

# CUSU Council Michaelmas II

## 7pm, Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October

### AGENDA

1. Objections to the order of items on the agenda
2. Corrections to the minutes of the last Council Meeting
3. Matters arising from the minutes of the last Council Meeting
4. Date, time and venue of upcoming Council Meetings:
  - a. Mich III: 9<sup>th</sup> November, 7pm. Location TBC
5. Announcements by Committees, Campaign Teams and the Executive
6. Questions to Committees, Campaign Teams and the Executive
7. Announcements by the Council
8. Discussions (background information supplied in appendix)
  - a. The TEF
  - b. Maintenance Grants
9. Ordinary motions
  - a. Supporting the National Demo for Free Education
  - b. Motion to Support the Cambridge University Calais Refugee Action Group
  - c. Motion to Actively Campaign Against Cambridgeshire County Council's Proposed Streetlight Switch Off
  - d. Motion to Increase Democratic Legitimation of CUSU Business through CUSU Council Involvement
10. Ratification of Motions from the last Inquorate CUSU Council
  - a. Motion to Support the Cambridge Calais Refugee Action Group
  - b. Motion to Appoint Student Trustees
11. Any other business
  - a. Elections Committee Election

### 5. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY COMMITTEES, CAMPAIGN TEAMS AND THE EXECUTIVE

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#### PRISCILLA MENSAH - CUSU PRESIDENT

To update at CUSU Council

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#### JEMMA STEWART - CUSU COORDINATOR

- Lighting: chasing for a contact within the University to discuss County Council's lighting issues and ways forward with the University
- UNI4 bus: emailed contacts within the University asking for information on the contract and terms held between the University and Stagecoach in order to figure out a process going forward to address rising costs with the UNI4
- Assisted two societies with formation of the society/funding tips

- Updating the CUSU website: an ongoing process of updating the content on the website and looking at areas that can be improved
- Society room bookings: have some information from the Junior Proctor on College processes with room bookings for University societies (this is currently a little out of date, but can be worked on). Working with someone in the UIS to give information on what would be useful for
- I'm now the returning officer for the Graduate Union President by-election, so we've been working on election rules and confirming dates for the election
- Part Time Exec election: putting together a page on the website with information on the PTE, working to put together dates and publicity for elections
- Minibus Scheme: Looking into funding options for future years, and working on an intermediate process (in particular for the immediate future). It would be helpful for any societies to send information over on how useful the scheme is!
- Freshers' Fair review - surveys out for both attendees and stallholders

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#### ROBERT CASHMAN - CUSU EDUCATION OFFICER

- I completed and submitted CUSU's response to the consultation on freezing the student loan repayment threshold. It will be uploaded to the CUSU website.
- I took part in a National Union of Students webinar on the future of the National Student Survey (NSS). A consultation has been launched which is looking into how the NSS can be improved, and also into the kinds of information higher education institutions provide to applicants. Over the course of the term we will be hearing what students think of the proposals and will then submit a response to the consultation.
- I attended meetings of the General Board Education Committee (GBEC), University Research Ethics Committee and the Library Syndicate. At the GBEC meeting we discussed areas the university should act on following the release of the 2015 NSS, Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) and Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) results, the content of University's Learning and Teaching Strategy for 2015-2018, and how the university will manage the changes which have been proposed to DSA.
- I helped to run the Presidents' and Externals' Roundtable. I prepared handouts on key issues in academic parity and provision across the Collegiate University for undergraduates and postgraduates.
- I am currently working on promoting the Faculty Rep elections (two core dates of 22nd October and 26th November) and am advising students who are interested in running. I am also arranging meetings with Schools and Faculties to encourage participation in the elections. I am also working on updating the website so that there is up-to-date and helpful information available to Faculty Reps.
- Along with Priscilla I met with one Senior Tutor to discuss intercollegiate academic parity. We have now met with ten Senior Tutors on this issue.
- I attended a meeting alongside the other full-time officers with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) to discuss ongoing issues including intercollegiate academic parity.

