

Council Minutes

1st week Hilary Term 2014

1st Week Council took place at 5.30pm on Wednesday 16th October 2013 at Bernard Sunley Lecture Theatre at St Catherine's College.

- a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- b. Matters Arising from the Minutes
- c. Ratifications in Council
- d. Elections in Council
- e. Reports from the Sabbatical Officers
- f. Reports from the Executive Officers who wish to make reports
- g. Questions to Members of the Executive
- h. Passage of Motions Nem Con
 - 1. Supporting local homeless charities in their campaign against 38% cuts
- i. Motions of No Confidence or Censure
- j. Emergency Motions
- k. Motions Authorising Capital Expenditure
 - 1. Feminist Conference Funding
- l. Other Motions
 - 1. Fairtrade Campaign Motion
 - 2. Environment and Ethics - Fossil Fuel Divestment Campaign
 - 3. Motion against Marketisation, and in support of Week of Action
- m. Any Other Business

a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

None.

b. Matters Arising from the Minutes

None.

c. Ratifications in Council

None.

d. Elections in Council

By-Elections for the Part-Time Executive

Academic Affairs Campaigns Officer - no candidates

Clubs & Societies Support Officer - Anna Bazley (St Peter's) was elected.

Disabled Students' Officer - James Elliott (Teddy Hall) was elected.

Graduate International Students' Officer - Kyle Edwards (St Cross) and Aparnareddy Mummadi (Wolfson) nominated. Hust requested.

Kyle - Grew up in LA. On Princeton committees including graduation ceremony, now serve as UK Europe position for building alumni support in the UK, hosting events, keeping website updated. Can read more in booklet. Interested in running - came as DPhil student. St Cross not most socially cohesive, and work in Department with very independent work. Lived out in first year and so have missed graduate international community. One idea is area based events for international students; tailor to location within Oxford so fewer barriers.

Aparna - Came to UK in 2004 from Singapore. Would like position to focus on mental health as not much focus now. Anxious time to arrive here especially when family far away. Depression higher in international students, and less likely to seek help - want to point to e.g. Counselling services and have sessions. Have been ambassador and advocate for patients. Was also Vice Chair of medical students society at Manchester.

Kyle 20, Aparna 42. Aparna Mummadi was elected.

Mature Students Officer - no candidates

Other Elections in Council

1 Position for MPLS Graduate Divisional Board Rep - Lucy Hutchinson (Lincoln) was elected.

2 Positions for Steering Committee - no candidates

4 positions on Scrutiny Committee - Nick Cooper (St John's), Rachel Jeal (Lincoln) and Will Obeney (Regent's Park) were elected.

1 Positions for Budget Sub Committee - no candidates

1 Position for the Rules Committee - Charlie Baker (St Catz) was elected.

3 Positions for Complaints Committee - no candidates

4 Positions for Internal Affairs Committee - Nick Cooper (St John's), James Blythe (Brasenose) and Alfred Burton (The Queen's) were elected.

2 positions for Deputy Returning Officer - Wharton Chan (Pembroke) and Poppy Heloise Stokes (Wadham) were elected.

e. Reports from the Sabbatical Officers

Garlen Lo - Postgraduate scholarship scheme with university: won a bid of £3m from Higher Education Fund for England. To be spent on scholarships for Masters, Springboard programme for women to enter Masters courses, and internships for Masters students. It's now on the Oxford website, so big priority.

Sarah Pine - Read report but main thing is student parents. Didn't think it would be priority. If you get subsidised childcare from the university it costs £9000, but most don't so it's £12,000. The only people who do get it are undergraduates with no partner, or with partners earning £35000+. Working to extend this with the Assessor.

Dan Tomlinson - Wed 3rd week - Balliol are putting on event about homelessness after Council in 3rd week. Over Summer, Council put consultation about how to engage with city, but didn't mention students except as statistic, so will work with them. RAG Ball now recruiting new committee - if you know students, let me know. OUSU is expanding Community Wardens programme, including maybe couple more in East Oxford. Can go into community and support students. Get involved.

Charlotte Hendy - two surveys open on Latest News section of OUSU website. One is on sexual health and HIV, following HIV testing last term - want feedback on session. Other survey is about drugs and alcohol. Little done that is student specific, and so we want to know what students want. Will be in JCR/MCR notices soon.

