**Student Council 7th Week Michaelmas Term 2020**

**Tuesday 24th  November 2020**

**Virtual – 5:30PM**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Agenda** | **Actions** |
|  | **Welcome and Apologies**    Wesley Ding, (Chair of Council): Welcomed council members to the meeting and explains how Student Council will run, and some ground rules. | 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. | To receive |
| **B** | **Matters arising from the minutes**  There were no matters arising | To receive |
| **C** | **Elections in council**  Chair explains the different [roles](https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/student-council/20mt1w/) that were up for elections and hands over to the RO Caleb van Ryneveld).  CB: we're going to start with the election for the position of chair of Council which Wesley's so excellently done over the Michaelmas and before that.  CB: invites candidates to give a 2 minute speech   1. Chair of Council candidate (Wesley Ding) to give a speech. Full manifesto can be found [here](https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/student-council/20mt7w/)   CB: hands back to the current chair WD who invites next candidate standing for RO (CB) to give a 2 minute speech   1. Retuning officer candidate (Caleb van Ryneveld) to give a speech. Full manifesto can be found [here](https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/student-council/20mt7w/)   Chair speaks about both Steering Committee and Scrutiny Committee candidates seeing as they were absent   1. Full manifesto can be found [here](https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/student-council/20mt7w/)   **Elections results can be found here.**  **Post: Chair of Council**    Total Valid Vote 31 Places 1 Quota 15.5      Candidate Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 2 Total  Re-open Nominations 2 0 2  Wesley Ding 29 0 29 **(Elected)**    **Post: Returning Officer**    Total Valid Vote 29 Places 1 Quota 14.5      Candidate Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 2 Total  Re-open Nominations 6 0 6  Caleb Van Ryneveld 23 0 23 **(Elected)**  **Post: Scrutiny Committee**    Total Valid Vote 18 Places 1 Quota 9      Candidate Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 2 Total  Re-open Nominations 3 0 3  Marcin Pisanski 15 0 15 **(Elected)**  **Post: Steering Committee**    Total Valid Vote 20 Places 1 Quota 10      Candidate Stage 1 Stage 2 Stage 2 Total  Re-open Nominations 0 0 0  Katarina Petrovic 20 0 20 **(Elected)** | To receive |
| **D** | **Reports from and questions to Sabbatical Trustees**  Chair informed members that officer reports can be accessed on [student council website](https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/student-council/20mt7w/) .  **Chair opens the floor for Questions and comments on officer reports**  **There were no questions raised**  All officer reports can be found [here.](https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/student-council/20mt7w/) | To receive |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **E** | **Reports from and questions to Campaign for Racial Awareness**  **Key highlights:** Dhruv and Ray were elected as co-chairs recently. While Dhruv was already working for the campaign and therefore helped to coordinate work with college BAME reps at the beginning of the year, Ray began work halfway through term. We worked collaboratively with the rest of the campaign committee on a piece about colonialism in Oxford alongside Common Ground and the Pitt Rivers Museum, using quotes from the 2014 100 Voices report. We have also been dealing with a specific incident of racism, and supporting the student through their complaint procedure  **Campaign for Racial Awareness** submitted[written report](https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/student-council/20mt7w/) and can be found online | To receive |
| **F** | **Reports from and questions to Equality and Suspended Students' Campaign**  **No report was submitted** | To receive |
|  | **Reports from and questions to PG and UG Humanities Representatives**  **Key highlights from the UG Rep**  I have had a lot of difficulty getting in contact with and collating information about course/Faculty reps. This has made it particularly difficult to consult students. Now that this is done, I hope to make the system/handover more robust in the future.  I also attended the Medical Sciences Student Forum. Key student issues included international student fees/experience, regular lecture uploads, disappointment about practicals.  I received Div Rep training with the SU where we determined our six key priorities (see above) and shared experiences.  **Key highlights from the PG Rep**  I have just received a list of all course reps and so will be  able to consult with them more going into the next term  **UG and PG social Sciences submitted** [written reports](https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/student-council/20mt7w/) |  |
| **G** | **Items for resolution** | To receive |
