



council minutes

**1st Week Council held at 5.30pm on Wednesday 4th May 2011
in Corpus Christi Auditorium**

- a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- b. Matters Arising from the Minutes
- c. Ratifications in Council
- d. Elections in Council
- e. Reports from the Sabbatical Officers
- f. Reports from the Executive Officers who wish to make reports
- g. Questions to Members of the Executive
- h. Emergency Motions
- i. Passage of Motions Nem Con
- j. Motions of No Confidence or Censure
- k. First readings of Motions to Amend the Constitution or Standing Orders
- l. The Budget or Amended Budget
- m. Motions Authorising Capital Expenditure
- n. Other Motions
 - i. motions affecting ousu members as ousu members
 - ii. motions affecting ousu members as students at Oxford University
 - iii. motions affecting ousu members as members of the student movement
 - iv. motions affecting ousu members as residents of Oxford
 - v. motions affecting ousu members as residents of the United Kingdom
 - vi. motions affecting ousu members as citizens of the world
- o. Any Other Business

a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

No problems or matters arising. Minutes passed

c. Ratifications in Council

Chair: Adam Tyndall

There was a typographical error with the agenda and these should be read, "notes and accepts" rather than "notes and approves".

1. Freshers' Fair Organiser's Report 2010

Council notes and accepts:

1. The appended Freshers' Fair Organiser's Report for 2010 (Appendix 1)

Proposed: David Barclay (Worcester)

This was noted and accepted

2. Returning Officer's Report for HT11

Council notes and accepts:

1. The report of the Returning Officer for HT11 (Appendix 2)

Proposed: Jonathan Edwards (Balliol)

This was noted and accepted

d. Elections in Council

The Chair cedes to the Returning Officer Ugo Okoroafor

Ugo Okoroafor

We are going to have 2 elections one for postgraduate rep divisional board and one for DRO. I have made a ruling on the DRO election that due to the fact that it was not advertised 48 hrs before Council I am going to allow people to stand from the floor. Will call you out to do this. There will be no option for Reopening Nominations.

The DRO basically assists the Returning Officer for the period of one term, they will assist with elections in Council.

We will firstly have the election for Postgraduate Maths, Physical and Life Sciences Divisional Board Rep. Do we have the candidates? The only candidate in attendance is Francesco Fermani he will have a 2 min hust.

Francesco Fermani (Merton)

I would like to do this. I would like to offer you my contribution and ensure our comments our heard, this position is usually vacant so we lose opportunity to give feedback to the Division. Currently sit of Postgraduate committee I help with student complaints. Idea of being on a committee to gather feedback which is not usually gathered is important. I previously did it in Astro physics. Organising and prioritising is something I know I can do.

Questions:

Jack Matthews (St Peter's)

MPLS Board Meeting is usually friendly but can be hostile if you go against the grain.

Francesco Fermani (Merton)

If I know that I will go there and bring a point that goes against what they are thinking then I will gather all the information I need so that I can talk confidently about what we are discussing. Not afraid of dealing with Heads of Departments or Divisions as they are all human beings.

Ugo Ukoroafor (St Hilda's)

Please can we have nominations for the position of DRO from the floor.

Daniel Lowe (St Edmunds)

Vote for me to be DRO as am contractually obliged to be here and I know how to count. Want to appear slightly higher on list of Junior Tribunal, I want to come back to do this.

Questions:

Jack Matthews (St Peter's)

Who is your favourite RO?

Daniel Lowe (St Edmunds)

Madeline Stanley – because she is a goddess.

Favourite Electoral system?

AV – don't like system where someone can be elected with only 30 / 40 % feel should be able to vote for the candidate that I want to vote for even if this is a minority party.

Ugo Okoroafor(St Hilda's)

The election will be STV. Use white slips for DRO

The following positions were elected.

1 position for Postgraduate Maths, Physical and Life Sciences Divisional Board Rep responsible for representing their peers directly to the heads of faculties and division. Serve until end of TTT11.