- I have been conducting research into the proposed Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) in order to facilitate discussion on this and to prepare to submit CUSU's response to the Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee.
- I worked with the university to put together a consultation for Colleges and Faculties/Departments on student workload. Please speak to your Senior Tutor / Chair or Secretary of your Faculty Board to ensure that you get the opportunity to shape your institution's response.
- I have sent a bulletin to Faculty Reps to update them on everything which is currently going on. A key item to be aware of is that the consultation on the review of exams is open until the end of next week - please do consider responding to this hugely important consultation on the future of assessment at Cambridge.

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#### POPPY ELLIS LOGAN - CUSU/GU WELFARE AND RIGHTS OFFICER

- I wrote the Sexual Health Scheme report to present to the Welfare and Finance Committee in order to secure continued funding for our Sexual Health Scheme. The Committee required a trip to Homerton (the best of all the 31 colleges), and gave me a chance to check in with the President and Male Welfare Officer. The Committee discussed the findings of a recent University project which found that the current Cambridge examination process still leaves students with SpLDs who get 25% extra time at a significant disadvantage to their peers, and that only use of a word processor AND extra time as a minimum could level the playing field. I pointed out that that this evidence needs to be used as effectively as possible in order to address the issue of perception, so that students needn't be concerned that their scripts will be marked more harshly if the marker knows that they have received reasonable adjustments. On Phillip Johnson's suggestion the committee agreed it would be beneficial to provide information sheets explaining the findings that the student will not have been at an advantage with any typed script sent to be marked. I also suggested that the 'Fitness to Study' procedure be renamed 'Supported Study' in order to better convey its purpose.
- I attended my second GU council and first CUSU council
- I led the first of many weekly Student Support Officer training sessions (Tuesday evenings, 17 Mill Lane, Seminar Room F, open to all - bring friends and food!)
- I sat on the Equality and Diversity Committee, discussing a new strategic plan and developments for staff training across the University. I'm looking forward to seeing the University's plans for promoting a culture of positive awareness and understanding.
- I met up with Helen from the DRC to make initial plans for a project on the barriers faced by students with ADHD. I also started planning the training session on 'Understanding Unseen Disabilities' which will take place on 17th November.
- I had lunch with a student who wanted to raise some concerns about their college's protocol in the event of overdosing. We planned training sessions that include guidance on how to support students who are panicking, overwhelmed or manic.
- I delivered two hundred and twenty-two sexual health supplies to the Downing JCR Welfare Officers

- I proposed setting up an end-of-day food collection scheme to work on with RAG president Liv Sinclair and Cambridge Foodcycle
- Continued ongoing SUAS work with the other advice officers
- I had a meeting with the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Education, Graham Virgo, to discuss a pledge for a welfare charter or better mental health practice.
- I had another trip to Homerton to meet with the senior tutor / chair of Welfare & Finance and discuss all things welfare, both specific to the College and across the University.
- I held the welfare ranking consultation with Priscilla
- I attended the counselling service exec committee.
- I met up with Jan, the awesome Pembroke college nurse. We discussed the possibility of trying to get some kind of prescription-delivery service available to students who don't necessarily have the resources to pick them up in person. We also planned the resurrection of the CFS solidarity group.
- I met with Alice Benton and Katherine Wallington to discuss fundamental student welfare, a basic charter of welfare provision and ending week 5 blues.

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#### HELENA BLAIR - CUSU ACCESS AND FUNDING OFFICER

- Sat on Admissions Forum and the Outreach Steering Group (committees).
- Met with web developers for the new CUSU Alternative Prospectus.
- Scheduled to meet with Heidi Allen (South Cambridgeshire MP) to discuss changes to maintenance grants.
- Held Access Forum with JCR Access Officers - discussed Shadowing Scheme, A Level Reform, Welcome to Cambridge events and Regional Meet-Ups.
- Worked at promoting Shadowing Scheme to recruit undergraduate volunteers and shadow student participants.
- Meeting with JCR Access Officers to provide guidance and practical support to their projects.
- Launched Regional Meet-Ups across university - informal social events for home students to meet people from their region of UK.
- Attended several College Access 'squashes' to talk about CUSU Access.

