

# Minutes

Subject:	Student Officer Committee Minutes
Date:	Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> September 2015
Paper:	SOC 1438
Author:	Josh Melling
Purpose:	Record of decision making

## Key Discussions

- Quality Conversations, Issues with data protection and accessibility of questionnaires for staff
- Accessibility to the building has become greater with door adaptations for wheelchair users, adaptations to the blue bar and grad bar to make ordering more accessible, however there is still an issue with the lift regarding its reliability
- Board of Trustees urged caution in proceeding with BDS policy implementation

## Key Actions

- Agreed to set up a working group for big policy, C Jarvis elected head of group.
- Agreed funding request of up to £400 for Wellbeing Festival
- Agreed funding request of up to £165 for Bi-Visibility Week
- Agreed funding request of up to £175 for #NeverOK

## **Union of UEA Students Purpose:**

"To enrich the life of every UEA student"

## **Minutes of the Student Officer Committee**

**17 September 2015**

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### **Voting Members present:**

Voting Members Present: C Jarvis (Chair), Tom Etheridge (Non-Portfolio Officer), Alex McCloskey (Ethical Issues Officer), Sam Jones (Environmental Officer), Theo Antoniou Phillips (LGBT+ Officer), Connor Rand (Undergraduate Education Officer), Liam McCafferty (Postgraduate Education Officer), Yinbo Yu (Activities & Opportunities Officer), Philippa Costello (Non-Portfolio Officer), Jo Swo (Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer), Jack Robinson (Non-Portfolio Officer), Ting Li (International Officer), Cameron Mellows (Non-Portfolio Officer), Hussam Hussein (Ethnic Minorities Officer).

### **Non-Voting Members Present:**

Jim Dickinson (Chief Executive)

### **Chair:**

Chris Jarvis (Campaigns and Democracy Officer), first part of meeting; Theo Antoniou Phillips (LGBT+ Officer), second part.

### **In attendance:**

Josh Melling (Student Officer Centre Assistant) Josh Clare (Head of Student Engagement), Tony Moore (Democracy and Governance Coordinator)

#### **1438 Chair Update**

There were none.

#### **1439 Apologies:**

Beth Smith (Women's Officer), Paul Erasmus (Mature Students' Officer)

#### **1440 Minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2015 & Matters Arising/Action Log**

The minutes of the meeting were approved, however T Antoniou Phillips noted only using 'Trans' in minutes as 'Trans\*' is non-binary exclusionary. There were no matter arising and no comments made concerning the Log.

**1441 Strategic Exercise: The Post-Election HE Landscape**

Presentation was given by J Dickinson.

**1442 Issues Presentations**

Presentation was given by R Drury, the Fresher's Student Organisation.

**1443 Items for Discussion**

Quality Conversations – Presentation was given by the Head of Student engagement.

T Etheridge questioned whether all members of student staff are required to have a quality conversation as some situations may not be suitable.

J Clare noted student staff have a quota of 1 therefore they may fill out the survey themselves.

L McCafferty believed the collation and analysis should be reworded to reflect how the data will feed into the actions of the Officers. Also noted how student staff are not the most representative of a whole student body therefore an issue arises if said staff fill out questionnaires as the same voices will be repeated over the course of the proposed scheme.

J Clare noted limitations of the research and how many surveys are completed by a particular group more than others.

J Swo highlighted the issue with location and how representative the survey will be if this is not monitored.

J Clare noted as results come in they will be tracked and deployment of staff members will then ensue, there will be a student support staff member who will identify where gaps occur and deal with this accordingly.

J Swo questioned how secure data will be considering the private nature of some themes.

J Clare noted limited people will have access to the survey.

J Swo argued that there should be something in writing to quell any fears of leaking confidential information as the actual conversations with student staff may be a topic of discussion at a later date.

C Rand noted many University focus groups held with students reported a negative view of the Union and its engagement with students, therefore the Education Communication Team will be linking up with Business Intelligence Unit to tackle issues stated.

J Clare noted where the link is beneficial, communication will be made, also noted the often hesitant attitude of the University to share such information.

T Etheridge questioned the logistics of a student staff member completing the survey themselves as they would not receive any feedback. Also how said staff will separately take the students email.

J Clare recognised the issue which will have to be addressed. Implement a concise way of recording these but noted for the time being write down email addresses during the conversation and have a mass send out at the end of each week.

