



## NAME CHANGE REPORT

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Dear Students

Following the urgent Student Body Meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2015, the Student Representative Council released a statement in which it dedicated itself to creating platforms for students to express themselves on the matter of the name of the university and other issues concerning transformation. The meeting confirmed that there are a large number of issues pertaining to transformation, which greatly concern many students. This particular report deals with just one of these issues – the name – and looks at the methods used by the SRC, the arguments presented by students as well as the SRC's position and reasons for this.

Our collective 'Rhodent' identity has been questioned. The student body requested that the SRC fulfil its role as an organization tasked with spearheading the introspection into who we are as a university.

### 2. METHODS

Following the Student Body Meeting, efforts have been made to promote discussion among students and for the SRC to hear the student body's opinion. The Wellness Leaders, supported by the SRC, held dining hall discussions and tried to create a safe environment in which students could express themselves and hear one another. We have also engaged with students in various formal and informal manners, including but not limited to person-to-person interaction, social media, interviews, electronic mail, google sheets and google surveys. A great deal of avenues were made available for students to voice their concerns.



The SRC has been criticised for taking the above approach. Many feel that the SRC should have immediately taken a stance on the matter. We understand their frustrations and the view that we should have taken a leading role sooner. Nevertheless, as a body which both leads and represents students, we felt it crucial to hear our student body out before reaching a decision on which direction we should lead. In addition, taking a stance prior to hearing the views of the student body would have potentially alienated a portion of the student body and hampered discussions. These discussions, we felt, were vital in providing students platforms not only to present their opinions but also an opportunity to hear, empathise with, and educate one another.

The SRC has also been criticised by some for not holding a referendum and reaching our position based on this. It is felt that the democratic process should have included such a referendum. However, in a representative democracy, elected leaders are, when they are voted in, entrusted to make certain decisions on behalf of their constituency. Although they might decide to make use of a referendum in particular cases, there are other situations in which it is important that a position is reached based on the substance of and the values informing the arguments put forward. There are ample examples which prove that the majority is not always right. One of the most cited cases is that of the death penalty in South Africa. Although surveys of the opinions of South Africans have shown that the majority would be in favour of introduction of the death penalty, this does not seem to represent what is morally correct<sup>1</sup>.

A major issue with referendums is the manner in which choosing from a set of finite options cannot represent the nuances of the debate. In addition, voters in referendums can vote in a manner which is not informed and they can vote without taking cognisance of the substance of the debate and/or the emotions and

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<sup>1</sup> See *S v Makwanyane* 1995 (3) SA 39 (CC)



viewpoints of others. Although we have not opted for a referendum, we do certainly value the opinions of the student body. This is the reason behind creating a variety platforms on which students could present their opinions, feelings and thoughts fully, rather than merely requiring them to tick a box that says 'yes' or 'no'.

### 3. RESULTS

Having taken into account the opinions of our diverse student body we have seriously considered the arguments concerning the name.

The major points of those who advocate for the name to remain, including but, by no means, exclusive to the Rhodes University Protection Movement:

- The name has become associated with a global brand promoting excellence. The brand is not associated with Cecil John Rhodes and the institution no longer espouses his values;
- Changing the name would cost a lot of money and create an unnecessary financial burden;
- People are paying for the name and those that do not like it should leave the institution;
- Changing the name will not transform the institution and we should rather focus on issues that will make a difference. The name is not what transformation is about, the name change is a small issue to transformation;
- The name holds meaning to a variety of stakeholders;
- The name has become embedded in our collective identity and culture;
- Cecil John Rhodes was not racist and/or had many positive qualities;
- The name is a part of our history, it is a testament to how far we have come and keeping it is a way of ensuring we remember this history and confront it;
- The name must not change because it does not add value once it changes and the debate would end;



- The social welfare of students is more important, what if you change the name and then the culture continues?
- Changing the name is a long term process and we should focus on the more pressing short term issues like reallocation of funds and assisting currently disadvantaged students;

