



1st week michaelmas 2004

1st Week Council
Michelmas 2004

Chair of council:

John Blake, St Hugh's: Under the constitution, where no one has nominated for the position of chair of council before first week council, the chair can be taken by the President, or the President can nominate a sabbatical officer to chair OUSU council for the duration of one term. In this case, the President has nominated the VP Welfare and Equal Opportunities, Nicky Ellis, to take the chair of Council.

The order of council business was explained by the Chair, both for the benefit of those who have not attended council before and those who have. During the discussion on speaking rights a procedural motion was put:

Laura West, St Catherine's: Procedural motion to allow the Business Manager speaking rights for the duration of first week council.

There were no objections to this procedural motion so it was passed unanimously.

a. Minutes of the previous meeting

Noted

b. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

Rob Vance, Wadham: The minutes make no sense, especially in regard to the questioning of the returning officer during her election.

Chair rules that people minuting should use the English language in order to make sense of the previous meetings.

c. Ratifications in Council

No ratifications

Dan Simpson, Balliol: Point of order, do we need to ratify the executive appointment of an environment committee co-chair?

John Blake, St Hugh's: The appointment was not made in time for the deadlines of the council agenda.

d. Elections in Council

The Returning Officer for this term in John Blake, St Hugh's, as the previous returning officer elected in Termly council of Trinity has resigned.

In terms of the elections during this first week council, there is one person standing for one position in all cases except for Undergraduate Representative on the Humanities Divisional Board, where there are two people standing for one position.

Hust requested for executive officer by Linsey Cole, St John's.

Position: Part-time executive officer

Candidate: Alison Kennedy, Hertford

Hust: I am a fourth year undergraduate from Hertford and have extensive experience of OUSU. I was a Target Schools Co-chair for a year, which involved liaising with sabbatical officers and university staff, as well as aiding with a massive mailing. I have co-organised Freshers' Fair with Steve Harper from Corpus Christi. This involved liaising with many external organisations, and a large degree of teamwork. I am an experienced public speaker, and happy to justify my actions to Council. I am experienced in representing OUSU and students to the external press. I had to deal with college representative and college staff in my work on Freshers' Fair. Beyond OUSU, she has held many positions within Hertford college societies, including their Languages society and more social positions. I believe OUSU can only represent students if it concentrates on the issues that concern them. I believe in campaigning, but not in campaigning for campaigning's sake. I want to serve the

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Chair rules to disallow clapping.

Questions to Alison:

Mark Hawkins, Queens: Do you have any political affiliations?

Alison Kennedy, Hertford: None

Linsey Cole, St John's: Have you ever had been censured or had a vote of non-confidence in you at OUSU Council?

Alison Kennedy, Hertford: No

Bex Wilkinson, St Edmund Hall: As a returning linguist, you will have major work commitments, would you have time to devote to being an executive officer?

Alison Kennedy, Hertford: It would be possible; I have experience of extensive time management as a co-chair.

Emma Jones, Keble: How do you propose to make campaigning better?

Alison Kennedy, Hertford: Campaigns needs to be re-assessed, for example Finance and Funding needs to reconsider its direction.

No further questions

Alison Kennedy was duly elected.

Hust requested for graduate executive officer

Candidate: Rachel Wechsler, Green

Hust: I am a studying for an M Sc in evidence-based social work. I am from New York and studied human development and communications, the kind of things that would be important for the position of graduate executive officer. I was involved in a community organisation that helps disadvantaged groups. I was a representative on the district board of New York State and had to represent the interests of all those from New York State. I am used to long formal meetings and public speaking. I used to do a radio show at Cornwell. I am happy to learn, and am open and approachable. I would be an asset to the Student Union.

I would like to set up a food committee, as I am a vegan and find that limited food options give a distraction from work. But I am also open to all different kinds of committees, with a particular interest in Women's Campaign and Ethics Committee.

Questions to Rachel:

Linsey Cole, St John's: Do you have any political affiliations?

Rachel Wechsler, Green: No

Tom Locker, Trinity: Do you have any contacts within the University?

Rachel Wechsler, Green: I have only just started at Oxford but will have the time and put in the effort to learn.

Dan Simpson, Balliol: OUSU tends to over-represent undergraduates at the expense of graduates.

What are the issues you feel that need to be addressed to encourage more graduate involvement?

Rachel Wechsler, Green: Things need to be addressed in a non-hierarchical manner. There should be discussions solely between the graduate executive to try and counter-act the over-representation of undergraduates.

Dan Simpson, Balliol: The issue of stint reform has been important recently, where graduates are paid to teach undergraduates. It seems to be in the interest of graduates, but not in the interest of undergraduates.

Rachel Wechsler, Green: All situations need to be taken individually, but if the graduates are experienced and have been properly trained then there should be no problem.

Tom Locker, Trinity: Why have you decided to run now rather than wait until the annual elections?

Rachel Wechsler, Green: I will only be here for one year. From past experience I think this is the kind of position I would be suited to and have gained a large body of knowledge in the few weeks I have already been here.

