

The Oxford Union Society Standing Committee Minutes

Standing Committee – 2nd week Hilary

DRAFT

Present: President (Stuart Cullen, Christ Church), **Librarian** (James Kingston) **Treasurer** (Rishi Patel. Jesus) **Treasurer-elect** (Dharmesh Nayee, University), **Secretary** (Will Chamberlain, Lincoln), **President-elect** (Laura Winwood, Hertford) **Mr McLean** (Christ Church), **Ms McGlone** (Trinity) **Ms Lischka** (Lincoln) **Mr Adams** (Brasenose), **Corey Dixon** (Ex-President, Oriel), **James Dray** (Ex-President, Mansfield), **Lou Stoppard** (Ex-Secretary, Christ Church), **Junior Steward** (Constantin Calavrezos, Somerville) **Bursar, Senior Treasurer** (Stephen Dixon, Downing College Cambridge) **Senior Librarian** (James Methven, Oriel) **CDSC** (Jonathan Leader Maynard, University), **The Returning Officer** (Andrew Mason, University)

In attendance: David Blagborough (Ex-Secretary's Committee, Somerville) **Liam Milner** (St Anne's) **Alex Priest** (Ex-RO, St John's), **Ollie Linch** (Ex-RO, Ex-CCC, Lincoln) **Ronald Collinson** (Ex-RO, Ex-CCC, Ex-Standing, Balioll) **Henry Curr** (Ex-Standing, Magdalen) **Pippa Neal** (Ex-DRO, Christ Church)

Opens at 17.06pm

The President would like to remind everyone that there is no reason for anyone to be late for this meeting and asks that everyone arrives on time in future.

Minutes

TSC proposes to ratify the minutes from 1st week Standing Committee with the amendment that Mr Curr (Ex-Standing, Magdalen) was in attendance.

Proposed: President

Passed: Nem Con

Matters arising

The President reminds the committee that the vacation day totals have now been circulated and opportunity to object was given. The evidence presented included emails that were sent, other members of committee confirming their presence and phone call records.

The Ex-Secretary, Christ Church questions the required total for those working in the Librarians office, she believed the tribunal report meant they only had to do 10 days.

The President agrees and says he will edit those totals.

TSC proposes the attached list of vacation days worked by members of committee.

Proposed: President

Passed: Nem Con

The President brings the committees attention to the Vac Reports, they have also all been circulated.

TSC proposes to pass all vacation reports present
Proposed: President
Passed: Nem Con

The Ex-President, Oriel asks if The President has asked for explanation from those members who are significantly short of their vacation day totals. Specifically about an officer who has only worked 6 days over the last vacation bringing a total to 15 out of 50 over the last two vacations.

The Junior Steward replies that this is not true. He had done something in the twenties over the summer. Also this vacation he had booked flights to be in Oxford for around 20 days, the snow delayed his travel, and he was wary of the cost of travel closer to Christmas as every day closer to Christmas was £100 more. He apologizes to the committee.

The President states that he thinks Secretary's Committee are actually amazing, having done all their vac days.

Mr Curr (Ex-Standing, Magdalen) enters 5.12.

The Senior Treasurer states that he has read the vac reports and found that one was just a long list of everyone contacted, which he felt wasn't very useful.

The Ex-President, Mansfield says that's actually what's required, even though it seems rather useless if there is also a spreadsheet with all the details in. He would also like to say well done to those who worked vacation days who weren't required to.

The President thanks The Treasurer-Elect particularly for doing so many days, No Treasurer Elect ever does this many.

TSC wishes the Treasurer-Elect Happy Birthday
Proposed: Ex-Secretary, Christ Church
Seconded: The Treasurer
Passed: Nem Con

Business of the CDSC

Miss Handel (Ex-Standing Committee, Hertford) enters 5.16

The CDSC gives us an update on debating, we have sent three teams to an IV in Dublin, two of these teams reached the final. Secondly, last week the issue of Pro-Ams was raised., he doesn't believe there is a problem, but he raised the issue anyway, however there is a sufficient problem with the supply of Pro-Ams and DSC are going to discuss ways to get people to offer more.

The CDSC leaves.

The Ex-President, Mansfield states that he would like to postpone the issue of Online Voting in elections until next week, it shall appear in the matters arising for next week.

Business of The President

The President has no Business

Questions to the President

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks about anonymous questions in the press.

The Librarian asks what was said in the newspaper.

The President replies that one was in the article about the private schools referring to a member running for Secretary's Committee; another was from an anonymous Ex-Officer. The Third was in an article about OxHub. He says that he has a way to find out who made these quotes and the perpetrators will be IDC'd.

