

Union of UEA Students Purpose:

"To enrich the life of every UEA student"



Minutes of the Student Officer Committee

3 October 2013

Summary

Key Discussions

- Chief Executive's Plans for the organisation
- Make-up of Action Log
- Terms of reference of SOC and Management Committee
- Faith Committee
- NUS Zone Conferences
- Format of SOC meetings
- Transport to conferences and events
- People and Planet training of Activists

Key Actions

- Traffic light system re-adopted for Action Log
- Chief Executive to include decision making matrix in November plan
- Idea of Faith Officer abandoned: establishment of Faith Committee with grant funding to be investigated
- Chief Executive to produce list of NUS events and conferences

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Voting Members present:

Tu An Ngo (International Officer), Ella Gilbert (Non Portfolio Officer), Rachel Knott (Women's Officer), Bintu Foday (Community and Student Rights Officer), Joe Levell (Finance Officer), Eunice Opare-Addo (Ethnic Minorities Officer), Lauren Sloan (Ethical Issues Officer), Sebastian Bachelier (Non Portfolio Officer), Rosie Rawle (Communications Officer), Freddie Meade (Non-Portfolio Officer), Daniel Delargy (Students with Disabilities Officer), Emma Silk (Environment Officer), Trevor Killeen (Mature Students Officer), Holly Staynor (LGBT+ Officer).

Non-Voting Member present:

Jim Dickinson (Chief Executive).

Chair

Joe Raynes (Non Portfolio Officer).

In attendance:

Tony Moore (Representation Support Worker)

Apologies:

Louise Withers Green (Academic Officer), Kimberley Hirst-Jones (Postgraduate Officer).

984 Informal Presentation from the Chief Executive

J Dickinson outlined his vision for the future of the organisation and the history of the leadership role in students' unions. He envisaged UUEAS being as good as any SU in the country but with its own unique direction based on the 'do different' ethos of UUEAS. He noted that the coming year would be a challenging time for the organisation. He reported that he would have his analysis and improvement plan ready for the November meeting of the Trustees and that a version of this would be then sent to SOC, Union Council and the University.

H Staynor asked what the Chief Executive's proposals would mean to her, as a PTO.

J Dickinson believed it would take some time for the changes to take effect but he noted that the resources freed up by the new MarComm structure would, accordingly, free up resources to provide greater support for the PTOs, in particular, in the immediate future. He noted, however, that, overall the PTOs would not have the year they should have because UUEAS, simply, did not have the structures in place to support them. He thought some things could be fixed in the short term but many issues needed medium and long term solutions.

He noted, in the upcoming consultation over the building, PTOs could play a vital role in shaping the future of the building and of the organisation. He noted the vast tracks of space occupied by staff offices that could be used for providing services to the members including social learning spaces.

He noted the ultimate goal would be faster, better provision of support for Officers.

He noted that he would be trying to have meetings with individual Officers over the coming weeks as he formulated his plan.

985 Minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2013

The minutes were agreed.

986 Action Log

Chair noted, as to his and the Deputy Chair's role that T Killeen as Deputy would be around during the week and would be looking to ensure continuity of actions.

E Gilbert reported that the demonstration at the Conservative Party Conference had been somewhat 'tame' but had been a rewarding experience in terms of networking and building solidarity for the 11 members who attended.

S Bachelier wondered whether UUEAS could send members to the Conservative Party Conference if they wished to attend.

R Rawle noted that UUEAS had sent members to oppose the austerity cuts not the Conservative party, as such and that the Conservative Society, itself, could send members, if they wished to attend.

Chair noted that action was needed to make the Action Log more effective in terms of which items were included and how actions were effectively monitored. He believed there should be a way of identifying when items were to be actioned.

H Staynor believed the current log represented a long list of things that no one wished to do.

L Sloan showed SOC a version she had drafted and noted that Officers would be assigned actions which would be agreed during meetings. She stressed the importance of each action having a due to be completed date and that the Chair should have the responsibility to monitor the progress of the actions.

R Rawle believed there should also be a Council Action Log and a Campaign Log which could be checked through the mentoring system.

T A Ngo thought that bullet points could be included in each item in

the log to identify progress.

SOC agreed it could be a good idea for the action points to be summarised and assigned at the end of each meeting.

T Killeen believed that the log could be, in addition, a live working document accessed via Google docs that could be updated outside of meetings.

SOC agreed that the Log be returned to a traffic light system.

Action

J Dickinson advised on the disciplinary procedure for repeat offenders that this had been superseded by the review he had been undertaking into the relationship between the management of licensed premises and the constitutional rights of members. SOC agreed this item would be discontinued.

