

## **RATIFIED**

The *Draft* Minutes of  
THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE  
3rd Week Trinity Term  
Monday 13th May 2019  
TV Room, 16:00

**Present:** The President (Genevieve Athis, *Christ Church*), The Treasurer (Charles Coverman, *Brasenose College*), The Secretary (Spencer Cohen, *Brasenose College*), The President-Elect (Brendan McGrath, *Oriel College*), The Librarian-Elect (Mahi Joshi, *Trinity College*), The Treasurer-Elect (Shining Zhao, *University College*), The Elected Member (Ayman D'Souza, *Christ Church*), The Elected Member (Nikhil Shah, *Exeter College*), The Elected Member (Beatrice Barr, *St Peter's College*), The Elected Member (Adam Wilkinson-Hill, *Jesus College*), The Elected Member (Kitsu Egerton, *Regent's Park*), The Elected Member (Mohamed Iman, *Somerville College*), The Elected Member (George Hargrave, *Hertford College*), The Ex-Treasurer (Amy Gregg, *Somerville College*), The Returning Officer (Joe Sisson, *St John's College*)

**Attending:** The Bursar (Lindsey Warne), The Senior Librarian (Sean Power), The Access Officer (Rabii Malik, *St Anne's College*), The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee (Lee Chin Wee, *Trinity College*), The Ordinary Member (Troels Boesen, *St. John's College*), Deputy Returning Officers (Charlie Willis, *Wadham College*), (Dominic Brind, *Magdalen College*), The Director for Digital Operations (Hugh Bellamy, *Lady Margaret Hall*), Kamran Ali, *Christ Church*

### **Apologies:**

The Librarian (Sara Dube, *St Hugh's College*), The Chair of the Consultative Committee (Elliot Bromley, *St Edmund Hall*)

### **Absent:**

*The President opens this Ordinary Meeting of the Standing Committee at 16:11.*

### **Requests to Pass Absences from Previous Meetings**

The Elected Member (Mo Iman, *Somerville College*) moves that the Standing Committee pass their absence from the Trinity Term 2019 2nd Week Ordinary Meeting of the Standing Committee as with 'good reason' due to disabling or infectious illness.

Seconded by The President-elect.

*The motion passes nem. con.*

### **Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

The Elected Member (Mr Wilkinson-Hill) notes that people leaving the room were not included in the minutes. He states that he left the room at 16:46 and returned at 16:50, and also states that The Elected Member (Mr Ayman D'Souza) left the room at 17:49 and returned at 17:53.

### **Ratification of Minutes**

The Secretary moves that the Standing Committee ratify the draft minutes of the Trinity Term 2019 2nd Week Ordinary Meeting of the Standing Committee, pending changes indicated by Mr Wilkinson-Hill.

Seconded by President.

*The motion passes nem. con.*

### **The President**

*Business of the President:*

#### **Rule 13b Change**

**The President** states that Rule 13b currently incorrectly reads “of” Standing Committee, which is a grammatical error, as it should indicate “at” Standing Committee.

**The President-Elect** states that the Returning Officer is entitled to fix any grammatical errors. **The Director of Digital Operations** also indicates that the President has been removed as the Chair of the Finance Committee.

**The President** indicates that this rule is inconsistent with other rules, and believes that the Treasurer should chair the Finance Committee as the Librarian chairs the Library Committee. **The President-elect** draws attention to the fact this change is not highlighted in red, and **the President** apologizes for this oversight.

**The Director of Digital Operations** states that rule 25 mandates the Treasurer to chair the Finance Committee, but Rule 13 contradicts this, as it mandates the President to. They state that this conflict in the rules must be resolved, and this amendment does.

**The Bursar** asks which rule this change refers to, and **The President** indicates that this corrects rule 13b.

The President moves that the Standing Committee recommend the private business motion affecting Rule 13b as presented by the President to the Public Business Meeting on May 16<sup>th</sup>.

Seconded by the Treasurer.

*The motion passes nem. con.*

#### **Rule 62 Change**

**The President** indicates that their change to Rule 62 affects two parts of the rule. The first part affects (h) to match it with the Standing Order Change made by the Standing Committee in 2nd week, about the budget the President shall present in 4th week. The second part of the rule removes the provision that mandates the bar maintenance costs to be reported to the Finance Committee on a termly basis. **The President** indicates that this is not currently practice, and sees no reason for it to be.

**The Director of Digital Operations** indicates a slight formatting problem and asks whether this is something the Returning Officer must fix. **The Returning Officer** states that this is indeed their responsibility.

**The Elected Member** (Adam Wilkinson-Hill, *Jesus College*) asks about Rule 62 (q), referencing the Union’s donation to Plush, which he supports. He mentions a donation of catwalks from the Pride Social as well. He brings this up in order to ask about the validity of this donation given the rules.

**The President** corrects him, indicating that this does not technically constitute a donation, because Plush would raise those funds alone. She indicates that the Union's charitable status prevents it from raising money from other charities, but Plush is a private company, making this donation acceptable within the rules.

**The Bursar** echoes this sentiment, explaining why charities cannot donate to other charities, and indicating that the money is raised, not donated in this case. **The President** concludes that the donation is within the rules.

The President moves that the Standing Committee recommend the private business motion affecting Rule 62 as presented by the President to the Public Business Meeting on May 16<sup>th</sup>.

Seconded by the Treasurer.

*The motion passes nem. con.*

### **Standing Order F7 amendment**

**The President** indicates that a clarification of Standing Order F7 is necessary in light of Brookes permanent membership, in order to reflect the discussion had about limiting access to this type of membership to students on 3 year courses.

**The Ex-Treasurer** asks whether the President would take a friendly amendment to phrase this as "minimum three year courses". **The President** accepts.

**The President-elect** questions the principles behind that, and states that 1 year students at the University of Oxford have access to life membership, whereas this does not hold for Brookes students. **The Bursar** corrects him, stating the eligibility for life membership depends on whether students matriculate rather than the duration of their degree.

**The President** reminds the President-elect that this was discussed at length in previous meetings. : this just reflects what we discussed at length. She reminds him that this gives students at Brookes the same financial incentive to join the Union as Oxford students, and that the Temporary Membership Officer supported this in Access Committee.

