

Council Minutes

1st Week Trinity Term 2016

1st Week Council took place on Wednesday 27th April 2016, at Magdalen College, Magdalen Auditorium.

We aim to make council as accessible as possible, and ensure that it is always in accessible venues. However, if there are any accessibility requirements that we are not meeting for yourself or others, please contact OUSU's Democratic Support Officer on 01865 611831, or at dso@ousu.ox.ac.uk.

If you have any questions about OUSU Council, please feel free to contact the Chair, Matt Collyer, at chair@ousu.ox.ac.uk.

- a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
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- d. Elections in Council
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- f. Emergency motions
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- h. Motions of No Confidence or censure
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- i. Motions to amend Bye-Laws, General Regulations or Election Regulation
 2. Final Reading of the Bye-Laws
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- k. Other motions
 4. Motion to Accept the Hilary Term 2016 Scrutiny Report
 5. Unpaid Internships
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 7. Divestment
 8. Electronics Watch – Ethical Procurement of IT Hardware
 9. International Freshers
 10. Referendum on Disaffiliating from the National Union of Students
- l. Any other business
 1. Election and Council Rules

a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

No issues were raised.

b. Matters Arising from the Minutes

No matters arising from the minutes.

c. Ratifications in Council

No ratifications in Council.

d. Elections in Council

Deputy Returning Officer – Fraser Boistelle (New) nominated.

Hust requested.

Fraser – Stated that this term has lots of opportunities for very interesting decisions to be made, not just for OUSU but for the student body as a whole. Noted the possibility for a referendum on NUS affiliation, which would pose a very exciting challenge to ensure that the referendum is run smoothly and fairly, and he would be very excited to support the returning officer with this and any other events that occur this term.

Hossein Sharafi (Keble) – Pointed out that last time OUSU had an NUS referendum, it was rigged, and asked how he would ensure that this did not happen again.

Fraser – Replied that he would act as a check on the returning officer, to make sure that they carry out their duties responsibly.

Dan Mead (St John's) – Asked if the candidate had any political experience.

Fraser – Replied that this would be his first elected position. Added that he has never been a part of any political society, and would be able to run the referendum in an impartial and fair manner.

Fraser – 46
RON – 13
SBV – 1

Fraser Boistelle was elected.

Aliya Yule (Wadham) – Proposed a procedural motion to bring motion 2 (Final Reading of the Bye-Laws) and motion 10 (Referendum on Disaffiliating from the National Union of Students) to the top of the agenda to take place immediately.

The majority of council voted in favour of the procedural motion.

i. Motions to amend Bye-Laws, General Regulations or Election Regulations

2. Final Reading of the Bye-Laws

Council Notes:

1. OUSU amended its highest governing document (the Articles of Association) at a General Meeting in December 2015, with consequential amendments required to lower documents.

2. That a new set of Bye-Laws have been proposed (Appendix B), making these consequential changes, along with further changes outlined in Appendix A.
3. That Council will see proposed new Regulations and Rules in 3rd week, to replace current Election and General Regulations.
4. Its decision to give a First and Second Reading in 5th and 7th week, Hilary Term 2016, and to accept amendments to these at Second Reading.
5. That the Sabbatical Officers have consulted widely on these changes, and offered students the opportunity to discuss the changes – with all amendments suggested having been incorporated into the final draft.
6. That the Executive has a duty as a collective body to implement OUSU Policy.

Council Believes:

1. It is important to protect the autonomy of liberation campaigns (the Campaigns listed in Bye-Law 15.3(a)), and of officers representing those campaigns, when the Executive changes in 2017.

Council Resolves:

1. To give a Final Reading to make new Bye-Laws (Appendix B).
2. That, from Hilary Term 2017, a member of the Executive representing a liberation campaign may disassociate themselves from the collective responsibility of the Executive to implement OUSU Policy where:
 - a. the Campaign they represent disagrees with a certain decision of the Executive or a certain Policy, and;
 - b. that member of the Executive (or their Campaign) states their objection to the decision or Policy at the time that it passes.
3. To add Notes 6, Believes 1 and Resolves 2 to the existing Policy named “Liberation Groups”.

Proposed: Nick Cooper (St John’s)

Seconded: Becky Howe (Pembroke)

Nick Cooper (St John’s) – Asked that council vote in favour of the motion.