Rachel Pickering - want to highlight the OUSU Teaching Awards run in last two years, to nominate Best Lecturer, and will now have Best Tutor and Best Support Staff (e.g. porter, Junior Dean, nurse). If you are interested in being involved, get in touch. Follow me on Twitter.

Tom Rutland - Please get in touch if you're new as I'd like to meet you. OUSU budget is main priority - want 62% increase. Have been meeting with senior university figures, and will have meeting tomorrow. Should report back to 3rd week. Student Opportunity Fund is currently under threat - use #SaveStudentOpportunities or email MP. Decision under Nick Clegg so worth contacting him. Have just appointed Communications Officer who should improve things and do a great job.

f. Reports from the Executive Officers who wish to make reports

None.

g. Questions to Members of the Executive

James Elliot (Teddy Hall) - Tom, do we know how disability services will be affected by SOF?

Tom Rutland - £150k goes into disability at the moment but don't know at this stage.

Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln): David Willetts talking in Oxford in five days. We have no confidence policy - are we doing anything about it?

Tom Rutland - I wasn't aware so will look into it.

h. Passage of Motions Nem Con

1. Supporting local homeless charities in their campaign against 38% cuts

OUSU Council notes:

1. That Oxford City has a relatively high proportion of homeless people, a homeless person is anyone who does not have a home, this includes those people that are sleeping rough and those staying in emergency accommodation (such as Oxford's O'Hanlon House night shelter).
2. At the last official count, August 2013, there were 14 people sleeping rough on the streets of Oxford.
3. Oxford Homeless Pathways manages more than 150 units of accommodation (emergency and non-emergency) for homeless individuals.
4. Oxfordshire County Council's draft budget proposals for 2014-2017 include a proposal to cut funding "for hostels for homeless people, floating support and housing support for victims of domestic violence and people with drug problems" by 38%.
5. The Vice-President (Charities and Community), Dan, and the Community Outreach and Charities Officer, Emily, both ran for election on a platform of working with local service providers and students to alleviate the issue of homelessness in Oxford.
6. Dan recently attended a meeting with the CEO's and Managing Directors of the homeless charities in Oxford city.
7. The local charities are campaigning against cuts of this magnitude and were seeking the support of OUSU in this
8. Dan committed to support the campaign in a personal capacity but did not commit the support of Oxford students or OUSU as a whole. He is seeking a mandate to do just that from OUSU Council today.

OUSU Council believes:

1. That homelessness is an issue that affects Oxford students, as we walk to lectures or out to the shop we regularly encounter, and interact, with homeless people.
2. That an increase in homelessness in Oxford City would not be good news for anyone, including students.
3. That cuts of 38% are likely to significantly increase the numbers of rough sleepers in Oxford City.
4. That students of Oxford University care about their community and would support a campaign against the 38% cuts.

OUSU Council resolves:

1. To support the campaigning efforts of the local homeless charities, for example by publicising their petition and advertising their action to students.
2. To financially support, from OUSU Council's discretionary campaign budget, students that wish to campaign on this issue - making available up to £150 for this purpose (noting that before this meeting of OUSU Council £0 of this £2,000 budget had been spent). This money will be used to purchase materials for the planned action (such as banners) taking place at the next County Council meeting to discuss the budget proposals. The specifics of the expenditure will be determined in a meeting with the homelessness service providers on Friday, OUSU Council can expect that not all of the £150 allocation will be spent.

3. Mandate Dan and Emily to contact the Heads of Houses, Vice-Chancellor and Pro Vice-Chancellors asking them to sign the open letter to the County Council's Cabinet (this letter is being circulated to influential people within Oxford).

Proposed: Daniel Tomlinson (Univ)

Seconded: Emily Silcock (New)

i. Motions of No Confidence or Censure

None.

j. Emergency Motions

None.

k. Motions authorising Capital Expenditure

1. Feminist Conference Funding

OUSU Council notes:

1. Leeds National Student Feminist Conference is on the 8th to the 9th February 2014
2. The event is the first of its kind to occur in the UK during what is now being termed 'the fourth wave' of feminism, The event features a range of talks, workshops, activist meetings and presentations from students and academics.
3. A return train ticket, with a 16-25 railcard, costs just under £50, and a return megabus ticket is £32.
4. A coach would cost £1350 for a 49 seater, £1250 for a 32 seater, £1150 for a 24 seater and £850 for a 16 seater. If the students pay £16 each, OUSU would pay £566 for the 49 seater, £738 for the 32 seater, £766 for the 24 seater, £594 for the 16 seater.
5. The conference is working to provide accommodation for attendees from other towns, so Oxford students would be able to stay for both days of the conference.
6. That OUSU's Mission, Vision and Values includes a belief in empowerment, saying OUSU '[w]e will enable students to shape their Oxford experience and develop them to be powerful agents of change.' That OUSU's Mission Vision and Values also aims to 'support under-resourced groups'

