

Ratified Minutes of
THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
3rd Week Hilary Term 2015
Monday 2nd February 2015
President's Office, 16:00

Present: **The President** (Miss Lisa Wehden, *Worcester College*), **The Librarian** (Mr Charlie Vaughan, *St. John's College*), **The Treasurer** (Miss NamPhuong Dinh, *Corpus Christi College*), **The Secretary** (Mr Robert Harris, *New College*), **The Elected Member** (Mr Joe Fowles, *Pembroke College*), **The Elected Member** (Miss Verity Hubbard, *Lady Margaret Hall*), **The Elected Member** (Miss Cindy Yu, *Christ Church*), **The Elected Member** (Mr David Browne, *Merton College*), **The Elected Member** (Mr Alastair Holder Ross, *St. Hilda's College*), **The President-Elect** (Mr Roberto Weeden-Sanz, *St. Benet's Hall*), **The Librarian-Elect** (Mr Stuart Webber, *Somerville College*), **The Treasurer-Elect** (Miss Antonia Trent, *St. Hugh's College*), **The Senior Librarian** (Mr Sean Power, *Oriel College*), **The Senior Treasurer** (Mr Stephen Dixon, *Downing College, Cambridge*), **The Bursar** (Mrs Lindsay Warne), **The Returning Officer** (Mr Thomas Reynolds, *University College*), **The Access Officer** (Mr Samuel Billington, *Somerville College*), **The Access Officer** (Mr Daniel Haynes, *New College*), **The Access Officer** (Miss Claire Butler, *Worcester College*).

Attending: **The Ex-Secretary** (Mr Alexander Trafford, *Pembroke College*), **The Ex-Elected Member** (Mr Joseph Miles, *Wadham College*), **The Chief of Staff** (Miss Olivia Merrett, *St. John's College*), **The Senior Deputy Returning Officer** (Mr Michael Flagg, *St. Hugh's College*), **The Deputy Returning Officer** (Mr Robert Boissonneault, *Keble College*), Miss Ceri Smith (*St. Anne's College*), Miss Oishika Ray (Capitox, *St. Anne's College*).

Apologies: **The Chairman of the Consultative Committee** (Miss Felicity Blackburn, *Somerville College*).

Absent: **The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee** (Mr Jamie Jackson, *St. John's College*).

The President opens the meeting at 16:02.

Requests to Pass Absences from Previous Meeting

The President-Elect expresses his desire for TSC to reconsider passing his absence from 1st Week TSC as being with 'good reason'. Evidence has never previously been required by TSC. He was on society business attempting to create contacts to attract speakers, and met with: Rochelle Rose; the Vice President of a production company; an executive of a film dubbing company; and the horror actress Barbara Steele. Similarly, he was absent from 2nd Week TSC also due to society business. Whilst in Madrid, he met with: the CEO of 'HELLO!' magazine; a fashion photographer; and others.

The President asks whether there is any evidence backing up these claims.

The President-Elect says that it is bizarre how evidence is suddenly being required when it never has been previously.

The President responds that the Secretary presented evidence when requesting his absence from 1st Week TSC to be passed as being with 'good reason'.

The President-Elect asserts that the requirement for evidence is not in the rules.

The Librarian clarifies that the rules do, in fact, require both 'argument' and 'evidence'.

The President-Elect explains that he thought that sending apologies in advance of a meeting was sufficient. He will also not be able to attend 4th Week TSC as it is his Grandmother's funeral.

Mr Browne notes that we have not yet passed the President-Elect's absence from 2nd Week TSC as being with 'good reason', and that this must be done in this meeting. If he misses 4th Week TSC, then the President-Elect will be deemed to have resigned.

The Librarian responds that this is not true because the absence from 4th Week TSC can be passed as extraordinary in 5th Week TSC.

The President-Elect explains that, in 5th Week TSC, he would like TSC to change the decision it made in 2nd Week regarding his absence in 1st Week. TSC has always done things like this in the past.

The President notes that the rules were observed to the letter when Miss Mehrunissa Sajjad (the Librarian-Elect at the time) found herself in similar difficulties in TT14. This set a precedent that we should follow the rules exactly as they are written.

The President-Elect says that it is a silly argument that, when a new precedent replaces an old precedent, we should follow the new precedent.

The Librarian explains that the new precedent follows the rules, so is correct. TSC is unable to change its decision on the President-Elect's 1st Week absence, but it can decide now whether or not to deem his 2nd Week absence as being with 'good reason'.