**The Access Officer** reports the conversation in Access Committee about which Brookes students should be eligible for life membership. He reports that the amendment brought forth by the President is the consensual compromise from this discussion.

**The President-elect** asks whether there is a cost to extending life membership to all Brookes students. **The President** explains that the cost would be the difference between short term and lifetime membership. **The President-elect** explains he is not inclined to vote for this amendment.

**The Access Officer** explains that the issues raised by the President-elect are valid, but not relevant to this conversation.

The Chair of the Consultative Committee enters at 16:24.

**The Elected Member** (Mo Iman, *Somerville College*) explains that he is concerned that this is unfair to 1 or 2 year Masters students at Brookes, who would not be eligible for life membership unlike their counterparts at Oxford.

**The Bursar** argues that it is actually discriminatory to undergraduates. She also states that in those cases, even if they were eligible for life-membership, they often would take short term membership because it is cheaper.

**The Ex-Treasurer** asks whether this has been agreed in Access Committee or in Access and Standing Committees. **The President** states that this was agreed in Access Committee, but not technically in Standing Committee, even though it was unofficially agreed upon.

**The President-elect** asks if this amendment is voted down, whether all Brookes students can get permanent membership. **The Bursar** answers no. **The Returning Officer** explains that this restricts the amount of Brookes students that are eligible, and as it stands, Brookes students have more rights than Oxford students, as not all Oxford students have access to life membership.

**The Ex-Treasurer** asks whether we can draw the distinction for life membership with “matriculated” Brookes students. **The President** states while this would be fair in theory, Brookes students do not have a matriculation process.

**The Elected Member** (Beatrice Barr, *St. Peter's College*) asks whether there is a different way to phrase it, to create an equivalency in rights between Brookes students and Oxford students on 1 or 2 year courses.

**The Returning Officer** indicates that the best way to proceed would be to mandate the Temporary Membership Officer to investigate a way to best phrase this.

**The President** indicates that Brookes students are aware that today is when they can purchase life membership for the first time, and doesn't want to renege on this promise. She indicates that her preferred way forward would be to pass the amendment this week, and pass another one next week with fairer phrasing as indicated above.

**The Librarian-elect** asks whether a one-week delay to make the membership process fairer and more consistent would be worth it. **The President** indicates that Brookes students and the office has agreed to do it today, and that it would be best to proceed.

**The Ex-Treasurer** expresses support for the President's position. She reiterated the Returning Officer's comments about the fairness of restricting Brookes students' rights to the same extent as Oxford students'.

**The President** indicates that a couple of people had already been down foto buy permanent membership, and that expanding it membership next week is possible through the Standing Committee.

The President moves that the Standing Committee amend Standing Order F7 as proposed by the President with the friendly amendment proposed by the Ex-Treasurer (Amy Gregg, *Somerville College*).

Seconded by the Treasurer.

*The motion passes nem. con.*

### **Retirement of Peter May**

**The President** indicates that Peter May, a maintenance worker, is retiring. He fell off of a ladder recently, and chose to retire after working 16 years for Society.

The President moves that the Standing Committee recommend giving Peter May honorary membership for extraordinary service to the Society.

Seconded by the Treasurer.

*The motion passes nem. con.*

### **Press requests**

**The President** indicates that she has received many press requests from The Guardian, the Oxford Mail, the BBC, The Independent, and from Cherwell to do with the No Platforming Debate, and whether protesters would make the Union disinvite Katie Hopkins, and whether the videos would go on the Youtube Channel. She indicated that Katie Hopkins was a debate speaker, and would be adequately challenged.

**The President** indicates that she has received press requests from the OxStu and a Spanish Newspaper about the blurb the Society has provided for Carles Puigdemont, and that his title has been clarified.

The Elected Member (Ayman D'Souza, *Christ Church*) leaves at 16:34, as does the President-Elect. They re-enter shortly.

### *Questions to the President:*

**The Bursar** asks whether the Society sends out press releases. **The President** says yes. **The Bursar** indicates that they should include clarifications regarding the differences between addresses and debates because this is a recurring question. **The President** agrees that this is an important clarification to make.

### **The Librarian**

#### *Business of the Librarian in their absence:*

The Librarian has no business.

#### *Questions to the Librarian in their absence:*

There are no questions to the Librarian.

### **The Treasurer**

#### *Business of the Treasurer:*

#### **DSC expenses**

**The Treasurer** indicates that The Finance Committee has recommended, pending the approval of a Senior Officer, that the Standing Committee pass DSC expenses for 3rd Week. **The Senior Librarian** approves them.

The Treasurer moves that the Standing Committee pass DSC Expenses for 3rd week.

Seconded by the President.

*The motion passes nem. con.*

### **Censorship in the Oxford Union**

**The Treasurer** states that the Ex-Chief of Staff (Ray William, Wadham College) has contacted him about his paper speech being removed from YouTube. **The President** explains that the person in charge of the Youtube

Channel was misled to believe that the Society had voted to remove it from the channel by the Ex-President (Daniel Wilkinson, *Oriel College*). She indicates that there should be a way to prevent this abuse.

**The Treasurer** indicates that he has thought of a way to achieve this, and is looking to introduce a rule that will require that the Standing Committee vote by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority to remove a video from the YouTube channel.

**The President-elect** indicates that they have a different version of event. He asked the person in charge of the Youtube Channel to cut the last part of Mr. Williams' speech, and got Mr. Williams' permission to do so.

**The President** indicates that she thinks the Standing Committee should have oversight of this process. She indicates that while the Ex-President (Daniel Wilkinson, *Oriel College*) thought that the video showed the Union in a bad light, she saw very positive comments, and that no forms of the house were violated in the video.

**The Elected Member** (Mo Iman, *Somerville College*) sees two separate issues, this particular incident, and the general ethics. He expresses support for the Treasurer's proposal, but would prefer a majority-vote rather than a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote. However, he thinks that the last part of Ray's speech does not add anything, and could be cut.

**The President** states that cutting a speech is a waste of the resources the Society uses to film debates.

**The Ex-Treasurer** expressed the opinion that doctoring videos is inappropriate, and substantially altering videos is dangerous.

