



Minutes 1st Week Trinity Term 2007

a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

No matters

b. Matters arising from the Minutes

No matters arising

Procedural motion to have attendance and speaking rights for non-members of OUSU
Kat Smith (NUS Women's Committee; Sabbatical Officer, Lancaster Student Union)
Oliver Russell (Ex-Vice President (Graduates))
Motion passed

Procedural motion to move the elections to the end of the agenda. Chair rules the motion in.
Move to overturn the chair's ruling.

Speech in Proposition:

Dave Green (Lincoln): People have turned up at the beginning of the meeting to hust for the elections, and not having the Returning Officer here does not mean we can't have elections.

Speech in Opposition:

Paul Dwyer (Keble): Given the amount on the agenda and not having the Returning Officer, it makes sense to move the elections, and this should be at the end so they are elected in order to come to the next council.

Chair's ruling stands

c. Ratifications in Council

No ratifications in Council

e. Reports from Sabbatical Officers

President - Alan Strickland (Merton): Nothing to add

Vice-President (Finance) - Ed Mayne (Mansfield): Nothing to add

Vice-President (Welfare and Equal Opportunitites) - Jamie Frew (Keble): Nothing to add

Vice-President (Women) - Jenny Hoogewerf-McComb (Merton): Nothing to add

Vice-President (Graduates) - Andrea Miller (Linacre): Nothing to add

Vice-President (Access and Academic Affairs) - Helen Bagshaw (Balliol): Nothing to add

Vice-President (Charities and Community) - Imran Khan (Christ Church): Nothing to add

f. Reports from any Executive Officers

No reports from the Executive

g. Questions to Members of the Executive

No questions to the Executive

h. Emergency Motions

No emergency motions

i. Passage of Motions Nem Con

Motions to be discussed i, ii, iii, v, vi
Motions passed Nem Con iv

n. Other Motions

i. *Charitable Status*

Paul Dwyer (Keble): *Reads out the motion because there aren't enough agendas.*

Speech in Proposition:

Alan Strickland (Merton): Hoped that this would be relatively straightforward – published consultation paper about the options, and everyone we spoke to suggested option 2 from the consultation paper. What every student union in the country is doing.

Short Factual Questions:

Sarah-Jane Fenton (St. Hilda's): Does becoming a registered charity affect the number of sabbaticals OUSU has? Do you have to register those numbers?

Alan Strickland (Merton): We are already a charity; it's just becoming a different sort of charity. It wouldn't force any changes on us. A working party is currently looking at the different governance options in terms of trustees but this is all we need to make a decision on.

Iain Simpson (Magdalen): Who would you anticipate being the trustees?

Alan Strickland (Merton): This is what the separate paper mentioned in the motion will talk about.

Ed Mayne (Mansfield): Would we continue to be covered by university insurance policy?

Alan Strickland (Merton): Everyone we have spoken to in the university has said that the things we currently have will stay the same. If this looks likely to change, we will let Council know.

Iain Simpson (Magdalen): If we were to change, would it require a greater crystallisation of our aims as with other charities?

Alan Strickland (Merton): Yes; we'd need to clarify our charitable aims and objectives although this is something that we should be doing now, so it will actually make sure that all these legal requirements are fulfilled.

Lewys Jones (St. Catherine's): If the University pays for the office staff, how can we control what we pay them for example?

Alan Strickland (Merton): The only way that the university can control it is along the lines of the Higher Education pay scale – we currently reimburse the University payroll so fully pay for all staff except 40% of each of the Vice-President (Access and Academic Affairs) and the Vice-President (Graduates), and 100% of the Vice-President (Charities and Community).

No Speech in Opposition offered so motion passes.

ii. *Welfare Sabbatical Positions*

Speech in Proposition:

Iain Simpson (Magdalen): Currently the bulk of non-academic and equal opportunities work is done by two sabbaticals, the Vice-President (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) and Vice-President (Women). The Vice-President (Welfare and Equal Opportunities), who is also the Head of the Student Advice Service, which is the 4 sabbaticals overseeing the direct welfare support that OUSU supplies to students, feels that the current position is untenable. The quantity of casework plus dealing with the Equal Opportunities campaigns makes unwieldy portfolio. Back in 1974, OUSU added a President, then added Vice-President (Finance) and has added sabbaticals piecemeal since then, with no one properly looking through and thinking of alternatives to make sure that what is already being done is correct. This motion calls for a review panel of 5 people, 2 of them being the Vice-President (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) and Vice-President (Women), and 3 full members of OUSU elected in the next meeting of Council; I'm happy to take amendments to the numbers if it is felt that there is a better combination. Since the Vice-President (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) needs reform and there are issues over the position of Vice-President (Women) it makes sense to sketch out the alternatives for both of these, including a Student Advisor and Male and Female Welfare Officers. If we were to change the positions, it is a vast change because of how long it takes to alter anything within the Constitution and Standing Orders. If we get it wrong, it would take a long time to fix. People will end up with problems because of not having a handover from someone who has done the job they are taking on. For an entire generation of Oxford students, our welfare will be messed up. However it's not just issues of structure, there is an issue of costings. We need the people who know the most about this to have a look at how to restructure and when this is done we will be informed and we can minimise the risks of getting this wrong.