J Dickinson noted responding personally engages students however, may be an issue for staff who have a large amount participants to email, never the less the issue was noted and will be looked at.

S Jones argued whether certain conversations will be allocated between officers and staff to avoid a situation of staff becoming accountable for the Unions views.

J Clare recognises the point and agrees that care will need to be taken if conversations become political.

Y Yu questioned whether there is a system in place for staff who may not comfortable to collect information from students.

J Clare noted there were no specific ways to collect information so staff can choose to go with staff who are more confident.

J Clare suggested emailing any suggestions or amendments to themes due to time sensitivity of the meeting.

*Chair agrees, suggestions or amendments to be emailed in due course to the Head of Student Engagement*

#### **1444 Access to the Union House**

J Dickenson gave a report on the current state of access for wheel chair users to Union House; highlighting the issue of the lift that was very old and prone to break down.

#### **1445 Islamophobia Awareness Month**

Deferred to the next SOC meeting.

#### **1446 Policy Implementation**

Report given by C Rand on the extent to which policy 1714 can be implemented whilst remaining within the law, following guidance from the Trustee Board to be aware of the legal grey areas and guidance from charities.

C Jarvis suggests setting up a Working Committee on big policy and nominating an officer to lead the group.

C Rand believed Union Council should be updated with the development of the policy and discussions with the Trustee Board.

C Jarvis put themselves forward as candidate to head the Working Committee.

*C Jarvis was elected.*

#### **1447 BDS Policy Implementation**

UUEAS is moving towards increasing revenue through advertisement for external companies. However, Ethical Steering Group and Management Committee believed there should be an advertising policy in place in order for advertising to adhere to the Unions values and not advertise for companies that are on any boycott list.

C Rand noted that Union Council have called for boycotts on numerous companies including those complicit with Israeli violations of international law, therefore clarity needs to be made on companies that are part of BDS movement, for example whether Coca-Cola will or will not.

#### **1448 Black History Month Update**

Deferred to next SOC meeting.

#### **1449 Priority Campaigns Update**

C Jarvis voiced apologies to those who could not make it to residential. Further steps were made following the data collected from the survey sent out to officers. Each sabbatical officer has been assigned a priority campaign; C Jarvis – Anti Austerity Campaign, C Rand – Transforming Education Campaign, L McCafferty – Cost of Living Campaign, Y Yu – Save Our Union Campaign, J Swo – Mental Health Awareness Campaign. Both working groups for Anti Austerity and Cost of Living campaigns met and had productive discussions.

L McCafferty reported that ideas had been gathered in regards to campaign objectives, these will be typed up and presented to SOC for discussion.

L McCafferty noted that each campaign had sub-objectives which will be championed by part time officers, more specifically non-portfolio officers.

**1450 Anti-Bullying Campaign**

Deferred to next SOC meeting.

*Chair noted full reports in the agenda are optional however, if Officers send points on current work, before SOC, these can potentially be discussed within SOC within the additional reports.*

**1451 Additional Campaigns and Reports**

S Jones reported in two weeks' the University is holding 'Travel Matters Week'. For which S Jones has been working on a campaign called 'UEA On Your Bike' involving a cycling awareness and advice.

**1452 Management Committee Report**

*Minutes are approved by SOC.*

**1453 Funding Requests**

Funding Allocation

SOC approved the allocation for General Campaigns (£5,000), Priority Campaigns (£4,000), and SOC Projects (£4,000).

C Jarvis noted a protected budget for liberation officers had been set.

**1454 Funding requests made over summer have all been approved.**

**1455 Wellbeing Festival**

J Swo amended the amount requested from £600 to £400. The funds will go towards travel for speakers, posters, programmes, and materials for arts and crafts.

*SOC approved funding request of up to £400.*

**1456 Never OK Campaign**

J Swo noted A3 posters that will go in all university accommodation need to be created externally due to quality of resolution.

*SOC agreed the funding request of up to £175.*

**1457 Bi Visibility Week**

T Antoniou-Phillips noted Bi students are the largest part of the LGBT+ acronym therefore, engage with said students during this week. The funding will go towards, badges, printing of posters and leaflets, and for face paint.

*Equal Opportunities Committee agreed the funding request of up to £165.*

*Chair noted for future funding requests an itemised breakdown of what the funding spent on would benefit SOC.*

**1458 Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

**1459 Time, Date and Place**

The next meeting of SOC will be held at 5.00 pm on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October in the Board Room, Union House.