Council Minutes

1st week Trinity Term 2014

1st Week Council took place at 6.30pm on Wednesday 30th April 2014 in the Auditorium, Magdalen College.

If you have any questions about OUSU Council, please feel free to contact the Chair, Nick Cooper, at chair@ousu.org

a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
b. Matters Arising from the Minutes
c. Ratifications in Council
d. Elections in Council
e. Reports from the Sabbatical Officers
f. Reports from the Executive Officers who wish to make reports
g. Questions to Members of the Executive
h. Passage of Motions *nem con**
i. Motions of No Confidence or Censure
j. Emergency Motions
k. Motions Authorising Capital Expenditure
   1. Women's Societies' Garden Party
   2. On Your Doorstop Campaign
l. Other Motions
   3. Cancelling the Safety Bus
   4. RAG Charity Selections Report
   5. The Roles of Council and the Trustee Board within OUSU
   6. The status of visiting students at OUSU
   7. NUS Conference Report
m. Any Other Business
   1. Policy Lapse
   2. Electoral Review Group

* Nem con means "without objection". Here, the Chair will read all items under "Other Motions". If you wish to hear a speech in proposition, ask the proposers a question, amend the motion, or speak in opposition, please raise your hand when the motion is called here. **If no one raises their hand, the motion passes without any discussion.**

---

a.   Minutes of the Previous Meeting

There were no issues raised with the minutes.

---

b.   Matters Arising from the Minutes

None

---

c.   Ratifications in Council

None

d.   Elections in Council

2 Positions for Deputy Returning Officer – no nominations

1 Position for Budget Sub Committee – no nominations

3 Positions for Complaints Committee – Marina Lambrakis (St John's) was elected

1 Position for Internal Affairs Committee – Anna Bradshaw (Wadham) was elected

2 Positions for Nominations Committee – no nominations

1 positions on Scrutiny Committee – no nominations

2 Positions for Steering Committee – no nominations

e.   Reports from the Sabbatical Officers

Sarah Pine (Wadham) – Announced that on Monday she attended a meeting with Sally Mapstone (Pro-Vice-Chancellor) to confirm the full revised harassment policy, complete with a timeline detailing when everything will happen.

Charlotte Hendy (Pembroke) – Reminded Council that Itchy Feet would be taking place tonight at the o2 Academy in collaboration with OUSU's 40th birthday celebration. Announced that two free tickets were available and would be drawn at the end of Council from any names collected during the meeting.

Rachel Pickering (Hertford) – Reported to Council that the Teaching Awards nominations were now closed and that she had received 392 nominations, with a particularly high number of nominations for support staff. Also updated on suspended status students, informing Council that she has produced a paper on this with Charlotte, and is now awaiting feedback from the Standing Committee of the Senior Tutors Committee (SCSTC).

Tom Rutland (Jesus) – Reported that our new Digital Communications Officer started over the vacation in order to improve the presence and communicate the work of OUSU. Explained that an interim CEO has also been recruited to stay with OUSU until a permanent replacement is found and recruitment for a new Student Advice Service Manager and an Academic Representation Officer is currently ongoing.

Garlen Lo (Wolfson) – Encouraged Council to click on his photo on the OUSU website in order to view his new Graduate FAQ's section. Requested that anyone with questions which they believe need including to get in touch.

Dan Tomlinson (University) – Announced to Council that the following day would be the first day that the OUSU cleaners receive the living wage. Reported that he has been building constructive relationships with University staff, and despite the fact that there is further to go, this has never happened before and is a big success so far.

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

Eden Tanner (St John's) – Explained to Council that she is collating information on couples and families who live in colleges so requested any input that people may have.

Anna Bazley (St Peter's) – Reminded Council that the funds for clubs and societies exist and encouraged applications.

Annie Teriba (Wadham) – Reported that she has had discussions with Rachel and is looking to make the issue of access more political. A meeting has been set up with Target Schools to discuss.

g.   Questions to Members of the Executive

Charlie Baker (St Catz)- Asked Garlen if graduate fees are coming up as a topic for discussion in the future.

Garlen – Responded that this is nothing something he is currently looking into but it can be discussed.

Louis Trup (Brasenose) – Questioned if any of the sabbs have been attending conferences.

Tom - LBGTQ

Charlotte – Explained that many of her Execs had been to conferences including LGBTQ, BME and Disabled Students.

Rachel – Higher Education Conference

Sarah – Lad Culture Summit

Visiting Student

Nick Cooper (St John's) – Informed Council that Lauren McKarus, a visiting student was present and checked if there was any objection to her both attending and speaking in Council.

No objection.

h.   Passage of Motions *nem con*

4. RAG Charity Selections Report

Council Notes:

1. The report on the RAG Charity selections written by the Vice President (Charities & Community) and the Returning Officer (Appendix 1).

