

Ratified *ex camera* Minutes of
THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
5th Week Michaelmas Term 2018
Monday 5th November 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*), **The Elected Member** (Mr Harry Webster, *Worcester College*), **The Elected Member** (Ms Mahi Joshi, *Trinity College*), **The Elected Member** (Mr Maxim Parr-Reid, *Trinity College*), **The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee** (Mr Lee Chin Wee, *Trinity College*)

Attending:

The Access Officers (Mx Brian Wong, *Wolfson College*, and Ms Kirsten Stewart, *Trinity College*), **The Returning Officer** (Ms Louise Kandler, *Lady Margaret Hall*), **The Bursar** (Ms Lindsey Warne), **The Senior Librarian** (Mr Sean Power, *Oriel College*), **The Senior Treasurer** (Mr Stephen Dixon, *Downing College, Cambridge*), Mr Liam Frahm, *Jesus College*, Mr Ray Williams, *Wadham College*, Mr Adam Watson, *Hertford College*, Mr David Graham, *St John's College*, Mr. Hugh Bellamy, *Lady Margaret Hall*

Absent:

The Chair of Consultative Committee (Mr Matthew Vautrety, *Magdalen College*)

The President opens the meeting at 16.08

The President-Elect enters the room at 16.09

Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

The President asks about the 4th week TSC minutes.

The Secretary says that he has made the small changes as suggested by the President, but that he thinks the minutes should not be ratified today because they were only circulated this morning.

The President agrees.

Business of the President

Press Requests

1. The President says he has received press requests about the Alice Weidel event cancellation - he told correspondents that Weidel cancelled her entire UK trip relating to security concerns, so she will not be speaking in Oxford.
2. The President says that he received a press request about his allocation of paper speeches from the Oxford Student, which he responded to.
3. The President says that he received a press request from the Cherwell relating to the letter from the Filipino society's letter to the Oxford Union regarding the Manny Pacquiao speaker event. He did not issue any comment.

Oxford SU Discussion

The President says that the Vice-President for welfare and equalities of OUSU contacted him to ask about the Alice Weidel event, asking for explanation about how members shape the speaker program, how speakers are selected, and how members can challenge the speaker program. He says that his view is that there are many ways that members can shape the speaker program, but that the Union is not concerned with the views of non-members unless they are the police.

The librarian leaves the room at 16.13

Ball Refund Issue

The President says that a member called Caleb Winchester messaged the Facebook page asking for a ball ticket refund the night before the ball. After the President-Elect replied affirmatively, he did not provide refund details until about noon on Friday, at which point the President and President-Elect did not have time to process this. The member has now complained and has asked for a review of the situation. The President says that he told the member that he was firstly asked to contact ball@oxford-union.org for ball refunds, and that he did not pass on ticket information quickly. He said he apologised for not making these details clear, but that a refund could not be processed after the ball. He says that he does not think there can be a reasonable expectation of a refund when giving details 8 hours before the ball.

The Bursar says that she thinks there is something in the rules saying that ball tickets are non-refundable.

The President-Elect says that regardless of this, refunds were being processed for this ball.

The Bursar says that refunds do sometimes have to be processed because ineligible people buy tickets, but that they are not given in general.

The President agrees that in this case, refunds were nevertheless being issued.

The Senior Librarian says that a clear policy should be established to avoid issues like this.

The President says that the policy was that members should email ball@oxford-union.org, but that the member did not do this.

The Treasurer-Elect asks whether the member was informed that he would be refunded.

The President agrees that this is the issue in this case.

The Bursar asks about the content of Standing Order A20 on ticket sales.

The President says that nothing helpful regarding refunds is in the Standing Order.

The President says that a more formalised policy for refunds should be agreed in future, but that he is seeking guidance for this situation.

The President moves that TSC grant Mr. David Graham speaking rights
Nem. con.

Mr. Graham says that he knows the Member concerned, and that he was confused because conflicting information regarding refunds was told to SBS students. He says they were informed that tickets were transferable, and then later that they were non-transferable.

