

CUSU COUNCIL LENT I MINUTES – 23RD JANUARY 2017

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT

Rachel Mander, CUSU Chair
Mark McCormack, CUSU General Manager (Scribe)
Amatey Doku, CUSU President
Roberta Huldisch, CUSU Education Officer
Éireann Attridge, CUSU Access and Funding Officer
Jess Wing, Disabled Students' Officer*
Sophie Buck, CUSU/GU Welfare & Rights Officer
Audrey Sebatindira, CUSU Women's Officer*

Eleanor Toal acting as proxy for Nancy Thorpe, Christ's JCR, Vice-President*
Callum Jessop acting as proxy for James Burn, Christ's JCR, President*
Max Edwards, Churchill JCR, External Officer*
Tom Meadows, Downing JCR, President*
Connor MacDonald, Emmanuel JCR, President*
Tom George, Emmanuel JCR, Vice-President*
Katie McCoshan, Fitzwilliam JCR, Vice-President*
Carl Martin, Fitzwilliam JCR, President*
Kayan Patel, Girton JCR, Vice-President*
William Hewstone, Homerton JCR, President*
Toby Matimong, Homerton JCR, Vice-President (External)*
Katherine Boucher, Jesus JCR, President*
Max Bowling, Jesus JCR, Secretary*
Ceylon Hickman, King's JCR, President*
Amy Clark, King's JCR, Vice-President*
Alicia Pasiecznik, Magdalene JCR, President*
Aidan Hilton, Magdalene JCR, Vice-President*
Bethany Bartlett, Newnham JCR, Vice-President*
Zach Berenson Barros, Pembroke JCR, Vice-President*
Oliver Hulme, Pembroke JCR, President*
Elizabeth Lloyd, Peterhouse JCR, Vice-President*
Joseph Levin, Queens' JCR, President*
Sam Dixon, Queens' JCR, Vice-President*
Rhys Goodall, Robinson JCR, President*
Lizzie Palmer, Robinson JCR, Chair*
Emma Harper, Selwyn JCR, Vice-President*

Ted Mackey, Selwyn JCR, President*
Fran Jenkins, Sidney Sussex JCR, President*
Darcy Levison, Sidney Sussex JCR, Vice-President*
Alex Ho, St Catharine's College JCR, External Officer*
Finn Kristensen, Trinity JCR, Vice-President*
Beth Greenwood, Murray Edwards JCR, Vice-President*

Oliver Fleck, Darwin DCSA, External Officer*
James Liley, Darwin DCSA, Sports Officer*
Susanna O'Brien, Emma MCR, Vice-President*
Nicholas Langford, Hughes Hall MCR, Vice-President*
Zoe Ye, Murray Edwards MCR, Vice-President*
Rachel Crosby, Newnham MCR, External*
Oliver Hulme acting as proxy for Craig Burns, Pembroke MCR, President*
Tom Albrow-Owen, Queens' MCR, President*
Ivanna Didur, Robinson MCR, Vice-President (External)*
Sebastian Wrobel, Wolfson, External Officer*

Chad Allen, Graduate Union President*
Claire Takami Siljedahl, BME Autonomous Campaign, International Officer*
Tom Ashford, LGBT+ Autonomous Campaign, President*
Louis Ashworth, Varsity
Monty Fynn, Varsity
Alastair Ward-Booth, Student
Sam Longton, Law Faculty Undergraduate Representative*
Verena Neufeld, Graduate Faculty Board of Chemistry and Physics*

Total voting members of CUSU Council present (*): 49

APOLOGIES

Alex Cicale, CUSU Democratic Support Officer
Henry Zhang, International Students Autonomous Campaign, President

1. OBJECTIONS TO THE ORDER OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

- As there is an absence of nominations for the Board of Policy Scrutiny and the Societies Syndicate, items 10b. and 10c. have been withdrawn.

2. CORRECTIONS TO THE MINUTES OF THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING

None

- **Alex Cicale (in absence):** I will be uploading the final two sets of minutes from last term here: <https://www.cusu.co.uk/representation/cusu-council/agenda-minutes> . I will also upload a document containing details regarding the Council Free Budget. This will be constantly updated to reflect expenditure throughout the academic year as well as in the past.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST COUNCIL MEETING

None

4. DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF UPCOMING COUNCIL MEETINGS

- The next Council will be held on the 6th of February 2017 from 7pm to 9pm in the same venue (the Cormack Room, University Centre).