The major points of those who advocate for the name to change, including but by no means exclusively, the Black Students Movement:

- Cecil John Rhodes was a man of highly immoral character;
- Changing the name would signal a break with the attitudes and culture that create an exclusionary environment;
- The name makes people feel unwelcome and excluded and the brand we are trying to protect is making others feel uncomfortable;
- The name change process can serve as a tool to debunk our identity and culture in a transformative society;
- The word 'Rhodes' has lately brought the man Cecil John Rhodes to mind as opposed to the institution with a brand of excellence;
- The brand does not capture the historical experiences and symbolism associated with the name. It is our responsibility to do something about it;
- The name is a memorial of a man who no institution of higher learning should be honouring in the democratic era;
- The name changing is a moral issue and should not be influenced by finances;
- The name must change because the brand can be carried through to the new name;
- After finding out who Rhodes was and how the association came about, the name must change.



There are also students for whom the name changing or remaining is not of particular concern. Some of these students feel that other issues of transformation should be addressed, but that this matter is not of importance. There are other students for whom neither the name nor transformation are of concern.

#### 4. INTERROGATING THE ARGUMENTS

After listening to the arguments from the student body the SRC has carefully evaluated these and come to its conclusions. Although we agree that there are many other issues which should be addressed on our campus and in our city, we still believe that the name of the university is something which is crucial and we need to take a stance on. In order to take a stance, we have weighed up the strengths of the various arguments contextualized in the ethical dimensions of the issue.

In making a decision on the name there are a number of things to consider including what the name currently stands for or means, what changing it could do, and the costs that would be incurred should the name be changed. Examining the former leads to discussions about the man after whose trust the institution was named and who he was. Despite some arguments to the contrary, the SRC believes that there is ample evidence that Cecil John Rhodes was a colonialist whose economic and military actions were severely detrimental to the people of Southern Africa<sup>2</sup>. The fact that some of the other qualities of the man, such as his entrepreneurial spirit and the value which he placed on education - which might be seen as positive and can be learnt from - does not outweigh the harm which he caused to so many people and the SRC believes that he is certainly not a man who should be glorified.

However, accepting Cecil John Rhodes' flaws does not necessarily translate into believing that the name of our institution should change. We do not believe that all students who support the name remaining are automatically either in denial about

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<sup>2</sup> Rotberg, R. I. (1988) *The Founder: Cecil Rhodes and The Pursuit of Power*. New York. Oxford University Press



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who Cecil John Rhodes was, nor racists who admire or support him, as has been suggested by some. Many students agree that the university should not be a place in which Cecil John Rhodes' discriminatory views are emulated, regardless of what the university is called as well as that active measures should be taken towards transforming our institution.

To many who wish for the name to remain, the university is in no way connected to Cecil John Rhodes. In particular, they cite the way in which many had very little idea of who Rhodes was or that the university was connected, albeit indirectly, with him. It can be said that this has, in recent times, changed. The manner in which each side, whether pro or anti name change brings up Cecil John Rhodes, as well as the existence of campaigns such as #RhodesMustFall and #RhodesMustFallAtOxford have meant that Rhodes (the man) has been increasingly thought of when the word 'Rhodes' is said and, thus, that our university has been associated with him more than it was in the past.

But it can then be argued that when Rhodes is out of the limelight again, ignorance about who he was and that he was in some way connected to the university will pervade once more. This may well occur, but we do not believe that this is necessarily something positive. Do we really wish for our name to remain based on a lack of awareness of the history of our university and nation, and the oppression that this contained? We do not believe that this should be the case. We believe that students at our institution of higher learning should know of and confront this history, not ignore the potential connections of Cecil John Rhodes. If we are to keep the name, we must do so whilst still being fully conscious of where it derives from.

