

Council Minutes

3rd week Hilary Term 2013

3rd Week Council held on Wednesday 29th January 2013 at 5.30pm in Merton College (TS Eliot Lecture Theatre).

If you have any questions about OUSU Council, please contact David Railton, the Chair, at motions@ousu.org

- a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- b. Matters Arising from the Minutes
- c. Ratifications in Council
- d. Elections in Council
 - LGBTQ Officer
 - 2 Positions for Rules Committee
 - 2 Positions for JS(EC)SM
 - 2 Positions for Deputy Returning Officer
 - 2 Positions for Scrutiny Committee
 - 5 positions for Complaints Committee
 - 3 positions for Internal Affairs
- e. Reports from the Sabbatical Officers
- f. Reports from the Executive Officers who wish to make reports
- g. Questions to Members of the Executive
- h. Emergency Motions
- i. Passage of Motions Nem Con
- n. Other Motion
 - 1. Campaign Names
- m. Any Other Business

a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

No matters arising, minutes passed.

d. Elections in Council

The following positions were up for election in OUSU Council of 3rd week.

LGBTQ Officer

2 positions for Rules Committee - consists of both student and staff members of the University and is responsible for making regulations for the conduct of student members. For more information email motions@ousu.org

2 positions for the Joint Subcommittee of the Education Committee with Student Members - A University committee that reviews the democratic procedures of the Student Union, such as our elections and budget. For more information email motions@ousu.org

2 positions for Deputy Returning Officer - Deputy Returning Officers are responsible for assisting the Returning Officer in running elections, including this term's annual cross-campus elections. Successful candidates will serve for one term, and will be required to chair hustings, undertake administrative tasks

in the OUSU offices, and to support the Returning Officer generally. For more information contact motions@ousu.org

2 positions for Scrutiny Committee - Scrutinises the work of the OUSU Executive and the Divisional Board Representatives. Has the power to call officers to be interviewed and request documents. Issues a report each term to OUSU Council. To serve until the end of Michaelmas Term 2013. For more information contact motions@ousu.org

5 positions for Complaints Committee - Complaints board deals with any complaints raised through OUSU's statutory complaints procedure. Successful candidates will serve for one year, and further information can be obtained from motions@ousu.org

3 positions for Internal Affairs Committee - Internal Affairs Committee reviews proposed amendments to the Student Unions Governing Documents, ensuring they remain coherent and legal. For more information contact motions@ousu.org

All positions were uncontested and no husts were required.

Election Results;

Jack Matthews, Univ elected to JS (EC)SM

Nick Cooper (St John's) and Beth Hanson-Jones (St Hugh's) elected as DRO's

Alex Cibulskis (Wadham) elected to Scrutiny Committee

Andrew Griffin (Christ Church) elected to Complaints Committee

e. Reports from the Sabbatical Officers

Chris Gray - VP Graduates

Put in touch societies for International Festival; also working on careers for D Phils

David Messling - VP Access & Academic Affairs

Teaching Awards nominations open today, please go there and nominate your favourite lecturer, supervisor or tutor, providing case studies and examples for future students.

Katie Colliver -VP Welfare & Equal Opportunities

Hanging out with my campaigns a lot. More recently been working with CRAE and the BME Officer on access to Oxford. I am working on an anonymous incident reporting system on line.

David Messling - VP Access & Academic Affairs

One thing didn't report, the OUSU information campaign is being rolled, the posters have now been printed, simple information about what we do for students, surprised not done in the past, will be complemented by David and I appearing on Oxide radio, we will be interviewing each other on the simple messages, prelims and sky subscription savings.

Sarah Santhosham - VP Charities & Community

Volunteering showcase at end of 5th week in Town Hall, to showcase volunteering projects to get people to interact and work together, please come and register for a place. On facebook. Looks set to be a good day, got great speakers.

RAG Charity Nominations are now open, please nominate as nominations close next Thursday

No questions.

h. Emergency Motions

1. OUSU's Destructively Low Block Grant Funding

OUSU Council NOTES

1. That OUSU currently receives an annual block grant from the University and Colleges of under £400,000, compared to an average block grant of £1.8M in other Russell Group universities (which have on, average, a similarly-sized student body).
2. That even if grants from Colleges and Halls to their common rooms (as mini-student unions) were included, the total figure for grants to all student union-type bodies in the Collegiate University would still only amount to approximately £1.1M per year, well below the Russell Group average.
3. That this underfunding of OUSU prevents it from doing the job that its individual members and constituent common rooms expect of it, especially with respect to the implementation of electoral promises and the communication of its current activities and services to its 22 000-strong membership.
4. That OUSU Council's Scrutiny Committee has reported that this extreme mismatch between legitimately high expectations and indecently low resources has had highly deleterious effects on the health and wellbeing of sabbatical officers (and indeed staff) in recent years.
5. That OUSU Council resolved in Trinity Term 2012 to express its frustration to the University at the paucity of OUSU's funding, and called on the University to remedy this situation.
6. That the University has not remedied the situation, and has given early indications that OUSU's budget will instead suffer a real-terms cut for 2013-2014.
7. That the OUSU Trustee Board, at its most recent meeting, expressed its concern at the prospect of a real-terms cut to OUSU's budget and the need to bring this to the immediate attention of OUSU Council, and the student body at large.

