



council minutes

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Motion I. Elections

Connor O'Neill, Wadham: This motion is based on the Returning Officer's report which was passed in the council of 1<sup>st</sup> week HT 04. Apologies for the spelling mistakes. This motion has been discussed with Helena and its intention is to make elections fairer and more easily accountable.

Short, factual questions:

John Blake, St Hugh's: Why is it not suitable for the part-time executive to elect the RO?

Connor O'Neill, Wadham: To make the system fairer, but it is possible to have a review on elections after this motion, but this motion is intended to make the process of changing imperative parts of the electoral regulations quicker. A sabbatical officer, as recommended in the RO's report, can do the review.

Dan Paskins, Magdalen: Why does the working day have to be defined in C1f?

Connor O'Neill, Wadham: For legal reasons.

Ros Dampier, St Hilda's: Do any of the sabbatical officers have time to do a review?

Is it not true that restricting the hours of photocopying to between 9 and 5 disproportionately disadvantages scientists?

Connor O'Neill, Wadham: It will be possible to find a sabbatical officer to do the review, as it is very important it gets done.

For transparency reasons and accountability, it is important that photocopying should only be done when there are people around, for example the General Manager, to give receipts for that photocopying.

Rob Vance, Wadham: Does this motion address the problems of cross slating included in the report?

Connor O'Neill, Wadham: No, as it was not possible to do this.

Ros Dampier, St Hilda's: Is it not true that fourth year physicists and second year medics, amongst other scientists would not be available between 9 and 5 to do the photocopying?

Connor O'Neill, Wadham: Yes but there would be some time during a week that they would be able to be at OUSU between those times, and if not then it would be possible to allow an activist to do the photocopying for a candidate.

Dan Paskins, Magdalen: To help everyone understand the motion, would it be possible to go through each section individually and explain it all?

Connor O'Neill, Wadham: Would be happy to take them all individually.

Dan Paskins, Magdalen: Thank you, as its hard to see what the motion means without a copy of the electoral regulations.

Connor O'Neill, Wadham: It will be re-proposed individually.

C1a1 This changes the way the RO is elected, by transferring the responsibility from the executive to council.

C1e2 This makes sure the Deputy Returning Officer is elected in 1<sup>st</sup> week council of the term in which they are to serve. This will be possible because the RO should already have been elected the previous term.

C83 Individual questioning is introduced so that not all candidates have to be asked the same question. This is because in exec it is possible to do this, but there is not yet any provision for this to be done in council.

C1f The working day of OUSU is clarified as 9-5.

C4e6 This changes who can sit on ballot boxes, so that it is not possible for activists to sit on a ballot box.

C3b9 This is simply a clarification of the old rules.

C3d5ii This ensures all GMBs are in the same format on email.

C2b1 Staggers the time of nominations, and so also changes C2e7 because lots will be drawn on who gets independent as their ballot paper description.

C3b2 This changes election publicity. There were many problems with barcodes and the current system in general, so this part of the motion makes provision to use OUSU endorsed election paper with UV and bar-coded systems. Without this part of the motion, the current system of election publicity is simply unenforceable.

C3b13 Under this part, it will only be possible to photocopy for election purposes during the office hours of 9-5, as this way there should be staff around to give receipts.

C5d5 This formalises what constitutes an appeal and what grounds are needed to appeal.

The other parts of the motion are intended to encourage more graduates to vote.

Dominic Curran, St Hugh's: How much would this UV embossed paper cost?

Connor O'Neill, Wadham: Don't know, but it would be possible to ask the printer for OUSU embossed paper.