The Bursar says that a precedent should not be set for when refunds should be given after the event. She suggests that in this case the President write to apologise, and say that as the refund policy has not been followed the refund should not normally be given, but that in this one case because of conflicting information regarding refunds, a refund should be given as a goodwill gesture.

OTS

The President says that OTS car rental performed poorly with regards to the Koen Laenerts event, because they turned up half an hour late to pick Mr. Laenerts up, because the driver spoke no English so did not understand English, and because the company refused to give specific contact details for the driver.

The President-Elect asks whether the Union has had problems with OTS before, in Trinity term 2017 and Hilary term 2018.

The President says that he is in an awkward position of having to write a letter of apology because Mr. Laenerts was not picked up or dropped off at the airport. He says that he thinks the Union should stop using OTS as a car rental company.

The Bursar says that OTS is significantly cheaper than other companies, and that on the vast majority of occasions OTS has been efficient.

The President says that Mr. Laenerts very nearly did not make it to the Union on time, and only made it because there was buffer time around that particular event.

The Treasurer-Elect asks whether a complaint has been lodged.

The President says that it is complicated because OTS does not directly employ the drivers, but operates via different taxi companies. He says his view is that a risk is taken every time OTS is employed, and that these risks are significant.

The Bursar says that other companies have been used that are very good, and that she will investigate the issue.

Rules Recommendations

The President moves that TSC grant Mr. Ray Williams speaking rights
Nem. con.

Mr. Williams says that these discussions are no longer important because Ms. Collins has withdrawn her motion. He says that he hopes TSC will draft a Standing Order governing elections workshops following the first one on Wednesday.

The Union's Cellars

The President moves that TSC go *in camera* under rule 23(g)(iii)(3) at 16.26
Nem. con.

The President moves to invite the Bursar *in camera*
Nem. con.

The President moves that TSC endorse the strategy proposed by the President with regards to the cellars
Nem. con.

The President moves *ex camera* at 16.47

Nem. con.

Disciplinary Matter

The President moves that TSC go *in camera* under rule 23(g)(iii)(1) at 16.48

Nem. con.

The President moves to invite the Bursar *in camera*

Nem. con.

The President moves that TSC under Standing Order G1(b), impose a fine of £50 on Mr. Shian SJ Harris, *St Catherine's College*, Membership Number 093794

Nem. con.

The President moves that we go *ex camera* at 17.03

Nem. con.

The President leaves the room at 17.03 and vacates the chair to the Treasurer

Business of the Treasurer

The Treasurer moves that TSC authorise £102.60 of expenditure on DSC expenses, as recommended by the Finance Committee

Seconded by Ms. Timmons

Nem. con.

Business of Ms. Collins

Ms. Collins has no business

Business of Ms. Timmons

Ms. Timmons has no business

Business of Ms. Faruk

Standing Order on Elections Workshops

Ms. Faruk says that a Standing Order should exist after the Elections workshop on Wednesday to bind future Standing Committees to follow a certain procedure. She says that her wording was brought to Rules Committee today, who recommended waiting until after the event and bringing the Standing Order to committee the following week. She says that her original writing had the RO, President, President-Elect and Access Officers attending the workshop, and that the reason for this was in this term it was a politically balanced pairing.

The President enters and resumes the chair at 17.06

Mr. Hugh Bellamy enters the room at 17.06

The President agrees that whilst this term the President and President-Elect balanced each other out, they may not do so every term.

Ms. Faruk asks the thoughts of TSC about binding future committees on which individuals should be involved in workshops.

The Access Officer (Mx. Wong) says that he thinks it would be good to bind the RO and Access Officers to attend, but not necessarily the President and President-Elect.

The Returning Officer adds that she thinks the CDSC should always be invited to attend.

The President suggests that the Standing Order mandate the CDSC, RO and Access Officers to attend and to recommend that the Standing Committee recommend different elected officials in each term that it deems to be advantageous.

Ms. Joshi says that she thinks the RO might be given some special responsibility in the event to ensure that the event remains neutral, as they are a completely neutral figure as opposed to the Access Officers and CDSC who may have bias.

