

Meeting:	Student Officer Committee
Date:	Thursday 30 April 2015
Time:	5.00 pm
Location:	Committee Room 1, the Council House
Code	SOC 1412

- 1412** **Departmental Presentation: Enterprise and Volunteering**
From Victoria Cook, Enterprise and Activities Coordinator.

- 1413** **Statements from the Chair**

- 1414** **Minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2015**
(See pages 2-6)

- 1415** **Matters Arising/Action Log**
(See page 7)

- 1416** **Social Policy Review**
(See pages 8-9)

- 1417** **Scrutiny Panels**
(See pages 10-11)

- 1418** **Budget update with totals**
(See page 12)

- 1419** **General Election Night**
A funding request from the Campaigns and Democracy Officer.
(See page 13)

- 1420** **Welcome Week**
A discussion topic from the Chief Executive.

- 1421** **Officer Go Around/Reports**

- 1422** **Reports on Priority Campaigns/Projects Any Other Business**
(For Priority Campaign update: see pages 14-16)

- 1423** **Time, Date and Place of Next Meeting**
To note the next meeting will be held at 5.00 pm on 21 May in
Committee Room 1, the Council House.

Minutes

Subject:	Student Officer Committee Minutes
Date:	Thursday, 23 April 2015
Paper:	SOC 1416
Author:	Tony Moore
Purpose:	Record of decision making

Key Discussions

- Policy Implementation

Key Actions

- Agreed £400 of funding for transport to the People's Assembly National Demo on 20 June
- SOC agreed £320 for publicity stickers and £130 for an advertising banner for the General Election and getting out the student vote
- Working Group of PTOs to be set up to work with the Campaigns and Democracy Officer on planning for Caucuses and Assemblies

Union of UEA Students Purpose:

"To enrich the life of every UEA student"

Minutes of the Student Officer Committee

23 April 2015

Voting Members present:

Yinbo Yu (Activities and Opportunities Officer), Ting Ni (International Officer), Hussam Hussein (Ethnic Minorities Officer), Alex McCloskey (Ethical issues Officer), Liam McCafferty (PG Education Officer), Cameron Mellowes (Non Portfolio Officer), Philippa Costello (Non Portfolio Officer), Theo Antoniou Phillips (LGBT+ Officer), Sam Jones (Environment Officer), Bethany Smith (Women's Officer), Jack Robinson (Non Portfolio Officer).

Chair

Tom Etheridge (Non Portfolio Officer).

Non-Voting Member present:

In attendance:

Josh Clare (Head of Student Engagement), Tony Moore (Democracy and Governance Coordinator), J Spiro (Head of Advocacy).

Apologies:

Holly Staynor (Welfare, Community & Diversity Officer), Aaron Hood (Students with Disabilities Officer), Jim Dickinson (Chief Executive), Chris Jarvis (Campaigns and Democracy Officer), Connor Rand (UG Education Officer).

Owing to the absence of the Chair and Deputy Chair, SOC elected Tom Etheridge to Chair the meeting.

1404 Statements from the Chair

There were none.

1405 Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2015

The minutes of the meeting were approved.

1406 Matters Arising

There were none.

1407 Action Log

Chair noted that there had been progress on some of the items and that the General Meeting for the Referendum on the change of title for the Ethnic Minorities Officer role was planned for the following Monday.

1408 Campaigns' Budget Update

McCafferty explained to new Officers how Liberations Campaign funds had been ring-fenced from the general Campaigns' Budget and suggested that allocation of budgets was a matter that should be discussed at residential training.

SOC asked for a set of totals for all budget spending to be brought to the next meeting.

1409 Anti-Austerity Demo

L McCafferty noted that the funding would be to attend a national event of an affiliate organisation. He anticipated that, as the event was out of term time, the best arrangement would be to half share a coach with the local organisation and come back for further funding if there was a strong demand for places.

SOC agreed £400 of funding for transport to the People's Assembly National Demo on 20 June.

1410 General Election Polling Day Publicity

SOC agreed £320 for publicity stickers and £130 for an advertising banner.