Short Factual Questions:

Sian Renwick (Queens): Has there ever been a review before?

Helen Bagshaw (Balliol): The Future and Funding of OUSU Report passed by Council in Hilary 2004 did assess all of the positions together and make recommendations as to how the team could be restructured into five full-time positions, but none of the recommendations came to Council outside of the report.

Andrea Miller (Linacre): As a member of the Student Advice Service it's my impression that we share all types of casework. Where did you get the information that non-academic casework was just done by those two sabbaticals?

Iain Simpson (Magdalen): From talking to Jamie and from my own experience of OUSU. I knew it was at least the bulk of the non-academic casework because of the specific casework responsibilities of the Vice-President (Access and Academic Affairs) and Vice-President (Graduates).

Thomas Lowe (Hertford): How will this motion affect motion 3?

Iain Simpson (Magdalen): Motion 2 and 3 both recognise the need for change. We have had both of these positions together for longer than a decade, its worth 6 weeks wait to get it right. I'd expect a referendum would need to happen after the committee has reported back to make decisions on the options presented.

Suzanne McClelland (St. Hilda's): What are the key issues you feel the committee would need to look at?

Iain Simpson (Magdalen): Firstly, to look at how much the options will cost; with the best will in the world, OUSU does not have a good record with costs. This is not the fault of individuals but of structures. Then they'd need to have a look at the number of hours spent doing various components like casework, attending University meetings, working on the liberation campaigns etc. These then need to be assessed to see which of the roles could be handed off to an appointed person and which are political in nature and need to be part of an elected officer role.

Move to debate:

Amendment:

Change resolves 3 to "elected in the Council immediately after either a decision not to hold a referendum on the issue or after a referendum decision calls for the status quo to remain until more options are given.

Change resolves 4 to "at their earliest convenience, but no later than the end of term."

Proposed: Lewis Iwu (New) Seconded: Pete Surr (University)

Speech in Proposition:

Lewis Iwu (New College): We need this meeting to go on quite smoothly. It makes sense to let the amendment go through, then this becomes the back-up option if we don't have a referendum.

Speech in Opposition:

Iain Simpson (Magdalen): If we are going to have a referendum, it might be a better idea to have a look at what we could replace the position with, and to cost the Student Advisor.

Lewis Iwu (New): If we decide to have referendum there will be a campaign period which the people on this committee will have to work on at the same time as being impartial in order to complete the review.

Dave Green (Lincoln): Lewis is missing the point. If we have a referendum we need a debate beforehand so the people know what the options are. In order to debate, we need to know the options are. This means we can have a referendum later on in the year when people are educated. This period of consultation needs to be looked at in an unbiased way.

Alastair Wrench (St. Hugh's): People are talking as if passing this motion means that a referendum couldn't go ahead. We could pass this and then the next motion. Currently, the committee would have to report back in 7th week and the referendum would be in 6th week. If we pass them both then the working party wouldn't get back to us before the referendum.

? (St. Edmund Hall MCR): If we look at the options after the result of a referendum it doesn't make sense; we need to make a choice about which of these motions to go for.

Imran Khan (Christ Church): Although the options being made clear is a good point, you can't have a debate on a referendum by committee. The point of a committee is to discuss the options if there isn't a referendum. If the referendum passes people will have a chance to find out about the choices, and if the referendum doesn't pass then it wouldn't make sense to have people talking part in both.

(St. Edmund Hall MCR): I was just wondering about the point of timing; if a certain number of weeks are needed for the consultation to happen, then when are people considering that any referendum will happen after the consultation?

Procedural motion to move onto the next motion.

Speech in Proposition:

Christine Quigley (Brasenose): Procedural motion because a lot of the debate in this motion is relating to motion 3.

Speech in Opposition:

Jamie Frew (Keble): Seems sensible as a point, but the 1st motion is a subset of what needs to be sorted out in the second. If you have the discussion first within this motion then they don't need to be had in the second.

Procedural motion passes.

Move onto motion 3

iii. Referendum

Procedural motion to have the motion by secret ballot.