OUSU Council believes:

7. This is a movement that OUSU members are very much involved with.
8. It is especially important that Oxford students are given the chance to attend this event to empower them to make change on a large scale. Learning from other engaged students is a part of this.
9. That facilitating students' attendance at the conference allows OUSU to act on it's mission of empowerment.
10. That women are an under-resourced group.

OUSU Council resolves:

1. To release a maximum of £700 of OUSU funding from the discretionary campaigns budget for a coach to attend the Leeds National Student Feminist Conference
2. To mandate the Vice-President (Women) to oversee the organisation of the transport.

Proposed by: Charlotte Sykes (Lady Margeret Hall)

Seconded by: Sarah Pine (Wadham College)

AMENDMENT 1

To insert:

Believes 11. That feedback on these events is helpful if OUSU is to continue to support this endeavour in the long run.

Resolves 3: To mandate those attending this conference to report back to Council on how much was spent, how it was spent, general feedback on the event and recommendation for next year should Council continue to support this endeavour.

Resolves 4: For the report to be submitted to 7th week Council HT14.

Proposed: Jack Matthews, Univ
Seconded: Nick Cooper, St John's

Taken as friendly.

AMENDMENT 2

In Resolves 1, replace £700 with £400.

Proposed: Charlotte Sykes (LMH)
Seconded: Sarah Pine (Wadham)

Taken as friendly.

Charlotte Sykes (LMH): want to ask for funding towards transport. First conference of its kind to bring together Fourth Wave feminism. Would be amazing if Oxford could have hosted, but Leeds took initiative first so want to be part of it. Workshops and talks from leading feminists and academics. Lots of activities to better your feminism, and understand intersectionality more. Money will come out of fund that has been underspent for the last few years.

Sarah Pine (Wadham) - comes from Council's discretionary campaigns budget. This has been underspent for many years and nothing spent yet.

Charlotte - it's expensive to get to Leeds, but can make it happen with OUSU's support. Fantastic opportunity to discuss feminism in a city we wouldn't be able to get to otherwise.

Sarah: OUSU Mission Vision Values includes empowering change within students' own communities. Feminism is gaining momentum in Oxford - Cuntry Living, Women's Campaign turnout. Matters to lots of students, and we have a responsibility to offer this to people who don't want to come to Council or attend their JCR/MCR meetings.

Short Factual Questions

Dan Tomlinson (Univ) - how many people do you think will come?

Charlotte - informal interest has been sent and have about 25 people, before using WomCam (only Cuntry Living). Estimated 40, which is a coach size.

James Blythe (Brasenose) - logistics question. What would you do if you had more people than space?

Charlotte - called coach company and asked about five sizes. May get funding elsewhere.

Sarah - loads of people want to come; will ask people to reach through JCRs/MCRs.

Lucy Delaney (Wadham) - WomCam committee will definitely attend. 15 people.

Harry Burt (Trinity) - do you think this counts an endorsement for charities financially supported by the event including, for instance, one that promotes legalisation of prostitution?

Sarah: Prostitution is legal.

Harry - Actions around prostitution?

Charlotte - probably a no, as people have various views.

Sarah - happy to discuss views on sex workers after.

Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln) - is there a cost for attendance?

Sarah - no, and accommodation free. Leeds will organise.

Will Tomsett (Regents Park) - how many other universities?

Sarah - unclear but others including Warwick.

Passes without opposition

I. Other Motions

1) Fairtrade Campaign Motion

OUSU Council Notes:

1. That Oxford University is currently not a Fairtrade certified University
2. That five Oxford colleges are already Fairtrade certified.
3. That there are 72 Fairtrade universities and colleges in the UK, including LSE, Manchester and Oxford Brookes.
4. That there have been various other campaigns in the past for Fairtrade at Oxford University.
5. That Oxford University would gain Fairtrade status if 2/3 of its departments and 2/3 of its colleges were Fairtrade certified.
6. That if Oxford University's main three suppliers agreed to source a certain proportion of their food supplies from Fairtrade sources, then relevant departments would become Fairtrade certified departments.
7. That Fairtrade certification would significantly improve Oxford University's score on the People and Planet Green League of universities, where it currently ranks 132nd, and 12th worst.