**The President** draws a distinction between cosmetically altering videos (like cutting coughs, or curse words), and substantially altering videos. She expresses support for the first, but sees the second as dangerous.

The President moves that the Standing Committee give the Deputy Returning Officer (Dominic Brind, Magdalen College) speaking rights.

Seconded by Returning Officer.

*The motion passes nem. con.*

**The Deputy Returning Officer** (Dominic Brind, Magdalen College) asks whether there are any current rules affecting this. **The President** answers no. **The Deputy Returning Officer** indicates that a Standing Order would be the best way forward, **The President** agrees.

**The Director of Digital Operations** asks whether this should be an *in camera* matter. **The President** asks why it would be. **The Director of Digital Operations** responds that the conversation could revolve around personal or sensitive issues that should be *in camera*. **The President** responds that this should be at the discretion of the committee rather than a rules matter.

**The Elected Member** (Adam Wilkinson-Hill, *Jesus College*) states that Mr. Williams' actions were not within the orders of the house. **The President** and **The Returning Officer** indicate that because the Ex-President (Daniel Wilkinson, *Oriel College*) did not bring a point of order, so it cannot be ruled as against the orders of the house.

**The Elected Member** (Beatrice Barr, *St. Peter's College*) states that the whole process is random, and that uploading often gets behind. She argues that a rule dictating the process would therefore be excessive.

**The President** acknowledges that the YouTube channel is in fact late on uploading videos, but reiterates the point that if a speaker signs a consent form, then there is no reason for their speech not to be uploaded.

The CDSC leaves and re-enters at 16:47.

**The Chair of the Consultative Committee** indicates that signing the consent form means signing the rights to the video away unless the rules of the house are broken. He also indicates that this process politicizes the YouTube channel, and makes it volatile, at the whim of the Standing Committee. **The President** responds that it

is currently even more volatile because it can be changed at the whim of a single person. **The Treasurer** indicates that the  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority requirement makes the decision less political and more permanent.

**The Ex-Treasurer** responds that she sees a difference between editing and uploading videos.

**The President-elect** states that he believes editing a video should be an individual right, and cites the case of the Ex-Treasurer (James Lamming, *Exeter College*) who sought to remove a curse from his paper speech. **The Treasurer** responds that this is not a substantive change to the speech, but rather a way to prevent the Society from being brought into disrepute.

**The President** repeats the clear difference between cosmetic and substantive changes to paper speeches, and emphasizes that they should not be treated in the same manner.

**The Librarian-elect** inquires about the purpose of the YouTube channel, and whether it is a minute book or an advertisement for the Society.

**The President** responds that it is to publicize the going-ons of the Society, and that once a speaker signs a consent form, the content should go on the YouTube channel.

**The Ex-Treasurer** states her belief that the YouTube channel should provide an accurate representation of the Society's events. **The Bursar** states that one should not seek to change the balance of the debate, in time or number of speakers, making it important to publish all content.

**The Treasurer** thanks the Standing Committee for the discussion, and promises to bring a proposal next week.

*Questions to the Treasurer:*

**The Elected Member** (Adam Wilkinson-Hill, *Jesus College*) asks whether the second Senior Treasurer candidate will be interviewed this week as previously planned.

**The President** indicates that the second candidate dropped out of contention. Therefore, the Standing Committee should recommend him to the House.

The President moves that the Standing Committee recommend Tim Myatt as Senior Treasurer and Oxford Union Trustee to the Public Business Meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> of May.

Seconded by the Treasurer.

*The motion passes nem. con.*

### **The Secretary**

*Business of the Secretary:*

The Secretary has no business.

*Questions to the Secretary:*

There are no questions to the Secretary.

### **Mr Ayman D'Souza**

*Business of Mr D'Souza:*

**The Elected Member** (Ayman D'Souza, *Christ Church*) states that he would like to report his business to next week's meeting, as he would like to consider his business longer. **The President** asks him to bring relevant proposal next time, as a discussion has already been had.

*Questions to Mr D'Souza:*

There are no questions to Mr D'Souza.

**Mr Nikhil Shah**

*Business of Mr Shah:*

Mr Shah has no business.

*Questions to Mr Shah:*

There are no questions to Mr Shah.

**Ms Beatrice Barr**

*Business of Ms Barr:*

Ms Barr has no business.

*Questions to Ms Barr:*

There are no questions to Ms Barr.

**Mr Adam Wilkinson-Hill**

*Business of Mr Wilkinson-Hill:*

The President objects to the Elected Member (Adam Wilkinson Hill, *Jesus College*)'s attempt to bring forward an item of business, as it was not on the agenda. This was seconded by the Treasurer.

*Questions to Mr Wilkinson-Hill:*

There are no questions to Mr Wilkinson-Hill.

**Mr Kitsu Egerton**

*Business of Mr Egerton:*

Mr Egerton has no business.

*Questions to Mr Egerton:*

There are no questions to Mr Egerton.

**Mr Mohamed Iman**

*Business of Mr Iman:*

Mr Iman has no business.

*Questions to Mr Iman:*



There are no questions to Mr Iman.

### **Mr George Hargrave**

*Business of Mr Hargrave:*

Mr Hargrave has no business.

*Questions to Mr Hargrave:*

There are no questions to Mr Hargrave.

### **The President-Elect**

*Business of the President-Elect:*

**The President** objects to the business of the President-Elect as he has not circulated his proposal within the 48 hour agenda deadline. This is seconded by The Treasurer.

**The President-Elect** claims that there is no rule against this. **The Returning Officer** corrects the President-Elect as he is required to have circulated his proposal within the deadline. Therefore, he may only discuss the principles, but not the proposal.

*Questions to the President-Elect:*

**The Elected Member** (Adam Wilkinson-Hill, *Jesus College*) asks when the proposal was sent to the Secretary. **The President-Elect** states it was sent earlier today.

**The Elected Member** (Mo Iman, *Somerville College*) asks what the President-elect wants to change about vac days. **The President** believes that this question is unnecessary as it is outlined in the proposal.