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- Dominic Curran, St Hugh's: How much would this UV embossed paper cost?
- Connor O'Neill, Wadham: Don't know, but it would be possible for OUSU to provide it.
- Tom Packer, St Cross: Are there legal objections to part C5d5?
- Connor O'Neill, Wadham: All OUSU elections are bound by the standing orders, so no.
- Louise McMullan, Wadham: What about RO's attendance rights at Junior Tribunal?
- Connor O'Neill, Wadham: It says in the Standing Orders that the RO can go if s/he chooses to, but is not required to attend. Some candidates may have a problem with the fact that the RO can attend Junior Tribunal, but it is not really a big issue.
- Dominic Curran, St Hugh's: Is C5d5 really necessary given that Junior Tribunal can already strike appeals that in their view are not sufficient to be classed as appeals?
- Connor O'Neill, Wadham: Junior Tribunal does already decide, but it would reduce the time it has to spend on throwing out petty appeals, and so would encourage more people to sit on Junior Tribunal, as it is currently difficult to find people to do it.

Debate

Opposition:

- Ros Dampier, St Hilda's: Just because OUSU already disadvantages scientists, does not mean it is ok for it to disadvantage them further. The regulations should allow fourth year scientists and other people who can't be in OUSU during office hours to be properly involved, rather than deliberately excluding them. Council accepted the RO's report, but this motion is just the opinion of the RO, and it would be better to have a review that included lots of people. Also it makes it harder for candidates to stand for election, and this situation should be addressed and rectified rather than further intensified.
- Helena Puig Larrauri, St Hilda's: Photocopying is indeed an issue if people are unable to make the times, but this is part of the reason candidates have activists to act on their behalf. It is not an insurmountable problem, and the RO would be able to help if there was no other way of doing it. In terms of the election review, was involved two years ago, but the potential existence of an election review does not mean this motion is not worth looking at. Something needs to be done about elections, especially with respect to the forthcoming VP Graduates election.
- Rodrigo Davies, Wadham: The election review would be a good idea, but this motion is extremely moderate compared to the RO's report. It is possible to go through the motion in parts, and vote on each electoral change separately.
- Louise McMullan, Wadham: There are two problems with the motion. Firstly, the change of C.8.3 to allow individual questioning is extremely harsh in the context of council, and could easily be intimidating. Also, the RO should be stripped of their rights to attend Junior Tribunal.
- Dan Paskins, Magdalen: There is a problem with the election regulations. The reason more people do not get involved in OUSU are the complicated rules. C3b9 is reigning in political organisations, and this should free up all campaigning. The RO should attempt to make elections more accessible.
- Tom Packer, St Cross: In relation to C5d5, the grounds for bringing an appeal are too narrow. It is not possible, or should not be possible for the election regulations to dictate the grounds for appeal.
- Dan Simpson, Balliol: C3b9 is likely to hurt political candidates running on a slate. The motion should be taken in parts.
- Nancy Mendoza, Balliol: Agrees with Ros on the issue of scientists, and this should definitely be part of the election review. If the motion is to be taken in parts, council shouldn't underestimate the effect on science students, as thanks to the way OUSU functions, someone doing Bio Chemistry would find it extremely difficult, if not impossible to run to be an executive officer.
- Ros Dampier, St Hilda's: Agrees that the motion should be taken in parts. In the standing orders there are already grounds for appeal, so the part of the motion referring to formalising grounds for appeal is un-necessary. In terms of activists and ballot boxes, it is extremely difficult to find people to sit on ballot boxes who are not activists, and it is not possible to use sabbatical officers on any kind of basis to fill gaps on ballot boxes, as happened at St Hugh's last term.
- Connor O'Neill, Wadham: The RO's report was the basis for the proposals set out in this motion.
- In response to previous questions, individual questioning can be intimidating, but the purpose is greater accountability. The rules in the motion actually make it easier for political parties because they are clearer than before. In terms of scientists, there are other reasons OUSU puts off scientists and the whole should be looked at, not simply this motion. Junior Tribunal has much of its time wasted by frivolous appeals, and it can be held at any time. Passing the motion would make it a more formalised process.

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Procedural motion to move to a vote put by Dan Paskins, Magadalen. There was opposition to this, so it was necessary to vote on the move to a vote.

Dan Paskins, Magadalen: Council has heard enough information to vote on the motion.

Josefa Henry-Bochan, Wadham: There are still new points to be made, including regarding the problem of people wanting to run in OUSU elections.