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#### CHARLIE CHORLEY - CUSU WOMEN'S OFFICER

- Sat on the Equality and Diversity Committee, discussing a new strategic plan and developments in E&D training for University staff members.
- Went to Sidney Sussex's Women Leader Speaker Series, where I got to listen to Vivian Hunt talk about being one of the most powerful women in consulting.
- Led the first Forum of term which was so amazing (thank you to all who turned up!). We discussed Julian Assange, Bahar Mustafa, and the fantastic WomCam campaigns this year. [Click here](#) for a list of all the WomCam Exec and their campaigns, if you want to get involved.
- Met with senior members of the English Faculty to look at how we can mobilise, and politicise, Faculty Reps in order to get alternative reading lists and alternative examination methods in place by September 2016. Faculty Rep elections are this

term, so please do let me know if you're keen; you really do have a lot of scope to get stuff done!

- Had a meeting with the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Education, Graham Virgo, to discuss the university sexual harassment policy, and update him on the work that WomCam is doing.
- Had a super-productive committee meeting, with my wonderful Exec, where we planned some great events for this term - so keep your eyes peeled.
- Dropped in to Corpus Feminist Discussion Group for a wee chat.

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#### TIANTIAN & TESSA - ETHICAL AFFAIRS OFFICERS

To update at CUSU Council

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#### CUSU LGBT+ CAMPAIGN

To update at CUSU Council

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#### CUSU BME CAMPAIGN

To update at CUSU Council

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#### CUSU DSC CAMPAIGN

To update at CUSU Council

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#### ICUSU CAMPAIGN

To update at CUSU Council

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### 9A. SUPPORTING THE NATIONAL DEMO FOR FREE EDUCATION

Proposed by Ben Platt ([bjp34@cam.ac.uk](mailto:bjp34@cam.ac.uk)), seconded by Jemma Stewart (CUSU Coordinator, [coordinator@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:coordinator@cusu.cam.ac.uk))

#### **CUSU Notes:**

1. The crisis of poverty, debt and lack of future that faces students who graduate today;
2. That the government plans to worsen the situation of students by cutting maintenance grants for students from lower income families;
3. That NUS Conference 2015 voted to campaign for free education, the creation of jobs with a living wage and security, an end to cuts, and rebuilding public services, funded by taxing the rich, business and the banks;
4. That a coalition of student unions and student campaigns, supported by NUS, are organising a national demonstration on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November under the slogan "Free Education and Living Grants for All: No Barriers, No Borders, No Business".

**CUSU Believes:**

1. After the General Election, there are clear opportunities to make substantial gains for students, if we put out a clear message and mobilise a movement;
2. That we should campaign for the same demands as NUS: free education and living grants for all to end student debt, and decent jobs with a living wage and job security for all.

**CUSU Resolves:**

1. To campaign on these themes over the next year with the slogans "Fund free education and living grants for all - tax the rich" ;
2. To support the national student demonstration taking place on the 4<sup>th</sup> November;
3. To organise transport to the demonstration and mobilise students for it;
4. To also emphasise how cuts, unemployment and debt hit the most oppressed groups in society hardest.

**9B. MOTION TO SUPPORT THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY CALAIS REFUGEE ACTION GROUP**

Proposed by Peter Martin ([pm505@cam.ac.uk](mailto:pm505@cam.ac.uk)), seconded by Tom Tyson ([tmt27@cam.ac.uk](mailto:tmt27@cam.ac.uk))

**CUSU Notes:**

1. That the newly formed society, the Cambridge University Calais Refugee Action Group, plans to make multiple trips to Calais to volunteer in the refugee camps;
2. That the charity CalAid, based in Calais, has received a large amount of donations and supplies over the last month, but does not have enough people in Calais to sort through the supplies and distribute them;
3. That over 350 Cambridge students have already expressed an interest in travelling to Calais to help, working in conjunction with CalAid;
4. Given that the CUSU minibus scheme is currently out of action, the cost of travel to, and accommodation in, Calais would cost each student around £50 to volunteer for one weekend;
5. That the first trip to Calais is planned for the weekend of October 30<sup>th</sup>;
6. That CUCRAG is distinct from, but working in association with, CCRAG (Cambridge Calais Refugee Action Group), a primarily Cambridge residents based group, which has different organisational structures not easily fit for University students given that most residents have their own cars as their means of transportation to Calais.