Mark Hawkins, Queens: Have you had any experience of involvement in Student Unions in the US?

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Mark Hawkins, Queens: Have you had any experience of involvement in Student Unions in the US?

Rachel Wechsler, Green: All the organisations and committees I was involved in in the US were interconnected, in a similar way to a Student Union.

Laura West, St Catherine's: How able do you feel you are to work with others and to learn from others? This is very important on the executive. Can you rate yourself out of 10, with 10 being the best?

Rachel Wechsler, Green: I feel I would be in the upper part of the scale, maybe a 9.

Siobhan McAndrew, Nuffield: Do you feel it would in fact benefit you to get involved straight away?

Rachel Wechsler, Green: Definitely, my knowledge will evolve quickly and I want to be able to contribute as soon as I am able.

Rachel Wechsler was duly elected.

Election for Graduate Representative to Medical Sciences Divisional Board

Linsey Cole, St John's: For information, there are more positions on divisional boards. The role involves liaising with JCC reps and the faculties. For more information email access@ousu.org.

Position: Graduate Representative to Medical Sciences Divisional Board

Candidate: Wen Shi, Magdalen College

Hust: I am studying for a D Phil in Clinical Medicine, and want to have a helpful impact on student learning. We need to have strong committees and views before addressing the divisional boards. I was a representative during my time in American universities on their University committees, so I am used to representing student interests effectively. I want to work with Linsey and Siobhan, and do a good job for students.

Questions to Wen:

Linsey Cole, St John's: Do you have any political affiliations?

Wen Shi, Magdalen: Democrat.

Wen Shi was duly elected

Election for Undergraduate Representative to Humanities Divisional Board

2 candidates: Charlynn Pullen, St Hugh's and Alison Kennedy, Hertford

Candidate: Charlynn Pullen, St Hugh's

Hust: I'm a member of the part-time executive with responsibility for Target Schools. I am also co-president of the History JCC, and have been attending Undergraduate JCC meetings. There will be many issues about the History Aptitude Test coming up in the Humanities Divisional Board meetings.

The people planning it have been involved in access work, and they have liaised with state schools as well as independent schools in the creation of the test. This is an important issue and I have already been involved in some of the discussion, and would like to be involved in looking at the effects of the test on admissions to study History at Oxford.

Candidate: Alison Kennedy, Hertford

Hust: I have experience of working with lots of different people, and I believe I could solicit lots of different opinions by publicising the role effectively. I want to stop the differences in workload and teaching between colleges. I want to make it easier to complain about tutors and work to extend library-opening hours.

Questions to the candidates:

Dominic Curran, St Hugh's: Will you work with JCC reps?

Alison Kennedy, Hertford: Yes, my first step would be a meeting with them.

Charlynn Pullen, St Hugh's: Of course, I would want input from all the reps and find out what they're doing, and what they are asking for within their own JCCs.

Linsey Cole, St John's: What do you feel would be the biggest issue this term within the divisional board?

Charlynn Pullen, St Hugh's: The History Aptitude Test will undoubtedly be a big issue, also Stint reform and its application. The finals gap is currently of importance, especially with the change of

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Alison Kennedy, Hertford: The standardising moves for interviews will be important, also the finals gap.

Bex Wilkinson, St Edmund Hall: What do you feel is the relationship between the JCC and the Divisional Board?

Alison Kennedy, Hertford: The divisional board is a liaison body between the JCC and University Committees.

Charlynn Pullen, St Hugh's: The divisional board is a higher place to represent the views of all the JCCs.

Rob Vance, Wadham: How do you propose to close the gaps between colleges and universities, for example helping the JCR President with issues of stint reform.

Charlynn Pullen, St Hugh's: I feel it is important to make everyone aware of what is happening both within the Divisional Board and within the individual JCCs.

Alison Kennedy, Hertford: Openness is very important, everyone must know each other, and we must raise the awareness of the Divisional Board.

Charlynn Pullen was duly elected

e. Reports from Sabbatical Officers

Chair: Questions to any sabbatical officers on their reports should be made after all sabbatical officers have given their reports.

Report from the President

John Blake, St Hugh's: My report is long, but this means I have not forgotten anything. There has been an NUS reform conference during the summer, and another meeting is to be held in December.

The aim is to reduce the size of delegations, and shift to just having the attendance of Student Union sabbatical officers. At its maximum this is in order to save money, but the actions that have been made are dubious.

Report from the VP Finance

Laura West, St Catherine's: I have written long report, but the most important sections to read are on the term-planner, ZOO and the OCCH if you do not have time to read the whole report. OSSL, the commercial arm of OUSU will be taking on short-term temporary staff to work for at least the next four weeks. We need intelligent people. Filthy Fridays is on tonight, so everybody should go there this evening. All the money from Entz goes back to OUSU. There will be a meeting about getting involved with ZOO on Monday at 2pm, for more information email finance@ousu.org.

I have to make an apology to council about the 'Fruit of the Loom' t-shirts ordered for Target Schools.

