



**student council minutes**

3<sup>rd</sup> Week Council HT 07

2<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2007-02-02  
Morden Hall, St Hugh's College

Christine Quigley (Brasenose) chairing.

- a. Minutes of previous meeting

No minutes available, will be on website soon

- b. ratifications

E+E cochair ratified  
PGA motions ratified

- c. reports from sabbatical officers

Alan Strickland: Cherwell editorial; issue that arose last week about oxide radio and Nick Griffin interview. OUSU has no platform policy, so we cancelled interview.

All OUSU policy is made by Council- no platform policy was passed in TT 2005, it's been around for ages, not just made up. Also, not an extreme position; NUS and nearly all SUs have no platform policies, and BNP members cannot work for Civil Service, police, trade unions, etc. Important for council attendees to understand this.

Jamie Frew, VPWelf: QR campaign is circulating questionnaire regarding lgbtq guides to lgbtq officers, but some CRs don't have those, so those CRs will have them sent to presidents.

Jenny HM, VPW: 1<sup>st</sup> March is Women's open day, be great if we had help from women, or also need tutors/fellows/old students (doctorates) to talk about Oxford to women from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Kieran HD, OUSU: New CR support officer. Trying to get fortnightly meeting of OUSU reps up and running once more, so please talk to me about that.

Any questions?

Lewis Jones, St catz: Is there enough work for graduate women officer?

Jenny HM, Merton: Yes.

- d. motions

RO report passed nem con

## 1. OUSU Council reform.

Alan Strickland, Merton: Has to come back as it has been amended, despite being passed.  
Motion passed

## 2. Reform referendum motion.

Alan Strickland, Merton: This year, we're trying to shakeup OUSU. For a long time, the way that ousu has been run hasn't been looked at, things got worse and worse. We're having a root and branch review of how things are being done. Our aim is clear.

However, like every sabattical team, we're finding beaurocracy difficult. Motions affecting constitution have to go through 2 termly councils and one ordinary... so would need to pass it in 5<sup>th</sup> week HT. Really important that stuff we're reforming this year, major changes, need careful consideration and consultation. Can't be rushed. Also important that since we've put so much work in, these changes are decided on during our term of office, not just dumped on next year's sabs.

Because of rules, we need to bring these changed by 5<sup>th</sup> week? Instead, we're going to schedule a referendum that will take place by 6<sup>th</sup> week TT on a package of constitutional changes. Having a date to work to will help us structure our time regarding reform. Having a referendum in TT will mean that new team will have new machinery right from the start.

Also important for democratic reasons; all students would have their say.

Lewis Jones, Catz: Referendum will be in 6<sup>th</sup> week TT or earlier.. people will have exams. Can it be earlier than 6<sup>th</sup> week?

AS, OUSU: Yes, hopefully it will be earlier, 6<sup>th</sup> week is deadline. Online referendum will be more accessible to busy finalists too.

Joseph Ammoun, SEH: To ensure reforms have a mandate, is there a requirement for minimum referendum numbers?

AS, OUSU: Haven't thought about that, but very good point. Also, anything going in referendum would be showed to council first. Not sure about setting absolute number, but obviously need a high mandate.

Helen Bagshaw, OUSU: What are reform leaders, and what are their areas?

AS, OUSU: Seems clear that if OUSU is going to change, reform needs to be powerfully led and be coherent. Easiest way would be for sabs and exec members and CR representatives to push forward specific areas of change, (e.g. equalopps, etc). Will bring clarity and focus.

Joseph Ammoun, SEH: Does current constitutional arrangements allow for online referendum?

AS, OUSU: Yes.

Emma Clossick, Queens: So do we only vote on reform once? I'm worried about certain reforms being agreed with and some not.

AS, OUSU: What we'll do is that everything that ends up in referendum will be discussed separately, so hopefully consensus can be reached before referendum.

No opposition, motion passes.

### 3. Support the torch-lit march for abortion rights

Friendly amendment accepted: no donation to the march (strike council resolves 2)

Prop: Jenny HM, OUSU. Second: Emma Clossick, Queen's.

Jenny HM, OUSU: This is a motion suggested by Womcam. March supports our pro-choice policy, which we already have. International women's day support, extend abortion rights to northern Ireland, also asks VPWomen to help campaign.

Paul Fleming, Mansfield: Is this extension of university policy already? What was original policy? What did we vote for exactly?

Jenny HM, OUSU: We've had pro-choice policy for years, which says we will provide students with range of options, and we will campaign to support pro-choice policy, single-parents.

#### Opposition

David Mitchell, Catz: First of all, I'm in favour of reviving support in care. Personal experience, as I've been affected. My problem is that you speak in point 3 of council notes, you use the word 'moral'... issue of right and wrong? Why is the word 'moral' in inverted commas in the motion? And why are we as an SU able to make decisions of morality?

#### Now in debate

Jenny HM, OUSU: I didn't write motion, was Womcam motion. You're entitled to bring an amendment to remove inverted commas. I think it's questioning that doctors should be allowed to withhold drugs on moral grounds, etc.

