



the DURHAM UNION

MEETING OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE Minutes – Wednesday 19th February 2020

Please note: - Details relating to attendance may be found in the General Committee register, housed at the Union Office on Palace Green. Permission to access the register may be granted upon request by the Secretary, Returning Officer or the Union Society Office Manager.

The meeting began in the Debating Chamber, Palace Green at half past two o'clock

Miss Kuszynski in the Chair, Mr Wroe minuting.

The President, Miss Kuszynski, opened the meeting, thanking members of the committee for their attendance.

Miss Asha Symons was proposed for ratification as Debates Training Secretary.

The President invited Miss Symons to begin her hust.

Miss Symons husted for the position of Debates Training Secretary outlining her experience in the area of debating since the age of 11. Miss Symons stated that she had good leadership and communication skills and described her experience in student leadership roles. She stated that debate practice should take place in central locations and that debate should be more accessible. Miss Symons committed to better training sessions, particularly for those who are novices.

The President opened the floor to questions.

Mr Enamorado asked about the Robinson Shield.

Miss Symons responded that it was a matter for the Debates Selection Committee.

There being no further questions, the question was put that Miss Symons be elected as Debates Training Secretary. This was taken on a general aye.

The President ceded the Chair to Miss Herrington.

Miss Herrington invited Mr Perry to move his amendment.

Mr Perry introduced his amendment to abolish the positions of Assistant Secretary, Assistant Sponsorship Secretary and Assistant Social Secretary. Mr Perry explained that whilst the positions did have role in the past, they have become obsolete due to the other officerships that have been created.

Mr Perry explained that Assistant Secretary has become obsolete due to the creation of a Publicity Officer, who handles the publicity of the Society. The role of the Assistant Sponsorship Secretary has similarly been made obsolete by the Outreach Officer. Mr Perry explained that Assistant Social Secretary has no meaningful duties and that it functions like an additional committee member, the

continued existence of such an officership has made the running of socials more difficult and added additional work for the Social Secretary.

Mr Perry explained that the amendment included a provision for the Chair of each committee to appoint a senior member if they so wished who could deputise for them if they were unable to attend.

Mr Wroe proposed a second-degree amendment to remove an erroneous reference to the Assistant Sponsorship Secretary that had been included in the amendment. This was taken on a general aye.

Miss Foster-Collins asked why some assistants had been retained.

Mr Perry explained that whilst the Assistant Secretary, Assistant Sponsorship Secretary and Assistant Social Secretary have become defunct other assistant officerships such as Assistant Custodian have not and still have important duties.

Mr Pahl noted his support for the amendment and explained the duties of the Assistant Custodian including organising 24s social events, managing the Facebook page and treasury work.

Miss Price explained why the Assistant Sponsorship Secretary is defunct and how its continued existence hinders the sponsorship work of the Society.

Mr Wroe noted his support for the amendment and explained why the role of Assistant Secretary had become entirely obsolete due to the creation of the Publicity Officer.

Mr Adamson asked why this logic could not be applied to Assistant Custodian and Deputy Returning Officer.

Mr Perry repeated that just because some assistant officerships are defunct does not mean all assistant officerships are defunct. These positions still retain important duties.

Miss Foster-Collins asked why the assistant officerships could not take work off the senior officer.

Mr Perry stated that this was simply unfeasible due to the individual work that officers have to do. Assistant Secretary, Assistant Sponsorship Secretary and Assistant Social Secretary have no role at the current time and should be abolished.

Miss Mitchell stated that it is necessary that officers have their own mandate.

Mr Enamorado stated that the Constitution must evolve and expressed his support, as a former Assistant Secretary, for the amendment.

Miss Farmer asked how the senior member would be appointed.

Mr Perry responded that it is up to the senior officer to decide.

Miss Jackson noted her support for the amendment and explained why the current system is so inflexible for social events.

Miss Herrington asked if there was any formal opposition to the amendment.

Miss Foster-Collins rose in formal opposition.

Miss Foster-Collins outlined her opposition to the amendment explaining that it made the Union less accessible and took away opportunity. She noted that full officerships should not be the only available positions.

Miss Jackson insisted that the amendment gives far more opportunity to students and that it is the current system that is inflexible.

Miss Foster-Collins disagreed noting that the amendment takes away officerships.

Mr Page stated that the amendment creates a tier of seniors that are far more accessible than the current system.

Mr Perry proposed a procedural motion that the amendment be adjourned until after the Custodian election. This was taken on a general aye.

Miss Herrington ceded the Chair to the Returning Officer, Mr Perry, who read out the valid proxy votes for the meeting.