The President says that the role of CDSC is to explain debating, and that he is not sure what can be done in terms of the rule to avoid bias, unless another potential pitfall for the RO is to be created.

Ms. Faruk asks whether TSC thinks anything has been missed from the Standing Order.

The President says that he does not think the exact day of the event should not be specified, but that a range should be. He recommends specifying before Wednesday of 3rd week, because it is better earlier in term, but that organising the event for 1st week may be unreasonable, and that events in 2nd week may delay it slightly.

The President-Elect asks about which members of committee might be invited.

The Librarian-Elect asks whether other members of committee would be allowed to attend the event.

The President-Elect says that he thinks the President and President-Elect should be habitually invited.

The President suggests that this be a minimum and that beyond this others may be invited to make the delegation neutral. He says that he thinks it is hard, however, to write rules legislating against bias. He also says he thinks that it is difficult to offset the President and President-Elect, as inviting e.g. the Secretary may not counterbalance this bias. He says that he thinks members of committee can be biased in different ways.

The Secretary says that leaving the makeup of the delegation up to Standing Committee may not prevent bias, as Standing Committee as a body could exhibit bias.

The Treasurer says that slates will be banned next term, and so the danger of those at the workshop being slated will be removed.

The President-Elect says that bias may still be exhibited in favour or against one particular candidate.

The President asks what should be done to prevent members of Standing Committee autonomously entering the event and hacking it to death, given that the rules say that members of Standing Committee have the right to be anywhere on the premises.

The Treasurer says that this right can be overruled and frequently is, and that for example male members of Standing Committee are not welcome at women-only events.

Ms. Faruk suggests that all elected members of committee should not be able to attend the event.

The President-Elect says that members of committee may still seek advice on the elections process and may still have questions.

The Treasurer-Elect asks whether the purpose of the event is to make new people get involved, or answer technical questions about the electoral process.

Ms. Faruk says the intention was to get those who usually would not get involved to come and find out information.

The Treasurer-Elect says that she thinks people who have already run in an election should not be welcomed.

The Treasurer and Mr. Hugh Bellamy leave at 17.18

Mr. David Graham asks whether the committee has considered restricting regular members from attending, because regular members who are not on committee could still lobby in the event for other candidates.

The Treasurer-Elect says there is only so much that can be done to prevent hacking at a 'how to get involved' workshop.

Ms. Faruk asks whether members of Standing Committee should be invited.

The President says that members of Standing Committee should absolutely not be at the event, as those people are disgusting.

The Access Officer (Mx. Wong) says that it might be a reasonable compromise to simply evict those from the event who are found to be soliciting votes.

Mr. Parr-Reid says that no elected official other than the President or President-Elect should be welcome at the event.

The President-Elect asks whether this restriction should be defined in the rules.

The President says that if people want to act in a malicious and unreasonable way, they will do so in some way and cannot be prevented from doing so. He says that he thinks a bare minimum rule should be passed after the event.

The Returning Officer says that for this particular week, it should be requested that elected officials do not come.

The President says that if elected members of committee attend the event this week, they will be asked to leave.

Business of Ms. Joshi

Ms. Joshi has no business

Business of Mr. Maxim Parr-Reid

Mr. Parr-Reid has no business

Business of the President-Elect

The President-Elect says that a member has asked him to raise this issue about the bar with the Standing Committee. He says that the member has raised concerns about member autonomy in the bar, and that he had a long meeting last week with an accompanying long email exchange. He says the main concerns raised were:

1. That the member thinks the music in the bar should be turned down if members request it
2. That the member thinks members should be able to request more temperature regulation and that windows should be shut if asked
3. That the maintenance man should cease maintenance activities during the daytime

The President-Elect notes that the Member also raised general concerns about financial transparency.

The Bursar says that she thinks the issue has been wrapped up by a long email she has just sent. She says the member is known to the staff, and that it is important to note that multiple members in the bar may have different wishes.

The President says that he thinks the issue has been largely resolved, and that the bar needs to cater to all members.

The Treasurer-Elect suggests that issues to do with how the bar operates might be included in the upcoming access survey.