In general, in terms of SU having moral policy... we already have policy on right to be gay, anti-racism, etc. Also on pro-choice. This is just an example of taking policy we already have to support a campaign.

Emma Clossick, Queens: On past OUSU policy, we passed in TT last year affiliation to 'abortion rights', which included to sustain AND extend pro-choice policy.

David Mitchell, Catz: Motion itself is making a moral judgement, which we're imposing on OUSU. What's missing is the 'life and death' involvement. Maybe have 'OUSU council also notes that foetus is a unique individual'

Ed Mayne, OUSU: I'd like to point out that all 'council notes' is to provide context. Important stuff is 'resolves' and 'believes'. I suggest you vote based on what it says in 'resolves and believes', not 'notes'. Motion builds on current policy, doesn't affect things that much.

Joseph Ammoun, SHE: I agree with amended resolution, but I agree that there's an implied moral judgement in the motion regarding doctors and pharmacists.

Jenny HM, OUSU: We'd accept amendment to take out the inverted commas.

Alex Stafford, St Benet's: Concerned about 'believes 4', which says that they shouldn't require consent of 2 doctors. That would contradict law?

Garth Smith, CHCH: I think that OUSU has history of commenting on general issues, which are all moral. It's important that Sus make clear their moral opinions.

Amendment: would strike 'on moral grounds' in 'notes3'. Accepted as friendly.  
Prop: Joseph Ammoun, SHE. 2<sup>nd</sup>: Marc Thompson, SEH

Andrea Miller, Linacre: Questioning if whether we should question UK law is silly; law reflects social values. Should racial segregation in US have been questioned?

David Mitchell, Catz: Council believes 2, says sex education is crucial to allowing women to control own bodies. I've been lucky enough to travel to burma, and having been to that country the women there are fully in control of their bodies; that's offensive to suggest otherwise. We have sex-ed in England, but have the highest rate of teenage pregnancy in Europe. I don't think the point about sex-ed is valid.

Lewis Jones, Catz: In council believes 4, the motion goes a long way to covering a lot of different types of abortion? I don't think that doctors shouldn't be consulted in ALL of those cases?

Jenny HM, OUSU: Point of info, we already have policy in favour of women not having to have consent of 2 doctors.

Melinda Hall, Greyfriars: What exactly are abortion rights saying? Are they saying they are pleased with current rights, or want further ones? We need more info.

Andrea Miller, OUSU: Faulty logic, I agree, women can have control over bodies without sex-ed!

Jenny HM, OUSU: On Alex's points, student union has ALWAYS had comment on UK law. Top up fees? Section 28? That's what we're here for! We as students WILL campaign on things we believe. We already know that student body supports pro-choice. Consent of 2 doctors? Yes, we do want to reform that. For instance, it prevents barrier to certain groups of women.

On aims of march, it's to recognise the women who die from illegal abortions, to stand up for rights we already have, and to demand rights detailed in 'council believes'

Paul, Mansfield: Two issues. Broad OUSU abortion policy. Secondly, stance on this march. The second one is what we should be talking about.

Amendment: Amend 'believes 2' to 'sex-ed can play important part in enabling women...' . Accepted as friendly.

Prop: Alistair Wrench, Hugh's. Second: Andrea Miller, Linacre

10 votes in opposition to acceptance as friendly, so need speeches in prop and opp.

Prop,

Alistair Wrench, Hugh's: Not watering down importance of sex-ed, just says that there may be other factors in control of their own body.

Opp,

Luke Tryl, Magd: Surely sex-ed is a fundamental right, so motion should reflect that! Yes, women all over the world should have access to sex-ed.

In debate on amendment.

Liv Bailey, Hilda's: Agree with Luke, important we don't water down policy on sex-ed. Schools still aren't completely obliged to provide it. Women are at risk without sex-ed.

Lewis Jones, Catz: In second half of 'believes 2' still says it should be available! So not watering down. Just doesn't denigrate un-sex-educated women.

Emma Clos, Queen's: Problem with amendment is that it says 'sex-ed CAN have important role', whereas we think it definitely DOES.

Move to vote on amendment

Ed Mayne, OUSU: Heard all things.

David Mitchell, Catz: More things to say!

Move passes.

Vote on amendment.

Amendment fails.

Amendment received: reads, changes 'believes 2' from 'control over' to 'better understand'. Not accepted as friendly.

Prop: Helen Bagshaw, Balliol. Second: Jamie Frew, Keble

Prop

Helen Bagshaw, OUSU: People had an issue with the derisory nature of original wording, this one just shows what sex-ed is for.

Opposition:

Ed Mayne, OUSU: Against amendment, because women need to have control to make choice regarding abortion. Amendment doesn't sit with context of motion.

Move to vote on amendment.

25 in favour.

4 against.

Amendment passes.

Back in debate on motion.

Move to vote.

Prop:

Andrea Miller, OUSU: We've heard enough.

Opp:

Alex Stafford, Benets: Another 5 minutes won't matter! Need to hear.

Move to vote passes.

Motion clearly passes.

Any other business? None.