

Draft *ex camera* Minutes of
THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
3rd Week Michaelmas Term 2018
Monday 22nd October 2018
President's Office, 16:00

Present:

The President (Mr Stephen Horvath, *New College*), **The Librarian** (Ms Genevieve Athis, *Christ Church*), **The Treasurer** (Mr James Lamming, *Exeter College*), **The Secretary** (Mr Nick Brown, *Magdalen College*), **The President-Elect** (Mr Daniel Wilkinson, *Oriel College*), **The Librarian-Elect** (Mr Brendan McGrath, *Oriel College*), **The Treasurer-Elect** (Ms Amy Gregg, *Magdalen College*), **The Elected Member** (Ms Rebecca Collins, *Balliol College*), **The Elected Member** (Ms Sara Dube, *St Hugh's College*), **The Elected Member** (Ms Gemma Timmons, *Magdalen College*), **The Elected Member** (Ms. Anisha Faruk, *The Queen's College*), **The Elected Member** (Mr Harry Webster, *Worcester College*), **The Elected Member** (Ms Mahi Joshi, *Trinity College*), **The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee** (Mr Andrew Seow, *Lincoln College*),

Attending:

The Returning Officer (Ms. Alexandra Galloway, *Magdalen College*), **The Access Officer** (Ms. Kirsten Stewart, *Trinity College*), Mr. Hugh Bellamy, *Lady Margaret Hall*, **The Access Officer** (Mr. Brian Wong, *Wolfson College*), **The Senior Treasurer** (Mr Stephen Dixon, *Downing College, Cambridge*), **The Senior Librarian** (Mr Sean Power, *Oriel College*), **The Bursar** (Ms Lindsay Warne), Mr Joseph Sisson, *St John's College*, Ms. Louise Kandler, *Lady Margaret Hall*, Mr. Liam Frahm, *Jesus College*,

Apologies:

The Elected Member (Mr Maxim Parr-Reid, *Trinity College*), **The Chair of the Consultative Committee** (Mr Patrick Cole, *Lady Margaret Hall*)

Absent:

The President opens the meeting at 16.13

Requests to Pass Absences from Previous Meeting

Ms. Gemma Timmons says that she has a compulsory tutor meeting at 16.30 last week.

The President moves that Ms. Timmons' absence from the 2nd week meeting of TSC was due to an immovable academic commitment, and therefore be deemed to be with good reason
Nem. con.

The President moves that Mr. Webster's absence from the 2nd week meeting of TSC was due to a pressing and extraordinary engagement of a personal nature, and therefore be deemed to be with good reason
Nem. con.

Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

The President says that he sent about four corrections to the 1st week draft minutes, which were important marks that he said were not included. He asks whether the Secretary has been able to incorporate these yet, but realises the suggestions were sent only very recently.

The Secretary says that they seem very reasonable, but that he has not yet had the chance to amend the minutes.

The President asks whether the minutes should be ratified now, pending the four amendments, or whether ratification should be delayed.

The Senior Librarian suggests the latter should be done.

The President suggests that the minutes are circulated by Tuesday 4pm, to be ratified the following week. The President asks about the situation with the 2nd week minutes, and why they have not been circulated.

The Secretary says that these will be circulated by Tuesday 4pm, and that they will have to be ratified the following week.

Business of the President

App Update

The President says this item of business is also on the business of the President-Elect, and that he will leave Mr. Wilkinson to discuss most of the issue but that he is awaiting response from the IT Officer, whose Apple ID has been requested multiple times. He says that an issue has now been created as we do not have the necessary information to trial the app. He says the app should be launched by the end of the month.

Librarian leaves 16.17

Press Requests:

1. The President says he was sent a request for comment late on Thursday about the Membership Drive after last week's TFC, and that he responded in a manner that was not as full as he would have liked due to speaker events. He clarified that we are only at the halfway point of the Membership Drive as well as a number of points. He says that the President-Elect also received a request about the Membership Drive, but did not give comment.
2. The President says that he was not certain if the request was from a journalist, but he received a request for comment about the visit of Alice Weidel, and issued the same comment as was issued the previous week.

