

CANTERBURY SCHOOLS DEBATING COUNCIL - SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

FRIDAY 27 JANUARY 2017 – 6PM KIRKWOOD KH05, UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

Meeting Opened: 6:02pm, Friday January 27 2017.

Meeting Chaired by Tom Kennedy in absence of Andre Knops.

Present: There were three eligible electors present (when opened): Tom Kennedy, Bill Dieckermann, Sam Walker

Apologies: Andre Knops (President), Matthew Amos (Treasurer), Megan Goodrich (General Member).

Proxy Votes: Tom Kennedy for Andre Knops & Megan Goodrich, Bill Dieckermann for Hamish Saunders (Life Member)

Speaking Rights were conferred to Daniel Doughty by the Chairperson (seconded by Bill Dieckermann).

Agenda:

1. Election of General Member
2. Treasurer's Report 2016
3. Constitutional Amendments
4. General Business

1. Election of General Member

Nominations Received: Daniel Doughty by Bill Dieckermann

Motion to elect Daniel Doughty as General Member (by Tom Kennedy, seconded Bill Dieckermann)

Motion Carried: Daniel Doughty elected General Member to the 2017 Executive.

2. Treasurer's Report

The report is attached to this document.

Matthew Amos, the Treasurer for the 2016 Executive was contacted by phone to deliver his report.

Motion to accept the 2016 Treasurers Report (by Tom Kennedy, seconded by Bill Dieckermann)

Motion Carried: 2016 Treasure's Report Accepted.

3. Constitutional Amendments

While five amendments were received by the returning officer, only four were put forward on the grounds of redrafting language.

The four amendments passed are attached to this document.

All proposed amendments were put forward by Bill Dieckermann (Life Member).

Motions to accept all all proposed amendments were made by Tom Kennedy, (seconded by Bill Dieckermann). (Voting occurred per amendment).

All amendments passed.

4. General Business

Motion to correct an error made in the last AGM and accept Tom O'Brien as a life member of the council made by Bill Dieckermann (Seconded by Daniel Doughty).

Motion Carried: Tom O'Brien is elected a life member of the Council.

Meeting Closed: 6:25pm Friday 27 January 2017.

See over page for attached documents

PROPOSED AMENDMENT ONE

MOTION

I move that the Constitution be amended in the following ways:

1. In **section 2(c)**, add the following paragraph **(x)**:

One or more **Non-Voting Executive Member(s)** appointed under *section 3* to assist the Executive with a specific matter.

2. Amend section 2(e) to read "All Executive members apart from the Convenor and Non-Voting Executive Member(s) shall be elected at General Meetings.."
3. Add a new **section 3** after section 2, as follows:

7. Non-Voting Executive Members

- (a) From time to time, the Executive may appoint persons eligible under *subsection (b)* to be Non-Voting Executive Members.
 - (b) The persons eligible to be appointed as Non-Voting Executive Members are:
 - i. Eligible electors;
 - ii. persons who have been Eligible electors within the last 12 months;
 - iii. persons who have either adjudicated or coached at a secondary schools' debating tournament organised by the New Zealand Schools Debating Council or any other organisation with similar purpose to the Council in the past 12 months and predominantly reside in the Canterbury region; and
 - iv. Life Members.
 - (c) Non-Voting Executive Members shall be appointed in order to assist the Executive with a specific matter, and each motion appointing a Non-Voting Executive Member must specify the matter for which their assistance is required.
 - (d) Non-Voting Executive Members cease to hold office at the adjournment of the next Annual General Meeting following their appointment.
 - (e) Non-Voting Executive Members may be dismissed from office by a motion supported by three-fifths of the voting members of the Executive.
 - (f) Non-Voting Executive Members are not subject to subsection (f) of section 2.
 - (g) For the avoidance of doubt, during their term of office Non-Voting Executive Members shall have all the rights, privileges, and powers of Executive members, except that they shall not vote.
 - (h) A person appointed a Non-Voting Executive Member under *subsection (b)(ii) or (b)(iii)* is deemed to be an eligible elector under section 8(a).
4. Renumber all sections following the new section 3 in order to account for the addition.