|  | **Motion to sign Disarm Oxford and Oxford University Amnesty International’s letter to the VC.**  **Notes:**  Departments of the University frequently accept funding from arms companies in exchange for research into weapons development. Oxford is responsible for the continued evolution and manufacture of arms, working for example on nuclear warhead technology\* and on technology which contributes to lethal autonomous weapons\*\* (the focus of the global ‘Campaign to Stop Killer Robots’, in which Oxford University Amnesty International participates).  The Careers Service frequently advertises arms companies at their Fairs and in their promotional material. This term, Careers Fairs have hosted DSTL, Frazer-Nash, GMV, and Leonardo, among other arms companies. The Careers Service has an official policy\*\*\* banning any advertising on behalf of tobacco companies because of their harmful impact. Earlier this term, large numbers of students wrote to the Careers Service to highlight the inconsistency of this policy, as arms companies have numerous deleterious impacts but their presence is not curtailed.\*\*\*\*  A new student campaign has been set up this term called Disarm Oxford, which aims to cut ties between the University and the arms industry.  Multiple college Junior Common Rooms including Balliol, Jesus, LMH, Somerville, and Mansfield have passed motions endorsing the aims of Disarm Oxford and Oxford University Amnesty International, with further motions expected to be debated and passed in Merton and St John’s MCRs.  Believes:  Based on its own internal policy regarding funding, the University of Oxford should refuse funding originating from unethical activity.  The Careers Service ban on unethical industries should not be limited to tobacco, and should include arms companies.  As a centre for academic excellence, the University has a duty to remain independent of the arms trade, which actively seeks to influence its research initiatives.  Arms research is unethical and drives conflicts; arms companies fuel humanitarian catastrophes, such as the ongoing crisis in Yemen.  In signing a letter to the Vice-Chancellor on this topic, and encouraging involvement in Disarm Oxford and Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, the SU would demonstrate its commitment to human rights, condemn Oxford’s role in perpetuating war crimes and humanitarian crises, and promote academic freedom.  **Resolves:**  Mandate the VP Charities and Communities to sign the open letter [**(Appendix A)**](https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/student-council/20mt7w/) by Disarm Oxford and Oxford University Amnesty International Society to the Vice-Chancellor, which calls for a severance of relations between the University and the arms trade and a policy stating that the University will not contribute to the development or production of lethal autonomous weapons systems.  Make the following SU Policy with the title ‘Disarm Oxford University and cut ties with the arms industry’: 'Oxford SU believes that the University, and its constituent colleges, departments, and other institutions should cut all links with the arms industry, which drives conflict and humanitarian crises. In particular, cutting links should include full divestment from arms company investments, a ban on accepting any direct funding from arms companies or carrying out any research on behalf of an arms company, and a blanket ban on arms companies being hosted at careers events, similar to existing sanctions on tobacco companies.'  Proposer: Leyla Manthorpe Rizatepe, Balliol College  Seconder: Anna Olerinyova, St John's College  \* <https://cherwell.org/2020/11/13/oxford-universitys-ties-to-nuclear-weapons-industry-revealed/>  \*\* https://isismagazine.org.uk/2019/11/funding-under-fire/  \*\*\* <https://www.careers.ox.ac.uk/advertise-your-vacancies/#collapse1561856>  \*\*\*\* <https://www.oxfordstudent.com/2020/10/24/careers-fair-criticised-by-disarm-oxford-campaign/>    **Chair opens floor for discussion:**  Mark Simpson, Oral College MCR president. Take a company like  rolls Royce Which, you know produces little weapons. You know it is definitely a company involved in this trade. They also do a lot of work and research that's not involved in the arms trade, and there's also a lot of Gray areas where the  work they could they do has both civilian applications and  military applications.  And so, for example, under this motion with the University would be pushing University to reject funding into, say, energy  materials. Research from a company that Rolls Royce, which  works on small nuclear reactors and things like this. Would that  be banned simply because Rolls Royce also happens to have  apartment business that sells weapons? It seems like there's a lot of research here that would be actively discouraging, which  has nothing to do with weapons.  Simply because the company has involvement in the  arms trade, which sadly many companies do. I know that this is something to quote unquote, be worked out.  But the motion doesn't talk about working that out, it just  says it and we take that as our policy. It feels  like we should have the conversation before we take the  policy rather than taking a policy position and then having  a conversation about it.  Proposer response: There's several things to  address. Their first is your point about civilian application  of some of this research, which I think I touched on earlier,  but I'll say it again is that we completely accept that a lot of  this research does have. Really positive potential uses that. Take for example, I forget the technical term for it, but be able to get robots to walk. That's a really tricky problem that have scientists  have been working on for ages, but you want robots that can move efficiently by themselves and they won't fall  over because I don't know you could have your grandma instead  of sending her to a care home. She could get a really useful  friendly robot around the house helping her out. Or that same  robot with that same walking technology could be a robot on a  battlefield. Saving all kinds of ethically problematic things. So  technology itself is kind of neutral.  Full motion can be found [here](https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/student-council/20mt7w/)  The amendment is accepted as friendly.  A Motion on Amending Motions  For 30  Against 12  Abstain 4  **Motion passes.** |  |