Speech in Proposition:

Helen Bagshaw (Balliol): I don't want people to be intimidated into voting either way; I'd ideally want people to have their own say and be honest about what they think is best.

Speech in Opposition

Lewys Jones (St. Catherine's): I think there should be a recorded vote so that each JCR knows how their representatives voted.

Procedural motion passes.

Andrea Miller (Linacre): I know that many of you have come to Council today with your minds already made up on this issue. However, I hope that even those intending to vote against this motion will actually listen to what I have to say and at least try to understand why I sincerely believe that this proposal is the best option for OUSU and the students of Oxford in general. I will try to keep it as brief and on point as possible.

I am proposing the motion before council in light of two pressing facts:

- 1) All four members of OUSU's Student Advice Service agree that we are desperately in need of help from a professional student advisor
- 2) The sabbatical post of Vice-President (Women) does not work well as it is currently structured **and has not for many years** This needs to be changed as soon as possible

The only legitimate way to make progress in the face of problems this significant is to have a referendum and ask our electorate to make some decisions. It is necessary that we begin this process with "all deliberate speed."

I will now briefly discuss each of the component problems just mentioned, and then explain why I believe a referendum on these issues is needed right now.

The Student Advice Service is undoubtedly one of OUSU's most important welfare services. Individual students come to us with all sorts of problems, and using our knowledge of the University resources and processes, Helen, Jamie, Jenny, and I help them figure out what to do. We deal with everything from accommodation complaints and exam queries to serious instances of sexual harassment and unjust academic dismissal. This role consumes a good portion of our time and seeing students in such difficult situations, which often take years to resolve can be very distressing to say the least. As sabbatical officers, we have been elected to represent students both collectively and as individuals- when we accompany student casework to meetings with college officials or the proctors, we are able to deliver on our promise of knowledgeable advocacy and representation in a very concrete way. This is the way it ought to be. But working for the SAS is not all about direct advocacy and representation- most of it is figuring out how to use the available structures and resources at the University and in the Colleges to work toward a solution. This is something that could be done much more effectively by a permanent professional than by a team of transient sabbatical officers.

The Student Advisor option, despite what some will say, is a good idea. It is neither hasty nor misguided, and it is not risky either. OUSU had a student advisor up until a few years ago, and it worked very well. A Student Advisor would devote their time entirely to running the SAS. They would be able to provide stability and a source of institutional memory. They would build effective relationships with college and university officials concerned with student welfare, and help with welfare publications and education. This would mean overseeing weekly meetings, training the sabs to be the most effective advocates they can be, and keeping adequate records and statistics so that the SAS team can figure out where the most common problems are and actively campaign to solve them. It would free up sabbatical time to focus on campaigning and representation.

As for the Vice-President (Women), she does very valuable work. There are many reasons to doubt, however, whether a full-time sabbatical position is still the best way to serve the interests and needs of Oxford's female students. It is my belief that the work currently done by the Vice-President (Women) can be achieved more effectively and more efficiently by hiring a student advisor and electing another women's representative to serve on the OUSU Part-Time Executive Committee.

In many respects, women at this university still find themselves at a disadvantage to their male colleagues. Simply because progress has been made in the fight for equal treatment it does not mean that we can be complacent. As a group, women at Oxford must ensure that our needs are represented and served. A team of 3 committed women's executive officers, working in conjunction with a strong autonomous women's campaign can do this just as effectively as a full-time sabbatical. The most successful and active student campaigns in recent years do not have a full time sabbatical at their head (think of Environment and Ethics Committee and the campaign for green electricity), so there is no reason that women's campaign cannot do the same. There will still be 4 votes in OUSU Council specifically allotted to women's officers.

The welfare role of the Vice-President (Women) can easily be covered by the other SAS sabbaticals with the help of a Student Advisor. A professional employee who is well versed in the avenues for help available at the university with heavily women's issues like unplanned pregnancy, child care, rape crisis, eating disorders, and body image, will surely be better for women students and also for the student body as a whole. After all, these are not only women's issues.

I would like to stress, that while it is clearly controversial and emotive, this is meant to be a strictly practical motion. The position of Vice-President (Women) has been controversial for years and it is time to ask the electorate what they think of it. Significant resources are invested in employing a full-time women's sabbatical officer, and if that is not the best way of serving women student's interests, then those resources ought to be redirected.

We need a referendum on these issues as soon as possible. It seems that as far as some people are concerned, there is never a right time for debate and referendum, so it keeps getting delayed. We are at far greater risk here if we delay the on this question than if we just ask it. The electorate cannot give us a wrong answer- ****we**** can only fail ****them**** in accurately representing their views or refusing to listen or even to ask.