Business of The Librarian

The Librarian has no business

Questions to The Librarian

The Bursar asks about the motion.

The Librarian replies that he will do it, after his essay,

The Bursar asks if the Lady who won the dinner last term has received the dinner.

The Librarian replies that he has come in to contact with the lady, and apparently her appetite for dinner with him has declined.

The Treasurer adds that he has given the lady a voucher for dinner at the Randolph.

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks about library committee appointments.

The Librarian replies that Richard Hill, Magdalen has been appointed by Library Committee as a new member.

The Ex-President, Oriel replies that Mr Curr has been on the list for a long time, this issue was raised in Standing Committee and in Library Committee before, and it seems odd that we then appoint someone else to the Committee.

TSC grants speaking rights for Mr Curr (Ex-Standing Committee, Magdalen)

Proposed: President

Passed: Nem Con

Mr Curr (Ex-Standing Committee Magdalen) states that he's not too worried about this now but a similar problem has occurred in Finance Committee.

The Librarian replies that he was confused in his head, between Finance and Library Committee.

The Ex-President, Oriel says that it sounds like something someone elected for more than one term should do.

The Junior Steward replies that if the chairman of the committee emails him with the applications and appointments he will keep a list.

The Ex-President, Mansfield states that it's the responsibility of the officer chairing the committee. It is a problem if a member puts their name down for a committee and get overlooked twice, something needs to be done about this. It seems as if it is a problem with the hand over.

The Ex-President, Oriel asks that The Junior Steward ensures that the handover details include a list of the people who have applied to the various committees.

The President asks the RO where the notice for applications to the position of the CC delegate to finance committee was placed.

The Returning Officer replies that it was at the top of RO board.

The President asks how long it was on the board for.

The Returning Officer states that it was placed on the board at 11.57 at noon on Friday, and one application was received. It was not advertised in any other way as CC was moved last week and the Returning Officer not informed.

President asks that we try to maximise the ability of ordinary members to apply for positions on these various committees.

The Returning Officer replies that he needs to know when the meetings of CC are.

The Bursar suggests that we have a "things you can apply for" section on the notice board. In words of one syllable, explaining how you can get involved in the running of the society, drawing the attention of members more than the little bits and pieces.

Ms McGlone adds that the Durham Union advertises vacancies on their website. We could advertise vacancies under the events section of the Website.

The Returning Officer replies that in the rules we have to put it up a big section about eligibility criteria, and suggests that it is the president's role to advertise the opening of

applications to be a DRO, which he has not done. He adds that he has not done anything against the rules, the notice was on the board for the required length of time.

Ms Handel (Women's Officer) leaves 5.29

The Ex-Secretary, Christ Church states that she thinks Bursars idea is good, it's very useful and easy to do. Members will read it and actually apply, she feels the people on library committee who are the most useful are those who aren't running for committee.

TSC grants speaking rights for Mr Linch (Ex-RO, Ex-CCC Lincoln)
Proposed: President
Passed: Nem Con

Mr Linch states that it is actually The President's responsibility to put up the notice as chair of Finance Committee, he could have put it up for however long he wished, the RO came in at the last minute and saved him by placing it on the board.

The Ex-President, Mansfield Questions why the RO was not notified of the time of CC.

The Returning Officer replies that he did not get the email.

The Treasurer Elect states that he simple clicked reply all on the first email sent at the beginning of term calling CC, he apologises for not checking the accuracy of the list.

The Ex-President, Mansfield Suggests that it is clear that this is a minor admin error and that we should make sure in future that the email list is complete.

The Ex-President, Oriel suggests we put something clear, easy to read, with no technicalities or Latin on the board, and suggests the RO should take on responsibility of making and maintain the board.

The Returning Officer states that this is an idea with great merit, which he will oversee.

Action the Returning Officer to ensure a sign is made in an accessible format and for those who are responsible to place the notices on it when made.

Business of The Treasurer

TSC proposes the debate expenses as recommended by finance committee to the value of
£517.42

Proposed: The Treasurer
Seconded: The Treasurer Elect
Passed: Nem Con

Questions to The Treasurer

There are no questions

Business of The Secretary

The Secretary draws the committees attention to the Ball Budget .

TSC proposes the attached ball budget for the Hilary Term Ball on the 19th February

Proposed: The Secretary

Seconded: The Treasurer Elect

Passed: Nem Con

The Ex-President, Oriel informs TSC of the suggestions made by Finance, that we should look to improve the number of food portions upwards and that we should negotiate a discount with RAG.

