Minutes of the Trinity 2021 TGM

Figure 1: CompSoc struggles with an abundance of spending money.

1 Members present

In person:

- Fryderyk Wiatrowski (President)
- Matthew Ruddy (Secretary)
- Cameron Chisholm (Social Secretary)
- James Hughes (Treasurer)
- Alasdair Kergon
- Alexandra Manciu

- Joe Farebrother
- Joe Gardiner
- Șerban Șlincu
- Kinga Mastej
- Lize Alberts
- Pavol Kollar

2 Committee reports

2.1 President

Fryderyk: Welcome everyone to this TGM. In terms of this term, there isn't much to say because we all had exams, it was very busy on our side. Despite that CompSoc was still very busy meeting every Saturday. We didn't have any sponsored events this term. I want to say a big thanks to Cameron, Matt and James for organising everything despite also having exams. From the outside it might not seem like much work but looking at what they've done it's very impressive. I think we've dealt with the lockdown incredibly well, we've had events consistently and they've been popular.

2.2 Secretary

Matthew: I haven't got too much to say, it's been a quiet term for us due to exams but I think things have gone well. We've had some new members. Good luck to the new committee!

2.3 Social Secretary

Cameron: I've got a similarly short report this time, as soon as exams started all the social nights were themeless nights for people to relax during the exam season.

2.4 Treasurer

James: As you might have realised, we still have money. Currently we have £26,296.44 which is a little less than at the end of last term, as expected. At the end of last term we had £27,685. Our spending this term was mostly split between pizza (£650) and stash (£670). The other expenses were general smaller payments made throughout the term, for example the Minecraft server which many of you have been using.

Current balance	£26 296
Balance this time last year	£17 293
Difference of	£9 003

Table 1: Accounts

We also made £128 through a combination of stash payments and membership dues. This time last year we had £24,843.27. Adjusting for an accidental payment received, we had £17,293. As you can see, we've made a large surplus this year and that's definitely something for the next committee to look at.

Fryderyk: Does that include the Oxford Hack takeover?

James: That hasn't happened yet so it isn't included. If the merger goes through with them then we'll have an additional £10,000 which we can use to spend on the hackathon.

3 Other motions

3.1 Approving the minutes from last term

Fryderyk: We need to approve the minutes from last term.

Cameron: I've got the forms ready. Do we want to discuss anything or ask any questions before voting?

Matthew: It's not a very big motion, it's basically just acknowledging that you're happy with what I've written about the last meeting. If there's something I've put down that you feel is incorrect or you want retracted, that's fine.

Voting ensues

For	12

MOTION PASSED

3.2 CompSoc should take over the Oxford Hackathon Society, the student society in charge of organising Oxford Hack (Proposer: Șerban Șlincu)

Șerban: I can provide more info here. Last time I suggested this motion because the Oxford Hack society is kind of dying. We don't have any new members and nobody is in charge of it for next year. Alasdair pointed out that the motion was unclear and some extra steps were needed. We have now talked to the proctors to get the merge approved, as well as having both societies' members approve the merge. The Oxford Hack society is happy with the merge, so it's up to CompSoc to decide. To give an idea of what Oxford Hack is, it's a hackathon which happens in Oxford, for students, by students. Cameron has the t-shirt.

For context, Cameron was indeed wearing an Oxford Hack t-shirt.

Șerban: It happens every year, usually in the maths institute. People from all around the world come to participate in a 24 hour contest.

Alexandra: Just want to add, Oxford Hack usually gathers about 300 people so it's a big event and it's a good way to spend our money. It would be easier to gather sponsors for the event through CompSoc than through us alone.

Șerban: On top of that, we've already got money: Oxford Hack has £10,000 from previous editions. Usually the biggest expense is renting the maths institute, about £12,000. Major League Hacking (MLH), the biggest hackathon league in the world, are partnered with Oxford Hack and have been for a few years. CompSoc taking Oxford Hack is the best thing that could happen to the hackathon.

Alexandra: If the person/people in charge of this need any support, we're more than happy to help all the time. MLH organise hackathons all the time so they know what they're doing.