OUSU Council Believes:

1. That the Fairtrade certification provides a good way of ensuring that food goods sold in the university are from ethical sources.
2. That Fairtrade certification would send out a message that Oxford University cares about the ethical consumption and workers' rights, and improve the university's image to the press and prospective applicants.
3. That it is financially feasible and practicable for Oxford University to ensure Fairtrade supplies to at least 2/3 of departments, in the same way that many other universities have attained certification.
4. That certification in 2/3 of departments would be a valuable step towards University certification, and give colleges greater motivation to also become Fairtrade certified.

OUSU Council Resolves:

1. To form a campaign for Fairtrade departments at Oxford University within OUSU's Environment and Ethics Campaign.
2. To support campaigns for colleges to become Fairtrade certified.

Proposed: David Lawrence (Jesus)

Seconded: Dan Tomlinson (Univ)

David Lawrence (Jesus) - can read motion. Want to ensure longevity of Fairtrade Campaign within university, and want it as part of Environment & Ethics campaign.

SFQs

Jack Matthews (Univ) - does this change our Fairtrade policy, as we have had one before?

David - asking for the *University* to be Fairtrade.

Jack - OUSU already has policy for university.

David - adds it to E&E.

Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln) - can the E&E campaign already do this?

Dan Tomlinson (Univ) - yes, but wanted Council to endorse.

Opposition

Will Obeney (Regents Park.) Feel bad about opposing. I support work about E&E campaign, and feel passionately about ethical food sourcing. Less money reaches developing world. 1-2% of Fairtrade extra money goes to exporting co-operatives. Further don't know how much goes to farmers. Certification fees etc. are taken out of money before farmer gets money, and farmer has additional production costs. Despite 18-37% of products at Fairtrade prices. Jury is out on this one, and many economists believe Fairtrade is not a good thing, so should be wary.

Anya Metzger (Wadham) - have also heard move away from Fairtrade, but worth bearing in mind that reason isn't just for money to go back. Things we would support including not using child labour. Not perfect, but work done and principles upheld mean we move closer to what we want. Wadham is Fairtrade and it means we think more carefully and notice what happens in the world.

Sarah Pine (Wadham) - do proponents want to add anything?

David - It doesn't interfere with free market. It's not perfect but it's better than the current system, where wages are unfair. See Fairtrade as political act - it's to give firms a better reason to pay fair wages. Want more efficient.

Annie Teriba (Wadham) - I think last response is problematic if you are endorsing it, as it makes people feel they're doing this. Farmers have to pay to enter co-operative, so not clear if poorest farmers do better as poorest farmers actually get an even worse.

Will Obeney - While well intentioned, it is not that good.

David - To respond, £2 extra doesn't mean £2 for farmer. Some does e.g. building hospitals and schools. It does make it more difficult.

Move to vote - no objection

Summary speeches

David - want to ensure we have mandate for student support, and this would provide this.

Will - I question how ethical Fairtrade is, and whether we should promote it. Especially based on which farmers are Fairtrade and which aren't. 24 million harmed for one to be helped.

41 for, 9 against, 18 abstentions. Motion passes.

2. Environment and Ethics - Fossil Fuel Divestment Campaign

OUSU Council notes:

1. In September 2013 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported that in order to stay below a one-third probability of a devastating global temperature rise of 2°C, cumulative carbon emissions cannot exceed a “budget” of about 800 gigatons. Over-shooting this by just 5% increases the chance of exceeding 2°C to 50%. Over 500 gigatons have already been emitted. [IPCC]
2. Current fossil fuel reserves amount to nearly four times the remaining carbon budget. Therefore between 60-80% of reserves must stay in the ground. [CarbonTracker.org]
3. Despite this, the top 200 coal, oil and gas companies spent almost \$700billion in the last 12 months finding and developing even more reserves. [CarbonTracker.org]
4. On average, around 5% of university endowments are invested in fossil fuels- this equates to a 2k investment per student. Oxford hasn't released a detailed breakdown and has no specific policy on fossil fuel investment so it is likely to be around the UK average. [350.org]
5. There is a growing international campaign for fossil fuel divestment, which has spread to the UK, notably through the Fossil Free UK campaign. There are currently student-led divestment campaigns in 20 UK universities, including Cambridge where in November 2013 the student union passed a motion calling on the university to divest from fossil fuels.