### **The Librarian-Elect**

*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**

*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-Officers**

*Business of the Ex-Officers:*

The Ex-Officers have no business.

*Questions to the Ex-Officers:*

There are no questions to the Ex-Officers.

### **The Senior Librarian**

*Business of the Senior Librarian:*

**The Senior Librarian** states the Society does not have enough Trustees, and that another trustee might guarantee the stability of the Trustees.

*Questions to the Senior Librarian:*

There are no questions to the Senior Librarian.

### **The Senior Treasurer**

*Business of the Senior Treasurer:*

The Office of Senior Treasurer is currently vacant so there is 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 Returning Officer:*

### **DRO appointments**

**The Returning Officer** states that he would like to appoint, as per rule 32, Julia Hussain(*The Queen's College*) as a Deputy Returning Officer. He states she has consented to serve and Standing Committee must deem her capable.

The Returning Officer moves that Standing Committee appoint Julia Hussain (The Queen's College) as a Deputy Returning Officer.

Seconded by Mr Iman

*The motion passes nem. con.*

**The Returning Officer** states that the 48 hour period for objections on the grounds of suitability begins with the posting of the notice immediately after this meeting. He states objections may be made in writing to the President. He states suitability is determined by the Scrutiny Board.

The Ex-Treasurer (Amy Gregg, Somerville College) leaves the room at 17:02.

#### **Rule 34-35**

**The Returning Officer** states that his proposed rules change shifts the close of nominations 5 hours earlier, from 3pm on Friday 6th week to 10am. He also states that his change staggers the objections deadline throughout the days of Scrutiny. He states he believes the current situation is unfair to start scrutiny for a given office before the objections deadline or start the entire office after the deadline, given the fact that manifestos change throughout scrutiny.

Reason to have submitted it with clause 7 (Returning Officer can give 6 hour extension to objection deadline) is because scrutiny can sometimes overrun. In this case it would be appropriate for the RO to ensure that all scrutiny for an office is finished before the objection deadline. Entirely reasonable as those who are interested in submitting objections would be aware of this and probably in the buildings for the entire scrutiny period.

The Elected Member (Beatrice Barr, St Peter's College) leaves the room at 17:04

The Ex-Treasurer (Amy Gregg, Somerville College) enters the room at 17:04.

**The Bursar** suggests a friendly amendment for the closing on nominations from 10am to 11am as it is easier for the office.

**The Returning Officer** suggests that since the PBM is on Wednesday, not Thursday, their intention is to have all candidates nominate on Thursday. He suggests that most mistakes are made in the first two hours before the close of nominations, and it is reasonable to have all candidates nominate on Thursday since they would have completed all their nomination speeches on Wednesday at the latest. In the future, following the TT19 election, the nomination could be submitted with an intended nomination speech rather than a completed nomination speech. He suggests that this change gives the Returning Officer and their deputies as much time as possible.

**The Bursar** suggests that the change will give the Returning Officer more work

**The Returning Officer** suggests that half an hour is sufficient for candidates who should already have prepared their nomination packs.

**The President** suggests a friendly amendment for the closing of nominations to be 10:30 am (1h after the opening of the general office)

**The President-elect** asks why the Returning Officer feels strongly about moving the time of closing nominations.

**The Returning Officer** suggests that every hour is going to count when there are three full slates running and that additional hour could mean that the scrutiny of candidates for the Secretary's Committee and the Standing Committee would not be completed in the assigned time frame.

**The Ex-Treasurer** asks whether the General Office or the Returning Officer and his Deputies are dealing with the final half hour of nominations.

**The Returning Officer** confirms that it is his responsibility to oversee close of nominations.

**The Bursar** suggests that the candidates would not have sufficient time to submit nominations in the morning.

**The Returning Officer** accepts the friendly amendment of The President, all instances of 10 am are to be changed to 10.30 am, and 30 minutes to an hour.

**The Ex-Treasurer** asks whether the capacity of the Returning Officer to extend the objection deadline is entirely discretionary, suggests that this could cause confusion among candidates.

**The Returning Officer** clarifies that the only reason that the deadline would be extended is if scrutiny for a particular office overran significantly so as the scrutiny for that office might not be completed before the deadline. In the case of Librarian-Elect and President-Elect the scrutiny will most likely start after the deadline so there will be no extension.

**The President-Elect** suggests that the case suggested by the Returning Officer should be written in

**The Returning Officer** does not agree and suggests that unexpected circumstances could arise that require discretion

**The Ex-Treasurer** suggests that the Returning Officer should be obligated to extend in the case suggested, to make it clearer for candidates. It is important that for a particular office, all scrutiny should be either before or after the objection deadline for that office. Since this is discretionary, there is a risk that it could be split.

**The Returning Officer** responds that in his scrutiny, there will be no such split. He suggests that in the future there could be an exceptional case where a candidate is unable to present their evidence due to personal circumstances, and writing in a hard deadline would mean such a candidate's manifesto would be entirely struck.

**The President** suggests that if you felt that you were being discriminated against by the RO, you could submit a claim for malpractice

**The Ex-Treasurer** suggests that the deadline could be at the close of the scrutiny of the final candidates for a given office.

**The Returning Officer** suggests that this would be more unfair because a manifesto could be changed significantly at the end and other candidates would not have the opportunity to respond. He further says that the suggested changes make the system more fair, but not perfect, whereas the current deadline of 12PM on Sunday is very inconvenient for all parties.

**The Ex-Treasurer** agrees that this is an improvement, but remains worried that the discretionary element should be changed, reiterating her previous point.

**The Returning Officer**, noting that the motion will not be debated until 23 May, and this is the last possible date for the motion to be passed, suggests that the Standing Committee pass the motion pending an amendment that will address the aforementioned concerns, namely, the discretion of the Returning Officer and the circumstance under which the Returning Officer would extend scrutiny deadlines.