The Returning Officer opened nominations for the position of Custodian, with the following candidates being nominated:

1. Mr Alexander Buxton-Carda, of Grey College, proposed by Fergus Barker and seconded by Lucy Jackson
2. Re-open Nominations, of no such fixed abode

The Returning Officer invited Mr Buxton-Carda to begin his hust.

Mr Buxton-Carda gave his hust explaining his love of 24s and desire to make it better. He stated that he had been involved in the running of the bar for a long-time having responsibility for social events such as pub quizzes and karaoke as well as the Facebook page. Mr Buxton-Carda expressed his desire to make Bar Committee a more active committee and noted his experience as a bar reserve. Mr Buxton-Carda is living in 24s next year and so is well suited. He urged members to sign up for door duty and explained that he will conduct a review over the summer of what drinks are on tap in the bar.

The candidate having husted, the Returning Officer opened the floor to questions.

Miss Mitchell asked about Strongbow coming on tap in the bar.

Mr Buxton-Carda responded that it is too expensive.

Miss Price asked about formalised compensation for bar staff that have to deal with mess in the bar or an altercation.

Mr Buxton-Carda expressed his support for such formalised compensation and stated he will speak with the Office Manager.

Miss Jackson asked about the cocktail menu.

Mr Buxton-Carda referred to the upcoming review.

Miss Herrington asked about bar snacks.

Mr Buxton-Carda similarly referred to the upcoming review.

Miss Life asked about the toilets being gender neutral.

Mr Buxton-Carda responded that they are currently used as gender neutral toilets but that some members do not know this. He outlined some ways this could be rectified.

There being no further questions, the Returning Officer asked the candidate to leave the room, and invited Mr Barker to propose Mr Buxton-Carda.

Mr Barker proposed Mr Buxton-Carda, stating that he has known him since the two of them were on House Committee last year. He stated that Mr Buxton-Carda is a man of fine character who knows 24s well and has the experience to take it forward.

The proposer having husted, the Returning Officer opened the floor to questions, of which there were none.

There being no questions, a vote was duly taken, and it was announced that Mr Buxton-Carda had been elected by 54 votes to 1, with 1 spoilt ballot.

The Returning Officer ceded the Chair to Miss Herrington.

Miss Foster-Collins resumed her formal opposition to the amendment proposed by Mr Perry.

Mr Wroe asked what Miss Foster-Collins thought the Assistant Secretary should do, given that it has no role at present.

Miss Foster-Collins stated that the Assistant Secretary should share the role of the Secretary.

Mr Wroe responded that this had been tried in the past and had been found to be impractical. He stated that if the role of Assistant Secretary was retained, someone would be elected to a position where they had nothing to do.

Miss Foster-Collins disagreed, stating that work could be found for the Assistant Secretary.

Miss Price stated that there are many other officerships and not just Standing positions.

Miss Foster-Collins replied that assistant officerships are accessible to first year students.

Miss Jackson disagreed stating that the amendment makes these positions far more accessible. She reiterated that Assistant Social Secretary has no role at the moment and is entirely obsolete.

Mr Green proposed a procedural motion to move immediately to a vote. This was taken on a general aye.

The committee moved immediately to a vote on the amendment. In this vote the ayes were 31, and the noes were 20. Two thirds of the votes of the members of the committee having not been in the affirmative, the amendment was not approved.

Miss Herrington ceded the Chair to Miss Price.

Miss Price invited Miss Kuszynski to propose her amendment.

Miss Kuszynski introduced her amendment giving each President and President-Elect the right to appoint a Speakers Secretary. Miss Kuszynski explained that each President has their own vision and should have the right to appoint a Speakers Secretary who they trust and who could help to implement their vision. She noted that the Speakers Secretary would be an Official and not an Officer and stated that the President could replace them at any time. General Committee similarly has the right to bring a Vote of No Confidence against a Speakers Secretary they object to and that they are still subject to the Complaints Panel, meaning that they remain accountable.

Mr Enamorado introduced a second-degree amendment reducing the points of the Speakers Secretary in the 24s accommodation ballot from 2 points per day to 1. This was taken on a general aye.

Mr Adamson asked if the Speakers Secretary should not be ratified.

Miss Kuszynski stated that the President has already been elected by the general membership and should not have to be elected a second time by the General Committee. A President should be able to organise their term without interference from the General Committee.

Miss Price asked if Mr Adamson was introducing a second-degree amendment to include ratification.

Mr Adamson responded that he was not at this time.

Mr Wroe stated that ratification undermines much of the point of the amendment.

Mr Enamorado similarly expressed his opposition to ratification, stating that the views of the General Committee may be out of step with the general membership.

Miss Jackson proposed a procedural motion to move immediately to a vote. This was taken on a general aye.

Miss Price asked if there was any formal opposition to the amendment. No such formal opposition was forthcoming.

The motion to take the amendment on a general aye was negated.