Proposed: Dan Tomlinson (University)
Seconded: Alexander Walker (Wadham)

i.   Motions of No Confidence or Censure

None

j.   Emergency Motions

None

k.   Motions authorising Capital Expenditure

1. Women's Societies' Garden Party

Council Notes:

> 1. That women are underrepresented in positions of leadership, both locally and
> nationally.
> 2. That women are underrepresented in Science, Technology, Engineering and
> Mathematics, both locally and nationally.
> 3. That women are underrepresented in business and politics, both locally and nationally.
> 4. That the VP (Women), Graduate Women's Officer and Women's Campaign officer are
> involved in the planning of the second annual Women's Societies' Garden Party with the
> Women's Campaign, Oxford Women In Politics, Women in Business, Women in Computer
> Science, Women in Physics and Females in Engineering, Science and Technology. That this
> will be on 31st May.
> 5. The garden party is used as a space for networking and as an opportunity to offer more
> leadership development opportunities for women.
> 6. That the women's societies have received sponsorship for the event. This has been in
> the form of a free ice cream van, a nexus 5 to raffle off and other goodies for attendees.
> 7. That there are some other costs associated with the event. All women's societies have
> pledged money to cover the costs, according to what they can afford.

Council Believes:

> 1. That networking and leadership development initiatives can challenge women's
> underrepresentation in leadership positions and can support career development.
> 2. That women's events raise the profile of women's contributions to their disciplines.

Council Resolves:

> 1. To allocate £75 of the discretionary campaign budget to cover some of the costs.

Proposed: **Sarah Pine (Wadham)**
Seconded: **Eden Tanner (St John's)**

Sarah Pine (Wadham) – Explained that they are asking Council for £75. Stated that the Garden
party is an excellent networking opportunity, particularly for women in sciences and women
aiming for positions of leadership. Currently in talks with Morgan Stanley.

Eden Tanner (St John's) – Informed council that the aim is to promote a positive environment
for women in STEM, in order to ensure that they don't feel isolated, and are not inclined to
leave the University.

Sarah – Announced that there would also be a Nexus 5 to raffle off at the event.

Chris Pike (St Edmunds Hall) – Asked if there is any interest in involving people from NGOs, or those that are ethically minded.

Sarah – Recognised that this was an issue with Morgan Stanley and stressed that it is not about working with Morgan Stanley but about gaining important representation for women. Claimed that if organisations wanted to donate free stuff items, they would be happy to take it.

Motion passes with no opposition.

2. On Your Doorstep Campaign

Council Notes:

1. Oxford fluctuates between having the second and third highest number of homeless people per capita in the country.
2. One in ten people are homeless at some stage in their lives.
3. Dan Tomlinson (VP Charities & Community) and Emily Silcock (Community Outreach and Charities Officer) were elected on manifestos particularly focussing on tackling the issues surrounding homelessness.
4. The Oxford Hub's Homeless Action Group links students with opportunities to volunteer with homelessness organisations. However, many of these volunteering placements require several hours a week, or a 12 week minimum commitment, meaning that there is room for a group focussing on campaigning with a more flexible time commitment.
5. For this reason, the On Your Doorstep campaign has been set up, with a focus on bringing students together to campaign and increase awareness of the issues surrounding homelessness, rather than on-the-ground volunteering.
6. Emily Silcock has met with more than 10 different homelessness organisations in Oxford, all of which are highly supportive of such a student campaign.
7. Student attendance has been high at On Your Doorstep meetings, the protest against the 38% cuts to homelessness services and events providing information about issues about homelessness.
8. The short term aims of the campaign are to:
    o Survey Oxford students so that we have information about current attitudes towards homelessness. This survey should be in your inboxes in 1st or 2nd week this term.
    o Develop a website which, amongst other things, will answer some of the questions that many students have about homelessness.
    o Place collection tins in every college so that students have somewhere to put their spare change other than giving it to people who are begging, if they wish to do so. We have so far made arrangements for half the colleges. (If your college does not have one please email homeless@ousu.org.)
    o Organise a sleep out to raise awareness and funds.
9. The longer term aims of the campaign are to:
    a. Raise awareness within the student community, including such things as who to contact if you see someone who is rough sleeping and changing stereotypes about people who are homeless.
    b. Encourage action by colleges and the university, such as employing people from charities that help people who are homeless to get back into work.
    c. Connect Oxford students with national campaigns on homelessness.

Council Believes:

1. Homelessness is an important issue and becoming homeless is something that can happen to anyone.
2. Many Oxford students could, later in life, be in positions where they can make decisions affecting people who are homeless - and therefore it is worth increasing

awareness of this issue.

3. The On Your Doorstep campaign would benefit from becoming an official OUSU campaign as it would have access to the skills provided by OUSU staff, have a free table at the Freshers' and Refreshers' Fair and would have a standard campaign budget.

Council Resolves:

1. To make On Your Doorstep Campaign a Permanent Campaign of OUSU that shall be included in the relevant governing documents. All provisions relating to Permanent Campaigns shall as such apply to the On Your Doorstep Campaign.
2. To give On Your Doorstep £200 for Trinity Term from the discretionary campaign budget, after which it will have a standard campaign budget of £500 pa.

Proposed: **Emily Silcock (New College)**
Seconded: **William Carter (St Anne's)**

Emily Silcock (New College) – Informed Council that this is a campaign which meets pledges made in both her own and Dan's (VP C&C) manifestos and they would like to make it OUSU official.

Anya Metzer (Wadham) – Asked if the campaign covers all homelessness or street homelessness.

Emily – Both.

James Blythe (Brasenose) – Questioned if the campaign will be autonomous or non-autonomous?

Tom Rutland (Jesus) – Non-autonomous.

Anna Bradshaw (Wadham) – Asked how much money there is left in the discretionary budget.