Mr Boissonneault expresses his belief that the only way to challenge a decision of TSC is through a Special Adjournment Motion (SAM) in the Chamber.

Mr Holder Ross says that it cannot be denied that the rules are in place; the fact that they have not been followed strictly in the past is not a reason to continue not following them strictly.

The President-Elect asserts that his situation is different to that of Miss Sajjad; he sent apologies before his absences whereas Miss Sajjad did not send anything.

The Secretary clarifies that apologies are merely matters of courtesy; the only way for an absence to be passed as being with 'good reason' is for TSC to vote on a motion brought at its next meeting.

The Librarian notes that we are still within time to vote to pass the President-Elect's 2nd Week absence as being with 'good reason'.

The Treasurer says that we should examine the President-Elect's evidence.

Mr Fowles examines email correspondence on the President-Elect's phone, and informs TSC that he is satisfied by the evidence.

The President-Elect moves that TSC passes his absence from the Ordinary Meeting of TSC of HT15 2nd Week as being with 'good reason' due to his being on society business.

Seconded by the Treasurer.

Nem. con.

Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

The President-Elect says that he has not been receiving any emails sent to TSC (e.g. relating to meetings and minutes).

The Secretary responds that all emails have been sent to president-elect@oxford-union.org.

The President-Elect says that the IT Officer informed him of the President's desire not to switch the President-Elect email account into his name.

The President explains that this was only during the vacation, when she needed access to all follow-ups from potential speakers.

The Secretary agrees to forward all previous minutes to the President-Elect's Nexus email account.

Ratification of Minutes

The Secretary moves that TSC ratifies the Minutes from the Ordinary Meeting of TSC of HT15 2nd Week.

Seconded by Mr Browne.

Nem. con.

The Secretary moves that TSC ratifies the Minutes from the Emergency Meeting of TSC of HT15 2nd Week.

Seconded by Mr Fowles.

Nem. con.

The President

Meetings missed: 0, Missed without good reason: 0

Business of the President:

The Senior Librarian enters the room at 16:05.

The President explains that she has received suggested amendments to her proposed electoral rules changes from Mr Ronald Collinson (Ex-RO, Ex-CCC, Ex-Standing).

The Librarian says that there appears to be some tension regarding the suggested amendments amongst 'RO World', and proceeds to summarise them: the first amendment is purely cosmetic; he agrees with Mr Collinson on the fifth amendment regarding defamatory statements, so the President will accept it as friendly; the Chamber can decide on the sixth amendment regarding the 'unfoundedness' condition; the seventh amendment, regarding automatic disqualification, has no place within the proposed set of rules; neither does the eighth amendment; neither does the ninth amendment; the tenth amendment is purely cosmetic; the eleventh amendment does not really add much and should be decided by the Chamber; the twelfth amendment fundamentally goes against the intentions of the rules changes; and the problem supposedly solved by the thirteenth amendment is already solved by the natural remedy of it being electorally undesirable to annoy people.

The President asks whether the amendments for which the disagreement is only slight can be retracted.

The Librarian responds that they can only be retracted by leave of the Chamber.

Mr Flagg questions the reasons behind the disagreement with suggested amendment 12. He explains that Mr Collinson regards it as merely being advice, not binding.

The Librarian responds that the purpose of the rules is not to give advice regarding everything the Society considers to be permissible.

The Returning Officer enters the room at 16:09.

Mr Browne agrees that it is the job of the tribunal to decide how to interpret the rules.

The President clarifies that, apart from those which she might decide to accept as friendly, the Chamber will be voting on all the suggested amendments.

Mr Boissonneault affirms Mr Collinson's hope that amendments one and ten will be accepted as friendly. The 'missing' amendments which have not yet been presented will pertain to slates, campaigning and door-knocking.

Miss Yu asks whether the members will have a chance to examine the suggested amendments before voting on them on Thursday.

The Librarian says that they will, as all amendments must be posted on the Society's noticeboard by 20:30 on Wednesday (the day before the rules changes are to be considered by the House).

The President states that posters have been put up in every single College by the Librarian, informing members about the vote in Thursday's Public Business Meeting.

Mr Fowles asks whether the relevant information will be emailed to members, given that not many people are likely to see the posters.

The Librarian replies that all relevant information will be emailed to members.

