**7th Week Michaelmas Term 2023 Student Council**

**TIME: 17:30**

**DATE: Tuesday 21st November 2023**

**LOCATION: Oxford SU**

If you have any questions about Student Council, please feel free to contact:
**Chair of Oxford SU Council: chair@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk**

**SU Staff: studentengagement@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk**

**Statement from SU CEO:**

Firstly, I would like to start by thanking the Chair for allowing me the unprecedented opportunity to speak before today’s meeting. As some of you will have seen in the student and national media this is a really difficult time for Oxford SU, its staff and sabbs.

I wanted to speak ahead of the meeting because I know there will be people who will have questions they would like answers to. I know that for some of you, you may feel the best route for answers is asking the sabbatical officers and SU staff. I want to make you all aware that the sabbatical officers and staff team other than myself have no role in any investigation that is currently happening and as such do not have the answers to any questions. HR investigations require confidentiality and as frustrating as this may seem, this is not an attempt to keep students in the dark, it is about ensuring that employment law is adhered to.

I am not able to answer every question for obvious reasons but I want student council to know that this is not because of a desire anyone has to withhold information. Our sabbatical officers here this evening should not be held to account for any ongoing HR matters and I would urge council to focus on the work our officers have been doing, and not the working environment they have found themselves in.

Thank you.

**Questions:**

Luca: Is there a timescale for the investigation?

Dom: Difficult to answer due to complicated nature of the process

**A. Minutes of the previous meeting**

**B. Matters arising from the minutes**

**C. Elections in Council**

Chair election:

Issac Chase-Rahman:

* Has been chair of council for previous term
* Describes chairing council as both tough and enjoybal
* Derives joy from allowing students to have their voices heard
* Previously served as JCR President at Corpus Christi, attend the vast majority of council meetings during his tenure

Steering committee:

Scrutiny committee:

Seun:

* Currently Wadham SU (JCR) President
* Holds themselves to “an extremely high standard”
* Willing to hold the Sabbs to their promises
* Links their conduct and achievements as SU President with what’s necessary for the role

Returning officer:

Joe Bell:

* Current returning officer
* Believes they’re making good on their promises and pledges when elected and would like to see them to completion
* Expresses their desire to improve the how meetings are generally

Elections committee:

Adam:

* Doesn’t generally run in elections but enjoys supporting them behind the scenes
* Has prior experience working in the SU at Edinburgh uni, supporting “Free & Fair” elections.
* Has been a charity trustee
* Reconfirms their commitment to “Free & Fair” elections

Q: Any idea of how you can improve SU elections

A: Would like to be aware of the problems before providing solutions, very willing to work with RO to locate these issues and areas for improvement.

**D. Reports from and questions to Sabbatical Trustees**

VP Activities and Community:

- Highlights points mentioned in the report

VP Liberation and Equality:

* Highlights points mentioned in the report including: Working with the University and relevant committees focusing on the issues of deadnaming in IT services, support and construction of package of support for refugee students including the start of the campaign focusing on refugee students , BAMErepcom has highlighted issues with racial profiling present in the university, working with EDI chief at University on various schemes and initatives outlined in the report, etc

VP PG Education and Access:

* Highlights points mentioned in the report including: The introduction of two new divisonal reps for post graduates, working with graduate accommodation boards on the issues of vacant rooms around the university, joining Jenni (VP undergrads) on meetingrelating to university fees , DPhil drinks at Bod in November, etc

VP UG Education and Access

* Highlights points mentioned in the report including: Talking to and working with JCR Presidents on access ball tickets, developing a code of practices to make outreach work paid rather than simply voluntary, On course support, scholarships for estranged students, etc

**E. Reports from and questions to CRAE, SusCam, DisCam, and It Happens Here.**

CRAE:

Highlights points mentioned in the report including: All planned events are either achieved or on course to be achieved

IHH:

Highlights points mentioned in the report including: All targets and goals outlined have been achieved. Working on event next term focusing on poetry and performance

DisCam (Response to query from last council meeting):

DisCam chair has investigated an organisation focusing on supporting neurodivergent students. After investigation, they’ve concluded that the organisation aligns with the goals of the campaign and the campaign will seek to work with this organisation in the future.

**F.** Reports from and questions to Divisional Representatives for ContEd, Medical Sciences, and Humanities.

Humanities undergraduate rep:

Highlights and points towards the information mentioned in the report

Humanities postgraduate rep:

In addition to points from report: Need for more grants for humanities students, assessing the quality of language courses/training, assessing the level of fees surrounding the courses/training and maintaining staff levels at the Ashmoleon.