OUSU Council believes:

1. The actions of companies that search for new fossil fuel reserves is unethical.
2. Investment made by the University into such companies is socially irresponsible.
3. Divestment is an effective means of protest against unethical corporate behaviour.
4. Actions taken by Oxford University can attract substantial national media coverage, as such a decision in favour of divestment would encourage other UK universities to divest.

OUSU Council resolves to:

1. Formally request that the University of Oxford, through its investment subsidiary Oxford University Endowment Management:
 - a) Ceases to directly invest in fossil fuel companies
 - b) Puts safeguards in place to ensure the University does not indirectly invest in fossil fuel companies through its ‘pooled vehicles’ or any other indirect investment channel.
2. (In response to a request from the University of Oxford) Offer the following definition for ‘fossil fuel companies’ as those companies that participate in exploration for and/or extraction of fossil fuel reserves.
3. Request that the University of Oxford releases a policy statement before the start of the new academic year setting out its view whether or not investment in fossil fuel companies can be considered ‘socially responsible’ as well as the stance that it takes with respect to the financial risks of investing in these companies.
4. Mandate the Vice-President (Charities and Community) to inform the Socially Responsible Investment Review Committee and other relevant staff members within the University of the resolutions of OUSU Council.

Proposed: James Rainey (Balliol)

Seconded: Daniel Turner (Balliol)

James Rainey (Balliol) - chair of E&E Campaign. Working with University to take fossil fuels out of investments. Research into carbon budget (only so much carbon we can release to prevent climate change - 300GTons of carbon). Would have to leave 60-80% of fossil fuels in ground. Many companies use these as assets. Over 12 month period, 700 million dollars used to find new reserves. Would be looking at catastrophic climate change of approx.. 4-6 degrees. University average investment is 5%, which is £2000 per student. Oxford doesn't know so probably about that average. The university we look at is unethical, as it benefits from this. Not a socially responsible investment - should not be funding climate change. Want to bring this to Socially Responsible Investment Review Committee (SRIRC). This motion asks for Dan to do this and take it forward.

Kameel Premhid (LMH) - 3 part question. Is current investment direct or indirect? If indirect, does this policy prohibit indirect, and what are implications for our investments? What are financial implications for money gained from these investments, and how it aids general student finance?

James - Endowment management company so indirect. When SRIRC set up, students didn't want university to fund arms companies. University tells fund managers: we don't want to fund this.

Kameel - hesitant to do this if we don't know exact money.

James - research done. If fossil fuel companies have to give these up, they're massively overvalued. University would make a massive loss if government changed definition of assets. Lots of risks associated with current policy. 5% is not a dangerous amount to take out.

Jack Matthews (Univ) - am I right in saying this only deals with financial investment, and does not affect things such as oil and gas companies funding students?

James - not at all.

Ashleigh Ainsley (St Catz) - do you actually know how much the university invests?

James - no. 5% is average. University won't answer Freedom of Information requests as they say we don't know. Want to push further but not currently.

Patrick Ferguson (Mansfield) -Engineering research is funding by companies such as Shell. Would this affect this?

James - international campaign. Some universities have done this in the US. No negative impact in America. Hard to say but better for companies' reputations to invest in students.

OPPOSITION

Kameel Premhid (LMH)- I will not endorse this until I see figures for financial implication.

Sarah Pine (Wadham) - while figures would be good, it's clear that Dan and James have tried to source this and not been able to.

Ashleigh Ainsley (St Catz) - echo what was said by Kameel.

Dan Tomlinson (Univ) - I think it's a valid question, but the only way we'll know is if we pass this and pressure the university. We need backing of student body.

Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln) - not us playing numbers game. Campaigning about arms trade before - not about £6m, £60m, £600m but we are against killing small children in developing world. Climate change is as much of an issue.

Anya Metzger (Wadham) - following Jack's question, may be reaction from fossil fuel companies about supporting students. Does this change your view?

James - worth debating but don't want companies holding us to ransom. Would have to talk about more if it happened.

Ashleigh (St Catz) - could we not just lobby the university to provide this information?

James - have tried.

Martin Evans (Worcester) - there is money in fossil fuels right now, or the university would have said right now. We're trying to find this, but we want no more invested.

