

Draft Minutes of

THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE DEBATES SELECTION COMMITTEE

4th Week Hilary Term 2018

Sunday 3rd February

The TV Room, 17:30

Present: **The Chair of Debate Select Committee** (Chin Wee Lee, *Trinity College*), **DSC Secretary** (Rosa Thomas, *St. Anne's College*), **DSC Treasurer** (Bryan Yan, *St. John's College*), **Member without Portfolio** (Louis Collier, *St. Hugh's College*), **Internals Officer** (Brian Wong, *Wolfson College*), **Externals Officer** (Jason Xiao, *Wadham College*), **Director of Training** (Rachel O'Nunain, *Trinity College*), **DSC Deputy Secretary cum Librarian-Elect** (Sara Singh Dube, *St. Hugh's College*), **President** (Daniel Wilkinson, *Oriel College*)

Apologies: **Standing Committee Delegate** (Chaitanya Kediya, *Exeter College*)

Absent:

DSC opens at 17:37.

Business of the CDSC

DSC votes to ratify the minutes from the previous meeting (HT W3). The motion passes *nem. con.*

DSC votes to appoint Sara Singh Dube (*St. Hugh's College*), *Librarian-elect*, to fill the vacancy on DSC. The motion passes *nem. con.*

The CDSC announces the following portfolio reshuffles:

Externals Officer – Jason Xiao

Internals – Brian Wong

Deputy Secretary – Sara Singh Dube

Member without Portfolio – Louis Collier

Oxford WSDC Proposal

The CDSC notes that rooms at the Union are indeed useable for May 4. He further notes that the briefing time for the tournament could be reduced to 30 minutes long, as opposed to an hour. The tournament cap is anticipated to be 40 teams. The CDSC notes that with DSC's relatively good relations with EC and Cherwell College, out rooms availability should not be an issue.

The DSC Treasurer observes that with respect to the projected balance sheet, even after we reprice the tournament's prices on the bases of access and outreach, we would still be able to make a reasonable profit. If we sell 15 packages, as opposed to 10 packages, of the training workshops, we will make an addition 2,500 pounds.

DSC concludes that preference for admission to tournaments, if there exists oversubscription, will be offered to teams who sign up for both the tournament and the training workshop, as opposed to merely those who sign up for the tournament. The Externals Officer and the Internals Officer suggest that DSC should be transparent about the prices we charge for teams coming from different regions. They note that this is desirable on the bases of both optics and in principle, and that a pricing differential between teams attending from IONA/UK and the rest of the world is indeed defensible.

On the subject of access criteria, the CDSC proposes that state schools and debate charities should be taken as the basis for the access criteria (e.g. access slots eligibility), as per Oxford Schools.

The DSC Secretary suggests that national teams comprising predominantly state schools students may be considered access teams. The Member without Portfolio adds to this, suggesting the amendment where DSC decides upon the eligibility for access spots/pricing on a case-by-case basis.

The CDSC suggests the following appointments: the Externals Officer as Convenor, the CDSC as Deputy Convenor, and with the CAs to be determined later. The Director of Training *for the competition* will be appointed following a later round of applications and selections. The Internals Officer and the CDSC note the suitability of the DSC Treasurer and the ex-Women's Convenor (Ana Verdnik Vilhemina, *St. John's College*) as prospective candidates.

The CDSC is optimistic about the likelihood of the tournament's success. He notes that there exists both adequate international demand, and that the reduced length and amount of time involved in the tournament suggest that DSC does have the organisational capacity to handle the tournament. The DSC Treasurer concurs, adding that the attending kids are likely to be well behaved.

DSC moves to ratify the OxWSDC proposal introduced by the CDSC and supported by the Externals Officer.

Business of the Externals Officer

DSC enters into camera to discuss selections.

DSC Treasurer enters the room at 17:43.

The President enters the room at 17:47.

DSC moves out of camera.

The team spots for Manchester IV have yet to be confirmed. The CDSC suggests that the most reasonable course of action is to inform the selected individuals that they will be going but with the caveat that their team slots have yet to be confirmed. The Externals Officer is to inform the following individuals of their selection:

Manchester IV

Oxford KB: Ishaan Kapoor (Delegation Leader) and Laura Bramall

Oxford AS: Ethan Stewart and Anagh Agarwal

Judge: Marcus Huang

LSE Open

Applicants have included: Kit Mercer, Ishaan Kapoor, Melanie Onovo, Will Prescott, Zaid Idris, Ethan Stewart

Oxford MO: Kit Mercer and Melanie Onovo

Leiden Open

The selections have been confirmed for Leiden Open.

Business of the DSC Secretary

Prosecco and Pro-Ams

The DSC Secretary flags to DSC that one person has asked if i) they could attend if they are not a Union member, and that ii) if they are not a Union member, could they bring a guest?

The President replies by noting that one member can bring up to three guests.

The DSC Secretary further notes that she would need three people to deliver workshops at tomorrow night's workshop (19:30-21:00). She further suggests that non-debating participants could watch any of the debates. For the second half of the half-debate, it may be ideal for the Pros and the chair of that debate to provide a workshop running through the arguments for the debate. 58 individuals have signed up for Prosecco and Pro-Ams.

Helper Points

The Director of Training observes that there is a problem of Helper Points inflation amongst DSC members.

The External Officer responds by suggesting that the problem may not be as large as initially conceived, given that DSC members do not consume a lot of Helper Points but give a lot back through volunteering.

