

Ratified Minutes of  
THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE  
0<sup>th</sup> Week Hilary Term 2015  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2015  
President's Office, 16:00

**Present:** **The President** (Miss Lisa Wehden, *Worcester College*), **The Librarian** (Mr Charlie Vaughan, *St. John's College*), **The Secretary** (Mr Robert Harris, *New 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 Librarian-Elect** (Mr Stuart Webber, *Somerville College*), **The Treasurer-Elect** (Miss Antonia Trent, *St. Hugh's College*), **The Senior Treasurer** (Mr Stephen Dixon, *Downing College, Cambridge*), **The Bursar** (Mrs Lindsay Warne), **The Returning Officer** (Mr Thomas Reynolds, *University College*), **The Chairman of Consultative Committee** (Miss Felicity Blackburn, *Somerville College*), **The Access Officer** (Mr Samuel Billington, *Somerville College*), **The Access Officer** (Miss Claire Butler, *Worcester College*), **The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee** (Mr Jamie Jackson, *St. John's College*).

**Attending:** **The Chief of Staff** (Miss Olivia Merrett, *St. John's College*), **The Ex-Elected Member** (Mr Joseph Miles, *Wadham College*), **The Senior Deputy Returning Officer** (Mr Michael Flagg, *St. Hugh's College*), **The Ex-Chair of the Debate Selection Committee** (Mr Daniel Bregman, *Merton College*).

**Apologies:** **The Elected Member** (Mr Joe Fowles, *Pembroke College*), **The Senior Librarian** (Mr Sean Power, *Oriel College*), **The Access Officer** (Mr Daniel Haynes, *New College*).

**Absent:** **The Treasurer** (Miss NamPhuong Dinh, *Corpus Christi College*), **The President-Elect** (Mr Roberto Weeden-Sanz, *St. Benet's Hall*)

*The President opens the meeting at 16:00.*

**Requests to Pass Absences from Previous Meeting**

There is no discussion on absences from the previous meeting.

**Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

There are no matters arising from the previous minutes.

**Ratification of Minutes**

The President moves to ratify the Minutes from the Ordinary Meeting of the Standing Committee of MT14 9<sup>th</sup> Week.

*Nem. con.*

**The President**

*Meetings missed: 0, Missed without good reason: 0*

**Business of the President:**

**The President** explains that we need to appoint each elected member of TSC as a delegate to a committee, and that she has asked each elected member, in order of seniority, for their preferences.

**The Librarian** reads out the five relevant committees: Library Committee, Finance Committee, Debate Selection Committee, Access Committee and Wines & Spirits Committee.

The President moves that the Standing Committee appoints Mr Joe Fowles to the Library Committee, Miss Verity Hubbard to the Finance Committee, Miss Cindy Yu to the Access Committee, Mr David Browne to the Wines & Spirits Committee and Mr Alastair Holder Ross to the Debate Selection Committee.

*Nem. con.*

**The President** suggests that we waive Standing Order A2, which concerns termly budgets.

**The Secretary** suggests that it may be more suitable to re-present the annual budget (passed in MT14) to TSC at next week's Ordinary Meeting.

**The Bursar** agrees that this is what we normally do.

**The President** says that she is happy with this plan.

**The President** suggests that we waive Standing Order B15, which concerns vacation days. Reading out the number of vacation days before the 1<sup>st</sup> week debate wastes time and annoys members.

**The Bursar** notes that, for the sake of transparency, it would be sensible to put the list of vacation days completed by each elected member on the society's noticeboard.

**The President** says that she will do this.

The President moves that the Standing Committee waives Standing Order B15.

