

The Draft Minutes of
THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE
2nd Week Michaelmas Term 2018
Monday, 15th October
The President's Office, 15:00

Present:

The President (Mr Stephen Horvath, *New College*), **The President-Elect** (Mr Daniel Wilkinson, *Oriel College*), **The Librarian** (Ms Genevieve Athis, *Christ Church*), **The Librarian-Elect** (Mr Brendan McGrath, *Oriel College*), **The Treasurer** (Mr James Lamming, *Exeter College*), **The Secretary** (Mr Nick Brown, *Magdalen College*), **The Bursar** (Ms Lindsey Warne), **The Senior Treasurer** (Mr Stephen Dixon, *Downing College, Cambridge*), **The Chair of Debate Select Committee** (Mr Andrew Seow, *Lincoln College*), **The Elected Member** (Mr Robert Cootes, *Christ Church*), **The Elected Member** (Mr Thomas Laver, *Balliol College*), **The Standing Committee Delegate** (Ms Gemma Timmons, *Magdalen College*), **The Standing Committee Delegate** (Ms Mahi Joshi, *Trinity College*)

The Chair of Debate Selection Committee enters at 15.20

Apologies

The Elected Member, Mr Adithya Menon, *Christ Church* sends apologies, due to disabling or infectious illness.

Absent:

The Treasurer-Elect, Ms Amy Gregg, *Somerville College*

Pass absences:

The President moves that the TFC passes the absences below from the meeting of the 1st Week Finance Committee:

Adithya Menon, Immovable Academic Commitment. Tutorial.

Genevieve Athis. Immovable Academic Commitment. Collection meeting.

Thomas Laver. Immovable Academic Commitment. Economics Class.

Passes nem con.

The President opens this Ordinary Meeting of Finance Committee at 15.04 in the President's Office.

Ratification of Minutes

Mr Thomas Laver moves that the Finance Committee ratify the minutes of the TT18 9th week.

The President seconds this and thanks Mr Laver for minuting the meeting of TSC in 9th week TT18.

Passes nem con.

Requests to Pass Absences from Previous Meetings

None.

Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

The President recommends that The Finance Committee chase the Chair of the Consultative Committee to purchase a projector remote control, following the discussion and The Finance Committee's recommendation to the The Standing Committee from the last meeting.

The President

Business of the President

The President has no business.

Questions to the President

There are no questions to the President.

The President-Elect

Business of the President-Elect

The President-Elect has no business.

Questions to the President-Elect

There are no questions to the President-Elect.

The Librarian

Business of the Librarian

The Librarian has no business.

Questions to the Librarian

There are no questions to the Librarian.

The Librarian-Elect

Business of the Librarian-Elect

The Librarian-Elect has no business.

Questions to the Librarian-Elect

There are no questions to the Librarian-Elect.

The Treasurer

Business of the Treasurer

The Treasurer moves that The Finance Committee recommend to The Standing Committee the passage of the expenses of the Debate Selection Committee worth £374.87

Seconded by the President.

Passes nem con

Questions to the Treasurer

There are no questions to the Treasurer.

The Treasurer-Elect

Business of the Treasurer-Elect

The Treasurer-Elect has no business in their absence.

Questions to the Treasurer-Elect

There are no questions to the Treasurer-Elect in their absence.

The Secretary

Business of the Secretary

Secretary announces the Oxford Union Ball successfully sold out, including the sale of 180 for £75 guest tickets. This has taken the contribution of the ball up from £1.64 to £1,501.64 since guest tickets had not been accounted for in the original budget.

The Secretary therefore requests the authorisation of an additional spending of £425. £175 of this would go towards an additional photographer which was cut out of the budget last week. The rest would cover the costs of additional lighting in the courtyard, where the streetlamp is broken. The Secretary is yet to obtain a quote on this, but does not want to take a risk with the lighting. This would take the contribution of the ball to £1,076.64

The Senior Treasurer suggest looking for the 30 Amp plug to fix this broken lamp, the Bursar says that it is entirely broken.

The President thanks the Bursar for pointing this issue.

The Secretary moves that TFC recommends to TCS additional exp of £425, taking additional contribution of the Oxford Union Ball to £1,076.64

Seconded by President.

Passes nem con.

The Bursar

Business of the Bursar

The Bursar brings to The Finance Committee the numbers showing the progress of Membership Drive 2018.

The President asks how the discussion here would be different to that which is due to take place in The Standing Committee. The Bursar and the Senior Treasurer say that a primary discussion on the Membership Drive normally takes place in the meeting of The Finance Committee. The President agrees to have a discussion on the financial aspects of the Membership Drive in the meeting.

Overall, the Bursar comments that the figures are poor, points out how far behind we are compared to previous terms. Since this is the main source of revenue for Oxford Union, this would set us back for many terms.

The Senior Treasurer concurs, says that this decrease in revenue will require a change in expenditure.

The President asks at what point the membership of the Said Business School is included in these figures, if it is included at all. The Bursar explains that the figures from the Said Business School membership have

never been a part of the figures used in monitoring the Membership Drive, and that they remain completely separate.

The Treasurer asks, out of interest, what happened on Thursday of 0th Week in Michaelmas Term 2012, as it joining figures looked particularly high that day. The Bursar says that this was down to an exceptional, members only speaker event.

The Senior Treasurer agrees, says that a high-profile speaker, ideally non-political speak is needed to boost membership drive.

The President and President-Elect acknowledge this, and mention the attendance of Jude Law and Jo Malone which aided Membership Drive. They point at a noticeable increase in the figures on the day of Jude Law's visit, i.e. Sunday, 14th October.