The Bursar says that this will not resolve specific issues of when windows should be opened etc.

The President-Elect suggests that a meeting of the Wine and Spirits committee might be called, and that the issue might be discussed with the member at this meeting.

Business of The Librarian-Elect

The Librarian-Elect has no business.

Business of The Treasurer-Elect

The Treasurer-Elect has no business.

Business of The Senior Librarian

The Senior Librarian has no business.

Business of The Senior Treasurer

The Senior Treasurer has no business.

Business of the Bursar

The Bursar asks about the Ethnic Minorities Officer's planned board games evening, and says that she has received the offer of 40 board games for rental with a member of staff for £100 from Thirsty Meeples. The Bursar asks whether TSC thinks this £100 budget is appropriate.

The President says that he thinks that much money should not be spent on these board games in particular, though he is not opposed to authorising expenditure for the event. He asks the Access Officer to liaise with the Ethnic Minorities Officer with regards to the event.

Business of the Returning Officer

SDC Shortlist

The Returning Officer says that the SDC Shortlist has to be proposed by TSC as a Private Business Motion, and that if there are particular objections then separate votes can be held, but that otherwise she recommends voting as a whole.

The Secretary asks how these individuals have come to be on the shortlist.

The Returning Officer says that she emailed ex-officials that the Union had contact details for, and that these are the people who replied the quickest.

The Treasurer-Elect asks whether any of these individuals have ever been found guilty of a disciplinary offence within the Union themselves.

The Returning Officer says they have not.

The President asks why there are some individuals on the SDC list but not the Tribunal shortlist.

The Returning Officer says that the Tribunal shortlist is relevant to a specific weekend this term, whilst the SDC list is relevant to unspecified weekends over the next three years.

Ms. Timmons asks about the gender imbalance of both the SDC and Tribunal shortlists, because the SDC list has 19 men and 6 women whilst the Tribunal list has 17 men and four women. She says it would be good if this imbalance could be improved.

The President says that it has been difficult to contact these individuals, and the process has lasted several months, so it would be difficult to find further women for the list.

The Treasurer-Elect suggests that instead of just removing men from the list, it could be made a policy to ensure women are contacted with priority when a panel is actually called.

The Returning Officer says that some women that were asked said no, and some were unavailable.

The Returning Officer moves that TSC recommend the SDC shortlist as a Private Business Motion to the Public Business Meeting on the 8th November

Seconded by the Treasurer

Nem. con.

Tribunal Shortlist

The Returning Officer presents the tribunal shortlist, and notes that it contains a lot of the same people.

The President asks about the rule that prevents individuals who sat on a tribunal from sitting on a subsequent tribunal in some time period.

The Returning Officer says that people cannot sit on a tribunal twice in three terms.

The President clarifies that his question is about the individuals who sat on the recent Appellate Board.

The Returning Officer says that there is no rule preventing those who sat on an Appellate Board from sitting on a subsequent tribunal panel.

The Returning Officer moves that TSC approve the Tribunal Shortlist
Nem. con.

Business of the Access Officers

The Bursar asks about the Access Officer co-ordinating with Ms. Antonia Heng on the planned BME social event.

The Access Officer (Mx. Wong) says that they will handle it.

Business of the Chair of Debate Selection Committee

The Chair of Debate Selection Committee says that he wishes to discuss the involvement of an individual in the Oxford IV, and that he is not sure whether TSC should move *in camera*.

The President says that the issue is not to do with a member of the Society, so it is unclear if TSC can move *in camera*.

The President says he does not think there are any grounds to move *in camera*.

The Chair of Debate Selection Committee says that a debater registered for the Oxford IV this weekend is an alleged sexual assaulter, and that he has been barred from some tournaments in China. He says that convenors of the KCL and Durham IVs have tried to barr the individual, but that the KCL IV convenors failed to do so because the individual threatened to sue. He says the view of DSC is that it is well within its rights to bar the individual, but that we should be aware of potential lawsuits. He says he does not believe the lawsuit would be lost but that it would incur significant financial cost. He says the view of DSC was to defer to TSC.

