

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

"To enrich the life of every UEA student"



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

**7 November 2013**

### **Summary**

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### **Key Discussions**

- Budget funding
- Officer cooperation and teamwork
- Attendance of members of Trustee Board Sub-Committees at full Board meetings
- Received report on closure of the Travel Shop and the restructuring of the Megashop

### **Key Actions**

- Agreed to the original funding request for food for the Course Reps Conference, with the money to come out of central administration
- Asked for a separate volunteer and representative training budget to be put in place for the following year
- Agreed funding for subscription to Ethical Consumer
- Agreed to receive comprehensive financial analysis and decision making matrix from the Chief Executive at 21 November meeting
- Agreed that Councillors elected to Trustee Board Sub-Committees would be invited to 21 November meeting

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### Voting Members present:

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

### Chair

Joe Raynes (Non Portfolio Officer),

### Apologies:

Tony Moore (Representation Support Worker)

*The meeting opened with a team building exercise.*

### 1035 Minutes of the meeting held on 31 October 2013

T Killeen noted that Item 1027 should read: '1027: Chair noted that his item would be considered at a future meeting due to the time constraints and level of attendance at this meeting'. With this change, the minutes were agreed.

### 1036 Action Log

**UEA London:** J Levell noted that he and the Academic Officer would be visiting the London Campus later in the month.

**Ethical Investment:** E Silk noted that some minor changes had been made and a section, describing an initiative by the University of Surrey, had been added. SOC agreed that the letter would be sent from 'SOC' rather than with the names of individual Officers as signatories.

### 1037 Matters Arising

J Levell noted that there had been a discussion at the last meeting, which he had been unable to attend, of funding for the forthcoming Course Reps Conference. He asked that SOC re-visit this discussion. He noted that the Conference was a new, exciting initiative and he believed it important to provide food and refreshments for the reps who would be attending.

L Withers Green believed that the lack of food provision might affect attendance and, thereby, would deprive reps of the training.

L Sloan believed she had possibly spoken somewhat too strongly during the discussion and apologised if this had upset any Officers. On reflection, she noted she would now be in favour of the provision of food. L Sloan believed that the problem lay in the fact that there was not a separate budget for this type of funding to come from, as the money, at present, would be taken from the Campaigns Budget and might affect the running of campaigns. She wondered if the food might be provided more cheaply by employing a staff member to prepare it.

L Withers Green asked that, if SOC were to revisit the decision, they should do it at the present meeting so that refreshments could be included in the advertising.

J Dickinson advised in response to the Chair's question that it would be no problem to establish a separate Events and Refreshments Budget. He advised that SOC could request Management Committee to take the funds from central administration where there was some money available from unpaid salaries. He noted he would provide the numbers on this at a future meeting. He further advised that, for future planning it would be wise for SOC to ask for a separate budget to be established for next year for volunteer and representative training that would not impact on campaigns. He noted that this would be in line with comparator students' unions which saw provision of volunteer and representative training as a priority.

*SOC agreed to the original funding request with the money to come out of central administration and to ask for a separate volunteer and representative training budget to be put in place for the following year.*

### **Action**

B Foday reported that the cost of attendance at the 'I will Lead the Way' conference had gone slightly over budget and that she would discuss this matter with Chief Executive.

L Sloan noted that SOC had asked for a briefing on funding and financial reporting.

J Dickinson advised that a full and detailed financial analysis would be presented to the Trustee Board on 16 November and he intended that this analysis, minus parts dealing with staffing matters that would need to remain confidential, would be presented to SOC the following week and that this would cover the whole picture as to funding and UUEAS' finances.

*SOC agreed to discuss the financial analysis at the 21 November meeting.*

**Action**

L Sloan noted that SOC had requested a decision making matrix from the Chief Executive. J Dickinson noted this would, similarly, be presented to the Trustee Board on 16 November.  
*SOC agreed to discuss the decision making matrix at the 21 November meeting.*

**Action**

**1038 Officer Cooperation and Teamwork**

Chair noted that this item would be a chance for Officers to assess where they thought SOC was, as a body, at present, and to examine the structure and culture of its meetings as well as which particular items would be brought to meetings.

SOC agreed to continue their discussions on Facebook and bring the results to a future meeting.

*Please note: due to time constraints, this item's minutes will be compiled later than usual and will be brought for approval to a later meeting.*

**1039 Subscription to Ethical Consumer**

L Sloan noted that Union Council had mandated SOC to hold an Ethical Careers Fair. She noted that she would be aiming to organise this for 20 January and that a working group would be meeting as part of People and Planet every week at 5 pm on Wednesday. She noted that the organisation would be a daunting task and that any help from other Officers would be welcome.

L Sloan noted that the funding request to subscribe to Ethical Consumer would be an essential part of the planning stage and the subscription would be vital in ascertaining which employers to invite to the Fair. She also believed that the subscription would be valuable as a future resource for policy making.

*SOC approved the funding request for the subscription.*

**1040 Terms of Reference of Trustee Board Sub-Committees**

R Rawle noted, on Item 1030, concerning the Terms of Reference of the Trustee Board Sub-Committees, that there was a general feeling amongst Officers that Councillors elected to these should not attend the full Board Meeting.

J Dickinson advised that this was a moot point as the intention would now be that for the next 12 months the work of the Sub-Committees would be subsumed into the functions of the main Board. He suggested that the Councillors elected on to the Sub-Committees should be invited to the 21 November SOC meeting.

*Councillors agreed that the Councillors elected on to the Sub-Committees would be invited to the 21 November SOC meeting.*

**Action**

**1041 Any Other Business**

J Dickinson reported that there had been meetings earlier in the day when he had met the staff at the Travel Shop. He noted that the staff had been informed that the Directors of the Subsidiary Companies

had decided to, after the failure of UUEAS' approach to the University to take over the business of the Travel Shop and after looking again at the figures, close the Travel Shop. He noted that the two members of staff concerned were now at risk of redundancy and there would be ongoing discussions as to avoiding this eventuality.

J Dickinson reported that he had also met with the Megashop staff and had briefed them on an analysis into the staffing structure that had been carried out in the last few weeks. He noted that the analysis had revealed that the structure was significantly top heavy with much overlapping of managerial functions. He noted further that there was a difficulty in having a staff structure that was not flexible in response to changes in demand both through the day and across the academic year.

He noted that management would be in consultation with Unison, the recognised trade union, as to how to change the structure and how to avoid any compulsory redundancies. He noted that this process would overlap with the offer of voluntary redundancy that had been made to all shop staff, earlier in the week.

J Dickinson noted that this was a very sad process for UUEAS to have to go through. He advised that it would be inappropriate for Officers comment on this matter whilst negotiations were ongoing with Unison and individual staff members.

J Dickinson concluded by noting that anecdotal research had shown that a significant number of international students had come to use the Travel Shop for expert travel advice and then had bought their tickets elsewhere. He advised it important to investigate how the advice facility might be maintained after the closure and included in a wider UUEAS' service to international students.

T Killeen asked what would happen to the bus pass facility.

J Dickinson confirmed that this would continue and would remain within UUEAS.

**1042 Time, Date and Place of Next Meeting**

5 pm, Thursday 14 November in the Board Room.