

**Union of UEA Students Mission 2009-13**

1. To create positive change in matters relating to the education of UEA students  
by effectively representing their collective views.



**Minutes of the Student Officer Committee**

**7 February 2013**

**Summary**

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**Key Discussions**

- Religious activities in Union House
- Attendance at NUS Conferences
- Constitutional Review Group progress
- Transitional Arrangements and recruitment of new Chief executive

**Key Actions**

- Agreed that present Officers and Officers elect would automatically have the right to attend NUS Conferences. Extra delegates to be elected by Campaigns Committees
- Agreed funding request of £60 for the Students with Disabilities Officer to attend the NUS Disabled Students Campaign Conference

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## Minutes of the Student Officer Committee

7 February 2013

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### Voting Members present:

Eliot Fallows (Non Portfolio Officer), Sam Clark (Community and Student Rights Officer), Joe Levell (Finance Officer), Kim Jenkins (Students with Disabilities Officer), Tess Gilder-Smith (Women's Officer), John Taylor (Post Graduate Officer), Astrid Heidemann Simonson (International Officer), Trevor Killeen (Mature Students Officer), Richard Laverick (LGBT Officer), Rosie Rawle (Ethical Issues Officer), Abbi Forsyth (Non Portfolio Officer), Hussam Hussein (Ethnic Minorities Officer).

### Chair

Matthew Myles (Communications Officer).

### In attendance:

Tony Moore (Representation Support Worker).

### Apologies:

Josh Bowker (Academic Officer), Benjamin Brown (Environment Officer), Jess Lewis (Non-Portfolio Officer), Bintu Foday (Non-Portfolio Officer), D Bowden (Chief Executive).

### 864 Resignation of the Chief Executive from SOC

J Levell noted D Bowden's apologies as to traffic problems that had prevented him attending. J Levell noted the Chief Executive's resignation from SOC would come into effect on his final day of employment which would be the last day of April.

### 865 Minutes of the meeting held on 31 January

The minutes were agreed.

### 866 Action Log

Chair noted the completed actions.

J Levell reported he would definitely be meeting with ENTS over the Safe Room in the near future.

SOC noted that B Brown's photo was now missing from the Officers'

details section of the website. SOC noted this part of the website was, now, adequately accessible.

**Action**

Chair noted that there had been an incident the previous day that had underlined the importance of having a policy as to religious activity in Union House.

R Laverick reported that there had been concerns raised by bystanders as to the behaviour of the Christian Union. He noted that the CU had reserved a section of the Blue Bar where they had a guest speaker and were handing out free waffles to students in the bar. He noted that the speaker had voiced their opinion that gay marriage was immoral and that being gay was unnatural. He noted that the CU had not made any prior announcement that they proposed to hold a public debate in an open area of Union House.

R Laverick noted he had met with the CU: they had had a positive dialogue and the CU had apologised over the incident.

Chair reported that he had been attempting to draft a policy but he felt this to be such a complicated issue that touched on freedom of speech and protection of members from offensive comments that it would need reflection and wide discussion before an adequate proposal could be sent to Council.

J Taylor wondered whether UUEAS' statement of values would be an adequate basis for the policy.

Chair noted this discussion should continue in the Open Space part of the meeting.

**Action**

Chair noted he had met with staff as to preparations for the Officers' hand over. He noted that PTOs would need to prepare some text for inclusion in the Officers' Handbooks.

**Action**

On Left in the Pot, SOC agreed that this item should be included as an agenda item once a month rather than on a weekly basis. Chair noted that any particularly large items of expenditure would be reported on an ad hoc basis.

**Action**

Chair noted the concerns over attendance at NUS conferences. SOC discussed whether it had the power to appoint delegates to NUS Conferences. SOC concluded that it had this power. SOC agreed that both the present and successor Part Time Officers would attend the relevant NUS conferences as of right. SOC noted that for conferences where it were agreed to send more than 2 delegates, the extra delegates would be elected by the relevant Campaign Committee. Chair noted he would investigate the situation with regard to the Environmental and Ethical conferences.

**Action**

Chair reported on the Constitutional Review Group's (CRG) first meeting.

R Laverick noted that, within the Constitution, there was a requirement for the Equal Opportunities Committee to report to the Trustees: he noted this had not happened for some time and he would be working with S Clark on producing a report.

Chair noted that the next steps for the CRG would be for the notes from the first meeting to be collated and posted online so that all members could add comments and suggestions. He noted he would be contacting the Presidents of Clubs and Societies for their input on the students' activities section. He noted the timeline would be for a pre-draft to be in place by March so that it could be sent to the University staff for comments. He noted that the final draft would then be sent to Union Council, then the Trustees and, finally, University Council for approval.

J Levell, updating on the Activities Hub, reported that the staff team was now complete with the appointment of Victoria Cook as Volunteers and Enterprise Coordinator.

**867 Matters Arising**

There were none.

**868 Left in the Pot**

There were no comments.

**869 NUS Disabled Students Conference**

SOC agreed £60 funding for the Students with Disabilities Officer to attend the NUS Disabled Students Campaign Conference.

**Action**

**870 Transitional Arrangements and Recruitment of a new Chief Executive**

Chair noted D Bowden's resignation.

J Levell reported that he had been in discussions with NUS as to provisional arrangements for the transition. He believed the best way forward to be to use the NUS facilities as to crisis management and to bring in an experienced SU chief executive on, possibly, a two day a week basis during the handover. He noted that UUEAS would be looking to bring in external expert advice on recruitment for the post. He thought the goal should be to have a new Chief Executive in place by September. He noted that members of Council would need to be elected to serve on the Appointments Committee. He welcomed input from Council, staff and other stakeholders into the process.

R Laverick noted the importance of having a robust structure for performance review in place before any appointment.

J Taylor noted it would be helpful to have an exit interview with the outgoing Chief Executive to gain a critique of the organisation.

R Laverick asked that some targets be set for D Bowden during the handover.

J Levell noted that a fixed set of criteria would be in place during this period.

**Action**

**871 Any Other Business**

SOC agreed that the Meet Your Officer (MYO) event had been a success and should become a regular feature of engagement with members.

J Taylor asked that the FTOs ensure their diaries would be clear during future MYO events.

SOC agreed that Officer candidates should be invited to a future meeting of SOC.

**Action**

SOC agreed to hold a pre-election social event.

**Action**

R Rawle reported that RBS had contacted her over the withdrawal from the ESSA competition. She noted that she would be explaining that UUEAS believed that, although the ESSA scheme was a good one, it could not participate because of the sponsoring bank's environmental record. She noted she would post her reply on the SOC Facebook page. She also noted that she would be drafting a new overarching policy proposal on ethical banking

**Action**

J Taylor reported that the GSA elections would be taking place during the first two weeks of March and that UUEAS' Representation Support Worker would act as Returning Officer.

**872 Time, Date and Place of Next Meeting**

5 pm, Thursday 21 February in the Student Officer Centre and the Board Room.