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY COMMITTEES, CAMPAIGN TEAMS AND THE EXECUTIVE

- **Jessica Wing (CUSU Disabled Students' Officer):**
 - Attended the 'Fitness to Study Network', a meeting with various members of the University (senior tutors, the DRC, the head of student conduct and complaints (OSCCA)) and some GPs to discuss the University's fitness to study policy, and how it should be reformed. Reform is important because, as every college has their own fitness to study procedure, the University's central one has never been used. The purpose of this meeting was discuss what a central University policy might be useful for, including issues like conflicts of interest.
 - Prepared and delivered a session at CUSU Conference, entitled Disability Activism and Accessibility at Cambridge. This gave student representatives in autonomous campaigns, JCRs and MCRs some baseline knowledge of the Equality Act 2010 and how it affects disabled students at Cambridge, as well as some practical tips for working with the Disabled Students' Campaign over the year.
 - Represented students in meetings
 - Updating and finalising the new DSC website. Lots of resources in the resources tab so do take a look.
 - Preparation for a new zine looking at the intersection of gender and autism – watch out for this, will be opening submissions soon.
 - Attended a committee on the lecture capture pilot project which is currently being run in some University departments (including engineering, biochemistry, the vet school, and ICE). Some very interesting student feedback is currently being analysed, and students overwhelmingly report (disabled or not) that they struggle to effectively take notes and understand the lecture simultaneously. These meetings are monthly.
 - I've also had input into the student-facing text that will appear on the University website regarding the new sexual harassment policy. The implementation of this policy has sadly been pushed back but the web text will be good to go when it's released.
 - I've also been finalising the text for the Disabled Students' Campaign's Guide to Undergraduate Intermission. This should be ready within a couple of weeks.
 - Met with John Harding at the DRC to discuss the Uni4 bus, lecture recording, committee papers, and resource creation for students
 - Creating a best practice guide for college-based intermission support with the W&R officer
 - Assisted the Access & Funding Officer with the Shadowing Scheme

CUSU LGBT+ CAMPAIGN

- **Tom Ashford (LGBT+ Autonomous Campaign, President):** The Campaign failed to attend a single Council meeting last term; the President had graduated and the Chair didn't step up. There were a

lot of inactive committee members; now we have had elections and nearly all our roles are filled – other roles are being split between committee members.

There is LGBT+ history month coming up – events and social activities are planned. Flags are being raised throughout the month in 17 different colleges.

Our main campaign is the PLUS CAMPAIGN – asexual, intersex, aromantic – and there are various talks for that going on; some independent, some in line with the history month. This began last term, more is going on this and next term.

We are also hoping to amend our constitution due to it not reflecting the campaign or structure of committee as currently stands – update on this to come next meeting.

CUSU BME CAMPAIGN

- **Claire Takami Siljedahl (BME Autonomous Campaign, International Officer):**

- Meeting with BME officers of JCRs. Discussing issues of racism at a college level and how they can be dealt with.
- Providing networks of support for individual JCRs.
- Rebuilding our website as part of a re-brand to make the campaign more accessible to members.
- Dealing with the recent situation in the Tab about a racist incident.

CUSU DISABLED STUDENTS' CAMPAIGN

Updated by Jessica Wing in section 5.

CUSU INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' CAMPAIGN

- No representative was in attendance. However, **Henry Zhang (International Students Autonomous Campaign, President)** provided the following update in absentia:

“Currently, iCUSU is working on a table consisting of college-specific access and welfare related issues to be published for both prospective and current international students. We are currently in the process of data collection and will publish it once we have confirmed that all data are from reliable sources. A survey will be carried out together with the publishing of the table, and campaigns would follow based on our findings. Event-wise, we will be organising an International Football World Cup in week5/6, in which we will invite football teams from various international societies to participate and compete. According to our Constitution, an election will be held in week 7/8 in Lent”.

CUSU WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN

Updated by Audrey Sebatindira in the agenda.