Francesco Fermani (Merton)

2 positions for Deputy Returning Officers – responsible for assisting the RO in all of his duties. For more information email president@ousu.org

Daniel Lowe (St Edmunds Hall)

e. Reports from the Sabbatical Officers

President – David Barclay

Hi, final update on fees campaign, can see what up to in report. Details in terms of fees, waiver and bursary. Didn't get a lower fee level. Will be £9,000. Improved Bursary system, were successful was a proposal to reduce but with help from colleges we managed to change the University's mind and they are going to be spending more this year. Fairly successful with fee waiver, fought for idea of frozen fees and with a lot of lobbying that principal was accepted, fee frozen for first year of study and then slightly lower level for next year. We had a very interesting University Council and lots of people came out in support but we didn't quite succeed. OUSU can achieve a lot when it works with colleges and common rooms, which couldn't without you. Current Oxford Opportunity Bursary system students in the room was when the University started to take notice. Let the people that it affects do the lobbying. Lots of conversations on access still ongoing. Another meeting next week, if you want to come along see me after council. Access working group will report back again this term. We are in a whole new world. We need to say students deserve a much better experience of Oxford, we should have greater say in how things work here.

Some people have asked questions about extra money. There will be an extra £7.3 million pounds of which half will go to college. £310 extra pounds per student to each college. That it is something you can take back to college and ask where the money is going.

Beth – Lot of work on immigration, a lot of things have changed. Government have said what their changes are going to be on visa requirements, where going to be awful, we managed to get a lot of things ditched with the assistance of students across the country.

Open house from 1.00pm on Friday afternoon, really good time to come in and say hi, not just you but also your students. Would be good for you to point them in the right direction.

VP Women - Katherine Terrell

I am currently rewriting the university harassment procedures, as they are not fit for purpose, so if you have had any experience of this then please bring them to me. They will be completely anonymous.

Tea and Toy's no fall-back venue, if anyone has a common room area that is reasonably accessible then let me know.

I ran a Women in Politics Open Day at the end of last term at St Johns just want to say thanks for their help.

WomCam have a special guest speaker on Monday so please come along.

VP Welfare & Equal Opportunities - Tom Perry

Wellbeing week next week, posters in lobby, please collect and take back to your college. Loads of events Zumba, loads of fun stuff, please join the facebook group as everything will be advertised on there.

VP Access & Academic Affairs - Alex Bulfin
Nothing to add to my written report.

VP Charities & Community - Daniel Lowe

Please encourage people to run for RAG Ball committee, we could really do with a good team to run it. Finally the total RAG managed to raise in the last year was £120,000, which is a large increase on last years total.

f. Reports from the Executive Officer who wish to make Reports

Community Outreach & Charities Officer – Sarah Santhosham

Together with London Citizens we have put together a series of workshops about running campaigns, please forward the information about them. I have fliers for you to pass on. Please encourage people to attend.

Rent & Accommodation Officer - Eleanor Brown

Rent Negotiation packs if conducting rent negotiations please pick them up. Or if you need any help get in touch.

g. Questions to Members of the Executive

Jack Evans (Corpus Christi)

Please can you update us on the NUS Conference?

David Barclay - President

Lots of close votes, if want to know more about policy stuff please ask myself or Jack Matthews. We got closely involved with the NUS President Elections, the person wanted to win won, Liam Burns. Students as Consumers or another basis, think at the heart of how OUSU is going to progress.

We need to think really carefully about the alternatives, don't think we are consumers, think dangerous things may come from them. If that isn't the relationship then who are we, when people talk about student rights, were do they come from. Hopefully answers over course of this term.

i. Passage of Motions Nem Con

No motions were passed Nem Con.

n. Other Motions

i. Motions affecting OUSU Members as OUSU Members

1. Oxford Living Wage Campaign

Council Notes:

1. That OUSU has had policy on the Living Wage since Michaelmas Term 2005
2. That this policy was renewed in OUSU Council in Trinity Term 2010
3. That there is a small but active Oxford Living Wage Campaign, consisting of Oxford University students, who feel that lobbying power would be significantly improved if it were to become a permanent OUSU campaign

Council Believes:

1. That people should be paid enough to live decently, and the best way to ensure this is to support a living wage
2. That employees of the University and its Colleges should be paid a Living Wage
3. That campaigns are stronger when more people get involved
4. That the Oxford Living Wage Campaign should be given the formal status of permanent committee of OUSU

Council Resolves:

1. To make the Oxford Living Wage Campaign a permanent committee of OUSU
2. To mandate the OUSU Executive to assist, where possible, in terms of mobilising students, providing publicity and liaising with University and College officials who have the power to make changes and implement the Living Wage.

