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# Minutes of the DCAC Open Meeting

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2006

Prepared by:

**Jamie Saunders**  
DCAC Junior Treasurer

*10<sup>th</sup> November 2006*

**i. Committee Members Present**

Amy Froomberg (JCR/DCAC President), Jamie Saunders (DCAC Junior Treasurer), James Bell (MCR Treasurer)

Apologies: Marijn Ford (DCAC Senior Treasurer), Beth Wensley (MCR Joint President), Jennie Doolan (MCR Joint President)

**ii. President's Report**

AF gave a brief speech on her DCAC-specific activities this term. These included:

**Catering:** A formal group seat reservation will be possible from Formal on Wednesday. Catering is also looking into recycling for the plastic water cups at dinner. Labelling and pricing (esp. of the salad bar) is also being reviewed and hopefully improved, as is the accuracy of the menu.

**Library:** AF has been working with Laura (JCR Academic Affairs Officer) and the Education Committee to allow remote access to the library catalogue. College have now taken this as a priority and are keen to push for this to happen as soon as possible.

**Ents:** AF has worked closely with Edward Taylor (JCR Ents Officer) in running the very successful Ents this term.

**Ball:** AF and the rest of the DCAC Committee have been meeting regularly with Dave Wotherspoon (Ball President 2007) planning the early stages of next year's Ball.

**iii. Approval of minutes of the last meeting**

**VOTE:**

59 in favour

0 against

2 abstentions

61 votes cast therefore quorum was reached

**MINUTES APPROVED**

#### **iv. DCAC Constitutional Changes**

*(Motions can be found in full in Appendix A)*

##### **(a) Constitutional Change to E1i: Changing DCAC Financial Year-End:**

JS quickly outlined this motion. Unique to all Downing College accounts, the DCAC financial year-end is September 30<sup>th</sup>, not July 31<sup>st</sup>. It would be of great benefit to the College Bursary department if the DCAC year-end could be brought into line with the other College Accounts. JS also stated that this would have no effect on the I&E of the DCAC, because income and expenditure is zero during August and September.

A question was asked about whether this would be practical for the DCAC Junior Treasurer, given the year-end is outside undergraduate NPR. JS responded that this should not be a problem – the accounts are produced by the Bursary department – the Junior Treasurer then communicates with the College Accountant by email to produce the final copy, hence there is little need to be ‘on-site’.

##### **VOTE:**

61 in favour

0 against

2 abstentions

63 votes cast therefore quorum was reached

##### **MOTION PASSED**

##### **(b) M1 (ix): Quorum at DCAC Open Meetings:**

AF outlined this motion, similar to the JCR motion proposed earlier in the evening. Despite great effort by the DCAC Committee quorum has not been reached at the previous two Open Meetings, and it was only just reached this evening (helped by the free Ball tickets on offer!). The whole DCAC Committee wish to lower quorum to 45, however the Committee will continue to work on incentives to increase Open Meeting turnout. Hopefully a lower quorum will allow the DCAC to run more efficiently in future.

Several questions were asked. The option of online voting, previously voted on and passed at the Open Meeting of Michaelmas 2005 was mentioned as an alternative to

reducing quorum. This has not been acted on since for several reasons, including queries over the constitutional compatibility of this motion, technical difficulties in implementing such a system and the worry by the existing Committee that much of the debate at Open Meetings will be lost. Another alternative mentioned was that if a vote was passed with majority but not quorum, the vote could be passed by the DCAC Committee. AF conceded that this was an interesting idea, not previously considered by the Committee, however she still believed in the motion – she'd rather have motions passed with a quorum of 45, than by the DCAC Committee. Matt Dyson also mentioned his concerns with reducing the quorum to 45, a small proportion of the student body. JS reminded the Open Meeting that quorum is a 'floor, not a ceiling', i.e. it is the minimum number of votes needed not some sort of maximum votes allowed – this motion won't stop 60 interested DCAC members turning up at the next Open Meeting and voting.

**VOTE:**

31 in favour

26 against

8 abstentions

65 votes cast therefore quorum was reached

**MOTION PASSED**

**v. DCAC Budget Presentation and Approval**

JS gave a brief summary of the Budget. The Budget can be found in full [here](#). JS also noted that due to motion (a) passing this budget was now for the year-end of July 31<sup>st</sup> 2007.