The Ex-Secretary, Christ Church suggests that people don't eat so much food, and RAG will be reluctant to give discounts.

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks about what happened to the proposal to work with The Russian Society.

The Secretary replies that he has met with them and they will be assisting with the provision of other food, such as smoked salmon blinis and honey cake.

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks if they are assisting with ticket sales.

The Secretary replies that they have offered to publicize the Ball but also asked for a discount for members of Russian Society.

The Ex-Secretary, Christ Church says this is not possible and commends the Secretary for putting things in for little bits and bobs, we won't be going into the contingency

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks how ticket sales are going.

The Secretary replies that as of lunch time today we have sold 176, that includes 100 in the office and online we have sold 76.

Questions to The Secretary

No Questions

Mr McLean enters 5.32

The President informs committee that the election of the CCC should have come under his business so seeks to return to the Business of President.

The Returning Officer suggests that the candidates are permitted to hush for up to three minutes if the committee wishes them to.

TSC grants speaking rights for Mr Blagbrough (Ex-Secretary's Committee, Somerville)
Proposed: President
Passed: Nem Con

Mr Blagbrough (Ex-Secretary's Committee) reminds committee that he ran last term, standing was split straight down the middle, but CC narrowly elected the other candidate who then went on to resign, he has been doing the job for 2 weeks, he's enjoying it, and thinks it's working well and he'd like to keep doing it.

The Librarian asks what drives him.

Mr Blagbrough (Ex-Secretary's Committee) says it's a desire to serve the members

The Ex-President, Oriel asks where's the cake?

Mr Blagbrough (Ex-Secretary's Committee) states that we had cake in the meeting today.

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks if he has a desire to change the society he loves.

Mr Blagbrough (Ex-Secretary's Committee) suggests he has a desire to improve the society within the rules.

The Librarian reminds committee of a past CCC who sought sponsorship for CC and prepared a lengthy sponsorship proposal and asks if this is something he would look in to.

Mr Blagbrough (Ex-Secretary's Committee) replies that if The Librarian were to write a report on the sponsorship proposal he would think about it, he's not ruling it out though

Ms McGlone asks how busy he will be for the three days of Torpids rowing later in this term.

Mr Blagbrough (Ex-Secretary's Committee) replies that races are an hour long during the day, finish by 5 as it gets dark. And whilst the CCC must be here in the evenings, there is much administration stuff that can be done at any time.

The Ex-Treasurer, University and Ms Neal (Christ Church) enters 5.42

Mr Adams asks that given the recent troubles with the position of CCC, which tellytubby would he be and why

Mr Blagbrough (Ex-Secretary's Committee) replies that he would be Noo Noo, who goes around cleaning up after the officers.

The Returning Officer distributes the voting slips

Mr Blagbrough (Ex-Secretary's Committee) is elected as CCC.

The President congratulates Mr Blagbrough and thanks Anastasia for applying.

Business of The Junior Steward

There is no Business.

Questions to The Junior Steward

Ms Lishka asks about the photos an MP has asked for which she passed the request on to the Junior Steward.

The Junior Steward replies that he has just emailed them back and was happy to deal with it

Business of Miss Simister

There is no Business. There are no Questions

Business of Mr McLean

There is no Business. There are no Questions

Business of Miss McGlone

Ms McGlone indicates that she would like to postpone her budget till next week, as it needs to go through Finance Committee and she needs to speak in detail with The Bursar about it.

Business of Miss Lischka

There is no Business. There are no Questions

Business of Mr Adams

Mr Adams outlines how last week TSC passed a motion to purchase a PA system from a company in London; he would like to amend this to purchase the PA system from a local company, City Audio Visual.

TSC proposes to amend last week's motion relating to the purchasing of a PA system to purchase the equipment from City Audio Video.

Proposed: Mr Adams

Seconded: Ex-Treasurer, University

Passed: Nem Con

The Bursar informs TSC that the reason for using a local firm is that if something goes wrong there is a much better chance of them coming to fix it.

Business of The President-Elect

There is no Business. There are no questions.

Business of The Treasurer-Elect

There is no Business. There are no questions.

Questions to The Treasurer-Elect

The President thanks The Treasurer-Elect for doing the job of CCC so well.

The Ex-Secretary, Christ Church wishes him a happy birthday

Business of Ex-officio

The Ex-President, Oriel informs TSC that a meeting of the new publicity committee was held, their report will be coming soon. But just on one small point that we should utilise the display boards where we can put down under every day what happens to keep the members informed. The CCC is to update it on the Monday of every week.

CCC adds that if the event is cancelled or moved the member of committee responsible should update the board.