**CUSU Believes:**

1. That as winter approaches, the refugees in Calais would benefit from our assistance in helping to ensure supplies are distributed from the CalAid warehouses and shelters are built;
2. That whilst some students, who wish to volunteer, may be able to afford the £50-60 costs for each weekend trip, the volunteering should be open to those with less

means as well, so that CUCRAG's trips are accessible to all through subsidised travel costs;

3. That in the first few weeks of CUCRAG's inception, a monetary donation will help CUCRAG organise effective initial trips to Calais, after which point CUCRAG hopes to have found a more permanent transportation means by which to get to Calais, and thereby lower costs for our volunteers.

#### **CUSU Resolves:**

1. To apportion £800 of the CUSU Council Free Budget to Cambridge University Calais Refugee Action Group (CUCRAG).

### **9C. MOTION TO ACTIVELY CAMPAIGN AGAINST CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S PROPOSED STREETLIGHT SWITCH OFF**

Proposed by Cornelius Roemer (cr492@cam.ac.uk), seconded by Damiano Sogaro (ds674@cam.ac.uk)

#### **CUSU Notes:**

1. That Cambridgeshire County Council has proposed to switch off streetlights in what it deems residential areas between midnight and 6am from the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2016 to cut costs;
2. Amongst the proposed streets to be plunged into darkness are a number of pathways that are highly frequented by students and other residents even well after midnight, such as Trinity Lane/Garret Hostel Lane/Burrell's Walk, on the way from the City Centre to Robinson and Fitzwilliam Colleges;
3. While data mentioned but not properly referenced by County Council purportedly shows that late-night streetlight switch-offs don't increase crime, subjective safety feeling is strongly affected on badly lit paths;
4. That the County Council has proposed to allow 'individual communities' to jump into pay for electricity at a cost of around 12 GBP per lamp per year.

#### **CUSU Believes:**

1. That there is consensus amongst students that streetlights in the student-populated wider city need to stay on during the night. This is the case, specifically because many of the areas in which will be switched off are lived in by students, who are likely to be returning home after midnight. Students living on the periphery are affected in particular, yet as a student body we should all show solidarity;
2. That comparing the costs with the benefits of street lighting on frequented pathways is strongly in favour of the benefits and that the proposed policy is thus ludicrous and irresponsible;
3. That students have not been properly consulted about the policy change;
4. That it is a responsibility of the state to provide street lighting, whether County or Council finances is irrelevant to students;

5. That nonetheless, if the state does decide to switch off relevant streets, it is in the interest of the University and Colleges to pay for the lights as otherwise current students will feel insecure and prospective applicants will be put off.

**CUSU Resolves:**

1. That the CUSU Executive Committee submits a petition to County Council informing Council of CUSU's disagreement with the policy and takes part in the City Council's consultation on the matter;
2. That the CUSU Executive Committee actively lobbies against the policy with elected County and City Councillors. To this end, a petition is launched that allows students and local residents to air their disagreement with the switch-off policy;
3. That the CUSU Executive Committee publishes Councillors positions and voting record on this issue to allow students to take this into account at future Council elections;
4. That the CUSU Executive Committee enters into negotiations with the University and inter-collegiate committees to make contingency plans for the case that County goes through with the policy.

**9D. MOTION TO INCREASE DEMOCRATIC LEGITIMATION OF CUSU BUSINESS THROUGH CUSU COUNCIL INVOLVEMENT**

Proposed by Cornelius Roemer (cr492@cam.ac.uk), seconded by Damiano Sogaro (ds674@cam.ac.uk)

**CUSU Notes:**

1. That the majority of CUSU Council business is currently administrative or very particular in nature;
2. That the attendance at CUSU Council is undesirably low;
3. That Students feel there is a lack of involvement in CUSU policies and that they lack democratic legitimation;
4. The reputation of CUSU is low, especially compared to other JCRs and University Student Unions;
5. That not all policies of elected officers necessarily have broad agreement amongst students despite their election - election success does not mean endorsement of all policy proposals;
6. That the CUSU Executive's constitutional role is to execute motions passed by Council, the governing body. There is a substantial difference between the election of an individual and their policies. CUSU elections are concerned with the election of individuals. Any proposed policies need to be ratified by Council.