Business of the Librarian

Reform of the Library Committee

The President asks about the Librarian's business in her absence.

The Librarian-Elect says that the Librarian intends to bring the reform of Library committee next week.

Sara dube enters at 16.19

Proposed Change to Rule 24

The President says that it is unhelpful for rules or Standing Order changes for TSC to be sent out on Monday, as it is difficult for members of committee to read such items at short notice. He asks if there is someone present to move the proposal in the Librarian's absence.

The Treasurer says that the aim of this is that, by analogy with DSC, that an access member sitting on Standing Committee gets first pick at being the Standing delegate to access committee.

The President elaborates that members of standing committee chose their committees on order of seniority, and that there is currently one exemption for DSC in that those with larger numbers of DSC points can leapfrog this seniority. He says this would be somewhat analogous by allowing leapfrogging of seniority for access members.

The Bursar says that she did not think that access membership and the access committee are the same thing, and she does not see the relevance.

The Treasurer says that, as with DSC where those with greater experience of debating can sit on Debate Selection committee, those who are access members have greater experience of issues of access in the Union and are therefore more suited to the committee. He says that this does not require anyone to sit on the access committee, but represents a normative statement that those from underprivileged backgrounds are probably better suited to the access committee.

The President says that he thinks Bursar's point is that the access committee currently focuses on the liberation groups, and this focuses on a different aspect of that.

Ms. Collins says that it is tokenising to say that solely because of someone's socioeconomic background, they should have priority with regards to access committee. She says that the same argument could be made with regards to women or LGBTQIA+ members, or those with disabilities on Standing Committee.

The Treasurer-Elect says she is unclear why financial ability has been privileged over every other under-represented group in the Union.

The Treasurer says that under the current system using seniority, we have the most unsuitable grounds to select delegates as the number of votes someone receives shouldn't determine their committee choice. He says that this is a step towards a more suitable criteria and that if an even more suitable criteria is proposed, then it can be considered. He says he thinks that as there is currently no low socioeconomic background officer on the access committee, it would be more suitable to use this metric to select the standing delegate.

The President says that he is concerned because international and graduate students are not eligible for access membership as currently constituted, and that this mechanism excludes those people.

The Treasurer says that this is a problem with access membership itself, rather than with this mechanism.

The Treasurer-Elect says that she thinks the Treasurer is saying that this measure is at the least better than the current mechanism, whilst she is concerned that passing this change could send a message that the Union endorses low socioeconomic background as the most important type of disadvantage.

The President-Elect says that in the previous term, a member of Standing Committee felt uncomfortable that the two access delegates were both white men, and as a result that member of committee became the delegate. He says that there is precedent for Standing having the power to reallocate the delegates, after seniority is considered.

The President agrees that ratification of delegates is a useful tool that allows TSC to discuss the allocation after the metric of seniority is used.

The President-Elect asks whether it might be more appropriate to create a new appointed position of a low socioeconomic background officer.

The Bursar asks whether we really need another one.

The President-Elect says that regardless of the merits of that issue, it would be a more appropriate way of including those from a low socioeconomic background in the access committee.

Mx. Wong says that appointment of Standing delegates should be based on a holistic process via discussion in TSC

The President says that he thinks this process already basically exists, in that whilst delegates are chosen in order of seniority they must be ratified by TSC.

The Treasurer says that TSC ratification is not in the rules, and that if someone declared they wanted to be the access delegate there is nothing to stop that person being the access delegate.

The President says that whilst ratification of delegates is not explicitly in the rules, it is unclear who is supposed to conduct the appointments based on seniority and so he thinks it intuitive that this reverts to TSC.

The motion is withdrawn by the Treasurer

The Treasurer

The Treasurer moves to authorise the expenditure of £3474.35 for DSC expenses, as recommended by TFC

Seconded by the President

Nem. con.

The Secretary

The Secretary has no business

Ms. Collins

Ms. Collins has no business

Brian wong leaves the room at 16.31

Ms. Dube

Ms. Dube has no business

Ms. Timmons

Ms. Timmons has no business

Ms. Faruk

Ms. Faruk has no business

Mr. Webster

Mr. Webster has no business

Ms. Joshi

Ms. Joshi has no business

Mr. Parr-Reid

Mr. Parr-Reid has no business in his absence

The President-Elect

Membership Drive Report

The President says that after a discussion at TFC, it is worth bringing the attention of TSC to a few points.