Ultimately, please remember that this is by no means a motion to jettison the position of Vice-President (WWomen). It is not even a motion to change the way that female representation in OUSU is exercised. It is not a motion to institute a student advisor. It is a motion that authorises a REFERENDUM that will question these options and allow the electorate to decide. As an organisation based on democratic principles, OUSU looks to referenda as its supreme policy-making tools: I strongly urge you to vote in favour of holding this referendum.

Short Factual Questions:

Kieran Hutchinson Dean (Wadham): I think that most people would agree that we need a Student Advisor – what have the sabbaticals done to campaign for this within the University?

Andrea Miller (Linacre): Everyone on the Student Advice Service started their term of office not knowing a lot about what we needed to do, and dealt with a lot of work and stress before realising that we needed a Student Advisor to help us deal with casework. University officials have said that they can completely appreciate that we need a Student Advisor and almost every other institution does. We haven't put forward a full paper on this so they haven't been forthcoming with the money.

Robin Moss (New): What do other Student Unions do? Do they have Student Advisors and are they positive about the role?

Andrea Miller (Linacre): It's very standard to have a team of maybe 4 or 5 full-time Student Advisors and to pay them within the range of £19-21k. Alongside helping out with casework they may help to produce literature or run different clinics on student welfare issues.

Christine Quigley (Brasenose): Could you outline the numbers of women you have consulted with, and what sort of cross-section this represents?

Andrea Miller (Linacre): I think it's pretty clear that ideally a little more consultation would have happened before now, but the entire point to having a referendum is that it is consulting with the widest possible audience.

Lewys Jones (St. Catherine's): You have mentioned figures of between £19-21k, but you have also mentioned that the position failed last time because there ended up being no money. Given that we know it takes a 2-3year period when things change over, how likely is it that OUSU will run out of money?

Andrea Miller (Linacre): The way it seems is that if we are creative with our resources and replace Vice-President (WWomen), we will have £16k to reallocate and the rest of the money will come from the University.

(St Catherine's): Has there been a precedence set on a sub-group voting in a referendum?

Alan Strickland (Merton): There currently is no precedence set but there is a presidential ruling that states that only women can vote in any referendum which has to do with the Vice-President (WWomen) and her work.

Dave Green (Lincoln): Which committees within the University has this been raised at and where are the minutes? What formal methods have been used to talk to the University about the position of Student Advisor?

Andrea Miller (Linacre): There is no way to fund a Student Advisor without redirecting resources within OUSU to contribute to that. We are not the only people that want more money; many others within the University need more money and have equally good reasons for requesting it. The Vice-Chancellor has said to Alan that we have incredibly good reasons, but outlined the difficulties of transferring money from a budget for one area of the University so that we can use that money. We need to show a willingness to be creative with our own resources in order to expect the University to do the same with theirs. There has as yet been no formal proposal but we have approached many senior members of central administration and have had good responses from them, including Dame Fiona Caldicott (Chair of Joint Committee of Council with Student Members), Professor Elizabeth Fallaize (Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education)), Michael Sibly (Academic Registrar), Julie Maxton (Registrar), the former Proctors and Assessor.

Niel Bowerman (Keble): Why does the referendum need to be done now?

Andrea Miller (Linacre): We have prepared a chart showing the lapse of time with the different options shown.

Imran Khan (Christ Church): *explains chart*

Andrea Miller (Linacre): One of the reasons for the timing that I would like to emphasise is that I don't want to see any other year have to go through what we have in terms of dealing with casework.

Kit Roskelly (St. Hilda's) Who exactly have you consulted with for this motion?

Andrea Miller (Linacre): The debate on the position of Vice-President (WWomen) has been going on for years. The motion creating the position was decided upon by a small majority of people in a barely quorate meeting of Council, and no referendum was ever held asking the women of Oxford what they thought.

Sian Renwick (Queen's): Is it proper for women to be the only ones allowed to vote in this referendum?
Question struck out, opinion not factual.

Lewys Jones (St. Catherine's): You are now mentioning that we would need an extra £4k once the rest had been redistributed; do we have the resources to redistribute? Why can't we wait one year?

Andrea Miller (Linacre): In terms of financing and redistributing, we would be using the money from the Vice-President (Women) position, which we always budget for, and I don't see your point about timing.

Garth Smith (Christ Church): Has this issue ever been debated in Council before?

Helen Bagshaw (Balliol): Yes it has, a number of times.

Iain Simpson (Magdalen): Is it right that we owe the University £1 million, as Ed is quoted in the student papers as saying? What would happen if Council says we can't have an extra £5k to make up the difference in pay?