The account manager at Shirt Works knew that OUSU has policy against 'Fruit of the Loom' t-shirts but this instruction was not followed.

Report from the VP Welfare and Equal Opportunities

Nicky Ellis, Queens: I also wrote a long report, but can give a brief summary. Campaigning and the Equal Opportunities bodies set up to facilitate this are not currently working. There are more people interested in these campaigns than are getting involved in them.

Everybody should read the report on the F and F2 review, and please give feedback on it.

I have especially enjoyed ordering many condoms this summer.

Report from the VP Women

Bex Wilkinson, St Edmund Hall: I am happy to report an OUSU victory over the summer. I made a complaint to the proctors about the proposed distribution of diaries at Freshers' Fair, which included LIFE adverts, something OUSU has policy against. The proctors upheld the complaint, and ruled that the diaries could not be distributed at Freshers' Fair in their current format, so OUSU won.

The Nightbus is now working under the Brookes scheme, and OUSU is helping to fund a third bus, where before Brookes were only running two buses. We need Oxford students to volunteer to drive and co-drive the bus. To drive the bus you must be over 21 and have a 3year driving licence.

Report from the VP Graduates

Siobhan McAndrew, Nuffield: I started at the beginning of September, so there was no time for

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Report from the VP Graduates

Siobhan McAndrew, Nuffield: I started at the beginning of September, so there was no time for handover. The main issue with graduates is the visa extension service at the moment, whereby the government is trying to massively increase the price of visa extensions, directly hitting international students. A major part of it is also that they are required to go without their passport for 3 months if they choose a particular type of visa extension. I have been working with JCRs and MCRs to try and gather support for a campaign on this issue.

I have also been to meetings on ISODORE, the University's proposed new computing system.

Report from the VP Access and Academic Affairs

Linsey Cole, St John's: We have postcards for the 'Open to Change?' campaign that is trying to get the Bod to open on Saturday afternoons. There are still vacancies on the Divisional Boards, please email access@ousu.org for more information. I also wanted to say thank you to everyone who worked on the publications over the summer.

Report from the VP Charities and Community

Ian King, Keble: I want to make an apology for a lack of report, I have been very busy trying to secure a location for the Beer fest, but unfortunately it will not be held this year. Charities that RAG has chosen to support this year include Gatehouse, Oxford Development Abroad and Streets Ahead.

RAG is helping to organise Taboo nights at Thirst on a Tuesday. There will be a fashion show in 7th week, and there will be organised film nights throughout the term. Friday 29th October is Wear it Pink day, where there will be a pink party at Filth in the evening. This is to support Breast Cancer Awareness. There will be an Oxbridge tour of the South in December, where collections will be made for different charities. RAG is also doing college pants again this year, and selling second-hand books. The national RAG conference will be in Oxford this year, the 1st one to be held in Oxbridge in RAG's 100 year history. This has taken a large chunk of my time in organisation.

Community is getting a lot more volunteers than last year already. The website collapsed, but I am working to get it back up and running. We are advertising for Nightbus volunteers. One project this year is a homework club, to be run by 'Children in Touch'. I have also been in contact with North Oxford Community Centre. I am working on getting a Smoothie Bar in OUSU for Council. Read the RAG term cards, they are important. There will be an alternative careers fair next term. I am working on increasing the awareness of fair-trade, there is now a café in Wadham and I am working to setting one up in OUSU.

Being a VP has been a baptism of fire, and I want to thank the whole exec for their help.

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

None

g. Questions to Members of the Executive

Questions to the President

Matt Sellwood, New: There is currently a petition to get the University to keep Green Electricity going round Council. What does the president think about this petition, and what is the president to help the campaign to keep Green Electricity?

John Blake, St Hugh's: The petition is a great thing to sign, OUSU is fully supporting this campaign, and Environment Committee is working very hard to publicise this campaign and gain for support for it wherever possible.

Rob Vance, Wadham: Has the Returning Officer elected in Termly Council of Trinity 2004 resigned? If so what is being done to find a new RO?

John Blake, St Hugh's: I will be the RO for this term, and I think I will be able to manage it within my job.

Questions to the VP Finance

Rob Vance, Wadham: I want to commend the Business Manager and the VP Finance for all their hard work. Would the proposed Entz Manager help to relieve some of the pressure on the people in these two positions?

Laura West, St Catherine's: The current problem is that myself and the Business Manager have built up personal relationships with the club owners and other important people, so one of us at least has to be at all the club nights at the moment. I have been looking at the position of Entz Manager but I'm not sure of being able to recruit anyone suitable within the timetable set out in the original motion. I will be taking these issues to the OSSL Board meeting. In the meantime if anyone wants to volunteer

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Edward May, Mansfield: What is happening to the OUSU shop?

Laura West, St Catherine's: The OUSU shop was closed last Christmas. I have a small longing to re-open it, as there are some things to sell, but it cannot be a drain on OUSU's resources.

Questions to the Welfare and Equal Opportunities

Rob Vance, Wadham: Are the condoms free to colleges?