Medical Sciences postgraduate:

Highlights and points towards the information mentioned in the report

**G. Items for resolution**

1. Reform to the Ethical Code of Practice for Commerical Activities, Luca di Bona

Introduction: Points out restrictions present on which groups the SU is allowed to work with commercially. The proposer believes that these restrictions and regulations are vague and need a rework.

1. Free Speech and the Oxford Union, Luca di Bona

Introduction: Mentions support surrounding the discussion surrounding the Union in previous council meeting, states that this motion simply mandates the VPs to support the calls for condemnation and cancellation of union invites to relevant speakers.

Mia (VP): Expresses overwhelming support for motion and previous motion.

1. It Happens Here’s Delegate Allowance, Yasmin Poole

Introduction: Details how IHH only has a single vote in council, instead of the three available for the liberation-oriented campaign. Proposer expresses belief that IHH ought to have three votes given the nature of the campaign.

**Amendment proposed**

* Amendment proposed to amend the relevant by-laws to give all the campaigns three votes and to reflect the title of the motion to reflect the changes brought via the amendment.

Motion passes nemcom

Lengthy discussion follows relating a potential amendment to convert campaigns to constituent organisations. The amendment does not end up being brought forward.

1. Creation of a Campaign Welfare Committee, Alfie Davis

Introduction: Notes the campaign lacks the ability to remove problematic individuals from relevant campaign events and campaign-adjacent events

Jenni (VP): Expresses support for the motion and work gone into the motion

1. Minimum Service Levels Act (Opposition to), Luca di Bona

Introduction: Explains the mentioned Act, the implications of the act and summarizes the motion.

Mia (VP): Expresses the fact that sabbatical officers are in agreement with the motion

1. Motion for non-punishment for non-violent activism, Mia Clement

Introduction: “Does what it says on the tin”. The motion and rational of the motion, as outlined, are reiterated.

Q: Does this include action against the University?

A: Responds in the affirmative

Q: Who defines “violence”?

A: Expresses that their definition, for the purposes of the motion, aligns with the current university/government definition

1. Centralised Gender Expression Fund Mandate, Isabella Done

Introduction: Clarifies that the motion is not resolving to create the fund but mandating the relevant sabbatical officers to work towards funds creation/establishment.

Q: Is there any scope for the sabbatical to expand the current welfare provision SUs give to JCRS

A: Depends on the nature of the provision itself and thus the scope would vary

Q: Query on the exact mechanisms of how the funds are allocated and by who

A: It’s currently an ongoing conversation and the details will continually be ironed out.

Q: Will the responsibility to advertise the fund, the college or the SU?

A: Confirmation given it will be the SU

Mia VP: Expresses thanks for the motion and potential benefits that will arise form it.

1. Gender Neutral & Accessible Toilets, Luca di Bona

Introduction: Proposer outlines and highlights the motions, as presented in the agenda.

Q: Would this decrease the number gender segregated toilets as a result.

A: The idea of the motion is that all toilets ought to be gender neutral and presents disabled toilets as an option for the need of single person stalls.

Q: Do you think with will restrict where the SU will be able to hold events?

A: Explains that the motion doesn’t mandate the SU to always comply with motion rather they are simply heavily suggested to do so.

1. Creation of a Refugee Rights Campaign, Kennedy Aliu
Content Warning: Racism, xenophobia

Introduction: The motion’s purpose is to translate what’s going on in the University into the SU. Outlines the motion as presented via the agenda. Proposer expresses their belief that funding isn’t major issue do to support from various sources. Highlights the importance of what the campaign seeks to do, especially in light of recent global events.

Q: Asks for clarification on the scope of the campaign, whether the focus is centered entirely on students or not.

A: Expresses how the constitution is currently a “skeleton” and further progress and consultation on this is being sought out.

Comment: Highlights the great importance of welfare support for those involved in the campaign, especially given the intended constituents on the committee.

Comment: Expresses how it would be useful it would be collecting donations as a part of the package of support for the campaign

**RO proposes amendments**

* Notes how the campaign’s proposed constitution mentions membership for staff members.
* Notes how this goes against by-laws which only how students to be members of campaigns.
* Amendment proposes to strike part allowing staff members

The proposer agrees with amendment!

