Hugh Bellamy speaker rights, seconded by The Standing Committee Delegate

Motion passes nem. com.

Ben Fraser and **The Director of Digital Operations** put themselves forward to become voting members of Bar Strategy Committee. Their membership shall be ratified in the

following meeting of Standing Committee Monday 12th February.

1. Discussion of the card machine

The Director of Digital Operations explores reducing or abolishing the minimum card spend, currently set at £5.

The Bursar suggests that she is prepared to look at rates for the card machine. She has previous experience attempting to renegotiate the rates for the card machine. She notes that an agenda was not circulated before this meeting because it is the first time the committee has sat in a while and previously had no recognized voting members.

The Treasurer suggests looking at other options and suggests a meeting with the Bursar to investigate other systems. These alternatives can be brought up at the next meeting of the committee. He suggests that 5 pounds is a high charge.

The Secretary suggests bringing this up in another future meeting after more research has been done.

2. Discussion of the bar food.

The Director of Digital Operations asks about exploring other alternatives for bar food, apart from the pizzas. He gives examples of such staples as pork pies and scratchings, favorites at other bars he frequents.

The House Manager provides previous experience with hot dogs and other snacks. Demand was quite low and other avenues have been explored, unsuccessfully.

Ben Fraser suggests popcorn in the style of a pub he commonly frequents usually on Sundays, The King's Arms.

The House Manager mentions that this has been trialed before, and **The Secretary** brings up concerns about smell.

The Standing Committee Delegate asks whether circulation of information – e.g. announcing deals and options in The Secretary's Business at debates – can improve consumption about the bar food. Anecdotally the notice at the previous debate seems to have increased food. **The House Manager** says that she will get the information soon.

3. Discussion of the bar facilities.

The Director of Digital Operations enquires about seating arrangements in the bar and asks for reasoning behind the focus on high tables and not sofas, which could be more comfortable.

Bursar and **The House Manager** inform the committee that sofa seating was removed from the bar to prevent people from hogging the bar. Importantly, the bar should be comfortable but not a coffee place. High tables allow more seating and work especially well for gin tasting and pub quizzes.

The Secretary acknowledges that the Union's bar has a distinctive feel and shouldn't feel like a coffee shop.

4. Discussion of a happy hour and drinks specials

The Standing Committee Delegate and **The Director of Digital Operations** ask about experience and the possibility of a happy hour.

The House Manager says that this was previously trialed in the "dead period" around 5-7pm but did not have exceptionally high take-up. Shortly after it was removed.

The Director of Digital Operations brings up potentially synchronizing happy hours with speaker events (e.g. similar to debate specials). He mentions that the Tony Abbot event was popular and was very fun in the bar. This would help transfer people from the chamber to the bar.

The Bursar says that **The House Manager** has done an excellent job turning the bar from a loss-making bar to a bar that makes a net contribution to the Union's finances. They've tried a lot of initiatives but they end up become costly and ineffective.

The Standing Committee Delegate brings up discussion over publicity for institutionalizing the bar. He asks how we can advertise debate specials and drinks events in the bar.

5. Discussion of pub quizzes.

The Bursar mentions that not all members are students and rearrangement of pub quizzes creates a lot of confusion in terms of updating Facebook, the website and informing the members.

The House Manager notes that the intensity of the Union's term card means that re-arranging pub quizzes can reduce turnout and brings additional challenges to the bar. Scheduling events and pub quizzes at the same time creates conflict between committee and members.

The Secretary notes that socials are considered disposable by others in committee and are considered overly flexible making arranging dates difficult.

6. Discussion of snooker table.

The Director of Digital Operations asks if snooker table falls under the remit of bar.

The Bursar responds that snooker used to be contained in the general office. She comments that the snooker tables make a very low amount of money surprisingly and there was previous discussion about removing them and replacing them with a billiards table.

The Secretary expresses his condolences about the potential loss of the tables.

7. Increasing publicity of the events

The Secretary reflects on the meeting. Some projects can be pursued but the institutional memory revealed at the meeting was enlightening. He says it is clear that one of the biggest issues is around information. It isn't clear to people what food the bar offers, what facilities it has and current and future deals.

The Standing Committee Delegate asks **The Secretary** if we can include information about the bar elsewhere around the union. **The Bursar** asks how we can increase publicity of events at the bar. **The House Manager** says that we advertise other bars better than the Union's own. Treasurer's treats are very well advertised everywhere in the term card and on the app, but there is nothing on anything about the bar.

The Secretary suggests bringing this issue of advertising to Consultative Committee or Standing Committee.

The House Manager says that she's asked presidents to bring speakers to the bar. This doesn't necessarily increase revenue but is very exciting and beneficial for the members.

The Secretary suggests another meeting in a fortnight in 6th Week. He acknowledges that we need more information. Some problems have solutions that can be debated and should be brought after doing more research and looking for more information. **The House Manager** suggests 5pm as a time.

The Secretary closes the meeting at 19:16pm

Signed,

Hugh Bellamy
Director of Digital Operations
Lady Margaret Hall