For	9
Against	1
Abstain	2

MOTION PASSED

3.3 CompSoc should no longer charge a sign-up fee to future members

James: I could talk a little about this. As we've discussed, CompSoc has a lot of money that it doesn't need and could do with spending. It raises the question "Why do we have membership fees?", in the past it was our only way to make money but that's no longer the case due to our sponsorships. Especially as the sign-up is now online, it creates a barrier to entry and limits new members in trying out the society. Really it feels like it isn't needed anymore and it's a relic of the past we could do without.

Joe G: I can add something, when I was secretary I ended up getting into the clubs' committee (where the university decides whether to grant money to societies) and one thing I learned from that is that the point of a small membership fee isn't to make money, it's so that the clubs have a way to keep track of members. I agree that it isn't necessary and I'd definitely support lowering it, even to 1p for example.

Șerban: I agree with Joe, I think the fee is a good thing because it encourages people to *actually* sign up, especially at fresher's fair you don't want a long list of names who never show up but are still on the member list. It makes a clear distinction, especially to sponsors, between the active and inactive members of our society. I don't think £5 is all that much but I'm happy to lower it.

Lize: It's a good point about sponsors, having no sign-up fee for a society that gives out "infinite" pizza because so many people sign up isn't a good thing.

Matthew: Another point about sponsors, when we sign up sponsors we let them know how many members we have (e.g. on our mailing lists) and the members we have now, at least at one point, were interested and active members in our society. It's a bit misleading to give a long list of members most of which are inactive and might never show up to an event.

Alexandra: When I was on the committee we had trouble with people showing up right as pizza arrives, then leaving afterwards. Being able to turn away non-members makes it easier to keep people from doing that.

James: Perhaps on that basis we could amend the motion, lowering the fee to £1? We can vote on the amendment, and then the motion.

Cameron: So the first vote is on what the motion should be, then the second vote is on the actual motion.

To amend motion:

For	12

MOTION PASSED

To lower fee to £1:

For	11
Against	1

MOTION PASSED

4 Election of the new committee

4.1 Election of president

Candidates: Lize Alberts

Fryderyk: Why do you think you're a good fit to be president?

Lize: I've been on the executive committee for some other societies. I'm a DPhil in computer science and I'm also organising an international student network on responsible innovation in technology. I have an inter-disciplinary background, I did a masters in philosphy and am currently working in the HCC (HUman Centered Computing) research group. I feel I have a lot of ideas for workshops in, for example, ethics for AI and practical approaches to ethics, getting away from the trolley problem and such. I'm friends with a lot of other CompSci graduates who'd be happy to give workshops on things like good practices in industry. I come from South Africa and would be interested in potential outreach hackathon competitions with my old university as we don't have a lot of opportunities for stuff like this.

Joe G: I've got a quick question. You mentioned trolley problems, would you or would you not?

Lize: Would I pull the lever? No! That's how people work, you don't want to take accountability. The trolley problem isn't even one problem, it all depends on the way it's phrased. It's a way of figuring out what people's ethical frameworks are. Avoid trolley problems, they're silly in general.

Fryderyk: I have a question too. Say there's a situation, you're organising a hackathon but the rest of the committee stop cooperating and start ignoring you. You're loaded with work and can't organise everything, what would you do?

Lize: I have a lot of connections and friends here who've been in hackathons, so I'd ask them for help. I can't force anyone to help if they can't, but I'd do what I can to make things run smoothly.

James: Any ideas for any events you'd like to see run at the society?

Lize: I've been kind of inactive because of the lockdown situation since I joined so I'm not sure what you've already done, but I've spoken with Fryderyk about potential ideas. I've already mentioned workshops and one of my DPhil friends would be happy to host something like this. I think people would really benefit from it. Another thing is an open course from MIT called "The Missing Semester", things you're expected to know but aren't taught, like coding in shell or data wrangling. It can be hard to get motivated to learn things like this but it could be encouraging to do it as a group. I have another friend who manages events at a media studio, some artists there are trying to make art through machine learning which is something we could collaborate on. In my research group we have something called an ethical

hackathon, where you work with people from different disciplines to solve a problem as a team. It'd be a good experience and would help bridge the gap between subjects.

James: You'll discover that most of the stuff we do around here is just for fun so those sound like great ideas.

