

The Oxford Union Society Standing Committee Minutes

Standing Committee – 3rd 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) **Ms Simister** (Christ Church) **Mr Adams** (Brasenose), **Corey Dixon** (Ex-President, Oriel), **James Dray** (Ex-President, Mansfield), **Junior Steward** (Constantin Calavrezos, Somerville) **Women's' Officer** (Claire Handel, Hertford) **Bursar**, **Senior Librarian** (James Methven, Oriel) **CCC** (David Blagbrough, Somerville) **CDSC** (Jonathan Leader Maynard, University), **The Returning Officer** (Andrew Mason, University)

In attendance: David Blagborough (Ex-Secretary's Committee, Somerville), **David Thomas** (Ex-Standing, Exeter) **Henry Curr** (Ex-Standing, Magdalen) **Ollie Linch** (Ex-RO, Ex-CCC, Lincoln) **Ronald Collinson** (Ex-RO, Ex-CCC, Ex-Standing, Balliol) **Ben Woolgar** (Secretary's Committee, Balliol)

Opens at 17.07pm

Apologies

Senior Treasurer (Stephen Dixon, Downing College, Cambridge)

Minutes

TSC proposes to ratify the minutes from 2nd week Standing Committee

Proposed: President

Passed: Nem Con

Matters arising

The President would like to deal with the Champagne and Valentines Social first.

Ms. McGlone replies that the budget has not yet gone through finance so will be brought next week.

The President the next matter arising is that of online voting in Union elections.

The Ex-President, Mansfield replies that he would like to postpone this.

Business of The President

The President would like to first discuss a proposal from OxHub, this is for an event separate to their series, it is called the Oxford Climate Forum, the main speaker is Anthony Giddens taking about the politics of Climate Change. The date is on Friday 12th February, there is space to do it.

Ms. McGlone expresses her enthusiasm for this speaker.

The Secretary questions the buildings availability on the 12th February, believing that the buildings will be rather busy on that day.

The President responds that although Courtney Love is coming and we do not yet have a time for her, this is not an all day event.

Mr. Adams informs the committee that he is under the impression she will be arriving in Oxford at half past seven.

The President replies that he has not yet been given a time for this event but he believes we should discuss if the main speaker is, in principle worth giving free room hire.

The Ex-President, Mansfield says he is confused as to what is going on.

The President replies that the Turl Street Arts Festival Ball which was booked for Friday 12th was moved to the 14th as a speaker was coming. He adds that such an agreement with Oxhub is good for a couple of reasons, it shows that we still like them and the speaker is rather interesting.

The Ex-President, Oriel asks if this event will be advertised by the Oxhub as in conjunction with the Oxford Union.

The President replies that he will be asking them to do so; a contract will be put together in exactly the same way as with past arrangements.

TSC proposes to give Oxhub free room hire Oxhub on Friday 12th February and to waive Standing Order E4 for this case.

Proposed: President

Passed: Nem Con

The President outlines that his second piece of business relates to a request he has just received from Ollie Harvey.

Mr Adams says he is informed about the issue and outlines that OCA wish to host the Adam Smith Institute drinks in the Union. It is unclear whether this is a proposal to co-host the drinks with the Union or just for free room hire.

The President adds that Madsen Pirie is hosting this event, he spoke to him on Thursday whilst he was at the Debate. The time in the Macmillan room is free according to the office. He is not sure if we want to waive the room hire for it. Would it be being booked by a Union member or Madsen Pirie?

Mr Adams replies most probably by a member.

Ms Simister adds that it is being mainly organised by someone who is a member of OCA committee and very involved with the Adam Smith Institute.

The President informs committee the main reason why we may want to give free room hire is that Madsen is a friend of the Union, he has been very helpful in the past, and it doesn't cost us very much to give this free room, the cost would usually be £100.

The Ex-President, Oriel asks if this is an OCA event.

Miss Simister replies that it is not.

The President asks why Ollie Harvey is involved.

Miss Simister replies that James, the man who is organising it, wants to do it in conjunction with as many societies as possible as a way of publicising it.

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks if you have to pay to go to this event.

The President replies that he believes it will be free and open to everyone

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks if it will be free to all members, is it open to everyone or invitation only, if it's not this is not ideal.