OUSU Council now therefore RESOLVES

1. To express its frustration that its resolution on this matter in Trinity Term 2012 does not appear to have been duly heeded by the University.
2. To express its complete dissatisfaction with the current level of block grant, relative both to OUSU's own institutional needs and other Russell Group student unions.
3. To express its deep concern over the unsustainability of OUSU's current activities and services under a budget suffering a real-terms cut.
4. To mandate the President to write to the Vice-Chancellor of the University, and to take other appropriate actions, in furtherance of the above resolutions.

Proposed: *David J. Townsend (St John's College)*

Seconded: *David Messling (St John's College)*

David Townsend (St John's College)

Hope everyone has looked through it and hope nobody concerned about time frame, but is a sense of emergency. There is a deep underfunding issue which can be seen from the figures ousu gets £19 per head for students other Russell Groups get £83, which tells you why OUSU has problems engaging with students, even adding in what the colleges get still shows you why there is a drastic funding gap. This manifests in a way that OUSU can't always do what you want us to do, such as running our campaigns, such as fixing the website, which should have happened years ago, and is for over 22,000. The training we deliver to common room presidents and all the other things, teaching awards fighting for better funding for postgraduates. Have been at the expense of sabs and staff, not a situation that is sustainable and frustrates the democratic mandate, because the university has been mean with its money and underfunds us. I understand the irony of saying we don't get enough money, but no wonder we can't deliver services you want. There will be a cut not an increase, they will be giving us a real time cut, this will mean delays in your democratic mandate, it is Tom and his team who will be trying to deliver this.

Purpose to bring to your attention and ask for your support to lobby the University on this. You can see there are specific things about mandating me to write a letter to the VC

Reason emergency as after deadline but accepted as came out of trustee meeting which came about after the deadline.

Jack Matthews (Univ)

My question is are we having any luck in spending the money we get rather than it being ringfenced?

David Townsend (St John's)

Tied up with the total funding question, hoping this will be got rid off but it won't enable us to

Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln)

What format of lobbying,

David Townsend (St John's)

Write again to VC in addition to take other actions as appropriate, interested in hearing how to take forward. Had idea of a petition taken across the student body as OUSU is every commpn room that it is affiliated, every undergraduate that has a fee packet negotiated by us every post grad that gets a scholarship

Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln)

Is there a formally constituted power to handle this?

David Townsend (St John's)

Run through sabs but interested in other people working with us, is time sensitivity has to happen fairly quickly. Good to get things done rather than make

Harry Burt (Trinity)

Examples of point 3, that you would have liked OUSU to do but restricted in a financial state

David Townsend (St John's)

My manifesto implementing a cost of living index which could be used in negotiation of rents, this will get you lower rents than you have. Haven't done as haven't got funding for research and development. The website very important for all those applying to Oxford, who look at before come here need to present best face if going to have the best applicants. The shadowing scheme, the CRB forms, access schemes.

Richard (Merton)

How about Cambridge

David Townsend (St John's)

Different place, get permanent staff on secondment buildings free, they are in some ways worse are negotiating for a block grant. This is why CUSU and OUSU have problems reaching out to their students.

Harry Burt (Trinity)

Keen on information drive, came up when access figures published. Think good thing to be doing, concern about why that doesn't come up in council notes. Always seems to be here's what we want everyone to do?

David Townsend (St John's)

Situation about NSS 39% not good enough, way get to rise is not just look at the figures in the middle the plurality response is don't know, doesn't know what OUSU does, all to play for not saying know what OUSU does but don't like it. Information campaign is because you don't already know what we do.

Tom Rutland (Jesus)

People are going to be widely in favour, but explain to your students why OUSU has the shortfalls, the idea the money could be less next year is dreadful, would be impossible to implement the ideas we have for next year with this cut.

Motions passed.

2. Consultation on Potential Changes to timing of OUSU elections

OUSU Council Notes:

1. The Electoral Review Group (ERG), who are reviewing OUSU's Annual Statutory Elections in the hope of improving them.
2. That the ERG has been receiving submissions from students across the University.
3. That some of the issues raised include the length of the ballot paper; lack of scrutiny towards Part Time Executive, Student Trustee, and NUS Delegate positions; and the ability of first year students to run in the elections.
4. That the ERG met on Saturday of 2nd Week, and there decided to recommend that the elections be split, with some of the elections taking place in Hilary Term, as well as some as normal in Michaelmas Term.
5. That such a change would require an amendment to the Bye-Laws, which to come into effect in time for the next election cycle, would need to be proposed by Monday of 4th Week.
6. That the ERG would like to consult Council on this major change before proposing such an amendment.

OUSU Council Believes:

1. That having effective elections are important for our democracy.
2. That consultation on and scrutiny of changes to our Governing Documents is a good thing.