The President says that steps can be taken to create a final push for membership, including flyer distribution. The Bursar and the Senior Treasurer agree.

The President-Elect says that an email will be sent out today through the OUSU mailing list to publicise membership further. The Senior Treasurer asks why the literature and publicity materials of the Oxford Union cannot be sent out along with OUSU materials. The President-Elect says that made the case for this to happen, but this did not go through and was not accepted by OUSU.

The Senior Treasurer asks who is speaking at the Oxford Union this week.

The President lists the events scheduled to take place this week, particularly the non-political ones such as Paul Smith and the Science Debate, which was scheduled by the President for 2nd week especially to encourage scientists to join the Oxford Union.

The President talks about the Student Essentials Fair, which where we had more sales than have been recorded ever before, indicating more engagement. The President also mentions that the Chair of the Debate Selection Committee reported an excellent turnout at Debaters Drinks on the Saturday of 0th week.

The Senior Treasurer raises the issue of potentially declining graduate involvement with the Union, and asks what can be done to improve this. The President-Elect says that this issue has already be recognised, and steps have been taken to address it. These include increased MCR outreach and MCR catered events than before. The President mentions the contribution of Mr Kaleem Hawa, ex-Standing who helped secure engagement with Rhodes Scholars, aiming to get over 50% involvement from them by the end of the Open Period. The contribution of Mr Tim Krupa, Guest Liaison Officer of the Blavatnik School is also recognised, as is that of Amy Gregg, Treasurer-Elect who, being a graduate student herself, has been able to help in this area.

The President agrees that more needs to be done to boost the Membership Drive and suggests arranging more tours. The President-Elect says that this has already been tried and that extra tours have already been arranged.

The Senior Treasurer asks if there has been any particular bad-mouthing against the Union in recent times. The President says that nothing in particular, or different to any other years, has been said. In fact, colleges with traditionally low Union involvement, such as Wadham, has actually become more engaged with the Union due to the involvement and contribution of members of committee such as Mr Ray Williams, Ex-Standing.

The President says that the issue may have been that we did not initiate the Membership Drive early enough.

Since more events cannot now be scheduled, there is discussion on the extension of the Open Period beyond the current deadline- Thursday, 18th October. The Bursar says that this has already been done before and would displease those who have already bought membership before the deadline.

Gemma Timmons, the Standing Committee Delegate asks if it may be possible to have another Discount Period or Open Period. The President raises two issues with this. Firstly, this would put those members joining in around week 4 in a difficult situation as they would find themselves stuck between two discount periods. Secondly, it would show weakness on the Union's part, which would be undesirable. The Senior Treasurer affirms this. The President maintains that we work on the social media promotion.

The Bursar says that historic evidence around summer sales and reopening discounted membership have shown that these do not work. A second Open Period may also create a damaging image of the Oxford Union, and suggest that the Union and its facilities can be used without purchasing membership at all.

The Senior Treasurer asks how well attended The Purple Turtle is. The President says that it is, in fact well attended and has good Brookes involvement. The President says that this is a separate issue entirely.

The President says we should focus on social media publicity. Suggests to the President-Elect the possibility of sponsored Facebook event pages for Paul Smith, etc. Suggests a push on the infographic, video and termcard release today.

Plans for the longer term and next year are outlined by the President and the Bursar. These include beginning Membership Drive earlier than -1st week, starting on A Level results day, with intermittent updates on 1st September and 15th September. Bursar mentions that when the Union was able to send letters to the residential addresses of students, there would be a surge of postal applications around 20th September. Although this is no longer possible, we should try and replicate this timeline on social media.

The Secretary asks whether the data presented by Bursar is about life membership only, or if it also includes other types of membership. The Bursar says it is life membership only, since it would require a lot of resources to monitor all types of membership.

The Senior Treasurer expresses concerns about having the discussion on Membership Drive in the meeting of The Standing Committee. The President then expresses concern about the relevance and applicability of this discussion to The Finance Committee at all.

This brings the discussion on Membership Drive to an end.

Questions to the Bursar

There are no additional questions to the Bursar.

The Senior Treasurer

Business of the Senior Treasurer

The Senior Treasurer has no business.

Questions to the Senior Treasurer

There are no questions to the Senior Treasurer.

Chair of the Debate Select Committee

Business of the Chair of the Debate Select Committee

The Chair of the Debate Select Committee has no business.

Questions to the Chair of the Debate Select Committee

There are no questions to the Chair of the Debate Select Committee.

Mr Thomas Laver:

Business of Mr Laver

Mr Laver has no business.

Questions to Mr Laver

There are no questions to Mr Laver.

Mr Robert Cootes:

Business of Mr Cootes

Mr Cootes has no business.

Questions to Mr Cootes

There are no questions to Mr Cootes.

Mr Adithya Menon

Business of Mr Menon

Mr Menon has no business in their absence.

Questions to Mr Menon

There are no questions to Mr Menon in their absence.

Ms Gemma Timmons

Business of Ms Timmons

Ms Timmons has no business.

Questions to Ms Timmons

There are no questions to Ms Timmons.

Ms Mahi Joshi

Business of Ms Joshi

Ms Joshi has no business

Questions to Ms Joshi

There are no questions to Ms Joshi

Any Other Business

None.

Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting of The Finance Committee was set for 3rd Week Michaelmas Term, Monday 22nd October at 15.00.

***The President** closes this Ordinary Meeting of Finance Committee at 15.33*

Signed,

M. JOSHI

Mahi Joshi

Trinity College

Standing Committee Delegate to the Finance Committee, elected member of The Standing Committee