Ignoring our history would also mean ignoring the emotions of some of our students for whom the name is personally offensive, and a reminder of the suffering of their ancestors which has left a legacy that continues to affect their families. The emotional responses which the name evokes should not be ignored. There are



some who would say that these students who are offended by the name should then not come to this university, indeed, some argue that those who wish for the name to change should leave. However, it is important to note that the fact that people wished to come to this university does not mean that they necessarily approve of the name of the institution. Being a member of Rhodes does not mean that one should not want to improve the university and change aspects of it. This would be analogous to saying that if you do not like lack of service delivery you should leave South Africa, rather than challenging and attempting to end that lack of service delivery.

Some students argue that changing the name is not necessary as Rhodes University has nothing to do with the values of Cecil John Rhodes and is an institution which forms the antithesis to the types of discrimination which he promoted. Our university has repeatedly declared that it is striving towards being a 'home for all' and has succeeded, to some extent, in creating a space in which overt discrimination is not tolerated. It has developed a reputation for being an accepting institution.

However, we are far from having a campus where all groups of students have the same chances of succeeding. For some, Rhodes University is not a home, and many barriers exist for a range of students. The manner in which many groups of students are not accommodated adequately in this university does, in certain respects, speak to the conditions of the past not having dissolved even within our institution. It is often – though certainly not exclusively – poor and/or black students<sup>3</sup> who face a range of these difficulties.

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<sup>3</sup> There is no doubt that we do have poor white students and that these students should be accommodated. However, poverty and race are still connected in this country, meaning that the majority of working class people are black, as is argued by many scholars. For an example of this see: Woolard, I. *An Overview of Poverty and Inequality in South Africa*. ([http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Ingrid\\_Woolard/publication/252240690\\_AN\\_OVERVIEW\\_OF\\_POVERTY\\_AND\\_INEQUALITY\\_IN\\_SOUTH\\_AFRICA/links/0c960533cf5d8a3716000000.pdf](http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Ingrid_Woolard/publication/252240690_AN_OVERVIEW_OF_POVERTY_AND_INEQUALITY_IN_SOUTH_AFRICA/links/0c960533cf5d8a3716000000.pdf))



On paper, all students regardless of “race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth”<sup>4</sup> are equal in this institution. However, giving people the same opportunities is not the same as equality. One can invite everyone to the lecture but if it is on the third floor and there is no elevator, a wheelchair bound person has not been treated equally. By the same token, one might require every student to type an assignment but unless provision is made to assist a student in the class who has not had exposure to a computer and does not have a laptop, this is not equal treatment.

It is not enough for this institution to have removed barriers that bar students from entering, it must also actively move the barriers which students then find here. The fact that these barriers are not deliberately placed there does not mean that they do not need to be addressed. In addition to accommodating the diverse student body at the institution, the institution must begin to reflect its student component in its staff compliment, in senate, in its policies and curriculum to name a few.

Having a diverse student body does by no means automatically mean that our university is transformed in the way it looks and functions and, until we have transformed our institution we cannot claim to have completely transcended our past as, in some aspects of our institution, the legacy of our colonial and Apartheid history can still be found .

The fact that it can be argued that we have not transcended the past that gave rise to the Rhodes Trust and the name of our institution does not, however, mean that transcending our name is not ever possible. Words and names have throughout history, altered in meaning as cultures have changed and shifted. It is conceivable that we could have a completely transformed institution firmly located in its South

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<sup>4</sup> s 9(3) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996.



African context with the same name, and an entirely different set of connotations whilst not ignoring the past which led to the name.

Some would ask, “What then would the name change do? If the above is possible then surely there is no reason to change it?”

We believe that even though a completely transformed institution may still be called Rhodes, there are still arguments for changing it. Perhaps the most obvious is that it seems we may not want our completely transformed institution to bear this name, but rather one which represents what it is and stands for. In addition, whilst we work towards transformation it is incredibly important that we envision what achieving this aim might look like. With this vision in mind, we must work towards creating a reality that is different, which is better, which is more just and is more equitable. It has been argued that a new name can contribute to this vision and towards making it a reality. Changing the name of the institution would, firstly, be a loud statement that we are ready to dramatically alter the manner in which the university functions; to say that we will break completely with the manner in which the institution used to – and, in some ways, continues to – operate. It has been argued that changing the name will not lead to any other form of change and, indeed, by itself, a new name could mean very little. However, it could serve as the flag of the new institution we imagine, and a motivation to earn the right to fly this flag, an opportunity to create a new identity around the new name.