B Foday reported that the Safe Room concept had been integrated into the campaign. Officers noted there had been some confusion as to having a chillax room in Union House and the wider Safe Room provision. B Foday noted she would be discussing Safe Room provision with the University and she would report back to SOC with the results of these discussions.

Action

T Killeen reminded Officers to sign up for the Officers on Tour Doodle.

Action

Chair noted that only 6 Officers had returned feedback forms on residential training. L Sloan noted her concerns about the feedback process.

SOC agreed that fresh feedback forms would be requested from HR and sent out again to Officers.

Action

On the Management Committee decision over restriction of entry to licensed premises she asked that it be formally minuted that the decision had not been minuted and there had been no formal accountable procedures in place. In view of this, she asked that formal terms of reference be made available for SOC, Management and the Trustee Board.

J Dickinson advised that he would be including a clear decision making matrix in his November plan.

SOC agreed to await the above matrix to be included in the Chief Executive's November plan.

Action

L Sloan asked that some notes be made available for the un-minuted meetings.

J Dickinson advised that these would probably be unhelpful as they would be somewhat 'woolly'.

SOC agreed that the idea of having a position of Faith Officer would not be helpful and decided to change this aspiration to investigate

the establishment and grant funding of a Faith Committee over the next month, for completion at the end of October.

Action

SOC noted that R Rawle would bring a motion on Ethical Banking on 24 October.

987 Matters Arising

SOC elected T A Ngo and H Staynor as joint Social Secretaries.

988 NUS Zone Conferences 2013

L Sloan asked for more details of how much money had been spent from the Budget before a decision could be made.

R Rawle noted the money would come from the Training Budget.

L Sloan asked for a full breakdown of available conferences, fees and transport costs.

B Foday noted that the previous year the Non-Portfolio Officers had been allowed to go as they were not going to Liberations Conferences.

J Dickinson advised there were two types of NUS events: constitutional and non-constitutional. He noted he would present a list of core constitutional events with costs to the next meeting of SOC.

Action

SOC agreed to R Rawle's request that the conference costs should come from the Training Budget. R Rawle noted she would make available the financial information given to her by the Finance Manager to the next SOC meeting.

Action

J Raynes and T Killeen expressed an interest in attending the Union Development and Welfare Conferences respectively.

J Dickinson advised all Officers to register with NUS Connect so they could view all the non-core events.

Action

989 Chair Training

H Staynor, T A Ngo, B Foday, R Rawle and J Raynes asked to attend the 22 October event.

Action

990 The agenda item: Open Space Discussion

SOC discussed various approaches to open discussion outside of the formal agenda and which items should form part of the formal part of the meeting. SOC also discussed the possibility of a change of venue and having two separate meetings a week or meeting every fortnight. SOC agreed that the Chair and Deputy Chair would obtain feedback from Officers and bring recommendations as to the format of the meeting back to SOC.

Action

991 Feminism in London 2013 Conference and Reclaim the Night March

SOC discussed the possibility of obtaining the cheapest travel. SOC agreed that the money, should come from the Women's Officer's autonomous campaigns' budget and that this would include taking the President of the Feminist Society.

Action

B Foday believed it important for a convenient, comfortable and relatively fast means of transport to be available Officers.

L Sloan noted that she would bring a proposal on funding requests and transport to the next meeting.

Action

992 Management Committee Minutes

L Sloan asked as to the Group Protection Income Policy that was discussed in the meeting of 24 July.

J Levell noted that this was a hardly ever used sickness payment policy that Management had agreed to discontinue.

L Sloan noted that the minutes only referred to a request for clarification and not that the policy had been stopped.

J Levell noted that the head of HR had come in to the meeting and had provided clarification and then agreement had been reached to discontinue the policy.

J Dickenson advised that as the matter was a change to staff terms and conditions it would be discussed and agreement sought from the recognised trade union at the next JCNC meeting before any implementation.

993 Any Other Business

R Rawle thanked Officers for their amazing work on the PCP despite the problems of giving tokens out in the new shop.

994 R Rawle noted she had posted the days for Activism Training for the coming week on Facebook. She noted she was hoping to get the NUS to do the training for these sessions but, if they were unavailable, she would run them herself with UUEAS staff.

She noted the main training would be at the Forum and she would bring a formal request for People and Planet to run this training and this would cost £1,200 for training the campaign teams. She noted she had posted details on Facebook.

J Levell believed that, given the discussion over a funding request by the Women's Officer, it would be difficult to justify spending such a large amount without a comparison as to price and availability of other training organisations such as NUS and New Internationalist.

T Killeen noted there was some urgency to the matter; if SOC wanted the activists trained.

SOC agreed that R Rawle would, the following day, track price and availability of different training organisations and make these available to SOC.

Action

- 995 Time, Date and Place of Next Meeting**
5 pm, Thursday 10 October, venue to be confirmed.