Miss Yu suggests that we make advertisement of the vote very obvious, as she has heard complaints that last term's poll was not advertised well (e.g. advertised in the last notice of a weekly email).

Questions to the President:

The Returning Officer asks whether members will be informed of the intention to start this week's debate slightly late.

The President responds that she is currently working out the logistics, bearing in mind the complications posed by the visit of Marine Le Pen on the same afternoon. Ideally, the debate will start at 21:00, but she cannot inform members until a final decision has been made.

Mr Flagg notes that, given that the discussion on each amendment could take up to 10 minutes, we are likely to require more than 30 minutes in total to discuss and vote on the rules changes.

The President responds that, given that most members will be in the Chamber primarily to hear the main debate, she will ask Mr Collinson to keep his remarks as short as possible.

The President-Elect asks whether, given the support of the Consultative Committee, the President would like to host the Fox News host he has been contacting.

The President replies that she is currently considering the possibility.

The Librarian

Meetings missed: 0, Missed without good reason: 0

Business of the Librarian:

The Librarian moves that TSC approves the appointment of Mr Angus Smith (*University College*) as a Junior Member of the Library Committee.

Seconded by Mr Browne.

Nem. con.

Questions to the Librarian:

There are no questions to the Librarian.

The Treasurer

Meetings missed: 0, Missed without good reason: 0

Business of the Treasurer:

The Treasurer moves that TSC passes DSC expenses totalling £735.65, as recommended by the Finance Committee.

Seconded by the President.

Nem. con.

Questions to the Treasurer:

There are no questions to the Treasurer.

The Secretary

Meetings missed: 1, Missed without good reason: 0

Business of the Secretary:

The Secretary has no business.

Questions to the Secretary:

There are no questions to the Secretary.

Mr Fowles

Meetings missed: 1, Missed without good reason: 1

Business of Mr Fowles:

Mr Fowles has no business.

Questions to Mr Fowles:

There are no questions to Mr Fowles.

Miss Hubbard

Meetings missed: 0, Missed without good reason: 0

Business of Miss Hubbard:

Miss Hubbard has no business.

Questions to Miss Hubbard:

There are no questions to Miss Hubbard.

Miss Yu

Meetings missed: 0, Missed without good reason: 0

Business of Miss Yu:

Miss Yu has no business.

Questions to Miss Yu:

There are no questions to Miss Yu.

Mr Browne

Meetings missed: 0, Missed without good reason: 0

Business of Mr Browne:

Mr Browne has no business.

Questions to Mr Browne:

There are no questions to Mr Browne.

Mr Holder Ross

Meetings missed: 0, Missed without good reason: 0

Business of Mr Holder Ross:

Mr Holder Ross has no business.

Questions to Mr Holder Ross:

There are no questions to Mr Holder Ross.

The President-Elect

Meetings missed: 2, Missed without good reason: 1

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-Elect

Meetings missed: 0, Missed without good reason: 0

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-Elect

Meetings missed: 1, Missed without good reason: 1

Business of the Treasurer-Elect:

The Treasurer-Elect has no business.

Questions to the Treasurer-Elect:

There are no questions to the Treasurer-Elect.

The Ex-Officio

Business of the Ex-Officio:

The Ex-Officio have no business.

Questions to the Ex-Officio:

There are no questions to the Ex-Officio.

The Senior Librarian

Business of the Senior Librarian:

The Senior Librarian has no business.

Questions to the Senior Librarian:

There are no questions to the Senior Librarian.

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.

The Bursar

Business of the Bursar:

The Bursar has no business.

Questions to the Bursar:

There are no questions to the Bursar.

The Returning Officer

Business of the RO:

The RO has no business.

Questions to the RO:

There are no questions to the RO.

The Chairman of the Consultative Committee

Business of the CCC in her absence:

The CCC has no business.

Questions to the CCC in her absence:

There are no questions to the CCC.

The Access Officers

Business of the Access Officers:

The Access Officers have no business.

Questions to the Access Officers:

There are no questions to the Access Officers.

The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee

Business of the CDSC in his absence:

The CDSC has no business.

Questions to the CDSC in his absence:

There are no questions to the CDSC.

Changes to the Composition of this Committee

There are no changes.

Any Other Business

There is no other business.

Date of the Next Meeting

Monday 4th Week Hilary Term 2015 (9th February 2015), 16:00, in the President's Office.

The President closes the meeting at 16:29.

Signed,

Robert Harris
New College
Secretary