

Minutes of the meeting of the KCSU Executive Committee, 7th February 2010

Present: Exec (minus apologies below), Luke Hawksbee, Aris Komporozos-Athanasidou, Stephen Downie

Apologies: Bono Xu, Anna Richardson, Jihye Moon

Officer's Reports:

Jacob: CUSU on Monday. Motions to NUS – Passed through CUSU to be sent to NUS. Motion saying – if we think affiliation is so good, let's take a motion to NUS to restructure. In order to bring something to NUS, needs to come from lots of places. All on External section of KCSU website.

Luke: Also restructuring open meetings.

Juan: 'God Squad'. Praying outside gay people's doors, etc. We decided I'd speak to them. JC said he felt it was his duty. John Barber told him to stop.

Lotte: Can we stop having frequent emails about Jesus, etc?

Jonny: Make sure LGBT know about the praying issue.

Juan: I'll be working on president's report. Booked part of King's for Big Chill. Free tea etc. Filespace on website sorted out. Enough space for Kords etc.

Juan: Chad pointed out we can get round constitutional thing by mandating Jonny to take a referendum.

Jacob: Can we have an official referendum?

Luke: Not binding, but an indicator.

Juan: What do people think? We could have an emergency open meeting?

Rikesh: We can't vote to let grads vote.

Jacob: Of course you can, you can vote to suspend standing orders.

Rikesh: Dangerous precedent.

Luke: I'm the King of democracy and statistics. Problem = majority of one meeting and majority of the other not necessarily the same as that of both.

Juan: Seems better to present as personal mandate for Jonny. Sending out and asking for feedback.

Lotte: Is it so dangerous to suspend standing order?

Juan: If there's a way to do it without, better.

John: Take majority of each?

Jacob: To clarify, your idea is that it's a whole student-wide resolution for Jonny even though he only represents undergrads?

Luke: The other problem with a referendum – CUSU run yes/no campaign etc, Controls. You don't know that people aren't going to randomly vote what they think is their gut instinct. The point of meeting up to vote is that people can listen to other opinions.

Shayan: We haven't even decided how we're going to create options? List of suggestions on website.

Hannah: Have to be put forward as motions.

Jacob: Badly worded on website. Write a proposal, we'll vote on it.. Not exactly what we're going to do. Up/Down vote followed by Replacement vote which doesn't make people happy. If you have lots of different votes for all replacement options, splinters votes when you compare it to 'let's leave it up'.

Juan: When somebody suggested voting for up/down, people didn't like it.

Luke: Seems to me that we use single transferrable vote – seems best solution. Some way of combining suggestions that are really similar. Replacing with blue/green hammer and sickle, just say replace with another hammer and sickle. Difference between red flag and hammer and sickle.

Tindall: Situation where a lot of people see it as choice between things strongly in favour, not, ends up with everyone discontented.

Luke: By definition a compromise – least unsatisfactory option.

Shayan: Before the debate, hasn't been uproar.

Tindall: We've never gone round and asked people what they think about it. The people who came to oppose it – I've never mixed in their circles. Before this, I had no idea. Hard to ascertain view without asking.

Aris: I missed some of the open meeting, but do we really think it necessary to come up with alternatives, etc? Was the general feeling that people didn't like idea of an up/down referendum?

Shayan: I had a straw poll of up/down – people objected.

Juan: Good proposal – up/down/change/add.

Shayan: Can't we look at suggestions, ask people to put forward suggestions, up/down/suggestions. Straight vote.

Tindall: Up/down/4-5 replacements. I might want to replace it. Everyone would vote for their favourite option, it'd go down to up/down.

Rikesh: Motion – up/down/replace THEN second round.

Lotte: I don't think that works – depends what you want to replace it with.

Luke: If someone wants to replace with hammer and sickle, different from wanting to replace it with Laurel and Hardy.

