ANALYSIS OF RESERVED BUSINESS QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Policy

Reserved business is **most commonly found in Council and Governing Body meetings**. If there is a transparent policy it is normally stated that **personnel and individual student matters** are designated for reserved business. A surprising number of colleges **do not have a clear policy** and it would seem that certain colleges dump almost all the matter of Governing Body meetings into the unreserved agenda (**Caius** and **Christ's** are of particular concern).

Of interest: Sidney Sussex includes **'conditions of services' and 'legal matters'** in their reserved business.

Where is Policy to be Found?

Most presidents are unsure about where the official policy is to be found. This would suggest that the **college does not explain the policy fully** (i.e. with reference to college statutes) to their presidents at the beginning of their terms in office.

Reserved Business Agenda Shown?

4/10 colleges do show the agenda. **Christ's** president voiced a concern over this, stating that **the bare titles in the agenda do not actually help to explain exactly what is being discussed.**

Reserved Business Discussed with Students?

3/10 colleges do discuss the reserved business. In general, when this happens the president concerned believes that reserved business is used adequately in their college. This may be because these discussions allow a **transparency**. However, **Christ's** president said that **because he does not receive the reserved business agenda it is difficult for him to use his time during such discussions wisely**: he feels that he might still be left out of certain key issues.

The **common complaint among the colleges is that they do not know what exactly is being discussed in the reserved agenda**. The discussions seem to put the presidents at ease over whether or not they are being excluded from anything of particular import. **Magdalene's** president stated that it was possible to request an item to be moved from the reserved to the unreserved business agenda: a **mobility** that seems to be lacking from most other colleges.

The issue at stake is whether or not the student representatives feel that they are able to participate in debate over issues of student concern: it would seem that this is not happening in many colleges. The way to improve the function of reserved business in these colleges would be to improve the **communication between fellow and student**.

Comments

Most presidents believe that reserved business is necessary but many feel that at present too many issues are excluded from student participation. One particularly worrying comment was from **Sidney Sussex** where A**OB is discussed in the reserved agenda**. Many presidents also moved on from the issue of reserved business to discuss the importance of increasing the scope of student representation.

Conclusion

Main issues:

- **Including the agenda** of reserved business in the unreserved agenda would be appreciated

- **Discussing reserved business** with students important. Flow of communication needs to be improved.

- Presidents need to be informed over what exactly should be going into reserved business. Colleges should **standardize their policies**.

- **AOB should be included in the unreserved agenda**.