The Ex-Treasurer, University suggests that it should be The President who update this board.

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks that as a formal committee of the union, has a Chairman and Secretary been appointed, and that the minutes should be passed on to the Junior Steward.

The Treasurer-Elect replies that he is the secretary and The Ex-President, Oriel is Chairman

The Ex-Treasurer, University wishes Happy Birthday to Marcus Walker, Ex-President Oriel

The Ex-President, Oriel asks about swapshop as last week they said they were paying, and they apparently think they're not.

The President says that he shall investigate, it is very odd.

The President would like to now discuss the proposed Bar Price increases from Finance Committee. He says that he's going to explain it carefully, the proposed increase is of 1.53% rounded to the nearest 5p, we are currently operating at around a 58% margin, below our 60% aim, and an increase of 1.53% would result in us hitting this 60% target.

Senior Librarian asks if that's a rounding up or to nearest.

The President replies that it's to nearest 5 pence.

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks why it's not being raised in line with the VAT increase.

The President replies that we have a target of a 60% margin, and we're not currently 2.5% below.

The Ex-President, Mansfield replies that we should be raising prices in line with vat.

The Ex-President, Oriel replies that the figures took into account the VAT change, looking at what the margins would be if VAT was 17.5% thus assuming if the exact same volumes go through at 17.5% VAT this will take us to a 60% margin.

The President asks if there are any more questions or any opposition to the motion.

The Ex-Treasurer, University states that he is opposed and asks if the prices were ever decreased in line with VAT.

The Bursar replies that when VAT went down, duty increased by a similar amount, canceling it out.

The CCC asks if we have looked at what this will actually do when we round it to the nearest 5 pence. We have no knowledge of what that will do in relation to the actual prices.

The Treasurer-Elect replies that we did discuss that most drinks are priced at over £2, which would mean that the price is increased by 5p.

The Ex-President, Oriel reminds TSC of the inconvenience of having coppers.

The CCC adds that it seems strange that there has been no consideration of actual percentages.

The President replies that there has been an awful lot of discussion, it's taken 2 weeks to discuss this and suggests we move to a vote.

TSC proposes an increase in bar prices of 1.53% rounded to the nearest five pence as recommended by Finance Committee.

Proposed: President

In Favour: 14

Opposed: 1

Motion Passes

Business of the Senior Treasurer

There is no business and there are no questions.

Business of The Senior Librarian

There is no business and there are no questions.

Business of The Bursar

There is no business and there are no questions.

Business of The Returning Officer

The Returning Officer asks that he would like to discuss recent events in private with the president before we rush in to any decisions, he has not been updated fully as to what is going on, he wouldn't like to get in to another awful interpretation battle on the board.

The President replies that he doesn't think it needs to necessarily be discussed in private and Standing Committee is a good a forum as any for this discussion. The President asks the Returning Officer to give the details of what has happened.

The Returning Officer replies that he thinks the President is better placed to give this.

The President says we have received a relatively large number of DRO applications, outlines the process whereby the DROs elect the RO. He outlines that the DRO's are allocated as follows, the immediate Ex-RO is appointed, any Ex-RO applying to be a DRO is also automatically appointed as a DRO. There are then 8 spaces for DRO's who have not been an RO before. These are compiled based on the grounds of experience. We have received 8 nominations from members who have already been DROs, thus they have all been placed as the top eight on the grounds of experience. There are then many others who applied to be a DRO who have never been a DRO before. Under current state of affairs it would just be the eight ex-DROs who have applied. This list comes to Standing Committee where we check it on the grounds of experience and capability. A problem has arisen that David Neale, had applied to be a DRO, but then emailed after the close of applications due to unforeseeable circumstances,

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks if he emailed just the President.

The President replies that he emailed both The President and The RO at 4.53pm.

Mr McLean asks if we can just decide that he cannot serve as a DRO and remove him from the list.

The Ex-President, Mansfield replies that there is no provision in the rules for it. The only thing Standing Committee can withdraw him from the list is on the grounds of capability, he thinks that Mr Neale has not said he is incapable of fulfilling role and thus we should appoint the original list of eight.

The Returning Officer replies that he has been bombarded with phone calls from people on all sides pointing out points in the rules supporting their arguments. He feels obliged to bring them to the committee. There is a rule which states that no member may be a DRO unless he consent to serve, the argument here being that he has withdrawn his consent to serve. The second point is that when you nominate for CCC you withdraw you can withdraw your nomination for DRO. He adds that there is some uncertainty as to whether this is something the Standing Committee can decide on of if it is a matter for interpretation.