5. In the current **section 5(b) (renumbered as section 6(b))** add the following underlined text:

Quorum for meetings shall be four voting Executive members (as specified in Section 2),
not counting any present Non-Voting Executive Members.

EXPLANATION

In short, if it's good for DebSoc it's good for CSDC

Why make the change?

The purpose of this amendment is to give the Executive the power to co-opt members. Many, if not most, societies have this power in their constitutions. The reason for this is that there will be occasions where an executive will benefit from bringing in outside help: either because a person has specific experience or expertise that might be valuable, or because they might be an extra pair of hands that could be useful in a particular situation.

I foresee two specific scenarios where this power might be useful for CSDC.

First, there will be times where the Executive would find it useful to co-opt particular individuals in order to run particular programs or tournaments which the Executive wishes to carry out. For example, the Executive may want to increase CSDC's presence in South Canterbury and would to formally invite someone with experience or contacts with South Canterbury schools to run that project. Another example could be in the event that an executive is rather young and inexperienced with regards to coaching or adjudicating and wishes to co-opt someone with the specific experience required in order to fulfil CSDC's functions.

Second, there will be times when the Executive would find it useful to keep former Executive members involved (or to involve other experienced debaters/administrators) in order to benefit from their experience. This power allows those experienced people to be co-opted in order to be in a position to give advice to the new Executive and to participate usefully in Executive discussions. This will be particularly useful in years when the Executive has many new members.

The positions are non-voting (since they are not elected by the Society), so those brought on will not be able to make decisions or override the elected members of the Executive. Co-opted members can be removed at any time by the Executive if they are no longer useful. The Executive also would have the complete freedom to choose when and whether they want to co-opt members. There will probably be many times when there are no co-opted members on the Executive. Nevertheless, it is a useful tool to have.

Specific wording

Most of the provisions are reasonably self-explanatory, but I will discuss a few in the proposed section 7 that are a bit more complicated.

First, subsection (b) confines the people who can be appointed to those people with a direct interest in CSDC. Paragraph (ii) is there to catch immediate electors (ie those who have just graduated) whose experience or effort would be useful but who have not (yet) been made Life Members. Paragraph (iii) is there to catch those who may be relocating to Christchurch but have useful experience relevant to debating. For example if John Brinsley-Pirie moved to Christchurch and the executive wished to ask him to run judge development the exec would be able to do so without waiting for John to do something which specifically would make him an eligible elector.

Subsection (c) makes sure that the Executive identifies why they want to co-opt each specific person, and provides an idea of the co-opted person's "portfolio". Of course, they may offer general advice and assistance, as subsection (g) makes clear.

Subsection (d) provides that co-opted members automatically leave office at the end of the AGM – so their term has an automatic limit. There is no need for them to stay until the end of the financial year as their task will presumably have finished (and if not they can be re-appointed).

Subsection (f) removes any confusion where there may be conflict between sections 2 and 3. Accountability comes in through subsection (e), which allows the Executive to remove Non-Voting Executive Members if they are no longer helpful. This makes Non-Voting Executive Members much easier to remove from office than voting Executive members, which is appropriate.

Finally, subsection (h) makes it clear that a co-opted member who is not currently an eligible elector can vote at a general meeting.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT TWO

MOTION

I move that the Constitution be amended in the following ways:

1. Amend **section 8(a)(ii)** to read:

Have adjudicated (not including as a trainee adjudicator) at least 7 debates on behalf of the Council at secondary school debating tournaments (organised by the Council or not) in Canterbury within the twelve months prior to the General Meeting; or

2. Insert new **section 8(a)(iii)** to read:

Have adjudicated (including as a trainee adjudicator) at least 7 debates on behalf of the Council spread across more than one secondary school debating tournament (organised by the Council or not), including two debates as a full adjudicator at different tournaments, in Canterbury within the twelve months prior to the General Meeting; or

3. In **section 8(a)(iii) [now renumbered 8(a)(iv)]** add the following underlined text:

Have coached or organised a secondary school team in a Council organised or facilitated tournament within the twelve months prior to the General Meeting and is not a secondary school student; or

