

Oxford Labour Club

Extraordinary General Meeting (29th April 2025)

In Attendance at Meeting Start:

- Mhairi Beken (Co-Chair) – MB
- Hattie Simpson (Co-Chair) – HS
- Mahima Nayak – MN
- Freya Cushman (Secretary) – FC
- Ami Rubiés (Pubs) - AR
- Akshita Anand (Co-Chair Ex-Officio) – AA
- Emily Young (Social Secretary) – EY
- Aidan Powell (Comms Officer) – AP
- Guus Wijnne (Welfare Officer) – GW
- Jack Leader (Co-Chair Elect) – JL
- Willow Parker (Co-Chair Elect) – WP
- Tom Taborn - TT

Order of Business:

1. Clarity and Consistency Amendment
2. Electoral Proxy and Administrative Procedures Amendment
3. Procedure Concerning Electoral Process Amendment

Meeting Time Start: 18:21

- MB – Explaining constitution, have been through multiple stages and worked together. They have had assistance from (indicates to) AA, Joseph Thomas (not present), Rose Harris (not present), AR and FC

Proxy Votes:

- MD enters room to deliver leaflets then leaves.
- Proxy votes – MB and HS acknowledge they had to approve votes for their own motion, as per the constitution as it currently stands. For this meeting, 10 proxy votes were submitted and accepted. The amendment will fix this issue for future committees.

HS and MB were supposed to chair this meeting constitutionally. They believe that this is unfair. They have now asked MN to chair.

MN moves to start the meeting. Confirms she has not helped with the amendments under any circumstances.

MN explains voting procedure and order of meeting.

Motion 1: Clarity and Consistency Amendment

Proposer: Mhari Beken

Secunder: Hattie Simpson

Speeches in Proposition:

- (MB) Nothing do with the proctors; we are not registered and have no intention to re-register. We would have to make major changes against what we wish to be as a club this would go against what we wish to be as a club and for the future of the club if we registered.
- (MB) Core purpose – update and reflect working practices and clarify vague, or, misleading language.
- (HS) Supports changes and has said it has time for changes. Very pedantic. Little should be controversial as again most reflects working practices or clarifies where vague.
- (AR) Secretary last term, this constitution is a real mess, and the use of language is haphazard, and every TGM is 'illegitimate' due to the current constitution. This is more in line with how we operate as a club.

Speeches in Opposition:

- There are no speeches in opposition.

Questions and Amendments:

- There are no questions to the proposers
- Jimmy Sergi amendment, raised by GW, under 38, 9 (not on document from Proposers). Add welfare officer after class officer, to remove the two-term limit. (EY) Should be a year long-position for a more stable club.
- HS and MB accept friendly amendment.

(MN moves to vote)

Result (66% needed to pass):

- Voted For: 23
- Voted Against: 1
- Motion 1 passes with 96%

(Isaac Cusworth (IC) enters the room at 18:33)

Motion 2: Electoral Proxy and Administrative Procedures Amendment

Proposer: Hattie Simpson

Seconder: Mhairi Beken

Speeches in Proposition:

- (HS) Shorter – ties up the looseness of proxies. Lacks clarifications on important details, including timeframes, valid reasons and makes it inaccessible. Clear validity makes a transparent process.

Speeches in Opposition:

- There are no speeches in opposition

Speeches in Favour:

- (AR) We all feel some changes should be made clearer.
- (WP) Makes it more transparent. Doesn't help if it is confusing. The spirit and text of this amendment is needed for the smoothness of future meetings.

Questions and Amendments:

- Questions:
 - o (IC) Invalid reasons having mods makes it difficult, and the questioner feels this is an unfair addition.
 - o Section 44:
 - (IC) Why no votes for caucus?
 - (HS) Manifestos would be the change to bring but we feel caucus is more of an 'entry' position and we want it to remain accessible.
 - (HS) Caucus' roles may not have been filled otherwise.
- Amendments:
 - o IC – 'proxy votes kept secret' has been crossed out?
 - o (HS and MB) Added later back on.