Council Further Resolves:

1. To amend the Standing Orders as appropriate
2. To amend E 4 'The Equal Opportunities Campaigns' and E 5 'The Nominations Committee' to E 5 and E 6 respectively
3. To insert:
 - a. E 4 'The Oxford Living Wage Campaign'
 - b. 4.1 The Oxford Living Wage Campaign shall be a Permanent Committee of OUSU. All provisions relating to Permanent Committees shall as such apply to the Oxford Living Wage Campaign
 - c. 4.2 The Oxford Living Wage Campaign shall be responsible for:
 - i. calculating and seeking accreditation for the Living Wage in Oxford and liaising with relevant bodies to do so
 - ii. campaigning for a Living Wage for all staff in Colleges and Departments of Oxford University
 - iii. encouraging Colleges and Departments of Oxford University who currently pay a Living Wage to be recognised as Living Wage employers
 - iv. working with the wider community to achieve a city-wide Living Wage in Oxford
 - d. The Oxford Living Wage Campaign shall elect a Chair or Co-chairs annually
 - e. 4.4 The Oxford Living Wage Campaign shall have an executive which shall consist of the Chair or Co-chairs, the OUSU Community Outreach and Charities Officer, the OUSU VP (C&C) and any other such officers as decided by the Oxford Living Wage Campaign.

Proposed: Sarah Santhosham (Corpus Christi)

Seconded: Daniel Lowe (St Edmund Hall)

Sarah Santhosham (Corpus Christi)

Motion to make official part of OUSU. The campaign was part of OUSU but died out, so getting VP C & C involved so can always be part.

Michael Hinge (Brasenose)

What is the Living wage?

Sarah Santhosham (Corpus Christi)

£7.20 outside London £8.30 in London.

Motion passes.

2. Undergraduate Rent

Council Notes:

1. That rents for undergraduates in some Colleges have risen by as much as 37% in the last 4 years
2. That many College rents are set on the basis of what a market price would be, or on a full economic costing model
3. That student loans are being frozen for the year 2011-12 at their current level
4. That as a whole, Oxford Colleges made a surplus in the last financial year
5. That the new undergraduate fees system will mean that every College will receive over £100,000 additional income per year at steady state

Council Believes:

1. That Oxford Colleges are not businesses, but are first and foremost academic institutions operating for the benefit of their members and the wider community
2. That rents at every College should be transparent and affordable for all, including those who may not be in receipt of an Oxford Opportunity Bursary but nonetheless do not receive financial support from their parents
3. That rent levels should be set with students' ability to pay as the foremost consideration

Council Resolves:

1. To call for a rent freeze on undergraduate accommodation across all Oxford Colleges for the academic year 2011-12.

Proposed by: David Barclay (Worcester College)

Seconded by: Eleanor Brown (St Hugh's College)

David Barclay (Worcester)

On one hand completed topic full of acronyms such as Van Noorden index and every college has a different system, on the other hand very simple, basically about market, how much can we charge how much can we get away with. How much does it cost the college, or could look at affordability have fixed incomes based on grants, don't think OUSU 's jobs to go to your college and say what your colleges rent should be, what we can do is try and set the broad format and the focus on affordability. Student loans are being frozen next year. If looking at from affordability perspective, then rents in colleges should be frozen. Think important OUSU builds a campaign around affordability and colleges taking in to consideration how much students can pay.

Question from Jesus College

Did rent negotiations last term and got 6.8 % increase.

David Barclay (Worcester)

Would be worth doing rent negotiation earlier, could look at surveys about students doing work in term time, and take those students to college. The way some colleges see money for hardship, eventually will come. Look at targeting students that are the squeezed middle. Still things could do we could help with.