Motion passed with no opposition.

k. Other motions

10. Referendum on Disaffiliating from the National Union of Students (NUS)

Council Notes:

1. That part of Oxford’s NUS delegation, Oh Well Alright Then, reported on NUS Conference, drawing attention to the passage of motions including one seeking to ban Yik Yak, seeking the end of mandatory GCSE English and Maths, and people applauding a speech against commemorating the Holocaust.
2. That in addition to the above, NUS National Conference 2016 elected Malia Bouattia as its President, who has been accused of anti-Semitism by over 50 JSoc Presidents
3. That Malia Bouattia was elected by 372 votes, less than 0.005% of the UK student population, a standard turnout for the NUS.

4. That the NUS has faced continuous criticism, increasing over previous years, about its unrepresentative nature, and its continuing inability to engage with other students.

Council Believes:

1. Numerous Oxford students are now questioning whether OUSU should remain affiliated to the NUS.
2. Most Oxford students have never had a chance to vote on this issue.
3. A referendum is the only way to gauge where Oxford students stand on this issue.

Council Resolves:

1. To hold a referendum as soon as possible on OUSU's affiliation to the NUS.
2. To encourage the Returning Officer to schedule the referendum before 6th Week of Trinity Term 2016.

Proposed: David Klemperer (St John's)

Seconded: Yoni Stone (Pembroke)

David Klemperer (St John's) – Reminded council that this motion is not about the pros and cons of the NUS, and is rather about doing things democratically, and giving students a say, particularly as over the last few days, it has become very clear that many students have very strong views, both for and against the NUS. Informed council that we have heard from a range of different students calling for a referendum, including the leaders of the Jewish society, the majority of OUSU's own delegation to the NUS Conference, and from OUSU's VP Welfare and Equal Opportunities (WEO). Argued that OUSU council should not be shutting these students down and refusing them the chance to have this discussion as a student body. Urged that for a decision this important, which affects how we are represented nationally, and how nearly £30,000 of OUSU's money is used, we need to give every student a say, and have enough respect for the student body to allow them to make a decision for themselves, rather than make it for them. Recognised concerns about the feasibility of running a referendum this term, but claimed that the amount of time between now and 6th week is such that we can easily hold a referendum according to the procedures set out in the electoral regulations. Added that he has spoken to the VP WEO who agreed that it is entirely feasible. Informed council that he is aware that some people have raised issues with the 'notes' section of the motion, and continued that while they fully stand by these comments which accurately represent conference, they would accept an amendment to remove them, as what is really important is to have a referendum, and allow Oxford students to decide for themselves whether they would like to stay in the NUS or not. Concluded that this motion is about giving every Oxford student a say.

Aliya Yule (Wadham) – Informed council that this motion is from a small group of people who went to NUS Conference on an anti-NUS platform, and who have always wanted to be out of the NUS. Argued that this referendum is an initiative based on a political vendetta against the current NUS president-elect, and the NUS body itself. Reported that these delegates did not manage to convince NUS to RON all of the presidential candidates and so are bringing it to council to boycott a democratic decision, made by the largest democratic student union in the world. Recognised that many common rooms have put this to a vote, and have a mandate on their representatives to vote for a referendum, however argued that these votes are based on lies and misinformation about what went on at NUS conference, and about what was said about the president-elect, who is the first black Muslim woman president to be elected to NUS. Added that this comes at the same time as we are seeing her being called an ISIS sympathiser in the national press, and urged that this is not the time to be calling a snap referendum. Added that this term the majority of undergraduates have exams, the majority of graduates have coursework deadlines, and the majority of the campaigning

to stay in the NUS will be left to liberation campaigns and marginalised students who do not have the time, energy or strength to be campaigning in colleges with exams and deadlines this term. Stated that the proposers have painted a picture in the motion of the NUS voting on a silly motion about Yik Yak, and saying ridiculous things about English and Maths GCSEs, which are both patently false, and that the proposers are relying on council buying into lies that have been put out into the press that aim to belittle the NUS and de-strengthen our student movement. Noted that what they don't point to is the amazing work NUS has been doing on the White Paper which will be coming next month, on the new election of a full-time trans officer, and on the continued campaigning against Prevent. Reiterated that the NUS is the biggest democratic student union in the world and emphasized that holding this referendum with only a few weeks with campaigns to debate is not democratic. Urged that council vote against this motion for democracy, liberation, strong student movement and national campaigning.

