Marshall Society Committee Meeting

27 September 2023

General Committee Meeting

Meeting commenced 16:10

Agenda Point 1: Attendance and apologies for absences

Apologies received from Ben Goree (External and Miscellaneous Officer), David Larence (Research Director), Avneet Sekhon (Speakers' Officer), Kieren Smith (Corporate Liaison Officer), James Troutman (Magazine Editor) and Victoria Romaniv (Chief Events Officer) for absence.

No apologies were received from Drishti Angra (Marshall Conference President).

Quorum of 8 was reached.

Agenda Point 2: Outline of expectations and benefits

Lucas Mordue (henceforth referred to as LM) stated that whilst Marshall Society is not a significant commitment, it is incredibly important that officers commit themselves to events and delivering for members. LM stressed the importance of communication and building a strong foundation to support the future of the society.

LM emphasised that participation in the committee should be fun, and committee members will all get the opportunity to attend socials for free and attend at least one speaker dinner.

LM noted that if anyone is struggling with time management, the first step will be a collaborative discussion, following this a formal warning will be issued, if this is not heeded, the member will be expelled from committee, although this final stage is unlikely to happen.

LM stated there will be two meetings a term in Michaelmas and Lent, with one meeting occurring in Easter. This does not include the AGM that will be held in Lent.

Agenda Point 3: Proposed constitutional changes

LM stated procedure for constitutional changes has been followed, and noted that all changes must be approved by a 3/4 majority of committee members present. LM noted his vote counts for 1.5 in the case of a deadlock, but stressed the democratic nature of the vote.

Proposal 1: replaces Part 2 i, ii & iii, concerning the definitions of lifetime and annual members, proposing to abolish annual membership.

Edward Hilditch, henceforth known as EH, seconded the motion.

No dissent was registered, the motion passed unilaterally.

Proposal 2: the creation of a "core officer" named the "chief events officer" being defined after part 3, iii, v.

EH seconded the motion.

Ellie Breeze, henceforth known as EB, asked whether language could be changed to be more gender inclusive.

LM stated this was a point he noted when reading the constitution and this would be more effectively addressed with a single motion addressing the entire constitution.

Athena Lau, henceforth known as AYL, asked who the current CEO is.

LM stated that Victoria Romaniv, henceforth referred to as VR, is currently CEO.

AYL asked whether having an odd number of core officers reduced the effectiveness of the President's ability to hold 1.5 votes.

LM stated most executive votes are needed to be unanimous or 3/4 quorum so the deadlock breaking ability was needed, and as the only elected officer, the President was best placed to hold this position.

No dissenting votes were recorded, and the motion passed unilaterally.

Proposal 3: to remove the title of "President Emeritus" and strike any references from the constitution.

EH seconded the motion.

EH asked what constitutional significance President Emeritus holds.

LM stated they hold no constitutional significance but awarding the title can be misleading and create unnecessary admin.

AYL asked if this position held any utility.

LM stated the position was made to deal with a specific situation and the position did not hold any utility.

James Yu, henceforth known as JY, asked whether the title could be reduced slowly rather than a complete striking would mitigate potential tensions.

LM stated a compromise could be reached through inserting language in the clause to introduce this change at the end of the year to allow time to alert any necessary stakeholders.

Proposal 3 has been amended to strike the role of President Emeritus at the next handover dinner (Easter 2024) rather than immediately, allowing time to notify stakeholders.

No dissenting voices were recorded, and the amended motion passed unilaterally.

Kieren Smith, the Corporate Liaison Officer, henceforth referred to as KS, joined the meeting.

Proposal 4: amending part 4, Xii, i, to hold an AGM during Lent at the Executive Committee's discretion

EH seconded the motion.

LM stated this is to allow for a set period of time to prepare the Presidential election occuring during the AGM and to limit power held by the President in relation to the AGM. LM stressed that this change allows a coherent transfer of power, with handover occurring at the handover dinner, not after the Presidential election.

No dissenting voices were recorded, and the amended motion passed unilaterally.

Proposal 5: to add a clause following part 7, 1, i, b, allowing constitutional changes to occur with a ¾ majority vote of the Executive Committee.

EH seconded the motion.

LM stated this allows greater flexibility and agility within the committee. LM stated that the small number of Executive members requires effective unanimity to pass a vote.

EH asked whether the General Committee must be informed of constitutional changes.

LM stated they must be.

AYL asked whether there is a provision for a General Committee member to disagree with any proposed changes by Executive Committee members.

LM stated an amendment can be added to make it clear that General Committee can challenge Executive Committee members.

Proposal 5 was amended to clarify that General Committee members can petition any changes.

No dissenting voices were recorded, and the amended motion passed unilaterally.

All proposals have been passed unanimously. The Secretary, EB, is responsible for writing and publishing the new constitution, which will be overseen at an Executive Committee meeting.

Agenda Point 4: Summer work overview

President: Lucas Mordue

LM stated he has been in contact with committee members to support oversight and administration. LM stated he has booked a stall at the Freshers' Fair and liaised with relevant committee members. LM and the outgoing President have appointed a new Senior Treasurer, Dr Oleh Stupak, who will assume their role on 1 October 2023 from Dr Charles Read, who is congratulated for his new role as Junior Proctor.