Question from Merton

Do you think this is symbolic, or practical?

David Barclay (Worcester)

Depends on how you respond, think makes sense. A campaign in a college with stuff happening across colleges. Both but as I said if we think we can defend then should.

Martha MacKenzie (St Johns)

The Van Noorden coming out next week after Estates Bursars Committee.

Jim O'Connell (Univ)

Any danger will combat by raising PG motion. Glad PG Motion so not just focussing on UG rent. Reason have not called for freezing of PG Motion. Is up to MCR presidents and OUSU to talk

David Barclay (Worcester)

Recommend negotiate together. Students are much stronger if working together same argument about affordability.

Jack Matthew (St Peter's)

Will OUSU be freedom of info requesting colleges?

David Barclay (Worcester)

Exploring multiple channels, people working on, big part of how this campaign will grow.

Question

Do you know on average how much of a loss colleges make on the rent they charge at the moment?

David Barclay (Worcester)

Haven't got to the bottom but is possible to do so.

Rob Collier (St Johns)

Student loan level is going to be fixed, from this year to next. Understanding was fixed year before.

David Barclay (Worcester)

Yes no doesn't weaken argument.

Sarah Hutchinson

Raising on domestic bursars committee.

David Barclay (Worcester)

Yes definitely as OUSU is going to be on this committee going forward, often a lot of resistance, as don't

Question from Merton

Risks on freezing, froze for 3 years, and then a 10% rise for incoming President.

David Barclay (Worcester)

Those deals often look good politically but very dangerous. Problem this year, and going to be more money with the new system. Overall not losing money, really need to push bursars on the fact they say they are losing money. Lots of colleges could take the hit, just a question of how much power students have.

Speech in Opposition

David Bagg (Balliol)

Difficult for us to accept, we have had a charge of £300 levied on each student. Happy to hear will be offset by fee system. We have pushed and pushed for cuts. We do not see how a freeze in rent would be beneficial for Balliol. It needs more money to keep running. This motion would put additional strain on relationship between JCR, MCR and college. May inhibit relations with other colleges, which might have to introduce a Domas charge. Costs of providing accommodation do rise over time. Would be beneficial for some JCR's to push for greater charges if colleges are in dire financial straits. Will put in difficult position when looking at Domas charge.

Daniel Lowe (St Edmund's)

Van Noorden index, he asked to stop calling it that as before his death he said it was rubbish.

Sarah Hutchinson

Way to go forward without rejecting. Really draws attention to fact that students are being pressured. Makes it more important, students are getting disproportionately poorer, think need to make colleges think more creatively. Think that colleges have to take seriously the financial pressures that students are under. No way would affect individual common room negotiations. Last year some graduate colleges didn't push for negotiations. Really important that colleges take student pressures seriously.

Katherine Terrell (St Hilda's)

Don't want to make relationships more strained. This is a great place where autonomy of colleges and common room is very useful. This is a tool that can or cannot be used depending on situation. Loans are going down. Not richest colleges that have got lowest rent. Working together is a good thing, but you don't have to use.

Eleanor – Balliol

Balliol has come to a satisfactory conclusion about the Domas charge. Colleges don't like the fact that the change to funding will help them. £100,000 isn't much considering the amount that they are losing. Don't think pointing this out is a good way forward. Not being affordable is a better way of getting it across to your colleges.

Daniel Lowe (St Edmund's)

Really good for common rooms to have good relationships. Senior Common rooms are pumping alumni for money, I was part of a college where they pumped us for money as soon as we become alumni. Rent freeze whilst arguing this might put back relationships between colleges and alumni for years. Bear in mind how strongly people feel when colleges start messing with their homes.

Jack Matthews (St Peter's)

Think really important that goes through, spoke about FOI requests earlier something which OUSU did brilliantly was a great exercise. It meant information was there. Good way OUSU can work centrally. If college doesn't want rent freeze you can pursue a different method.