Nicky Ellis, Queens: I can order in bulk once I have requests from colleges, this year I got a much bigger response by chasing people for their orders. The colleges are paying for them at the moment. The allocation of free condoms has recently been cut but I am trying to get us more free ones.

Aled George, Mansfield: Do you have any plans to remove the VAT paid on condoms?

Nicky Ellis, Queens: We currently have to pay VAT on condoms.

Questions to the VP Women

Daniel Cooper, Balliol: What is happening to the old Nightbus?

Bex Wilkinson, St Edmund Hall: It is currently sat in St Hugh's as there is no one eligible to drive it under University regulations. It is commercially sensitive to say what is happening to the Nightbus in the future.

James Coatsworth, Mansfield: Has the safety of lone women stated in OUSU policy been reiterated to the organisers of the scheme at Brookes?

Bex Wilkinson, St Edmund Hall: There have been certain problems with the Nightbus in town, but I am negotiating with Brookes. There is still a small problem with picking up lone females in town.

Point of Information.

Laura West, St Catherine's: I rang the Nightbus for a lone female on Wednesday night at Park End, and it came to pick her up very quickly, so it does work.

Dominic Curran, St Hugh's: What is happening with the sponsorship of the Nightbus?

Bex Wilkinson, St Edmund Hall: Unfortunately that information is commercially sensitive.

Point of Information

Siobhan McAndrew, Nuffield: The new number for the Nightbus is 07714445050 for all those who do not already know.

Mike Nile, Hertford: Why are there adverts for the Nightbus in the Oxford Student?

Bex Wilkinson, St Edmund Hall: Because the number has changed so it needs to be advertised.

Questions for the VP Graduates

None

Questions for the VP Access and Academic Affairs

None

Questions for the VP Charities and Community

Siobhan McAndrew, Nuffield: What has happened about the Beer fest?

Ian King, Keble: It has been cancelled due to bad relations with the Turf. Dan Cooper tried to secure Balliol as a location, but this failed, and the venue of the Union was only confirmed yesterday afternoon, which was not enough time to get a licence and a marquee.

No Questions to the Part-Time Executive

Rob Vance, Wadham: Are the part-time exec here in full?

Chair: Yes, they are all here.

h. Emergency Motions

None

i. Passage of Motions Nem Con

Chair: Motions need a simple majority to pass. Amendments have to be proposed during debate and must be received by the Chair. There are short factual questions before we move to debate, and

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h. Emergency Motions

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i. Passage of Motions Nem Con

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Mark Hawkins, Queens: What does motions of Nem Con mean?

Chair: This means there is no opposition to the motion, so that motion can be passed without debate and questions.

There was no objection to motion 1 entitled OUSU Election Regulations, so that motion is passed. There were objections to all other motions.

j. Motions of No Confidence or Censure

Chair: For Council's information a motion of censure is a way of discipline, it is not a personal attack or a forced resignation.

Motion of Censure: Tim Ayles

Proposer

John Blake, St Hugh's: This is not ideally the way I would have wished to start my first council as a sabbatical officer, but I feel that the part-time executive have a responsibility to OUSU. They must fulfil their responsibilities. These responsibilities are even clearer over the vacation, where the executive take over the role of Council. The important issues that needed to be discussed by the executive over the vacation were the appointment of a new VP Graduates, and the Nightbus. I was upset by the failure to respond on numerous occasions by Tim Ayles. The other members of the executive felt that this failure to respond meant a lack of interest in the responsibilities undertaken. I wanted the motion to be clear. Council employs the executive, and they need to be held accountable to Council to ensure they fulfil their responsibilities. My predecessor followed a 'three strikes and you're out' policy, which would lead to a vote of non-confidence. I believe the responsibilities of being an executive officer were not taken seriously in this case. The Cherwell has accused me of 'Tory-bashing' but the political party here is not important, it is the issue of the responsibilities of being an OUSU Executive Officer that are being discussed.

Short, factual questions:

Dan Simpson, Balliol: Just to clarify, do the fact that there are three aspects of the 'council resolves' section of this motion that ask council 'to censure' mean there will be one or three censures undertaken by council if this motion is passed?

John Blake, St Hugh's: If the motion is passed, council will undertake one censure.

Mark Hawkins, Queens: Is it the responsibility of an executive officer to constantly check their emails?

John Blake, St Hugh's: Yes

Point of Information

Laura West, St Catherine's: The responsibility is stated in the constitution.

Alice Freeman, Christ Church: Was any forewarning of this motion of censure given?

John Blake, St Hugh's: Yes, forewarning was given.

Chris Allan, Somerville: Did Tim Ayles know of these emails and was he checking emails?

John Blake, St Hugh's: I have sent other emails to Tim Ayles since asking many times for a reason for not attending the Extraordinary Executive Meeting.

Opposition

Tim Ayles, Trinity requests to stand at the front to give his speech in opposition, and the Chair granted permission.