6. QUESTIONS TO COMMITTEES, CAMPAIGN TEAMS AND THE EXECUTIVE

None

7. ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE COUNCIL

• **Roberta Huldish, CUSU Education Officer:**

- Roberta has launched a survey on degree classifications. She encourages all to consult with committees and students and complete the survey; ask questions, engage and be in touch.
- Opened nominations for student led teaching awards.
- Asks for interest in judging panel, and describes responsibility of these judges. Award ceremony is at the start of Easter term. Encourages attendees to speak to her if interested or wants to know more.

• A question is asked about an opt-out for class lists. She responds that Professor Graham Virgo, Pro-Vice Chancellor for Education, will be taking this to a committee later this term; will propose an opt-out system. It has been indicated that this will probably go on through most of next term.

• **Jessica Wing**

A major campaign of Jess' is to get colleges to make their social areas accessible. She has created a Google Form for JCRs and MCRs to complete – she asks members to take a lead and help to support the campaign and complete the information. Timeframe is Lent Term; if over 50% of responses, will publish into a table and share.

• **Éireann Attridge (CUSU Access and Funding Officer)**

Supports Jess' campaign and says it is important for Access that social spaces are accessible; could be a motivating factor for prospective students selecting their institution and could put them off attending Cambridge.

Makes an announcement about shadowing scheme – please tell college staff and students they shouldn't be serving alcohol to shadows in their bars.

• **Amatey Doku, CUSU President**

Informs Council of a P&E dinner and invites members to attend.

8. DISCUSSIONS

• **Proposed changes to CUSU's Constitution (20 minutes)**

• **Amatey:** The Union Development Team have been tasked with reviewing CUSU's constitution and standing orders. Purpose of consultation is to communicate a whistle-stop tour of changes and gather feedback.

Amatey gives overview of rationale for constitutional change (Why we doing this? They are not fit for purpose. Wants to make sure the constitution complies with charity law; there is a lot in the constitution that shouldn't be there. Wants to make sure that core things and key governance matters are in correct place, e.g. constitution or standing orders.)

New theme/s of constitution:

- Clarifying role of trustees - explains current board make-up.

- Explains legal duty for charities to have trustees. New draft clarifies duties and responsibilities as well as being more explicit about their powers, which wasn't spelt out in old constitution.
 - Clearer process for removing trustees.
 - General Meetings replacing open meetings. Turns out open meetings haven't been taking place even though the constitution requires one per term. Explains what open meetings are and the difference between current open meetings and general meetings. Amatey introduces the policy pyramid showing different levels of decision-making by members throughout the union's proposed governance structure.
- General Meetings mean decision-making is open to influence by groups who want certain agendas to pass, not the elected representatives (JCRs and MCRs); e.g. open to abuse?
 - Amatey says we already have this mechanism in the referendum function; common in other Student Unions. General Meetings are about providing opportunity for wider discussion across the student body.
 - We are looking into mechanisms to prevent meetings being over-run by interest groups who want to abuse the process. We would like a space for policy-making by members outside of the normal representative democracy process. These shouldn't be common.
 - Have we the provision for logistically fitting in the number of students required to meet quorum?
 - There is provision for space by having 3 venues.
 - On the topic of quorum: it is funny that there is no quorum for General Meetings?

Shouldn't General Meeting and referendum quorums be lower? Doesn't seem any incentive to call for a referendum?

- Amatey describes provisions in draft around amendments to the constitution. He also explains the options the UD Team want to consult on.
- Is there any provision for more than yes/no questions in referendum?
 - This is good feedback, we will look at it. General meetings do provide a new way to have that broader conversation about policy and different stances.
 - Better to have yes and no questions. Otherwise there could be tactical voting.
 - If doing first past post for referendum; but if move toward transferable vote would be different. Referenda should have yes/no referendum, and in that case probably want 10% voting in favour. If one has a case of multiple options of voting in referenda, in essence would need to consider different voting quotas for decision-making, perhaps not the 10% in favour. Would need to think about different way of deciding the outcome.
 - For current format, will it need 10% in favour, i.e. to approve the constitution?
 - Yes

