



council minutes

Hilary Term OUSU Council

i. Election of Chair of Council

Hinesh: Does anyone want to me chair of council? Can the RO chair?

Laurie Burton (Wadham): I'd like to stand

Hinesh: Declarations please.

LB: Labour Club. Nothing else. I've been to nearly every OUSU council, I am familiar with the way it works. I've chaired QR for a year and I think I can tell people when to shut up.

Hinesh: Any questions for the candidate?

Rob Vance (Wadham): What is your position on speaking limits?

LB: You have to strike a balance. If they're rambling then you should impose speaker limits.

RD: What proportion of people do you need for a secret ballot?

LB: A third?

RV: What is Quorum?

LB: 35?

RV: What would you do about the casting vote?

LB: You should stick to what was previously there.

Ruth Evans (SEH): Why are you wearing a hat?

LB: I'm having a bad hair day.

RV: Where is council best held?

LB: In Wadham. Or The King's Arms would be good.

Dan Paskins (Magd): Move to a vote.

ii) Termly Reports of the President and Vice-Presidents

President

Helena Puig Larrauri (St Hilda's): The F and F referendum is happening. We have stickers for computers in your JCR, they do peel off. Please take some. NUS usually grant OUSU one observer place for free, this year they gave us two and they voted for Rodrigo Davies (Wadham) to go with me. We can talk to them about different affiliation arrangements. I'd like to thank everyone who has worked for OUSU this term, especially the part time exec.

Vice President Finance

RD: Nothing to add.

Vice President Welfare

DP: Rosie sends her apologies, she's at a meeting.

Vice President Women

Catherine Wallis (Keble): There is a No Sweat meeting on Wed in OUSU, it's not specifically about university policy. Please come at 7.30.

Vice President Graduates

DP: Future and Funding - to do with graduate women we are following up the report and bringing and motion to first week council. We need a separate graduate section. As of Monday nominations open for VP Graduates for the next two weeks, There are also nominations for 2 more part time executive officers so if you know anyone interested.

Vice President Acc/Aff

HPL: Please email her with questions as she is away.

Vice President (Charities and Community)

Josefa Henry-Bochan (Wadham): Mr and Miss Oxford is on Monday at 8.30pm. Thanks to exec, especially Sarah who has organised the skydive.

Louise Radnofsky (Univ): Is it appropriate to have thoughts on motions coming to council this week in your sab report?

HPL: The comments that I made are about the content. I wanted to have them in writing as a good response.

RD: I take your point, but what I put in my report is more like extra information and I'll go with whatever passes as a motion but I thought I was addressing things that I had been dealing with directly in my job.

LR: Dan?

DP: I often talk about motions and I don't see the problem and I thought my insight would be helpful.

Ros Dampier (St. Hilda's): For the President and VP Finance. Given that the point of F&F2 was for every member of OUSU to make a submission and that you had an opportunity to comment is it fair to voice your opinion again?

HPL: What I have written is a response to the report. My opinions do get read more, which may be a problem.

Ros: But is it fair that you can comment?

HPL: yes

RD: yes

Daniel Conrad-Kooper (Balliol): Do the appointed delegates feel they have more to say or will they be adding things in the debate later on?

DP: I often comment on motions, it is right to do that, there's never been a problem before in my other sab reports. There is overlap between what comes up in OUSU council and what I do.

Daniel Rees (Merton): It's great that all these events are coming up, but could you email them out?

RD: Standard practice is for the relevant parties to send it out on email, as they have done.

Tom Packer (St. Cross). For VP grads. In terms of changing the structures of graduate representation is this a good time, as participation is now going up.

DP: Participation is going up because of restructuring. It is good to bring a report now so that I can explain my reasoning behind it.

Andrew Copson (Balliol): Did the VPF attend the meeting where the job of VPF was discussed?

RD: No.

iii. Termly Reports of the Executive and Committee Chairs

Ros Dampier: I had a question for Ian Caddy but he's not here.

HPL: He has a tute, will be here soon.

Timothy Ayles (Trinity): My report is on the internet

iv. Constitutional Business

Motion 1 - Elections

HPL: I'll take questions on any clauses you have questions. It is a good way to tidy up our election regs.

Ros Dampier: I'm dubious about the clause which bans activists from sitting on ballot boxes. A lot of people who sit on the ballot box and JCR members and often activists. It will be difficult for JCR's to cover those boxes properly. Hugh's had to be covered by OUSU exec and sabs. We don't have enough exec to do that.

Daniel Rees (Merton): If that's the only objection its not a problem, they are first JCR committee and then activists.

Tom Packer (St. Cross): Can we take it in parts?

Hinesh: No

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Hinesh: No

Louise McMullan (Wadham): For the sake of realism we should strike that bit of the motion.

HPL: I think it is feasible to have enough people on the ballot box, it also engages more people in the elections. The ruling Conor made worked.

RD: Move to a vote

Ros Dampier: No, it's important, we need a debate

Hinesh: 2/3 majority required

Clearly 2/3rd's

HPL: It's a good idea as a whole motion, it will make the election free and fair.

Ros Dampier: Will cause more problems than it will solve, you have to find new people, there aren't many people who will sit on an OUSU ballot box who aren't activists.

Vote Result:

For: 51

Against: 3

Abstention 6

Motion passes

VP Graduates 2004-5 Election

Dan Paskins (Magd): These are good recommendations, we need to pass this to have an election.

Hinesh: Any questions

Lorna Stevenson (Hertford): Did we get anywhere with getting ballot boxes in the departments?

DP: Yes.