Tim Ayles, Trinity: This motion reflects an unfortunate state of affairs and half of information is slanders. I will go through the accusations separately. I did not respond in late July for reasons I will detail, but an important thing to mention before is that my disk usage was full. I was in Florida from the 7th August to the 17th August. I flew to Italy on the 23rd August, and so I was not able to check my emails for the majority of the month of August, and I had no access to email. My colleague on the executive, Tom Packer, informed me that the Extraordinary Executive Meeting was happening and I was unhappy about not being able to attend.

I will admit that I once forgot a meeting in Hilary but I offered a retrospective apology accepted by the then chair of executive meetings, Helena Puig Larrini. Other than on this occasion, I have always come to meetings or offered apologies when I was unable to attend.

In terms of Freshers' Fair, I was contacted by the VP Finance on Sunday of 0th week, and was asked to respond via email to the VP Finance to say whether or not I was able to help at the Fair. This email was sent and I believe the VP Finance received it. At the next executive meeting, Chris Allan was rude to me about my lack of help at Freshers' Fair.

Chair: That accusation of rudeness must be withdrawn.

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Chair: That accusation of rudeness must be withdrawn.

Tim Ayles, Trinity: I apologise for that statement.

I was at Freshers' Fair on Wednesday morning to help on the Oxford University Conservative Association stall. On Wednesday afternoon, my girlfriend went into hospital, so I was at there with her. On Thursday afternoon I was revising for my two collections on the Friday. I was not told by any member of the executive that I would be required to help at Freshers' Fair as part of my role as an executive officer.

I want to thank the President and Chris Allan for all their work for OUSU. I acknowledge that the other members of the executive work harder than I do for OUSU. I want to thank the organisers of Freshers' Fair. I do not see this censure as a partisan attack.

I have made my case, and now it is up to council to decide.

Chair: Thank you to all parties for keeping this discussion civil. I have received an Amendment but I will rule it out of order as I believe it substantially changes the nature of the motion.

Before asking for any objections to this ruling, the amendment was read out:

Insert

Believes 7: The exec officer in question should make amends for his failure to carry out his duties.

Resolves 6: To mandate the executive officer in question to be personally responsible for the receipt, packaging and individual delivery of the Oxford Handbook, OCCH and the individual welfare publications.

There were no objections to the Chair's ruling.

Debate on the motion of censure

Laura West, St Catherine's: Tim Ayles did email me and explain his reasons for not helping at Freshers' Fair. But here, the level of commitment to OUSU is being questioned. The part-time executive needs to take this commitment seriously. A motion of censure is not serious. All executive officers should know about the 48hour notice for an executive meeting.

John Blake, St Hugh's: I want to thank Tim Ayles for being courteous. I needed to have the information on the excuse for not attending the meeting in question. Forewarning was given and the emails made the threat of censure clear. Having other non-academic commitments is not an excuse for not fulfilling executive responsibilities. Council expects the executive to be responsible.

Move to Vote

For:

Daniel Cooper, Balliol: We have other motions to get through and the debate has been heard.

Against:

Dominic Curran, St Hugh's: I want to move to have a secret ballot.

Move to Vote withdrawn

Dominic Curran, St Hugh's: Procedural motion to hold a secret ballot.

There is opposition to this procedural motion.

For:

Dominic Curran, St Hugh's: A secret ballot would make everybody comfortable when giving their vote, this is a sensitive issue.

Against:

Tim Ayles, Trinity: Nobody is trying to intimidate anyone, and I won't personally reproach anyone.

Linsey Cole, St John's: What is the percentage needed to secure a secret ballot?

Chair: 25%

Vote on Procedural motion to hold a secret ballot

For: 19 votes

Against: 36 votes

Abstentions: 6 votes

This motion passes. The vote will be held by secret ballot.

Move to Vote

For:

Daniel Cooper, Balliol: We have heard both sides of the argument.

Against:

Mark Lawling, Queens: I want to more fully understand the relationship between the executive

Against: 36 votes
Abstentions: 6 votes
This motion passes. The vote will be held by secret ballot.

Move to Vote

For:

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Against:

Mark Hawkins, Queens: I want to more fully understand the relationship between the executive.

Vote on the Move to Vote

For: 53 votes

Against: 8 votes

Abstentions: 3 votes

The Move to Vote clearly passes.

John Blake, St Hugh's: As the Returning Officer I would like to count the votes after council if Tim Ayles would like to oversee the count?

Chair rules to elect a new Returning Officer to count this vote by secret ballot.

Chair elects Bex Wilkinson, St Edmund Hall as Returning Officer and Laura West, St Catherine's as Deputy Returning Officer to count this vote by secret ballot only.

Summing up speeches on the motion of censure

For:

John Blake, St Hugh's: Most of the points have already been made. I want to thank Tim Ayles for his ability as a member of the executive, but the motion is important to record the expectation of the role of the part-time executive within OUSU.

Against:

Tim Ayles, Trinity: I made my two points at the beginning of the motion, and I hope my apology will be sufficient, without the need for a motion of censure.