- **Roberta** clarified that an alternative method of asking the referendum question could be suggested.
 - Amatey asks whether CUSU should stick with 10% majority or 10% voting. He asks whether it should be easier or harder to change the constitution.
 - If the constitution is changing so that it is more flexible/less detail, there will probably be fewer referendums anyhow.
 - Perhaps keep the quota/decision-mechanism as is?
 - If referendums are easier or harder, would there be less or more pressure on CUSU? Therefore may be better that way.
 - AD introduces the code of conduct. Lengthy complaints section; want to include the code of conduct that CUSU Council would set this. AD asks if members have views.
 - What is meant by sanctions?
 - E.g. removes membership, or ban from a venue. Wants to move away from complicated complaints procedure and have set of standards set by members.
 - Referendums: AD explains has distinguished between referendums to change the constitution and those that are issue-based within new draft. AD asks whether issue-based referendum should be easier to pass.
 - Lower quorum, e.g. 5% in favour, may be more practical in getting resolution and debate.
 - Shouldn't be lower.
 - Consider that one doesn't want to make the constitution too difficult to change.
 - AD explains that there are changes for external trustees. Current drafting proposes scope for up to 4 external trustees to be appointed.
 - Jess clarifies that also has scope for up to 6 sabbatical trustees.
 - Term lengths, are they different at all? May want to think about longer or shorter terms.
- AD explains why external trustees are useful.
- Trustees can override decisions of the members, via referendum, for 'best interests of the union'. Seems very broad – not just on financial. Do we really want to adopt it?
 - AD says highly unlikely, as members can get rid of them. Cannot deny policy on a whim. Appreciate how it sounds.
 - Trustees should have power to amend standing orders. Aren't standing orders more of a council thing?
 - Yes more of a Council thing; does sound like trustees have more power. Common practice for unions.
 - Yes common for charities, but as a students' union really important to make sure members understand this change.
 - Good feedback, and definitely worth spelling out. Will look at that clause again.
 - Perhaps add 'extraordinary'.
 - "From time-to-time", what does that mean?
 - Sam suggested this meant 'whenever they like'.

Removal of trustees – explains changes proposed and current practice.

- In notice section, should have to mail people, not just post on website.

Talks through quorum of trustees.

- Quorum is 4, cannot be 4 sabbs; cannot exclude sabbs.

- Clauses related to indemnity in the current Constitution. Been moved to SOs?

Current constitution says Elected Officers and staff can be compensated for losses they sustain; looks like this has been removed.

- May be relic of past; only relates to trustees, but will double-check that.

- AD outlines next steps. Coming to Lent II with proposals to Standing Orders. Will be sending out survey – contact uniondev@cusu.cam.ac.uk

9. ORDINARY MOTIONS

SUPPORTING A BOYCOTT OF THE NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY

- **Amatey Doku presents:** AD explains what the NSS is, that data is used to inform fee levels; and that CUSU has policy against the TEF. AD feels that students who have previously completed the NSS didn't realise that their results would be used to set fee levels.

If we boycott we will have 3 shots at boycott, and this may mean the university has insufficient data to engage with TEF.

If we weren't to boycott, when students find out that there is a link between NSS and fees, this will begin affecting students' approach to feedback about their course and uni experience.

Advocates supporting the motion and extending the TEF boycott to NSS completion by students. The boycott will help educate CUSU's Members about the relationship between NS feedback and fee levels.

No speeches against.

Questions:

- **Proposal to boycott could backfire – those students who do engage may feel disengaged from CUSU. Could sacrifice student voice in trying to oppose it. This isn't opposition to the motion, but want to communicate concern.**

- **Amatey:** If results aren't ideal in the first year, we have another two years to keep trying to affect the NSS response-rate at Cambridge. There are other ways for students to make their voices heard about education at Cambridge, not just the NSS.
- **Roberta:** Understand concerns; the Uni has opened a new survey this year, the student barometer. There are better ways to gauge the views of students constructively.
- Other data couldn't be put towards the TEF assessment

• **Heard aren't just using NSS results, using other factors. Part of NSS is dept. specific and I may want to help out my dept. What would you say about letting depts. down as they find it very valuable to how they go about providing their education to students?**

- 3 metrics will be used to determine TEF scores, not just NSS – retention and employment stats. But NSS does account for half of these. In regards to feedback, there are better ways to feedback and not just finalists. By not using NSS, will allow a bigger conversation about how we go about feedback. Want all students throughout three years to be able to feedback.

