

Minutes

Meeting:	Student Officer Committee
Date:	Thursday 22 nd October 2015
Paper:	SOC 1466
Author:	Josh Melling
Purpose:	Record of Decision Making

Key Discussions

- **Duration of Union Council regarding accessibility issues**
- **Accessibility of the Union Building, post refurbishment, including ongoing issues with the lift.**
- **Donations to refugees in Calais, and where in the Union Building these can be stored.**

Key Actions

- **Officers each took policies which were passed at Union council**
- **SOC agreed a strong steer towards having a collection point for the Calais refugee camp which will be addressed at management committee.**

Union of UEA Students Purpose:

"To enrich the life of every UEA student"

Minutes of the Student Officer Committee

22nd October 2015

Voting Members present:

Voting Members Present: C Jarvis (Chair), Tom Etheridge (Non-Portfolio Officer), Beth Smith (Women's Officer), Sam Jones (Environmental Officer), Theo Antoniou Phillips (Co-Chair), Aaron Hood (Students' with Disabilities Officer), Connor Rand (Undergraduate Education Officer), Liam McCafferty (Postgraduate Education Officer), Philippa Costello (Non-Portfolio Officer), Cameron Mellows (Non-Portfolio Officer), Jack Robinson (Non-Portfolio Officer).

Chair:

Chris Jarvis (Campaigns and Democracy), Theo Antoniou Phillips (LGBT+ Officer).

In attendance:

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

1466 Departmental Presentation: Advice

Presentation given by J Plumstead and M Hill.

Highlighted the current success of the 'Don't drop out, Drop in' campaign, with many issues coming in regarding UEA's private accommodation provision.

New services are being implemented where the impact of volunteers has been noted.

Foodbank SU Initiative

1467 Chair Update

Chair updated SOC on the progress of Black History month.

Two new positions have been appointed which are J Robinson as Retail and T Etheridge as Ents/Bar on the SUS Oversight and Development Board

SOC discussed P Erasmus' continued absence from meetings.

1468 Attendance and Apologies

Apologies from Jim Dickinson (Chief Executive), Yinbo Yu (Activities and Opportunities Officer), Jo Swo (Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer), Paul Erasmus (Mature Students' Officer), Chris Jarvis (Campaigns and Democracy Officer) - left part way through the meeting, Ting Ni (International Officer Officer), Alex McCloskey (Ethical Issues Officer), Hussam Hussein (Ethnic Minorities Officer).

1469 Minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2015/Matters Arising/Action Log

Minutes of the meeting were approved, however, J Dickinson and P Erasmus were noted as present, which was not the case.

There were no other matters arising.

1470 Issue Presentations

There were no presentations given.

1471 Items for Discussion

T Etheridge brought forward the discussion point of accessibility and duration of Union Council. Noting officers could collectively develop a front page issue of Concrete.

Also suggested SOC look at what they take to council even if there is a mandate to do so. Further noted indicative vote on policy prior to attending council, no objections then there is no need for a full debate on policy which will reduce the overall time of the meeting.

A Hood noted a mandatory guillotine could be an option, also noted they are willing to take it to caucus and discuss the issue.

J Robinson noted having a discussion with the Chair of council would be a good starting point. Also noted a lack of confidence in indicative voting as it would rely on every councillor responding.

T Etheridge noted the indicative voting would just be a helpful indication as to how council will vote so there can be some prior knowledge of how long each discussion will last, also making it easier for the chair.

C Rand noted the first 30 minutes of council often runs a lot less smooth compared to the rest. So the issue could be with how the agenda is structured.

J Robinson questioned how easy it is for councillors to e-vote and whether this is a well-known method.

S Jones noted at the previous council meeting there were no indications to councillors that live streaming the meeting from home was an option.

J Clare noted this is made clear to all councillors when the agenda is sent out.

C Mellows questioned whether there could be workshops set up on writing motions as currently it feels like only officers voices are being heard at council.

T Moore questioned whether SOC would like to establish the workshops

Chair asked if there are any officers who would like to lead on talking to the Chair of council and start work on motion writing workshops.

Feedback on Union House Refurbishment

J Robinson noted the atmosphere is a lot more sociable however, noted the lift has not been replaced and is still an issue.

C Jarvis noted their ambivalence towards the refurbishment, also noted the nap nook does not work and general accessibility of the building is still not great.

B Smith (Inaudible, when minutes are distributed to SOC for approval please send in what was said so the minutes can be a true and proper reflection of the meeting.)

C Rand noted the gateway has been great for students coming into the building however, also noted the accessibility of the building.

C Mellows noted many of the bookable rooms are not accommodating for large societies.

S Jones noted the gateway is a good addition however, noted there are still changes that need to be made such as blue bar carpet and the toilets upstairs in union house.

