



## **OUSU Termly Council, Hilary Term 2005.**

### **(1) Election of Chair of Council**

Candidate: Dan Simpson (Balliol).

Hust requested.

Hust: I have been involved for a long time and this involvement with OUSU has brought the knowledge needed to chair council. I believe I will be able to chair meetings in a fair, democratic manner.

Questions of DS

Rebecca Wilkinson (St. Edmund's Hall): Do you have any political affiliations?

DS: Oxford University Labour Club and Labour Party

Nicky Ellis (Queens): Can you explain the points of order to us?

DS: There are a number of procedural motions – for votes to be carried out in different ways, to call a quorum count, to move to no-con the chair, to move to expel someone from Council, to table any particular amendment.

Linsey Cole (St. John's): Do you think Council should have a permanent or moving venue?

DS: I think it's good to have a roving brief – so long as there is proper advertisement of this.

John Blake (St Hugh's): Can I ask Council to agree that Lorna Stevenson will act as returning officer? [agreed]

### **(2) Election of Returning Officer**

There were no candidates

### **(3) Termly Reports of the President and Vice Presidents**

Report from President

John Blake (St Hugh's): I have nothing to add to my report.

Questions to the President

Tom Packer (St. Cross): Any comment on The Cherwell front page?

John Blake (St Hugh's): I'm not trying to avoid questions. No statement was made to the Cherwell to allow debate in Council.

Suzanne McClelland (St Hilda's): What measures are being taken to resolve the situation with the OxStu?

John Blake (St Hugh's): We need to appoint a new editorial board and staff – this is the only way forward. These positions are open to anyone, including those involved in this dispute. We need talented, capable people.

Rachel S..... (St Hilda's): How will you train the new editors?

John Blake (St Hugh's): You appoint those with the necessary skills.

Dan Simpson (Balliol): The editorial independence of the OxStu is inviolable. Is that compatible with the decision made?

John Blake (St Hugh's): It is my conviction that this is not an issue of editorial independence.

Tom Packer (St Cross): Can you offer a definition of editorial independence?

John Blake (St Hugh's): The point at issue here is that no newspaper would negotiate with its owner through the paper.

David White (Wadham): Editorial independence is established in f1.7 of the constitution. Why was a paper produced?

John Blake (St Hugh's): It was the responsibility of the OSSL Board for financial and legal responsibilities it holds with regard to the newspaper. It has to fulfil its contracts.

Stephanie Johnson (Hertford): Why did the OSSL Board circulate its own opinion around OSUSReps and exelist?

John Blake (St Hugh's): People felt ill-informed. I felt it incumbent on me as OUSU President to explain what it was that had happened

Rebecca Patten (Queens): Considering the necessity of keeping all informed, does he disagree that the OxStu would have been best allow to print what it wished to?

John Blake (St Hugh's): A fair, free discussion cannot be had on the pages of the OxStu.

Suzanne McClelland (St Hilda's): Did the OxStu staff say they would report it as news?

John Blake (St Hugh's): No.

Rebecca Patten (Queens): Were the positions of the OxStu and OSSI irreconcilable to the point that this had to happen?

John Blake (St Hugh's): It's gone far too far. Discussion is clearly required. We need to talk about what to do next. Discussions got to the point that OSSL had to insure the paper would be produced.

Mary Partington (University): Can you explain why a paper had to be produced and who was involved in the production of the paper?

John Blake (St Hugh's): Contractual obligation meant that the paper had to be produced. It was collaboratively edited by people who came in to help.

Tom Packer (St Cross): Is it compatible with the editorial independence of the OSSL Board to edit the paper instead?

John Blake (St Hugh's): These were exceptional circumstances. The paper had to be produced.

Vava Gligorov (St John's): For future accountability, can we have a list of names of people who participated?

John Blake (St Hugh's): Only if people are prepared for this to be done.

Vava Gligorov (St John's): Are you ashamed?

Tom Dale (Corpus Christi): Point of information – data protection means that this information cannot be given out.

Tim Bennett (St Peter's): Given the inevitability of things being known through such things as Oxford Gossip, why not let the OxStu print what it wanted to.

John Blake: The point at issue is how you see appropriate negotiation between a body who owns a paper and those who participate in its production.

David White (Wadham): Where is it enshrined in OUSU's Constitution that the OxStu is not entirely independent from OUSU?

