



council minutes

Minutes of 5<sup>th</sup> Week Hilary 2005 OUSU Council

Chair of council: John Blake/Rob Vance

John Blake (St Hugh's): Starting off, the minutes of 3<sup>rd</sup> week council are currently unavailable, and we have no ratifications or elections to be made in council hence we'll move onto reports. Are there any objections to me making my report from the chair?

*No objections*

Apologies for not having written a report this week I have been very busy. There are two major things to mention. The first is that following extensive campaigning, the university has agreed to renew its green electricity contracts; for one year in most parts of the university but for two years within the science area. This is in line with the policy that we have and is down to such organisations as People and Planet and the Environment Committee.

The other thing is the case of Azim; last night myself and Antony Myers met the Immigration minister Des Browne before the debate in the Union; thanks to Linsey Cole who has been key in co-ordinating this and the vigil and lobby which was held before our meeting. From what I know this went well and I will be questioning those present about that to get a full picture of what happened.

As I'm sure you're all aware, the elections have been taking place this week and in the election for VP (Women) Ellie Cumbo was elected, with the election for VP (Graduates) remaining outstanding.

The amended budget has been completed and is presented to you all today.

In terms of the Charities legislation and the status of OUSU, I am hoping to arrange a meeting with the President of CUSU, who are currently independent and will report back when this meeting has taken place. I'd now like to ask the VP (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) to make a report.

Nicky Ellis (Queens): Sorry for not having submitted a written report, and I would blame the elections for that. I'd just like to draw your attention again to the counselling service since that is constituting a worse problem than ever at the moment. I had a meeting with the head of the counselling service and have written a summary of the meeting; if you'd like any information then do get in contact with me but I will be circulating this to the CR Presidents. The problem at present has been that two staff have been on sick leave, however there is no provision in the budget to cover extended sick leave although there has been some money put forward from a trust fund. Though this money has been provided the service is still not functioning as normal, although you should still advise people to ring them as they often have cancellations, meaning those requesting appointments should get one before the end of term. Of course, people can always get an emergency referral from their GP; this was never meant to be an emergency service by any means. This problem is short-term however the lists continue to grow and I would like to say this is not the counselling service's fault – they'd like to have more funding as much as anyone so I am going to launch a proper campaign to lobby both the university and colleges, who all contribute to the funding. I'll be circulating a motion for JCRs and MCRs but if you have any other ideas on how we can campaign for this then get in contact with me.

The other thing is the health centre however that is covered in the emergency motion so I will leave any discussion of that until the motion is considered.

John Blake (St Hugh's): Any questions to the VP (Welfare and Equal Opportunities)? On seeing no questions could the VP (Women) make her report please.

Bex Wilkinson (SEH): I have written a report for this week however they seem to be currently unavailable. We held the election for my successor with the count finishing at 1am, which was good for all concerned. However I have mostly been spending my time organising the Women's cabaret – that is to say a cabaret in which only women can perform however all are welcome to attend, with all proceeds going to the Oxford Rape Crisis Centre, a very good cause.

Also, if you know your college is sending delegates to the NUS Women's conference then could you let me know, as I will be organising transport? We are centrally disaffiliated so they will not let me have a list although as I'm sure you can all understand it would be useful for me to know.

Finals forums are also being organised and if anyone knows of a female maths tutor that they think would be able to take part could you let me know.

John Blake (St Hugh's): Any questions for the VP (Women)?

Oliver Clifford Mobley (Wadham): Who won the election for VP (Women)?

Bex Wilkinson (SEH): Ellie Cumbo.

John Blake (St Hugh's): Could we have a report from the VP (Graduates) please?

Julian Brown (St Anthony's): This will be a short speech; mostly I have been meeting and consulting with both MCR Presidents and OUSU reps as well as discussing the issue of 4<sup>th</sup> year fees. However I do have to say that the events of the last few days have somewhat overshadowed the past two weeks but I'm sure you all know what I mean so I'll leave that there.

John Blake (St Hugh's): I've received apologies from the VP (Access and Academic Affairs) as she is currently at a very important meeting of the Admissions Working Party.

The VP (Charities and Community) has also sent his apologies for being late, as he is tidying up after the twelve-hour music marathon yesterday.

Would any of the Executive Officers like to submit a report?

Helen Bagshaw (Balliol): Target Schools is currently organising the Easter Visiting Scheme and I know Linsey has sent emails round to the OUSU reps and Presidents for your mailing lists but just to ask if you could further plug this; we want as many people as possible to go back to schools in their local area to talk about student life and applying to Oxford. If anyone wants any more information then see [www.ousu.org/visitingcheme](http://www.ousu.org/visitingcheme) or send an email to Linsey on [access@ousu.org](mailto:access@ousu.org)

Tom Dale (Corpus Christi): In the last council we discussed the OUSU Ethics committee and the use or not of sweat shop labour, and I said that we would be meeting with Mike Davis, the chair of Oxford Limited. That meeting has now taken place and he has agreed to integrate into contracts the standards that we laid out and has also agreed to look at securing a certain percentage of products from fair trade suppliers.

John Blake (St Hugh's): As the VP (Access and Academic Affairs) is currently not here I'd like to suggest that discussion of motions one and two be postponed until such time as she is here to propose them; is there any opposition to this? On seeing no opposition we'll begin with the rule of interpretation.