Seen in this light, the fact that changing the name of the institution disrupts the identity of those associated might not be entirely negative. Indeed, many people value this identity and feel a great deal of connection with the name. This connection is important and the positive emotions with which it is associated should be payed cognisance to.



However, a great deal of the pride in being a 'Rhodent' is often associated with the idealistic 'purple bubble', in which the fact that all cannot join this 'bubble' is not recognised. The lived experiences of those students who are excluded from this identity are often ignored. Changing the name would mean being forced to interrogate what being a part of this university truly means and what the positive and negative aspects of our identity and culture are. It would be a rupture that would indeed be uncomfortable, but uncomfortable spaces are often those that allow for growth. We must create and enable a space where those excluded may enter and bring in new expertise to further improve on it. Discomfort could not only challenge what is seen as our culture as students but the university as a whole. Our university has long been associated with elitism and privilege. Changing the name would make a statement both to ourselves and the outside world that we should not be an elite university whose aim is to maintain the status quo or limit the change to small, intangible fractions but are an institution ready to create serious change and lead in our national pursuit of transformation.

All meaningful change carries significant cost. There would, indeed, be costs to changing the name, to gaining ourselves that flag. One of the costs would be the above mentioned 'Rhodent' identity being more challenging to maintain. Another would be the brand which Rhodes University has built using this name and the manner in which people associate it with the Rhodes and Mandela-Rhodes scholarships. A third would be the literal financial cost.

The first concern has already been addressed to an extent, but it should also perhaps be said that all pride in an institution which one has a connection with and/or love for, does not rest with the name and that such connection can remain intact despite a name change. With regard to the second and third, it would, indeed take time, energy and money to rebuild a brand with a new name. In addition, there may be the additional indirect cost of losing sponsors. In terms of sponsors, though, it has been argued that there are likely to be new, sponsors interested in the



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transformative agenda who could come to the fore and, in addition, there has been strong arguments put forward that finances should not determine what a moral decision.

There is no denying that a great deal of time and energy would be required to change the name and that letting go of the name of a brand should not be taken lightly and would, by no means, be effortless to rebuild. Some feel as though this would be putting energies in creating an aesthetic and false transformation instead of using that time and money to change things on the ground. This argument has often been presented as a false dichotomy, making it appear as though there is a choice between changing the name and affecting change that is perceived as more directly impacting students. There is no reason, though, as to why the two cannot be complementary. They are by no means mutually exclusive. In addition, it should not be assumed that symbolic forms of transformation are not meaningful or real. It has been argued as well that using the money for the name change would disadvantage students from working class backgrounds, for instance, as it would take money away from things such as Financial Aid. However, this has brought about frustrations that Financial Aid students only seem to be used as an argument when it is convenient and that this is not fair. In addition, those who advocate for name change certainly have not said that the money should come from the budget which is used for things such as Financial Aid but that other elements of the budget should be examined. The budgeting committee would need to draw a long term plan to change the name so that it does not impact too greatly on the spending of the institution nor the fees for students.

One of the sacrifices which would need to be made in terms of changing the name would be losing the irony that would exist in creating an institution whose values completely and utterly contradict the man whose name it shares. There are a number of instances in terms of symbols in which irony has been used to great effect. An example is by Willem Boshoff for South Africa House in London and his



piece on the mural of Jan Van Riebeeck<sup>5</sup>. These murals were covered in glass panels inscribed with the names of indigenous people and slaves who were severely affected by Van Riebeeck and who are often not remembered in history. Viewers must look through the names of these people, so often forgotten, in order to see the iconic imagery of Van Riebeeck, forcing them to confront the harm that colonialists wrought and completely altering the meaning of the space. There is something to be said for this form of confrontation. However, there are enough spaces in this institution in which such symbols could be confronted in creative ways without having to have the university's name remain. Furthermore, an institution's name does not seem like the kind of symbol around which an appropriate sense of irony can be easily created. It is perhaps more appropriate for the primary symbol of this institution – the name – to be something that speaks more directly to the values which we seek to promote.