The President replies that he has been told the organisers want it to be as big as possible.

Miss Simister replies she believes it is a free drinks party.

The Ex-President, Mansfield replies that if it was not open to members he would have a problem with giving free room hire, there are many friends of the Union and we can't give them all free room hire.

The Bursar this is the sort of thing OCA would have paid for in the past, they've always paid for everything.

The President replies that this is not an OCA event, it's just Ollie Harvey's complicated event.

The Bursar says she thought it was, there always seems to be a reason why people shouldn't pay for a room, some people do have to pay to keep the finances in order.

The President replies the reason why this is exceptional is that members can go for free and benefit for free, it is a benefit to the members, and is being run by a friend of the Union, it's not worth making him sad.

5.18 The Returning Officer, CDSC and The Librarian enter. The Women's Officer leaves.

Mr Adams clarifies by reading from the OCA term card; it says that there will be free drinks to compliment the debate and discussion.

TSC proposes free room hire for the Adam Smith Institute Drinks, conditional on the free entry of a number of union members in accordance with the events requirements and to waive Standing Order E4 for this case.

Proposed: President

Passed: Nem Con

Questions to the President

The Ex-President, Oriel asks what the President has discovered about Swapshop. .

The President replies that he was under impression they were paying, however, Miss Handel thought they were not. We need to decide whether we want to allow them to have free room hire, bearing in mind they have previously thought they do.

The Junior Steward asks why we would give them free room hire.

The President suggests that it is for charity, and it was just a mix up, it could look very bad if we now say they cannot have the room for free.

Ms McGlone suggests that it is not actually the President's fault, they misunderstood what was said.

The Ex-President, Oriel thinks we shouldn't blame or penalize the president for this small accident, however, he is mindful that we are paying RAG for a casino at the Ball, and we do give them a lot of things for free. They need to realize we are also a charity; it needs to be a two-way relationship. We should give them the free room hire, conditional on a discount for the Casino for the ball. It is pure profit to them, and they get free ball tickets.

TSC proposes to waive the room hire charges for swapshop, and Standing Order E4, conditionally on the Union receiving a discount for the RAG Casino at the Union Ball this term of half price.

Proposed: President

Passed: Nem Con

Business of The Librarian

The Librarian has no business

Questions to The Librarian

There are no questions

Business of The Treasurer

TSC proposes the debate expenses as recommended by finance committee to the value of £1186.60.

Proposed: The Treasurer
Seconded: The Ex-President Oriel
Passed: Nem Con

The Treasurer draws the attention of the committee to the budget passed by Finance Committee for the leadership night.

TSC proposes the attached budget for the Mayer Brown Leadership Night.

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

The Treasurer informs committee that the account will be presented on Monday of 6th Week

The Treasurer also has the budget for Claire's Women's drinks, which has been discussed in Finance Committee

The President states that the important thing to remember and note from this budget is that this is coming out of the Standing Committee Budget, this is a £150 loss as there are other non-monetary benefits from this event.

Ms. Lischka asks if men are invited to this event, she thinks they should be.

Ms. McGlone suggests that it is the kind of event which is directed towards women but open to men.

TSC proposes the attached budget for the Women's Drinks.

Proposed: The Treasurer
Seconded: Mr McLean
Passed: Nem Con

Questions to The Treasurer

The Librarian asks about progress with Eucalyptus plants.

The Treasurer asks the bursar

The Bursar replies that she is unaware of any action; she thought someone was looking in to it.

The Ex-President, Mansfield suggests we just get Mr Balachander to go and get the plants and have complete control of this.

The President urges that immediate action is taken.

Business of The Secretary

There is no Business

Questions to The Secretary

Ms. Lishka suggests there is a mistake in the minutes from last week, where the Ex-President Mansfield said “it’s a good thing the press aren’t here” it says “it’s a good thing the press are here”

The Ex-President, Mansfield replies that he did say “it’s a good thing the press are here,” as they were.

The President-Elect asks how ticket sales are going, and how many were sold online.

The Secretary replies that the total earlier was 417 in total, including online sales

The Bursar adds that 125 of these were sold online.

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks if there are only about 20 left, and if we are looking to make it bigger.

The Secretary replies that this is the case and it is indeed going to be enlarged.