Basically with this there will ideally be a period of brief debate and then the ruling will require at least two-thirds of the vote to be ratified. I have included in the yellow booklet a copy of the original ruling made by the Returning Officer, the ruling made at Junior Tribunal following the appeal against the Returning Officer's ruling and also my rule of interpretation. This deals with the status of Oliver Russell and hence whether or not he was eligible to stand for VP (Graduates) – at this point I'd like to apologise to Oliver for this having become such a personal issue. The sequence of events was that the Returning Officer validated Oliver Russell's nomination for VP (Graduates) and no complaint was made within the time period of two working days following the validation laid out for such complaints. There is provision in the standing orders for late complaints if there is deemed to be good reason for the lateness of the complaint; in this case the Returning Officer felt that there was sufficient good reason for the lateness of the complaint and hence revoked Oliver Russell's nomination. In the ruling made by Junior Tribunal, it is noted that although the Returning Officer acted in good faith, to revoke the nomination at this late stage was equivalent to disqualifying the candidate from the election – the power to do so being held by Senior Tribunal alone. Junior Tribunal concluded that the election must still be held providing a ruling was made by me in my capacity as President on the definition of graduate status. In article K of the constitution, it states that "Graduate' means any Student Member holding a degree or other qualification from a degree-awarding body recognised by the University, or otherwise registered as a graduate student of the University." Oliver Russell produced a letter from the Head of the Chemistry Department to say that he was considered to be a graduate by the department, and hence under the definition laid out in article K he is a graduate. This did bring up some questions about confusion at university level on exactly what constitutes a graduate, however council needs to consider this individual case. I have laid out my arguments in the ruling; are there any questions on the matter?

Julian Brown (St Anthony's): What would happen if council did not ratify the rule of interpretation?

John Blake (St Hugh's): in this case the graduate status of Oliver Russell will fall and Senior Tribunal will be called upon to exercise its power and remove Oliver Russell from the election.

Tom Packer (St Cross): As this is a Presidential ruling, is it the case that even if the ruling is not ratified by council all decisions taken under it will still stand hence Oliver Russell will still be considered to be a graduate?

John Blake (St Hugh's): Yes Junior Tribunal wouldn't have met if I had been asked to make this ruling earlier. This needs two-thirds of the vote to show support for it.

Peter Hughes (Hertford): What is the status of the election?

John Blake (St Hugh's): If council should agree with my ruling then the election will go ahead. If council sees fit to overturn my ruling then the matter can still then be referred to the university under the Education Act in which case an independent adjudicator will have to be appointed to consider the matter.

Peter Hughes (Hertford): When would the election take place?

John Blake (St Hugh's): Not certain, I need to have a discussion with the Returning Officer about the best date to hold it.

Alison Kennedy (Hertford): Will the election take place as it was supposed to or will nominations be reopened?

John Blake (St Hugh's): It will take place as it was supposed to.

Jo Lee Morrison (Christ Church): What exactly is council voting on? Could you clarify this for us?

John Blake (St Hugh's): Council is only voting on the ruling which I was asked to make on the constitution, which I circulated to Presidents last night via prelist; we cannot rule on either the ruling made by Junior Tribunal or the Returning Officer. If you agree with my interpretation of the constitution then the election will continue as it was supposed to with Oliver Russell standing against RON. If council fails to endorse the ruling, then the matter will be referred to Senior Tribunal so that they can remove Oliver Russell from the election.

Chris Allan (Somerville): Is it the case that if the ruling fails to be ratified then it is as if no decision has been made at all?

John Blake (St Hugh's): It is my belief that this is a binary situation – either Oliver Russell is a graduate or an undergraduate. There is the possibility that it may be considered as if no decision had been taken however we do need to reach a decision; we have to remember that this affects the next year of an individual's life and he needs to know and plan accordingly.

Jo Lee Morrison (Christ Church): I'd just like to make sure that the section of the Junior Tribunal ruling about referring the matter to Senior Tribunal would still go ahead.

John Blake (St Hugh's): Yes it would.

Nicky Ellis (Queens): Can we have a quick indicative poll to see how many people would like to take a five minute break to read over all the material? It was only circulated last night and I'm not certain everyone will have had time to read it all.

John Blake (St Hugh's): Would everyone like to have a five-minute break?

*General consensus indicates yes.*

John Blake (St Hugh's): In which case council is adjourned, to reconvene in five minutes.

*Five minute break...*

*...and back in session.*

John Blake (St Hugh's): Ok, are there any further questions on the matter? Seeing none we will now enter into a small debate.

Julian Brown (St Anthony's): There are quite clearly problems with understanding graduates that need to be addressed at some point however it is too late in the day. I agree with the ruling made based on a particularly flawed constitution, and would have to say that although several MCRs have stated they are not in favour of the election, there is always the option to choose RON if the voter doesn't agree.

Daniel Russell (St Anthony's): We have to consider that we have no one else and we need a VP (Graduates). It is logical that we let Oliver Russell stand for election as although he is not in every technical sense a graduate he is dealing with many of the issues.

Tom Packer (St Cross): I agree. There was no candidate to stand for the position in the first place. Many people who take on the position of VP (Graduates) have to resign over the course over the year due to their degree commitments; however this will not be the case with Oliver Russell. He does qualify, he does hold a degree, uphold the ruling.

David Holtam (Corpus Christi): Although I accept it makes sense and he is a good candidate I am worried about setting a precedent.

John Blake (St Hugh's): It is clear from the reports of previous Returning Officers and also from the motion that went through PGA that we need to radically overhaul our elections regulations and I'm going to propose in 7<sup>th</sup> week council that an elections committee is appointed to undertake a full revision and provide a definitive answer.

Jo Lee Morrison (Christ Church): As a member of Junior Tribunal, am I allowed to discuss the ruling we made?

John Blake (St Hugh's): Can I have a clarification of that from the chair of Junior Tribunal?

Nicky Ellis (Queens): Yes, you are allowed to speak as long as it's clear you're doing so in your capacity as a member of Junior Tribunal.

Jo Lee Morrison (Christ Church): I am a member of the Junior Tribunal that made the ruling and it was felt important to note it was vital that someone ran for the position. However there was a serious enough ambiguity in the status that it warranted discussion and hence

the need for a good candidate was not a good reason to consider this. Oliver Russell is a 4<sup>th</sup> year and has not had the full experience of a graduate student; he has not had to reapply, has not had to apply for funding and lives in undergraduate accommodation.