Motion clearly PASSES

There were 12 mini-votes after two general summation speeches for the proposition and opposition.

Proposition

Connor O'Neill, Wadham: There would be support for an electoral review, but this motion should be passed prior to that. The parts of the motion are important, and should be voted through on their merits.

Ros Dampier, St Hilda's: The rules about the office day would unfairly exclude scientists. There should not be a limit to the grounds of appeal. Activists on ballot boxes would not realistically work.

Votes:

C1a1 PASSES

C1a2 PASSES

C.8.3 Votes for 33, votes against 15, abstentions 7 PASSES

New C1f Votes for 19, votes against 30, abstentions 7 FAILS

C4e6 Votes for 29, votes against 18, abstentions 8 PASSES

C3b9 PASSES

C3d5ii PASSES

C2e7 PASSES

C3b2 Votes for 34, Votes against 5, abstentions 9 PASSES

C3b13 Connor O'Neill, Wadham puts procedural motion that this part not be put. There is opposition to this procedural motion.

Connor O'Neill, Wadham: To put this part would no longer make sense as vote for C1f failed.

Lorna Stephenson, Hertford: Timetables are still needed.

Votes for 33, votes against 16, abstentions 3.

52 people voting and 34 votes for needed to not put the motion, so the procedural motion FAILS and the part of the motion is still to be voted on.

Voting on part C3b13: votes for 16, votes against 32, abstentions 6. Motion FAILS

C5d5 Votes for 12, votes against 38, abstentions 10 FAILS

Council further resolves:

1 PASSES

2 PASSES

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Motion I-OUSA

Helena Puig Larrauri, St Hilda's: The Open University is a good thing, and this agreement would just mean that their members could use OUSU facilities. There is information in the brochure to answer questions.

Greg Stafford, St Peter's: What is the subscription to OUSU and OUSA respectively?

Rodrigo Davies, Wadham: The subscription for OUSU is about £5 a head, and don't know about OUSA.

Sarah Marshall, St Peter's: How many students belong to OUSA?

Helena Puig Larrauri, St Hilda's: Don't know.

Sian Green, Wadham: What advantages would OUSU students get from this agreement?

Helena Puig Larrauri, St Hilda's: We would be invited to OUSA's social events that are happening in this area.

Alice Freeman, Christ Church: How many other Student Unions are involved in this agreement with OUSA?

Helena Puig Larrauri, St Hilda's: Most other Student Unions in the country are involved.

James Coatsworth, Mansfield: Do OUSA think OUSU has a central venue?

Helena Puig Larrauri, St Hilda's: No, they know OUSU does not have a central venue.

Greg Stafford, St Peter's: How many events do OUSA run in this area that OUSU students could attend?

Helena Puig Larrauri, St Hilda's: Don't know.

Dan Paskins, Magadalen puts a move to a debate PASSES

Opposition:

Greg Stafford, St Peter's: Students who belong to OUSA would get lots out of OUSU but OUSU would get nothing in return.

Rodrigo Davies, Wadham puts a move to a vote. There is opposition so the move to a vote must be voted on.

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Proposition:

Rodrigo Davies, Wadham: One man alone.

Opposition:

Timothy Ayles, Trinity: Wants to speak.

PASSES

Summation speeches on the motion:

Proposition:

Helena Puig Larrauri, St Hilda's: We should vote through this motion, it would be a good thing to do, and it should be supported.

Opposition:

Greg Stafford, St Peter's: We don't know how much this would cost OUSU, and it is a ridiculous motion.

Motion PASSES

Any Other Business:

Connor O'Neill, Wadham: During his term of office the RO volunteered to train common room officers on the Single Transferable Vote system, and there were two requests during that time. The period has been extended, and the former RO would be happy to run more training sessions if there is demand for them. For more information email [connor.o'neill@Wadham.ox.ac.uk](mailto:connor.o'neill@Wadham.ox.ac.uk)

Helena Puig Larrauri, St Hilda's: A rent committee co-chair is still needed, for more information email [president@ousu.org](mailto:president@ousu.org)