

The Ratified Minutes of  
THE EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE  
4th Week Hilary Term 2018  
Wednesday 7th February  
President's Office, 15:45

**Present:** **The President** (Ms Laali Vadlamani, *Trinity College*), **The Treasurer** (Mr Stephen Horvath, *New College*), **The Treasurer-Elect** (Mr Daniel Wilkinson, *Oriel College*), **The Secretary** (Ms Molly Greenwood, *St. Hilda's College*), **The Elected Member**, (Mr Shanuk Mediawaka, *Lincoln College*), **The Elected Member** (Ms Genevieve Athis, *Christ Church College*), **The Elected Member** (Mr Adam Watson, *Hertford College*), **The Elected Member** (Mr Charlie Cheesman, *St. Edmund Hall*), **The Elected Member** (Ms Izzy Risino, *St. Catherine's College*), **The Elected Member** (Mr Chris Garner, *St. Peter's College*), **The Returning Officer** (Mr Harry Samuels, *New College*), **The Bursar** (Ms Lindsay Warne), **The Senior Treasurer** (Mr Stephen Dixon, *Downing College, Cambridge*)

**Attending:**

**Apologies:**

**Absent:**

*The President opens this Ordinary Meeting of the Standing Committee at 15:57.*

**Requests to Pass Absences from Previous Meetings**

There are no requests to pass absences from previous meetings.

**Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

There are no matters arising from previous minutes.

**Ratification of Minutes**

**The President**

**Business of the President**

**The President** explains that the Union has received press requests from both the Cherwell and Oxford Student regarding the Union's decision to host Yvonne Ridley for the religion debate this coming Thursday. The Jewish Society got in touch with the President about 36 hours previously requesting that her invitation be rescinded. She explains that she replied within 24 hours with response denying the request, firstly from a logistical point of view since it was around 72 hours before the event was set to take place, and the Union felt that the comments she had previously made to which were being objected were not relevant to the debate that was to be hosted. She explains that beyond this, the Union offers a platform where such comments can be challenged. She mentions that since contacting the Union, the Jewish Society has contacted the Cherwell and Oxford Student asking them to run a story on the decision. The requests from the student papers are asking for comment, which seem to suggest that they are not informed that the Union had responded to JSoc.

**The Senior Treasurer** asks why Yvonne Ridley has been objected to, and asks whether it is just because she is marginally controversial.

**The Treasurer** comments that she is not simply controversial, but has made some hideously anti-semitic and anti-zionist comments in the past.

**The President** mentions that Ms Ridley has spoken at the Union before, and is not the most high-profile of figures.

**The Treasurer** believes that, while the Union should uphold the commitment to host her, we should not belittle the comments she has made.

**The President** reads out her email to Jordan Bernstein, who has got into contact with us. It is as follows:

*Firstly, let me say that I do appreciate your concerns, and view of some of Ms Ridley's past comments. It is certainly not the Union's intent to make Jewish students on campus feel unsafe. That said, Thursday's debate, and her invitation to speak on Thursday's motion, are not a platform for Ms Ridley to talk about Zionism or the topic of Israel - we do think that her views on these topics are less relevant. Moreover, the Union represents a forum where Ms Ridley can be challenged, and will have her views questioned.*

*Do let me know if you would like to discuss this further - particularly your mention of the way in which her appearance has been advertised (we are most definitely open to suggestions on ways in which we can help address some of your concerns). I don't mind meeting to discuss tomorrow/ Thursday morning before the evening's debate.*

**The President** explains that she was told that JSoc wished for the termcard bio should have contained information about her comments, but she argues that this is not the purpose of the bio since it does not describe her.

**The Treasurer** mentions that were we to host a debate about Israel and Palestine and have her as a guest, then it might be appropriate to mention these comments, but due to the topic of this debate, it would not.

**The President** expects her to speak about her own religion and faith in this debate.

**Mr Kirk** believes that we must not put words into the speaker's mouth.

**The Senior Treasurer** comments that in the event she makes a very offensive comment, she should be asked to withdraw it and if she refuses, asked to leave.

**The President** mentions that there will be extra security on the night.

**The Returning Officer** reminds the Standing Committee of Standing Order B1, which prohibits members of the Committee from commenting about Union affairs to the press, save for comment about elections.

**The President** points out that she knows some people have been messaged on Facebook regarding this matter, and asks that no one respond as she believes this would be in violation of the Rules.

**The Treasurer** argues that a comment to a friend, off the record, would not be in violation of these rules.

**The Bursar** says that an ordinary friend could also be working for the student press.

**The President** argues that due to the way Oxford works, comments might get back to student press even if given to a friend.