Tom Packer (St Cross): I did a masters degree that may as well have been a continuation of my undergraduate degree; it was at the same institution and in the same subject. 4<sup>th</sup> year chemists have to write a thesis and hence what he is doing could be considered closer to a graduate degree than what I did. It is up to the department whether people are allowed to continue into their 4<sup>th</sup> year – they can be prevented and made to supplicate if they are not considered to be good enough. 4<sup>th</sup> years are also very often members of their MCRs. As a D.Phil student I would class them as graduates.

Kenneth Clark (University): I would support the status and am in no wishing to make a statement about this particular candidate but it is serious in terms of representing graduates. Too much weight has been given to the word of the Head of the Chemistry department and we need further clarification; this alone is not enough to allow us to conclude the status.

Tom Dale (Corpus Christi): How many MCRs have expressed concern?

Julian Brown (St Anthony's): There are between 30 and 40 MCRs, and of those four have written very strongly worded complaints against the ruling.

Daniel Russell (St Anthony's): How many of these were complaints about the electoral procedures and how many were about the ruling itself?

Julian Brown (St Anthony's): I would say half and half.

Vava Gligorov (St Johns): The status is very difficult to determine using experience; this varies greatly depending on the department. For example, in the physics department students do not apply for a particular subject, they apply for a place and then thesis topics are sorted out later. Graduate students also do not have to apply for funding themselves – the department does this. If you are going to use the criteria of experience then you could say a lot of people have not fully experienced graduate life.

Kirsty Ross (New): Has anyone talked more to the Head of the Chemistry department?

John Blake (St Hugh's): It was necessary that the ruling be made immediately and so we could not consult with the Head of Department before it was written.

Nicky Ellis (Queens): I wanted to make three points. The first is the technical status, the second is the relative experiences and the third is regarding representation; will the candidate command the respect of other graduates and the University. I just wanted to raise the issues.

Alison Kennedy (Hertford): In response to several points made, it holds no water to talk about theses because undergraduates write theses. I am a 4<sup>th</sup> year undergraduate with MCR membership and though I accept that I haven't sat finals, I couldn't represent graduates as I live as an undergraduate. You can be a member of an MCR without knowing what it's like to be a graduate student.

Also, Article K does not mention supplicating and not holding a degree.

Peter Gunning (Pembroke): I would challenge people thinking that 4<sup>th</sup> year Chemists are not graduates to distinguish between them and D.Phil students. The way they study Chemistry and the way they work in groups is identical – you can't tell them apart. In other subjects such as Maths, 4<sup>th</sup> years are studying for exams and still attending lectures and tutorials whereas D.Phil students work in research groups and the behaviour is completely different. The same doesn't apply to Chemistry.

Tom Dale (Corpus Christi): Is it the case that he could have graduated after his 3<sup>rd</sup> year at any other institution then come here for his 4<sup>th</sup> year and would still be doing the same thing? But yet a degree from here means that he is disqualified?

Nicky Ellis (Queens): Point of information, Junior Tribunal was informed that this was not the case.

Tom Packer (St Cross): By the literal definition, he does have a degree. Paying undergraduate fees doesn't matter, as fee status doesn't count. International students pay more fees for example. And as for whether he will command the respect of the graduates, that's what the election is for – there's always the option to vote RON and I would happily do that if I believed him to be an undergraduate.

John Blake (St Hugh's): Would anyone object to the closure of the speaking list?

*No objections.*

Dan Simpson (Balliol): The experience of graduates is down to the subject they are studying; it differs across all subjects. We should hold the election as he has qualified for a BSc therefore is a graduate. The OUSU constitution is not the best reference point anyway; it refers to things from decades ago.

Oliver Clifford Mobley (Wadham): I just wanted to make the same points as the Chemist.

Chris Allan (Somerville): Too much emphasis is being put on the academic side of things. I share classes with graduates so there is no difference in the way they and I work. In terms of representation within OUSU and to the University it is more important to consider experience of graduate accommodation, fees and funding. It could change the status of many people if we only looked at the academic side.

Peter Hughes (Hertford): I am not saying that all 4<sup>th</sup> years are graduates; on a normal 4-year course they would not be graduates. But in this case he has sat finals and as such it is different from other 4-year courses.

Stephanie Johnson (Hertford): We are talking about issues that are not relevant; the graduate electorate are the only ones who can decide whether he can represent them. Rather than having a third reopening of nominations, we should support this election.

Daniel Russell (St Anthony's): I may as well be doing the 4<sup>th</sup> year of an undergraduate degree. I don't really know what being a graduate means; we're all students. He has taken an active graduate role and wants to do the job. If he's not allowed to run then we'll have a blank spot; no one else wants to do it.

Richard Tydeman (Christ Church): Does this not have implications as to who can vote? Should we be making a ruling on supplications and 4<sup>th</sup> years?

John Blake (St Hugh's): It was necessary for a Returning Officer's ruling. We do need discussion.

Ian King (Keble): The Sabbatical Officers have degrees but we're still classed as students so where do we sit? Can we vote in elections? We're essentially an anomaly.

John Blake (St Hugh's): As a brief point, the implications are wide but I faced a decision on the constitution and whether the difference is recognised. There are bigger questions raised; the amalgamation of the Graduates' Union into OUSU was done appallingly and answers lie in improving this.

Wen Shi (Magdalen): I'm from the same MCR as Oliver Russell and I've seen him representing the MCR to OUSU and the JCR. Considering the collegiate nature of the University we should bear this in mind.

John Blake (St Hugh's): As the list is closed, we now move to a vote. Is there any support for a secret ballot?

*General consensus suggests no.*

John Blake (St Hugh's): In that case I'll make the speech in proposition. My ruling covers the constitution as it stands; there are wider issues raised but we're not voting on those, the implications were discovered later. It is an imperfect system but we're working as best we can and council must now decide. Is there a speech in opposition?

Ed Griffiths (St Johns): There is an area of ambiguity and I don't know the candidate personally, but many of the issues heard here are completely irrelevant. Experience varies from one course to another – for example some masters are taught in the same way as undergraduate courses etc. The difference comes in applying, funding, fees and accommodation. We would be making a mistake to decide on based on the differences in academic life and so we should turn the ruling down.