Balliol

JCR in Balliol feels that we are at a point where doing anything else to sour relationship is a bad thing. We don't think they are willing to go lower, unless we are prepared to concede that they need higher rents. Calling for a flat line, a decrease in real terms would be damaging to relationships with Domestic Bursar. Student Loans are being frozen appreciate this.

We can see the principle would rather have a moderate increase in rent, without having atmosphere made even more rigid. It was a 5% increase including BMI.

Eleanor - Balliol

Whilst threat of Domas is over head, but this is something will come up in every college.

Alex Bulfin (Univ)

Strain between common rooms and colleges, colleges and common rooms fall out for many different reasons, fact come through on speaking terms is testament to how strong your relationship is. OUSU is perfectly placed to be the fall guy, to provide a coordinated approach. We have spent the best part of a year, negotiating with the University for ridiculous things and now have a stronger position. Not something to be scared off.

Move to Vote

David Barclay (Worcester)

Vote on this on how you see fit, this is an opportunity for students across Oxford to say a really important principal for students to being able to live in Oxford without working during term time.

David Bagg (Balliol)

Personally think will be taken as OUSU dictat, I don't think sensitive to where colleges financial situations are at. Think would be damaging to relationships which are tense between JCR's and SCR's. For all these reasons should be opposed.

In favour:

Against

Motion Passes.

3. Postgraduate Rent (amended version)

Council Notes:

1. The huge variation in availability and price of PG College and University accommodation
2. That many international students are forced to search for private accommodation either before they arrive in Oxford or in their first weeks here
3. That this is the first year that the average cost of living out for PGs is lower than the cost of some College accommodation
4. That many sources of Postgraduate funding have been frozen or are becoming more restricted
5. That information on rents is often only available in different forms for different Colleges and is not always transparent enough.

Council Believes:

1. That Oxford Colleges are not businesses, but are first and foremost academic institutions operating for the benefit of their members and the wider community
2. That living alongside other members of the University community is a fundamental part of the Oxford academic experience.

Council Resolves:

1. To call on all the University and all Colleges to bring their levels of PG rent below the average cost of living out
2. To call on all the University and Colleges to work towards guaranteed accommodation for all 1st year postgraduates, especially international students and to provide comprehensive advice on living out for those that choose to do so
3. To support MCRs in lobbying for the above
4. To lobby the University to create a common template for prospective Postgraduates of College rents
5. To support initiatives such as Oxgrad Housing and Student Pad
6. To commit to embedding Postgraduate issues into the upcoming OUSU Rent Campaign

Proposed by: Chris Gray (Merton)

Seconded by: Beth Evans (Wadham)

Chris Gray (Merton)

Good to see that postgraduate issues are important. Want to make sure that postgraduate issues are central to OUSU this term. Can be split down to 3 different areas, cost the most important one, spread across colleges, no indication of quality or why costs are so high. Also issues of transparency, facts and ranges of numbers is given different on each college. Some colleges don't give guaranteed accommodation for the first year for International Students. The fundamental logic is the same as the UG one, should be about community, understand have to make money but have responsibility to students to provide accommodation to facilitate education. It is about opening up debate, crucial that we assert now OUSU isn't going to ignore postgraduates.

Student Pad – Is something we have in our building can search for accommodation. Oxford grad housing can sign up an advertise houses. Up and running gives access to individual rooms.

Katherine Terrell (St Hilda's)

What average cost is?

Chris Gray (Merton)

That line was based on information postgraduates are sent, when they apply. Had to show bank statement that showed had whole amount to fund Postgraduate studies.

Amendment – Sarah Hutchinson

Sarah Hutchinson

Reason said this was because calling on my college to provide this is not possible, what Uni and colleges can do together is look at access. We managed to win more rooms for students last year. Would be possible to do if colleges and University worked together. Will take a long time. But lots of things colleges could do to provide support.

Amendment taken as friendly.

No opposition.