1411 Decisions made by Union Council

SOC discussed the implementation of policy passed by Union Council on 16 April; the key points of the discussion were:

- *Key Performance Indicators of Policy Implementation to be discussed at residential training*
- *Working Group of PTOs to be set up to work with the Campaigns and Democracy Officer on planning for Policy 1712 (Caucuses and Assemblies) and to report back at residential training*
- Possibility of LGBT+ event as core part of Welcome Week
- For Policy 1714 on Palestine, discussion to be had with the Ethical Steering Group about retail implications and with the UCU as to lobbying the University

1412 Officer Go Round/Reports

L McCafferty: PG Experience Report completed, University adopted the Postgraduate Employment Charter
Y Yu: Club and Society training, sports and the University
S Jones: talks with the University over biodegradability; discussions over more water fountains on campus and possibility of bike hire schemes; discussions with the City Council on the Pink Peddle Way cycle route
T Etheridge: liaising with staff to try and reduce queues during the Union House refurbishment, policy work and attendance at the Transforming Teaching Award
T Ni: discussions with International Society regarding NHS fees for international society
J Robinson: liaising with staff on events and charity material in the Shop
H Hussein: liaising with students over proposed Italian and Latin American Societies, liaising with Islamic Society over kosher and halal labelling
T Antoniou Phillips: running Pride committee elections, meeting with Norwich Pride, working on posters for gender neutral toilets
A McCloskey: liaising over Living Wage campaign and Ethical Steering Group

1413 Reports on Priority Campaigns/Projects/AOB

L McCafferty noted that, with the University's adoption of the Postgraduate Employment Charter, one of the Priority Campaigns had been won.

J Clare advised as to the current state of the Priority Campaigns. He noted that one of the features of the experience of this year's campaigns had been that none of the planned Campaign Teams had been formed and that this failure should be considered in planning for the coming year.

SOC asked for a colour coded chart of progress on the Priority Campaigns to be brought to the next meeting.

L McCafferty registered his concerns that Officers, including himself, had been asked to prepare food as a bonding exercise during Residential Training. He stated his belief that real bonding happened, not whilst one was preparing food but when one was consuming food, preferably accompanied by a fine bottle of wine, which would be one of his specified dietary requirements.

SOC noted that the SU had employed a new staff member, Rob Drury, to co-ordinate the organisation of Welcome Week and agreed to invite Rob to the May meeting to feed in their ideas for Welcome Week. Chair asked Officers to think about possible events with emphasis on hard to reach groups for Welcome Week.

J Clare, on Officer Handovers, advised that all Officers would be given a document to sign on completion of their handovers.

1414 Time, Date and Place

5 pm., Thursday 30 April in Committee Room 1, the Council House.

SOC Action Log for 30 April 15

Date Commissioned	Action Required	Status	Assigned To:	Date to be actioned by:
16 October 14	Letter to be send to NUS concerning trans-exclusion in election regulations	Actioned	Holly, Theo, Beth	Nov 14
16 October 14	Public statement to be made on DSA Cuts in collaboration with NUA and City College	Liaising with University over joint declaration with NUA/City	Holly, Aaron, Chris	Nov 14
26 February 15	Proposed amendment on the Referendum Bye-Laws to be brought Council.	To be brought to Council	Chris	16 Apr 15
26 February 15	Some signage in the Shop as to information on product boycotts.	Actioned	Chris/Alex	End of March
12 March 15	Referendum on change of Ethnic Minorities Officer job title	Referendum called, General Meeting failed to meet quorum	Josh/Holly	End of May
23 April 15	Update on progress to Priority Campaigns to be reported	Agenda Item	Josh	30 April
23 April 15	Key Performance Indicators of Policy Implementation to be discussed at residential training	For residential training	Josh/Chris	June
23 April 15	Working Group of PTOs to be set up to work with the Campaigns and Democracy Officer on planning for Policy 1712 (Caucuses and Assemblies) and to report back at residential training	For residential training	Chris	June

Ongoing Actions

Date Commissioned	Action Required	Status	Assigned To:	Date :
5 June 14/2 October/23 Oct	Constitutionality of reserved places on Union Council for Rep Organisers to be investigated	Proposal to brought to SOC from Student Engagement	Chris	
16 October 14	University to be lobbied over student accommodation in city centre	Lobbying continuing	Holly	
26 February 15	Officers to, in future, submit short written reports on policy implementation to be included in the SOC agenda papers	Ongoing	All	

Social Policy Review March 2015

Purpose:

The Advice Service saw 833 students in the 2013/14 Academic Year. This is 5.62% of the population at UEA. These students tend to be seen on a one to one basis and often the issue that the student is facing is one that is being experienced by many others.

The Education and Engagement Team (E&E) was established in the summer of 2014. This team offer support to those students who work in representing their peers, through Counsellors, Faculty Convenors, Course Reps etc. They also have a dedicated member of staff that is responsible for Research, Policy and Projects coordinator. This team will often hear about issues that are affecting large groups of students.

The Advice and Education and Engagement Team form the Advocacy Department in the Union. It is important that the issues that are experienced by students are addressed so that the matter is resolved for all students and not just on a case by case basis.