Nick Cooper (St John's) - £1325

Jack Matthews (University) – Asked if this would require a change to the governing documents.

Tom – Responded that if it passed it would be included in the new drafts of the governing documents.

Louis Trup (Brasenose) – Does it fit with the Memorandum of Understanding with the Ox Hub.

Emily – Yes.

Dan Tomlinson (University) – This came from the Ox Hub connecting students with causes. We compliment each other.

James - Suggested an amendment to make the campaign autonomous.

Emily – Claimed she is not entirely informed on this matter, but stated that it would still be an OUSU campaign and they want it to be representative.

Sarah Pine (Wadham) – Commented that autonomous campaigns focus on liberation and reflect minority groups or those who are oppressed.

James – Withdrew amendment.

Motion passes no opposition.

<u>NUS Referendum</u>

Alex Walker (Wadham) – Highlighted the upcoming referendum on OUSU's affiliation with NUS taking place on the Monday to Wednesday of 4th week. Explained that briefing meetings to elect the campaign leaders would be held on Sunday 4th May, with the YES campaign at 10am and the NO campaign at 12pm. Referred Council to the regulations on the website for further guidance and informed them that an information meeting would take place after Council 3d week, with a debate between the leaders.

I.   Other Motions

<u>3. Cancelling the Safety Bus</u>

Council notes:

1. The Safety Bus has been a service run in partnership with Brookes Union (Oxford Brookes University Students' Union) for a number of years.
2. It costs OUSU £12,000 per year
3. There is no data on the number of Oxford University students that use the bus and Brookes Union is unwilling to collect this data. They have been asked repeatedly to do so by OUSU, but have continued to refuse.
4. A survey conducted two years ago, by a previous Vice-President (Charities and Community), found that 70% of respondents had never used the bus during their time at University, 20% had used it once and 10% had used it more than once.
5. The average waiting time for the Safety Bus was found to be 16 minutes, with 17% of users having to wait more than 20 minutes for the service.
6. The Safety Bus does not run for 25% of full Oxford university term.
7. In TT 12 OUSU Council resolved to mandate the VP (C&C) to ensure that the Safety Bus runs for the duration of the Oxford University term time.
8. The only way the Safety Bus could run for 100% of full term would be for OUSU to recruit and train a number of student volunteers but that achieving this has not been possible. The previous VP (C&C) tried to do this but was unable to do so.
9. Student volunteers on the Safety Bus are given training by Brookes Union, but Brookes Union is unwilling to ask the volunteers to sign any form of contract or agreement as to the behaviour expected from a Safety Bus volunteer.
10. The survey conducted about the safety bus found that a small number of users found the volunteers 'confrontational'.

Council Believes:

1. The Safety Bus is an inadequate service and is failing Oxford University students because:
   a. Students that need picking up in a short space of time, for example because they feel unsafe, can expect to have to wait for 16 minutes to be picked up.
   b. We have, and are not able to have, any idea as to how many students actually use the bus even though we pay £12,000 per academic year for the service.
   c. It does not run for a significant proportion of University term.
   d. Some users of the service have had unsatisfactory experiences.
2. Taxi companies and bus companies could provide a broadly equivalent service to that offered by the Safety Bus.

Council Resolves:
1. Mandate the VP (C&C) to cancel the Safety Bus from the end of this academic year.
2. Mandate the VP (C&C) to continue conversations with taxi and bus companies in order to see if cheaper and more effective alternatives for the Safety Bus are possible.

Proposed: **Daniel Tomlinson (University College)**
Seconded: **Sarah Pine (Wadham College)**

Dan Tomlinson (University) – Informed council that he wished to cancel the safety bus and explained briefly the following reasons why:
- It costs £12,000 per year to run but no-one really uses it.
- It doesn't run for 25% of our term as it is staffed by Oxford Brookes. The previous VP Charities and Community met with Brookes to arrange times for OUSU volunteers to run it during this time but it proved impossible. There was also insufficient interest from students to actually run it.
- Brookes are unwilling to have their student volunteers sign any ofrm of code of conduct.
- Brookes refuse to collect data on who uses the bus.
- The bus can sometimes take 16 minutes to reach someone which is not adequate if you are in real need.

Sarah Pine (Wadham) – Explained to council that she is seconding this issue as the safety bus has a culture of predatory behaviour that is not protecting women as it should be.

Balliol – Asked what the alternatives to the bus would be and if they would be cheap.

Dan – Informed that he is looking into this and is currently in touch with taxi companies. Also explained he is in touch with Reading University Students' Union about the scheme which they run. OUSU could potentially use some of the £12,000 they would be saving to sign a code of conduct with a taxi company.

William Gerry (St Antony's) – Explained that sometimes students have had so much to drink that taxis actually refuse to let them in. Asked if an agreement with a taxi company would ensure that these students are picked up.

Sarah – Replied that she is unsure but believes this would be OK as would be covered by insurance but will check it out.

Jack Matthews (University) – Move to debate.

Jack – Stressed that this is a big issue and that the decision made should be based on facts. Pointed out that Dan has not been involved in the safety bus and that it is current OUSU policy. Also stated that there are two buses so even if one is out on the ring road, the other should be able to arrive with you quickly. Addressed Sarah's point about the culture of predatory behaviour and claimed that we need to be sure that this is representative of the entire movement. Concluded that he is still on the fence on the matter.