*Nem. con.*

The President moves that the Standing Committee ratifies the following appointed positions:

- Guest Liaison Officers: Mr Mark Fischel (*Balliol College*), Mr Owen Mears (*Lincoln College*), Miss Elise Jelsma (*Pembroke College*), Mr Adam Dayan (*Magdalen College*), Mr George Dennis (*Christ Church*), Miss Jennifer Brawn (*Nuffield College*), Mr Edward Saunders (*New College*), Miss Seana Moon White (*Jesus College*), Miss Gina Sternberg (*Mansfield College*), Mr Joel Allen (*Wycliffe Hall*), Miss Emily Pritchard (*Worcester College*), Mr Louis Trupia (*Brasenose College*) and Miss Zuleyka Shahin (*Balliol College*).
- International Officer: Mr Ryan Mao (*University College*).
- Access Officers: Mr Samuel Billington (*Somerville College*), Mr Daniel Haynes (*New College*) and Miss Claire Butler (*Worcester College*).
- Women's Officers: Miss Claire Butler (*Worcester College*), Miss Alice White (*Lincoln College*) and Miss Jacqueline Gallo (*Pembroke College*).
- Graduate Officers: Mr Lewis Willcocks (*St. Cross College*) and Mr Tim Muller (*Magdalen College*).
- Oxford Brookes Officer: Miss Anne-Marie Grigorescu (*Oxford Brookes*)
- Saïd Business School Liaison Officer: Mr Rishi Kartari (*Saïd Business School*).
- Press Officer: Mr Daniel Valentine (*Hertford College*).

*Nem. con.*

**The President** says that there is a Debate Mate primary school debating competition happening on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015 (during the Michaelmas vacation). The event has been cleared with Nikki (the Events Manager) and it would be really good to support them.

The President proposes that the Standing Committee reserves the Oxford Union's rooms for the use of Debate Mate on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015.

*Nem. con.*

**The President** explains that, working alongside the Returning Officer, she would like to pass electoral rules changes in time for this term's election. Given that not everyone on TSC is interested in a lengthy discussion right now, she is giving until 20:00 on Friday of 0<sup>th</sup> Week (16<sup>th</sup> January 2015) for people to send in comments, suggestions and changes. All emails should be sent to the President at [president@oxford-union.org](mailto:president@oxford-union.org). Any proposed changes can then be discussed over the weekend before being brought to TSC on Monday of 1<sup>st</sup> Week.

**The Senior Treasurer** requests a brief outline of the intentions behind the rules changes.

**Mr Browne** explains that the intention is to reform the electoral system by introducing Re-Open Nominations (RON) for Officerships, to reform the conduct of the tribunal for frivolous and malicious allegations, and to open up campaigning within reasonable limits whilst ensuring that candidates who are richer or better connected do not have an inherent advantage over other candidates.

**The President** affirms that the proposed rules changes are all quite sensible.

*Mr Holder Ross enters at 16:08.*

**The President** notes that, if any member would like to discuss the proposed rules changes in more detail, her door is always open.

Questions to the President:

There are no questions to the President.

**The Librarian**

*Meetings missed: 0, Missed without good reason: 0*

Business of the Librarian:

The Librarian has no business.

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 in her absence:

The Treasurer has no business.

Questions to the Treasurer in her absence:

There are no questions to the Treasurer.

**The Secretary**

*Meetings missed: 0, Missed without good reason: 0*

Business of the Secretary:

**The Secretary** explains that this term's 'Night in Paris' Ball will be taking place on Friday of 4<sup>th</sup> Week (Friday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2015), the night before Valentine's Day. He would like to start making payments and so needs to get the Ball budget passed by TSC. The Secretary explains that the required 20% contingency is unnecessary when the budget is relatively large. In various past Balls, TSC has given permission for the contingency to be lowered.

The Secretary moves that the Standing Committee approves lowering the contingency for this term's Ball from 20% to 14%.

*Seconded by Mr Browne.*

*Nem. con.*

**The Secretary** explains that the budget has been passed by the Finance Committee, with an amendment temporarily to remove the Wealdstone Raider (Gordon Hill) and, instead, to approve the spending of a £1,000 pot as the Secretary sees fit. The Secretary is speaking to the Wealdstone Raider's agent this evening to confirm his availability and to negotiate on the price. In the meantime, it makes sense to pass the budget without him featuring.

