

Draft Minutes of

THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE DEBATE SELECTION COMMITTEE

2nd Week Hilary Term 2019

Sunday 20th January

The Morris Room, 18:15

Present: **The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee** (Lee Chin Wee, *Trinity College*), **The Internals Officer** (Louis Collier, *St. Hugh's College*), **Standing Committee Delegate** (Chaitanya Kediya, *Exeter College*), **The DSC Treasurer** (Bryan Yan, *Keble College*), **The DSC Deputy Secretary** (Jason Xiao, *Wadham College*), **The Access, Communications & Equity Officer** (Brian Wong, *Wolfson College*), **The External Officer** (Andrew Seow, *Lincoln College*), **The DSC Secretary** (Rosa Thomas, *St. Anne's College*), **The President** (Daniel Wilkinson, *Oriel College*)

Attending:

Apologies: **Director of Training** (Rachel O Nunain, *Trinity College*)

Absent:

Late:

DSC opens at 18:24

Apologies

Request to pass Absences from Previous Meetings

The Access, Communications & Equity Officer moved to pass their absence from the previous meeting on the grounds that they were attending a pressing and extraordinary engagement agreed to be unavoidable.

Motion passes nem. com.

Matters arising from Previous Minutes

Ratification of Minutes

The CDSC moves to ratify the minutes of week 1 of Hilary term.

Motion passes nem. com.

Business of the CDSC

Backdating of helper points record

The CDSC inquires about the progress in backdating the helper points record.

The DSC Deputy Secretary says that they compiled all the helper points over the winter vacation based on tournaments attended by members over Trinity Term 2018, while the DSC Secretary compiled all the helper points based on activities in which members volunteered, such as ICYD and the Oxford Women's Open Trinity Term 2018.

The CDSC thanks the DSC Deputy Secretary and the DSC Secretary for their work over the vacation, and suggests formatting the helper points on a viewable but non-editable Google Sheet by week three, which would then be updated on a weekly basis.

The DSC Secretary points out that the compiled helper points need to be formatted with the account maintained by Mr George Hames, however they say that it will be possible to create such a Google sheet by week three.

Women's workshop

The CDSC moves a formal motion of thanks to Ms Rosa Thomas and Ms Rachel O Nunain for successfully running the women's workshop on Monday.

Motion passes nem. com.

The CDSC says that they will be attending the forthcoming meeting of the Access Committee, along with the Access, Communications & Equity Officer, to attempt to secure funding for the Pro-Am and Prosecco event, which is meant to take place in week four.

The CDSC adds that they will report back in the next ordinary meeting of DSC.

Expenses

The CDSC suggests that it might be necessary to ensure that the Accounts Manager, Rob, makes payments on behalf of DSC in time. The CDSC mentions that during the Inner Temple Debating Open the conveners had not received the registration fees. As a result, Mr Luke Dunne had to provide the necessary sum of money.

The DSC Treasurer responds that they have tried their very best, and have often reminded the Accounts Manager to make the necessary payments in time.

The CDSC says that they will look into the matter, and try coming up with adequate solutions.

The DSC Secretary points out that it has been the case for a while that payments are not made in time, and this might just be a systemic issue.

The Access, Communications & Equity Officer adds that the Accounts Manager has complained that DSC sends far too many updates, and that it would be better if a single list were sent.

The Externals Officer says that it is not possible to process all payments at one time because the necessary information is not always available.

The DSC Treasurer points out that the issue raised by the CDSC is not a fault of the Accounts Manager. In that particular case, the conveners failed to provide the necessary information about whom the payment had to be made to.

Pro-Am Tournament in Trinity Term

The CDSC says that the recently concluded FOTY had a promising set of first year students, and suggests hosting a pro-am tournament in Trinity term.

The Internals Officer mentions that they are concerned that first year students would be busy with examinations in Trinity Term.

The DSC Secretary points out that the Pro-Am and Prosecco event is structured in a similar manner, and that such a system could be adopted for this prospective tournament.

The DSC Treasurer inquires why the Pro-Am and Prosecco event is exclusively for women and non-binary speakers.

The DSC Secretary explains that the Pro-Am and Prosecco event was meant to serve as a tournament in the first term for women, and that this event was a replacement since organising a tournament in Michaelmas term was unviable.

The Internals Officer says that members might not want to spend an entire day on a tournament, and suggests that such a tournament could be incorporated into evening squads sessions.

The Externals Officer points out that there needs to be a broader discussion about how squads are run during Trinity term, and suggests running ad hoc sessions rather than regular sessions.

The Internals Officer responds that the regularity of sessions is valuable and should be preferred over an ad hoc approach.

The DSC Secretary adds that in the past the intermediate squads were folded into one squad and framed as an opportunity to have a pro-am session.

The Externals Officer says that it is often difficult to secure the availability of coaches and agrees with the DSC Secretary that folding squads into one session would be a viable solution.

The Internals Officer adds that adopting such a solution could have the benefit of making senior members more regular in their attendance.

The CDSC agrees that senior debaters do not currently train enough.