Dan Templeton (St Catz) - we want to represent students best. Divestment in these policies may raise prices. Students already hit hard - is this best?

James - it has to happen eventually, so want to encourage others. Need political momentum that this is unacceptable. Removing 5% will not harm these companies; principle that we can't do this.

Summary

James - really important to go to the university and ask them to take this further. Really important for Oxford to send a strong signal.

Opposition Ashleigh- not clear what the impact would be so opposed.

For 50, Against 16, Abstentions 8. Motion passes.

3. Motion against Marketisation, and in support of Week of Action

OUSU Council Notes:

1. The marketisation of this university, and higher education more broadly, by which we mean the transformation of education from a public good into a private commodity.
2. Cuts to staff pay and conditions:
 - a. Staff have faced a real-terms pay cut of 13% since 2008, despite a £1bn surplus in the sector and a £53m surplus at the University of Oxford alone.
 - b. OUSU Council has previously supported strike action by UCU, UNISON and Unite.
 - c. There will be further two-hour strikes on Thursday 23 January, Tuesday 28 January and Monday 10 February.
3. The sell-off of the student loanbook:
 - a. The government have recently sold off £890m of student loans to a debt management consortium for £160m.
 - b. David Willetts, Universities Minister, has announced plans to sell-off the rest of the loanbook, and has confirmed that students' terms and conditions can be changed.¹
 - c. A similar loanbook sell-off in New Zealand in 2012, saw interest rates on repayment for existing borrowers raised from 10% to 12%.²
4. The repression of student protest against marketisation:
 - a. Five students at Sussex University were suspended by VC Michael Farthing, and have subsequently been reinstated, for their role in a peaceful occupation.
 - b. Six students at Birmingham University are facing disciplinary action for their role in a similar peaceful occupation.
 - c. The University of London occupation at Senate House was violently broken up after management called in the police, with videos from the *Guardian* indicating police brutality against students, including a student being punched in the face.
 - d. That NUS supported the #copsoffcampus demonstration in London on the 11th of December, which saw over 2,000 people take to the streets.
5. There is a national Week of Action in February, protesting the student loanbook sell-off, with over 40 campuses planning to take part.

1 Aditya Chakraborty, writing in the *Guardian*: <http://www.theguardian.com/money/2013/jun/13/raise-interest-rate-student-loans-secret-report>

2 Andrew McGettigan, higher education policy analyst: <http://andrewmcgettigan.org/2012/06/27/news-from-new-zealand-changing-repayment-terms/>

OUSU Council believes:

1. That the sell-off of student loans and cuts to staff's pay are part of the same process of marketisation, which requires universities behave more like businesses run for profit than educational establishments run for the pursuit of academic knowledge.
2. That marketisation of higher education is detrimental to academic quality, students' welfare and the living standards of staff.
3. That the struggles of staff for fair pay and of students for quality, affordable education, are therefore closely intertwined.
4. That where students and staff have united at other universities, that this has been met with repression from management and police.
5. That protests, including demonstrations and occupations, are legitimate and students have every right to undertake them without repression.

OUSU Council resolves:

1. To condemn the increased marketisation of this university, and higher education in Britain.
2. To voice support for campaigns against marketisation where it harms the interests of student members and university staff.
3. To support staff from UCU, Unite and UNISON in their pay dispute with UCEA, the employer's association by:
 - a. Calling on the university to return to the negotiating table.
 - b. Encouraging students to respect staff picket lines on all strike days by not attending lectures, and for OUSU to send a reminder email about this in advance of strike days.
 - c. Where possible, to coordinate with UCU, Unite and UNISON members to hold joint student-staff rallies on strike days.
4. To voice support for the national Week of Action against the sell-off of the student loanbook.
5. To mandate the OUSU President to discuss opposition to the loanbook sell-off with the Vice-Chancellor, and request the Vice-Chancellor lobby against this policy.
6. To condemn any violation of students' right to peaceful protest.
7. To make Council Resolves 1, 3, and 6 from this motion OUSU Policy.