The CDSC notes that on the logistical side of things, he will send out a Debate Announcement email containing the HP records later; he also requests that the Deputy Secretary creates a Google Form for people to review and prospectively complain about inaccuracies in their HP records.

The CDSC also notes that DSC should offer helper points to individuals who adjudicate the Oxford ICYD regional round: one HP for two rounds of judging.

Business of the DSC Treasurer

Expenses

The DSC Treasurer quips that there are a lot of erroneous claims this week.

Dhruva Bhat has provided invalid receipts. Jamie Johnson has submitted a list of expenses claims on behalf of the other judges he has invited to the York round. It is agreed upon by DSC that Jamie should pay those judges and then claim expenses from DSC with copies of attached receipts.

The taxi expense incurred for the Birmingham Schools round has been approved.

DSC moves to pass expenses of 890.45GBP. The motion passes nem. con.

The DSC Treasurer discusses the issue of vacation tournaments; he suggests that we should treat vacation tournaments as comparable to European tournaments for budgeting purposes – some attending participants may live far away from London/Oxford, and thus travel expenses may be rather significant. Whilst this move (increase in the budgeted expense for each vacation tournament) may involve sending fewer people to the tournaments, this problem may be mitigated by our sending more teams to other tournaments during term.

The Director of Training is sceptical; she says that there are some tournaments that may be cheaper to travel to during vacation, and has reservations about the policy because it is plausible that individuals may find vacation tournaments easier or less expensive to travel to than tournaments during term time.

The MWOP notes that we are also more likely to get individuals who apply for tournaments if they live/reside near the tournaments, thus there is an existing mechanism to check against exorbitantly expensive travel claims.

The CDSC suggests that a sensible solution would be to cap the spending at a higher amount and total. He supports, in principle, capping spending, but also recognises that DSC should not undermine individuals who live far away from the tournaments. The CDSC will discuss with DSC Treasurer to determine and note down the caps for spending.

Proposed Standing Order Changes

The first change to the SOs is largely uncontroversial; it involves the recognition of the fact that regional rounds convenors have varying levels of competence skill, and that some rounds may involve more hard work than others. Thus a range of helper points is only fair and reflective.

The second change to the SOs is that if one is selected to speak at EUDC or WUDC for Oxford, one cannot speak at a competition until one has completed their Pro-Am. This standing order, as noted by the DSC Treasurer, has the effective function of enforcing the requirement that WUDC/EUDC representatives for the Union complete their Pro-Ams.

The Director of Training affirms this by noting that there exists ample time for individuals to do their Pro-Ams.

The CDSC observes that there is a possibility for us to have fewer tournaments to send Pro-Ams to than the number of speakers (Pros) who need to be placed into Pro-Ams. The DSC Secretary adds that we should not punish individuals for the fact that there are insufficient tournaments for them to fulfil their Pro-Am requirements at.

The Internals Officer suggests that we could add a supplementary clause that allows individuals to be selected if they can demonstrate that they have the intention and willingness to fulfil their Pro-Am requirements – e.g. multiple applications to speak with Ams across multiple tournaments *after* the internationals to which they are sent.

The CDSC suggests an alternative, where senior individuals (e.g. the WUDC/EUDC delegation speakers who have not fulfilled their Pro-Am requirements) are sent along to judge and go through performances or offer suggestions to participating teams at tournaments, which enables them to effectively act as delegation helpers and quasi-coaches.

The Director of Training is sceptical about the feasibility and enforceability of such a proposal.

The Internals Officer recommends the following supplementary clause: “[the requirement is waived when] the ‘Pro’ speaker has applied for two (or three) times to speak in a Pro-Am, and has not been selected to do so.”

The MWOP notes a particular concern regarding the difficulty for speakers to fulfil their requirements if they are selected for EUDC; he notes that there is a limited number of tournaments between EUDC selections (start of TT) and WUDC, especially in light of the need for teams to prepare for EUDC.

The DSC Treasurer suggests that DSC could allow for EUDC speakers to judge schools’ rounds as a reasonable substitute, OR to rock up to speak with individuals from the Upper-Intermediate squads *at least three times* during Trinity Term. DSC further notes that such a proposal also addresses the low attendance rates problem for squads during Trinity. The CDSC and Director of Training note that the squad attended needs not be strictly the Upper-Intermediate squads, but can also include the Advanced squads or whatever DSC deems to be most appropriate or reasonable.

The MWOP notes that the above criteria should be made very clear to all individuals trialling for EUDC and WUDC.

The RO has yet to send the CDSC the updated list of standing orders. The President will follow up with the RO, specifically on all the SO changes from W1 and W3 HT '19.

The President notes that the new RO is “very fast”.

Business of the Member without Portfolio

The MWOP resigns.

DSC passes a motion of congratulations and thanks to MWOP.

The motion passes nem. com.

Business of the Deputy Secretary cum Librarian-Elect

No business.

Business of the Director of Training

No business.

Business of the Internals Officer

No business.

Changes to the composition of this Committee

The Member without Portfolio (Louis Collier, *St. Hugh’s College*) has resigned.

The DSC Deputy Secretary is now Ms Sara Singh Dube (*St. Hugh’s College*).

The Internals Officer is now Mx Brian Wong (*Wolfson College*)

The Externals Officer is now Mr Jason Xiao (*Wadham College*)

DSC closes at 18:42.

Signed,

Brian Wong

Internals Officer

Wolfson College