Business of the Treasurer

Expenses

The DSC Treasurer points out that Ms Vikki Perijainen took a ferry to Helsinki, since there is no South African embassy in Estonia. This was the cheapest form of travel and the total cost claimed will be reimbursed.

The DSC Treasurer says that Mx Imogen Edwards-Lawrence stayed for an extra day in Ireland as a result of which they could not claim the cheapest form of bus travel. Consequently, the sum reimbursed has been reduced accordingly.

The DSC Treasurer mentions that during the Manchester regional round of the Oxford Schools competition, the members took taxis between the school and the station. This was because the tournament had to be run on a tight schedule, and the expense is not significant and reasonable when measured per person.

The DSC Secretary says that it would be fair to compensate people for such expenditure especially since it is reasonable and incurred as part of assisting the Oxford Schools competition.

The CDSC points out that Ms Tejaswini Krishnaprasad, CA of the Oxford Wom*n's Open Michaelmas Term 2018, was not reimbursed in time. The CDSC says that they are willing to bear the difference in cost.

The DSC Treasurer says that in the future the conveners of competitions should be required to directly pay the CAs upfront, and then submit expense forms for reimbursement.

The DSC Deputy Secretary adds that all future hand over documents should make it clear that conveners are expected to prepare all of the money before the tournament.

The DSC Treasurer says that £534.14 has to be passed as DSC expenses today.

Business of the Internals Officer

Helper points for people who judged FOTY

The Internals Officer says that 2 points should be awarded to people who judged all rounds of FOTY and that 1 point to people who judged who judged at least one round of FOTY.

The Internals Officer inquires whether helper points should be deducted from Mx Imogen Edwards-Lawrence for not showing up to judge after having confirmed that they would do so.

The DSC Secretary points out that helper points are only deducted for external competitions and asks how detrimental the absence of the member was to the functioning of the competition. They also add that after the Oxford IV there is a precedent to deduct points from people who did not end up offering crash, and this would be an extension of that principle.

The Internals Officer says that the absence of the member did create a problem and made the competition look unprofessional.

The Externals Officer suggests that a standard should not be based on the nature of harm caused since that is incidental. Rather, they suggest the standard should be one of bad faith.

The Internals Officer clarifies that five other people also dropped out but did so by messaging by Friday. Mx Imogen Edwards-Lawrence gave no such notice.

The CDSC says that they will personally follow-up with the member instead of deducting helper points.

The CDSC moves a formal motion of thanks to Mr Louis Collier for running the Fresher of the Year competition on Sunday.

Motion passes nem. com.

The Access, Communications & Equity Officer points out that the Internals Officer is burdened in running such competition single-handedly and suggests having an Internals OrgComm.

The CDSC says that in the future the Access, Communications & Equity Officer would assist the Internals Officer in the running of such competitions.

Business of the DSC Deputy Secretary

Oxford World Schools proposal

The DSC Deputy Secretary says that the basic premise for an Oxford World Schools Debating Championship (OxWSDC) is because the DSC needs to raise more funds.

The DSC Deputy Secretary suggests hosting OxWSDC the week after ICYD, since this would not create a significant overlap and any later in Trinity term would not be viable. The DSC Deputy Secretary also adds that most other World Schools competitions happen later in the year.

The CDSC asks the President about the viability of hosting a competition from May 3 to 5.

The President says that they would no longer be the President during that period.

The DSC Deputy Secretary suggests that OxWSDC would be able to attract European WSDC teams, which do not traditionally attend similar tournaments such as the Harvard WSDC. The DSC Deputy Secretary adds that a basic straw poll suggests that a range of teams, approximately thirty teams, would be interested in attending OxWSDC, however also mentions that they are not aware of potentially clashing exam dates with the proposed dates of OxWSDC.

The Internals Officer says that younger students would start preparing for their examinations, but suggests checking the exact dates of examinations.

The CDSC suggests hosting OxWSDC in Michaelmas term because the run up to a tournament is too short.

The DSC Treasurer points out that hosting a tournament at such a time would have very little value to WSDC teams.

The DSC Deputy Secretary says that there are over three months to plan for OxWSDC in Trinity term, and it would be possible to organise the competition. The DSC Deputy Secretary adds that the duration of OxWSDC can be reduced by having six preliminary rounds and breaking directly to the quarterfinals.

The DSC Treasurer suggests conducting workshops in addition to the competition.

The DSC Deputy Secretary suggests doing an admissions talk, since these additions are a very low cost. The DSC Deputy Secretary also adds that the OxWSDC would only offer one dinner and then breakfast on Saturday and Sunday. The teams would also be required to figure out their own accommodation, and the price per person would be £60 for both speakers and observers.

The DSC Secretary points out that the exam dates are not an issue as this is always the case. However, they question whether the teams were made aware of the prices, since European WSDC teams often have to crowd fund to attend competitions. This might make the tournament comprise mainly of UK school teams and they could be the targeted market. The

DSC Secretary adds that the additional cost of accommodation might prevent European WSDC teams from being able to attend OxWSDC.