The motion of censure was passed.

2. Reaction to comments of Michael Belloff - from the minutes taken by Timothy Ayles (Trinity)

JB: Beloff has said stupid things in the media. He makes good points about academic freedom.

Privatisation is wrong for the university; Beloff talks of going to war and tanks on the lawns - we need to respond.

SFQs;

Edward Mayne (?) Mansfield: What does Chris Patten think?

JB; Yes - the chancellor is also expressing a wrong viewpoint as well.

Point of information - Dom Curran (St Hugh's); Described Chris Patten's comments about OFFA on the Radio 4 Today programme. MBs proposals not ideal.

Aidan Randle-Conde (Trinity): What did Beloff say?

JB: Tanks on the lawn

Opposition:

Linsey Cole (SJC): I oppose it because I have an amendment.

Amendment:

To add resolves 2:

"To write to Chris Patten expressing the same sentiments."

No objections - incorporated.

Simon Clarke (Univ): Fairly drastic letter proposed. MB comments well structured - government is heavy handed, no respect to universities - the letter isn't helpful.

Linsey Cole (SJC): Beloff can use better forums - comments are ill timed and there are better forums for airing concerns about OFFA.

No objections - incorporated.

Simon Clarke (Univ): Fairly drastic letter proposed. MB comments well structured - government is heavy handed, no respect to universities - the letter isn't helpful.

Linsey Cole (SJC): Beloff can use better forums - comments are ill timed and there are better forums for airing concerns about OFFA.

Dominic Curran (St Hugh's): It is a significant point that Beloff made - they speak for the University as a whole and have an enormous effect, We have to make an aggressive point.

Rob Vance (Wadham): MTV - repeating ourselves

EM (Trinity): No one has spoken in Beloff's favour yet - he does lots for access.

MTV - passes

Summation

Linsey Cole (St John's): We must make our concerns made - ill-timed, do lots of damage for access.

Lorna Stevenson (Hertford): Shouldn't go shouting our heads off.

Motion passes.

The announcement of the result of the vote of censure is made, and Tim Ayles, Trinity states that he is resigning as a member of the OUSU exec and will form an OUSU disaffiliation committee.

Minutes resumed by original minute-taker.

Motion 3: Post-Qualification Application

Speech by proposer of the motion:

Linsey Cole, St John's: The Schwartz report and the Tomlinson Report propose that all universities should admit students after they have received their qualifications. The purpose of this motion is to be able to advocate this course of action on university committees, with the support of council. Students would be less discouraged about applying to top universities like Oxford, if they already knew they had top grades. This would provide an equal playing field for all students when applying to university. The practicalities will be later discussed, as a government taskforce will be set up. The motion is simply to provide broad support for the idea. This will hopefully make applications more fair and open.

Short factual questions

Rob Vance, Wadham: Have you discussed this with admissions tutors, how would it work?

Linsey Cole, St Johns: There would interviews after the results are published and most admissions tutors support the proposals.

Point of information

John Blake, St Hugh's: In a discussion with Colin Lucas, he admitted that there was no particular reason not to support this idea.

Chris Allan, Somerville: Has any research been done, or are there any statistics to say that A Levels are a good representation of the potential and academic ability of a student?

Linsey Cole, St Johns: Having the results before applying to University would help students who are unsure about applying to top universities, despite their capability to attend them. Oxford would still have to keep interviews to help judge potential.

Mark Hawkins, Queens: This is a broad motion, it is simply for support in principle?

Linsey Cole, St Johns: Yes

Aled George, Mansfield: Is there any evidence that this system will be better than the current one?

Linsey Cole, St Johns: Not really

Mark Hawkins, Queens: Are there any useful international comparisons to be made?

Linsey Cole, St Johns: None that are relevant.

Into debate

Opposition to the motion:

Aled George, Mansfield: This would be a disincentive on students to work hard prior to their A Levels and there will not be enough time to conduct interviews.

John Blake, St Hugh's: If a student were made to apply after their results, it would actually be more of an incentive to work hard in their A Levels. The timing would not be difficult, although the practicalities will still have to be worked out. This motion is only for broad support of the principle.

Linsey Cole, St Johns: There is a nationwide change in the timing of school terms at the moment, with

Into debate

Opposition to the motion:

Aled George, Mansfield: This would be a disincentive on students to work hard prior to their A Levels and there will not be enough time to conduct interviews.

John Blake, St Hugh's: If a student were made to apply after their results, it would actually be more of an incentive to work hard in their A Levels. The timing would not be difficult, although the practicalities will still have to be worked out. This motion is only for broad support of the principle.

Linsey Cole, St Johns: There is a nationwide change in the timing of school terms at the moment, with the shift to 6 terms.

Move to Vote

No Opposition

Summing up speeches:

For: John Blake, St Hugh's: This is a good idea

Against: Bex Wilkinson, St Edmund Hall: No it is not.

Vote

For: 45

Against: 1

Abstentions: 1

The motion clearly passes.