**Miss Hubbard** asks why the Wealdstone Raider is being considered as entertainment for the Ball.

**The President** notes that she made her reservations about the Wealdstone Raider's quality and cost clear to the Finance Committee.

**Mr Browne** points out that the Minutes from this meeting of the Finance Committee are available for inspection on the society's noticeboard.

**The Secretary** says that he would welcome TSC's thoughts on the Wealdstone Raider as a potential entertainment act.

**Miss Yu** questions the relevance of the Wealdstone Raider to a Parisian-themed Ball.

**The Librarian-Elect** retorts that Wealdstone is the Paris of London.

**Miss Hubbard** questions the high £1,000 cost, given that he used to be available for £300.

**Mr Holder Ross** asks whether all his proceeds go to charity.

**The Librarian-Elect** answers that most, but not all, of his proceeds go to charity.

**Miss Yu** asks whether the £1,000 could instead be spent on some kind of raffle or prize at the Ball.

**The President** explains that various alternative uses of the £1,000 were discussed by the Finance Committee, such as having a 'Bucking Bronco' ride or better lighting for the Chamber.

**The Secretary** elucidates that inflation and success in the Christmas charts have resulted in him demanding a higher price, though £1,000 is still apparently a 'mate's rate' (he normally charges £1,500).

**The President** asks for how long the Wealdstone Raider would be at the Ball and what he would do.

**The Secretary** answers that he would probably come for a couple of hours to socialise with guests and, at some point, would reel off his catchphrases through the microphone.

**Miss Hubbard** expresses concern that we might be using him as a 'performing monkey'.

**The Librarian-Elect** points out that Miss Hubbard hired the Wealdstone Raider for her friend's birthday.

**The President** concludes that the Wealdstone Raider seems to cost a lot of money, but we should wait and see whether he is available before deciding on whether to have him.

The Secretary moves that the Standing Committee passes this term's Ball budget, with an amendment temporarily to remove the Wealdstone Raider (Gordon Hill) and, instead, to approve the spending of a £1,000 pot as the Secretary sees fit.

*Seconded by the President.*

*Nem. con.*

Questions to the Secretary:

There are no questions to the Secretary.

**Mr Fowles**

*Meetings missed: 0, Missed without good reason: 0*

Business of Mr Fowles in his absence:

Mr Fowles has no business.

Questions to Mr Fowles in his absence:

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: 0, Missed without good reason: 0*

Business of the President-Elect in his absence:

The President-Elect has no business.

Questions to the President-Elect in his absence:

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: 0, Missed without good reason: 0*

Business of the Treasurer-Elect:

**The President** asks whether the Bursar has looked at all of the debate expenses.

**The Treasurer-Elect** notes that we need to subtract £2.44 for Hula Hoops, leaving a total of £471.60.

**The Secretary** notes that these expenses have not been passed by the Finance Committee.

**The Senior Treasurer** says that this should not be a problem given that TSC is the senior body.

**The Librarian** points out that, according to Rule 62(a) it is, in fact, obligatory for all expenses to go through the Finance Committee unless this requirement has been waived by the Senior Treasurer.

**The Senior Treasurer** agrees to waive the requirement of Rule 62(a).

The Treasurer-Elect moves that the Standing Committee passes debate expenses totalling £471.60.

*Seconded by the President.*

*Nem. con.*

Questions to the Treasurer-Elect:

There are no questions to the Treasurer-Elect.

### **The Ex-Officio**

Business of the Ex-Officio in their absence:

The Ex-Officio have no business.

Questions to the Ex-Officio in their absence:

There are no questions to the Ex-Officio.

### **The Senior Librarian**

Business of the Senior Librarian in his absence:

The Senior Librarian has no business.

Questions to the Senior Librarian his absence:

There are no questions to the Senior Librarian.