*In favour: 35*

*Against: 9*

*Abstentions: 6*

*Rule of Interpretation duly upheld.*

John Blake (St Hugh's): We have one emergency motion concerning the proposed Central Oxford Health Centre. Can we hear a speech in proposition?

Samir Sinha (New): It has recently come to light that the Oxford Primary Care Trust is building a new super health centre and it needs a home. There would be 30 different doctors for the 60,000 people that would be using the centre, including many college doctors. There was a consultation process and the public was consulted; and though around 17,000 letters were written to people, the students should also have been consulted. They did briefly contact OUSU but claimed they had done a full review through it. They indicated a review through the colleges as well, but a poll of Domestic Bursars indicates that many were not consulted. It will affect all the students in Oxford and as such we want to ask the PCT to conduct a proper consultation.

John Blake (St Hugh's): Are there any short factual questions?

Tom Packer (St Cross): How is this an emergency motion?

Nicky Ellis (Queens): Although the consultation process has been ongoing it only hit local press recently. The Student Committee of Health and Welfare is on Monday and the meeting of College Doctors is on Tuesday, and this will be discussed at both. It has only just come to my attention through hitting the press.

John Blake (St Hugh's): Any other short factual questions?

Ed Young (Magdalen): It doesn't give clear reasons here; why did we turn down the consultation with students?

Nicky Ellis (Queens): It was a very stupid survey and they'd clearly already decided what they wanted. There is a tick list of facilities and the idea was that we would tick which facilities we would want at such a site, in order of preference. But the options are not all suitable for students plus the centre would be built in 2010 when most students will not still be here.

We also had other concerns; students whose GPs were far away would clearly think a nearer GP to be good etc. It was also not suitable for us to do it; they don't understand how we work. We did discuss it with the Welfare reps and some agreed, some disagreed, generally dependent on how far away their GP was now and how it would change. It was decided that it was not suitable and therefore there was no point in participating. It is not an appropriate method of gathering information.

If there are no further short factual questions, is there any opposition to the motion?

*No opposition, motion passes.*

John Blake (St Hugh's): In that case we move on to the main motions and the passing of motions nem con.

*No motions passed nem con.*

John Blake (St Hugh's): We will start with the amended budget and I'll propose. The notes and amended budget are included in the booklet. We are well beyond the expected income and I have to say well done to the business team for that, but we have had to spend a lot more money as well as time and effort to produce this. Are there any short factual questions? Is there any opposition?

*No opposition, motion passes.*

John Blake (St Hugh's): In that case we'll move on to the Returning Officer's Report. Can the Returning Officer give the speech in proposition?

Angus Heberton (New): Read the report; it's all in there. Some areas that present problems have been listed at the back, including ballot papers, the powers of the DROs and scrutineers.

John Blake (St Hugh's): Short factual questions?

Tom Packer (St Cross): There was a discrepancy in the rulings. There was a complaint about a St Hilda's JCR email sent round but there was only a 10 poster fine for that, but the yes campaign had various complaints against posters. It was not tantamount to censoring LIFE, regardless of the dictionary definition of censorship.

John Blake (St Hugh's): I'm going to rule out the question, on the basis that it is neither short nor factual nor a question.

Nicky Ellis (Queens): Can I bring a procedural motion? Was this sent out via email?

John Blake (St Hugh's): No.

Nicky Ellis (Queens): Have people had the time to read this? Do you want time?

*General consensus indicates no.*

Tim Bennett (St Peter's): In the passage on colleges, all the blame for problems seems to be put on the colleges rather than OUSU or the Returning Officer; does he take any responsibility?

John Blake (St Hugh's): Not a factual question.

Tom Packer (St Cross): Why has the report only been brought to 5<sup>th</sup> week council, rather than 1<sup>st</sup> week or 3<sup>rd</sup> week? Why was it not initially up on the web?

John Blake (St Hugh's): It has always been presented in 5<sup>th</sup> week council, as it takes a lot of time to write. We didn't receive it in enough time for the report to be put on the website.

Lucy Underwood (Corpus Christi): In the course of the report, it accuses one member of the yes campaign of "hysterical sobbing", one member of being "particularly sarcastic" and one of "a refusal to leave the building". It states that they know who they are, could you say who you mean?

Angus Heberton (New): I thought it was fair to mention the behaviour but not the names of the individuals involved.

Tom Packer (St Cross): Were they breaking election regulations by doing this?

Angus Hebenton (New): No this is just the personal opinion of the Returning Officer.

Lucy Underwood (Corpus Christi): Is it the case that an error was made involving statements that bar-coded material was handed in at 8:40pm, rather than at 7:40pm when the material was actually handed in?

Angus Hebenton (New): That was the error made.

Stephanie Johnson (Hertford): What is the current training for scrutineers?

Angus Hebenton (New): They are all trained by the CRO – elections committee does not oversee this process.

Dan Simpson (Balliol): Is it true that the Magdalen CRO put the key in the ballot box when it was sealed? And that this was actually the second year running that this has happened?

Angus Hebenton (New): Yes both are true.

Tom Packer (St Cross): Is the Returning Officer aware that despite suggestions of more details being put on the website, there were none there?

John Blake (St Hugh's): That was my fault. Time ran out.

Daniel Russell (St Anthony's): Have you seen the PGA motion that was ratified by council?

Angus Hebenton (New): I didn't receive the information.

Tom Packer (St Cross): In the case of the email from St Catherine's JCR, I assume it was from some official of the JCR rather than all students?

Angus Hebenton (New): Yes, the president.

Lucy Underwood (Corpus Christi): In Junior Tribunal ruling 6, statements were made which criticise statements contained in the manifesto of the yes campaign. The manifesto was handed in one week before polling, yet the ruling was only made at 7am the day after. Had any member of Junior Tribunal looked at the manifesto?

Nicky Ellis (Queens): On behalf on Junior Tribunal, no as that would be like Junior Tribunal looking for a complaint and they are not empowered to do that. The matter would have been referred to Senior Tribunal, since we couldn't have discussed issues raised by the matters discovered, such as revocation. Peter Hughes (Hertford): What would happen if the report were rejected?

