

Kellogg College Finance and Resources Committee

Inquiry into MCR Payment of £733 to the 2019-20 MCR Ball President

Introduction

At the meeting of the Kellogg College Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) on 3rd June 2020 the Committee received a report on the MCR expenditure. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the Finance Bursar was asked to investigate further. This report sets out the conclusions of a preliminary inquiry into the £733 payment.

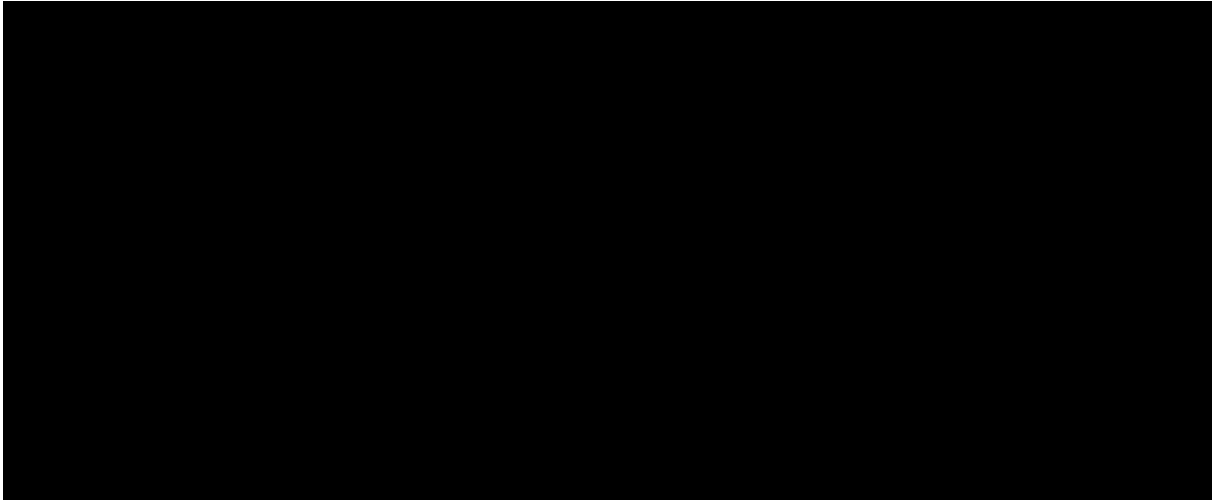
Report Structure

This report adopts the following structure:

1. Lines of Inquiry
2. Analysis and Conclusions
3. Recommendations.

1. Lines of Inquiry

- A copy of an MCR email to all Kellogg students from Michaelmas Term 2018 [the prior year] that states “*we [the MCR] feel that you deserve a little more love. So this year for the first time ever our ball president will receive all their meals free at Kellogg for the entire Trinity term*”. The email was provided with an understanding that it represents a statement of MCR policy regarding the subsidy by the MCR of the Ball President's meals for Trinity Term.



1.2 [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

1.3 MCR Constitution and Standing Orders

The MCR Constitution and Standing Orders were reviewed. Sections germane to this inquiry are:

- Article 8. Finances, Section 4 of the MCR Constitution states that: “The MCR President may approve any requests for expenditure not exceeding £250, in consultation with the Treasurer, to be paid from any bank or other financial account maintained on behalf of the MCR, or by the requestor, with reimbursement provided by the MCR or the College. All requests for expenditure in excess of £250 must be specially authorized by a two-thirds vote of the Committee, as must all requests for expenditure made by the MCR President.” The MCR Standing Orders state that the duties of MCR Treasurer include “to pay all bills authorised by the MCR”. [Redacted]
- The MCR’s Standing Orders state that “the MCR President shall organize or delegate the organization of the Annual Ball”. [Redacted]

1.4 Supplementary Material [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

2. Analysis and Conclusions

The College's Position Regarding Provision of Free College Meals

2.1. [REDACTED]. There have been a few discussions with the MCR about the College's willingness to cover the cost of MCR role-holders dining in College when the role naturally involves the role-holder being in College at a meal-time [REDACTED] the College have generally been supportive of these requests where it would be disruptive for the role-holder to have to make arrangements to eat elsewhere. Prior to 2019-20 the College would not charge for any instances where such an agreement had been made. With an expanded MCR budget made available in 2019-20 the College ceased not charging, but accepted that the MCR might choose to cover the cost for a role-holder to enable them to fulfil their role on site more practicably. [REDACTED]

2.2. The College regards the spirit of the MCR offer to meet the cost of meals taken at the College during Trinity Term as recognising that the Ball President may have to spend considerable time in College during Trinity Term, and the ability to eat in College on these occasions without incurring personal expense offers considerable support to the Ball President in maximising the time available to organise the Ball and to meet and liaise with the Ball Committee.

[REDACTED] the MCR Governance Framework

2.3. The MCR governance framework consists of the MCR Constitution and the MCR Standing Orders. There is minimal reference to the Ball in either the MCR Constitution or Standing Orders. The MCR Constitution places responsibility for organising or delegating the organisation of the Ball solely with the MCR President. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[Redacted]

2.4. [Redacted]

2.5. [Redacted]

2.6. The single financial threshold of £250 stipulated in the MCR Constitution is a purposeful control intended to balance the practicality of making payments alongside managing the risks of potentially inappropriate payments. [Redacted]

2.7. The MCR Standing Orders in respect of the Treasurer role identify a number of largely enabling duties of the Treasurer, but do not emphasise the control or ‘gatekeeper’ aspects of the role. Financial reporting expectations are focussed on the College Governing Body and Finance Committee but do not mention reporting regularly to the MCR Committee and do not specifically include mention of the Ball. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

¹ Remunerate “to pay someone for work or services”

2.10. [Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

Overall Conclusion

2.12. T [Redacted text block]

2.13. [Redacted text block]

2.14. [Redacted text block]

3. Recommendations

- i. The College Governance Working Group and the MCR review the MCR Constitution and Standing Orders seeking to ensure that:

a. [REDACTED]

ii. The College Finance Office work more closely with the MCR Treasurer to establish an appropriate level of detail and structure for MCR financial reporting.

[REDACTED]