

Draft Minutes of

THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE DEBATE SELECTION COMMITTEE

4th Week Michaelmas Term 2018

Monday 29th October

The Morris Room, 9:00

Present: **The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee** (Andrew Seow, *Lincoln College*), **Externals Officer** (Lee Chin Wee, *Trinity College*), **DSC Treasurer** (Bryan Yan, *Keble College*), **Standing Committee Delegate** (Sara Dube, *St. Hugh's College*), **DSC Secretary** (Rosa Thomas, *St. Anne's College*), **Access and Equity Officer** (Brian Wong, *Wolfson College*), **Communications Officer** (Jason Xiao, *Wadham College*), **Internals Officer** (Louis Collier, *St. Hugh's College*), **Director of Training** (Rachel O Nunain, *Trinity College*), **The President** (Stephen Horvath, *New College*)

Attending:

Apologies:

Absent:

Late: **Internals Officer** (Louis Collier, *St. Hugh's College*)

DSC opens at 9:10

Business of the CDSC

Oxford IV Update

The DSC Treasurer brings up a need to push crash as they currently only have 1/3 of the sign-ups they need.

The Director of Training suggests going to squads with laptops to make people sign up.

The DSC Treasurer says that he has done this.

The Communications Officer says that the crash officers can just message people to ask to take crash.

The CDSC suggests asking people who have already signed up for crash to take more people and also suggests messaging ex-member of Standing Committee Rob Sutton, who took crash for 10 people last year.

The Communications Officer says that the New York Times is not willing to pay to have a stand at the IV this year but will give out free things.

The DSC Secretary asks if there is any way to not charge them this time but to get it in writing that they will give money to the Union next year.

The President points out that it is not definite that NYT will pay money the next time.

The CDSC asks the IV convenors to try to get some sort of fee or promise in writing that NYT will pay next year.

The Communications Officer says that he will email them. He also suggests Cveta and Emily from KCL as the External Equity officers for the IV.

The CDSC agrees and says that other options can be explored if both are speaking in the IV.

Cambridge IV and Women's

The Externals Officer says that selections for Cambridge Women's should be opened. He says that there are 6 teams and 5 judges for the Cambridge IV.

The DSC Secretary suggests provisionally sending 2 teams and 1 judge for Cambridge Women's.

The Externals Officer agrees.

Prisoners debate

The CDSC says he was contacted by the Head of Press of the Union about doing a debate with prisoners.

The President suggests looking into the possibility but to look less into the possibility of filming the debate.

The CDSC says that the Head of Press mentioned the debate would probably take place in HT19.

The President agrees.

IV Payments

The Communications Officer says that 5 teams have dropped without any payments.

The DSC Treasurer says that a lot of these teams are international and it seems unlikely that they will turn up if they haven't completed pre-reg.

The Communications Officer states that he would like to flag this problem for next year, in that invoices need to be updated earlier to have accurate information in order to plan for the IV.

The Internals Officer enters at 9:21

The CDSC says that this problem is something outside our control.

The Communications Officer says that they currently have 128 teams for the IV.

The DSC Treasurer says that Member of Secretary's Committee Chaitanya Kediya is going to Cherwell College today to confirm the external rooms for the IV – Cherwell may potentially offer 20 rooms.

The Communications Officer says that he has emailed all the institutions that haven't pre-registered yet.

WUDC spot

The President clarifies that TSC did not pass any motion last week regarding the WUDC spot and just said in the absence of the CDSC that they would not change anything with regard to the current situation. He says that there is not block from TSC regarding purchasing a new spot.

The CDSC says that the appeals committee representative he is in touch with has recommended buying the extra spot.

The Externals Officer asks if everyone is of the agreement that the best case scenario would be buying an extra spot if the appeal fails.

The CDSC says that he has been in contact with the eligibility appeals committee and adds that it seems unclear when the result of the appeal will be made known. He also mentions that a second appeal is unlikely to pass if the first one fails.

The President points out that the CDSC can reasonably ask the appeals committee to get back to him within the next three days.

The DSC Secretary points out that the Oxford Union is one of the only institutions that funds people to go to competitions so the problems of getting such an appeal through are not ones that most other institutions would understand.

The CDSC says that the total fee of adding the extra spot is likely to be £2,000.

The President says that WUDC could potentially waive Mr. Heredith's registration fee.

The DSC Secretary says she thinks this is unlikely.

The CDSC says that buying the extra spot would be financially burdensome but it would also give 100% assurance that everything will be sorted out.

The Director of Training asks if Mr. Heredith would be open to stepping down.