• **What are participation rates like presently, therefore how likely is success of the boycott?**

- Approx. 65%, which is much lower than other universities.
- Other unis rely on NSS more than Cambridge do and generally spend more resource on getting students to fill out the survey than Cambridge do.

• **If Cambridge depends on this to get their gold, will they begin pushing it as much as possible to get their 50% response-rate?**

- Will be in their interests to do so. Two reasons Uni decided to do TEF – to get the money and for reputational reasons. House of Lords is ripping this Bill apart, especially link between NSS and fees; there is convention in Lords not to block mandates from election – TEF was in conservative mandate, however link between TEF and fees wasn't.

• **Is there a potential for depts. to try to put pressure on students and leverage good response-rates with incentives/penalties?**

- It is possible and again, more possible in other unis. Those tactics may be used; but as a union, we'll do our best to get to our members.

• **Last time CUSU campaigned against NSS was in 2010, setting fire to promotional materials. Likely to see anything like that?**

- Not sure we have scope for that in the motion.

• **Will the University try to raise fees anyway, and could this be more detrimental by being outside of NSS?**

- The University won't be able to raise fees outside of following the TEF mechanism.

• **How much money left in Council free budget?**

- Over £4000
 - o Suggests someone might want to propose raising the budget to allow for better campaign.
 - Will Homerton proposes raising budget for campaign to £250
 - Amatey accepts this amendment as friendly
- Roberta lists a number of other unis who are also boycotting the NSS.

• **Voting Record:**

For: 36

Ceylon Hickman, King's JCR, President
Jess Wing, Disabled Students' Officer
Darcy Levison, Sidney Sussex JCR, Vice-President
Fran Jenkins, Sidney Sussex JCR, President
Amy Clark, King's JCR, Vice-President
Susanna O'Brien, Emma MCR, Vice-President
Katherine Boucher, Jesus JCR, President
Ivanna Didur, Robinson MCR, Vice-President (External)
Ted Mackey, Selwyn JCR, President
Aidan Hilton, Magdalene JCR, Vice-President
Alicia Pasiecznik, Magdalene JCR, President
Emma Harper, Selwyn JCR, Vice-President
Alex Ho, St Catharine's College JCR, External Officer
Nicholas Langford, Hughes Hall MCR, Vice-President
James Liley, Darwin DCSA, Sports Officer
Zoe Ye, Murray Edwards MCR, Vice-President
Beth Greenwood, Murray Edwards JCR, Vice-President
Carl Martin, Fitzwilliam JCR, President
Callum Jessop acting as proxy for James Burn, Christ's JCR, President
Eleanor Toal acting as proxy for Nancy Thorpe, Christ's JCR, Vice-President
Bethany Bartlett, Newnham JCR, Vice-President
Kayan Patel, Girton JCR, Vice-President
Oliver Hulme acting as proxy for Craig Burns, Pembroke MCR, President
Finn Kristensen, Trinity JCR, Vice President
Elizabeth Lloyd, Peterhouse JCR, Vice-President
Audrey Sebatindira, CUSU Women's Officer
Rhys Goodall, Robinson JCR, President
Max Edwards, Churchill JCR, External Officer
William Hewstone, Homerton JCR, President
Tom Meadows, Downing JCR, President
Rachel Crosby, Newnham MCR, External
Toby Matimong, Homerton JCR, Vice-President (External)
Zach Berenson Barros, Pembroke JCR, Vice-President
Claire Takami Siljedahl, BME Autonomous Campaign, International Officer
Sebastian Wrobel, Wolfson, External Officer
Tom Albrow-Owen, Queens' MCR, President

Abstain: 5

Connor MacDonald, Emmanuel JCR, President
Tom George, Emmanuel JCR, Vice-President
Verena Neufeld, Graduate Faculty Board of Chemistry and Physics
Sam Longton, Law Faculty Undergraduate Representative
Chad Allen, Graduate Union President

Against: 3

Joseph Levin, Queens' JCR, President
Sam Dixon, Queens' JCR, Vice-President

The motion passes

CAMPAIGNING FOR UNCONSCIOUS BIAS TRAINING IN COLLEGES

- **Amatey Doku presents:** Amatey introduces the motion. Explains work on unconscious bias training, inconsistent across colleges; variable support across the colleges. He explains what unconscious bias is – people make unconsciously make assumptions about people and there is commonly adverse effects on BME students. Central university doesn't have much influence over college decisions on this matter.