The President-Elect says that we should firstly observe that membership numbers are better than in previous years.

The Bursar says that as has happened previously, the last few days of the Membership Drive have gone very well. She says that the second debate was at capacity, and that Dave Chapelle and Jon Stewart on Friday was also a popular event. She says that downbeat observations last week were premature.

The President notes that a formal motion of thanks was passed at TFC to the Bursar, President-Elect and Treasurer-Elect for their hard work, and that lessons about the timeline of publicity have been learnt for next year. He also notes that as expected, the non-political events proved popular.

The Senior Treasurer says that the Union is in good financial health, and that the finances are in the best state they have ever been during his tenure as Senior Treasurer. He says that a contribution has been made for many years in a row, and that an emergency fund is now able to exist.

Mr. Harry Webster leaves the room at 16.33

The President says that audited accounts were published in the HT18 term card, showing the Union with healthy savings and a good balance. He says that these show consistent expenditure.

The Senior Treasurer says he resents what has been printed in the student press, and that he would be surprised if they were to publish a correction, although they should.

The Bursar says that these articles have been damaging and are appearing on search engines, which has many detrimental effects.

The President says that he and the President-Elect plan to ask Cherwell to issue clarifications and apologies and to retract factually erroneous claims.

Oxford Union app

The President-Elect says he and Mr. Bellamy have been discussing what has caused recent delays to the app, and that the app is now ready to go. He says that discussion was had on who the app should be registered under.

The President says that he thinks it was agreed to create an Oxford Union app store developer account and publish the app under this account.

The President moves to grant Mr. Hugh Bellamy speaking rights

Nem. con.

The President says that Mr. Bellamy has created the app, but that it would be useful to have it under the control of the Union. He says that following beta testing with members of committee, the process of creating a Union account can occur.

The President-Elect says that a couple of weeks are needed to test the app amongst members of committee to find any bugs. He says that he is happy for the app to be launched at the beginning of Hilary.

The President says the app has been in development for a while, and that it would be good to launch it as soon as possible. He says that this is because it has been promised for quite a while. He says it is also because it could be used valuably for sponsorship purposes, and particularly for graduate recruitment schemes - he says that most graduate recruitment timelines are coming to an end by the beginning of next term, so it would be good to launch the app sooner rather than later.

The Treasurer-Elect asks how the IP associated with the app works, and that in a normal employer-employee relationship the arrangements are in the contract of employment, but that Mr. Bellamy is not an employee of the Union.

The President says that this is something that should be considered and that a contract should be created.

The Treasurer-Elect suggests seeking advice from someone who is expert in IP law.

The President suggests asking Jo Joyce for her advice.

The Bursar asks about what IP is present in the app.

The President asks that an appropriate IP lawyer should be asked, as he does not know how valuable the IP is. He asks Mr. Bellamy if he has any knowledge about IP of apps in general.

Mr. Bellamy says that he thinks that given that he wrote the code, it remains his intellectual property.

The President suggests that the President-Elect consult Jo Joyce on the matter.

Access Survey Discussion

The President-Elect says that he has two aims with the survey - firstly to ask questions about access issues, and secondly questions he wanted the help of TSC to create.

The President asks whether TSC will get copies of the access questions before the survey is sent out.

The President-Elect says that this will be the case, that Mx. Wong will have finished writing the access questions by tonight, that these will be taken to access committee on Friday for approval, to be brought back to TSC in 4th week.

The President says that it is important to include a range of voices in the survey, and asks whether other people have been able to create questions.

Ms. Stewart says that in access committee on Friday the liberation officers were encouraged to come up with their own questions for the survey.

The President-Elect says that he wants TSC to advise on general questions about the effectiveness of the Union, for example in relation to the bar, the library and in relation to the Library.

The President says that, separately to this survey, he had the idea of sending out Google forms to members towards the end of terms for members to suggest speakers and debate topics for the following term.