Proposed: James Elliott (St Edmund Hall College)

Seconded: Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln College)

James Elliott (Teddy Hall)- lots of political activity in higher education since last Council. Want to talk about marketisation - not treating education as a public service. Next round of staff strikes, starting tomorrow. Sell off of the student loan book. Should oppose this sell off. 40 Councils taking part, and should have OUSU to voice support for this. Happened in New Zealand that interest rates could be raised on the loans, meaning retrospective hike in fees. Also the issue of violation of student rights to peaceful protest. Students at Birmingham and Sussex threatened with suspension. Brutal removal of students by police at University of London. OUSU should stand up for any students who suffer brutality for peaceful protest. Other universities have vindicated students.

Ashleigh (St Catz) - would you be supporting all staff even if not members of the unions?

James - they wouldn't be on strike.

Josh Platt (Hertford)- Resolves 3(b) - is it wise for OUSU to send email to students to miss lectures when we have finalists?

James - already passed policy that it would be good to support strikers. It's an individual decision, but point is to be disruptive to university.

Tom Rutland (Jesus) Can you give more details about what Week of Action will involve?

James - 40 campuses to hold demonstrations. Called by students against austerity, but others have supported. Not sure what is happening on all 40 campuses.

Anya Metzger (Wadham) - can you say what you mean by Resolves 3a, and who we should be calling on a return to the table?

James - appreciates it's not clear, but OUSU officers.

OPPOSITION

Jack Matthews (Univ) - some of these points I've made before but I'll start with sell off of loan book. Not yet decided what the terms will be. If terms allow a change of interest rates, I'll be at front of queue. It's like us condemning Catz for increasing price of a pint by £1 when they have no plan to do that. On strikes, I can't tell my Common Room not to attend their lectures. While trade unions look for our support, UCU and other unions have thrown things like academic feedback sessions back in our face as opportunities for sexism and racism. Especially at a university where the SU was founded on our right to criticise our lectures. When we ask unions to join with us, they turn our back on us. I'm not sold on supporting them.

James - student loan: government report by banks revealed by Guardian suggested that they do this. Synthetic hedge: sell off loans at a loss, so a subsidy. Alternative is to change the terms of interest. David Willetts has said that the terms can be changed. Threat is there, and condemned by bodies including the NUS. Naive not to deal with now. Strikes debated before. Talking about 13% pay cut in 5 years. Mostly support staff - caterers, scouts. Outrageous not to stand in solidarity with most vulnerable in society. Trade unions very supportive on issues such as marches for tuition fees.

James Blythe (Brasenose) - don't want to get involved in student loan debate. So close to support - but can't support Resolves 3. Only email other than weekly email has been about strikes. Perception of OUSU email is to talk to them about a "left wing cause". It's about preservation. I'm not a voting member, but you are representing common room. We all support principles. Think that what I work for within OUSU is so much more than this. We reduce the amount other people listen to OUSU.

James - don't want to treble emails - just have it in normal weekly email.

Harry Burt (Trinity) - in personal capacity. Motives are good. Quotes about student loan book are good. David Willetts has said "no-one will have their interest rate increased" and that will be condition of sale. Vince Cable said same, Treasury Minister the same. On Council Notes 3a, question of 14% were actually repaying loans so that explains valuation. So points are misplaced and devalue otherwise good motion.

James - don't believe what David Willetts told us. Were always told there were no fees, then £1k, £3k, £9k. Vince Cable said no fees and changed. Can't trust government.

Jack Matthews - on terms of loan, if they're already there, why are we only causing that now? They could do it in state hands. Also saw no effect on last strike - many lecturers turned out anyway.

AMENDMENT

To delete Resolves 3b.

Proposed: James Blythe (Brasenose)

Seconded: Josh Platt (Hertford)

James Blythe: James and Nathan and people campaign very well, but I don't think OUSU should. Damaging to ask people not to go to lectures, and OUSU has perception issues.

Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln) - no one wants special bulletin, but I think there should be an all student email. OUSU seen as irrelevant and this perpetuates it.

Vote - amendment clearly passed.

Tom Rutland (Jesus) - will still inform, but with no steer either way.

Move to vote - no objection.

James Elliott - enough said about strikes. Should respect staff because of pay cuts. Risk to everyone in room because of student loan. Student Union should respect this.

Jack Matthews - should support students and not trade unions all the time. Great to have a debate about this.

For 48, Against 4, Abstentions 20. Motion passes.

I. Any Other Business

Nick Cooper (St John's): Electoral Review Group still ongoing. Will report back to 5th week Council. Please send submissions to electoralreview@ousu.org by Friday 2nd week with any views on Michaelmas elections, electoral practice or possible changes to the rules.