Vote Result:

For 54

Against 2

Abstention 2

Speaking Limits

Rob Vance (Wadham): This is a clarification of a motion that was brought last year. The motion was split into parts when it shouldn't have been.

This sets speaker limits in the standing orders.

Andrew Copson (Balliol): How was the problem resolved about the paradox in the motion?

HPL: Resolves 2 is meaningless

Ros Dampier: If this motion passes the standing orders stay the same

HPL: Yes, but it legitimises them as there is some debate as whether they should be there.

Vote

For 46

Against 5

Abstention 4

Responsive to Change

AC: This makes it easier to change the number and nature of the sabs.

HPL: What happens to the bits in the constitution that have job duties.

AC: They'd have to get done by someone else.

Vote

For 47

Against 1

Abstention 6

Staffing OUSU

DP: This was amended the last time it was discussed it does 3 things which we all know need to be dealt with including appointing new staff and dealing with contracts. It is astonishing that this hasn't been done before. We need an appointments committee. The problem might be who makes up the standing committee, there is always a fear of change. It won't stop council creating jobs, but if we want to remove a member of staff we can make sure that we have a legal basis for doing so. It means we can arrange training, we will muddle along if that doesn't pass but we really need to sort the current situation out. All of the people on standing committee are accountable to council. I have discussed this with a lot of experts in the field of staffing and I want to challenge the idea that this amendment hasn't been well thought out. Ask me questions now, but voting for it will change OUSU for the better.

AC: I agree with the bits that I wrote, but there are problems with the amendment which are worth bearing in mind. There are 2 points that need to be clarified 5 and 6. How do you advertise the decisions of the standing committee. Also ratifications just get pushed through and it won't make people think. In the last 5 years council has never refused to ratify anything. Also, if the standing committee is a body with authority then I think you want people on it who aren't just exec but who are elected in council.

HPL: An example. There is extra admin work to do so the General Manager and myself decided that she would work an extra day by chatting. We need a procedure to do that, it shouldn't be just my decision. Also, balance of power - council is sovereign, the standing committee won't have the power to get rid of positions. The balance of power remains with council, if it doesn't work, council can change it. The motion gives authority to the standing committee. I would like to have a structure to work on.

Ros Dampier: No-one is saying that we shouldn't make a change. But we need something that will work very well, the amendment was tacked on to a well thought out motion. Someone should come back with this motion, with a proposal people agree with. This is not solving the problem that as council can overturn ratification. You can bring one back without controversy.

Tom Packer (St. Cross): Problems with the amendment. My previous University had staff procedure. This wouldn't work if you don't have a nice standing committee. Direct participation is a strongpoint for OUSU and this motion would reduce that.

Rosie Buckland (St. Hilda's): I would be happier if certain changes were made and I would be happier if this was voted down and brought back. I would prefer it if the standing committee could bring things to council.

DR: Move to Vote.

AC: There are two arguments in favour of the motion that I'd like to dismiss.

Move to Vote fails

AC: Once they change now, things can be changed quickly - this position has gone on 30 years without change, they motion shouldn't be passed as it is now. Also, the argument that the situation Helena spoke of can be dealt with without the amendment, the motion already allows for that.

Ned Nader (Balliol): Andrew has been working for OUSU for 5 years, both Daniel Finley and Andrew Copson are against the amendment. The sabs will still have

influence and it works if they are good, but we need to have a structure in case there aren't good sabs.

RD: Dan brought this to a lot of people including trade unions and the staff. Definitions of the working conditions going too far - where has this come from? eg if we want to move the general manager should she be consulted or should she be told by council what to do? The ratification of press officer was discussed so it can happen. We're putting the attention on this motion, if we get pass it we can change it.

Ros: Sorry for being annoying and speaking again. This motion wouldn't be easy to change, we will have to live with this for the whole of next year. Working conditions - the business manager spoke about mandates for his work. With the new structures we can't do that.

RD: Point of information?

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RD: Point of information?

Ros: No thanks. We'll just be given a line a information of just made to accept it. The motion does have some good things but there are problems.

TP: If we pass this motion and council realises it wants to change it a minority could block a change. We haven't had an abuse yet, so its not an urgent problem we can wait. Andrew and I understand why it wouldn't work in terms of OUSU structures.

Ros: Move to a vote.

DP: Let's hear the 8 people on the list speak

For 25

Against 25

Abstentions 3

HPL: You can make policy about what you want people to do but if they have a contract they can't do that. The non elected staff don't get mandated to council to do things. That's not a problem.

Dan Simpson (Balliol): The reason this amendment was brought was to protect the staff, this is representations to staff and workers. I don't want to work for a union that doesn't respect it's staff.

Tim Waters (Magd): According to employment law you have to reasonably informed about people's work - ie. the exec. This motion should be passed now and we should bring one to make it incrementally better next term. We have to respect workers rights.

Move to a vote

Digo: We've had points on staff.

Ros: 5 speakers are left.

Rob: How may haven't spoken?

Hinesh: 4

Move to a vote.

Vote Result

For 39

Against 9

Abstention 4

DP: This is the biggest debate we've had on staffing and if you don't vote on this motion we'll so back to the status quo, which is bad. We can make things better now, and go on to improve them.

Ros: The decisions of the standing committee will be uncontentious. Power will be taken from OUSU council and given to 6 members of the exec. That is more damaging and it will effect the student advice service.

Vote

Total 59

For 41

Ag 13

Ab 5

Motion passes

OSSL

Daniel Finley (Balliol): We are proposing that all the commercial revenue goes through OSSL and a change to the board structure. The VPF would report to council at the beginning of term.

Vote

For 44

Ag 1

Ab 0

Passes