Nicky Ellis (Queens): Standing Orders, F.6.6.2 explain that the OxStu is administered through OSSL.

Daniel Russell (St Anthony's): If you were interested in negotiations why did you demand a yes or a no?

John Blake (St Hugh's): We needed to take a position and guarantee the production of the paper.

Tom Packer (St. Cross): Are you aware that there is a clear president for an editorially independent press on the national level? What is the principle which applies here?

John Blake (St Hugh's): The principle is the same – national newspapers have a board of governors.

Nicky Ellis (Queens): Procedural motion to give Dan Finlay (Business Manager) speaking rights.

No objection, the chair grants speaking rights.

Report of VP (Welfare and Equal Opportunities)

Nicky Ellis (Queens): In addition to my report, I have attended a seminar on self-harm, organised by the university. This was helpful. Can I draw attention to the current situation with the Counselling Service in my report? Also, I have received a further briefing document from the Primary Care Trust. There will be more early next term – contact me if you want more information. I'm still concerned and feel that we need to contribute.

No questions.

Report of VP (Women)

Rebecca Wilkinson (St Edmund's Hall): Thanks to all who helped and all who performed in the Woman's Cabert. The planned Reclaim the Night march has had to be cancelled due to snow. This will have to be moved to the second week of Trinity Term. We hope for the same support.

No questions

Report of VP (Graduates)

Julian Brown (St Antony's): I haven't much to add. Things are quiet and moving on in a sane, sensible manner.

Questions to VP (Graduates)

Ed Young (Wadham): When will there be an election?

:When was Senior Tribunal held?

John Blake (St Hugh's): It wasn't.

Report of VP(Access and Academic Affairs)

Linsey Cole (St John's): Please fill out forms for the Alternative Prospectus. Thank you for all the submissions offered on the topic of the Academic Green Paper. Thank you also to all those students involved in Target Schools Easter Visiting. On the National Student Survey, people are still being harassed after declining to reply three times.

Questions to VP (Access and Academic Affairs)

Rob Vance (Wadham): If you have not opted out of the National Student Survey, are you legally obliged to fill it out?

Linsey Cole (St John's): No.

Report of VP (Charities and Community)

Ian King (Keble): It's all in my report. It was Mr and Miss Oxford on Monday – a talent contest not a beauty contest, all good intercollegiate fun.

#### **(4) Termly Reports of the Executive and Committee Chairs**

Emma Jones (Keble): Apologies to Council for not having managed to submit a written report in time for today. I've been very busy organising things for the Keep Azim in Oxford Campaign. Can I remind everyone that tomorrow will be the rally in support of Azim? There will be cross-party speakers. Please bring our large delegations – your JCR Committee and your JCR banners. These things really so make a difference.

Bryn Addams: I'm afraid that I e-mailed my report in too late to be distributed round Council. If any JCR Presidents have haven't got back to me with details on rents please do.

Tom Dale (Corpus Christi): Can I draw people's attention to the Anti-Racism proposals detailed in my report. There's a lot to be considered. Please let me know if you have any feedback / ideas.

Iain Simpson (Magdalen): I haven't got a report – I've been busy. This term I've been secretary to the executive, keeping minutes of meetings. We've decided to keep verbatim minutes. I've also been helping out with RAG. With Health and Welfare I've done some work on condom distribution and looked into a list of external resources that we have.

Hollie Robson-Marchant (Univeristy): Further to my report, thank you to all involved in RAG over the past term.

Tim Bennett (St Peter's): I wrote my report before the events of this week. They have highlighted areas of concern in the running of OSSL. The majority of the OSSL Board are elected executive members. There is no one from outside. There is a need for democratic legitimacy.

Tom Packer (St Cross): There is a demonstrated need to define OSSL more precisely – it needs to be more democratic and more accountable. On the NUS – would people please look at my report. We will probably be running a second training session. If you are a member of the NUS you should send people.

Lorna Stevenson (Hertford): OUSU Reps – my report wasn't upbeat. Sorry not to have been there. Please send any ideas you have to myself or John Blake.

#### Questions to Executive and Committee Chairs

Rebecca Patten (Queens): Do you have a date for rent packs?

Bryn Addams (Christ Church): Sometime next term.

Ed Grierson (Trinity): As equal opportunities campaigns are without co-chairs can we abolish campaigns and get rid of the budget?