4. Insert **renumbered 8(a)(v)**:

Have coached or organised a secondary school team in a Council organised or facilitated tournament within the twelve months prior to the General Meeting and is a secondary school student who coaches or organises debating without oversight from school faculty; or

5. In **section 8(a)(iv) [now renumbered 8(a)(vi)]** add the following underlined text:

Have debated as a secondary school student at a tournament in Canterbury within the twelve months prior to the General Meeting and will have finished secondary schooling within the 18 months following the General Meeting; or

6. Insert new **section 8(b)** and rename current section 8(b) to 8(c):

Secondary school students who have debated at a tournament in Canterbury in the past 12 months but are not eligible to vote may attend General Meetings and have speaking rights.

7. Renumber any sections and references to sections to maintain continuity.

EXPLANATION

As the constitution stands one incredibly unscrupulous person can wield a lot of power through manipulating the rules in order to get additional votes. These amendments make it harder to do so by restricting eligible electors to those who have legitimate interests in CSDC.

Clause 1 requires adjudicators to have adjudicated at least 7 debates and not as a trainee. In the last 2-3 years it has become commonplace for executive members to ask their friends to trainee or judge where there is a shortage or just because they're going out afterwards. Most of these friends never judge again and thus it would be absurd to allow them voting rights. Moreover, it is possible for an unscrupulous round co-ordinator to get friends to trainee single rounds throughout the year in order to get a vote boost at the AGM. This loophole should be closed.

By introducing a 7 debate floor this means that judges must have made a significant contribution to judging in order to get voting rights. 7 has been chosen as it is one more than judging all rounds at regionals including break rounds. This is to limit the ability for judges invited from other regions to gain voting rights by stealth by attending regionals and claiming to be there on behalf of the Council.

Clause 2 changes the requirements for trainee adjudicators. Those who trainee can only get voting rights by judging at more than one tournament and getting experience as a full adjudicator at multiple tournaments. This is again to stop someone's lackey getting voting rights by shadowing their friend at every round – they actually have to become real judges at some point and not just at one tournament.

Clause 3 expands voting rights to include teachers who don't actively coach their teams but still organise them. This makes the subsection to mirror more closely what was intended. Coaches who are still students have been excluded to include them in clause 5 with an exception added for school students who run debating without teacher oversight in clause 4.

Clause 5 prevents General Meetings being stacked with young secondary school students manipulated by either teachers or coaches. Year 12s and 13s should still be able to come and vote.

Clause 6 allows younger school students to continue to have speaking rights in the event students have specific concerns or want to engage with the Council more.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT THREE

MOTION

I move that the Constitution be amended in the following ways:

1. Replace subsection 10(c) with the following two subsections:

c) Proposed amendments to this Constitution must be communicated to the Returning Officer no fewer than ten days prior to the General Meeting.

d) Nominations for the election of persons to the Executive may be communicated to the Returning Officer at any time prior to the election of officers. The Returning Officer must ask electors for further nominations during the General Meeting prior to the election of each officer.

2. Replace subsection **10(d)** [renumbered as **10(e)**] with:

e) Any eligible elector may nominate another eligible elector to hold their vote as proxy if they will not be present at a general meeting. Any eligible elector wishing to do so must communicate their intention to do so to the Returning Officer at least 3 days before the general meeting.

3. Insert 10(f):

f) Proxy votes are subject to the following rules:

i) The eligible elector must nominate a proxy for each individual vote;

ii) The eligible elector may leave specific instructions on how their proxy should vote;

iii) The eligible elector must leave specific instructions on how to vote for constitutional amendments;

iv) Any eligible elector nominated as proxy may decline;

v) A proxy may use their discretion on how to vote unless it violates specific instructions left by the principal;

vi) A proxy may not cast proxy votes in order to elect themselves as an officer or to pass constitutional amendments proposed by them;

vii) No proxy may cast more than two proxy votes at any one time. If three or more eligible electors nominate the same proxy for the same vote the proxy must choose which votes to cast and the Returning Officer must notify any eligible elector who must find a new proxy;

viii) An eligible elector may nominate the same proxy for up to three votes.