**The President-Elect** inquires whether the motion could be passed without caveat and subsequently amended

**The Returning Officer** clarifies that he would be willing to accept a friendly amendment and pass it later on as a substantive motion in the House

**The President-Elect** asks whether if an amendment that completely reversed the nature of the change were to be accepted, Standing Committee could oppose the motion in the House

**The Returning Officer** clarifies that this would be a matter for the Chair, and that such a concern is an issue with the way the Standing Committee recommends motions to the House, and not with the content of the motion that he submitted, he suggests that he is happy to commit to not accepting such an amendment, which is binding

**The Ex-Treasurer** suggests that this would be a reason to postpone these changes until next week

**The Returning Officer** states that this would not be possible, since this would mean that the changes would not apply for the upcoming election, in which three full slates make timing an issue

**The Elected Member** (Beatrice Barr, *St Peter's College*) suggests that she is still uncomfortable with the Returning Officer's discretion and asks for an outline of what such discretion would entail

**The Returning Officer** suggests that a potential solution would be to say ‘notwithstanding the above, the Returning Officer may, if they believe it necessary to ensure the completion of scrutiny for a given office before the given objection deadline, extend the objection deadline for that office. He states that this means that the Returning Officer must believe that scrutiny will not be complete in time.

**The President** states that all candidates should remember that if they believe that the Returning Officer has done things to skew the results of the election, there is recourse, and that she believes that the Returning Officer has brought this motion to make scrutinizing a large number of candidates easier.

**The Deputy Returning Officer** (Dominic Brind, *Magdalen College*) asks whether it would be a significant abuse of office for the Returning Officer to mislead the Standing Committee on the circumstance in which such discretion would be used.

**The Returning Officer** confirms that this would amount to a disciplinary offence

**The Ex-Treasurer** raises that she is concerned that the 6 hour minimum time period for extension could lead to an objection deadline taking place in the middle of scrutiny, if the Returning Officer is unable to say with certainty how long scrutiny would go on for

**The Returning Officer** suggests that he and his deputies have a good idea of how long scrutiny takes and that 6 hours is a reasonable amount needed to calculate this, 4 hours would not be enough for candidates, for instance

**The Ex-Treasurer** suggests a change wherein the Returning Officer must extend objection deadline if they believe it is necessary to complete the scrutiny for a given office

**The Returning Officer** reiterates that the status quo would likely lead to disruption of the election, and that his proposed change would limit such disruption. He further suggests that he is ready to accept amendments that further improve the scrutiny process later in the week.

**The President-Elect** asks whether the Deputy Returning Officer had a concern with the motion

**The Returning Officer** suggests that the Deputy Returning Officer was making the point for the record that any RO that mislead the Standing Committee, would be faced with a significant amount of evidence of their intention that would be used by a Tribunal

**The President** further clarifies that the Deputy Returning Officer was not making a point about content but making the point that the Returning Officer has committed to making the rules change as suggested to the Standing Committee.

The Returning Officer moves that the Standing Committee recommend the private business motion affecting Rule 34-35 as presented by the Returning Officer including the friendly amendment of the President to the Public Business Meeting on May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Seconded by the President.

*The motion passes nem. con.*

**The Returning Officer** specifies that this motion is being brought because a number of rules are invalid, passed in such a way that they conflict with rule 73. He believes that it is unhealthy for the society to have rules which can only be amended by a select few individuals who know this.

He suggests that the motion seeks to do several things; in the changes it makes to rule 73: (i) make public the seniority of each rule, (ii) set the seniority of each rule, (iii) set the rules to be rules as they currently are or as we understand them to be. He further suggests that this would prevent an occurrence similar to the overturning of the slates ban in HT19, that this would inform members how each rule can be changed, and make the process of changing the rules clearer.

He specifies that the motion contains changes to rules 66 to 69, as they are significantly lacking in several respects, including that it removes the possibility of someone posting a motion with a specific intention and subsequently deciding that the substantive effect of the motion will be different.

Following a request from **The President** and **The Ex-Treasurer**, **The Returning Officer** comes back to his points on rule 73.

**The Returning Officer**, directing the attention of the Committee to the changes in Section C, suggests that there are some minor cosmetic changes to Clause A. He states that substantive change is made to Clause B, and adds: “anyone listed in Clause A above shall have the right to confer executive seniority of anyone junior to itself to any policy or alteration of the Rules and Standing Orders.”

He offers the example that if you are to pass a rules change with special attention, this means that every single bit of the rules that is changed does not necessarily need to have special attention, he further states that this is probably implicitly allowed but should be made explicit.

He points out a further addition, drawing the Committees attention to changes in Section D, that any change to the rules that has the seniority of a poll of members can be changed with special attention. He suggests that polls are highly time sensitive and that people may not be willing to turn out in a poll on an issue that is no longer relevant. For this reason, he suggests that a large portion of the rules are unchangeable.

He states that changes to Section E are purely cosmetic and spell out what a disciplinary committee is.

He states that the changes to Section F mandates the Returning Officer to include the executive seniority of all policies, which is not currently the case.

He states that a further addition reads: “the Returning Officer shall keep record of the executive seniority of all rules and standing orders, this shall be the schedule of executive seniority”. He states that this means that every time a change is made to the rules, the Returning Officer shall update the schedule of executive seniority, along with changing the rules. He suggests that this is the most transparent way forward.

**The President-Elect** asks to discuss the Appendix to Rule 33, specifically the difference between Clause C and Clause D

**The Returning Officer** states that the differences is that Clause C deals with policies while Clause D deals with direct alterations to rules and standing orders

**The Elected Member** (Adam Wilkinson-Hill, *Jesus College*) asks the Returning Officer about why he changed the word amendment to the word alterations, which the Elected Member suggests is undefined in the rules

**The Returning Officer** suggests that alterations is the term used in Chapter 6, and further suggests that alterations is a clearer term than amendments, which implies a change to an existing thing, whereas alteration could refer to deletion of rules

**The Elected Member** (Adam Wilkinson-Hill, *Jesus College*) suggests that it may be worth adding this to appendix D

**The Returning Officer** agrees, in theory

**The President-Elect** enquires on whether the current functioning of Rule 73 means that one amends a rule with a certain idea behind it i.e.: banning slates, and that idea cannot be subsequently overridden

**The Returning Officer** states that this is not his understanding of Rule 73, and his understanding provides for two protections: (i) applies protection to an explicitly elucidated idea, i.e.: the policy of the society should be that there should be no slates, (ii) protection concerning amendments to the rules and standing orders, applies direct protection to each individual rule passed under certain circumstances

