**Student Council 1st Week Trinity Term 2022**

**Tuesday 26th April 2022**

**Hybrid model – 5:30PM**

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| **Item** | **Agenda** | **Actions** |
|  | **Welcome and Apologies**  Anvee Bhutani (acting as Chair of Council) welcomed council members to the 1st meeting of the term. | To note |
| **A** | **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**  Chair opened the floor to questions and comments regarding the minutes of the previous meeting and any matters arising from the minutes.  Minutes to the previous meeting can be accessed [here.](https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/student-council/22ht5w/) | To receive |
| **B** | **Matters arising from the minutes**  There were no matters arising | To receive |
| **C** | **Elections in council**  Chair hands over to Kemi Agunbiade (VP Women) to introduce positions open for elections.  **Returning Officer:** The Returning Officer is responsible for all things to do with Elections and voting. In Council they look after the electronic voting pads. During Oxford SU's Leadership Elections they chair the Elections Committee, handle complaints and count the results.  **Christopher Collins**, running unopposed made brief remarks about his credentials and the importance of the Student Union on impacting student experiences.  **Full nomination can be found [here.](https://www.oxfordsu.org/pageassets/representation/student-council/21mt7w/Philipp-Dietrich.docx" \t "_blank)**  VP Women opened the floor for questions for the position of Returning Officer.  VP Women invited candidate for Chair of Council to address the council.  **Chair of Council:** Chair of Council is elected in 7th Week Council each term to serve for the following term. They are responsible for the running, operation, and pre-planning of the meeting as well as sitting on Steering Committee. Council’s decisions have an impact across all levels of both the University and the Student Union, and as Chair you will be responsible for ensuring that this student decision making body is as effective as it can be.  **Ciaron Tobin**, made brief remarks about his credentials. Ciaron remarked on the importance of improving attendance from student body members and ensuring that speakers are clear and concise for a smoother running of meetings. Lastly, Ciaron commented on the importance of using social media to improve council meeting attendance.  **Full nomination can be found [here.](https://www.oxfordsu.org/pageassets/representation/student-council/21mt7w/Philipp-Dietrich.docx" \t "_blank)**  VP Women stated that the candidate is running unopposed and opened the floor for questions for the position of Chair of Council.  Question 1: For the last couple of years the meetings have been held online, but they used to take place in different colleges, are there any plans on changing the venue?  Tobin: To do that, it would need to be a central college such as Balliol. However, the next Student Union (SU) meeting will stay here in the SU, given it is still a central location.  Question 2: Will SU meetings be hybrid or in person?  Tobin: I would like to keep them in person, when they were online there was low engagement.  **Chair interjected and pointed out that anyone can make nominations for the steering committee and encouraged members to apply for the open position.**  Question 3: If the meetings are only online, it becomes restricting. What about disabled students?  Tobin: Meetings are announced beforehand, if someone reaches out and is unable to attend for those reasons, then we can make it hybrid.  Question 4: Having to email to let you know in advance is not only an extra step, but you cannot always know beforehand it you can attend. To ensure accessibility, a hybrid format should be encouraged to make sure everyone can attend.  Tobin: Yes, I agree. A link should be posted online so everyone can join.  VP Women stateed that the candidate is running unopposed and voting closes on Wednesday 27th of April.  SU President paused the meeting for a couple of minutes so that people can vote online. President reminded that only voting members can cast a vote.  **Results:**   ***Chair of Council***   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Re-open Nominations (R.O.N.) | 5 | | 0 | | 5 | | **Excluded** @ Stage 1 | |  | | | Ciaron Tobin | | | 29 | | 0 | | 29 | | **Elected** @ Stage 1 | |  | |  |  | | --- | |  | |  |   ***Returning Officer***   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Re-open Nominations (R.O.N.) | 3 | 0 | 3 | **Excluded** @ Stage 1 | | Christopher Collins | 31 | 0 | 31 | **Elected** @ Stage 1 | | To receive |
| **D** | **Reports from and questions to Sabbatical Trustees**  Chair informed members that full officer written reports can be accessed on [student council website](https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/student-council/22ht7w/).  **Chair opened the floor for Questions and comments on Sabbatical Trustee Reports**  There were none | To receive |