John Blake (St Hugh's): It's not exactly clear. In the past it has been rejected but this was due to it being a single side of A4 and it in no way encompassed everything that had happened in that election. If rejected it would be brought back but if it is to be rejected then we must outline why. There has been no personal opinion in the past.

Tom Packer (St Cross): Are we allowed to make amendments to the report?

John Blake (St Hugh's): No.

Rachel Standing (St Hilda's): I was the St Hilda's CRO but was not informed about the ruling on the email sent round. Do you have any comment?

Angus Hebenton (New): Officials were instructed to remove posters, as were the yes campaign.

Tim Bennett (St Peter's): Following the previous question from Lucy Underwood, I would like the Returning Officer to answer the same question.

Angus Hebenton (New): I read the manifesto prior to the elections but it was Junior Tribunal that made the ruling on the manifesto as well as the campaign.

*Move to debate called.*

John Blake (St Hugh's): Is there a speech in proposition of moving to debate?

Oliver Clifford Mobley (Wadham): The questions are now neither short nor factual.

John Blake (St Hugh's): Any opposition?

Tom Packer (St Cross): My next question is short and factual and the issues are questions.

*Move to debate passes.*

Lorna Stevenson (Hertford): John, you said we can't amend the report but can we amend the motion?

John Blake (St Hugh's): If it is made clear that council made the additions then yes. Is there any opposition to this motion?

Tom Packer (St Cross): I have no objections with the large majority of the report, especially the recommendations, but I have concerns about things that have been left out. I would propose to add things that concern everyone caring about the elections, such as the details of the poster fines and emails to JCRs. There was a 150 poster fine for pro-life statements and this amounts to censorship. The difference in fines is setting a precedent and this is very dangerous. We should amend this.

*Rob Vance (Wadham) takes the chair.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): I have received an amendment that proposes to add to resolves 2 “All rulings made by the Returning Officer, Junior Tribunal and Senior Tribunal to be attached to the Returning Officer’s report.” Are there any questions?

Vava Gligorov (St Johns): Does this express opinion?

Tom Packer (St Cross): No.

Nicky Ellis (Queens): It doesn’t make sense and would cause confusion. Council cannot debate retrospectively on the rulings made. We are just trying to accept whether this is a true account of what happened. It may be wise in future years but what if council doesn’t accept the report and hence the rulings? Is it sufficient or not?

*Move to vote called.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): Is there a speech in proposition of moving to a vote?

Bex Wilkinson (SEH): It is only a statement of fact so we’re just voting yes or no.

Rob Vance (Wadham): And a speech in opposition?

Nicky Ellis (Queens): It is still not clear what this would mean. Would it be added as an addendum? Vote to accept by all means but we should clarify what this means.

*Move to a vote passes.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): Is there a speech in proposition for the amendment?

Tom Packer (St Cross): This would put in the public domain the rulings made – we’re not accepting the rulings, just making sure people see them in the future.

Rob Vance (Wadham): And a speech in opposition?

Nicky Ellis (Queens): It doesn’t do that. It needs a change to standing orders and won’t mean anything because it needs a motion to do that.

*Amendment clearly fails.*

*Move to vote called.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): Is there a speech in proposition of moving to a vote?

Bex Wilkinson (SEH): You may or may not agree with sections of the report but it is the Returning Officer’s personal opinion and there are no mandates from council. We are just deciding whether this is well written or not.

Rob Vance (Wadham): And a speech in opposition?

Tom Packer (St Cross): This raises profound issues and sets precedents for the future, and it would be an idea to debate them.

*Move to vote clearly passes.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): Can I see a speech in proposition of the motion?

Angus Heberton (New): The report sets out what happened, the problems and some solutions. It still needs a motion to adopt some of the recommendations after acceptance but if you think that it is an accurate report, then accept it.

Rob Vance (Wadham): Is there a speech in opposition to the motion?

Nicky Ellis (Queens): It is an excellent report but we should ask the Returning Officer to remove the sections about “hysterical sobbing” etc. The content is generally fine; it should just be taken away, revised and brought back.

Rob Vance (Wadham): We are now voting on whether to accept the motion and hence the Returning Officer’s report.

*Motion clearly passes.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): Now we move onto the next motion, concerning the Genocide of the Armenians; is the proposer of the motion here?

Lucine Shabazian (Corpus Christi): This motion comes after Holocaust Memorial Day. All we’re doing here is asking the government to recognise that what happened in Armenia was a genocide by way of a letter from the OUSU President and a petition.

Ed Young (Magdalen): What is it considered to be at the moment?

Lucine Shabazian (Corpus Christi): A war.

Daniel Russell (St Anthony’s): Is it genocide or a holocaust?

Lucine Shabazian (Corpus Christi): It can count as both.

Julian Brown (St Anthony’s): What is your definition of genocide?

Lucine Shabazian (Corpus Christi): Systematic killing of people by a state.

Rebecca John (Merton): What will the implications of changing what it's considered as be?

Rob Vance (Wadham): I'm going to rule that out, it's speculative.

Tom Packer (St Cross): Which governments currently consider it to be genocide?

Lucine Shabazian (Corpus Christi): The French.

Rob Vance (Wadham): As there are no more questions we'll now move into debate; is there any opposition to this?

*No opposition raised.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): In that case is there any opposition to this motion?

Peter Hughes (Hertford): It has nothing to do with students as students and as many people have no real opinion on it, is there any need for policy?

John Blake (St Hugh's): We should support this, as there is now a concept that the holocaust was not uncontroversial. If we commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day then we're clearly willing to say something more than that and take further action. I stood in the service on Holocaust Memorial Day and said out loud the prayer asking that it never happen again. We're just asking that the government acknowledge that this happened. I read on Oxford Gossip that people were questioning what difference a letter from me would make, and I don't think one letter will change everything but if we all write letters then it will start to work, just as when we lobbied Des Brown at the Union last night. Maybe some people don't have an opinion on this but most would say that genocide is a bad idea. We're here as a representative of students and clearly some students do have an opinion on this, and care about it enough to bring this motion before council. We should feel some guilt about this as a British state and we should push for it to be acknowledged, and it's not going to take up too much of OUSU's time to do so.