Bearing all of the above in mind, and taking very seriously all of the views of our students, the SRC has taken the position that the name should be changed. There are still various stakeholders which the university must consult including “students, academic and support staff, unions, alumni, convocation, Senate, Council and the greater Grahamstown community”<sup>6</sup> to canvass their views on the name of the University. The SRC will be using its position in order to advocate for a name change of this institution and gain a commitment from the university to change the name. This commitment should be accompanied by a clear plan of action to budget for the name change and a time-frame in which this should occur. A plan must be put in place to make the name change financially possible within the shortest amount of time so that building a new brand can commence.

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<sup>5</sup> For more on Boshoff's work see <http://www.willemboshoff.com/index.html>

<sup>6</sup> RHODES UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 7 MAY 2015 AT 10:30 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, RHODES UNIVERSITY.



In the meantime, and for the foreseeable future, the university and the SRC, for whom transformation is a priority, must continue to make other aspects of transformation a reality at our institution. It should be noted that although this report is concerned with the name of the university, this does not mean that other transformation issues are not of importance to the SRC. We are currently working on a variety of projects and advocating for a number of issues to do with transformation – including the Ubuntu fund, accessibility, curriculum and core course, MIP and International student fees among others.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Your SRC will hold the university accountable and ensure that the student body is able to contribute and is kept informed about what has been achieved as well as what still needs to be done and of the institutions name change process attached<sup>7</sup>.

We must be an institution where leaders not only learn, but an institution where leaders lead.

“Our mandate is clear. Transformation is crucial. Siqhubela phambili.”

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<sup>7</sup> See RHODES UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 7 MAY 2015 AT 10:30 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, RHODES UNIVERSITY.

## Addendum

### EXTRACTS FROM THE MINUTES RHODES UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 7 MAY 2015 AT 10:30 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, RHODES UNIVERSITY.

#### **2015.1.08 TRANSFORMATION AND NAME CHANGE**

The Vice-Chancellor reported that in terms of Section 65 of the Higher Education Act, the final decision regarding a change of name of a public institution of higher learning rests with its Council, and subject to the approval of the Minister. The Act further states that any change of name does not affect any right, duty, liability or obligation of the public higher education institution. To the extent that any decision on the future of the name of the University constitutes an administrative action on the part of Council, it is important, in terms of the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act, 2000 (Act No. 3 of 2000)(PAJA), that all stakeholders and parties that are likely to be affected by the decision are properly consulted.

The Institutional Forum recommended to Council a two-stage process in engaging the matter of the future of the name of Rhodes University. The first stage will entail an engagement with all University constituencies and stakeholders including students, academic and support staff, unions, alumni, convocation, Senate, Council and the greater Grahamstown community to canvass their views on the name of the University.

The second stage would follow in the event the outcome of the first stage indicates support for the change of the name of the University. This stage would involve a process of deciding on how this outcome would be brought into effect.

The Institutional Forum recommended to Council that a Task Team be appointed to investigate the sentiments of the University constituencies. It is intended that the Task Team be composed of members of impeccable credentials so that the outcome of the process can be beyond reproach. The RHODES UNIVERSITY: Council, 7 May 2015 Page 5

Task Team would report to the Institutional Forum and its findings would be debated and discussed by the Institutional Forum which would then draw up recommendations for consideration by Council.

The VC reported that the SRC had held a Forum to discuss the name change issue. The VC had held meetings with the Deans and relevant members of the Leadership Team. He had also reported on the issue at Faculty Boards, Senate and the Board of Governors. He reported further that he had received petitions in support of and against retaining the name of the institution. Over and above the receipt of petitions, he had received submissions from interested parties offering their views. These would be passed onto the Task Team for consideration.

