



the DURHAM UNION

MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE Minutes – Wednesday 11th March 2020

Present: -

- Miss Sarah Kuszynski, *President*
- Mr Fergus Barker, *Treasurer*
- Mr James Wroe, *Secretary*
- Miss Tamara Herrington, *Sponsorship Secretary*
- Miss Lucy Jackson, *Social Secretary*
- Mr Alexander Buxton-Carda, *Custodian*
- Mr George Filippopoulos, *Director of Debating*
- Mr Eduardo Enamorado, *President-Elect*

The meeting began in the Debating Chamber, Palace Green at one o'clock.

Miss Kuszynski in the Chair, Mr Wroe minuting.

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

Miss Kuszynski referred to the remaining events in the term and stated that turn out had been declining toward the end of the term.

Miss Kuszynski stated that it her intention to re-organise the presidential files and presidential email before the end of the term.

Miss Jackson stated that General Committee social would be next Thursday. This will clash with Intermediate Debate Practice but is the only available date. The social will begin late enough so people at IDP can still come.

Mr Barker noted that some speakers had not sent invoices for their travel to the Society, bringing down the overall cost of the term more in line with previous Epiphany terms. Speakers are being urged to buy their train tickets as long in advance as possible.

Mr Filippopoulos stated that the Debates Competition Secretary is overloaded with work at the current time due to how they must organise Durham Schools as well as the Durham Open and other competitions. The work of organising Durham Schools has grown to such a level that it requires a separate officership. Mr Filippopoulos proposed the creation of a new officership to handle Durham Schools whereas the Debates Competition Secretary would handle all other competitions.

Mr Enamorado asked if this new position should be merged with Outreach Officer, given that the Outreach Officer works on Durham Schools. He asked if the Outreach Officer could simply become a Debating Officer in the Constitution.

Mr Wroe asked why the position required an additional officership and asked if someone could simply be elected to the position of Convenor of Durham Schools.

Mr Filippopoulos stated that such an appointed convenor would rank below the DCS and would lack the privileges of an officer in terms of easy access to the office and a dedicated email account.

The Committee agreed to second Mr Filippopoulos' amendment.

Mr Filippopoulos stated that the Durham Schools competition is in serious danger due to the novel coronavirus. Schools are calling to cancel and are requesting refunds. The university may unilaterally cancel the entire event.

Mr Filippopoulos stated that there will be an emergency Debates Selection Committee meeting this evening and invited the Standing Committee to attend. The options are to go ahead with the competition, cancel the competition or attempt to reschedule.

Mr Filippopoulos stated that in the event that Durham Schools is cancelled there will be a shortfall in the debating budget of £6,500. He proposes a 'loan' from the Union reserves, to be repaid over a four-year period. Mr Filippopoulos stated that the trustees would have to approve such a transfer.

Miss Kuszynski asked how feasible it would be to reschedule.

Mr Filippopoulos conceded it would be very difficult to find a date.

Mr Enamorado stated that this incident demonstrated the importance of debating being fully involved in Union institutions such as Standing Committee and General Committee.

Mr Filippopoulos agreed and pledged to work toward this goal.

Mr Filippopoulos asked if an emergency trustees meeting could be called.

Miss Kuszynski stated that it could but that it may be difficult given the coronavirus outbreak. We could organise a conference call or simply get approval from the Chair of the Trustees.

Miss Jackson stated that the Easter ball would take place on Sunday 14th June in the masonic hall.

The Committee discussed some changes to the sponsorship package sent to firms.

Mr Wroe outlined his amendment to make some changes to Consultative Committee.

Miss Jackson outlined her amendment to codify the Alumni Weekend in the Constitution.

Mr Buxton-Carda referred to the karaoke night on Sunday.

Mr Wroe asked how the technical requirements for the candidates for Publicity Officer could be tested before the General Committee meeting on Wednesday.

Miss Kuszynski stated that candidates would be asked to bring along a piece of work that demonstrates their technical capability for the role.

There being no further business, Miss Kuszynski closed the meeting.

Secretary: **J. Wroe**

President: **S. Kuszynski**