|  | **Waive the residency requirement!**  **Notes:**   1. The University's Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Martin Williams, made a statement on 17 November on the extension of residency requirement to Hilary Term in 2021.\*     **Believes:**   1. The residency requirement must be waived for all students from Hillary term onward. 2. Students should be able to choose what is best for them and their families. 3. The university should follow the lead of other universities in developing the formulation for online labs where possible.   **Resolves:**   1. To mandate the Oxford SU President to: 2. Sign the forthcoming petition drafted by the proposers of this motion and promote the petition to students. 3. Lobby the university to waive the residency requirement for all students from Hilary term 2021 until the end of the pandemic.   Proposer: Rashmi Samant, Linacre College  Seconder: Benjamin Fernando, Teddy Hall  **Chair opens floor for discussion**  There were no further questions from members  Full motion can be found [here](https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/student-council/20mt7w/)  For 38  Against 3  Abstain 3  **Motion passes.** | To receive |
|  | **Sustainability Strategy**  **Council Notes:**   1. The University is developing an Environmental Sustainability Strategy with a target to achieve biodiversity net gain and net zero carbon by 2035. 2. Consultation on the strategy is open to all students and stuff until 6 December. 3. The draft strategy along with the online consultation is available at this link: <https://sustainability.admin.ox.ac.uk/consultation>   **Council Believes:**   1. It is essential to the success of the planned strategy to get as many students involved in the consultation and to point out issues that might raise concern among the student body. 2. Staff and students should participate in the consultation, share this information, and encourage their colleagues and friends to participate in the consultation. 3. Colleges should take steps to develop their own policy and plans for achieving net zero carbon and net biodiversity net gain by 2035. 4. There are areas of the strategy which could be improved in particular the inclusion of the below 6 concerns: 5. Climate Justice: Centre climate justice in all sections of the strategy and research the ways that Oxford – both currently and historically – participates in colonial processes of exploitation and extraction, to the cost of indigenous peoples and frontline communities. Integrate sustainability and anti-racism policy throughout the University. 6. Climate Education: Prioritise climate education in the curriculum across the University, including experiences of frontline communities and indigenous peoples, so all students have access to climate education. 7. Historic emissions: Calculate and include historic emissions including scope 1 and 2 within the sustainability strategy and develop equitable solutions to reflect Oxford’s historic and continuing impact. 8. Research: The University must commit to no longer carry out research into the extraction of fossil fuels. 9. Sponsorship: The University should commit to no longer take research grants, donations or sponsorships from any fossil fuel company. 10. Careers: The Career Service should be prohibited from advertising positions on behalf of any fossil fuel company that does not have a credible net zero plan as defined within the Oxford Martin Principles.   **Council Resolves:**   1. To mandate the VP Charities and Community to 2. Promote the consultation to students at the University and encourage them to fill it in. 3. Support the inclusion of the above 6 concerns into the Sustainability Strategy and encourage students to include the concerns in the survey response. 4. To establish as SU Policy: 5. A levy for student flights should not be introduced in student fees or charged to students in another way. 6. The collegiate University should make it more appealing and affordable for students to stay in Oxford during the vacations. This would reduce the need to leave Oxford and reduce the number of flights. 7. The collegiate University should incentivize students to use travel options with lower carbon footprints, such as trains.   Proposer: Ellie Holton, New College  Seconder: Ben Chuah, Regent's Park  Full motion can be found [here](https://www.oxfordsu.org/representation/student-council/20mt7w/)  For 35  Against 7  Abstain 2  **Motion passes.** |  |
| **H.** | **Items for discussion** | To receive |
|  | **UG Admissions Interviews**  **Notes:**  There has been a bit of false information circulating online surrounding the university's plans for UG Admissions Interviews this year. I wanted to open this as an item for discussion to report in more detail the current plans, and to address student concerns surrounding the process. Furthermore, I wanted to take this as an opportunity to hear from students their suggestions on how this admissions cycle can still be improved for applicants.  **Proposer:** Tucker Drew, Oxford SU  **Chair opens floor to members**  No further questions were asked | To receive |
|  | **Reports from and questions to Homelessness Awareness Walk in my shoes**  No reports were submitted |  |
| 7 | **Any Other Business** | To note |
| 8 | Chair declares meeting finished at 19:15 | To note |