*Move to vote called.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): Is there any opposition to moving to a vote?

Tom Packer (St Cross): This is obviously a sensitive and important issue and in some ways concerns the role of OUSU. I am uncertain of my own views on this and need to decide what I think.

*Move to vote withdrawn.*

Tom Packer (St Cross): It is very rare that I am uncertain what to think about something, it's usually very simple to decide. There is some historical dispute, but no-one can deny that it was horrific; these people were regarded as a threat and hence killed. However firstly, on the point of students for students, we're not campaigning, we're just passing policy but Turkish students would be against this and we can't ignore that. We have no power to affect the British government and there have been many horrendous crimes throughout history, hence we could be setting a precedent for motions against similar things.

Rob Vance (Wadham): We are relatively pressed for time so could I remind people to keep speeches short and there is an issue of Ultra Vires in terms of how money and time is spent.

Lucine Shabazian (Corpus Christi): There is serious denial about what happened and Turkish students may deny this but many say similar things about the Holocaust.

Tim Bennett (St Peter's): If this is passed then in every council we could be asked to judge on other very ambiguous matters.

Vava Gligorov (St Johns): I want to make two points. The first is about students for students; why should we care about the definition of what affects us as students rather than as human beings. If we don't pass this because we're afraid that other motions will come to council, that's not fair. Yes there have been other events through history and these could and should be brought up; we need to inform people of them. It is vacuous to say that people have no opinions. We are here as representatives of students and we can't pretend that students have no opinions. If we accept that, in 10 or 20 years time we could have people judging on events happening now and not calling it genocide or murder.

*Move to vote called.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): Is there a speech in proposition of moving to a vote?

Lorna Stevenson (Hertford): We're just debating on the merits of genocide and are coming back to the same old debates of students for students. We need to move on.

Rob Vance (Wadham): And a speech in opposition?

Peter Hughes (Hertford): I want to outline why not to vote for this motion.

*Move to vote clearly passes.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): Is there a speech in proposition for the motion?

John Blake (St Hugh's): There have clearly been a great number of crimes throughout history but we're not talking about something that has no implications. Turkey is about to enter the EU, which is based on the idea of having peace in Western Europe but yet they won't admit to what they did. No-one can write things out of history at will – don't this isn't going to destroy us, we just need to say these things are fundamentally wrong and it will take very little time.

Rob Vance (Wadham): And is there a speech in opposition to the motion?

Peter Hughes (Hertford): We have to think about the fact that we're not a political pressure group. We represent students to the University and other necessary bodies. We know very little about this and there is real academic opposition to reclassifying it, so we should reject the motion.

*Motion clearly passes.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): Moving on, we come to the motion to abolish the position of Student Advisor; as this is a constitutional amendment, it has to pass through this council and two termly councils. This is therefore the first of three readings, and it cannot be amended at the final reading so if you want to amend it, do it now.

Tom Packer (St Cross): Are we able to amend sections that do not affect the constitution later?

Rob Vance (Wadham): Yes, I have made the decision that you can do that.

Nicky Ellis (Queens): Or you could just amend it now.

Rob Vance (Wadham): Yes it can be changed now. Can we hear a speech in proposition of the motion?

Nicky Ellis (Queens): There is an allusion that there is better information available about this but really there is very little. We have had the position of Student Advisor for 5 years and it was introduced when only the VP (Welfare and Equal Opportunities) was in the SAS and was dealing with the casework. There was a view that the long-term continuity would be a good thing. However we now have more sabbatical officers dealing with casework and we need to be honest about what we can and can't do. Annily, the last Student Advisor, was a trained counsellor but wasn't allowed to counsel students. As an advice service we do well on academic advice; we are able to empathise well and it is important that we know about the issues for lobbying the University. We aren't able to give legal or technical advice and even if we were, the Student Advisor would not fill these gaps; it would take someone with legal knowledge to fill the gap and that would cost a considerable amount of money plus there is the issue of someone permanent and full-time being line managed by sabbatical officers. We can't afford a lawyer and is it even the role of the student union to provide this? If we had no constraints on budgets then this is one of many things we'd love to be able to have, a counselling service amongst others, but as the previous Student Advisor said in her annual report, we can't carry on in the current manner as there is very little for a Student Advisor to do.

Rob Vance (Wadham): Are there any short factual questions?

Tom Packer (St Cross): In council believes 4 it says "that the service is not comparable to many other student union advice centres, which run parallel to the student unions, with separate managers and procedures. Can you explain a little more about how it works at other Student Unions?

Nicky Ellis (Queens): It tends to be run as a student advice centre, almost like the service of GPs etc. We can't confirm who does what, it's to do with lobbying the University.

Rob Vance (Wadham): Is there any opposition to this motion?

*No opposition, motion passes.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): Now we move on to the VP (Access and Academic Affairs) motion. Can I ask Linsey to propose the motion?

Linsey Cole (St John's): I'll try to be brief. There have been long-term considerations since the creation of the post; in the last report of Rhodri Thomas, the VP (Access and Academic Affairs) for 2000-1, it says "The main objectives of the this year was to justify the creation of the position of Vice-President (Access and Academic Affairs). I believe this has been achieved. On a wider range of issues I believe have shown that Access and Academic Affairs need a full-time sabbatical officer and that these issues can only be tackled properly with a full-time officer." This showed that even in the first year of creation, each part of the job was equally important. In the Futures and Funding report it says "The VP (Access and Academic Affairs) has a range of portfolios that constitutes too heavy a workload." and it is important that we raise these issues.

Although the position has not been around that long, there have been huge changes since it's creation. At the OUSU level, the VP (Access and Academic Affairs) is now part of the SAS and casework takes up a large proportion of my time. In terms of the University, we now have representation on more committees than ever. There's also been the academic strategy paper to be introduced in the future, and this will affect students.