The committee moved to a vote on the amendment. In this vote the ayes were 35, and the noes were 10. Two thirds of the votes of the members of the committee having been in the affirmative, the amendment was approved.

Miss Price ceded the Chair to the President.

The President adjourned the meeting for ten minutes for a meeting of the Rules Committee

The President resumed the meeting.

The Deputy Returning Officer, Mr Wroe, explained that eight elections are scheduled for this general meeting and that due to the decision of the committee to reject Mr Perry's amendment there will not be time to conclude all of the elections today. He stated that the elections to Assistant Social Secretary, Assistant Sponsorship Secretary and Rules Committee will be moved to the next meeting.

The President ceded the Chair to the Deputy Returning Officer.

The Deputy Returning Officer opened nominations for the position of Sponsorship Secretary, with the following candidates being nominated:

1. Miss Tamara Celeste Herrington of St Chad's College, proposed by Lucy Jackson and seconded by Fergus Barker
2. Re-open Nominations, of no such fixed abode

The Deputy Returning Officer invited Miss Herrington to begin her hust.

Miss Herrington began her hust outlining her experience in the Society and her plans for sponsorship. She stated that attaining sponsorship for the term card will be a priority and that she will look for sponsorship outside of the usual sectors. Miss Herrington stated that it is her desire to get better sponsorship of alumni events and to take advantage of the Alumni Weekend.

The candidate having husted, the Deputy Returning Officer opened the floor to questions.

A member asked if debating events were sponsored.

Miss Herrington replied that they were and that such events are a significant part of the work of the Sponsorship Secretary.

Miss Kuszynski asked about sponsorship of social events.

Miss Herrington replied that she will try to get sponsorship for social events. She referred to success of the Law Society to get sponsorship for their ball.

Mr Pahl asked if Miss Herrington is willing to go in person to firms over the summer to seek out sponsorship.

Miss Herrington replied that she will.

There being no further questions, the Deputy Returning Officer asked the candidate to leave the room, and invited Miss Jackson to propose Miss Herrington.

Miss Jackson proposed Miss Herrington, outlining her dedication and expertise as Publicity Officer and how this will carry over to the role of Sponsorship Secretary. Miss Herrington has graphical skills and attends almost every event. Miss Herrington has a creative vision of what to do with the role and will carry it out well.

The Deputy Returning Officer opened the floor to questions, of which there were none.

There being no questions, a vote was duly taken, and it was announced that Miss Herrington had been elected by 43 votes to 3, with 4 spoilt ballots.

The Deputy Returning Officer opened nominations for the position of Assistant Custodian, with the following candidates being nominated:

1. Miss Grace Annandale of Stephenson College, proposed by Tamara Celeste Herrington and seconded by Sirawich Arjparu
2. Re-open Nominations, of no such fixed abode

The Deputy Returning Officer invited Miss Annandale to begin her hust.

Miss Annandale gave her hust outlining her experience in helping to run a bar outside of university. She noted her experience working on Bar Committee and how this prepared her for this role. Miss Annandale noted her experience dealing with rowdy drunken revellers and outlined some ideas for 24s social events if she was elected.

The candidate having husted, the Deputy Returning Officer opened the floor to questions.

Miss Jackson enquired about the possibility of 'boujee bingo' taking place in the bar.

Miss Annandale responded that she would certainly consider this suggestion.

Miss Price asked if the work with Durham Lawyers without Borders would continue.

Miss Annandale responded that it would.

There being no further questions, a vote was duly taken, and it was announced that Miss Annandale had been elected by 34 votes to 14, with 2 spoilt ballots.

The Deputy Returning Officer opened nominations for the position of Deputy Technologies Officer, with the following candidates being nominated:

1. Mr Luke Stewart of University College, proposed by Lucy Jackson and seconded by Kristen Price
2. Re-open Nominations, of no such fixed abode

The Deputy Returning Officer invited Mr Stewart to begin his hust.

Mr Stewart began his hust, explaining that he is a second year Computer Science student. Mr Stewart outlined his experience for the position, including work with a local charity and with editing YouTube videos.

The candidate having husted, the Deputy Returning Officer opened the floor to questions.

Miss Jackson asked about promotion of social events.

Mr Stewart proposed the creation of promotional videos for social events.

Mr Boyd-Stringer asked about having a regular upload schedule for videos on the Durham Union YouTube channel.

Mr Stewart agreed that such a schedule should be developed and proposed that the Society should buy some hard drives to store videos of events.

There being no further questions, a vote was duly taken, and it was announced that Mr Stewart had been elected by 38 votes to 2, with 4 spoilt ballots.

There being no further business, the President closed the meeting.

Secretary: **J. Wroe**

President: **S. Kuszynski**