### **The Senior Treasurer**

Business of the Senior Treasurer:

**The Senior Treasurer** explains that he would like to talk briefly about OLDUT (the Oxford Literary and Debating Union Trust). It was set up when the Union was on the verge of bankruptcy and could not pay its bills; the death of the Union was envisaged. Senior members of the University and the Union set up a charitable trust to raise funds solely for the benefit of the Oxford Union Society (OUS). Any money they raise has to be for the benefit of the Union. In return, all the OUS's property is vested with OLDUT except for the Steward's House and the Rewley Press. OLDUT have been enormously helpful over the years and have made contributions out of the funds they have. In particular, they managed to persuade Mitsubishi Bank to give £1m (in the form of a loan) for the support of the Union, and they make periodic grants to the Union for specific projects. For example, when the Library was refurbished, OLDUT contributed significantly. OLDUT meet biannually and last met on Saturday. They are a charity whose purpose, aside from giving money to the Union, is to focus on the Union's educational activity, which does not include the Bar! External debates and internal Chamber debates count as educational and are supported hugely by OLDUT. There were times when OLDUT was badly viewed and seen as wanting to take control of Union, but this is simply not true; its motivation is solely to benefit the Union and it is entirely supportive of the current way the Union is run. The Union is not itself a charity which means that people cannot give Gift Aid when donating to the Union; OLDUT is the registered charity so, for any money we are given, we channel it through OLDUT and they pass it onto us. OLDUT has also been helpful in the past with finding speakers.

**The President** reiterates that OLDUT is very helpful and supportive. It is great to have them there.

**The Senior Treasurer** notes that the trustees of OLDUT would be very happy to come and address TSC if we ever wanted. It is unique for a society of this scale (with a turnover in excess of £1m) to be managed entirely by students – long may it last!

**The President** thanks everyone for their help during the vacation. It is unique that we are a society run by students, for students. OLDUT seem to be very pleased with what is planned for the term.

Questions to the Senior Treasurer:

There are no questions to the Senior Treasurer.

**The Bursar**

Business of the Bursar:

**The Bursar** states that all members of TSC should have received an information booklet – please read it and ask any questions!

**The Senior Treasurer** requests that members of TSC please use the staff! They have been here for such a long time and really know how the place works.

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:

The CCC has no business.

Questions to the CCC:

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:**

**The President** congratulates Mr Jamie Jackson (*St. John's College*) upon his election as Chair of the Debate Selection Committee.

**The CDSC** updates TSC on the performance of the Oxford Union's teams at the World Universities Debating Championship (WUDC) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, over the vacation. About 370 teams participated and all four of our teams did very well: the A, B and C teams reached the 'outrounds' (highest 48 teams in the competition); the A team reached Grand Final (top 4 teams in the competition); and one of our speakers was ranked in the top 10 in the world.

**The Senior Treasurer** asks whether there is still a world ranking of debating institutions – we used to be number one! It would be good to tell OLDUT and Mitsubishi how we are doing.

**Mr Bregman** explains that the ranking is very spurious and does not really exist anymore. It is fair to say we are in the top four in the world, but Sydney is probably the best institution at the moment.

**The CDSC** boasts that, currently, we are probably the best debating society in the UK, de facto Europe, de facto the Northern Hemisphere.

The President proposes a motion of congratulations to the Union's debaters for their successful performance at WUDC.

*Nem. con.*

### **Questions to the CDSC:**

**The Bursar** queries an unexpected debating expense from Worlds.

**Mr Bregman** explains that there was a slight shortfall from bank transfers in conversion costs that only became apparent when the delegation arrived in Malaysia, so he paid it.

**The Bursar** says that this seems dubious, since we paid everything the competition requested, including bank transfer fees, in advance.

**The CDSC** suggests that the fees were presented without their own bank transfer fees, but the small-print said we were required to pay them.

**The Bursar** notes that it seems like the organisers are 'pulling a fast one'.

**The Senior Treasurer** asks how large the discrepancy is.

**The Bursar** states that it is £62.

**Mr Bregman** promises that he will look into it, and notes that it has become his specialty to negotiate contracts with Malaysia!

## **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 1<sup>st</sup> Week Hilary Term 2015 (19<sup>th</sup> January 2015), 16:00, in the President's Office.

*The President closes the meeting at 16:32.*

Signed,

**Robert Harris**  
*New College*  
Secretary