Annie Teriba (Wadham) – Stated that regardless of gaining an image of what is representative, the allegations are still incredibly serious.

Eden Tanner (St John's) – Believes that people are buying into myths when they assume that women are safer on the bus and is not comfortable having OUSU's name attached to something which is run by people who are not willing to sign a code of conduct.

Emily Tamkin (St Antony's) – Agreed with the previous two speakers but is uncomfortable with the lack of alternatives proposed.

Daniel Zajarias-Fainsod (Wadham) – Commented that this is a welfare issue and that the focus of discussion should be that it is not providing the welfare that it should be. Stated that there is a need to look at alternatives further, and suggested that officers could be mandated to do so. Noted that Wadham currently have a similar taxi system to that proposed.

Chris Pike (St Edmund's) – Stated that the bus is failing and informed council that he called it twice to try and help a friend who was drunk and both times it went straight to answerphone. Suggested that Dan should look into the possibility of an OUSU safety bus.

Amendment received:

To add 'and report to 7th week council' to resolves 2.

Proposed: **Louis Trup (Brasenose)**
Seconded: **James Blythe (Brasenose)**

Dan – Accepted amendment as friendly.

Charlie Baker (St Catz) – Informed council that she shared Jack's disquiet with the use of emotive points. Disliked the use of anecdotes with a lack of factual substance as it may undermine the points being made.

Dan – Concluded that this is a big decision which highlights exactly why OUSU council matters.

Motion passed with 1 against and 3 abstentions.

5. The Roles of Council and the Trustee Board Within OUSU

Council Notes:

1. That Council exists to 'represent the voice of the Students and act as the representative channel for student opinion'.
2. That we also have obligations to scrutinise and elect certain office-holders, and to set the policy that guides our Student Union's work, amongst other things.

Council Further Notes:

1. That OUSU is a registered charity, and is therefore required to have a Trustee Board.

Council Believes:

1. That the addition of a Trustee Board within OUSU is welcome for the guidance and strategic planning it provides.
2. That, regrettably, in many student unions the Trustee Board has become the key decision-making body, leaving Council as a rubber stamp.
3. That students have the right to be aware of what decisions are being made for them, and in their name, and it is therefore a matter of regret that up-to-date minutes, reflecting all the discussions that took place at the Trustee Board, are not available on the OUSU Website.
4. That it is disconcerting that for many terms the Trustee Board has failed in its responsibility, as set out in Article 39.3.13, to present termly reports of its work to Council.
5. That the further Council is from the running of OUSU, the further the membership are also.

Council Resolves:
1. To mandate the Chair of Council to write to the Trustee Board asking them to comply with the Governing Documents of OUSU and ensure the Board fulfils its obligations, both as defined in the Governing Documents, and moral, that their proceedings be open and transparent to Student Members.
2. To mandate the President and Chair of Council to meet and find ways for the Board to engage Council more effectively with decision-making.

Proposed: **Jack Matthews (University College)**
Seconded: **James Blythe (Brasenose College)**

Jack Matthews (University) – Explained to council that this is a motion which aims to make a very clear point that council are the students which represent the student body as a whole. Claimed that there exists a worrying trend across SU's in which trustee boards are taking increasing

amounts of power away from student and under there own control. Argued that minutes from Trustee Board meetings should be made available on the OUSU website, and those that have now been uploaded show that the meetings involve discussions about governance, budgets etc., which would have taken place in council in years gone by. Additionally commented that following the reports earlier, there are decisions about new staff being made which council are not aware of.

Nick Cooper (St John's) – Briefly summarised the members and the purpose of the Trustee Board.

Alfred Burton (Queen's) – Asked what the obligations of the board are.

Jack – Explained the board are legally responsible for OUSU. Gave the example that if council were to mandate something illegal, the board would have the power to intervene.

Henry Zeffman (Brasenose) – Asked who appoints the board.

Jack – Explained that the Nominations Committee makes recommendations for external trustees which it submits to council. Student trustees are elected in the cross-campus elections each year.

James Blythe (Brasenose) – Pointed out to council that there are currently two vacant positions on Nominations Committee.

Charlie Baker (St Catz) – Questioned who holds the Trustee Bard to account in a direct way.

Jack – Stated that ultimately it should be council, who also have the power to remove a trustee.

Alfred – Questioned if there is any evidence that the Trustee Board are forcing decision on council.

James – Answered that discussions are confidential so it is difficult to know. Explained that we need council to sit in the political seat and the board to sit in the governing seat.

Jack – Stated that there should be no discussion about us without us.

Charlie – Questioned what is specific about OUSU that makes the discussions of the board confidential.

James – Responded that minutes of the meetings are available online.

Daniel Zajarias-Fainsod (Wadham) – Suggested that the motion itself lacked substance and that further information is required before it is voted on, as currently, 'resolves' does not suggest anything substantial.

Tom Rutland (Jesus) – Apologised to council for the late minutes and informed them that they are now up on the OUSU website. Assured council that a report of the Trustee Board will be delivered in Termly Council. Confidential issues that may need to be removed include things that are commercially sensitive or involve personal information about staff.

Dan Tomlinson (University) – Asserted that this is an important discussion to have but assured council that the board is not an evil thing which attempts to make decisions against students, rather it stands for them and works on their behalf. Informed council he would be voting in favour of the motion.