Nicky Ellis (Queens): Disabilities Action has a chair and there is considerable interesting the position of co-chair of the Queer Right's Campaign. Further, getting rid of a co-chair and campaign does not mean pulling the budget. We need to be doing a lot of work on this. How does the Univeristy make courses accessible under SENDA? It's not the case that we need to be doing nothing.

Edward Young (Madgalen): Would any executive officer like to voluntter whether they volunteered for the OxStu this week?

The chair rules this question out of order on the grounds that the OxStu does not constitute any part of the responsibilities of the executive.

### 5. Constitutional Business

#### 1. Motion to remove the position of student advisor (second reading)

In proposition

Nicky Ellis (Queen's): I'll be brief on this. The post does not suit the current structure. I'll leave anything further to questions.

There were no questions or opposition.

#### Motion passes

Lorna Stevenson (Herford): The results of the election are that Dan Simpson is elected as Chair of Council for next term.

#### 2. The Vice President (Academic) and Vice President (Access) motion.

In proposition:

Linsey Cole (St John's): There is a lot else on the agenda and people can debate it in substance. It's important for now that we focus of the principle and then we can go on to work out the financial viability of the plan. I don't want to bankrupt OUSU.

SFQ's

Tom Packer (St. Cross): If this isn't passed then we can still bring the proposal forward at another time?

Linsey Cole (St John's): It would reduce the possibility of effective negotiation. The change would happen in 2006 and the delay would be too long. There can be further debate next term, and look then at the financial situation. But we need two passings of the motion now.

Tom Packer (St Cross): Is it true that several people have claimed that we have too many Sabs already?

Linsey Cole (St John's): All of my predecessors are behind this motion as was F&F2.

In opposition:

Rebecca Wilkinson (SEH): To make the position financially viable it must be funded by the university. This will mean a constant conflict of interest. Further, the university should do this work for itself.

Debate opens:

Linsey Cole (SJC): I'm 40% funded by the University and am not compromised in the work that I do. The university will not oppose it. It's also an important principle that OUSU has separates the two. Academic Affairs affect everyone but case work levels mean that we need the job to stand on it's own. Access is also fundamental in importance, Top-Up fees will only increase this. We need to be doing this work. Please don't vote for financial reasons today. So this is 7<sup>th</sup> week Council next term.

Tom Packer (St Cross): I'm opposed to this for a large number of reasons. Firstly AcAff should not be divided from Access, they should feed into each other. Secondly it removes the Council member of University Council, thus ending student participation. Thirdly it can only be supported through the revenue of the university and this will make us reliant.

MTV

\*MTV opposed\*

In proposition:

Linsey Cole (SJC): We heard all of these arguments last week. We're repeating the same information.

Nicky Ellis (Queen's): We've just started a long and lengthy discussion. There are new things here and we should discuss them properly.

\*MTV fails\*

Tim Bennett (SPC): It's clear what this motion will not do – voting against this motion will not stop access work. We don't want another sab. We should look at F&F2 as a whole. Despite being a collegiate university we have more Sabs than most other students' unions.

Nicky Ellis (Queens): I don't understand the argument that we don't need more sabs due to our size. We actually have a small student body. We sit on university committee's, deal with case work and do access. This is too much. Most of the work OUSU does should be done by the university. With regard to money, we will say no if it relies on our revenue to fund this. If access work is funded through through us we are in a string position. We can refuse to act if they don't improve. There is no conflict. The more the university need us the better. We need a definite mandate to go into negotiations.

MTV

**MTV passes**

In summation for:

Linsey Cole (SJC): We have fewer sabs than Cambridge. Even if we move to have two people for my job we still have one less than Cambridge. The argument that my job fits together is not the case. Sitting in bodies defending students who have been discriminated against, for example, makes it difficult to then go and do access work. This was also difficult for my predecessor. If we don't vote for this today then we can't move forward. This is for the Oxford of today and tomorrow.

In summation against:

Tom Packer (St Cross): I don't accept the idea of job splitting. If there are problems with discrimination, people should know. In response to the argument that we don't have enough people, the problem is that we have so many Sabs and so few non-Sabs. Those with greater Sab teams have greater non-Sab numbers...

Rob Vance (Wadham): You can't introduce new information.

Tom Packer (St Cross):...if you believe that the jobs should not contradict each other, that the idea we have a new sabbatical is ridiculous or that we should have funding first then vote against this motion.

**Motion Passes**