Mr. Mclean replies “Good Lord”

Business of The Junior Steward

There is no Business.

Questions to The Junior Steward

There are no questions

Business of Miss Simister

Miss Simister Informs the committee of Treasury Committee discussions, which discussed bird feeders, clocks, holes in carpets and snooker tables.

The Librarian asks what exactly is being done about the clocks and suggests that the problem of the clocks is raised many many times, and then not much happens.

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks if some of the clocks have been removed for maintenance.

The Bursar replies that this is correct and an invoice was brought to Treasury Committee.

Business of Mr McLean

There is no Business. There are no Questions

Business of Miss McGlone

There is no Business. There are no Questions

Business of Miss Lischka

Miss Lischka informs committee that her budget for her Medieval Social Event will be brought to committee next week after she has further investigated sponsorship with a brewery.

Questions to Miss Lischka

There are no Questions

Business of Mr Adams

Mr Adams updates Standing Committee on the discussions of WSC, there are going to be a new range of shooters and cocktails, also the Ex-President, Oriel has been appointed Nacho monitor.

Questions to Mr Adams

Mr McLean asks if there is going to be a push for more beers.

Mr Adams replies this was discussed today and WSC is looking in to prices.

Business of The President-Elect

The President-Elect informs Standing Committee that Finance Committee has recommended the purchase of a CD player for use at Union Events, such as Pilates classes.

TSC proposes the purchase of the cheapest possible CD player for use at Union events up to the value of £10.

Proposed: President

Passed: Nem Con

The President-Elect also would like to suggest that speakers do not leave their coats in the Gladstone room, where they may be damaged or even stolen. The GLO's should bring them up to the coat rack in the President's Office.

The President replies that this week this was done, and shall be continued in the future.

Questions to The President-Elect

There are no Questions

Business of The Treasurer-Elect

There is no Business. There are no questions.

Business of Ex-officio

There is no Business.

Business of the Senior Treasurer

There is no business and there are no questions.

TSC proposes the Senior Treasurer's absence as for good reason under Standing Order B4.

Proposed: President

Passed: Nem Con

Business of The Senior Librarian

There is no business and there are no questions.

Business of The Bursar

The Bursar says she has been approached by someone wishing to sell second hand and new bikes in the Union Gardens, she would like to hear if the committee thinks this is a good idea and if she should forward negotiations with them

The Ex-President, Mansfield suggests the Treasurer and Treasurer-Elect should just deal with this.

The Bursar suggests in the past it has been done, it doesn't cost or earn us anything but is a service to the members.

The President asks The Treasurer and Treasurer Elect to put together a contract, which takes in to account that the Union has other requirements which will have priority.

The Bursar suggests that further investigation is required before his is done.

The Ex-President, Mansfield agrees

The President asks The Treasurer to investigate this.

Business of The Returning Officer

There is no Business, there are no questions.

Business of the CCC

There is no Business.

Questions to the CCC

The Ex-President, Oriel asks where the display boards are.

The CCC replies that he has discussed this with the Bursar and they will meet again tomorrow.

The Ex-President, Oriel Asks what is there to discuss, it should just be done.

The CCC replies that Standing Committee asked him to discuss it with Bursar and they have both not yet had time.

The Ex-President, Oriel suggests it just needs to be done, it doesn't take long to move them up from the cellars.

Business of the CDSC

The CDSC informs committee that DSC has had a proposal brought to them to hold a Women's open, given the potential problems that this may cause it has been suggested that this event should just be organised by a group of individuals. He suggests that on this note we give speaking rights to Ben Woolgar.

The Ex-President, Mansfield suggests he is very confused, and questions why do we have to bring this up as a separate thing, it's a women's IV, none of the participants are union members. It doesn't breach any of the Unions participation rules.

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

Proposed: President

Passed: Nem Con

Mr Linch suggests that some interpretations of the rules say that the Union cannot run events which are discriminatory. He suggests the way this is approached to prevent key defenders of this principle have no objections, given that union members will be able to compete.

The Ex-President, Mansfield replies that Union members will not be able to compete, otherwise who would run it.

The CDSC adds that technically it is an "open" so anyone can enter, even Union members, although the Union will not be officially sending a team.

Mr Linch suggests that we should be very careful about the Oxford Union holding an event which breaches the principles enshrined within the rules. The best way to hold it is to make it a private event.