4. Update **10(e)** [renumbered as **10(g)**] to read:

g) Only proxy votes cast on behalf of eligible electors that are received by the Returning Officer (prior to the General Meeting) on the form described in Subsection (e) shall be valid. The Returning Officer shall have sole discretion to determine the validity of proxy votes according to the criteria set out in this Constitution.

EXPLANATION

This amendment seeks to do two things. Firstly it makes AGM process in the constitution match how AGM's have historically been carried out by allowing nominations from the floor and rewriting the proxy vote sections to be more clear and resemble how we actually do proxy voting instead of postal voting which is more appropriate for a 10 day notice system. Secondly, in light of the large number of eligible electors compared to

the number of people who actually come to General Meetings this amendment seeks to prevent unscrupulous electors manipulating General Meetings through wielding large numbers of proxy votes.

Clause 1 simply splits the 10 day notice period for amendments from nominations for officers to reflect past conduct.

Clause 2 simplifies the process of nominating a proxy. Council may still provide a form but this also allows Council to simply ask electors to e-mail the returning officer. Furthermore, by introducing a three day before the general meeting deadline it prevents last minute stacking.

Clause 3 outlines rules surrounding proxy votes in order to prevent their abuse.

i) requires a nomination of proxy for each individual vote. This allows electors to split their proxy up especially if a proxy is running for a position. It also al

ii) empowers electors to leave binding instructions for proxies to ensure that their proxies vote appropriately. This can range from simply voting preferences to complex voting strategies.

iii) requires electors to have an opinion on amendments should they choose to cast a proxy vote in or against them. No instructions means no vote.

iv) makes it clear that an elector only has to cast proxy votes that they want to

v) makes it clear that proxies can vote how they want unless it violates any instructions given to them.

vi) is a further protection against vote stacking.

vii) prevents General Meetings from being dominated by proxy votes as well as prevents vote stacking giving more power to electors present at the general meeting.

viii) forces proxy votes to distributed among present electors. This firstly means that those intending to proxy vote must think more about how they want to vote as they have to think about each individual vote. Secondly, it prevents an individual from wielding 3 votes by getting 2 mates to give them proxies. At the very least this more abusive strategy requires 4 eligible electors.

Clause 4 simply makes the subsection flow better with the rest of the section.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT FOUR

MOTION

I move that the Constitution be amended in the following ways:

1. Add the underlined to 2(e):

- e) All Executive members apart from the Convenor shall be elected at General Meetings by at least 50% of eligible electors voting at that General Meeting, and shall hold office for no more than one calendar year from the General Meeting at which they were elected. The Convenor shall be appointed by the New Zealand Schools' Debating Council and shall hold office at that organisation's discretion.

EXPLANATION

This is a simple amendment that requires General Meetings to use run offs or preference votes when electing executive members. The reason for doing this is to simply ensure that Executive members have the support of a majority of eligible voters at the General Meeting. It prevents highly competitive elections from electing executive members who have a small plurality but may be the third choice of the rest of the GM. This has not been an issue in the recent past but introducing this now may improve our elections in all future timelines where CSDC is highly competitive.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT FIVE

MOTION

I move that the Constitution be amended in the following ways:

1. Add the underlined to 2(f):

- f) An Executive member may only be removed from office during his or her period of tenure for cause and either by a unanimous resolution of the other members of the Executive or by a resolution of a Special General Meeting required by subsection 2(g). If an office holder is removed in this way then a Special General Meeting must be called as soon as practicable in order to elect a replacement. An office holder is allowed to rerun for an executive position if removed in this way.

2. Insert new 2(g):

- g) A Special General Meeting must be called to remove and replace an Executive member if the Executive is petitioned by a number of eligible electors greater than the highest of 15 or half the attendance of the General Meeting at which the Executive member was elected.

EXPLANATION

Debating can be quite a chummy sport where mates protect mates; an old boys club in essence. Under the status quo an underperforming executive member can be protecting by one other exec member. Although this protects stability it can mean that it is more difficult to ensure the organisation runs efficiently.