The CDSC says that Mr. Heredith thinks the Union should fund the extra spot.

The President asks where DSC will find the money for this.

The CDSC says that Oxford Schools has expanded its team cap and is likely to exceed last year's profit of £18,000. He adds that an extra spot on this year's WUDC would make it as expensive as Mexico the previous year.

The DSC Secretary points out that part of DSC is that everyone can go to any tournament regardless of money. She suggests cutting back on expenses by not providing funding for transport such as the London underground.

The CDSC says that this is a conversation for a different time as it would involve a substantial reorientation of DSC policy. He adds that they have already cut down on expenses by cutting further away tournaments such as Durham and Newcastle. We are also more likely to get cheaper flights for Euros as they are in Athens this year. He says that it is worth bringing the discussion regarding the extra WUDC spot to TSC.

The President says that it will be important to clarify in TSC that 1) Mr. Heredith attending WUDC is a boost not just to him but to the Oxford Union Society and 2) the expected DSC revenues this year will be able to fund the extra spot. He adds that it is still worth putting pressure on the eligibility appeals committee to get back soon.

The Internals Officer points out that there is a DSC precedent of never kicking people off international squads.

The President says that DSC should unanimously recommend to TSC that should the appeal fail in the first round we hope to fund an extra judge slot. He tells the CDSC that he should set a deadline of Wednesday to the appeals committee to hear back about the appeal.

The Director of Training says that Wednesday may be too tight of a turnaround.

The President says that it shouldn't take that long for them to come to a decision and that not hearing the appeal is a breach of the provisions of natural justice.

Business of the DSC Treasurer

The DSC Treasurer says that Mr. Sherry is claiming the maximum expense of £14 for a taxi he took back to Oxford from London.

The Director of Training suggests reimbursing this.

The CDSC agrees.

The DSC Treasurer says that Mr. Heredith has submitted two travel expense claims from June.

The President says that it is too late for these expenses to be passed.

The CDSC agrees.

The DSC Treasurer says that the total expenses to be passed for the week at £1,579.44.

Other business

The CDSC announces that he is resigning as CDSC.

The Access and Equity Officer passes a formal motion of thanks to Mr. Seow for being a wonderful CDSC.

Motion passes nem. com.

The DSC Treasurer and the Externals Officer nominate themselves for the position of CDSC.

The President moves to have an election by secret ballot administered by the Standing Committee Delegate Sara Dube.

The Externals Officer says that he would like to implement a central depository of resources for training squads, getting feedback from members of each squad to see what can be improved. He says that he would also like to have more visibility regarding DSC finances to be able to focus on wrapping up more sponsorship deals. He mentions that he will explore ways of diversifying the DSC revenue stream. He ends by saying that DSC is in safe hands no matter which candidate is elected but that he has a good track record with leadership and administration.

The DSC Treasurer says that he agrees with many of the points raised by the Externals Officer. He says that he has a lot of experience with administrative and decision-making bodies – as the president of Student Council in Singapore. He adds that he is also convening the Oxford IV and understands first-hand some of the problems DSC may face, allowing him to incorporate DSC changes the most effectively.

The Communications Officer asks both candidates how they will change the debating community to integrate more people and to get more volunteers.

The DSC Treasurer says that while simple answers like organizing socials and holding more friendly training events are useful, the main problem with retention is that if you are not already a debater you tend to get caught up with work and fail to attend squads. He says he thinks the Union should host more internal competitions to get people more involved.

The Externals Officer says he thinks training is extremely important and that it is essential for those in squads to feel like they have a continual debating pathway. He also thinks that they should explore the idea of non-alcoholic socials, movie nights, and more community-based activities.

The Director of Training asks how the candidates would ensure that training reforms go through and why they have not come to her with any training reform proposals yet.

The Externals Officer says that he has only been on DSC for a term and that now he has done both beginners and advanced workshops he suggests sending everyone a short brief of suggested reforms before DSC meetings so that everyone has time to look at them in advance to then discuss them on the spot.

The DSC Treasurer says that he thinks reform proposals shouldn't just be shelved. He says he will make sure that the proposal goes on each agenda and that as the weeks go on the proposals should be moved up the agenda in importance. He adds he thinks there is no huge problem with the training program structure as it is but suggests holding more social events.

The members of DSC move to vote for the candidates by secret ballot.

The Standing Committee Delegate Sara Dube counts the votes and announces that the Externals Officer has been elected as CDSC with 6 votes to 3.

The CDSC closes the meeting of DSC at 10:11.

Signed,

Sara Dube
Standing Committee
St. Hugh's College