The Ex-President, Oriel thinks it's important that we do hold this event, it may or may not be in conflict with the rules, we should pass it and if it is against the rules, dependent on an RO's interpretation as to whether or not this breaches the rule, and if it does allow an individual member to run the event.

The Ex-President, Mansfield suggests it is important that it is the Union organising this event not just a member.

The CDSC adds that both men and women will be able to attend and take part in terms of support and judging.

The Returning Officer suggests that the Women's officer may hold events which are in breach of the rule on discrimination.

Mr Linch replies that is only in special circumstances.

TSC supports the notion of an Oxford Union Women's Open where no Oxford Union members will compete, TSC also notes that if the event is in breach of the rules then TSC waives the room hire (and Standing Order E4) for Ben Woolgar (Balioll) to hold a Women's Open Debating Competition.

**Proposed: The Ex-President, Oriel
Seconded: The Ex-President, Mansfield
Passed: Nem Con**

The CDSC then goes on to the rest of his business to say that it has been an amazing journey, at the end of this committee he resigns as CDSC, he would like to thank everyone on this committee and last committee, The Bursar, the two presidents and all the officers for giving us rooms and things like that. If anyone wants to ask him questions he assures the committee that he will still be around

TSC thanks Mr Leader Maynard for being such a wonderful CDSC.

**Proposed: President
Passed: Nem Con**

Questions to The CDSC

The President Elect asks if when others are using the Officers' Offices that they could telephone the relevant officer and inform them.

The President replies that he usually gives permission, but in future he will ensure the officer's are asked.

Business of the Women's Officer

There is no Business. There are no Questions.

AOB

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks that in light of contradictory statements issued by TSC and the RO with respect to Mr Neale he would like to suggest we put a motion to the chamber to support the appointment of Mr Neale as a DRO and to assume that he is a DRO, given that he is here he would like to ask if he is willing to serve, this proposal will be withdrawn if it turns out Mr Neale is not consenting to serve.

TSC proposes speaking rights for Mr Neale (DRO, Hertford).

**Proposed: President
Passed: Nem Con**

Mr. Neale replies that he does not wish to create more controversy, but yes he is willing to serve. But he would like to add that he does not wish to get involved in anything and apologizes for the controversy which has developed.

The Ex-President, Oriel would like to note that the controversy is not his fault.

The Ex-President, Mansfield would just like to say that in no way has Mr Neale asked him to do this, he knows that he doesn't want to create any controversy, it is not his fault.

The President asks to confirm that The Ex-President, Mansfield is proposing to corporately propose a motion to the Chamber on Thursday

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

Proposed: President

Passed: Nem Con

Mr. Linch asks if it was ever the case during the process of the DROs being selected that he did not consent

Mr. Neale replies that he sent in a withdrawal.

Mr. Linch asks if he had been immediately appointed as a DRO at that time he would not have consented at that time

Mr. Neale asks if this is actually correct

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks if this is actually correct, was Mr Neale willing to serve when he sent in the application

Mr. Neale replies that he was willing to serve when he submitted his application

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks what happened to change his mind between the submitting of the applications and the withdrawal of his nomination.

The President reminds committee that Mr Neale is not obliged to answer these questions

Mr. Neale states that he decided at that time to withdraw and that the reasons are not relevant. As of now, if he was asked to be a DRO he would consent.

The CDSC leaves 17.49

The President reminds the committee that the motion is to corporately propose to the Chamber that Mr. Neale is a DRO.

Mr. Adams asks what happens if this is passed, can the Returning Officers interpretation be overruled.

The Ex-President, Mansfield replies that at the moment TSC doesn't recognise that interpretation. By doing this we're saying to the chamber that we don't agree with it, and asking what they think about it. We're appealing to a higher power.

The Junior Steward asks if the Chamber can actually instate him as a DRO, or is it just dragging this in to the public.

The Ex-President, Mansfield replies that is not the case, we're just asking what the people think, this is democratic. It is not dragging it into the public, were asking them what they think.

The Returning Officer indicates that he believes the Returning Officer has higher interpretative power than a motion in the Chamber.

The Ex-President, Mansfield replies that he believes that is up for discussion.

The Librarian asks what would happen if the chamber decided either way, what if it didn't support his appointment.