Andrea Miller (Linacre): The idea is that it would be the University who would give us the extra money.

Ed Mayne (Mansfield): As a point of information, we are not £1 million in debt to the University, it's actually £250k.

James McDaid (Corpus Christi): Do other Student Unions have Vice-President (Women) positions, or the equivalent?

Andrea Miller (Linacre): Some do – there are around 10 in the country who have full-time Women's Officer positions.

Procedural motion to move to debate

Speech in Proposition:

Frank Hardee (Oriel): I think we should move to debate as all the points coming up are moving into debate.

Speech in Opposition:

Lewys Jones (St. Catherine's): I still have questions I'd like to ask.

Procedural motion passes

Speech in Opposition:

Dave Green (Lincoln): No one who is speaking against the motion is afraid of democracy, and neither are we saying that we don't want a Student Advisor. We agree that sabbaticals should not have to deal with a horrid system. This motion proposes a binary option. I have asked a question about asking the University for a Student Advisor, and I don't believe that the moves within the University have been adequate. What happened to asking for change? We originally campaigned for a Student Union and won; if we have a strong claim then we should go and campaign in the University for it. The point I'm trying to make is that if you defeat this motion and pass motion 2 will not remove the chance to have a referendum. This means that unbiased consultation will be able to inform a referendum about the options. We need to have a look at all the issues involved. The consultation body will come back with options and propose a question to Council. It is only then that we will be able to do justice to the future of this Student Union. You have heard that referendum the only way in democracy; I would point out that you need to have the debate first to make sure that it is informed. Have the consultation and then this will work.

Amendment

In Council Resolves I strike "in which only female students may vote"

Proposed: Adam Marsh (Trinity) Seconded: Cameron Penny (Oriel)

Speech in Proposition:

Adam Marsh (Trinity): I think I should make clear that we are impartial on the issue, and don't mind what the outcome of the vote is. However, we care about democracy and right now the motion is untenable. The motion isn't debating a women's issue, it is debating an issue of budgeting. It concerns a Student Advisor, a position which affects men as well as women therefore it shouldn't be only half of OUSU's members that get a say on this. I think it's clear all women would say that there is a need for the Vice-President (Women), and it effectively becomes a rubber stamp mechanism. We should have a real referendum and real democracy.

Speech in Opposition:

Kieran Hutchinson Dean (Wadham): The idea that all women in favour is wrong, and to say that all women think the same way is patronising. The position of Vice-President (Women) is there to defend women's rights which is why they should be the ones that make the decision.

Short Factual Questions:

Lewys Jones (St. Catherine's): You've just heard it said that it is fair for women only to vote. But what about support for eating disorders and student parents, which are in the portfolio of the Vice-President (Women). These are not female only issues so why shouldn't men have a say in this?

Imran Khan (Christ Church): Precedence has already been set that the referendum should have only women voting. To the issue of council overturning the presidential ruling on this, it can only be struck down by 2/3 of Council if the ruling has not already been ratified.

Paul Dwyer (Keble): To get round this, a request for a further presidential ruling has to be taken in writing to Alan, for him to make a further ruling that could be voted down. Therefore I will strike this amendment down.

Amendment

Strike Council Resolves 1 and replace it with: "To hold a referendum in which all members of OUSU can vote to replace Vice-President (Women) and Vice-President (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) with a new arrangement, such arrangement to be determined by Council following consultation."

Proposed: Iain Simpson (Magdalen) Seconded: Jamie Frew (Keble)

Speech in Proposition:

Iain Simpson (Magdalen): I'm convinced people will think that Vice-President (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) and Vice-President (Women) need to be looked at in tandem. If a referendum says that we should replace them, options can be brought forward then.

Speech in Opposition:

Imran Khan (Christ Church): This is meant to be about the Vice-President (Women) and the Student Advisor and has been brought because it will address both issues as one. This motion doesn't change the issues of improving the welfare service provided by the Student Advice Service.

Alan Strickland (Merton): The presidential ruling states that in a referendum mentioning Vice-President (Women) only women can vote. I think that the reasoning was logical therefore I would stand by the interpretation. You need to ask for a new interpretation and challenge that in council, as already said.

Amendment withdrawn

Garth Smith (Christ Church): The majority of people in this room are JCR officers, all here on a mandate. I have taken to this to my JCR committee and have spoken to people within college; the one thing that comes out is that students want to make the choice for themselves. The majority of your students would want a referendum so you should vote for the motion.

Frank Hardee (Oriell): I want to support Garth's sentiments but as it currently stands, only women can vote. It will fundamentally affect all men given the creation of a new post is implied. You shouldn't support a referendum that only women are able to vote in.

