

Motion on reviewing rent prices in first year halls of residence

Proposer: Shervin Sabeghi – Deputy President (Welfare)

Secunder: Abhijay Sood – Union President

Union notes:

1. Following precedent from the previous review of first year rent prices, the College have approached the Union requesting that students choose how rent is set across each hall, within the confines of a breakeven costing model
2. This model only considers College-owned first year halls i.e. Eastside, Southside, Beit, Wilson, Woodward and Pembridge
3. The College's breakeven model considers the total cost of running *all* these halls over a 39-week period, and covers:
 - a. Staff costs (both generally, and local to each hall)
 - b. Estates: day-to-day maintenance, security, soft services, cleaning etc.
 - c. The debt accrued from the construction of halls paid back over a 50-year period (i.e. 2% per year, so 1.5% for a 39-week year)
 - d. Long term maintenance: bigger refurbishment works
4. In 2014/15, Union Council decided on the current rent setting model where the ratio of rent per square metre between South Kensington and Woodward halls was 2:1^{1,2}.
5. In 2020/21, Kemp Porter Hall will be added to the accommodation portfolio. This is a new block currently in construction situated very close to Woodward in North Acton, and will have rooms identical to Woodward.
6. Pembridge is being removed from the portfolio next year. Xenia is considered separate from this model as it is not owned by the College.
7. In 2019/20, the average price of rent was £182 across 2,374 bed spaces. For 2020/21, College indicated that they intend for this to be £190 across 2,988 bed spaces. However, this *does not* represent an average increase of £8 across every room as the model changes significantly with the addition of Kemp Porter.
8. If Kemp Porter is added to the current model at the same price as Woodward, and Pembridge is completely removed, the average rent price is £170 across 2,988 bed spaces. This is more reflective of the actual increase in the average rent price.
9. The addition of Kemp Porter and removal of Pembridge means that the proportion of halls in North Acton increases from 27% to 49% which intrinsically changes the balance between North Acton and South Kensington halls.
10. Council met in December to consider College's proposed model, and to allocate the division of rent between halls³. Council resolved to reject the financial model presented by College, as no option under that model would be acceptable.
11. College have since had discussions with the Union, and returned with an alternate financial model, as outlined in Appendix A.

Union believes

1. That the Union should only agree to a model that is in the best interests of students.

Union resolves

1. To endorse the pricing model outlined in Appendix A.

[1] 2014/15 Council paper: https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/how-were-run/committees/14-15/Union_Council/file/4591

[2] 2014/15 Council meeting minutes: https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/how-were-run/committees/14-15/Union_Council/file/4590

[3] December 2019 Council paper: https://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/your-union/how-were-run/committees/19-20/Union_Council/file/5849