| **E** | **Reports from and questions to Disabilities Campaign and LGBTQ+ Campaign**    LGBTQ+ Co-Chairs supplemented the written report available on the website with a short verbal update on progress and upcoming targets.  Co-Chair’s full report can be found here.  **Chair opened the floor for Questions and comments on campaign reports.**  Question 1: You mentioned an upcoming consent workshop. Current efforts taking place have proven to not be enough, how is this workshop different?  Elliot: This workshop is focused on sex-education with a part on consent. Any further ideas are welcomed.  Question 2: It sounds like there is a lot of work taking place. It all of this work getting back to the JCR representatives? Many times events are not advertised by them.  Elliot: we had a JCR representative committee yesterday to ensure our work is followed up at the college level.  VP Women mentioned that becoming a member via SU website is the best way to get regular information.  **Reports from and questions to Disabilities Campaign**  Both Co-Chairs supplemented the written report available on the website with a short verbal update on Hilary and Trinity term targets.  Full Disabilities Campaign report can be accessed [here](https://www.oxfordsu.org/pageassets/representation/student-council/22ht7w/Humanities-Rep-Report-HT22.docx).  **Chair opened the floor for Questions and comments on Disabilities Campaign.**  Question 1: What are the current response times when we email asking for support or advice?  Theo: We are waiting for the Student Engagement Team to give us access to the email account, the response time is one week right now. The best way to reach us is via our Facebook account, we have a one-day response rate.  Question 2: On physical access to colleges, there is already an access guide published by the University, is the proposed handbook different?  Theo: It would be a student led document, separate from the university.  Question 3: Will college staff be engaged in this effort beforehand?  Theo: Yes, I will contact staff  Follow-up: It is important to avoid antagonistic feelings and they will be more receptive when providing information if they know about this beforehand.  No further questions were asked. | To receive |
| **F** | **Reports from and questions to MPLS PG Divisional Representative**  Chair opened the floor for questions and comments.  There were none. |  |
| **G** | **Report from and questions to the Returning Officer**  Chair opened the floor for questions and comments.  There were none. | To receive |
| **H** | **Report from and questions to the NUS Delegates**  Full Report of NUS Delegate can be accessed [here](https://www.oxfordsu.org/elections/manifesto/12530/).  Delegate supplemented the written report available on the website with a short verbal update on accomplishments and issues.  **Chair opened the floor for Questions and comments to NUS Delegate.**  Question 1: Where any of the issues raised during the event?  Anas: There was no opportunity to provide feedback at all.    No further questions were asked. |  |
| **I** | **Items for Resolution**  Chair opened the floor to members to discuss these items |  |
| **1.** | **Motion to introduce policy on conflicts of interest and affiliations**  **Council Notes:**  Currently, Oxford SU does not have a formalised policy on conflicts of interest in any of its governing documents - Candidates running for positions in the SU do not have to declare any organisations which they are currently serving on the committee of, or have been elected to  **Council Believes:**  Conflicts of interest due to roles or affiliations elsewhere risk compromising the integrity of some of the most essential officers within the SU - Furthermore, especially high commitment additional roles may compromise the quality of work in the Sabbatical role, worsening student satisfaction with the SU - Whilst Sabbatical Officers/Sabbatical Officer candidates have a right to associate with whatever organisations they choose, their constituents should equally have the right to scrutinise them for this both before and after their election - The roles a candidate chooses to take on once elected remain highly relevant, as it may impact the choices they make as a Sabbatical Officer - These concerns are most relevant for Sabbatical Officers as the only paid elected representatives of the student body within the Oxford SU, instead of also applying these to trustees or NUS delegates  **Council Resolves:**  For the relevant Sabbatical Officers to present in favour of the following changes to the Bye-Laws and Electoral Rules both at the pre-approval consultation board and the pre-approval consultation committee at the University level, thereby beginning the process of amending these document accordingly. This mandate should also extend to the Trustees and University further approval, should these steps be reached.  Add the following clause to the Election Rules document:  1. 17: Roles and affiliations When the campaign period begins, candidates must declare any roles within any relevant organisations to which they were elected or appointed since their matriculation.  Relevant organisations are those which have the reasonable potential to influence a candidate’s behaviour in office, including but not limited to: - Student societies, both Oxford exclusive and for the UK more widely - College JCRs or MCRs - The Oxford Union Debating Society - Student publications (e.g., The Oxford Student, the Cherwell, This list need not include any roles where the candidate was under paid employment. This information should be publicly visible as part of a candidates’ manifesto, listed as relevant experience or disclosures.  And add the following clause to the Bye-Laws:  1. 22 Sabbatical Trustee Affiliations   1. 22.1 Sabbatical Trustees should declare any existing roles or affiliations during their candidacy as detailed in the Electoral Procedure document. 2. 22.2 When in office, Trustees must publicly declare any new roles or affiliations which they take on. This includes appointments to new positions within an organisation which they have previously declared a role with.   When updates are made to these roles or affiliations, it will be announced in student council and edited accordingly on the Oxford SU website.  