One question was asked about the size of the DCAC Investment Fund and whether it is now believed to be at a suitable size (given the advice of 18months ago that it should be reduced). JS responded stating that after significant expenditure last year (largely on the Party Room), the Investment Fund was now thought to be at a suitable size (approx 1.5x annual income) given the financial risk currently faced the DCAC.

**VOTE:**

65 in favour

1 against  
0 abstentions  
66 votes cast therefore quorum was reached

**BUDGET APPROVED**

**vi. DCAC Ordinary Motions**

*(Motions can be found in full in Appendix A)*

**(c) Creation of a DCAC SAFE Society:**

Claire Willman gave a brief speech outlining what SAFE is and why it should be affiliated to the DCAC. SAFE is a charity focussing on education and sex education in the South African region. Affiliation to DCAC would mean all money raised could be given directly to SAFE, and not used to cover 'in-college' costs (such as Party Room Hire). JS emphasised that, like Downing Amnesty, no DCAC money would be given directly to the charity; however expenses faced by Downing students would be covered.

**VOTE:**

58 in favour  
2 against  
1 abstention  
61 votes cast therefore quorum was reached

**MOTION PASSED**

**vii. Next Meeting**

The next Open Meeting is scheduled for the second half of Lent 2007 – once the new JCR/ MCR Committee's have been elected.

## **Appendix A: Motions in Full:**

### **(a) Constitutional Change to E1i: Changing DCAC Financial Year-End:**

*The DCAC notes:*

- That uniquely to all Downing College accounts, the DCAC accounts year-end is the 30th September.
- That this anomaly causes both a delay in the publication of the audited accounts to DCAC members and an extra and unnecessary hassle to the College Bursary department
- That changing the year-end will have no effect on the finances of the DCAC due to I&E equalling zero during August and September.

*The DCAC believes:*

- That the DCAC financial year-end date should be brought into line with all other College accounts

*The DCAC resolves:*

- To change part E1i of the DCAC Constitution from 'The DCAC Committee shall be responsible for the finances of the DCAC. The year of accounts shall run from 1 October to 30 September.' to 'The DCAC Committee shall be responsible for the finances of the DCAC. The year of accounts shall run from 1 August to 31 July.'

*Proposed by: Jamie Saunders (JCR/ DCAC Junior Treasurer)*

*Seconded by: James Bell (MCR Treasurer)*

### **(b) M1 (ix): Quorum at DCAC Open Meetings:**

*The DCAC notes:*

- Currently the JRC Open Meetings require 60 persons to be present in order to reach quorum
- This is often difficult to reach, resulting in motions passing convincingly by all who are there but underneath quorum, which is frustrating for those proposing and seconding motions

*The DCAC resolves:*

- To lower the quorum number to 45 persons
- To continue working on incentives to attract a higher turnout at Open Meetings

*Proposed: Amy Froomberg (DCAC President)*

*Seconded: Jamie Saunders (JCR/ DCAC Junior Treasurer)*

### **(c) Creation of a DCAC SAFE Society:**

*The DCAC notes that:*

- A SAFE (Southern African Fund for Education) scheme has already been set up within Downing.
- DCSAFE already has a written constitution, a committee and a senior treasurer.
- DCSAFE has already had some success within college in achieving its aims of raising money to support charities that work to promote education in sub-Saharan Africa, and raising awareness of the plight of people in this area.
- DCSAFE meetings are open to any members of the college who wish to attend.
- Most other colleges already have SAFE schemes, all of which, as far as DCSAFE is aware, are affiliated to their relevant college bodies.

*The DCAC believes that:*

- Affiliation to the DCAC would enable DCSAFE to apply for DCAC funding, and thus ensure that all the donations it receives can be passed directly to the chosen charities, rather than a proportion being wasted covering the various expenses incurred (printing costs, ents equipment hire etc) in running the scheme.

*The DCAC motions to:*

- Formally establish DCSAFE as a DCAC affiliated society.
- Seek to provide DCSAFE with the small amount of funding required to cover its expenses this year, if funds are available, and to fund DCSAFE through the normal application process in subsequent years.

*Proposed by: Claire Willman (cw361)*

*Seconded by: Ruth Danvers (rld35)*