Custodians, porters, fellows and tutors should be trained.

Opportunity for staff in colleges to reflect on how they approach and relate with students. Important that BME students are supported in correct manner. AD wanted CUSU Council to have opportunity to endorse progress being made so far, and to try to work with JCR/MCR committees to work on this issue in-house.

No speeches against.

Questions:

- **At end of CUSU resolves will make essential for supervisors. How will this be run? Grad supervisors not necessarily trained in college?**

- **Amatey:** We are looking at this; E&D unit do run training already, however not necessarily for supervisor. This could take years and will require lots of depts. To get on board. We want to get this issue out there as something student endorse.

- **Motion focuses on racial biases. Why not gender or otherwise?**

- Focuses on BME mainly. However unconscious bias also affects other characteristics and the training contextualises this.

• Voting Record:

For: 43

Ceylon Hickman, King's JCR, President

Jess Wing, Disabled Students' Officer

Darcy Levison, Sidney Sussex JCR, Vice-President

Fran Jenkins, Sidney Sussex JCR, President

Amy Clark, King's JCR, Vice-President

Susanna O'Brien, Emma MCR, Vice-President

Katherine Boucher, Jesus JCR, President

Ivanna Didur, Robinson MCR, Vice-President (External)

Ted Mackey, Selwyn JCR, President

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Max Bowling, Jesus JCR, Secretary
Tom George, Emmanuel JCR, Vice-President
Elizabeth Lloyd, Peterhouse JCR, Vice-President
Verena Neufeld, Graduate Faculty Board of Chemistry and Physics
Chad Allen, Graduate Union President

Abstain: 2

Sam Dixon, Queens' JCR, Vice-President
Sam Longton, Law Faculty Undergraduate Representative

Against: 0

The motion passes

10A. CUSU ELECTIONS COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

- Ellie Chan withdrew and the Chair invited speeches.

Alistair: 2nd year lawyer at Caius. Returning officer for University society. Aware of responsibilities, familiar with disputes that occur – key responsibility. Independence and impartiality – I offer this. Don't have any links with CUSU or campaigns. Have organisational experience and juggle other commitments.

Roberta: Has run in CUSU election, have campaigned in DSO referendum, and so know how elections work from a candidate and campaigner point of view. Feels that election rules should be more enforceable and simpler. Emphasises that social media is key. Elections are stressful and daunting for candidates. Make sure candidates more informed. Want to lighten administrative load on campaigners and make video content more accessible with subtitling. Video campaigning should be more viable. Increase engagement with elections. Elections publicity should be framed differently; technology should work. Need to adapt to online environment and make elections more accessible to disabled students.

Chad: I'm Chad, I'm the GU President. I'm somewhere between Roberta and Alastair. I represent a combination of the benefits of a student and a sabbatical committee member. I've got the experience and full-time focus of a Sabb, but I don't hold any CUSU office so I've got a more detached, external point of view. I'm coming to the end of my second term of office, so I couldn't re-run even if I wanted to. Because the CUSU elections committee normally run the election for the GU President alongside the CUSU elections, it behoves me as a GU Sabb to volunteer to serve on the committee that runs these elections now that I can. It's been eight and a half years since I matriculated, and in that time I've helped to run many JCR, MCR, and society elections. Earlier this year I submitted a returning officer's report to the University's Council Committee for the Supervision of the Students' Union following the election of the GU's sabbatical Vice-President, so I have a good idea of the standards the University expects of central union elections and how they're reported. In this election I heavily cut down the CUSU rules to halve their length, and this seemed to be well received.

Ilma was not present to deliver a speech.

COUNT OF VOTE

1st round of voting, 3 vacancies and 5 candidates (Ellie had withdrawn).

Chad: 17 votes

Roberta: 19 votes

Alistair: 6 votes.

Ilma: 0

RON: 0

Both Ilma and RON were eliminated in the first round; Roberta, Chad and Alastair are therefore elected.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None