

OPEN UNIVERSITY LAW SOCIETY



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Society Committee

Sunday 28th April 2024

MINUTES

The minutes of the 1st meeting of the 2024/25 Society Committee held online on Sunday 28th April 2024.

Present:

Patricia Thomson

Chair

Mark Lindley-Highfield of Ballumbie Castle

Treasurer

William Brazier

Secretary

Agenda:

1. To discuss the plans for the society moving forwards.

Welcome

Patricia Thomson, Committee Chair, welcomed everyone to the 2024/25 Society Committee's 1st meeting.

Housekeeping

Ms Thomson informed the committee that access to twelve out of fourteen email accounts belonging to the society had been attained, with two still being inaccessible. Ms Thomson further advised that data would be exported from the email accounts, and the total number of accounts would be reduced to save on the subscription fee.

Absent

Ryan Greene

Vice- Chair

Minutes of the last meeting

N/A.

Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

N/A.

Report

Patricia Thomson

Ms Thomson explained that she had received an email from a sponsor, who provides £1000 per annum to the society. The sponsor asked if the society would be holding a summer ball this year.

Ms Thomson advised a previous student, and the former vice-chair are willing to assist with bringing mootings to the society.

Further, the new committee email had been opened by 449 people. Ms Thomson stated that 5000 emails can be sent each month, this number reducing to 2500, after the sending of the newsletter. It was suggested and agreed that increasing the emails sent from 5000 to 1000000 was a step in the right direction. In effect, substituting email accounts, for an increase in emails.

Advertising third party events to students, including a mootings competition in Autumn, on the society website was agreed.

The Law school has reached out to Ms Thomson and a meeting will be arranged soon.

The email accounts are .org, but the website is co.uk. The website has possibly been changed.

Ms Thomson has been unable to access the Facebook page. A re-design of the Facebook page and society website was agreed. Ms Thomson previous experience in website design. Ms Thomson will work on this in the background and provide updates.

Volunteer roles discussed; it was agreed an editor is not needed as Ms Thomson and Mr Brazier are content to perform this role.

Ryan is going to coordinate mootings. Careers coordinator discussed, but at this time it was not deemed necessary, although the committee will keep an open mind to this. It was discussed this could be a possible title for Pupil Barrister who may work with Ryan on coordinating mootings for the society. Ms Thomson, currently, does not think that the committee requires any volunteers.

Ms Thomson tasked Mr Brazier with heading the society newsletter, which will contain general updates about the society.

Uploading events to the society events page was discussed and agreed.

No notification from the former committee of the cancellation for William Klegg KC, was discussed. It was agreed that an apology would be issued.

Ms Thomson has intentions to bring in guest speakers and has a couple of names in the pipeline. Ms Thomson would like to set up a series of speakers.

Ms Thomson affirmed that she is happy to hold events across the country.

Mark Lindley-Highfield of Ballumbie Castle

Mr Lindley-Highfield offered an alternative to the summer ball, a career event.

Mr Lindley-Highfield suggested it may be worth keeping a list of society members who are willing to volunteer with the society.

Mr Lindley-Highfield suggested creating or obtaining a geographical map indicating the locations of law students, to ensure all students are advocated for. Further, Mr Lindley-Highfield may be to put on one or two events for Scottish students.

William Brazier

Mr Brazier offered an alternative to the summer ball, a mooting workshop.

Mr Brazier is content to assist with editing.

Mr Brazier is happy to head the society newsletter.

Mr Brazier discussed the idea of creating an Instagram page for the society.

Actions

Patricia is going to go through the emails and share those of which are relevant.

Email credits to be upgraded.

Everyone is to create an email signature, there should be some uniformity.

Headshot, bio, and brief introduction outlining role on the committee, to be uploaded to the society website.

Ms Thomson is going to be creating a website in the background.

Mr Brazier is going to begin work on a newsletter.

Mr Lindley-Highfield is to complete an audit of the PayPay accounts.

Apology to William Klegg KC to be issued.

Finance

It costs £6 per account for each email account, the latest bill coming to £84 per month. Ways to reduce this cost discussed.

Mr Lindley-Highfield raised concern with the PayPal account.

It would appear the previous treasurer did not have access to the PayPal account.

Ms Thomson discussed obtaining access to the PayPay account, and stated the account is accessible, however it is attached to the previous treasurer, and so it is unable to be passed over.

It was mentioned that refunds have not been honoured, and Mr Lindley-Highfield is unable to action this as he does not currently have access. One member raised a dispute with PayPal which was actioned.

Ms Thomson mentioned that some members have subscribed and had the money refunded, indicating a possible issue with the payment system.

Proposed changes to the society byelaws and society guidelines

With reference to the charter, it was agreed that there was no change needed right away. However, if a member of the committee was to leave before their elected period is up, this would have to be amended to allow for an election to be held.

Any other business

Ms Thomson discussed using 'Interface' for the new website. Ms Thomson explained that this is an interactive form to assist with membership, it in effect works as a chatbot. The contract is both monthly and annually. 'Interface' can provide analytics.

Date of next meeting

No date confirmed, it was felt contact over email would suffice.

Signed:

William Brazier, Secretary.