T Etheridge noted the large welcome desk is not in use downstairs and meaning no one is there to greet anyone. Also

noted the bars look messy and there is a lot of furniture which is difficult to get through for wheelchair users.

P Costello noted the reception upstairs is not fit for purpose and would be much better if reception staff used the desk at the entrance of the gateway. Also noted a lot of students walk into the advice centre to ask questions which can be problematic if there is a confidential conversation happening.

L McCafferty noted their enthusiasm for their office. Acknowledged the issues regarding nap nook, noted signage will be put up soon asking people to avoid the route through if possible.

A Hood noted the appearance of building is a lot better. Also noted the issue with the lift and access for wheelchair users to toilets during LCR events from the Blue Bar.

C Rand suggested FTO's would be willing to cover the empty reception desk.

T Antoniou-Phillips noted the feel of the building is too clean and corporate.

1472

Policy Implementation

Chair provided suggestions as to which officer should take each policy passed at Union Council.

SOC decided the allocation of policies to officers as follows:

A Transgender and Non-binary Students Policy – T Antoniou-Phillips and J Swo

Fighting Institutional Homophobia in the Health Service – T Antoniou-Phillips

Ending Discrimination in the Blood Service – T Antoniou-Phillips

Student Fees Equality - deferred, T Antoniou-Phillips to send to International Students assembly for T Nin to report.

Support when it's Needed Most – J Swo and C Rand

Show me the Money! – C Rand and C Jarvis

#RefugeesWelcomeHere – J Robinson, J Swo and L McCafferty

Water, Water Everywhere and not a Drop to Drink – A McCloskey

Improving Democracy for Union Activities – Amendment to the Bye Laws – C Jarvis and Y Yu

Supporting Student Action on Climate Change - C Jarvis and S Jones

Sombre-No: Clarifying the Equal Opportunities Policy – L McCafferty, C Jarvis and Liberation Officers

Food Waste – L McCafferty and S Jones

L McCafferty noted on the migrant solidarity policy, there needs to be a steer from SOC as the collection bin outside Union House will be leaving shortly due to a permanent sports storage facility outside, thus confidence in the Union being able to take and store more donations is decreasing. Also noted SOC has to make a hard decision as if a new space is designated to collections this could potentially be taking space away from societies. Also noted, from information given to them, if permanent collections were be established it would involve compromising something else. Furthermore noted SOC need to give clear indication that is is an issue they want to take forward so management committee can go ahead.

Chair noted before SOC continues with discussion that the policy offers permanent location within Union House for donations.

J Robinson believed the amount of donations will reduce and having storage in Union House would be preferable, yet a location in town which takes donations may be useful if and when the storage space is filled.

L McCafferty noted most collection points in the city are people's houses therefore it will be difficult for the Union to turn around and ask for these people to then store more donations.

J Robinson noted not all advice rooms are used at once therefore could be an option.

A Hood offered for donations to be stored at their house, if it came to that situation.

L McCafferty did not feel comfortable with this suggestion considering the size of the Union Building.

T Etheridge questioned whether SOC money could be used to create a space outside used for storage.

L McCafferty noted the logistics of this suggestion would be difficult due to the aforementioned storage facility which are yet to be built.

Chair noted SOC having a strong steer to have a collection point in Union House which should be taken to management committee and any issues with facilities to be brought back to SOC.

1473 Projects, Campaigns and Policy Reports

Cost of Living Campaign Update

L McCafferty noted the Foodbank will be launched on the 10th of November. Also noted there are three parts to the policy which when discussed with the working group will have PTO's championing each one.

Transforming Education Campaign Update

C Rand noted they are happy to circulate the current key areas that have been worked on to anyone who is interested. Also noted there will be PTO's championing different aspects of the campaign.

S Jones noted they have started a petition for more park and ride buses.

B Smith (Inaudible, when minutes are distributed to SOC for approval please send in what was said so the minutes can be a true and proper reflection of the meeting.)

J Clare distributed funding records and noted they have been added to spending papers.

1474 Annual Elections Schedule/Appointment of DRO

S Jones questioned whether nominations closed so early last time.

L McCafferty noted the date of opening nominations is odd as students will not yet be back from the Christmas break.

T Etheridge questioned how long hustings would be open for and whether turnout would spike at certain times.

J Clare noted the only aspect that affects hustings and turnout is candidates.

S Jones believed one week is a good amount of time for this to run as it makes it a more accessible experience.

Chair noted there is a SOC meeting on the 3rd of March and a Union Council meeting on the 10th.

There was a discussion as to the status of the election of the DRO; noted that this will be brought up at the next meeting.

1475 Finance Update

Finance update will be given after the Finance Committee have had chance to meet.

1476 Cycle of Business

SOC noted the cycle of business.

1477 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

1478 Time, Date and Place of Next Meeting

To note the next meeting will be held at 4.30 pm on Thursday 5th November in the Board Room, Union House