Jack – Summarised that the Quinquennial Review will provide an opportunity to look at this relationship. Stated that external trustees are good people however there is a culture of them drifting away form council.

Motion passes with no opposition.

6. The status of visiting students at OUSU

Council Notes:

1. That being a member of OUSU is conditional on being a "student" of the University, and the University definition of "student" requires matriculation. This excludes most visiting students, who do not matriculate.
2. Visiting students make up a significant amount of the student base of Oxford with 491 studying at Oxford this year, and some studying at Oxford for a period of time as long as many other Oxford students.
3. That visiting students do not have the rights to OUSU services that members of OUSU do, including the right to vote and stand in elections, and lack direct representation to the University.
4. That new draft General Regulations being brought to Council this term will suggest giving visiting students attendance and speaking rights at Council.

Council Believes:

1. That the lack of representation of visiting students in a body their fees in part fund is not right and should be addressed.
2. That denying visiting students these rights based on an out of date definition of a student would be wrong.

Council Resolves:

1. To mandate the President to:
    a. explore the possibility of creating a Visiting Students' Officer who can represent the views of visiting students, and who need not necessarily be a Student Member of OUSU;
    b. lobby the University to reconsider the status of visiting students, especially with respect to the definition of "student" under University Statute II.
    and report back no later than 7th week Council of Trinity Term 2014 with recommendations in these areas.
2. To make Council Believes 1 and 2 Policy Guidelines.

Proposed: **Andrew McKay (Wadham)**
Seconded: **Alex Cibulskis (Wadham)**

Andrew McKay (Wadham) – Explained to council that he does not believe that a procedural motion should have to happen, as it did earlier in council, in order for a visiting student to have the right to speak. Pointed out that many of these students are here for as long as some graduate students, they pay money and should have a voice in OUSU and some form of representation.

Eden Tanner (St John's) – Questioned how difficult it would be to change the meaning of the word student.

Andrew – Answered that it is apparently incredibly difficult.

Charlie Baker (St Catz) – Asked the wording of the motion means in terms of what is was asking for. Unsure if it requests support from the University.

Andrew – Responded that he is willing to change to wording accordingly.

Rachel – Noted to council that the University defines the meaning of student in their governing documents.

Annie Teriba (Wadham) – Asked for clarification if the reason for this issue is due to the definition set by the University.

Nick Cooper (St John's) – Responded that the Memorandum and Articles comes from the University and we are bound by them.

Annie – Asked if we could change the definition in OUSU without changing the University one.

Nick – Responded that we would have to take the changes to the University regardless.

Yajing Xu (University) – Asked what other services they cannot access and if we can make them available to them without changing the governing documents.

Tom Rutland (Jesus) – Listed the Student Advice Service, help from OUSU and any of our services offered to those defined as students. Suggested that in realty, it does not necessarily always happen that this access is denied.

Alexander Rankine (Corpus) – Asked for the rough idea of time which a visiting student would remain at Oxford for.

Andrew – Answered that it is generally anything up to a year, which is the same as MA students. Added that there are up to 30 per year at Wadham alone.

Charlie – Questioned if the proposers wanted to change the definition to apply to all visiting students regardless of how long they are here for.

Andrew – Responded that yes they did, with the exception of standing for a position which they would not be here to perform.

Sarah Pine – Move to vote.

Yajing – Objected and state that the motion wouldn't change anything as it currently existed.

Tom Rutland – Stated that he could do resolves b) and could ask about resolves a).

Anna Bazley (St Peter's) – Suggested that mandate was too strong a word.

Jack Matthews (University) – Confirmed that his understanding meant that a change would require the consent of council, and that even if University cannot change Statute 2, there are ways that the SU can do this.

Andrew – Commented that if this is a possibility then this would be great.

Eden – Pointed out that visiting students also do not currently have access to other services such as counselling etc., which is surely far more important.

Amendment received:

Change Resolves 1 (b) to 'explore the possibility of extending the definition of students represented by OUSU to include all visiting students.'

Proposed: **Annie Teriba (Wadham)**
Seconded: **Eden Tanner (St John's)**

Andrew – Accepted amendment as friendly.

Sarah – Move to vote.

Lauren McKarus – Explained the council when she was running for International Students' Office but was told she was not a student of Oxford. Stated that the fact that she had to ask the whole

of council's permission to just sit and listen is not particularly welcoming and should be something that all should be able to do without it being an issue.

Motion passed.

7. NUS Conference Report

Council Notes:

1. That OUSU is affiliated to the National Union of Students (NUS).

2. That OUSU sent 7 delegates (the President, the President-elect and 5 elected NUS Delegates) to the NUS Conference on 8 to 10 April 2014.

3. That, during Hilary Term 2014, OUSU Council discussed and voted on a policy to send to NUS Conference which was the subject of an amendment at NUS Conference.

4. That General Regulation 4.5 requires the President, in consultation with the other delegates, to submit a report to the first meeting of OUSU Council following the NUS Conference dealing with Council mandates.

Council therefore Resolves:

To receive the 'President's Report on OUSU's Attendance at the NUS Conference 2014' (Appendix 2)

Nick Cooper (St John's) – Directed council to the report and informed that that all delegates were present and open to questions.

Anna Bazley (Wadham) – Questioned the attendance of the president elect and asked if there should only be one ex-offcio attendee.