OUSU Council Resolves:

1. To debate the issue of moving some of the elections to Hilary Term immediately after the passing of this motion, for an amount of time deemed appropriate by the Chair.
2. To mandate the ERG to take a steer from the debate on whether to propose a change to the timing of the OUSU Elections, and if so what form those changes should take.

Proposed: *Jack Matthews (University College)*

Seconded: *David Bagg (Balliol College)*

Emergency motion as arose after deadline due to timing of meeting.

Jack Matthews (Univ)

Keep brief, as mandates discussion afterwards if passed. One recommendations is splitting elections and have some in Hilary. If we want to do this then we have to submit to OUSU by Monday. Do you want a split and if so what split. If want discussion then pass.

Motion passed.

Discussion

Jack Matthews (Univ)

Reason for split, ballot paper too long and puts people off, therefore easiest way is to have two sets of elections. Trinity stupid. Take some of elections to Hilary. What we move is what we want to hear from you, Sabs, part time Exec, NUS delegates and Student Trustees. Think sabs and trustees stay the same, think too close to exams and they might miss out on jobs. Would move part time and NUS to Hilary would align with national NUS debate.

Chris Gray (Merton)

Not entirely convinced only evidence is that others do, think problem is communication, also take a lot of leg work. Splitting will mean two times work. I think risk will vote less. If do split already problem of getting PG's involved 1 year masters won't be able to run. If leave to same time will be restricted. Confusing 4000 students who are under represented this will make it even more difficult.

Tom Rutland (Jesus)

Want to oppose movement of sabs to Hilary, think bad much closer to exams will effect your ability to study. Adverse to splitting as think will lead to decreased turnouts as will have fewer people campaigning so even less people involved and aware that happening. Think could lead to even more positions on the part time exec which are unfilled if you don't have sabs encouraging them to run, especially as hardly any independents run. Decrease turnout would have to elect now as would be unable to debate the amendments and could only really debate officers.

Jonathan Metzger (Worcester)

Think unnecessary to split will put people off.

Sarah Santhosham

Running elections will impact the work of the sabbatical officers and permanent staff.

David Townsend (St John's)

We put sab officers at wrong time. Take Cambridge have it Hilary, cant have in Trinity. Michaelmas too early, the new students are unlikely to run and if haven't heard of OUSU as terrible introduction. This thing exists so please vote for me, when campaigns knock on door, bad introduction to organsiation. Think we are under representing our members would advocate moving to Hilary. There is no problem with candidates getting jobs.

Thomas Adams (Jesus)

First years most enthusiastic about elections, just have to encourage slates to speak to 1st years. Would include 1st year lawyers from running. In longer term we are moving voting to being linked in with single sign on which will reduce the task. Splitting the ballot paper isn't going to help would still be large ballots in both terms. People find out via press coverage if split elections won't cover NUS delegates or part time exec as no figure head.

Nathan Akehurst (Lincoln)

Take on board concerns is a long ballot, I agree with the other points in opposition. Easier to campaign if you have a bigger team, good for spreading the word don't think bad way to introduce people to OUSU altogether, think good raising awareness.

David Messling (St John's)

Student trustees sometimes have dodgy position where some are finalists so can only serve two terms, as leave. We don't want to leave the trustee board with gaps. With sabbatical elections is a trade off if you win don't have to do job search. If do in Hilary would have to do both.

Beth Hanson-Jones (St Hugh')

Do need tutor permission so as gets closer to exams think unlikely would get permission.

David Butler

Moving PTE would make it harder for them to run for sabs.

David Bagg (Balliol)

Please email me if people do talk to you about get them to email me. Should think about the Returning officer having a longer term of office. Think would be niggly admin things if having two elections.

No one wants to split the elections.

i. Passage of Motion Nem Con

7. CAMPAIGN NAMES

OUSU COUNCIL NOTES

1. That OUSU has a range of Campaigns, including those for under-represented groups.
2. Some of the Campaigns for under-represented groups have traditionally been autonomous, of which the Students with Disabilities Campaign' is one.
3. That disability theory distinguishes between a 'medical' and 'social' model of disability.
4. Contemporary opinion favours the 'social' model and the Students with Disabilities Campaign has expressed a similar preference.

OUSU COUNCIL BELIEVES

1. That 'Students with Disabilities' is a long-winded name, with an unclear acronym (SWD).
2. That the name 'students with disabilities' is reflective of the medical model of disability.
3. That 'Disability' or 'Disabled Students' fits better with the social model, and is clearer.

OUSU COUNCIL RESOLVES

1. To refer to the 'Students with Disabilities Campaign' as the 'Disabled Students' Campaign', pending the introduction of General Regulations making this name change official.
2. To refer to the 'Students with Disabilities Officer' as the 'Disability Officer', pending the introduction of General Regulations making this name change official.

Proposed: *Katie Colliver, (University College)*

Seconded: *Dwight Kelly, (Wadham College)*

Passed nem con

n. Other Motions

8. CAMPAIGN NAMES

Passed nem con.