This is the procedure to use if someone from E&E, Advice, or the Officer team feels that a certain issue should become a social policy item.

Method:

Items will be discussed at a monthly social policy meeting held on the first Monday (TBC) of each month.

Attendees can include advisers + officers + faculty convenors + rep coordinators, relevant Union staff

The group will then decide if the particular issue should become a defined social policy item, i.e.

- is there a potential to affect large groups of people
- is there evidence of consistent bad practice
- is there evidence of poor policy implementation, etc.

The group should work out together which issues they want to take forward, using their knowledge of what takes place within UEA and nationally.

The group will review the social policy issues at the end of each semester and at the end of the academic year, to consider whether progress has been made and if further work needs to be done.

Example form for recording issues:

Social Policy Agenda item (Date, Number) SP 1/- 3/15		Raised by:	Status: (Current, Suspended, Completed)	
Action points				
Date			Member	Date completed
March 5th			XY	
Ongoing Developments				
Date	(meeting, emails, minutes etc)			
March 7th	Email			

Scrutiny Panels

Introduction

Scrutiny Panels, or their equivalents, are a mechanism of increasing accountability for officers which have been introduced by a number of student unions across the country. The model varies by student union, but at its core, is about having a group of students who regularly scrutinise the work of the elected officers and report back to the wider student body. Scrutiny Panels are based on a concern that it is difficult to hold officers to account effectively through student councils alone, since these meet infrequently, have busy agendas, and have much less information on officers' work than the officers do themselves. Scrutiny Panels aim to address this by giving councils, and students in general, more information about what their officers are doing for them.

The Core Model

A Scrutiny Panel is generally made up of students who are elected, either directly in a cross-campus ballot or through the student council. The role covers the scrutiny of all officers, with a focus on sabbatical officers. Panels rarely have any powers themselves, but are about providing better information to students and to councils. This means that the panel will publish reports during the year for students to read, which summarise the current performance of the elected officer team and pick out any general features which are working well or could be improved.

Panels generally achieve this by receiving reports from officers and by meeting officers in person to ask them questions about their own performance and their opinions on how the student officer team is functioning as a whole.

It's important to note that Scrutiny Panels aren't about setting political direction, but are about accountability for union policy and for elected manifesto goals. For instance, if an officer was elected on a policy of building a new SU building, the panel would likely ask them how this was going, and would then report back to students on the progress of this policy. This makes Scrutiny Panels different to 'juries', because they are about increasing a student council's ability to hold officers to account, rather than changing the process for setting policy.

Examples

Nottingham University Students' Union

“Student Scrutineers hold all full-time Officers and the Environment and Social Justice Officer to account on their remit, manifesto, and policy. They meet six times a year, assisted by an Officer from another Union.”

The panel meets six times per year and receive reports from each officer based around their set goals for their time in office. Officers also meet with the panel, after which the panel give each officer a ‘rating’ out of ten. There is a procedure for officers challenging this rating if they feel that the panel has been unfair. The members of the panel are elected by cross-campus ballot.

Oxford University Student Union

OUSU’s Scrutiny Committee is elected in OUSU Council and holds office for one academic year. At the end of each term they meet with every officer to ask questions about how the term has gone. Following this, the committee submits a report to OUSU council which runs through the performance of each officer and offers some general recommendations about potential team-wide improvements (e.g. better communication between officer portfolios).

Leicester Students’ Union

Leicester’s committee is something of a hybrid between a Democratic Procedures Committee or a Council Steering Committee and a conventional Scrutiny Panel. This means that in addition to holding officers to account it also assists with the running of Council and is responsible for overseeing elections and upholding the Bye-Laws.

Summary

Scrutiny Panels can play a role in assisting officer accountability by providing information on officer performance for the student membership, and particular the student council. In addition to accountability, they can also be a channel for officers to raise general issues around their role, challenges in working at their union, or any additional support they would appreciate in their roles.

Recorded granted Funding Requests to SOC 14-15

18 September	£100 for attendance at the lobby of the UKIP national conference.
2 October	the revised figure of £2,200 on publicity and coaches for the TUC demo and to the associated Action Plan for the event. Overall Campaign Budget agreed
6 November	Reported spend of £650 on attending the TUC Demo
4 December	General Election Student Manifesto £1,500
15 January	£400 World Cafe £200 International Women's Day of which £100 to come from Liberations Budget; increased liberations budget from £100 to £150
5 February	Standing OUT LGBTQIA Women in Leadership; the amount requested was £100
26 February	UEA Palestine Solidarity Campaign £150 from Campaigns
23 rd April	Anti-Austerity Demo £400
23 rd April	General Election Polling Day- £450

Facebook requests approved by SOC-

£173.35- Black Students winter conference
£120- Mature student Christmas Get-together
£62- NUS women's campaign activist network.