**The President-Elect** enquires whether the Returning Officer is of the opinion that a poll that says “amend the this chapter to read ‘blank’”, and the change only applies to one clause, then the protection applies to the whole chapter

**The Returning Officer** confirms that this is his opinion

**The President-Elect** suggests that this is not a reasonable interpretation of Rule 73

**The Returning Officer** suggests that Rule 73 is not a reasonable rule as it stands

**The Elected Member** (Mohammed Iman, *Somerville College*) asks whether this relates to any other business

**The Returning Officer** states that it does not, and the particular business referred to is not being brought. He clarifies his position on why Rule 73 is unreasonable, saying that there was a Disciplinary Committee in 2001 that dealt with the smoking ban, and held that the question was not just a policy question but also a direct alteration question, meaning that the smoking ban policy would have to be done by poll and that the direct rules change also had this protection. He states that his interpretation is the understanding that has been developed in tribunals and other cases that have dealt with this.

**The President-Elect**, directing the Committee's attention to Rule 73(a), reads the following section: "In the event of a conflict over a decision concerning a particular policy or the implementation of a particular policy, or concerning amendments to the Rules or Standing Orders". He suggests that this means that Rule 73 only applies in the case of a conflict.

**The Returning Officer** clarifies that he believes that any alteration with junior seniority that purports to change anything with higher seniority is a conflict

**The President-Elect** asks whether there is a difference between a direct amendment of the rules making them higher in seniority and a larger amendment that happens to elevate rules that are not being amended to higher seniority, as mentioned previously in his example.

**The Returning Officer** provides an example, where hypothetical rules 1 and 2 are amended by poll and rule 3 is added in a PBM, in this case he suggests that rules 1 and 2 would have poll protection and rule 3 would have PBM protection. He states that any given rule passed with a given level of seniority takes on that level of seniority.

**The President-Elect** suggests that the Returning Officer's interpretation of the protection is very broad, and that the Ex-Returning Officer's (Liam Frahm, *Jesus College*) ruling in HT19 showed great difficulty in establishing conflict between rules for Rule 73 to come into operation.

**The Returning Officer** suggests that he has a different view to the Ex-Returning Officer, that it would be inappropriate for a Returning Officer to deem what the intention or policy was behind something. He states that whether or not a Returning Officer needs to determine if something is a conflict or not, Rule 73 concerns all the Rules and Standing Orders. He suggests that when one attempts to amend something with higher status, having lower status, then you are conflicting with that thing. He further states that simply by being passed at a passed at a PBM, a motion assumes the protection of a PBM.

**The President** suggests to move on to other business

**The President-Elect** states that this is very important, and that the Committee should continue this discussion. He states that if passed, this motion, gives a clause protection as opposed to a given policy

**The Returning Officer** states that he does not agree, and that the clause currently has protection, and that if this change is not passed many Rules will become invalid

**The President-Elect** suggests that both views are reasonable, but after this rules change is passed there will be no room for disagreement

**The Returning Officer** suggests that having no disagreement on this question is better than having some, because having misconceptions about rule 73 led to the situation surrounding the slates ban, and it took a lot of work from the Returning Officers to figure out what the rule meant. He suggests that this clarifies the rule beyond doubt and is excellent for transparency.

**The President-Elect** agrees on the point about Rule 73 but voices his concern regarding the breadth of the schedule of executive seniority and elevating rule 33 to protection by a poll.

**The Returning Officer** states that rule 33 is chosen for a reason and shouldn't be changed without special attention, it is carefully designed to be fair and equitable. Rule 34 and 35 have lower protection because they deal with procedural points that can and should be changed.

**The Returning Officer and President-Elect**, in agreeing to move on to Section D, voice a mutual understanding of the importance of these changes to the functioning of the society

**The Returning Officer** states that the schedule of executive seniority outlines what the protections of each rule would be following the passing of this motion, specifying that it is public, and shows people how to amend the rules

**The Ex-Treasurer** asks about the “Seniority Unknown” section and what the course of action with rules under it will be

**The Returning Officer** suggests that these rules can only be amended with the consent of the trustees, and that he does not have jurisdiction to provide a definitive answer. He suggests that the seniority can be set as and when each of these rules is amended

**The President-Elect** asks whether this pick out all protected rules

**The Returning Officer** states that it does

**The President-Elect** suggests that the protection of Rule 33 should be lowered, so some sections are protected

**The Returning Officer** agrees, suggesting that Clause A retain the level of special attention, and Clauses B-D is lowered

**The President-Elect** suggests that the schedule makes it seem that not many rules have passed by poll, asks for clarification as to what changes have been made to seniority

**The Returning Officer** states that the rule creating the office of Librarian-Elect was actively lowered to PBM protection, he suggests that the duties of Librarian-Elect do not need to be protected by special attention, none of the officers are. He states that some parts of Rule 34 and 35 have been lowered from special attention to PBM because some of the procedures introduced by special attention don’t necessarily need that level of protection. He suggests that beyond that, the only substantive changes are financial in nature: Polls of 1998 gave most financial rules special attention and he believes that this is not appropriate

**The Ex-Treasurer** asks the President-Elect whether he thinks there are rules that need to be amended more easily than a poll

**The President** states that his general concern is that the Returning Officer is determining what level of protection each rule should have, and he does not want the Returning Officer to have that power. He suggests that he is trying to make the situation more similar to how it actually works, which is that most of Rule 33 is level 3 protected, some is level 2 protected.