Louis Trup (Brasenose) – Responded that there is motion prepared for third week council to prevent this.

Tom Rutland (Jesus) – Assured council that this will be changing.

Nick – Explained that ex offcio means 'by virtue of one's office'.

Charlie Baker (St Catz) – Questioned why we are not putting more forward to NUS conference.

Jack Matthews (University) – Claimed that certain unions dominated the conference, including Royal Holloway, however assured council that Oxford was involved. Explained that James proposed an amendment, Louis asked a question and he submitted a question himself.

Sarah Pine (Wadham) – Informed council that 10 or more students emailed Tom to engage about motions which were forwarded to delegates so there was engagement.

Motion passed.

I.   Any Other Business

1. Policy Lapse

Nick Cooper (St John's) – Explained policy lapse and informed council that any policy which they wish to keep must be brought to council as a new motion in 3rd or 5th week. Encouraged council to read through the document carefully so as to avoid missing anything.

2. Electoral Review Group (Appendix 3)

James Blythe (Brasenose) – Informed council that there were four main issues of debate which he wanted to bring to their attention.
- Informed council that NUS delegates gender balancing will be happening from now on but there is discussion on how they should be elected. Suggested the option of first past the post or some 'jiggery pokery' with the current system. A straw poll was conducted which showed slightly more in favour of maintaining the current system.
- Asked council if we impose the same restrictions of gender balance on slates. A straw poll showed a equal split of opinion between council on this issue.
- Explained that currently only the equal opportunities campaigns can endorse during elections and asked council if we should allow other campaigns the same freedom. In a straw poll, against won in a vote of 14 to 12.
- Asked council if we want to change the current list of equal opportunities campaigns to remove International Students' Campaign and Mature Students' Campaign.

Jack Matthews (University) – Questioned if this would be proposing a fundamental change to liberation campaigns.

Tom Rutland (Jesus) – Answered that there would be a wider effect to the governing documents.

Jack - Claimed that he could not vote either way without hearing what the two campaigns involved think about the matter themselves.

Appendix 1 – Report on the 2014 RAG Charity Selections

In 7th Week MT Council I, as VP (Charities and Community), was mandated to produce a report upon the conclusion of the RAG charity selection process. Here follows that report:

Report on the 2014 RAG Charity Selections

This report contains four sections:
1. The nominations process
2. The shortlisting process
3. The selection process and results
4. Recommendations for future years

Section 1 – Nominations
Nominations for the RAG Selections opened on Thursday 2nd week and closed on Thursday 4th week Hilary Term.
Nominations were publicised with two adverts in the Oxford Student newspaper, email notices sent out to common room Presidents, features in the OUSU President's weekly email and large amounts of social media.

This year, for the first time, the nominations form could be filled out on the OUSU website and were easily accessible from www.ousu.org/charity-nominations

We received a total of 37 nominations for 25 charities, with OSARCC, Aspire, The Ark T centre,

AMF, SCI, 28 Too Many and KEEN all receiving multiple nominations.

We were very disappointed to notice, after nominations had closed, that only one student-led charity had been nominated.

Section 2 - Shortlisting
No shortlisting was required for the Local or Student-led charities.

There were a total of 20 charities nominated as a national/international charity.

Once charity was ruled out because it was not nominated by a current student of the University of Oxford.

This left us with 19 charities – to shortlist to 10.

It was not easy to shortlist the remaining charities. We decided to rank charities according to 3 different criteria, based on the questions that we asked on the nominations form, and the charities with the most points were shortlisted.

We gave marks out of five to charities according to these criteria (passed in 7th week MT OUSU Council)

1. Charities that are able to help RAG in their work such as by providing prizes, promotional material or expertise and training will be favoured.
2. The marginal impact of receiving funds from Oxford RAG will be considered, with charities which will do the most good with the additional support from Oxford RAG being favoured.
3. Charities which have been recognised for their cost effectiveness will be prioritised.
4. Oxford RAG will consider the alternative sources of funding available to charities, with priority given to organisations with fewer sources of income.

The questions on the nomination form matched reasonably closely with these 4 criteria so the quality of the answer provided by those nominating charities was crucial in determining the number of points scored – particularly in relation to point 2.

We gave AMF and SCI points for being charities recoginsed for their cost effectiveness and gave no other charities for this criteria.

We looked at the most recent submissions to the Charity Commission in order to rank charities for criteria 4. Charities with a very large annual income, some in the tens of millions, scored poorly compared to smaller charities, some with income barely in the tens of thousands.

Ranking these charities was not an easy task, but we sought to do so as fairly as possible given the criteria.

Section 3 – Selections
The Charity Selections too place this year from 8am on Wednesday 6th week to 6pm on Thursday of 6th week.

822 votes were cast, turnout was 3.7% (1).

The results were as follows (detailed results can be obtained on request from the VP(C&C)):

Local Charity:

Results: *Oxford Homeless Pathways* Elected
34 Abstains

National/International:

Results: First Elected is *28 Too Many*. Second Elected is *Against Malaria Foundation*
38 Abstains

Student-Run Charity:
Results: *KEEN* Elected unopposed
133 Abstains   (2)

Report on Mi-Voice (the voter software used) from the RO:

As the Returning Officer, I was very pleased with the use of Mi-Voice as the voting system for the RAG Charity Ballot. Elections like this one require some effort to ensure that people vote and a simple online system helps the Returning Officer ensure this. Indeed, a turnout of 3.7% (1) is in line with previous RAG Charity Ballots.