The Internals Officer points out that UK schools cannot have three day tournaments, and suggests having a two day tournament, reducing the price and attracting a larger number of teams. The Internals Officer also adds that even though exams do not necessarily clash with the proposed dates of OxWSDC, students might shy away from such a tournament.

The CDSC says that all the issues raised can be resolved, but the time taken to resolve them might cut in to time to plan OxWSDC.

The DSC Deputy Secretary suggests providing bursaries in the case that UK teams cannot afford the registration fees of the tournament, and to exercise price discrimination where possible.

The Internals Officer points out that a travel lodge in Oxford costs at least £30.

The Externals Officer adds that schools have to conduct a safety risk assessment, which would mean that it would not be easy to convince schools that they can affordably and safely stay in Oxford.

The DSC Secretary says that there seem to be three options. First, to cancel the tournament all together. Second, to target UK schools that could afford to pay for such a tournament. This would be similar to Ibstock Schools. Third, to make the tournament international in nature and have a high quality tournament.

The Externals Officer asks whether there might be fatigue among students after participating in multiple tournaments, which means that there is not sufficient participation in OxWSDC.

The CDSC suggests running a one-day tournament, reducing the price, and inviting European WSDC teams.

The DSC Treasurer questions whether European WSDC teams would turn up for a one-day tournament.

The DSC Deputy Secretary suggests offering a day of training to the European WSDC teams after OxWSDC.

The Access, Communications & Equity Officer points out that certain international teams regularly pay such costs since they can afford to do so.

The Internals Officer stresses the importance of ensuring the quality of OxWSDC because it would affect the reputation of the tournament in the future. The Internals Officer also suggests conducting the training before OxWSDC.

The DSC Secretary inquires whether the DSC Deputy Secretary and the Internals Officer can train teams given their affiliation to other WSDC teams.

The DSC Treasurer points out that there is a sufficiently large pool of debaters to ensure high quality training without requiring individuals with conflicting interests having to train such teams.

The Externals Officer questions whether providing training to teams before having them compete against other teams would create an access issue.

The DSC Treasurer suggests conducting the training after the completion of OxWSDC, and adds that such training can be priced favourably.

The Externals Officer says that this would require re-working the schedule and deciding how many rounds would take place.

The Internals Officer suggests adopting a system similar to Ibstock Schools, in which there were some prepared and unprepared motions, and in which the final round was a repeat of the prepared motion.

The CDSC says that proposal of a one-day tournament, followed by a one-day training workshop would be explored, and that they would further discuss this point in week three.

Business of the Director of Training

Business of the Externals Officer

Warwick IV

The Externals Officer explains that currently Ms Geneva Roy has -4 helper points and is ineligible for selection. The prospective points that she would earn as a result of convening the Taunton Oxford Schools regional round cannot be taken into consideration. The Externals Officer suggests explaining the situation to Ms Geneva Roy.

The Externals Officer announces that Ms Olivia Railton and Mr Conor Sheehan have been selected as one of the two teams for the Warwick IV, and asks that applications be re-opened for one team and one judge.

Leiden Open

The Externals Officer raises the concern that since Ms Geneva Roy does not have the requisite helper points, Ms Olivia Railton and Mr Conor Sheehan would be selected once again, in addition to Mr Tommy Peto and Ms Gigi Gil.

The Standing Committee Delegate points out that the applications for Leiden Open were opened well in advance simply to determine interest.

The Externals Officer asks the CDSC to announce that applications for Leiden Open remain open for another week.

Queen Mary IV

The Externals Officer says that applications need to be re-opened for the position of judge for the Queen Mary IV.

LSE Open

The Externals Officer mentions that three teams and two judges will be sent to the LSE Open, and asks the CDSC to open applications.

Business of the DSC Secretary

The DSC Secretary asks whether Ms Ana Vilhelmina Verdnik will receive five helper points as the convener of the Oxford Women's Open Trinity term 2018.

The DSC Treasurer says that this would be the case.

Changes to the composition of this Committee

The DSC Deputy Secretary is now Mr Jason Xiao (*Wadham College*)

The Externals Officer is now Mr Andrew Seow (*Lincoln College*)

The Access, Communications & Equity Officer is now Mx Brian Wong (*Wolfson College*)

Any Other Business

Enforcing Pro-Am requirement

The DSC Treasurer points out that the pro-am requirement to participate in EUDC or WUDC, can be breached by members who do not intend to trial for such competitions in the future. The DSC Treasurer suggests putting in place a time frame by which members have to meet their pro-am requirement.

The Internals Officer says that it might be unfair to not select such members for any tournament until they meet the pro-am requirement because they might have a particular tournament in mind, which they wish to attend in a pro-am team.

The Access, Communications & Equity Officer suggests that such members should be required to show in good faith their plans to undertake a pro-am.

The Internals Officer cautions against such members being able to decide which exact tournament they would use to meet the pro-am requirement, and suggests that such members should show a range of tournaments that they can attend.

The DSC Secretary adds that the CDSC can directly apply pressure on such members to meet their pro-am requirement.

The CDSC closes the meeting of DSC at 19:23

Signed,

Chaitanya Kediya
Standing Committee
Exeter College