This mandate should expire one year from the day of this amendment (23/04/23), with the aim to ideally achieve the desired result by the end of Trinity 2022.  **Proposed by:** Samuel Williamson, University College  **Seconded by:** Alice Childs Dos Santos, New College  **Chair opened the floor for questions and comments.**  Question 1: What will be the process of verification? How do we ensure candidates are not just trying to bolster their achievements?  Samuel: The motion does not specify who this would fall into, my first thought is that the retuning officer would be a good fit.  Question 2: What if someone does not want to disclose a committee role for any reason? For example, involvement in an LGBTQ+ society?  Samuel: Just committee roles need to be disclosed, not casual involvement in societies. It remains tricky, but the general feeling behind the motion stands. I see no issue on informing someone that you don’t want that information to be published in a manifesto.  Question 3: What is the definition of ‘society’? Only registered ones?  Chair stated that motion has to define what falls under ‘society’  Samuel: We will further discuss that next week.  Chair opened the floor for speeches for and against the motion.  Concerns were raised about risking votes becoming aligned by political party affiliations, given the already divisive environment in national politics.  The example of JCR elections in New College was presented. Where disclosing affiliations and parties is required. So far, it has not become an issue that people are voting along party lines. If people care about the issues they are voting for, then that should not become an issue. There needs to be a level of scrutiny for paid positions, and this motion does that.  Chair clarified that MPLS and President Report have been submitted but are missing from the SU webpage.  **Results:**  Total Votes: 46  For:35  Against:6  Abstain:5  **The motion was deemed to be CARRIED.** |  |
| 2. | **Formalising the protection of marginalised students within College and University Conflicts of Interest policies**  **Council Notes:** **1. The policy recommendations found in Appendix A will, in this motion, be referred to as “the proposed policy changes.” 2. The proposed policy changes were developed by the Oxford University LGBTQ+ Society after conducting research into how far College and University policy goes to protect the welfare of students that are classified as protected groups under the Equality Act 2010, with specific focus on policies pertaining to the external work of College Heads and those with pastoral duties for students. 3. The report was compiled following the revelation that a College Head, in a professional capacity, was representing a foreign government in a case in which the government sought to deny a Black lesbian couple the equal right to marriage. Many students at the College and across the University, were left feeling hurt, vulnerable and distressed, and a hostile environment was created as a result. 4. This research, presented as an official report that can be found in Appendix B, involved: - communication with all College Heads at the University - review of all College’s conflicts of interest policy - consultation with Stonewall and international human rights experts, including Jonathan Cooper OBE and others at Doughty Street Chambers 5. The proposed policy changes have since been endorsed by the SU LGBTQ+ Campaign. 6. In January 2021, the President and VP Welfare and Equal Opportunities were mandated to support LGBTQ+ Rights and Welfare in Light of Events at Magdalen College.**  **Council Believes:**  1. It is important to have comprehensive policies that explicitly reference the protection of marginalised students to ensure that the interests of these groups are considered in College decisions.  2. Marginalised members of our community deserve our continued support.  3. Students’ welfare is important, and the Student Union should strive to represent and protect all students to the best of its ability.  4. Endorsing the proposed policy changes will show the student body is committed to entrenching the protection of marginalised students into University and College policy.  **Council Resolves:**  1. To endorse the proposed policy changes in Appendix A as standard University and College Policy.  2. To mandate the SU President to lobby the University and Colleges to formally adopt the proposed policy changes. This includes bringing the issue to relevant boards that the SU President sits on.  3. To mandate the VP Welfare & Equal Opportunities and VP Women to lobby the University and Colleges to formally adopt the proposed policy changes. This includes raising the issue at relevant boards that the Sabbatical Officers sit on.  **Proposed by:** Clay Nash, Brasenose College (SU LGBTQ+ Campaign Co-Chair)  **Seconded by:** Anvee Bhutani, Magdalen College (SU President)  **Chair opened the floor for questions and comments.**  Question: What was the reason given for this?  Clay: Candidates were asked to disclose any ongoing professional obligations. She had declared two pending cases, one of them was this. However, when students interviewed the candiades for president, they were not told about these comittments, even when the College knew about them. The college did not publicly disclose this information even before she started.  Chair opened the floor for speeches for and against the motion.  **Results:**  Total Votes: 43  For:34  Against:4  Abstain:5  **The motion was deemed to be CARRIED.**  **J. Any Other Business**  **Chair declares meeting finished at 19:05 PM** |  |