Motion 4 Reforming OUSU

Speech by proposer of the motion:

John Blake, St Hugh's: The motion is simple. This is my own report that includes aspects of the F and F2 report. There needs to be more discussion on firm recommendations. There will be motions relating to the report in 3rd week.

Short factual questions:

Laura West, St Catherine's: Who are the authors of this report?

John Blake, St Hugh's: Nicky Ellis and me.

Dominic Curran, St Hugh's: Will there be a meeting to discuss the issues brought up in this report?

John Blake, St Hugh's: Any ideas will be taken to 3rd week council in the form of motions. There needs to be more information about what is happening within OUSU as quickly as possible.

Aled George, Mansfield: Will there be a referendum on this report?

Chair: ruled out of order

Laura West, St Catherine's: Is this document endorsed by anyone, is it an official report?

John Blake, St Hugh's: It is not an official report, it's just what I think, so feel no obligation to support it.

Mark Hawkins, Queens: Will the recommendations be brought as a single motion or as separate motions?

John Blake, St Hugh's: As separate motions.

Rob Vance, Wadham: Can anyone bring reports to council and pass motions to invite people to read them?

John Blake, St Hugh's: Yes

Aidan Randle-Conde, Trinity: How many hearings will each of these future motions need?

John Blake, St Hugh's: It will be obvious in the division of motions.

Into debate

Opposition

Laura West, St Catherine's: I am opposing this motion in order to bring an amendment.

Dominic Curran, St Hugh's: There are many interesting ideas in this report.

Chair: Council can only discuss the motion, and not things expressed in the report.

Dominic Curran, St Hugh's: But we discussed the contents of the F and F2 report?

Chair: This motion only says that the report exists and asks the exec to read it, Council can't discuss parts of the reports.

Amendment put by Laura West, St Catherine's.

The amended motion reads:

'Council resolves:

1. To invite all members of council to read the attached report thoroughly, and to raise any immediate questions, or small technical details, with the President before the deadline for motion to 3rd Week Council.
2. To make possible in accordance with the constitution and Standing Orders the discussion of the substance of the report in 3rd Week Council.'

Point of order, Laura West, St Catherine's: is this motion constitutionally unacceptable without my amendment?

John Blake, St Hugh's: I just want people to read my report. I will bring motions to 3rd Week Council.

No objections to the amendment

- and to raise any immediate questions, or small technical details, with the President before the deadline for motion to 3rd Week Council.
2. To make possible in accordance with the constitution and Standing Orders the discussion of the substance of the report in 3rd Week Council.'

Point of order, Laura West, St Catherine's: is this motion constitutionally unacceptable without my amendment?

John Blake, St Hugh's: I just want people to read my report. I will bring motions to 3rd Week Council. No objections to the amendment.

Amended Motion passes unanimously and 4 abstentions.

Motion 5: OUSU elections

Speech by proposer of the motion.

John Blake, St Hugh's: This seemed like a good idea at the beginning of the summer. There are good reasons to hold the elections in Hilary, but the real concern is to shift the date of the part-time exec elections.

Short factual questions

Linsey Cole, St John's: When did the OUSU elections change to Michelmas?

John Blake, St Hugh's: They were changed in 1997

Richard Overy, Regents Park: When would the part-time exec start their positions?

John Blake, St Hugh's: 4th week of Hilary

Sarah Waite, Jesus: What are the implications for the current part-time exec?

John Blake, St Hugh's: That would be something to discuss within the executive.

Emrys Jones, Regents Park: How many times would this motion have to pass?

John Blake, St Hugh's: Once

Rob Vance, Wadham: Why have you put the changing of the all the elections at once?

John Blake, St Hugh's: The motion can be amended to only move certain elections if council decides that would be best.

Jamie Audsley, St Edmund Hall: What if all the current part-time exec resign?

John Blake, St Hugh's: That would have to be sorted out personally with each member individually.

Emma Norris, Somerville: Is this likely to increase electoral turnout?

John Blake, St Hugh's: Yes.

Into debate

Opposition

Laura West, St Catherine's: I disagree with the motion. There is a need to continually review our elections to make sure they are democratic and fair. In terms of the current part-time exec, many are unhappy about the prospect of serving for 4 extra weeks. There is a concern here about whether exec meetings are going to quorate. This year's potential sabs would be applying for jobs in Hilary if not elected, it is ridiculous to make them wait so long to know what they will be doing for the next year.

It is hard for these candidates to make their minds up in terms of whether or not they should still run.

They will probably have already organised their lives around running in the OUSU election. There is also a problem in terms of the part-time executive, because it would be unable to function this year between Christmas and Hilary when the new members are elected. It is an important part of the executive role to go through handover in 9th week and begin the work of the executive over Christmas.

There would then be a gap of 10 weeks when there is no functioning executive. It would also be unhelpful to move the elections for delegates, and would cause OUSU to go without its delegates for 2 councils. There are good ideas in this motion, but it is too soon to put this motion. It would be a bad idea for sabbatical candidates already planning to run. There would be a problem of a large gap in which OUSU couldn't function. OUSU does need to be reformed, but it should be done more gradually.