- IC – we should know how many proxies have taken place?
- (HS) – Proxy and room are equally valid on votes
- IC – less likely to see the difference and electoral malpractice
- (MB) This is not for the member but for the RO.
- IC– we should know?
- (MB) Could discriminate against proxy voters, we are not doing that.
- MN – do you want to move to a vote on this amendment?
- IC – No.

Additional discussion:

[Zagham Farham (ZF) enters room] ZF – Concerns with proctors?

HS – We are not doing that and have no concerns with re-registering.

MN moves the motion to a vote.

Result (66% needed to pass):

- Voted For: 22
- Voted Against: 0
- Motion 2 passes with: 100%

Motion 3: Procedure Concerning Electoral Process Amendment

Proposer: Hattie Simpson

Seconder: Mhairi Beken

Speeches in Proposition:

- (HS) Comes along the lines of the ones we have just passed. It looks to tackle the accessibility issues already present. It is currently vague and inconsistent from term to term and we wish for it to pass as it is. They are open to answering questions. Reiterate and acknowledge it has taken 4 months of work, closer to 50-100 hours of work. This has taken a lot of process and thought. We are confident it fixes current and pre-emptive issues.
- (MB) Nothing to add.
- (AR) Following what was said before, but also talk about why some things haven't made it in. I think it will keep the spirit of OLC elections. If you run, for Co-Chair, you can run for other things later. It is important to keep good people engaged with the club. We don't want to make it too much like OUCA or Union elections. It could take

away from the spirit of the club. The ROs, we trust, I doubt there will be issues with electoral practice following this.

Speeches in Opposition:

- (IC) – I get the idea in the spirit of the club you want a close-knit community. If the society's main event is debate it feels hypocritical against the 'aims of the labour party'.
- (AR) [interjects], it has been changed.
- (HS) [also supports AR's correction]
- (AR) claims it brings us into line the Labour
- (HS) No it doesn't
- (AR) corrects mistake
- (ZF) Does not bring in line with other university clubs.
- (HS) Party and movement are two different things
- (ZF) It is not in the OUCA and OSLA election. Members of your club come and vote.
- (MB) This is the fairest way for our club.
- (ZF) What does 'movement' mean?
- (HS) Equality – that is what the spirit is. We trust our members to be honest with us, we do not police this.
- (TT) This is a campaigning club not a debate club. B&B makes money but the purpose is to be part of the Labour movement.
- (IC) The aim of the club should be to convert. It suggests discrimination based on their beliefs. Those not part of the Labour movement or the party and it may push people away. It is a negative requirement in general.
- [Discourse and speaking over-each other] MN interjects and reminds that questions have to be directed to the Co-Chairs, answered and then returns.
- (HS) People on the committee we would hope support the aims. I am sure that those in a society should keep these. This is not outlawing those of other student parties. It is instead for elections and for those who have a genuine belief who support the club.
- (IC) There seems to be a fear of hacking. It seems that those types of people are losing their rights with this meeting. The concern that OUCA would fill the room.
- (HS) No we are not. This wouldn't work for the club. We don't work with slates either. Union runs for one role, but we can run for more than one. The statement of the 'Union' is about that and not preventing people.
- (IC) I feel that people in this room will not be allowed to exercise their rights. Members would be banned from TGMs and they may not be permitted to attend – as it is seen for 'voting' and not for 'complaints.' They deserve to see themselves represented at these meetings. I don't know what the real concern is that they wouldn't care about the outcome.