A lengthy discussion ensued, with various views on the issue being expressed and noted.

Council APPROVED the recommendations of the Institutional Forum as detailed above and in the Institutional Forum report dated 4 May 2015. (Item 2015.1.12.3) (Minutes of this meeting attached by the SRC for your consumption)

Council expressed strong support for the Vice-Chancellor and his leadership team in the manner in which they had handled issues impacting on the transformation and the name of the University. Council was committed to ensuring the sustainability of Rhodes University, acknowledging that ideas must be expressed, debated and discussed in order to forge a new and shared future that ensures that Rhodes University is a home for all.

**RHODES UNIVERSITY**

**INSTITUTIONAL FORUM**

MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 4 MAY 2015  
AT 11:30 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, RHODES UNIVERSITY

**2015.2.01 PRESENT**

Ms J Sewry *Council Chair*, Dr S Khamanga *Council*, Professor L Strelitz *Council*, Dr S Matthews *Senate*, Professor J Larena *Senate*, Dr S Mabizela *Management*, Drs S Fourie *Management* and J-A Vorster *CHERTL*, Messrs S Makhubo *SRC President*, Z Maqubela *SRC VP*, T Majongwe *SRC Academic* and L Zungu *SRC Sec-Gen*, Ms H Raselabe *SRC Student Benefits*, Messrs M Lunke *NTEU*, A Vena *NEHAWU* and M Maisiri *PGLSC* and Mesdames N Nhlapo *E&IC* and S Smailes *Genact*.

*Ms J Sewry, as Council rep, was elected to chair the meeting.*

**CLASS A MATTER**

**2015.2.02 TRANSFORMATION AT RHODES UNIVERSITY – NAME CHANGE**

The Forum was requested to provide guidance on the process that needed to be followed in considering the future of the name of Rhodes University, and, further, to advise on the timeframes for the resolution of the future of the name.

The Forum **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL** a two stage process:

1. To establish whether or not there was support for a name change.
2. Depending on the outcome of the first stage, a second stage to discuss the process for actioning the decision.

The Forum **RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL** to the Rhodes University Council that a Task Team, as outlined in the discussion below, should be appointed to investigate the possibility of a name change. The Forum **REQUESTED** that Council allocate a suitable budget to this team.

Council would also be asked to **APPROVE** that a sub-committee of Institutional Forum members be appointed to write the remit/Terms of Reference of the Task Team.

Council were asked to **NOTE** that the SRC's support of such a move was predicated on an open and transparent process of selection of members to serve on this Task Team.

The Task Team should be constituted of members of impeccable credentials to canvass the views of the various constituencies in whichever manner seemed fit (including but not limited to forums, meetings with alumni etc). The process should be beyond reproach and should have credibility across all constituencies. Members did not have to be members of the University. The Task Team would report to the Institutional Forum and its results would be debated and discussed by the Forum to draw up recommendations for the Rhodes University Council.

The discussion covered the following points:

The VC outlined the place of the Institutional Forum within the governance structures of the university and gave the context to this special meeting. Attention post the #Rhodesmustfall debate had been turned on Rhodes University. The SRC convened a forum to discuss the name and other issues of transformation. Talks had been held with the Black Students Movement (BSM), the SRC and other student groupings. All meetings had discussed the name and issues relating to transformation more broadly. A VCs Circular had been issued and the VC had reported to Senate, Council and Faculty Boards. A petition with 295 signatures of current, past students and staff who were agitating for name change had been received. Additionally, some 30/40 students had petitioned to keep the name. An electronic petition with 1871 signatures demanding that the name be retained was also in existence.