**CUSU Believes:**

1. That there is a lack of scrutiny of CUSU Executive policies that extends beyond sabbatical elections;
2. That low attendance at CUSU Council is due to a lack of engaging motions;

3. That broad and engaging debates of CUSU policies at CUSU Council are desirable and strengthen the democratic process and student satisfaction. Student politics would benefit from more debates;
4. Elected CUSU officers are doing what they think is in the best interest of students, yet there needs to be affirmation of their policies through a representative body;
5. CUSU Council through its broad participative basis is ideally suited to fulfil the role of body of scrutiny and affirmation.

#### **CUSU Resolves:**

1. That the CUSU Officers bring forward their policy ideas to CUSU Council for scrutiny and affirmation on a continuous basis, including policies they are already pursuing;
2. CUSU Officers will present an 'active list' of resolutions and policies and what is being done. This will be based on a document which is readily accessible by student representatives;
3. An up-to-date archive of accepted and active motions will be made widely available on the CUSU website;
4. CUSU will thus act like a government, being responsible for the implementation and drafting of policies;
5. A list of motions that are about to expire within the next two CUSU Councils will be distributed in a separate email together with the Council agenda to allow consideration of re-enactment and prolongation.

### **10A. MOTION TO SUPPORT THE CAMBRIDGE CALAIS REFUGEE ACTION GROUP**

Proposed by Maddie Tait ([mmt37@cam.ac.uk](mailto:mmt37@cam.ac.uk)), seconded by Anya Draycott ([amid2@cam.ac.uk](mailto:amid2@cam.ac.uk))

#### **CUSU Notes:**

1. The Cambridge Calais Refugee Action (CCRA) is a group of people who live in and around Cambridge working to help the refugees living in the camp in Calais. Their aim is to raise awareness of the situation and to provide practical help to the refugees by fundraising and organising donations of clothing and other items;
2. The CCRA does not have a donation point in the centre of Cambridge;
3. Our new building move, there is now social space shared with the Graduate Union;
4. Our capacity as a student body to give a platform to groups such as CCRA and to coordinate large numbers of students quickly;
5. In August there were 5,000 recorded people living in Calais camps and around 39,000 people have attempted to cross from Calais to Britain in the last year;
6. The existing Jules Ferry centre and adjoining slum does not fulfil the resident refugees rights of access to clean water, safe housing and food;
7. Student donations through CCRA will enable students to contribute whatever they can towards improving the quality of life of the thousands living in Calais slums.

#### **CUSU Believes:**

1. That we should support efforts by charities in providing and coordinating the response to the 'Refugee Crisis'

**CUSU Resolves:**

1. To work with the CCRA to provide donations to refugees in camps across Europe;
2. To provide storage for student donations;
3. To work with CUAL, whose college reps will organise in-college collection points in order to make donation points more accessible to students;
4. To work with volunteers from CUAL, other concerned/interested charitable university societies, and any interested students, to transport and organise donations for CCRA.

## 10B. MOTION TO APPOINT STUDENT TRUSTEES

Proposed by the Student Trustee Selection Group

**CUSU Notes:**

1. The Selection Group tasked with recommending the appointment of student trustees was established at the first meeting of CUSU Council in Easter, its membership being as follows:
  - Helen Hoogewerf-McComb (CUSU President)
  - Rob Richardson (CUSU Education Officer)
  - Amelia Horgan (CUSU Women's Officer)
  - Brendan Mahon (CUSU LGBT+ President)
  - Robert Corbyn-Smith (CUSU DSC Co-Chair)
2. That the Selection Group received applications from 9 students for 2 positions;
3. That Student Trustee appointments, if approved, will take immediate effect until Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

**CUSU Believes:**

1. That applications were of an exceptionally high standard, representing students with a broad range of experiences which could contribute to the effective operation of the CUUS Trustee Board in the interests of CUSU's members.

**CUSU Resolves:**

1. To appoint Jon Wall to the CUSU Board of Trustees as a student trustee;
2. To appoint William Marks to the CUSU Board of Trustees as a student trustee.