Amendment put by Dominic Curran, St Hugh's and Matt Jobber, St Hugh's to postpone the change until next academic year (2005/6).

Speech in proposition of the amendment by Dominic Curran, St Hugh's: It is a good idea to change the times of the election, but it would be unfair to those people thinking of running for election if it were passed for this academic year.

Opposition to the amendment:

John Blake, St Hugh's: I wanted to change something this year, and not have the atmosphere of inertia within OUSU. We have to break boundaries. Only pass this amendment if people will actually work to make the change next year. I want to make sure this change does happen, if passed.

Linsey Cole, St John's: If we don't make this change this year, at least make it next year. Make a point of reading the reforms in next council. Changes need to be made now, there are issues regarding the splitting of jobs.

Rob Vance, Wadham: There are three types of opinion on this motion, with some people believing this is a good idea for this year, some a good idea for next year, and others think it is a wholly bad idea. I think it is a bad idea.

Chair: We have to limit the discussion to the amendment.

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Rob Vance, Wadham: There are three types of opinion on this motion, with some people believing this is a good idea for this year, some a good idea for next year, and others think it is a wholly bad idea. I think it is a bad idea.

Chair: We have to limit the discussion to the amendment.

Move to a Vote called

For: John Blake, St Hugh's: We need to get on.

Against: Linsey Cole, St John's: This needs careful consideration.

Votes

For: 24

Against: 17

Abstentions: 5

The move to a vote fails, so council is still in debate on the amendment.

Laura West, St Catherine's: I wouldn't support the amendment now. It is really important so we need more consideration.

Bex Wilkinson, St Edmund Hall: I agree with Rob. It is irresponsible to try and move the election 5 weeks before it is meant to be happening.

Dominic Curran, St Hugh's: There is a danger of this motion not being implemented if postponed, this is a valid point by John. You should consider the amendment, it makes a difficult motion better. There are other important decisions to be made about the role of sabbatical officers. It is not sufficient to have many short-term changes.

Move to a Vote

No Opposition

Voting on the amendment

For: 25

Against: 15

Abstentions: 9

The amendment clearly passes by a simple majority.

A Procedural motion is requested, to take the motion in parts.

For: Chris Allan, Somerville: It is a very different issue to change the sabbatical elections than to change the elections for the part-time executive and the delegates.

Against: Rob Vance, Wadham: We should get rid of the entire motion at once.

Procedural motion fails.

Back into debate on the amended main motion

Dan Simpson, Balliol: I voted for the amendment. This motion has many problems, but the amendment got rid of one of the problems. The motion is bad for the part-time exec. John said that moving the elections for the part-time exec to Hilary would get more first years to run for the positions, but I do not think this is the case. Whatever happens, I don't think many first years will think of running for exec, it will always be mainly second years that serve on the part-time exec. And this being the case, serving until 4th week of Hilary is too near to finals, and this would discourage people from standing to begin with, but might also encourage people to resign before finishing their term of office.

Bex Wilkinson, St Edmund Hall: I think it is unfair to ask people to run for election or serve on the part-time exec past the Michelmas of their final year. Campaigns for sabbatical officers take a lot of effort and time, and you can't ask people to put that much work in so close to finals. We are here to get a degree, and this will be an unfair burden to both those on the part-time exec or running for a sabbatical position, which would only serve to deter candidates from running in the first place.

Chris Allan, Somerville: There is not much difference in the workload of Michelmas and Hilary in the final year. The elections are an important aspect of publicity and telling people what OUSU is. This would be changed completely if no one stands for positions. It is hard to get jobs in Hilary.

Move to a Vote

For: Dave White, Wadham: The motion is not going to pass, lets just vote.

Against: Laura West, St Catherine's: It is important to hear what other people have to say about this.

Votes

For: 33

Against: 7

Abstentions: 3

The move to a vote passes.

For: Dave White, Wadham: The motion is not going to pass, lets just vote.

Against: Laura West, St Catherine's: It is important to hear what other people have to say about this.

Votes

For: 33

Against: 7

Abstentions: 3

The move to a vote passes.

Summation speeches

Proposing

John Blake, St Hugh's: I think I am going to lose this vote, which is a shame because I think the motion puts forward a good idea. I don't think it would cause the calamity suggested if it was passed, there would be none of the four horsemen of the apocalypse.

Opposing

Laura West, St Catherine's: I will just clarify what I said earlier. This motion would only inconvenience people and possibly increase OUSU's publicity. This is a choice between OUSU and the JCRs. We want people to be elected on their skills to do the jobs they are running for, not their politics. Our electoral policy should not make up for the failures within OUSU.

Motion clearly fails.

Any Other Business:

John Blake, St Hugh's: Everybody should go to filthy Fridays, if you get in early you might get lucky.

Matt Sellwood, New: Keep filling in the green electricity petitions.

Bex Wilkinson, St Edmund Hall: Everybody use the Nightbus and email me if you want more posters.