Imran Khan (Christ Church): *Point of information.* The motion calls for any decision on the Student Advisor will need to be ratified by Council.

Frank Hardee (Oriell): If the referendum fails then men will not be allowed to have a say at all.

Alan Strickland (Merton): There would still be time to overturn the presidential interpretation before the voting.

Lewys Jones (St. Catherine's): Why can't we have more than one option? Are there other Universities where this has been working? And does the old ruling still applies in new social climate?

Imran Khan (Christ Church): Alan will uphold the ruling, he has already said that. Every other Union will have more resources because better funded which means they have a 4 or 5 member Student Advice team paid for by the University. This motion was brought because of the problem with the Student Advice Service; I have been outside OUSU up until this year so am not sure about in previous years, but this year I have seen four welfare sabbaticals at breaking point. We can't afford for this to happen again.

Christine Quigley (Brasenose): One of the things that hasn't been mentioned enough is the point of consultation. The fact that there has been these two motions shows that there is a movement for change, but we don't have to accept the first uninformed proposal that comes along. This motion only calls for one option, and I haven't yet seen why this option should be the one presented. The women of Oxford deserve better, and there should have been a consultation of a representative cross-section of female students. This proposal is misguided. It is the end of the current sabbaticals term and decisions will have been rushed because of that. You should vote against this as it will need proper consultation.

Kieran Hutchinson Dean (Wadham): The point has been made about mandates, and of course Common Rooms should go on mandates but the problem is that this motion was only published on Monday so I believe that most people are not here on a mandate. If you vote against this, we can properly consult people in JCRs and MCRs. In terms of the Student Advisor, I think that it was wrong for the two issues to be conflated. It's obvious that a lot of people would want to have a Student Advisor but I agree we should have an active campaign and get the University to pay for one for us. Universities that are poorer than us have them, so we could get them to give us money. If a concerted effort is made, then we could secure the position. If you want to question the position of Vice-President (Women) then have a referendum on that separate issue in future.

Lewis Iwu (New): Consultation words are being bandied about, but what exactly does consultation involve? Why can't this happen in a four-week campaign period? I haven't yet heard an argument about why women will be uninformed. My JCR

feels strongly that they need a vote. I am yet to be convinced that women can't hear all the arguments during a referendum.

James McDaid (Corpus Christi): I want to emphasise the point that passing this motion does nothing to change the status quo, it just gives people the chance to make the change. I find it insulting that people think I wouldn't be able to make a binary choice. If we refuse the opportunity to consult with our peers then we are saying we don't trust them to make a decision. In questions like this, you can either take a sample or ask the entire population; in this case we should take the population, and the best way to do this is in a referendum.

(St. Edmund Hall MCR): If you are asking wrong question in a referendum, then you will get the wrong answer. You are asking students to resolve these issues for themselves before they make a choice. The two motions are not incompatible, we can pass both of them.

Dave Green (Lincoln): With regard to the Student Advice Service, I'd like to assure people that we are not disenfranchising the people of Oxford by rejecting this motion. The options we have been presented with are insufficient, and it was wrong to put the two options together. We need to sit down and decide what question to put. Noone here is afraid of democracy, we just think that we need to have an unbiased debate before the referendum. The fact that we're having points made about men not being able to vote on a Student Advisor suggests that there are a multiplicity of options. Our only option is to vote this motion down and vote for motion 2 instead.

Luke Tryl (Magdalen): I have to say I am astounded by Dave's attitude. The main thing that came up within the disaffiliation debate at Magdalen was that OUSU promises change and they never deliver. Here we have a concrete proposal to reform, and you are wanting to delay it all over again. This is a great proposal to put through and we should let students have their choice.

Iain Simpson (Magdalen): This is not delaying reform. If you vote for motion 2, then we have the time to put changes through. We need to have about four options and then give students the choice. This will not change the movement of change that is being put through. You are not delaying reform, it is just being sensible. If we get it wrong it will take 3 yrs to fix.

Jamie Frew (Keble): As the Vice-President (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) I am obviously caught up in the middle of all of this, and I am also the Head of the Student Advice Service. I was in favour of this motion originally, as the Student Advisor is the grail of student welfare services. However, I'm not convinced that right now is the time to do it as we do not have enough information. I have been involved in welfare for 5yrs in Oxford and I am not convinced. We need to add research to this. We don't know enough. There are a lot of things that are not known, such as the definite costs. It could be £21k, it could be £25k. It could damage our chances of getting money and we need to know that risk. We don't know if £25k is too small or too large as we have no idea what job they would be doing – I could give you a job description given a couple of days, but I haven't seen a proposal. I have seen some of the sums of money from other Student Unions, almost none of them do what we do. They only provide information and referral services; none of them provide advocacy services and even at Birmingham, where they do, this is a volunteer workforce.