Hossein Sharafi (Keble) – Asked if anyone in the room has been mandated to vote against the motion.

The chair conducted a straw poll and approximately 12 members of council raised their hands.

Jacob Williams (Exeter) – Asked if those opposing the motion would support delaying the referendum to next term.

Aliya – Replied that yes she would as it would allow time for a proper debate.

Student member – Asked what the point was in making this decision via a referendum.

David Klemperer – Replied that it means that every student in Oxford rather than just those here have a chance to express their opinion.

Ian Berryman (Kellogg) – Asked how much the referendum would cost to run and where the money would come from.

Chair – Replied that it would be run on the online voting platform for now extra cost.

Becky Howe (Pembroke) – Added that the primary cost would be staff time, which would be huge.

Aliya – Added that in 2014, a lot of liberation campaigns ended up paying out of their own pockets, and are likely to again be the people that are out of pocket as a result of the referendum.

Danny Waldman (St John's) – Asked if it would be electoral malpractice for campaigns to pay out of their own pockets.

Becky Howe – Replied that they have a budget that they can spend.

Alex Curtis (St Catherine's) – Stated that the argument that the 'yes to NUS' side would be out of pocket would also apply to the other side of the debate as well.

Aliya – Argued that the campaigning to stay in the NUS is likely to fall to liberation groups, who often have the least amount of money for various structural reasons, which will unfairly disadvantage them.

Chair set a limit of 1 minute speeches.

No opposition.

Benji Woolf (Christ Church) – Noted that people seem to think that this motion has come solely from the NUS delegates, but pointed out that it has been seconded by Yoni Stone, who was twice president of Oxford JSoc. Noted that in regards to the liberation point, the vast majority of Jewish students feel that this is important and that he has spoken to a number of Jewish students who have attended NUS conference over a number of years, who reported that it was one of the most unpleasant points of their lives, and this year the Jewish representative was kicked off the anti-racism campaign. Questioned how giving all the students of Oxford a vote on this can possibly be considered undemocratic. Informed council that something like 23 student unions are proposing a referendum on this, and we should give our students a say and be part of that national movement.

Jacob Page (St Cross) – Noted that this is a hotly contested issue but requested that people keep to the facts. Pointed out that we do not know anything that is going to happen in the white paper for certain yet, and that there are also issues with the motion itself that have been highlighted. Urged people to represent students properly by keeping to the facts and having the best debate possible.

Jack Matthews (University) – Informed council that two years ago we gave Oxford students the opportunity to make this decision by referendum, an opportunity which was robbed from them. Explained that in terms of governance, it is as if this referendum never happened, following the overturning of the results after evidence that the vote had been rigged. Noted that consequently, the students of Oxford have still not had a chance to have their say. Recognised that some have argued that the NUS is no different from OUSU, and if we respect the decisions of this council, then we should also respect the validity of NUS conference, however this fails to recognise the important difference between the systems, such as the ability of any student to turn up here today and speak, as opposed to at the inaccessible NUS conference. Added that once a year we hand over the power to our students to reinvigorate our democracy with fresh ideas, through our sabbatical elections, something which does not happen at NUS. Noted that there is no democratic contact with students. Argued that we should offer our students an unmediated channel through which we can test the waters and consent to their continuing association with the NUS. Concluded that anything other than giving our students a referendum would be a total betrayal of the trust placed in each one of us.

Vivian Holmes (Wadham) – Informed council that they were another delegate to NUS conference, and recognised that there were problems, including issues surrounding accessibility with 12 hour days and insufficient food breaks. Noted the need for reform. Informed council however, that after nearly 7 years of campaigning within the NUS, there is now a full-time trans campaign set up. Argued that the help that trans students will get from NUS, as well as other liberation groups is huge, however argued that their voices will be a minority if this is voted on in a referendum. Accepted that certain students get more out of the NUS than others, but explained that those students need a lot more help. Noted there is a problem with antisemitism, but pointed out that the Union of Jewish students has told people that they should stay within the NUS. Argued that SUs should not be holding these referendums which will make the NUS less powerful, when there are massive higher education cuts happening. Urged council to vote against this motion.