The Bursar says that the SurveyMonkey platform gives 100 free responses, and that the previous survey got 532 responses and that these were paid for. She says that it might be useful to see how the previous questions were phrased, and how this can be instructive for the wording of questions this time round.

The President-Elect says that a useful discussion was had in access committee to ensure that questions are not leading, but that they still elicit useful responses.

The Bursar says that questions asking for comment are far more likely to elicit negative and positive responses.

The President-Elect says that this thought prompted the plan of using questions that are answered on a scale of 1-5.

The Treasurer-Elect asks whether an incentive is being offered for completion of the survey.

The President-Elect says that a £25 bar voucher has been offered, as has been previously used.

The Treasurer-Elect says that this might be a way to ensure that not only those who have a grievance against the Union answer the survey.

The President-Elect asks whether anyone has any strong feelings on what should or not be included, but that otherwise he will just draft the set of questions.

Ms. Joshi asks what will happen when the answers to the survey come through.

The President-Elect says that he will write a report and bring it to TSC.

Ms. Rebecca Collins leaves the room at 16.49

The Librarian-Elect

The Librarian-Elect has no business.

The Treasurer-Elect

Proposed Change to Standing Order on OUL

The President says that it might not be appropriate to vote on this Standing Order today, given that the Senior Treasurer and Bursar have not seen the proposed change.

The President says that Oxford Union Limited is a legally registered company created in 2015 when the Union was formalising a contractual relationship with Audible and Oxford Media Solutions, relating to our rights surrounding the distribution of our content. He says that as a result of these agreements we are required to have intellectual property insurance. He says that there are occasional IP issues for our events, and as an example says that a famous singer may hum part of another artist's song during their event. He says there are a number of small issues in IP like this, and that Audible's agreements with content providers requires them to have such IP insurance. He says the company was set up over Michaelmas 2015 by Charlie Vaughan, ex-President, and that various Presidents have since served as directors of the company. He says that the Bursar handles the paperwork relating to termination of appointments. He says that he has been a director since mid-July and this was because

it was appropriate for a new contract to be signed through Oxford Union Limited relating to the new term card.

Ms. Gemma Timmons leaves the room at 16.52

The Librarian-Elect asks whether directors come under financial liability.

The President says that he thinks the Union has directors' insurance for this.

The Bursar confirms this.

The President says there are financial reporting requirements for directors of companies, but that there is no direct cost to becoming a director of the company.

The Treasurer-Elect says that she has drafted this new Standing Order after having noted that the directors of OUL are currently Mr. Michael Li and the President, which seems odd given that Mr. Li has not been President for over a year. She says there is nothing in the articles of incorporation or the Union's rules and Standing Orders to mandate a change in directorship, so has drafted this mechanism to oblige directors of OUL to appoint the subsequent President as director. She says that the Standing Order includes a provision to ensure that the SO complies with the law and would never mean a choice between following the law and the Union's rules. She says there is no legal remedy if a President fails to comply with the proposed SO, but that they could be found to be in breach of the SO.

The Bursar says that this ignores the difficulty of appointing non-UK nationals as directors. She says that in the prior cases of ex-Presidents Mr. Koshikov and Mr. Cavalcanti, it was impractical to appoint both of them.

The Treasurer-Elect says that a similar mechanism exists in Cambridge, and that this is done every term including for non-UK nationals who are Presidents.

The Bursar says that this is a considerable surprise. She additionally says that the auditors have advised not to change the OUL directors until the audited accounts are signed, and that this was the reason for Mr. Zabilowicz to not be appointed. She says that Ms. Vadlamani did not want to remain director after her term, and that this explains Mr. Li still being a listed director.

The President says that Mr. Li is the only member of Standing Committee who was on TSC when the articles of incorporation were signed, and so it seems appropriate to maintain him as a director.

The President-Elect says that his understanding is that all this SO requires is that the directorship is brought to the attention of TSC, and that if there is a good reason to not change the directorship then this can be accepted.

The Treasurer-Elect says that she thinks this SO is important because Mr. Li remains legally empowered to sign any contract obliging the company to do anything as a director, whilst ensuring current Presidents are directors is better because current Presidents are much less incentivised to do anything against the interests of the Union.