Aris: Don't you think we're rushing into the question of replacing it? We have a motion that was brought for the first time in a while that the flag is an offensive artefact and we need to consider replacing it. By deciding to include the change question, is this an assessment made of the motion? Having two referendums, putting the options in the same list – Issue of the flag has not been formally contested. Shouldn't we decide as a student body to acknowledge this as a serious issue? What is the point of discussing alternatives?

Jacob: It inflects the way people vote yes/no. People might vote to keep up if there's a bad alternative. Most of the alternative ideas are coming from the same position – some representation of radical heritage. Maybe we could generically make that one thing. Full replacement vote.

Bayu: Going back to the whole up/down/replace thing it's important people know what they'll replace it with. Some want to replace it with something completely uncommunist, some with something communist. People will have the incentive to vote replace if they know what it is. Second round, people who voted yes/no can converge on mean. Specify, and amalgamate all votes at the end.

Luke: I was quite careful about how I worded my motion. Possibly just voting on them as two motion might make the most sense. Situation then = knocking down both motions and rejecting both motions, means we keep it up. If we pass first but not second, we replace it with nothing, if second, regardless, means we have a specified idea of what we replace it with. Mandate to replace.

Lotte: That makes sense, except it disregards the suggestion of adding to the flag – question mark, caption etc.

Luke: We could ask someone to submit motion saying we add. If the first two fall and last passes..

Juan: Tiered system – Do we all agree that a tiered system of voting is a good one?

Aris: Have we decided whether the grads are involved?

Shayan: I think the grads should have a vote.

Juan: Mandate to Jonny.

Jonny: I have to check with Packman.

Lotte: I think it's pretty presumptuous to say the fellows want it down. I've had several conversations with fellows [me too, me too], they'd be pretty upset. We can't make assumption.

Juan: I spoke to fellows, heard only one in favour. If vote is to change it, will fellows agree?

Jacob: We'll put it up and see what they do.

John: This is our space. We claim it as our space by going in and putting money behind the bar.

Tindall: It won't bother them too much, they never see it.

Shayan: Are we going to ask the people who've sent in suggestions to present ideas as motions?

Hannah: As well as adding/replacing. Someone suggested moving it.

Tindall: Moving it's just taking it down and putting it down somewhere else.

Bayu: Luke's idea means using the original motions. It seems to me that the implication is to replace with another communist symbol.

Luke: We could reword my motion to say 'another symbol'.

Jacob: I don't see why we have to change it.

Bayu: People will make a face judgement.

Luke: If the exec just post three motions –

Jacob: Risk of dividing debate across a few things. Could we not add and try to pass amendments suggesting to add your resolves onto Steve's motion.

Luke: I think this is the best way of reflecting people's opinions.

Aris: Isn't this a way of directing the debate? I sense that we don't include an option of just keeping. Isn't this already an acceptance that Steve's motion is correct?

Jade: Bayu's system – definite yes, definite no + amendments.

Tindall: I think people made it clear that members of the college do think something should be done about it? We can't decide what we think the majority do.

Shayan: The point is – We have an option to keep it up, take it down, replacement.

Bayu: I see Aris' point that other options split the vote.

Lotte: I think it's going to be hard to reach a consensus unless we do it this way. Make it clear that by rejecting all motions it will stay up.

Luke: Are we using STV or First past the post? We're going to have to suspend constitution this way.

Juan: Debate over email?

Jacob: Could we have a vote of people in this room but electronically?

Juan: Only we can vote.

Tindall: Difference between meeting open to everyone.

Jacob: I don't feel secure in voting now. I propose we have an electronic vote, maybe + rest of exec.

Tindall: Suspending constitution – take this sheet. Formulation of voting procedure etc. Heated. Email etc. Bad behaviour etc. Many people in KCSU – first hands on experience of democracy. Some people are going to act badly, no excuse for exec to. Some members of executive conducting

themselves in a way that was downright rude. We're all susceptible to doing this kind of thing – when it's an exec member, this crosses the line.

Jacob: This is a continuation of the hammer and sickle debate – who gets offended by what.

[The meeting had to be cut short at this point and the discussion continued online]