Ali Lennon (St John's) – Informed council that he does support the belief that students should have a say on this issue via a referendum, and reminded council that this debate is about whether we give students a voice and a chance to have their say, rather than about the merits of the NUS, which is what we are hearing about at the moment. Informed council that a number of students have been in touch with him expressing serious concerns about a series of events that have happened, and want to have their say. Recognised that we need to ensure that all voices are platformed in a constructive

and cordial debate as we should be having in council now. Noted that many people care about this issue, that many common rooms have already made their thoughts clear, and that we should not deny students the chance to have their say. Argued that it is still important in spite of the factual inaccuracies, and that we need to take all voices and concerns seriously and give them a vote.

Tom Wadsworth (St John's) – Reported that he is against the referendum for a number of reasons, and that OSDC have already stated that they are against having one, particularly as it already takes them so much time and effort to run the events that they do, meaning that people suspend or are unable to complete their workloads. Added that increasingly this workload with a referendum in such short notice will cause great harm, particularly to the liberation campaigns who benefit the most from the NUS. Argued that these groups would have to campaign so much to stay within this body which means so much to them, and that this is not democratic, as the people who need the NUS the most will not have a say within the voice of the referendum.

Marina Lambrakis (St John's) – Reminded council that this is a debate on whether or not to have a referendum, not on whether the NUS is good or bad.

Eden Tanner (St John's) – Suggested that the proposers re-write the motion so that we are all having the discussion, as some people may be uncomfortable passing the current motion even if they want a referendum.

Lucy Delaney (Wadham) – Reported that the NUS provides invaluable resources to herself, other sabbatical officers and liberation officers, and recognises that certain voices in society are not platformed, therefore taking active steps to platform them. Added that we would not have consent workshops without the NUS, we would not have support for RMF, and 'Why is my Curriculum white?', we would not have the new full time Trans Officer position, and full time Trans Campaign. Noted that crucially, they ran #CutTheCosts, caused a government debate when the government tried to get a back door vote passed to scrap maintenance grants, have closed spaces and caucuses so that people from intersecting oppressions can talk about their experiences which is invaluable. Argued that this is all relevant to this motion if we make this decision by referendum, as we will be having it via the entire student body which is hugely white and middle class.

Vivian – Reiterated an earlier point that Yik Yak was not banned at NUS, but agreed to work with Yik Yak. Added that the notes on GCSEs was also untrue, as the motion was only to not have mandatory maths and English retakes at GCSE for all people in FE colleges. Argued that the structure of this motion is based on a hatred of the NUS, and built on lies, so cannot lead to a free and fair referendum. Insisted that the debate should wait until next term, when all of the lies that are circulating in the media have slowed down, so we can have a proper debate.

Amendment received:

In Resolves 1: To remove "as soon as possible".

In Resolves 2: To replace after "before..." with "in Michaelmas term 2016."

To remove Notes 1, 2 and 3, and renumber accordingly.

Proposed: Tom Barringer (St Hugh's)

Seconded: Eden Tanner (St John's)

Tom Barringer (St John's) – Stated that based on the discussion so far, this attempts to remove controversy. Noted that the proposer of the motion said he would be willing to remove Notes 1, 2 and 3 at the start, so this amendment does that. Added that Aliya Yule stated at the start of the

meeting that she would be willing to vote for an amendment which moved everything to Michaelmas 2016.

Amendment opposed.

Aaron Simons (University) – Reminded council that one of the major reasons that we are having this discussion is the fact that the new NUS President has been involved in startling anti-Semitic conspiracy theories, and explained that he wanted to promote the voice of Jewish students, as former JSoc president. Stated that we should not postpone this motion over the summer, as there will be a number of Jewish students, including his younger sister, that will be starting at the University in Michaelmas, and stated that he did not want them to suffer over their whole summer, thinking that they are coming to University, knowing that their student body support an NUS president who has espoused some of the ugliest anti-semitic conspiracy theories that he has ever heard. Urged that we need to take action immediately, and should not postpone this referendum.

Move to vote received.

Opposed.

Vote on move to vote:

Majority in support of moving to vote.

Vote on amendment:

For – 54

Against – 39

Abstain – 18

Amendment passed.

Amendment received:

To remove Believes 2.

Proposed: Vivian Holmes (Wadham)

Seconded: Tom Barringer (St Hugh's)

Amendment opposed.