I propose creating an alternate mechanism to depose of executive members who have done wrong and refuse to resign and cannot be taken out by their executives for various reasons. This allows a large group (in the context of schools debating) to petition for the removal of an office holder through an SGM. A large number (15) was chosen to prevent this power from being used for petty politics but only for the most serious of reasons. I foresee that in order to make up the numbers teachers and students will likely be involved in this removal. This will improve accountability of the exec as there is an external check on their actions as well as empowers key stakeholders outside the exec to keep the organisation accountable.

2016 Treasurer's Report

Matthew Amos

27/01/2017

This year has been financially successful. Following from the last few years we have achieved another surplus. We had no capital expenses this year. Income increased, largely due to an increase in school fees. Our overall financial situation is healthy and stable.

Writing this report has proved difficult, and there are sure to be some small inaccuracies. These are explained throughout. The cause of this is that I only have access to one statement which covers the period 29/02/2016 to 28/09/16. What is certain is the financial situation of the Council is healthy.

I was unable to attend the AGM (due to my own incompetence) and so the report wasn't delivered then when it otherwise would have been.

Also, an error by Westpac occurred when we attempted to change over signatories from Bill Dieckermann, Tim Bain, and Ashleigh Ooi to Bill Dieckermann, Matthew Amos, and Natalija Petrovic in December 2015. This means that the current signatories are still Bill, Tim, and Ashleigh. This was only discovered late in 2016. This has made procuring up to date statements difficult as I myself cannot do so.

Because of these difficulties I think the Council should consider moving to another bank. However, the continuity provided by staying at the same bank could also be beneficial.

Bank Balance 29/02/16	6252.76
Income	
School Fees (all 2016)*	2670.00
Interest (29/02/16 – 28/02/16)	7.90
Probable Chequing Error	5.00
Total Income	2682.90
Expenses	
Web hosting	317.29
Food**	113.38
Nationals**	906.66
Coaching**	210.00
Fuel**	57.79
Total Expenses	1525.12
Bank Balance 28/02/16	5924.71
Overall Balance	7410.54

One payment to Bill Dieckermann for nationals and coaching was recorded as being \$115.00 (\$55.00 for Nationals and \$60 for coaching), but the payment I have identified that this is likely to be in our statement is

listed as \$110.00. I have recorded this discrepancy as a \$5.00 chequing error above. To be clear, it is not certain that this is what has happened, but in my view it is the most likely option.

Second, interest for the period between the date given in the 2015 Treasurer's report (21/10/15) and 29/02/16 is indeterminate. This is likely to total less than \$10.

* Fees were billed after 28/09/16. I believe a moderately large majority were paid before the date of this report.

** All or some of these sections had not been paid out of the account as of 28/09/16.

An unnoticed fee rise from our old web hosting service Meta Digital caused web hosting costs to be somewhat higher this year than last year. I moved web hosting to Wordpress.com in response to this, but left domain name renewal with Meta Digital. I expect the costs to fall to around \$200/year from here on in (depending somewhat on NZD/USD exchange rates because wordpress.com must be paid in USD).

Financial Position

Assets

Assets	
Bank Balance (as at 28/09/2016)	5924.71
Novice Trophy	165.40
Junior Trophy	234.50
Senior Trophy	275.20
Senior Impromptu Trophy	50.00
Junior Regionals Trophy	50.00
School Fees (*as above)	2670.00
Total Assets	9369.81
Liabilities	
Unbanked Cheques and Payments Made After 28/09/16	1085.95
Net Financial Position	8283.86

I have chosen to not depreciate the values of trophies given in the 2016 statement. This is because my doing so would be fairly arbitrary. It appears that previous reports have also not applied depreciation here. This likely means that some/all of the trophies are currently overvalued. I recommend that the Council should look to revalue the trophies and check that we are still in possession of all of them.

Recommendations

- Audit and revalue trophies
- Set up online banking
- Consider moving to another bank
- Treasurer to keep better records
- Treasurer to locate clear and complete records from late 2015 through to the present date and use these to write a report that clarifies the Council's financial situation.

- Follow up on those schools that haven't yet paid their fees.