**The Ex-Treasurer** suggests that it may be useful to review what rules are level 2 protected

**The Returning Officer** suggests that the parts relating to slates are level 2 protected, covered by 33(a)

**The Ex-Treasurer** suggests that she would be uncomfortable voting in favour of a motion that changed the seniority of rules that she was not aware of, and that the Committee should scrutinise each change

**The Returning Officer**, in response to a question from the **President-Elect** confirms that, to the best of his knowledge, there is no added word not in green and no removed word that is not in red

**The Returning Officer**, directs the Committee’s attention to the HT15 rules change concerning campaigning. He suggests that the parts changed with special attention (level 2) are: rule 33(a)(i) 1, 2, 3, 9, 10; rule 33(b) Innocent Interference; rule 33(c) the penalties available to an election Tribunal, automatic penalties

**The President-Elect** asks the Returning Officer to run through all the rules that he knows to have been changed with a poll

**The Returning Officer** lists the polls to have taken place: Financial Polls of 1998: changed financial rules as to they are now, many changes have been passed since and are invalid; Poll on Counting-Out Procedure: protection maintained; Office of Librarian-Elect: altered to the same status as any other officer; Poll on Security Gate/Structural Alterations to Society’s Buildings. He states that although we have a good record of what polls took place, we are unsure as to the exact motions of many polls.



**The Ex-Treasurer** suggests that she is more comfortable with the Returning Officer's original proposal of keeping the entirety of the rule at level 2 protection.

**The Returning Officer** suggests that he is happy with either option as long as the Committee can reach consensus

**The Ex-Treasurer** suggests that the highly political nature of Rule 33 warrants level 2 protection, **The Returning Officer** concurs

**The President-Elect** suggests that if there is something toxic in the rules currently, this would make it more difficult to amend

**The Ex-Treasurer** suggests that if there is something truly bad within the rules, that is something that you could rally a poll around.

**The President-Elect** suggests that Rules 13-19 should also be protected

**The Returning Officer** states that he would rather keep them amenable by PBM, given that special attention is an expensive and onerous process, some Presidents wish to amend their duties and there are mechanisms to prevent this from being nefarious

**The Ex-Treasurer** asks about the effects of the discussed motion on rule 34, given that the Returning Officer suggested that an amendment to it may be brought at a later stage

**The Returning Officer** confirms that this does not change Rule 34, and would rather not insert amendments that would politicise the change

**The President-Elect** suggests to return to the conversation on Rules 13-19, stating that most duties are actually scattered around the rules and not contained therein

**The President** suggests that Rules 13-19 confer specific duties on offices such as that of President, whereas other sections of the rules confer general duties such as the submission of OPBM reports

**The President-Elect** suggests that he is concerned about the removal of the office of Librarian-Elect

**The Returning Officer** states that if you wished to abolish an office you could do so through the removal of Rule 12(b)

**The President-Elect** suggests, in that case, that Rule 12(b) should be protected

**The Returning Officer** states that if any of the rules under discussion warrant additional protection, it is Rule 12, not Rules 13-19

**The President** asks whether the President-Elect has no faith in the Standing Committee to scrutinise and pass changes

**The President-Elect** suggests that rules changes do not have to go through the Standing Committee

**The President** suggests that the President-Elect seems to believe that this is all part of a plot to overthrow someone

**The President-Elect** suggests that although there is currently no plot, one may arise in the future

**The Librarian-Elect** suggests that this is all part of the scrutiny process

**The President-Elect** suggests that there are good reasons for protecting rules and that you should not be able to abolish an office without a high threshold

**The Returning Officer** states that he would like to leave the question to the Standing Committee as to whether they would like to protect rule 12(b) in particular

**The President-Elect** suggests that one could still swoop in and remove Rule 16

**The Returning Officer** clarifies that one is welcome to remove the duties of the Librarian-Elect, but this would not remove office, and clarifies that if the Standing Committee decides to protect rule 12(b) this would require a simple majority the Standing Committee, as this qualifies as special attention

**The Deputy Returning Officer** (Dominic Brind, *Magdalen College*) asks for clarification as to how the table of seniority has been decided

**The Returning Officer** states that it is based on changes that he believes were made in polls. He suggests that regardless of the disagreement on the minor details, this rules change makes it very hard to surprise someone with a Rule 73 invalidation like last term

**The Ex-Treasurer** asks to clarify whether level 2 special attention consists of a simple majority on Standing Committee and whether anything is currently protected by a poll

**The Returning Officer** confirms this, and suggests that nothing should be protected by a poll as things currently stand

**The Returning Officer** and **President-Elect** agree that Rule 12(b) should be elevated to level 2 protection, rule 33 remaining at special attention

**The Returning Officer** directs the committee's attention to amendments to Rules 66-69. He points out the substantive changes. Rule 67(b)(ii): duty of suppressing motion shifted from the President to the Returning Officer, has to check whether the rule is valid. Abolition of the method which allows agreeing a motion and saying what it does afterwards.

**The Returning Officer** and **President-Elect** discuss whether such a method actually exists, agreeing that it does and it is reasonable to abolish it

**The Returning Officer** states that he cut out a loophole that allowed for a motion to be counted out or to collect signatures on a poll causing a motion to come into effect immediately, potentially invalidating it, even if it says that it comes into effect later. He states that in Rule 67(d) the specified rules are changed to be the exception (rather than the default) that require specifying days of vacation. He states that he introduces a number of mechanisms for the repealing of interpretations of rulings, most pertinently, section 8 which allows the Returning Officer with  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority on TSC to declare interpretations invalid, even if they are made by a purportedly higher authority. He states that it puts interpretations, previously out of reach, under review. He suggests that the rest of the changes are cosmetic.

**The Elected Member** (Adam Wilkinson-Hill, *Jesus College*) enquires into the justification for the changing of the definition of 'term' from the University of Oxford definition

**The Returning Officer** suggests that this is because some definitions by the University say that the term starts in 0th week which does not reflect the Society's functioning

**The President-Elect** voices his concern that this could be used to disqualify candidates by saying if they succeeded later in term, arguing that they didn't complete a full term

**The Returning Officer** suggests that his change does not make this more likely, it only specifies what a term is more clearly than is currently specified, but is happy to strike the change of the definition of term

**The Elected Member** (Adam Wilkinson-Hill, *Jesus College*) directs the attention of the Committee to several cosmetic errors

**The Returning Officer**, in response, notes that a copy of The Rules is always up to date because the latest copy is the only valid one

**The President-Elect** suggests that this is problematic as it is difficult to gain access to the latest copy at certain points in term

**The Returning Officer** clarifies that any member of the Society is entitled to request a copy of The Rules at any point