Total spend: £4,605

(Please from the £2,200 approved in October only £650 spent)

Project/Campaign Title: General Election Night

Amount of money requested: £350

Budget requested from: SOC Projects

Details of project (500 words max)

The culmination of all our work on the General Election will be our election night PARTY!!!

We will be screening the results as they come in throughout the night in the Blue Bar. Drinks can be bought from the bar until 3am and the building will be open overnight.

As part of this, we will be offering themed cocktails and mocktails, of a similar vein to our well received smoothies, there will be competitions every hour for students to guess who will be ahead at each hour.

In order to make this event a big success and generate a strong atmosphere for the General Election night, we are looking to fully decorate the bar with election themed material.

We are looking to buy and use:
Cardboard cut outs of party leaders
Party themed bunting
Flags

Report on Priorities Campaigns April 2015

1. To set up a campaign team of 10-15 students to work on the cost of student living campaign
2. Accommodation:
 - a. To Lobby the University to commit that any increases in accommodation fees are, at the very least, offset by national increases in government maintenance grants and loans for the next (X) years
 - b. To ensure there is student representation on the body that decides accommodation fees
 - c. To Lobby the University to work towards a 5% increase in the proportion of housing stock provided by UEA is affordable.
3. Private landlords:
 - a. To work with landlords to ensure that all properties on home run/home let are band E and above energy efficiency rating
 - b. To have successfully lobbied for 50 properties to have better insulation installed
 - c. To revise accreditation criteria for HomeRun/Let to ensure that our accreditation scheme is as rigorous as it is at other institutions across the country
4. Hidden Course Costs:
 - a. To lobby the University to introduce a printing allowance for all students
 - b. To lobby for hidden course costs, such as textbooks etc. to be minimised.

Win:

In accommodation setting discussions for 2015/16

- green standard on properties

1. Work to stop cuts to DSA on a national level:
 - a. Build an alliance across Norwich of HE/FE institutions campaigning to stop cuts to DSA
 - b. Work closely with the NUS disabled students campaign
 - c. Lobby the University to take a public stance on DSA cuts

- d. Lobby the University to raise DSA with UUK
 - e. Lobby PPCs to make a pledge on DSA in the run up to May 2015
2. Lobby the University to make sufficient contingency plans for provisions to be made in the event that DSA cuts go ahead.
 - a. Work with DOS to ensure ET provide sufficient provisions that directly matches what was previously provided by central government
 - b. Set up a University-Union working group to oversee the transition to ensure that the provisions are sufficient and that disabled students will not be impacted. This working group should have student representatives including the Disabled Students Officer.

NB: waiting till after election to see what happens

1. Living wage
 - a. To draft policy on UUEAS contracts that covers the Living Wage to ensure that all sub-contracted workers are paid at least the Living Wage
 - b. To ensure UUEAS is a Living Wage Foundation accredited employer
 - c. To lobby UEA to adopt a formal agreement that sets out employment standards for sub-contracted workers, including a living wage guarantee
 - d. To lobby UEA to introduce the Living Wage for staff employed on casual contracts
 - e. To collaborate with Norwich City Council, community groups, trade unions and activists from across Norwich to launch a campaign to establish the Living Wage as the norm across the city.
 - f. To build a strong campaign team of 15-20 activists to lead and direct the campaign for the Living Wage (NB: through Unison campaign)
2. Employment rights
 - a. To reach 300 students through stalls, activities and events to promote rights at work.
 - b. To reach 1,000 students through social media
3. Trade Union membership (NB: Union staff joining Unison)
4. Unpaid internships

5. PG contracts:

- a. To establish a postgraduate employment charter that is specific to UEA
- b. To lobby the University to improve employment for Postgraduate employees of the University (Associate Tutors etc.) by meeting the demands of the charter

6. Ethical Careers Fair

- a. To reach 500 students through a Union-run ethical careers fair which does not invite companies whose practices conflict with Union Policy (NB: joint event held with 50 attendees)
- b. Lobby the University careers service to ensure their careers provision, particularly regarding employment fairs exists within a stringent ethical framework.
- c. To build a co-ordinating team of 10 students to lead on the project.

1. Postgraduates

- a. To lobby the University to introduce a cap on Postgraduate fees. (NB: PG loan intro)

2. International students

- a. To lobby the University to fix fees for international students, so that fees don't increase more than in line with inflation from one year to the next
- b. To lobby the University to fix fees for the duration of a course for international students (NB: lobbied but Uni didn't move)