Motion passes.

iii. Motions affecting OUSU Members as Members of the Student Movement

4. NUS Democracy (Amended)

Council Notes:

1. That currently, the NUS President, Vice Presidents and the Block of 15 officers, are elected by delegates at the NUS National Conference
2. That organisations of a similar size to the NUS, including trade unions and political parties elect their leaders in a National Ballot where every member has a vote
3. That the contact details of our National representatives within the NUS are not available to all students
4. That the minutes of the National Executive Council of NUS, which by the NUS's own rules should be available to all students, are not

Council Believes:

1. That the NUS should investigate the possibility of electing a NUS Officers in a one member vote system and present the findings to National Conference
2. That all students should be able to contact their national representatives
3. That all students should be able to see the decisions made on their behalf by the National Executive Council, via easily accessible minutes, and reports from the National Officers
4. That the NUS must put more effort into explaining how it works and how to get involved, and in general become more open, accessible and accountable.

Council Resolves:

1. To support moves to research how NUS could move to using a National Ballot to elect its main officers, as well as other alternative methods
2. To disapprove of the NUS's continued failure to publish important information such as the contact details of officers and NEC minutes
3. To mandate officers of OUSU to lobby other student unions when they have suitable opportunities, to support our calls for change within the NUS
4. To mandate the OUSU NUS Delegates for the National Conference 2012 to submit a motion to that conference calling for research to be done into how NUS could move to a one member one vote system
5. To mandate the Returning Officer to publicise details of key NUS elections and how people can get involved with the NUS.

Proposed: Jack Matthews (St. Peter's College)

Seconded: Chris Smith (Keble College)

Jack Matthews (St Peter's)

I am one of your NUS delegates I went to conference and I have a few problems, I was elected on a mandate of making the NUS more accountable. The NUS has a real big issue with its democracy. The delegates go to conference to elected the NUS members, lets look into one member one vote. Was motion that looked at this at conference, suggested going away and looking at it. If we want to get this passed next year, then we

need to start working on this. Lets say it now to our delegates, we should look into one member one vote next year. Also asks that they should publish their contact details.

SFQ

What reasons given for one member one vote?

Can't remember.

David Barclay (Worcester)

I am going to propose amendment.

Jack Matthews (St Peter's)

Under the constitution we are all members. The NUS has crazy rules. We as members of OUSU are individual members.

A referendum cannot overthrow what conference has agreed. If referendum not one member one vote.

Amendment proposed by David Barclay

Not taken as friendly.

David Barclay (Worcester)

Taken out all the ones that refer to elections. Don't think worth NUS taking time to look at national ballot. I voted against investigation, reason bad idea, elections would become more dependent on people being able to travel, would reward candidates who had money. Having all in one place at one time makes it easier for people to have access to those people. Would also almost inevitably have a situation where candidates would focus on institutions with large amounts of students, felt this a good point as smaller institution would be disenfranchised.

Speech in opposition

Number 1 the motion does talk about one member one vote, but in resolves have been more open minded. Am a realist if go away and research might come back with an in between situation. On travel recognise but could be rules. TU and Political parties manage to do. I don't think FE would miss out, would mandate VP FE to go round. Lets widen debate and open it up so that ever student can have their say. Lets have their debate, their a plenty people that have time to do this. People like me on both sides, shouldn't be scared of research.

Daniel Lowe (St Edmund's)

How many of you know who won, or stood against. NUS Conference attendees and a sabbatical elect. David has raised some important issues regarding getting people to vote. Most people don't know much about what NUS does, the best way to engage people is to get them involved in elections. Whole lot of rules that can sort out this. What bigger fish to fry is there than engaging students in the NUS. We should be looking in to this.

Amendment to strike resolves 1, and amending council believes 2.

Move to vote on David's Amendment

Amendment falls.

Daniel Lowe's Amendment

Accepted as friendly.

Motion passes.

o. Any Other Business

Jack Matthews I put my chief scrutinating committee hat on. We look at what the executive do. We are looking at part time exec this time, if you have worked with them, please do email us on scrutiny@ousu.org. We are happy to speak to you and we will be interviewing them.

Policy Lapse, any policy before TT08, this is 70 pieces of policy, unless anyone brings back the policy in 5th or 7th week. Will read through now, booklet in week 3. If you want to bring them back, then please speak to me. They will be available on OUSU website. If you think important then email me.