On a national scale, there have been changes in terms of top-up fees and bad press reports.

It is important that we effectively know what's happening.

In this quote from Sonia Sodha, VP (Access and Academic Affairs) in 2002-3, it says "However, it's crucial that we still have student-led access initiatives – very often it's the fact that students care enough about access to produce their own publications and events that help to challenge stereotypes and preconceptions in the minds of prospective applicants and their teachers." This shows exactly why we need to do access work; there has been a decrease in student-led access recently as well.

If we are to have no Student Advisor then it is even more crucial to have a full-time sabbatical officer to deal with the casework and continue to lobby the University. If stint reform continues to pass, we need to keep an eye on this. There's also a massive amount of co-ordination that needs to be done and requires a full-time officer. There need to be co-ordination between common rooms and the faculties and divisional boards; there's no point in having representation if there is no co-ordination.

In terms of money, you've just passed the amended budget, showing how much income we're making from Entz. The University funds 40% of my position but we can hopefully increase the amount of money they contribute. I need to find this out but, as this is the first reading of three, you should vote for it now in terms of viability and not finances.

To finish off, I'll read a quote from the last report to council made by my predecessor, Louise McMullan. "So often I feel like the two parts of my job are in conflict. In academic affairs casework and sitting on University committees I see this place at it's worst; racist, sexist, socially elitist and sometimes just absurd. If you're then faced with a group of particularly cynical prospective students from South Yorkshire it's rather hard to sell the place. We really should have two sabbaticals, one for Access and one for Academic Affairs. Not just because there is this conflict, but because there's more than enough work for the pair of them to do, and hey Cambridge do it, so why can't we?"

Rob Vance (Wadham): Are there any short factual questions?

Tom Packer (St Cross): Does this effectively just split the current job descriptions?

Linsey Cole (St John's): Not really, as the current job description is out of date anyway.

Tom Packer (St Cross): Can we have the existing job descriptions?

Linsey Cole (St John's): In terms of Access there's Target Schools, mentoring projects and co-ordinating all things access. In terms of Academic Affairs there's the SAS and then a huge variety of committees mentioned in the new job descriptions in the motion.

Daniel Russell (St Anthony's): Would the section about sending the VP (Academic Affairs) to University Council mean there was no longer a representative elected in council?

Linsey Cole (St John's): Yes.

Chris Allan (Somerville): Has there been anything taken away from the job descriptions?

Linsey Cole (St John's): No.

Rob Vance (Wadham): I have just received an amendment, which proposes to strike from Standing Orders Article D (i) "To change: i) The University Council. One student elected at the last OUSU Council of Michaelmas Term, to serve for a calendar year; the OUSU Vice-President (Graduates); the OUSU President.

To:

i) The University Council : the OUSU Vice-President (Graduates); the OUSU President and the OUSU Vice-President (Academic)." and renumber accordingly. Is there a proposer for this motion?

Dan Simpson (Balliol): We currently send three people to University Council; the President, VP (Graduates) and a representative from council. We shouldn't change this to the VP (Academic Affairs) as the council rep is a current student therefore has a different perspective and can speak for current students. We send serving students to most other committees.

Rob Vance (Wadham): Is there any opposition to this amendment?

John Blake (St Hugh's): Having attended University Council as both the council rep and OUSU President, I can honestly say that most people that go don't really understand what happens and being a current student doesn't help. Everything has been discussed previously on boards that the same people as are at University Council sit on. One of the reasons I'm generally so bemused at University Council is

because I don't sit on the committees prior to it that discuss academic issues; Linsey does. She has to explain what's happened to me and then I have to present them in Council. The benefit of having the VP (Academic Affairs) attend University Council is enormous in comparison to having an elected current student.

Rob Vance (Wadham): Is only sending three people a decision by the University Council?

John Blake (St Hugh's): Yes.

Chris Allan (Somerville): I do agree with Dan but since the decision is between a VP (Academic Affairs) and a current student it is simple. There is a much broader knowledge of affairs if we send the VP (Academic Affairs) rather than the current student. It seems mad to send the current student just because of democracy.

Linsey Cole (St John's): I have thought a lot about it. If there is no consistency then we have poorer representation, especially if there aren't good relations between the president and the VP (Academic Affairs), as happened last year.

Emma Norris (Somerville): I oppose this amendment for two reasons. I was elected by council and made no contribution at all in University Council; there is an intricate web of committees and no-one will have the knowledge about them unless they are a sabb. Current students can't do a better job than the sabbs, they are there to represent students as full-time officers and we need to do this as current students can't apply the same amount of time.

*Move to vote called.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): Can I hear a speech in proposition for moving to a vote?

Bex Wilkinson (SEH): We have all made up our minds, let's just vote.

Rob Vance (Wadham): And a speech in opposition?

Dan Simpson (Balliol): I haven't had the chance to reply.

*Move to vote clearly passes.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): We're now voting on the amendment; is there a speech in proposition?

Dan Simpson (Balliol): We've heard speeches that seem to indicate why it would be good not to send the President rather than the current student. It would be good to have the part-time and full-time combination.

Rob Vance (Wadham): And a speech in opposition?

John Blake (St Hugh's): There are very good reasons for sending the President, and for sending the VP (Academic Affairs). It is essential, particularly on matters such as academic strategy.

Nicky Ellis (Queens): As a point of order, can you read out the amendment again?

Rob Vance (Wadham): The amendment proposes to strike from Standing Orders Article D (i) "To change:

i) The University Council. One student elected at the last OUSU Council of Michaelmas Term, to serve for a calendar year; the OUSU Vice-President (Graduates); the OUSU President.

To:

i) The University Council : the OUSU Vice-President (Graduates); the OUSU President and the OUSU Vice-President (Academic)." and renumber accordingly. We are now voting on the amendment.

*Amendment clearly fails.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): We're now onto debating the motion as it stands.