- (TT) This seems like a distraction to the outcome. Are we aligned with the purpose of the club is the question. It makes sense when we are discussing organisation and meeting of the club that those should be aligned with the purpose of the club. People can still be members but it feels 'silly' they should be able to run the club / have a say.
- (IC) Attend but not vote?
- (HS) They can attend but they cannot vote.
- (ZF) Amendments – we can come back to – Question to TT, anyone who is involved with the business of the meeting and the aims of the Labour movement in such broad terms that I would suggest I support them as set out by their Co-Chair (HS).
- (TT) I didn't say this was contradictory. It isn't contrary to hold other posts, but if we find the definition too broad, then you can want that, but on the broader net, it makes pretty obvious sense that if those do not support the LAB movement, they should not be involved in the organisation.
- (HS) We are making it more open to members who support the aims. It would be contradictory to allow those on other parties committees to vote. It allows people to have multiple interests and enfranchise those who support.
- (IC) They weren't allowed to vote in GMs in the past. Regardless, they could attend but could not vote in committee elections. Now, we are extending this to GMs?
- (HS) This is in the GM section and not the election section.
- (IC) Who is going to decide. Will it be a neutral body to decide who supports the LAB movement.
- (HS) I feel I need to repeat myself for the third time now. We don't go around for caucus making people prove they can be in the caucus. We trust people to self-identify.
- (MB) We have been on the amendment for 20 minutes now. We are not taking these friendly amendments.

MN explains that unfriendly amendments go for a vote and they need 50% to pass.

Questions and Amendments:

- An unfriendly amendment is raised by ZF.
- (ZF) starting with the controversial amendments (starting in behind)
- (HS) Is this a proposal or amendment?
- (ZF) I will separate for 4, I am humbly besieging you to accept.
- (HS) If we don't accept do you want to move to a vote?
- (ZF) Yes
- - 1: Rule 3, regarding rule 69
 - (ZF) In-line with what HS and MB said it is to increase transparency.

Questions to the exec. There is no weekly meeting unlike OUCA and

OSLA for us to be questioned 'why are you being an idiot?'. Only Qs to Co-Chairs seems wrong. I propose to replace 'executive' and replace to 'all'.

- (HS) Practicality purposes. Co-Chairs, now delegation.
- (MB) Nobody has ever asked a question to committee reports. It isn't intended to block Qs.
- **MB and HS are happy to accept it.**
- Section 3, rule 68 (a, b, c)
- (ZF) 68 A2 is somewhat inoperative – waive for everyone or can't. I have made that clear and give some notice of that.
- (HS) If someone is a visiting student someone may join in the middle. We currently waive for fresher's etc. It isn't for 'I forgot'. There are valid reasons such as the visiting student. This is at the co-chairs' discretion.
- (MB) Keeping it in line with the way we function.
- (ZF) I think this is rare and there is a real possibility that people could take advantage.
- (HS) It is up to more than just one person to make the decision. We'd rather keep it open.
- (TT) People believe they have become members and paid but it could have been declined by the card company. If in good faith they attempted to join then that works.
- (MB) Constitutional changes can cause changes etc.
- (ZF) happy with explanations.
- (ZF) B – can be removed. No positive scenario of denying people's attendance to Meetings... Any member could come to a GM if any other club. This says that all members can attend but subject to the membership etc.
- (JL) Question – Remove 'aims of Labour movement' to exclusion?
- (HS) There is a reason – we recognise that those on other committees and those of senior members have to be members of the Lib Dems, but the Junior officers do not. Junior officers should be allowed to attend. Member of another political party is a financial investment. We do not think people who are members of Green, Reform, Conservative, Lib Dems should not be allowed to attend meetings. It is to allow people to shape the club and it allows them to stand for positions etc. If I was a young person invested in the LAB movement and attended and someone coming from OUCA or OSLA which went against the committee, I don't think that is very inviting. I don't want people being put off from attending. Being a presence in the club is not how this club works. We aren't any other organisation.