**The Elected Member** (Adam Wilkinson-Hill, *Jesus College*) suggests that his remarks were only for the sake of uniformity and that an earlier clause mentioned The Rules as being up to date

**The Returning Officer** suggests that he is happy to change the wording to read 'current copy' in all instances

**The Elected Member** (Adam Wilkinson-Hill, *Jesus College*) points the Committees attention to Rule 67(e)(4) (iii), and suggests a cosmetic change changing the disparity between ex-Officers and ex-Presidents, removing the 21 term limit

**The Returning Officer** accepts the Elected Member's suggestion

**The President-Elect** asks whether there are any relevant substantive changes to the rules on kindred societies

**The Returning Officer** responds that there are none

**The Elected Member** (Mohammed Iman, *Somerville College*) asks whether Rule 73 would require a poll to change

**The Returning Officer** specifies that it would only require special attention, because Rule 73 is only protected by special attention, and there is no such thing as poll protection within the Rules

**The President-Elect** suggests that the motion should come into effect at the beginning of next term

**The Returning Officer** states that he would not like this, and that he would prefer his version of the rules to be accurate. He further states that many of the current rules are invalid and leaving them as they are gives him the discretion to invalidate them. He further suggests that he would investigate a number of rules changes from Michaelmas 2018 and that they would likely be invalid.

**The President-Elect** asks whether that is a threat. **The Returning Officer** responds that this a fact, emphasizing that all of appointed committee could be invalidated. **The Librarian-elect** asks why and how this would happen.

**The Returning Officer** indicates that the Committee amended a rule it was not able to, and therefore everything in that motion is invalid and should be reverted.

**The President-elect** expresses concern about the 2 week period in which this is passed but not enforced. **The Returning Officer** explains that he does not intend to issue rules in this period. He also expressed that this also cements all the election rules in time for the election beyond doubt.

**The Ex-Treasurer** expresses concern that this change makes eligibility rules more stringent. The President-elect indicates that he would like to suspend this rules change until Michaelmas, and **The President** disagrees, as it provides an important clarification.

**The Treasurer** indicates that this is important as it allays many concerns by making hostile rules changes less simple. **The President-elect** agrees. **The Returning Officer** indicates that he has no nefarious intentions. **The President-elect** indicates that they do not believe him.

**The Librarian-elect** asks why this cannot be passed next week, **The Returning Officer** responds that it must be passed before the opening of nominations, and he reminds that there is nothing preventing the Standing Committee from withdrawing this next week. He also indicates that the Committee can decide to pass this with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority. **The President-elect** indicates that this is a complicated change.

The Librarian-Elect moves to grant The Events Officer (Oliver Tushingham, *St. John's College*) speaking rights.

Seconded by The Elected Member (Adam Wilkinson-Hill, *Jesus College*)

*The motion passes nem. con.*

**The Events Officer** asks whether this could pass next week with special attention before the close of nominations. **The Returning Officer** answers no, however, Standing Committee could revoke this next week if they are not happy be (with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority). **The Ex-Treasurer** endorses this idea.

**The Events Officer** asks whether it could be amended newt week - **The Returning Officer** answers yes.

The Librarian enters the room at 18:20.

The Returning Officer moves that the Standing Committee recommend the proposed Private Business Motion to the Public Business Meeting on 16th May, with the agreed amendments, with  $\frac{2}{3}$  of Standing Committee approval required at the next Ordinary Meeting of Standing Committee, else the Motion shall be withdrawn.

Seconded by the President

*Pass nem. con.*

The Returning Officer invokes the special attention provisions under 67(b)(iv), postponing the motion to the Public Business Meeting on 23rd May, noting there will need to be a Finance Committee meeting to recommend the necessary expenditure.

Seconded by the President.

*Passes nem. con.*

*Questions to the Returning Officer:*

There are no questions to the Returning Officer.

### **The Chair of the Consultative Committee (CCC)**

*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 Officer moves that the Standing Committee ratify Kofo Braithwaite as an elected member of Access Committee

Seconded by the President.

*The motion passes nem. con.*

*Questions to the Access Officers:*

There are no questions to the Access Officers in their absence.

### **The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee (CDSC)**

*Business of the CDSC:*

### **Proposed Increase to DSC Spending**

**The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee** states that the Bursar is comfortable with the budget proposition he has brought forward to increase DSC spending. The increase is about £2,000, which gives exposure and experience to an extra team.

**The President** states they are happy to pass this. **The Bursar** states that they are not requesting more money, because they have surplus, it just authorizes additional spending.

The CDSC moves that the Standing Committee approve the increase in DSC Spending as proposed by the CDSC pending the presence of a Senior Officer at the next meeting of the Standing Committee.

Seconded by the President.

*The motion passes nem. con.*

### **Standing Orders H7(b) and H9(c)**

**The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee** states that this standing order amendment adds increased requirements on debaters trialing for EUDC because of how expensive it is.

**The Deputy Returning Officer** (Dominic Brind, *Magdalen College*) states that currently very few debaters get quite a lot of the debating pie, and that this fixes that.

**The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee** indicates that this is prospective rather than retrospective - this will be clear to everyone who is considering applying.

The CDSC moves that the Standing Committee amend Standing Orders H7(b) and H9(c), as proposed by the CDSC.

Seconded by the President.

*The motion passes nem. con.*

### **Rule 23 Change**

**The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee** states that this change allows to place any discussion of corporate objections *in camera*. **The President** agrees with this change, and clarifies that a corporate objection could still be public if requested.

The CDSC moves that the Standing Committee recommend the private business motion affecting Rule 23 as presented by the CDSC to the Public Business Meeting on May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Seconded by the President.

*The motion passes nem. con.*

*Questions to the CDSC:*

There are no questions to the CDSC in their absence.

**Changes to the Composition of this Committee**

Joseph Sisson (*St John's College*) has been elected Returning Officer by conclave.

**Any Other Business**

**The Returning Officer** states that the individual who submitted business on the agenda could not make this meeting, nor does he intend to bring this business again.

**Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held Monday 20th May 2019 in the TV Room at 16:00.

*The President closes the meeting at 18:32 in the TV Room.*

Signed,

**Spencer Cohen**

*Brasenose College*

Secretary