**The Senior Treasurer** asks for the Rules' attitude towards off the record comments.

**The Returning Officer** believes that anything off the record would still be captured by Standing Order B1, as it could be still published as an anonymous comment.

**The President** asks that, since the official statement has been released, no one should say anything about it, and invites anyone to get in touch with her if they have any questions.

**The Treasurer** explains that he had received a question about this topic from a friend unconnected to Cherwell or other publication, and replied saying that he had not been directly involved in it, and only heard about it when Mr Bernstein wrote to the President and Officers.

**The President** believes that the Standing Committee represents the Union, and so should be able to come up with responses that we all agree with rather than making individual comments.

**The Treasurer** suggests we raise this with the Ethnic Minorities Officer, or the Access Officers.

**The President** believes that it is too much short notice, and that these Officers are not involved with the organisation of debates.

#### Questions to the President

There are no questions to the President.

#### **The Librarian**

##### Business of the Librarian

The Librarian has no business.

##### Questions to the Librarian

There are no questions to the Librarian.

#### **The Treasurer**

##### Business of the Treasurer

The Treasurer has no business.

##### Questions to the Treasurer

There are no questions to the Treasurer.

#### **The Secretary**

Business of the Secretary

The Secretary has no business.

Questions to the Secretary

There are no questions to the Secretary.

**Mr Shanuk Mediwaka**

Business of Mr Mediwaka

Mr Mediwaka has no business.

Questions to Mr Mediwaka

There are no questions to Mr Mediwaka.

**Ms Genevieve Athis**

Business of Ms Athis

Ms Athis has no business.

Questions to Ms Athis

There are no questions to Ms Athis.

**Mr Adam Watson**

Business of Mr Watson

Mr Watson has no business.

Questions to Mr Watson

There are no questions to Mr Watson.

**Mr Charles Wang**

Business of Mr Wang

Mr Wang has no business.

Questions to Mr Wang

There are no questions to Mr Wang.

**Mr Charlie Cheesman**

Business of Mr Cheesman

Mr Cheesman has no business.

Questions to Mr Cheesman

There are no questions to Mr Cheesman.

**Ms Izzy Risino**

Business of Ms Risino

Ms Risino moves that, following the recommendation of the Finance Committee, the Standing Committee pass the budget for the Martinis and Macaroons social, with the provision that the actual accounts will be submitted by the Ordinary Meeting of the Standing Committee in 8th Week, that being Monday 5th March 2018, and the provisional by 7th Week, and with an expected contribution of £436.75.

Seconded by Ms Athis.

*nem. con.*

*Julian Kirk enters the room at 15:58.*

**The Returning Officer** and **the Senior Treasurer** explain that the consequences of not providing accounts by the date agreed will result in a £50 fine that cannot be appealed, in accordance with the Rules.

Questions to Ms Risino

There are no questions to Ms Risino.

**Mr Chris Garner**

Business of Mr Garner

Mr Garner has no business.

Questions to Mr Garner

There are no questions to Mr Garner.

**The President-Elect**

Business

The President-Elect has no business.

Questions

There are no questions to the President-Elect.

**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-Officio**

#### Business to the Ex-Officio

The Ex-Officio have no business.

#### Questions to the Ex-Officio

There are no questions to the Ex-Officio.

### **The Senior Librarian**

#### Business of the The Senior Librarian

The Senior Librarian has no business.

#### Questions to the The Senior Librarian

There are questions to the The Senior Librarian.

### **The Senior Treasurer**

#### Business of the The Senior Treasurer

The Senior Treasurer has 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

The Returning Officer has no business.

#### Questions to The Returning Officer

There are no questions to The Returning Officer.

#### **The Chair of the Consultative Committee**

##### Business of The Chair of the Consultative Committee

The Chair of the Consultative Committee has no business.

#### Questions to The Chair of the Consultative Committee

There are no questions to The Chair of the Consultative Committee.

#### **The Access Officers**

##### Business of The Access Officers

The Access Officers have no business.

#### Questions to The Access Officers

There are no questions to The Access Officers.

#### **The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee**

##### Business of The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee

The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee has no business.

#### Questions to The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee

There are no questions to The Chair of the Debate Selection Committee.

#### **Changes to the Composition of this Committee**

There are no changes to the composition of this Committee.

#### **Any Other Business**

There is no other business.

**Date of Next Meeting**

- TBC

***The President** closes this Ordinary Meeting of the Standing Committee at 16:10.*

Signed,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Green', is written over a faint, light blue circular watermark.

**Molly Greenwood**  
*St. Hilda's College*  
Secretary