Vivian – Argued that this part of the motion is factually incorrect, as the motion in 7th week council last Trinity on OUSU's affiliation to the NUS, allowed any student who was in Oxford last Trinity to vote on this motion, as they could have taken their college's the third vote.

Ali White (Regent's) – Recognised that there is a third vote for each JCR, but noted that this is only three people out of a college, which does not mean that everyone can vote. Added that many people are not likely to give up their time to attend council, so certainly have not had their chance to vote on this at all.

Move to vote received.

Opposed.

Vote on move to vote:

Majority in support of moving to vote.

Vote on amendment:

Majority opposed the amendment.

Amendment fell.

Move to vote received.

Opposed.

Move to vote retracted.

Jacob Williams (Exeter) – Claimed that the first amendment, which was passed by council, was a wrecking motion, as it makes no difference if we have a referendum in Michaelmas Term, as at this point, it will be impossible to disaffiliate until the summer of 2017. Explained that we are now voting on a motion which makes no difference to what happens, as we have no idea what things will be like in a year's time.

Hossein Sharafi (Keble) – Responded to the 'white and middle class comment', stating that he couldn't comment on class, but looking around the room, it still seems pretty white. Asked why it OK to have one white middle class middle class institution decide something, rather than another white middle class institution, particularly when one is still elected by the other. Argued that it makes absolutely no difference.

Eden Bailey (Magdalen) – Spoken against having a referendum, stating that we have heard numerous times about the amount of time which it takes to prepare an effective campaign, and that the students who will be involved in this will be the students who the NUS support the most. Added that the time and resources that a referendum will take away from OUSU officers, particularly sabbatical officers, will be enormous, and will prevent them from getting on with the mazing work which they have been voted in on. Insisted that we need our sabbatical officers to spending their time on supporting students right here and now. Recognised that there are a lot of problems with the NUS, including anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and suggested that the time which would be spent on organising a referendum is instead spent on tackling these issues, both in Oxford and in the NUS.

Amendment received:

In Resolves 2 replace "Michaelmas 2016", with "Trinity Term 2017".

Proposed: Nick Cooper (St John's)

Seconded: Emily Silcock (New)

Amendment opposed.

Nick Cooper (St John's) – Noted that we will have to have a vote this term on affiliation regardless, through either referendum or council vote. Added that it doesn't make a difference whether we hold a referendum in Michaelmas, Hilary or Trinity next year, as it still will not take affect until the end of Trinity. Clarified that he is not taking a stance on the referendum himself in this amendment, but that he wants to give the incoming sabbatical team the freedom to not have to have it in Michaelmas term which is already incredibly busy.

Jacob Williams (Exeter) – Urged that we need to make a decision this term, as this debate is happening because of recent events.

Aliya Yule (Wadham) – Pointed out that we will be making a decision in council this term regardless.

Amendment withdrawn.

Ali White (Regent's) – Urged that there should be a referendum, and that while she understands the argument that people are busy, this is no excuse, and students should have a say on important issues, such as our affiliation with the NUS. Stated that there are people in liberation groups who do support leaving the NUS, and that the idea that it is just white middle class men who support this is frankly unfair on other people. Urged that all people should have a say and it is unfair to not have a referendum.

Amendment received:

In Resolves 2: to replace "Michaelmas Term 2016" with "Trinity Term 2016".

Jacob Williams (Exeter) – Argued that we voted to move the referendum to Michaelmas Term prior to being properly informed that this would mean that we cannot leave until summer next year. Stressed that we need to make an informed decision.

Becky Howe (Pembroke) – Stated that she is against this amendment as this term we need to stand united, and explained that her being anti-referendum is not her defending anti-Semitism in any way. Condemned all anti-Semitic comments made in the NUS election, and urged a full apology. Additionally condemned the Islamophobic attacks against Malia since her election. Stated that we need to stand united as this term the government will be releasing a white paper, which if it is anything like the green paper will be catastrophic for higher education. Urged that her job is to defend higher education so asked council to let her do that. Insisted that a referendum this term is not going to allow her or liberation groups who need NUS the most the time and energy to campaign to stay in the NUS. Urged people to vote against the amendment.

Move to vote received.

Opposition received.