Section 4 – Recommendations
For the 2015 charity selections we recommend the following in order to increase turnout:
1. The VP (C&C) should work to avoid charities being elected unopposed. They should feel comfortable to contact charities directly in order to make this possible. This will also reduce the number of abstentions, which we consider to be desirable.

2. The nomination form should include requests for information that were, this year, collected after shortlisting had taken place. This would avoid shortlisted charities not sending in required information. Such information includes:
   a. A short (less than 200 words) answer to the question: "What will the impact of RAG's support be?".
   b. A link to the charities website
   c. A contact phone number of the person nominating the charity
   d. An email address of some working at the charity

3. OUSU or RAG should hire students to effectively promote the charity selections. We suggest that the VP C&C hires a student interested in developing marketing/advertising skills to be tasked with increasing turnout significantly through visible and creative marketing. With social media marketing tools advanced tweeting and facebook posting can be easily organised. We recommend hiring them on an hourly basis, and paying them at least the national Living Wage.

Daniel Tomlinson
Vice-President (Charities and Community)

Alexander Walker
Returning Officer

Appendix 2 – NUS Conference Report

President's Report on the National Union of Students National Conference 2014

Introduction

OUSU is affiliated to the National Union of Students. As such, we are entitled to send delegates to the National Union of Students National Conference. This is where SUs around the country come together to elect national representatives and to set policy and campaigning priorities for the forthcoming year. NUS National Conference 2014 was held in Liverpool April 8-10.

OUSU sent 7 delegates to Conference – 5 elected as NUS delegates in the 2013 annual elections, 2 ex-officio:

- Tom Rutland (ex-officio as OUSU President)
- Louis Trup (ex-officio as OUSU President-elect)
- Mirela Ivanova
- Ed Nickell
- Jack Matthews
- Harry Coath
- James Elliott

Policy sent by OUSU Council

Delegates from common rooms and OUSU's executive at OUSU Council voted to send one piece of policy to NUS conference, which opposed the privatization of student loans. This was 'composited' into one amendment with similar policy submitted from student unions, in the form of an amendment to the priority motion (Motion 101: A new deal for the next generation; Amendment 101d: Opposing privatization of student loans). The amendment can be read in the Appendix at the end of this report. **This motion passed, as did our amendment to it**.

Here is how your delegates have reported their votes on this policy sent by OUSU Council:

- Tom Rutland – FOR
- Louis Trup – FOR
- Mirela Ivanova – FOR
- Ed Nickell – FOR
- Jack Matthews – FOR
- Harry Coath – FOR
- James Elliott - FOR

Elections

Here's how and why I voted in the elections for Full Time Officer (sabbatical) positions:

President: Toni Pearce

Toni was clearly the best candidate for President. In her first year as President, she has successfully campaigned to scrap fees for apprentices, secure £45m in postgraduate student support and won huge concessions on the lobbying bill. I particularly liked her policies on helping student unions create a general election strategy to win for students, ensuring students are registered to vote despite the introduction of individual voter registration, a focus on graduate employment, fighting lad culture and encouraging diverse leadership. **Toni was re-elected.**

Vice-President for Higher Education: Megan Dunn

Megan's focus on students and academics working in partnership to shape their academic experience at university chimes with OUSU's vision for Oxford University, and indeed follows on well from the work of Rachel Wenstone (current VPHE). Megan's strong position on the cuts to access funds and teaching excellence similarly fits in well with the work done by OUSU and the interests of Oxford students. Her pledge to improve support for course reps fits in with OUSU's strategy to overhaul the course rep system and empower representatives at every level. The focus

on widening participation to postgraduate education and introducing a government loan scheme for students (like at undergraduate level) is great. **Megan was elected.**

Vice-President for Society and Citizenship: Hugh Murdoch

Hugh's record as President of Edinburgh University Students' Association was impressive: a successful living wage campaign, winning wifi for students in halls and a retained £1.8m subsidy of student rents. His focus on the general election – making student demands a priority, and holding to account MPs who broke the fees pledge – was fantastic. Policy passed on this at conference too. His pledge to train thousands of students on campuses across the country in community organizing to equip them with skills to win for students locally was good. **Piers Telemacque was elected.**

Vice-President for Welfare: Colum McGuire

Our sabbatical team has worked closely with Colum this year, and he visited OUSU back in Michaelmas to help us with various campaigns. His work on housing and private letting, a key issue for students in Oxford, has been brilliant. We're awaiting an NUS report specifically on housing in Oxford as a result of this work, which will greatly aid our campaigns on this issue. I liked in particular his pledges on campaigning to protect student hardship funds; ban letting agent fees; and fight for the introduction of a better EMA. **Colum was re-elected.**

Vice-President for Union Development: Raechel Mattey

Raechel's record on empowering and training students over the past year on campuses across the country is impressive. The expansion of training for sabbatical officers is brilliant, and shows she recognizes the importance of the work done on campus – just like OUSU engages with JCRs and MCRs. Her pledge to introduce a guarantee on number of one-on-ones between SUs and NUS is good – our team has gotten a lot out of membership this year by engaging with NUS, and I expect more unions could do the same. I also like Raechel's focus on engaging students who wouldn't normally be involved in their student unions or NUS, as it's a key area OUSU is looking to expand into by engaging more students in clubs and societies. **Raechel was re-elected.**

A full list of election results is available at this link.