22 votes in favor, 0 against, 0 abstentions,

Amendment carried

**Second amendment proposed**

* Amendment proposes to add reps intersecting Class, LGBT+, IHH, Enviromental affairs, BME, DisCam, and WomCam

Motion passes NemCom

**H. Project Proposals for resolution**

1. Wildlife Photography Exhibition, Will Jackson-Nichols

**I. Items Below the Line**
**Steering Committee have deemed these motions uncontroversial, and so they will pass at the conclusion of the meeting, without a discussion or a vote. Attendees can request to the Chair that a motion be moved ‘above the line’ (and therefore discussed and voted on).**

1. Campus Unions, Luca di Bona
2. Environmental Affairs Campaign Constitution, Mia Clement
3. Addition of a Foundation Year Officer to Class Act, Jenni Lynam
4. Appointment of External Appeals Officer, Jenni Lynam

**J. Items for Discussion**

1. In-person delegates to NUS Conference, Luca di Bona

Introduction: The proposer began by explaining the role of the National Union of Students (NUS) and Oxford's entitlement to send delegates to both national and liberation conferences. They highlighted that last year, Oxford failed to send any liberation delegates, emphasizing the need for Oxford Student Union (SU) to maximize the return on its significant £26,000 NUS membership investment. This involves engaging more actively in the NUS's multistep decision-making process, which includes policy submissions, consultations, in-person workshops, and debates at conferences. Due to current election schedules, Oxford SU's delegates are limited to online participation, reducing their influence to initial submissions and final voting. The proposer suggests exploring funding avenues for in-person delegate attendance, to ensure Oxford SU's voice is fully heard in policy formation.

(Joel): Expresses how the costs of funding travel and accommodation are more than worth it as it it ultimately a in comparison to the larger £26,000 cost of NUS membership for Oxford.

(Michael): Expresses how there should be a wider discussion about the financials of the SU before going forward due to funding pressures currently present on the SU.

(Mia): Would agree with the spirit of the item, in-person things are much more engaging. NUS is great way to engage in a positive way and get some positive media!

(Luca): The first motion on the agenda was about providing guidance for existing SU Policy. It would be great to get this moving forwards by speaking to NUS Sabbatical Officers.

(Joel): Luca has suggested some good alternatives for funding, there are JCRs and MCRs to appeal for as we’re a decentralised University.

**I: Any Other Business**

(Isaac): Any Other Business

(Sumeyye): Are any other divisions asked for a “Fee Standardisation,” which is in reality an increase in fees?

(Guohao): Trying to drop tuition fees within MedSci.

(Sumeyye): How are you doing this?

(Guohao): Our JCC have acknowledged that prices have risen higher than inflation and they’re trying to adjust to lower levels next year.

(Isaac) Thanks attendees and reminds people to vote from 8pm tonight!

**ELECTIONS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Position**  | **Elected Student(s)**  |
| Returning Officer  | Joe Bell  |
| Chair of Council  |  Isaac Chase-Rahman  |
| Elections Committee  | 1. Adam Turner
 |
|   | 1. Patricia Mativo
 |
|   | 1. Mads Proitz
 |
| Steering Committee  | 1. Adya Singh
 |
|   | 1. Kenneth Lim
 |
| Scrutiny Committee  | 1. Suen Sowunmi
 |
|   | 1. Daniel Leung
 |

**REFERENDUM**

**Reform to the Ethical Code of Practice for Commerical Activities, Luca di Bona**
Total votes: 32
For: 27
Against: 5

Abstain: 0
Motion deemed to be carried

Free Speech and the Oxford Union, Luca di Bona
Total votes: 32
For: 21
Against: 10

Abstain: 1
Motion deemed to be carried

**It Happens Here’s Delegate Allowance, Yasmin Poole**
Total votes: 32
For: 29
Against: 3

Abstain: 0
Motion deemed to be carried

Creation of a Campaign Welfare Committee, Alfie Davis
Total votes: 33
For: 29
Against: 2

Abstain: 2

Motion deemed to be carried

Minimum Service Levels Act (Opposition to), Luca di Bona
Total votes: 32
For: 26
Against: 3

Abstains: 3
Motion deemed to be carried

Motion for non-punishment for non-violent activism, Mia Clement
Total votes: 31
For: 27
Against: 1

Abstain: 3
Motion deemed to be carried

Centralised Gender Expression Fund Mandate, Isabella Done
Total votes: 30
For: 28
Against: 0

Abstain: 2
Motion deemed to be carried

Gender Neutral & Accessible Toilets, Luca di Bona
Total votes: 31
For: 27
Against: 2

Abstain: 2
Motion deemed to be carried

Creation of a Refugee Rights Campaign, Kennedy Aliu
Total votes: 31
For: 30
Against: 1

Abstain: 0
Motion deemed to be carried

Wildlife Photography Exhibition, Will Jackson-Nichols
Total votes: 30
For: 26
Against: 2

Abstain: 2

Motion deemed to be carried