John Blake (St Hugh's): We should fully support this motion as a key point from the Future and Funding report. Ever since the establishment of this post, the amount of work has increased massively, especially now that the Academic Affairs portfolio includes casework for the SAS. We can't go back now and cut the amount of casework; that would make us a bad Student Union. We need to keep pressing for more representation on University Committees and Target Schools keeps going and improving after more than 20 years now; both functions are essential and need to be carried out. We should not think about money today; we can go away and think about the money, as we had to do when the position was originally created.

*Move to vote called.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): We need a formal opposition speech so I have to rule that move to vote out of order. Is there anyone that's on the list wishing to give a speech in opposition?

Bex Wilkinson (SEH): I want to oppose this on financial grounds. I am concerned that it may be suggested that we use money from ZOO – we're not sure how long this increase in income will carry on. My other concern is that although I fully agree that Academic Affairs is an integral part of OUSU and something we need to have, I am worried about prioritising the role of an Access sabbatical when the

University should be doing something about this. I would only do this if the University paid us for the Access sabbatical. I agree that there is enough work for two people to do the job but I'm not sure it should be done in this way.

Rob Vance (Wadham): From now on I am going to introduce a maximum time limit for speeches of two minutes.

Charlynn Pullen (St Hugh's): I am in support of this motion – we need to sort out getting to people to say what the issues are, and there is no-one better to say this than the current students. The University will have to spend significant amounts of money on access so could easily afford to fund the position of VP (Access). Though we can and should have the argument about finances next term.

Tom Packer (St Cross): There is a large reason to oppose this. It is essentially a problem of having no money or relying on the University. The short-term funds of OUSU are reliant on ZOO and we don't know whether this is going to carry on. It is ridiculous to add another sabbatical position; not many Students' Unions have more sabbaticals than we currently do.

Nicky Ellis (Queens): I seconded the motion and if by the third reading the University has said that they won't pay for the VP (Access) then I won't vote for the motion. You have just passed the motion to get rid of the Student Advisor and the money saved from that would be more than a sabbatical wage. It will give us a good lobbying position and shows that we're serious about both areas of the job. There is definitely more than enough work for two people to do.

*Move to vote called.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): Can I hear a speech in proposition of moving to a vote?

Dan Simpson (Balliol): We have heard both sides now and I think we should move on.

Rob Vance (Wadham): Is there a speech in opposition of moving to a vote?

John Blake (St Hugh's): I want to answer things that Tom has said that are untrue.

*Move to vote fails, not a two-thirds majority.*

Tim Bennett (St Peter's): This comes from the Future and Funding report and we should look at it as a whole rather than taking it in parts. No-one has ever said that the problem with OUSU is that it doesn't have enough sabbs, and anyway we can just redistribute responsibilities to take up the slack.

Linsey Cole (St John's): Coming back to what Bex said, we did consider creating the position of Access and Equal Opportunities but Nicky is currently sorting the Equal Opportunities campaigns out; this comes as part of a long-term reallocation of portfolios. The University has £500,000 from top-up fees that it has to use for widening participation. We need to think about both current and prospective students. I too would vote against this if it were not financially viable.

Stephanie Johnson (Hertford): Linsey is the best person to know about this, and lots has changed and been added to the position since it was created. We can't under prioritise one part of this because the University isn't good at Access; in fact, it would be better to have the position of VP (Access) to use to lobby the University.

John Blake (St Hugh's): I just want to respond to some things that have been said throughout this debate. In terms of positions being funded 100% by the University, the VP (Graduates) was funded fully by the University but was cut-down until top-up fees, and we do need to be careful of commercial issues.

There is an enormous amount of work for the VP (Access and Academic Affairs). The University should pay a large amount for access; some things we can't have elected positions for, such as legal advice, as mentioned earlier. However access is something that is done better by us. The Vice-Chancellor loves Target Schools and they need to spend their allocated money somehow.

*Move to vote called.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): Is there a speech in proposition of moving to a vote?

Nicky Ellis (Queens): We've heard all the arguments and then heard them all twice more, plus we're going to lose the room soon.

Rob Vance (Wadham): Is there any opposition to moving to a vote?

Alison Kennedy (Hertford): Yes, I haven't been allowed to speak yet.

*Move to vote clearly passes.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): Can we have a speech in proposition of the motion?

Linsey Cole (St John's): As you've all heard, we need an Access sabbatical as we do it better. Common Room officers, your JCR needs people representing them, particularly in terms of Academic Affairs, so we need a full-time VP (Academic Affairs) too.

Rob Vance (Wadham): Is there a speech in opposition?

Bex Wilkinson (SEH): Lots of things are done better by students, which is why there are so many graduate jobs for example. Academic Affairs plays a key role but it is part of a wider debate as to what the sabbs prioritise, and this needs to be brought as a set of changes rather than like this now.

*Motion clearly passes.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): Ok, now moving onto the motion concerning sabbatical remuneration. Is the proposer of the motion here?

Daniel Russell (St Anthony's): This was something raised at Post-Graduate Assembly, and is something we thought needed to be taken into consideration.

Rob Vance (Wadham): Is there any opposition to this motion?

John Blake (St Hugh's): Can we table it until the next meeting?

Tom Packer (St Cross): On a point of order, I move to close the meeting.

Bex Wilkinson (SEH): I don't think we should close the meeting.

*Move to close the meeting clearly fails.*

*Vote by secret ballot called.*

Rob Vance (Wadham): Can I have a speech in proposition of voting by secret ballot?

Dan Simpson (Balliol): This affects how much money people in this room get, both this year and next year because there are sabb-elects in the room.

Rob Vance (Wadham): And a speech in opposition?

Bex Wilkinson (SEH): It takes ages and is complicated; we should only do it if it is worth it.

*Move to vote by secret ballot clearly fails.*

Peter Hughes (Hertford): What is the current sabbatical salary?

Rob Vance (Wadham): Look at the amended budget.

Daniel Russell (St Antony's): It's all in the motion.

Peter Hughes (Hertford): What is the percentage increase?

Triona Giblin: Can we have a quorum count?

*Below quorum, meeting closes.*