The Senior Librarian asks for clarification, and says that the issue is that currently Mr. Wilkinson ought to be a director rather than Mr. Li.

The President says he takes issue with this, and thinks that at the end of his term as President he ought to resign as director and appoint the President-Elect, whilst Mr. Li should remain a director. He says this is because the continuity of maintaining Mr. Li is good, and also that Mr. Li is a more relevant party to the incorporation of OUL. Against the point about accountability made by the Treasurer-

Elect, the President says that a sitting President or President-Elect is still able to sign whatever contract they want and that the consequences for abusing this power is the same.

The Treasurer-Elect says that in the case of Mr. Li it would not impact his term as President.

The Bursar says that Mr. Robert Harris was also director beyond his term of presidency because of Mr. Koshikov not being a UK citizen, and that the Treasurer-Elect is ignoring the advice of the auditors to not transfer directorships until year-end accounts are signed.

The Treasurer-Elect says that she thinks this is accounted for by section B of the proposal, which means that Presidents are not obliged to hand over directorship if it is in the best interest of the company but just have to justify this to TSC, and cannot be compelled by TSC.

The President says that he does not think the proposed SO accounts for this issue and has a lack of clarity.

The Senior Librarian suggests that if continuity is wanted, it would make more sense to appoint a Senior Officer as a director rather than maintaining Mr. Li.

The Treasurer-Elect says that she would be very happy to write another draft accounting for this suggestion.

The President says that he thinks the status quo is that the sitting Senior Treasurer and President should be directors, and not the President-Elect.

The Librarian-Elect asks whether there is a legal maximum number of directors, whilst acknowledging the minimum of 2.

The President notes that having additional directors would incur additional costs and paperwork.

The Librarian-Elect asks whether the President, Bursar and Senior Treasurers might all be directors to ensure continuity.

The President thinks this is good, and accepts that the Treasurer-Elect will redraft this for the following week.

Ex-Officers

No Ex-Officers have any business in their absence

The Senior Librarian

The Senior Librarian has no business.

The Senior Treasurer

The Senior Treasurer says that he has been Senior Treasurer for about 18 or 19 years and that he will be resigning in due course, and says that it is important that a replacement is found. He says that he will not leave the Union without a replacement, but that one candidate has come forward and has met him, the Senior Librarian and the Bursar. He suggests that the applicant would meet with the President and then the Standing Committee next Monday so that he can be questioned for the role.

The President clarifies that the election of the Senior Treasurer is conducted in the House.

The Senior Treasurer says that he has communicated to the applicant this process of meeting TSC, and reads the draft of this communication. He says that the job has to be advertised and has not been yet, but that a suitable candidate may have already been found.

The President says that the Standing Committee will look forward to meeting the prospective candidate.

The Bursar

The Bursar has no business.

The Returning Officer

The Returning Officer thanks the committee upon leaving her office.

The President moves a motion of thanks to Ms. Alexandra Galloway for her service as Returning Officer.

Nem. con.

The Chair of Consultative Committee

The Chair of Consultative Committee has no business in his absence.

The Chair of Debate Selection Committee

The President says that the CDSC does have business, relating to the selection of teams for the World Debating Championships and that in accordance with rule 24 this discussion should be in camera.

The President moves that TSC move *in camera* in accordance with rule 24(g)(iv)(4) at 17.22

Nem. con.

The President moves that TSC invite the Bursar to join *in camera* discussion

Nem. con.

The President moves that TSC moves *ex camera* at 17.36

Nem. con.

Any Other Business

The President moves that TSC ratify Mr. Daniil Ukhorsky, Brasenose College, as an elected member of the Access Committee

Nem. con.

The President moves that TSC ratify Mr. Joseph Grehan-Bradley, Christ Church, as an elected member of the Access Committee.

Nem. con.

The President asks the Returning Officer how progress with the new SDC shortlist is going.

The Returning Officer says that progress is being made, and that she hopes the new Returning Officer would complete a shortlist within 2 to 3 weeks of election.

Date of Next Meeting

- Monday of 4th Week, 29th October 2018 at 16:00 in the President's Office

The President closes the meeting at 17.39.

Signed,

Nick Brown
Magdalen College
Secretary