Miscellaneous

Thanks go to all of the delegates for successfully making it to Liverpool for Conference, to anyone who sent in views on motions, and to Ami (our Democratic Support Officer) for handling the admin around conference!

Tom Rutland
President
23/04/14

Amendment 101d Opposing privatization of student loans

Amendment Action: Add Amendment

Submitted by: Mid-Kent College Students' Union, Dudley College Students' Union, NUS Black Students' Committee, Middlesex Students' Union, Gateshead College Students' Union, University of Manchester Students' Union, Oxford University Students' Union

Speech For: Mid-Kent College Students' Union (1.5 minutes)

Speech Against: Free (1.5 minutes)

Summation: Oxford University Students' Union (1 minute)

Conference believes:

1. Building the movement to stop the government selling off the student loan book to private companies is an urgent priority.

2. George Osborne confirmed during the Autumn Statement in 2013 that the government is going ahead with the plans to sell off student loans taken out between 1998-2012.

3. There is widespread concern that handing over our student debt to private companies will lead to an increase in the financial burdens placed on students and graduates, as the new owners of the debts hike up interest rates in order to make more profits. These concerns are well placed given the fact that:

4. A secret report for the government has revealed, in order to ensure the student loan book is profitable for private companies the cap on interest for repayments would need to be increased or removed all together. This proposal would cause student debt to soar and represents a retrospective hike in tuition fees.

5. The Minister for Universities, David Willetts, made clear to a parliamentary select committee last June that it is very easy for the rate of interest to be hiked up: "In the letter that every student gets there are some words to the effect that government reserve the right to change the terms of the loans."

6. Therefore, David Willetts' reassurances that the terms and conditions on student loans will not be changed following the privatization of the student loan book ring hollow. In the run up to the 2015 General Election we have a window of opportunity to put maximum pressure on MPs and Prospective Parliamentary Candidates to publicly oppose the sell off of student debt.

7. Education is a human right, and should not be in the hands of private financial companies.

8. A similar loanbook sell-off in New Zealand in 2012, saw interest rates on repayment for existing borrowers raised from 10% to 12%.

9. That the sell-off of student loans has the potential to adversely affect students' financial situations through higher debts.

10. Toni Pearce, NUS President, has previously said the sell-off was 'extremely concerning' as it would see 'the public subsidising a private company making a profit from public debt'.

11. In January, the NUS National Executive Council resolved, 'To support and promote the national week of action to stop the privatisation of student debt'.

12. The NUS National Executive were right to support grassroots action against the sell-off, but more political pressure is needed to prevent the sell-off.

13. NUS should campaign against this policy and build a movement against it until the government ceases the selling-off of student loans.

Conference resolves:

1. Organise under the banner of opposing the privatization of student loans and defending education.

2. Lobby MPs and Prospective Parliamentary Candidates to sign a pledge promising to oppose the privatization of student loans.

3. Coordinate national weeks and days of action –support and Students' Unions and campus societies to organize 'debt ins', creative stunts, mass petitioning, protests and public meetings.

Appendix 3 - Electoral Review Group

We are bringing amendments to the Election Regulations (which govern Michaelmas Term elections and by-elections) to 3rd week Council for consultation, and then to 5th week Council for voting. However we have two issues we wish to consult on:

NUS Delegates

From next year, we will elect six Delegates (as we are not permitted to send the President-elect automatically). NUS Conference also passed a motion meaning at least three Delegates must be women[1]. We therefore have to alter how we count votes (to ensure extra women are elected instead of non-women if there aren't enough initially). The Group is split on how to do this, and have two questions:

1. How should we count votes in Delegate elections? We suggest two options:

    a) by First Past The Post. First the top three women in terms of votes are elected. Then the 3 highest other candidates (women or non-women) will be elected. Voters will *not* be able to make second preferences etc.

    b) by an amended form of Single Transferable Vote (which we use currently). If there aren't three women elected, the lowest-placed non-woman will be eliminated and their votes redistributed. This will happen repeatedly until at least three women are elected.

2. Should we also impose a restriction on "slates" (people campaigning as a group) so a certain number of NUS Delegates on each slate must be women?

Campaigns endorsing candidates
At the moment, six campaigns can "endorse" candidates in elections: Campaign for Racial Awareness and Equality (CRAE), Disabled Students', International Students', LGBTQ, Mature Students', and Women's. This is because they are considered "autonomous" liberation campaigns, meaning they can set their own policy and are not directly overseen by an OUSU Sabbatical officer.

3. Do we want to extend this to so-called non-autonomous campaigns? This is any other OUSU campaign not listed above (Target Schools, Environment and Ethics, Mind Your Head etc.) This is currently prohibited because they are more bound by Council policy, and are less autonomous from Sabbatical officers.

---

[1] Provided a motion passes in 7th week Council this term, the definition of "woman" in OUSU's governing documents is "a person who, wholly or partly, identifies as a woman or as transfeminine". Here, non-woman means anyone who is not a woman on the above definition.

4. If no to 3, do we want to change the current list of campaigns? The idea made to the Group is to remove International Students' & Mature Students' Campaigns as they are possibly not "liberation campaigns" in the above sense.