LM has overseen the Marshall Society Essay Competition, with a team of core members marking 700-800 essays in total. Marks have been awarded and the top 3 essays will be published in the upcoming edition of the Dismal Scientist and awarded a monetary prize.

LM thanked JT and DL for their work on the essay competition.

Treasurer: Philip Al Taiee

Philip Al Taiee, henceforth known as PT, stated he has been in contact with VR and a budget for freshers' events has been set.

PT thanked KS for his work in securing corporate sponsorship and noted there is one payment outstanding.

PT reminded committee members to pay £25 membership costs.

PT stated of the essay competition winners, only 1 has been paid as he is waiting for the other 2 to reply with their bank details.

Chief Events Officer: Victoria Romaniv

VR is not in attendance. On her behalf, LM stated VR has started work on freshers' events and is creating a Michaelmas term card to ensure a strong membership drive.

Research Director: David Lawrence

Absent, LM has been updated.

Magazine Editor: James Troutman

Absent, LM has been updated.

Conference President: Drishti Angra

Absent, LM to chase.

Technology: James Yu

JY stated his main work was ensuring that the essay competition website was updated, and highlighted he had made minor design changes to ensure an improved interface experience.

JY stated he would like to create a page highlighting previous successes of the society and asked whether this could be completed before freshers' arrive.

LM asked whether additional support was needed.

JY stated it depends on how detailed the section should be, but stated he would reach out if required.

CPS: Isaac Chit Long

Isaac Chit Long, henceforth referred to as ICL, shared his screen and proposed designs and sources.

LM recommended reaching out to the previous Conference Officer for stash sources and stated he would like stash to be available in Michaelmas.

AYL asked whether we have an idea of interest levels.

LM stated they will send out an interest form prior to orders opening to gauge interest.

AYL highlighted the potential issue if we advertise Marshall Society stash at the same time as college stash. She stated that smaller items such as mugs and folders could be effective.

JY suggested pens and pencils as a stash item.

LM stated they have 400 Marshall-branded notebooks that they would give out during the Freshers' Fair. He asked whether progress had been made on membership cards.

ICL stated he would work on that in the upcoming week.

Corporate Liaison: Kieren Smith

KS stated the 4 previous sponsors had been retained but prices had been increased. KS stated 2 new marketing sponsors had been secured. KS highlighted he had reached out to other companies and was waiting for correspondence.

LM thanked KS for an exceptional job in securing new revenue streams. LM stated Executive Committee are expected to attend every event, with events officers expected to attend their respective events as well.

Speakers' Officer: Avneet Sekon

Absent, LM noted 4 speakers have been secured for Michaelmas.

Social: Amanda Larsfalten

Amanda Larsfalten, henceforth referred to as AL, stated that she is working with VR to organise freshers' events, and stated she is planning to host a meet-and-greet event at first to introduce the committee.

AL stated she is planning to hold 3-4 social events a term.

External and Miscellaneous Affairs Officers: Ben Goree and Athena Lau

AYL stated neither her nor BG had any issues to raise.

LM stated a long-term project would be a swap with another University's economics society.

AOB

LM reminded committee members to sign-up for at least 3 hours on the freshers' stall.

Meeting adjourned at 17:15

Executive Committee meeting

Meeting commenced 17:15

Agenda Point 1: Specific Executive Committee expectations

LM stated expectations are outlined in the constitution and stated Executive Committee will meet in-person once a fortnight in LM's room.

Agenda Point 2: Budget and membership fee

LM stated general meetings that include food and drink would not be subsidised, funds are reserved for special occasions. LM stated a potential bar tab could be considered at social events.

PT asked whether committee socials should be subsidised.

LM stated they should be, but meeting dinners should not be subsidised, and the restaurant selected would be cheap to remove any financial barriers to access. LM suggested committee club nights.

LM suggested the creation of a WhatsApp group chat to encourage direct communication.

EH suggested asking companies to pay for their own drinks and revenues at in-person events.

LM agreed and stated the priority should be on free and central college rooms. LM stated he was happy to run a deficit this year, and stated this year was focused on reconstruction following COVID-19.

Agenda Point 3: Stash

EH stated that smaller items would generate greater interest and that it would be hard to compete with colleges in terms of larger and more expensive items.

LM stated that new stash can generate hype and emphasised the need to try stash amongst the members before deciding against the idea.

LM emphasised his desire to introduce membership cards.

Agenda Point 4: Freshers' drive plan

EB asked what resources were available and what needed to be bought. She suggested a banner, termcards, and a QR code for the new WhatsApp Group Chat.

PT asked whether the £10 membership fee will be exclusively for freshers.

LM stated the official membership cost will be £15, but £10 for the first two weeks.

Agenda Point 5: Michaelmas term card

LM stated AL and VR are organising socials well and KS has secured corporate events. LM stated the term card will be completed at the end of September and copies will be distributed at the freshers' fair.

AOB

PT asked whether the conference will break even or make money

LM stated it will make a small amount of money.

PT stated the website nor his treasurer email address is working and suggested adding a Google Form to the website or integrating payment into the website.

EH stated there is a chance we already pay for that functionality and this should be investigated.

PT stated he would speak to JY about this function.

Meeting adjourned at 18:15