The Access Officer (Mx. Wong) says that they were on the CA team for the KCL IV, and that the individual threatened to sue individuals on the CA team as well as the committee as a whole.

The Treasurer-Elect asks whether the individual has already been given a place for the IV.

The President clarifies that institutions are granted places and teams, and not individuals.

The Bursar says that she thinks it is a difficult decision as barring such an individual would be tantamount to announcing guilt without proof.

The President says that he does not think the stated grounds would be guilt, but that it might make others feel uncomfortable and so might be inappropriate.

Ms. Faruk asks about who exactly the individual has threatened to sue.

The Chair of Debate Selection Committee says that the individual threatened the KCL convenors, but not Durham. He says that Durham do not know why they have not been threatened.

The Treasurer-Elect asks whether the individual is a wealthy person in a position to sue.

The Librarian-Elect asks whether DSC has to specify grounds for barring someone from a competition.

The CDSC says that historically, DSC always has provided grounds, but that there is nothing in the rules mandating this.

The Treasurer-Elect says that if no reason is given for exclusion, there would be very little likelihood of any libel case.

The Treasurer asks whether the individual is being given a crash.

The CDSC says they are not.

The Access Officer (Mx. Wong) says that there is no formal rule mandating that DSC provide reasoning, but that confirmation of registration has already been given, which could make the Union liable for transport costs rather than libel.

The Treasurer says that it is dangerous for TSC to discuss the potential legal ramifications when almost no one in the room has experience in law.

The Treasurer-Elect says that it is difficult to do so without knowing the detailed rules of the competition.

The CDSC says that he will take the concerns of TSC back to DSC.

The President says that this is not possible because the IV is on Friday, before the next meeting of DSC.

Ms. Timmons and Ms. Collins leave the room at 17.48

The Bursar asks whether this individual is an overseas student.

The CDSC says that he is a Chinese student.

The Bursar asks whether this would mean he has probably already booked international travel.

The CDSC says that he believes the individual to be based in London.

The Treasurer asks whether the CDSC has the terms and conditions for the IV.

The President says that he is interested in the question of justice, and that he is not too concerned about legal ramifications.

The Treasurer-Elect says that the Union does not have to apply justice in the same way as a court of law, and that the standard of “innocent until proven guilty” need not apply to this case.

The CDSC says that individuals do not sign a contract when they register for the IV, but that individuals provide payment upon receipt of an invoice, which is considered confirmation of registration. He says that this individual has not paid, and they have been told that the institution has been allocated 1 team for the IV.

The President asks what institution the person represents.

The Access Officer (Mx. Wong) says that the person is from Minerva College, a long-distance learning institution with no physical campus.

The President says that DSC should classify Minerva as ineligible to enter the IV because of its lack of physical campus.

The Access Officer (Mx. Wong) says that long-distance learning institutions are permitted under the rules.

The Access Officer (Mx. Wong) says that this will not work because Minerva does actually have a campus.

The Librarian-Elect suggests waiving a Standing Order on eligibility to not apply to this institution.

The Bursar asks whether the participant's name is public.

The CDSC says that a list of participants is not public.

Mr. Graham asks whether it would be better to bar the individual rather than arbitrarily bar the institution.

The President says that he does not believe TSC should make this decision, but should allow DSC to do so because they are in possession of all the facts.

The President asks if there was disruption at the KCL IV when this individual participated.

The Access Officer (Mx. Wong) says that there was, and that the individual threatened the CA team with "all sorts of things".

The Treasurer-Elect says that banning an individual on the basis of threatening convenors would be reasonable.

The Access Officer (Mx. Wong) says that they will seek to find the evidence of this.

The President says to the CDSC that he thinks TSC is happy to allow DSC to bar this individual.

Changes to the Composition of this Committee

The President says that Mr. Matthew Vautrey has been elected as the new Chair of Consultative Committee.

Date of Next Meeting

- Monday of 6th Week, 12th November 2018 at 16:00 in the President's Office

The President closes the meeting at 17.58

Signed,

Nick Brown
Magdalen College
Secretary