The Ex-President, Mansfield replies that we would have to bow to the higher authority, and say that he is not a DRO, but if they support his appointment then we would be justified in the decision we reached last week that he is currently a DRO which in the eyes of TSC he is.

Mr. McLean asks if we are basically giving the chamber absolute power over TSC and the RO.

The Ex-President, Mansfield replies that the Chamber does have power over Standing Committee already. It can't interpret the rules however.

The Returning Officer replies that he has higher interpretative power than the Chamber.

The Ex-President, Oriel replies that he thinks this is up for debate.

The Ex-President, Mansfield suggests there is some disagreement over this.

The Returning Officer asks if someone has a copy of the rules.

Mr. Adams asks if the Chamber is a higher authority in the rules or is it just morally to make us feel good.

The President replies that it is in the rules, the Chamber is above Standing Committee and a poll is above the chamber. He reminds us that the status quo is that TSC decided last week that Mr Neale is a DRO, and the interpretation issued by the Returning Officer does not prevent Mr Neale from becoming a DRO.

TSC proposes speaking rights for Mr Neale (DRO, Hertford).

Proposed: President

Passed: Nem Con

Mr Neale as he said before he really didn't want to be embroiled in the middle of this, just as much as he doesn't want it to be the topic of conversation in the chamber, but he is entirely neutral in this either way. He has come here and answered questions put to him and that is all he wants. He would also like to be a DRO.

The Junior Steward suggests that what we will be debating in the Chamber will touch on Mr Neale as a person and it is important that we ask his opinion and if he consents to be discussed in front of an audience.

The Ex-President, Mansfield replies that were not discussing that, it's nothing to do with his personal characteristics, we're discussing whether we support the motion we passed in standing last week in action, and there's no reason we can't do that.

The Junior Steward would like to add that he just thinks Mr. Neale is a rather shy person and we should really consider this.

Mr. Adams would like it to be explained what this does if the Chamber agrees, will Mr. Neale be re-instated.

The Ex-President, Mansfield replies that he is a DRO according to Standing Committee. It may well be the case that according to the RO he is not, but according to TSC he is.

Mr. McLean asks if it goes to the chamber will this resolve it, will the RO recognize him as a DRO. When are the two arguments going to be reconciled? Will he be certainly a DRO for the election?

The Ex-President, Mansfield replies that the conclave is on Wednesday, this is on Thursday.

The Librarian is curious; we've gone and said this isn't going to be a question about Mr Neale as a person. However, surely if it gets to the Chamber and we want them to agree with Standing Committee there will necessarily be a discussion of his Character.

Miss Simister replies that this is not true; it can just be a discussion over the interpretation of the rules.

Mr Linch the motion of standing last week simply said the list presented to it as accurate in terms of experience and capability. This list then becomes the list of DROs unless there is a reason they cannot be. It has not said whether Mr Neale is or is not a DRO. There is only one way someone can become a DRO, they are passed on the list and there is no reason to stop them from becoming a DRO, such as that they're dead, resigned from the society, or withdrew their consent. He is entirely agnostic as to the effect of a motion through the Chamber over this. It really can't be said that it is the opinion of TSC that he is a DRO, all it has said so far is that he is in the correct place on the list.

The Ex-President, Mansfield asks if Mr Neale was knifed.

The President replies that he was not.

The Ex-President, Oriel hates the way it appears people in the room have an agenda, he does not care who is on the DRO list, but the facts are clear, there have been cases where the chamber has been important in decisions later on, for example when it was very important the Chamber supported the creation of the Steward. The Chamber is clearly the highest democratic

authority aside from a poll. We know the facts; Mr Neale has not objected to this, he is happy to serve. He does not understand why anyone would object to this unless they have some kind of sad agenda. He would like to move to a vote.

The Treasurer-Elect seconds this.

Mr. Adams is opposed to moving to a vote.

TSC proposes to put a motion to the house to corporately confirm the appointment of Mr Neale as a Deputy Returning Officer.

Proposed: The Ex-President, Mansfield

Seconded: The Ex-President, Oriel

Proposes 9

Against 3

Abstentions 2

Motion Passed

Next Meeting

Monday 4th week 5pm in the President's Office.

Meeting closes at 6.03pm.