- (WP) I don't know what societies you have been part of, but I am involved with socialist societies. This is in line with other Labour clubs.
- (HS) We are trying to be in line with the Labour Party and not the University of Oxford.
- (ZF) This goes against what was said earlier.
- (HS) I do not feel I should be defining who can be part of what caucus and why.
- (ZF) This is the issue with broad terms. This leaves so much for disagreement and confusion. This could be hard going forwards. I have not sat on an Oxford University club societies in the last 100 days. What do you define as committee.
- (HS) We have a definition.
- (ZF) Now you are choosing a definition which you suit.
- (HS) A committee – have been elected and sit on the board of the society.
- (ZF) It can mean different things in different times.
- (HS and MB) We are not policing this, we take people on what they say. This isn't to target individuals such as yourself. We'd love to have you back in Labour come September.
- (ZF) concedes on this amendment.
- Section 2, Rule 40:
 - (ZF) Caucus then co-chairs.
 - (HS and MB) We haven't said anything.
 - (ZF) It should be done earlier on. It is 'highly burdensome'.
 - (HS) Explains people who have an interest should be able to sit through the meeting. We will accept if people have explanation.
 - (ZF) Okay, fine. Leave this one as well.
- Replace 'e' with the following
 - (ZF) Explains last meeting and explains confusion. Not wanting the full breakdown of the election, that is baffling.
 - (TT) We can correct that.
 - (ZF) [In the contexts of STV] They are more substantial than X won by 3 votes. It requires votes and quotas.
 - (TT) The round isn't included.
 - (MB) Data. We can try and find it.
 - (TT) Data can be added.
 - (ZF) There was confusion that the
 - (HS) What do you mean confusion?
 - (ZF) STV is hard if done properly. There is a reasonable chance it could have missed or things could have been miscalculated.
 - (HS) We have identified and amended this.

- (MB) STV is very easy. We have it outlined in RO handover document.
- (TT) Friendly amendment, we should give breakdown. Can we amend it to not slow down the electoral process. I am saying you should change it to 'on request'.
- (AR) 'of the candidate' (in that specific election)?
- (HS and MB) Are not accepting it. All that matters is that you know what the result is. RO is not the role of the members that is the ex-officios or those asked in to consult. I think that assumes members know how STV works, which you have said is complicated.
- (ZF) Any properly counted election includes this breakdown. Has observers. Those representing the candidate are checking the election. We actively encourage mistakes being spotted.
- (Discussion between ZF, HS and MB surrounding the prospect of Ex-Co-Chair appointment versus elected RO bias.)
- (HS) Reiterates that she and MB don't wisht to take the amendment.
- (TT to HS and MB) Personally if it was made clear in the constitution, I would be happy to provide a round-breakdown.
- (MB and HS) We don't think it is necessary.
- (TT) So, speed and efficiency?
- (IC) Idea of ex-co-chairs becoming ROs, 'not having a vested interest' and there could be biased.
- (HS) I am not being biased. All Co-Chair's Ex-Officio are run-down and don't have an interest in being biased. The role is not to be biased.
- (ZF) How to confirm?
- (HS) Complaint procedures.
- (ZF) Would that involve the overturning of the election?
- (MB) Nothing can stop you from making these complaints. People are welcome to.
- Moves to a vote. (50% needed to pass)
 - Votes made: 14
 - Voted for: 7
 - Votes against: 7
 - Amendment outcome: does not pass.

Result (66% needed to pass):

- Voted for: 22
- Voted against: 2

- Motion 3 passes with: 91.67%

Any Other Business:

- (WP) [Introduces discussion on topic of government announcement in response to the Supreme Court ruling]. On the topic of ministers and the calls on Transgender rights. I think there should be a dialogue and statement from the club.
- (HS) You can say the co-chairs can write it and then voted on.
- (AR) I think there is a statement, could we add. [Referring to cross-university clubs statement, via Instagram the week before this meeting.]
- (WP) More powerful to make our own?
- (Agreement from the room).
- (MB) should we keep it a verbal motion? [Instead of written motion]
- (WP) I'd like to put forward a motion then, now, that the co-chairs should draft a response to recent events for trans-rights which can be passed by committee with a committee.
- Seconded by (AP)
- (TT) – highlights there have been issues of us using spaces due to freedom of speech issues, we have uninvited people in the past so we should be careful. They could ban us.
- (WP) I don't see it will cause conflict and we will check this. I'd imagine we are more in line with solidarity than any individuals in the university context. We also shouldn't let transphobes dictate if we make statements against trans rights.
- (TT) I want to stress I am not against but we just need to be aware.

MN moves to vote on this motion.

- Voted for: 11
- Voted against: 0
- Motion 4 passes with: 100% of the vote.

Meeting Time End: 19:59