Andrea Miller (Linacre): *Point of information* The Student Advisor would not make the Student Advice Service disappear. We're still envisaging that sabbatical members of the Student Advice Service would go along as advocates as this is what we are elected to do.

Jamie Frew (Keble): I would argue that there are extreme benefits for carrying through a student's case from the start to the finish.

Andrea Miller (Linacre): We would be working as a team throughout the whole of the case.

Lewis Iwu (New): Why can't these arguments be made during the referendum campaign?

Amendment

Strike Council Resolves 1 and replace with: "To hold a referendum in Michaelmas 2007 to reform the welfare provision within OUSU, following consultation throughout Trinity 2007, on the positions of Vice-President (Women) and Vice-President (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) which will outline the best solutions for reform."

Proposed: Nik Alatortsev (Merton) Seconded: Sïan Renwick (Queens)

Speech in Proposition:

Nik Merton MCR: I have been listening to the arguments for and against this motion, and the amendment is a compromise. It builds on what the original opposition said, in that noone is opposed to the idea of referendum, or in favour of leaving things as they are. Myself and anyone supporting this amendment want reform, but for that reform to happen in a sensible way. Consultation needs to happen and then a referendum question outlining two strict options can be created. I would urge you to support this amendment.

Speech in Opposition:

Imran Khan (Christ Church): I appreciate the efforts in trying to reach a compromise. However what the amendment proposes is the same as motion 2, and if you are in favour of that then you should just vote for motion 2.

Short Factual Questions:

Nick Long (Lincoln): Would it be realistic to hold the referendum in 3rd week Michaelmas?

Nik Alatortsev (Merton): If consultation happened this term and then we have everything online.

Dave Green (Lincoln): I think people should support this amendment. We need a referendum, but it would be good to go back to JCRs and say we'll be doing it properly. Then we can have strong campaigns in Michaelmas. The current President-elect will be running a large consultation in Michaelmas anyway and that context will be good for debate. In light of that fact, a referendum can be parcelled in with that set of consultations, to include Vice-President (Women) and a Student Advisor or better options. If you want a referendum but think the current proposal is inadequate then vote for this amendment.

Pete Wright (Wadham): Any referendum in Michaelmas needs to be done in 6th week or later. You can't have a referendum with the Statutory Annual Election's as there is the potential for people campaigning for both a referendum side and a Sabbatical Officer position. In terms of practicality, the referendum would ideally be this term or Hilary Term.

Nik Alatortsev (Merton): Our JCR had at least 4 elections in Michaelmas Term. Why is it that it would not be possible? It could be in 3rd week.

Pete Wright (Wadham): In 3rd week the nominations process kicks off so the Returning Officer would need to be starting out on these. I would not want to be the Returning Officer asked to run both at the same time.

Move to vote proposed

Speech in Proposition:

Christine Quigley (Brasenose): I think we should move to vote on the amendment because everyone is likely to have their minds made up.

Speech in Opposition:

Garth Smith (Christ Church): I need to make points still.

Procedural motion passes

Recorded vote proposed – no opposition, procedural motion passes

Amendment Speech in Proposition:

Nik Alatortsev (Merton): With this amendment, you get a referendum and you get consultation, all done sensibly.

Amendment Speech in Opposition:

Imran Khan (Christ Church): The amendment changes the point of the motion too much. If you agree with the amendment then you should just vote down this motion as a whole and vote in favour of motion 2.

Votes in favour: 54

Votes against: 47

Amendment passes

Procedural motion to dismiss the remaining amendments

Speech in Proposition:

Iain Simpson (Magdalen): We need to get out of the room for 6pm.

Speech in Opposition:

Garth Smith (Christ Church): Amendments have been put and we need to consider everything seriously.

Helen Bagshaw (Balliol): Perhaps it would be best if the amendments were read out before we considered dismissing them.

Amendment

Add to Council Resolves 1: " To hold a referendum presenting more than two options..."

Proposed: Lewys Jones (St. Catherine's) Seconded: Frank Hardee (Oriol)

Speech in Proposition:

Lewys Jones (St. Catherine's): Right now the referendum will only be offering one option or the other, and I think having more than 2 choices is a good thing.

Speech in Opposition:

James McDaid (Corpus Christi): The current amendment suggests plural by including the word options, and these are to be determined by Council anyway.

Move to Vote proposed

Speech in Proposition:

Iain Simpson (Magdalen): We have already said that we will have multiple options, so vote this unnecessary amendment down and let's move onto the next one.