The Ex-President, Mansfield now asks if he can open the can of worms, and asks who it is that is being appointed as a result of Mr Neale's withdrawal.

The President replies that it is Alex Alias

The Ex-President, Mansfield suggests that what we are actually seeing here is someone resigning from being a DRO so that someone else is appointed as a DRO and can go on to be the RO.

The President reminds TSC that the result of this would be that the 9th person in terms of experience would become a DRO, who is Alex Alias, who has been an ROA for 3 terms.

TSC grants speaking rights for Mr Linch (Ex-RO, Ex-CCC Lincoln)

Proposed: President

Passed: Nem Con

Mr Linch (Ex-RO, Ex-CCC Lincoln) suggests that there are rules which have not been mentioned. The rules say that the list presented to committee is a list of members who have originally applied. 32(a)(ii) It seems clear that this rule is in place to ensure that when the shortlist is brought out no illegitimate pressure could be put on a member to resign, although he would not suggest this is what taking place here. 32(a)(iii) “The shortlist and the full list of original applicants shall be presented. Standing Committee shall have the power to replace names on the shortlist, using names from the full list of original applicants, solely according to the criteria in (ii) above.” That criteria is on the grounds of capability or experience. Mr Linch adds that Mr Neale has indicated that he will be seeking to be an ROA during the election this term.

The Treasurer states that it is clear he is capable of being a DRO then.

The President suggests that there is a principle that we don’t let people withdraw from an application to a position after the close.

The Returning Officer adds that we do for the position of CCC, but that is under a separate provision.

The President suggests that he must be capable; he didn’t specify in the email that he was incapable of holding the position. And re-reads his email which says that “due to unforeseeable circumstances I find it necessary to withdraw my nomination for Deputy Returning officer” he did not say he was incapable.

The Ex-President, Mansfield reminds committee that if Mr Neale is appointed he can then resign, he doesn’t have to do it. If he resigns in the future he isn’t replaced. The reason this is being done now is so that someone else can take the position of this individual, the reason why the rules say they can’t resign before appointment is so that undue pressure cannot be placed on an individual to resign. It will always be the case that if a certain group of people get together behind the scenes and decide that they want a certain individual to be in a certain position they could get others from their group to withdraw to favour their candidate.

The Librarian replies that that may be the case, but we haven't seen any evidence to suggest this.

The Ex-President, Mansfield suggests that he's not suggesting this is the case, but as far as he can see the rules are clear cannot withdraw applications, he has not given indication that he is not capable, in fact he has given indication that he still wishes to be an ROA, all we can do is make judgements on the grounds of capability.

The Librarian questions when he gave indication that he wishes to be a ROA.

Mr Linch replies that it was about half an hour ago.

The Ex-President, Oriel advises the President to deal with this immediately.

The President asks the Returning Officer for the list.

The Returning Officer apologises and states that he has just signed something.

The Ex-President, Oriel expresses his disbelief that Alex Priest has just given the Returning Officer an interpretation and he has just signed it. This is absolutely bloody ridiculous. It is absolutely pathetic that members of this society will not allow the Returning officer to make up his own mind.

The Returning Officer replies that The Ex-President Oriel must understand that he gets bullied by everyone on both sides.

The President reads the interpretation, "DROs may withdraw their application to serve up until the point at which the motion is put to standing."

The Ex-President, Mansfield would like to say thank goodness the press is here. This is ridiculous. This is the kind of thing some of us have been talking about for a very long time. Issuing an interpretation in a meeting 2 minutes before a vote is about to take place to ensure that it does not go the way you disagree with is ridiculous.

The President suggests that is also deeply corrupt.

The Ex-President, Oriel asks what kind of democracy they think this is, that they should at least put an argument and shouldn't just force someone's hand.

The President suggests that he doesn't think it's the kind of thing he can interpret on.

The Ex-President, Mansfield suggests that it's not an interpretation.

The Ex-President, Oriel asks if standing committee can challenge an interpretation.

The Treasurer-Elect asks that surely if there is no way to interpret within the rules then surely that interpretation can be challenged.

The Ex-President, Mansfield adds that the only way is if a higher body was to rule on it, at present there is no way we can appeal to a higher body to rule on it.

TSC grants speaking rights for Mr Collinson (Ex-RO, Ex-CCC, Ex-Standing Balioll)
Proposed: President
Passed: Nem Con

Mr Collinson speaking rights suggests that it has kind of been done before, and that the Ex-President LMH nearly did it. When he wanted to pass rules to legalise campaigning, as there was an SDC anyway last trinity he asked them to also consider it as a separate case. This seems to set a precedent for the consideration of interpretations by disciplinary committees.