Vote on move to vote:

For – 80

Against – 22

Abstain – 7

Vote on amendment:

For – 60
Against - 50
Abstain – 7

Amendment passed.

Move to vote received on the full motion as amended received.

Opposition received.

Vote on move to vote:

For – 92
Against - 12
Abstain – 6

Vote on move to vote passed.

Procedural motion for a recorded vote received.

Vote on recorded vote:

For – 26
Against – 79
Abstain – 17

Procedural motion for recorded vote fell.

Re-Count requested.

Vote on recorded vote:

For – 34
Against- 74
Abstain - 9

Procedural motion for recorded vote passed.

Procedural motion for a secret ballot received.

Opposition received.

Eden Bailey (Magdalen) – Raised concerns of causing a risk to specific people from marginalised groups who may be targeted by other students if they have to record their vote publicly.

Matt Sumption (Christ Church) – Noted that the contentious elements of the motion have been removed, and we are asking people who have been mandated by their common rooms, as they cannot be held to account by a secret ballot. Reminded council that we can still see how people vote in a normal council vote.

Vote on secret ballot:

For – 34
Against – 63
Abstain – 17

Procedural motion for secret ballot passed.

Chair – Explained that when a vote for recorded vote and secret ballot both pass, the vote must be by secret ballot.

Anne Cremin (Magdalen) – Explained that she ran as an NUS delegate as she really wanted to enact change. Recognised that a lot of people do not believe that, but explained that she is very passionate about certain things. Informed council that she rusticated last year due to her mental health, and felt largely abandoned by the NHS, so this was one of her major priorities going to NUS. Explained that she was helped by the counselling service and the things provided to her by OUSU, so it is important to her to stress that wanting this referendum does not mean that they hate institutions. Reiterated that she is thankful for the work that OUSU do as she felt listened to, but that what happened at NUS conference made people like her feel not listened to. Explained that ultimately the NUS does not represent her anymore, that she returned from the conference exhausted. Added that she was proud that delegates put forward a motion in favour of working on mental health, but disappointed that conference was so inaccessible itself, that she proud of the motion to tackle anti-Semitism, but that this was overshadowed by the election of someone who has be condemned by many Jewish students as anti-Semitic, that she was proud of the motion in favour of a full time Trans rep, but amazed that it took the NUS years and years to get their act together on this. Concluded that the NUS she sees is now failing many students, and this motion is about giving students the chance to give students a voice on the debate and have a vote.

Becky Howe (Pembroke) – Stated that she had a lot of respect for what Anne just said, and also a huge amount of respect for JSoc and Jewish students who have spoken up about this. Explained that the decision to stand against the referendum is the hardest one she has made this year, and not one which she has taken lightly. Informed council that she has several reasons for not wanting the referendum this term, including the already mentioned fact that we need to stand together against the marketization of higher education, which will mean that Oxford can charge higher fees than others institutions because it is deemed excellent. Argued that the fracturing of the NUS is playing into the hands of those who want to marketise education. Insisted that having a referendum this term would be really difficult and detrimental to the liberation groups who the NUS help the most. Emphasised that her arguments are not because she doesn't want to do the work, but because we need to avoid causing burn out from those who would want to campaign to stay in the NUS. Stressed that we should be focusing on Prevent and other key issues. Urged that we should not be fighting amongst ourselves, but fighting against these issues. Informed council that NUS have just released an incredible student handbook on mental health and student suicide. Concluded that it would be a disaster for access if both Oxford and Cambridge have a referendum at the same time, and questioned what that would say.

Secret ballot results:

For – 67
Against – 56
Abstain – 3

Motion passed as amended.

e. Reports from and questions to the Sabbatical Officers, Executive Officers, Divisional Board Officers, Representatives of the OUSU Campaigns and RAG (*Raise and Give*)

Dan Mead (St John's) – Asked if the members of the Part-Time Executive that had not submitted reports could report to do so now.

No members of the Part-Time Executive identified themselves to make a report.

Eden Bailey (Magdalen) – Introduced herself as the Humanities Postgraduate Divisional Board Rep. Reported that Graduate Study Committee took place this week, with a number of big successes with students being listened to. Added that we have worked on the application process, trying to make it more accessible by reducing the amount of references needed, and hopefully decided that the application deadline for masters and DPhil applications will only be bought back a month, rather than several months.