The VC requested that the IF look at transformation on five different levels:

1. ***Social and demographic composition of staff and students:*** While the student demographic had shifted dramatically, it had been harder to achieve transformation in the staff arena.
2. ***Curriculum:*** the VC would like to see transformation as responsive in this case, i.e. curriculum change as a response to the change in the student demographic. Did Rhodes' Teaching & Learning practices create a richer educational experience for its student body? Were we drawing on wide and diverse knowledge sources from around the world?
3. ***Visual representation:*** was it representative of the university population?
4. ***Traditions and Rituals***
5. ***Names and the naming of buildings and other spaces on campus.***

The VC noted that it was preferable that debate on these issues be carried out in a dispassionate manner which respected the diversity of views, and avoided trivialising or delegitimising the views of others. Awareness was needed of the consequences of the decisions taken, and the best decisions for the institution and for future generations should be made. All stakeholders/constituencies should be consulted as all had an interest with respect to the name of this university.

The Council representative pointed out that in order for informed decisions to be made, all information should be placed on the table, and hard decisions might have to be made. The difficult and complex past should be acknowledged.

The Director: E&IC suggested that Work Practices be added to the list of five transformational levels above, and that the Staff Survey results be used to inform this.

The SRC President suggested that Institutional Culture be added to the list above. He asked how Rhodes could make students from poor backgrounds feel comfortable at the university, and added that issues with MIPs, short vac accommodation, financial difficulties etc. should be addressed. He raised the idea of a common course, as per the University of the Free State, and acknowledged that Professor Tabensky was running semesterised modules which could grow into such a course. The VC agreed and noted how important the institutional culture was for students and staff, and how Rhodes needed to be welcoming to all.

The SRC had undertaken to arrange name-change debates in dining halls and to hold an Oppi Forum on the issue. Responses would be collated and a wider institutional forum called thereafter. A referendum had been discussed by the SRC, but it was felt that it should be a last resort. A chance to debate and engage with this issue in an intellectual setting and space was preferred. It was acknowledged that issues existed with referendums, including the need to establish who would be entitled to vote. Would all constituencies have a say (Council, Senate, Board of Governors, staff, current students, past students, community members etc.)?

The PGLSC representative noted that students were currently studying towards exams and might not be able to attend the debates; a platform should be provided for these students. There were students who were not comfortable speaking out in public debates due to the disharmony within the student body over this issue. The PGLSC called for an event with a statistically measurable outcome, such as an election/referendum, where students could express their view without fear of reprisal. All the constituencies involved should have such a platform.

It was acknowledged that name change was not a simple process. Institutions which had changed their names in the past had done so as a result of mergers – there had never been an instance of an institution changing its name (other than Free State University dropping the *Orange*). The letter of the law stated that the University Council could change the name, with the approval of the Minister, and this would have to be gazetted in the Government Gazette. The financial impact of the name change was noted.

The need to identify the different constituencies was raised, and it was stressed that a way of bringing all relevant information to these

constituencies must be found. The importance of creating cross-constituency channels was noted.

The NEHAWU representative requested that any voting mechanism put in place not be electronic only, and that any voting mechanism should be set up by a separate body to the task team.

It was proposed that the IF should draft the Terms of Reference for the Task Team, and these should include a list of positives and negatives to be presented to the IF during the report-back meeting. The processes which were set up by the task team to assess the voices of stakeholders should be fair and beyond reproach.

In respect of a timeline for the process, the Forum AGREED that this meeting's minutes and recommendations should serve before the Rhodes University Council on Thursday 7 May 2015. Thereafter a further special meeting of the IF would be called to discuss Council's responses.

The Forum AGREED that in anticipation of Council approval, a sub-committee should be appointed to draw up the Terms of Reference for the Task Team. The following agreed to serve on the sub-committee:

**Ms S Smailes** *representing* Management/Genact/Council

**Professor J Larena** *representing* Senate

**Mr L Zungu**, the Activism & Transformation Councillor on the SRC

**Mr M Lunke** *representing* NTEU

**Mr A Vena** *representing* NEHAWU

**Ms N Nhlapo** *representing* the E&IC Office

It was also AGREED that Distinguished Professor P Maylam should be invited to sit on the sub-committee.

The need for commitment to this sub-committee was stressed by the Chair, to avoid accusations of lack of representation.

*jwm/ 5 May 2015*