

Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Rules Committee

7<sup>th</sup> Week Michaelmas Term 2018

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> 2018

President's Office, 2.00pm

**Present**

**The Treasurer-Elect** (Ms Amy Gregg, Somerville), **Mr Joseph Sisson** (Deputy Returning Officer, St John's), **Mr Adam Watson** (Ex-Standing Committee, Hertford), **The Treasurer** (Mr James Lamming, Exeter), **Mr Ray Williams** (Ex-Standing Committee, Wadham), **Mr Samuel Burns** (Ex-Secretary's Committee, St John's), **The President** (Mr Stephen Horvath, New), NB, AG

**Absent**

**Mr Liam Frahm** (Deputy Returning Officer, Jesus), Officer, Magdalen) **The Returning Officer** (Ms Louise Kandler, LMH)

**Observers**

**Mr Hugh Bellamy** (Secretary's Committee, LMH)

***Mr Williams opens the meeting at 2.13pm***

**Minutes**

**1. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

No matters were raised.

**2. Ratification of Previous Minutes**

Mr Williams moves that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2018 be ratified, seconded by Mr Burns.

*Passes nem. con.*

**3. Passing of Absences**

**Mr Burns** offers apologies from the Returning Officer for her absence.

The Secretary moves that his absence from the Ordinary Meeting of the Rules Committee on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2018 be passed, seconded by the Treasurer-Elect.

*Passes nem. con.*

**Mr Williams** offers apologies from Mr Frahm for his absence.

**4. Secretary's Report on the Composition of the Committee**

**Mr Burns** notes that he expects the question of expanding the Committee to be raised by Mr Watson later.

## 5. Mr Watson's First Piece of Business

Mr Watson moves that Mr Bellamy be given speaking rights, seconded by Mr Ray Williams.

*Passes nem. con.*

HB: Reconciling rules and SOs on dates

**Mr Bellamy** says that his motion ensures the rules are consistent in when they permit election-related Standing Orders to be amended during Term.

**Ms Galloway** notes that the inconsistency Mr Bellamy is resolving is likely a result of when the nominations window was much narrower, and so election-related Standing Orders could conceivably be amended in sixth week but still before the opening of nominations.

There is general consensus on the Committee that Mr Bellamy's motion is a good idea.

Mr Adam Watson (Ex-Standing Committee, Hertford) moves that the Rules Committee deem the Private Business Motion posted by Mr Hugh Bellamy on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2018 to be viable and feasible, seconded by Mr Ray Williams (Ex-Standing Committee, Wadham).

*Passes nem. con.*

## 6. Mr Watson's Second Piece of Business

**The Treasurer** introduces the motion posted by the Librarian.

**The President** notes that she is presently in Library Committee and unable to attend the meeting of Rules Committee.

**Mr Watson** says that the phrase "security arrangements" in the Librarian's motion could benefit from a more explicit definition.

**The President** also notes that the phrase "controversial" in the motion would also likely need further clarification, possibly via an interpretation.

**The Treasurer-Elect** suggests it be defined as "liable to cause resistance from the members".

**The Treasurer** believes that it is reasonable for the Standing Committee to hold its meeting *in camera* for non-controversial but important speakers who need special security arrangements, such as John Kerry.

**The President** offers the example of the Bulgarian president's visit earlier in the term as another good case.

**Mr Williams** asks the Treasurer how the part of the motion mandating the President ask pre-submitted questions from members would work.

**Mr Watson** says that the system does not require full technical definition, comparing it to the current system of balloting for events that exists in the rules.

**The Treasurer** says that a Google form similar to existing ballot arrangements would work.

**The Treasurer** also says that it is a problem that the President or Librarian hosting an event cannot tell whether an audience member's question will be good when they pick them during the event.

**Mr Williams** asks if in failing to ask questions submitted by members prior to the event, the President will be in breach of the rules.

**The Treasurer** sees the rule as establishing a guiding principle for the President.

**Mr Williams** suggests a Standing Order would be better for establishing a ‘guiding principle’.

**The Treasurer** accepts Mr Williams’ point.

**Mr Watson** says that the discussion risks veering into a policy debate.

**Mr Williams** says it is still within the remit of the Committee to discuss whether the motion as written would have the effect desired by the Librarian.

**Mr Watson** says if one were to bring a disciplinary procedure on the basis of this rule, it would be deemed frivolous.

**The Treasurer-Elect** says that the motion could bind the President to asking bad questions if only bad questions are submitted by members.

**The Treasurer** says that is a good point, but not really within the remit of the Committee to discuss.

**The Treasurer-Elect** says that the problem she is raising is likely an unintended effect of the Librarian’s motion and therefore right to discuss.

**The Treasurer** says that the Committee should informally recommend the Librarian improve her motion in the areas discussed, to which there is general assent from the Committee.

## **7. Mr Watson’s Third Piece of Business.**

**The Treasurer-Elect** asks if Mr Watson has drafted anything for this business to be distributed to the Committee.

**Mr Watson** says that he has not.

**Mr Watson** says that given a number of non-members have been attending Rules Committee, it would be appropriate to increase the number of voting members.

**The Treasurer** says increasing the size of the Committee to an odd number of is good, as it would reduce the number of votes decided by the chair’s casting vote, which he feels casts aspersions of the legitimacy of the Committee’s decisions.

**The Treasurer-Elect** asks Mr Watson if he has an idea of how the application process for any vacancies would work.

**Mr Watson** says the rules already provide a mechanism – a vote at the next meeting – and additionally recommends any vacancies be advertised in the intervening period.

**The President** says he will make an announcement in the chamber at the next Public Business Meeting.

**The Treasurer** says he intends to nominate Mr Bellamy to a vacancy.

**Mr Watson** says any member of the Society could come to the meeting, and two members of the Committee would be appointed to conduct the ballot.

**The Treasurer** notes the low turnout to the Committee at recent meetings.

**Mr Watson** says that is understandable that many DROs are absent, given the closeness of the Election.

**Mr Williams** says that it makes sense for voting members not to be DROs.

**The Treasurer-Elect** says that that can be a consideration to take when deciding how to vote at the next meeting.

**The Treasurer** says that in the case of an actively harmful change (unlike what had previously been brought to the Committee), DRO members not abstain and vote not to recommend.

**Mr Sisson** offers the motion earlier in the term to create a new polling station as an example of such a logistically difficulty, flawed idea.

**Mr Watson** says that there are a lot of places the vacancy can be advertised, such is an announcement during the next Public Business Meeting or in the meetings of other committees.

**The Treasurer** suggests an announcement at Port and Policy.

Mr Watson moves that the number of voting members of the Rules Committee be amended to 13, to take effect immediately, and that the ballot for this 13<sup>th</sup> member shall take place at the next meeting of the Rules Committee, and that the Chair shall put a notice on the noticeboard and that the members of the Rules Committee shall advertise this vacancy as much as possible, and that the Rules Committee recommend that the President advertise the vacancy during Private Business at the next Public Business Meeting, seconded by Mr Williams.

*Passes nem. con.*

## **8. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

## **9. Date of the Next Meeting**

The committee agrees that an ordinary meeting next Monday will not necessarily be required, but that an extraordinary meeting to elect the new member may be needed.

***Mr Williams closes the meeting at 2.35pm***

Samuel Burns

St John's College

Ex-Secretary's Committee

Secretary of the Rules Committee