The Ex-President, Oriel asks if this means we would have to SDC the RO which he would loath to do given the pressure he is under.

Mr Collinson replies that this is not the case, you would be appealing it in a mechanism which has previously been suggested by Mr Priest, under rule 67 using the mechanism of rule 71 to bring the disciplinary committee together.

The Ex-President, Mansfield suggests that the problem is that we cannot summon a panel we can only ask a panel to consider it if they come, at present there is no mechanism by which we can make it happen.

The Senior Librarian asks what is in the long term interest of society, such that the rules operate and cannot be changed, and why the rules can only be bindingly interpreted as by a particular group of people. He suggests the rules should not be dependent on the vague whims of people who are not elected.

The Ex-President, Oriel replies that this is a huge problem, if you try to challenge any RO they will ruin your term. They will drag every minor breaking of the rules through the mud; bring it up at the start of debates. Or they may call loads of polls. It is never in the President's interests to do anything about it as they've spent so long. The rules were written by ROs to protect themselves against the people that are elected and thus they deem as incompetent and incapable as looking after the society.

Mr Collinson the reason that rule 67 gives such authority to the RO is so that in urgent matters dealing with election he can deal with things easily and quickly and the election can run.

The Ex-President, Oriel replies that this is not the case right now.

The Senior Treasurer asks how we can change this situation.

The President replies that there is almost nothing we can do. The only way in which this can be dealt with is through the court of public opinion. We can't substantively change what the rules say. We can't do anything about this ridiculous interpretation, but we can certainly

attempt and this committee has a responsibility to attempt to show the members what is going on.

The Ex-President, Oriel asks if everyone understands what is going on here.

The Ex-President, Mansfield explains the it was reasonably acceptable that there was a lack of clarity in this situation. He doesn't think there was a lack of clarity, he thinks we knew but what was the case that if 2 minutes before we had had a vote and decided that this particular individual would have been able to do his job then that decision would have stood, what the Returning Officer has done is issue an interpretation, it overrides any decision we might have been able to make, his interpretation is that we can't decide that Mr Neale has not resigned. He has effectively played the end game.

The Senior Treasurer asks who asked him to make an interpretation.

The Ex-President, Mansfield replies that it is not clear that he has to be asked, he can ask himself and make interpretations within his ambit (as was decided in the last tribunal where it was decided that the whole section covering elections was in his ambit)

Mr Collinson says that's not completely accurate, they decided not to decide. They decided it has to be decided on a case by case basis. They felt that if they set a definite limit then, in the carrying out of his duties if the Returning Officer ran into problems he will be able to surmount them, although this obviously isn't the case in this instance.

The Senior Treasurer suggests we should just say we do not want an interpretation.

Mr Lynch suggests that the tribunal made it very clear that if the RO says it is in his jurisdiction then you have to have very good grounds to say it's not. If you look at the schedule of interpretations from the Returning Officer the majority of them refer to the appointment of Deputy Returning officers. Secondly he would like to say that an extraordinary amount of pressure has been extorted from both sides in this, the people who are placed in the position to make interpretations over the last few terms have found themselves in crossfire of an issue which is not theirs in the first place. They are in the middle of a battle between people who think that it is acceptable to use their influence in this or other societies to force an outcome. This is compounded when members of this committee are minuted in levelling personal accusations at anyone. The committee has to understand that the jobs of the President and the Returning Officer are extraordinarily pressurised, and as we saw last term through the debacle there are so many vested interests and bits of leverage here and there that it is simply unacceptable for members of this committee to level personal accusations at them for what has happened. The committee should look at what can be done from here but it must take note of the fact that very often the person with the interpretative power is caught in the middle of a fight that they want nothing to do with.

Mr Collinson asks if the committee has been presented with a shortlist of DRO's

The President replies that Standing Committee has not.

Mr Collinson replies that this is a problem.

The President states that the list has been written and is available. It was drawn up earlier between the Returning Officer, Acting CCC and himself and he can remember the list. Mr Neale was on the list when originally written.

Mr Linch suggests that Mr Neale is not a DRO until the moment that he is appointed, and thus the interpretation does not affect him.

Mr Collinson agrees.

The Treasurer-Elect suggests that this interpretation does not affect the case of Mr Neale as it does not say candidate for DRO.

The Ex-President, Mansfield proposes that we accept the eight people on the shortlist as provided originally on the basis that this interpretation does not cover anyone as no DRO's have been appointed, and given that there are no DROs then there is no one to withdraw their nomination, we are considering a prospective deputy returning officer.