Lize Alberts	10
RON	0

LIZE ALBERTS DULY ELECTED

4.2 Election of secretary

Candidates: Kinga Mastej

Fryderyk: Why do you think you'd be a good candidate for this role?

Kinga: I think I'd be a good fit because I already have experience organising. I'm not really from a computer science background, I study chemistry but programming is so vital in STEM subjects that when applying for internships every opportunity needed some basics in programming so I've learned some Python and C++. I think I'd be good at helping Lize to organise events, I'm currently the leader of a 6-day online bootcamp event coordinating with 7 committee members. I'm always tackling issues and keeping things going. The bootcamp starts in the first week of August and we'll be organising an event for high-achieving Polish students to receive personalised mentiorship for their university applications. We're collaborating with over 20 speakers from four different countries, so I've obtained a lot of experience contacting people, managing events and working together as a team. I was also an event organiser for the Oxford Polish society. I've been looking at [CompSoc's] Facebook and there are many great opportunities available. My aim for this role is to attract more students from STEM backgrounds and give them skills to help improve their employability.

Matthew: You mentioned you were going to try and branch out and attract more students from other STEM subjects to the society. What would be a good way of doing that?

Kinga: I think we can go into collaborations with societies like chemistry or biology. This year especially, if someone didn't search specifically for computer science then nobody from the other subjects would join or be interested. Advertise at freshers' fair alongside other STEM subjects, post into other society pages to increase the outreach.

Fryderyk: I have a very important question which has to be asked to all anyone aiming to be secretary. What keyboard do you have?

Kinga: Keyboard?

Matthew: Yeah there's a lot of typing, especially the minutes.

Kinga: I'm able to type fast.

Joe G: When I was secretary, I'd record the audio and go through it later.

Fryderyk: One more question. It often happens that some people in the committee are busy with their degree and others have to take over their roles. Would you be happy to take over other roles sometimes to help others out?

Kinga: I also did that in the Polish Society committee, it's natural and it's why part of why I wanted to join the society here. Taking on work from the treasurer or president is a good way to gain experience.

Kinga Mastej	10
RON	0

Kinga Mastej duly elected

4.3 Treasurer

Candidates: Pavol Kollar

Pavol: I'd like to run for treasurer. I've just finished my 2nd year of my Maths and CS degree. I think I should engage with the society because I'm guilty of being a "dead member" and I wand to amend that. I've done some camp organising for the past 5 years, I've been responsible for the money as well and I think it's taught me enough responsibility to carry the society. Hearing from other committee members it looks like we have some events coming up to spend all this money we have. To borrow words from Donald T, we should "Make CompSoc spend again".

James: I have some questions which were inspired by the questions I had last year. You deal a lot with value as a treasurer, what's the most expensive thing you could fit in your room?

Pavol: I have a pretty spacious bedroom. Probably a plasma TV or maybe a Tesla.

James: What is the VAT number of the society?

Pavol: I'm not even sure what that means.

James: It's a trick question, the society does not have a VAT number. That's something good to know. What would you do to manage the income of the society? We're making a lot more than we're spending.

Pavol: We can either lower our income or raise our spending. Maybe taking on fewer sponsors and focusing on our own events in addition to sponsor events.

Joe G: The advantage of a lot of sponsors is that we get a wide variety of tech talks. I don't think we should reduce the number of sponsors, just reduce the amount we charge for them.

Pavol: We could also spend more money on events, for example more food/stash or having a more expensive event like a trip to the cinema or a museum.

Matthew: CompSoc did a trip to Bletchley Park a few years ago which I think was quite successful.

James: One more question, this one's kind of like a choose-your-own-adventure. Imagine a situation: It's 2AM and your phone rings. It's the president! She's with some friends, they've been drinking, and she demands that you order pizza for everyone present.

Pavol: I'd have my phone on "Do not disturb" at night so this would never be an issue. I like my sleep.

Fryderyk: Imagine one day you look at the CompSoc bank account and see an extra £100,000. What do you do? I ask this because it actually happened.

Pavol: My first instinct is to check if it's a mistake, if not then we could buy everyone a laptop. The mistake should be easily visible.

Pavol Kollar	10
RON	0

PAVOL KOLLAR DULY ELECTED