No speech in opposition.

Amendment fails

Amendment:

Amend Council Resolves 1 to read: "in Michaelmas 2007 so that the result is known before the opening of nominations for the position of Vice-President (Women)."

Proposed: Ed Mayne (Mansfield) Seconded: Niel Bowerman (Keble)

Speech in Proposition: Ed Mayne (Mansfield): Students want to have a choice, but whatever that choice is will be delayed if another Vice-President (Women) is elected. Stop talking about reform and let them have the chance to do it quickly.

Speech in Opposition: Pete Wright (Wadham): The best thing to do would be to move the elections for the two positions concerned so that they happened in Hilary Term.

Imran Khan (Christ Church): We accept the amendment as friendly.

Move to vote on the motion as a whole proposed

Speech in Proposition:

Iain Simpson (Magdalen): We have spent our time in discussion over amendment, which has brought up all the points.

Speech in Opposition:

Garth Smith (Christ Church): People still need to decide whether or not they want to have a referendum.

Move to Vote passes

Secret ballot:

In favour: 74

Against: 16

Motion passes

ii. *Welfare Sabbatical Positions Part II*

Restarted discussion

Amendment

Amend Council Resolves 1 to read: "To establish a committee of 7..."

Amend Council Resolves 2 to add: "That all 4 Sabbatical Officers on the Student Advice Service shall sit on the committee."

Proposed: Andrea Miller (Linacre) Seconded: Jenny Hoogewerf-McComb (Merton)

Iain Simpson (Magdalen): I accept the amendment as friendly

Move to Vote proposed – no opposition to move to vote or to the amendment

Motion passes

d. Elections in Council

OUSU Delegate Elections

Pete Wright (Wadham): Could you declare any political affiliations, whether you have been censured in Council or thrown out, and then give a short speech on why you would like to be Council Delegate?

Stuart Tooley (Christ Church): OULC and the Labour Party. I was originally a Council Delegate but I had to resign due to physics practicals; I would now like to return to my position.

Alice Taylor (Jesus): OULC and the Labour Party. I was surprised to find there were spaces for Council Delegates, and wanted to take up the opportunity as I think the extra representation they offer is important.

Iain Simpson (Magdalen): In one sentence; what is OUSU for?

Stuart Tooley (Christ Church): Student Representation.

Alice Taylor (Jesus): I'd agree – I was going to say representing students.

Ed Mayne (Mansfield): What would you say is the point of Council Delegates?

Alice Taylor (Jesus): Although there are people elected by their JCRs, this could mean unfair representation of students views; for example, policy could be created by a vote with 55%. It's good to have new opinions brought forward in Council by individuals.

Stuart Tooley (Christ Church): The OUSU Delegate role is useful for broader students opinion. I don't necessarily always agree with the Christ Church Representatives and I think Council needs wider views.

Niel Bowerman (Keble): Do both of your arguments mean that you would vote for the minority opinion in your college?

Stuart Tooley (Christ Church): I might not always vote with majority, but I wouldn't want to be mandated to vote in a particular way.

Alice Taylor (Jesus): If there had been a huge majority in favour at my JCR meeting, I would probably vote in line with them.

?: Do you think being OULC members means that the Labour Club will have too many representatives?

Alice Taylor (Jesus): Noone should do this because of being a member of OULC, it shouldn't make a difference.

Stuart Tooley (Christ Church): I'd echo those statements.

?: How would you represent the views not voted for within your JCR?

Stuart Tooley (Christ Church): I haven't said I would, just said that my JCR's views don't reflect my views necessarily.

Alice Taylor (Jesus): Are you asking how I would make up my mind? I would make my own decision based on the arguments presented.

Lewis Iwu (New): Do you think there is merit in the argument that Delegates should be allowed to speak and therefore introduce a wider range of views, but not vote?

Alice Taylor (Jesus): I think they should vote as at the moment JCRs have 3 votes irrespective of size and there is not anything to be done about that so we should take the opportunity to be able to vote without mandates.

Stuart Tooley (Christ Church): Some groups of students e.g. those in the sciences couldn't take the time to run for JCR positions so their views are not as well represented. Important to have votes as well.

MPLS Divisional Board Undergraduate Representative

Statement from Alexander Williamson (Wadham) and Alexander Priest (St. John's)

"We believe that our previous experience on the Chemists Joint Consultative Committee stands us in good stead to represent students at a divisional level; and we propose to facilitate the implementation of a divisional joint consultative committee - to allow better representation of students' ideas and views, and to improve understanding in the student body of the roles covered by the divisional board."