Mr Priest suggests that the RO will just interpret that it happened and this is not valid

The Ex-President, Oriel suggests that maybe the Returning Officer will go away, look at the relative merits and de-merits of the two opposing arguments, think about what is right and what is wrong and make his own decision.

The Librarian suggests that the interpretation saying DRO includes those who have nominated for the position of DRO, but have not yet been appointed.

The Ex-President, Oriel suggests we need to have a list in order to pass it.

The President says that he does not have a physical copy of the list with him

Mr Priest says that he will ring the Returning Officer who has a list.

The Ex-President, Oriel suggests that maybe Mr Priest could do this without leaving the room.

Mr Priest leaves 6.28.

The Ex-President, Mansfield suggests that The President and Ex-Acting CCC (Treasurer-Elect) should write a list now from memory.

Mr Linch suggests that the list must be presented by the Returning Officer.

Mr Collinson states that Mr Neale satisfies all the criteria as outlined in 32(a)(iii)(i) of experience as laid out, Standing Committee could just replace him back on to the shortlist. Mr Neale is more experienced than Mr Alias and thus it is Standing Committees responsibility to check the list of potential DROs for the grounds of experience and capability and replace them with anyone from the original list who is more experienced. Standing Committee can just put him on as he was on the original list. The rules say that “The shortlist and the full list of original applicants shall be presented. Standing Committee shall have the power to replace names on the shortlist, using names from the full list of original applicants, solely according to the criteria in (ii)” Standing committee has the power to replace names back on the shortlist using names from the original list based on the criteria of experience which Mr Neale has satisfied. He has been withdrawn from the short list and can be placed back on. Normally when people are knocked off the shortlist by standing committee on the grounds of capability or experience they can be replaced by someone from the original list. In this case someone has been removed for another reason, and Standing Committee can still replace them with someone from the original list. Mr Neale is undoubtedly on the original list.

The President presents the shortlist he compiled earlier with the Acting CCC and RO.

Mr Collinson adds that Standing should be aware that this has not been presented by the RO, but the Returning Officer is not available.

Ex-Secretary, Christ Church asks if a DRO can present the shortlist on behalf of the RO.

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks if this is the original list as compiled in conjunction with the RO and CCC.

The President states that he believes in good faith that this is the correct list as compiled with the CCC and the RO who is not present.

The Treasurer-Elect states that he was acting CCC and he agrees with the list.

The President-Elect asks if the President could explain the list to ensure everyone understands.

The President reiterates the formula of the list, with Ex-ROs at the top, then the experienced DROs below.

Mr Collinson suggests that there is an argument that since the RO is not here he is in breach of his duties and another DRO, perhaps the Senior Ex-RO St. Johns could present the list.

The Ex-President, Mansfield suggests this is not necessary.

Mr Collinson suggests this protects the President from a potential IDC over this.

The President replies that he is perfectly happy to be IDC's over this.

The Senior Librarian asks why the President would be a victim of an IDC, and suggests that there is no other option than to present this as the original list as the Returning Officer has left the room in distress.

The President-Elect asks if anyone knows where the Returning Officer is.

The Secretary replies that he saw the Returning Officer leave the buildings.

Mr Collinson states that the Returning Officer is in breach of his duties, he is meant to be here presenting a list.

The Ex-President, Mansfield proposes that we should pass a motion with two elements, the first element saying that TSC does not believe this interpretation means Mr Neale is no longer a candidate for DRO, and as such passes the original full list. However, should it be the case that the interpretation is found to be binding the standing committee replaces Mr Alias with Mr Neale on the basis of rule 32(a)(iii)(i).

The Ex-Secretary would like to re-emphasise that the Returning Officer is not here and is in neglect of his duties.

The President states that he feels it is just getting to a ridiculous stage.

The Ex-President, Mansfield says he will propose it if Stuart seconds it as that way we go down together.

The Librarian asks the President to clarify what has happened.

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks if there is anyone who is confused, and reiterates his proposal outlined above.

The President-Elect asks if this is one motion

The President replies that it is just one motion with two parts.

Mr Linch suggests that TSC does not gain anything except for a huge headache by attempting to nullify an interpretation of the RO, the fact is that he made it his intention is entirely clear, you may disagree with his decision but he made it. You cannot respect the rules and the office of the RO if you then pass a motion like this. There is a mechanism for doing what we want; it is entirely legitimate for the RO to make this interpretation and TSC should respect that given that there is now a mechanism for us to do what we want.

The Ex-President, Oriel suggests that it is not clear what the ROs intention was given that he isn't here to clarify and didn't even write the interpretation himself. His intention is entirely unclear.

Mr Collinson says that he doesn't think it is possible to argue that when the RO is interpreting the rules his intention is to stop Mr Neale from being a DRO, his intention must have been to

interpret the rules. Secondly, he is not here to present the list, it is difficult to discover his intention and we have to surmise the list he would have presented. Given the list he drew up with The President and The Acting CCC. Even if it isn't this list then there is a mechanism which we can invoke perfectly legitimately, respecting the interpretation of the RO to achieve this result.

The CCC asks if, under the rules the list has actually been presented to standing given that the RO did not present it, and he then left the room.

The Ex-President, Oriel replies that the ROs interpretation does not change that the list was put to standing committee; it doesn't have to be by the RO if he is not here.

The President replies that the list is very simple, everyone who applies to be a DRO is put on the list. The RO, President and CCC sit down and write out all these names in order of experience. This is the original list written by the three of us.

Mr Collinson states that he has good news; the rules 32a(iii)(i) just say "shall be presented" but does not indicate by whom.

Mr Linch suggests that it is disingenuous for this committee to say that they do not understand what the RO meant, he issued the interpretation during a discussion as to whether Mr Neale could withdraw his name from the list, if you can sit here and honestly say that you don't know what he meant then fine, The interpretation instructed that it had the effect that Mr Neale cannot become a DRO then that is what you should be voting for, especially as you have this other mechanism. Fundamentally it shows a tremendous amount of disrespect to the Office of The Returning Officer. If you were in any position in the society and others said they did not understand what you meant, just because they disagree then that shows a tremendous amount of disrespect and is entirely unnecessary.

The Ex-President, Mansfield thinks that the motion shows the upmost respect for the RO, what it says is that the RO didn't just make an interpretation arbitrarily because he didn't want someone to be a DRO or because he was trying to manipulate the outcome of an election. He made the interpretation based on the submission of a letter of interpretation and what it meant. We are not suggesting he did this with reference to a particular individual, to do so would be an abuse of office. We are saying that he acted in good faith, he interpreted what he thought the rules meant and we accept that he may be right, we don't entirely know so we are making contingencies. If he was sitting there making interpretations to exclude a particular individual from being on a committee that would be quite problematic.

The Junior Steward has one more question about this, he asks about the mechanism by which we are replacing Alias with David Neale, how this works, and questions if we have to exclude him first.

The President replies that it is purely on the grounds of experience. He is less experienced than Mr Neale.

TSC does not believe the Returning Officers interpretation means Mr Neal is no longer a candidate for DRO, and as such passes the full list. However, should it be the case that the interpretation is found to be binding the standing committee replaces Mr Alias with Mr Neal on the basis of rule 32a3i.

Proposed: Ex-President, Mansfield

Seconded: The President

In favour: 11

Opposition: 0

Abstentions: 1

Motion Passes.

The Ex-President, Mansfield would like to propose another motion to reiterate 2nd part of the motion; we are just saying the same again.

The Librarian asks what this is actually done.

The Ex-President, Mansfield replies that it is just reiterating what we have already passed, so that if someone was to have a problem with the first part of the first one and to SAM it the second part would still stand. They may SAM them both but it is giving people options.

TSC reiterates the replacement of Mr Alias with Mr Neal on the basis of rule 32a3i.

Proposed: Ex-President, Mansfield

Seconded: The President

In favour: 11

Opposition: 0

Abstentions: 1

Motion Passes.

Mr Collinson reminds TSC that we must ratify the list.

The President asks if anyone on the list is incapable of holding the office and asks members of Standing Committee to check the list for its accuracy in terms of the experience of the candidates.

The Ex-President, Mansfield reminds the committee that any member of the society can object to anyone on this list, totally anonymously only before the CCC, RO and President. That is where you can raise other concerns.

TSC proposes to ratify the list of DROs as attached.

Proposed: President

Passed: Nem Con

Questions to the Returning Officer

The Senior Librarian wishes to express his own distress that someone should have to leave the room in distress and that we should ensure that such meetings are not so stressful that someone should have to leave the room in distress and that should then be the subject of such conversation. It doesn't sit well for any committee that someone should leave in distress, it is not a usual activity.

Business of the CCC

There is no Business. There are no Questions.

Business of the Women's Officer

There is no Business. There are no Questions.

AOB

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks whether there is any movement on the enforcing of the finance rules as passed after last term which last week we asked the President meet with Bursar and the Senior Treasurer.

The President replies that he has not had chance to.

Next Meeting

Monday 3rd week 5pm in the President's Office.

Meeting closes at 7.10pm.