

Name of Motion: Defend Net Neutrality

Full Name of proposer: Computer Science Departmental Councillor Fred Tovey-Ansell

Sheffield Students' Union Council notes:

1. The internet is integral in almost every aspect of our society; Internet access is crucial for our economy to grow and function, for the operation of our emergency services, and for the longevity of many people's livelihood.
2. Net neutrality is the principle that internet service providers and governments are to treat all data on the internet equally, without discriminating or charging differentially by user, data content, mode of transmission, content provider or platform.
3. In December 2017, the FCC voted to repeal net neutrality protections in the United States.
4. Internet pioneers and technology giants are outspokenly against this decision, arguing these repeals are based off a fundamental misunderstanding of the way the internet works. [1]
5. The abolition of net neutrality in the United States may very well set a precedent for other governments to follow.
6. Although net neutrality in the UK is protected under EU law, there is no guarantee that these regulations will be transferred by our government during Brexit, with current UK digital strategy making no mention of net neutrality. [2]

References:

[1] <https://ecfsapi.fcc.gov/file/1071761547058/Dkt.%2017-108%20Joint%20Comments%20of%20Internet%20Engineers%2C%20Pioneers%2C%20and%20Technologists%202017.07.17.pdf>

[2] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-digital-strategy>

Sheffield Students' Union Council believes:

1. The abolition of net neutrality entrusts internet service providers with an unacceptable amount of power and control over our society.
2. The abolition of net neutrality carries considerable risk to the UK's e-commerce market.
3. Through social engineering and censorship, the abolition of net neutrality can be used as a weapon to subvert democracy and free speech.

Sheffield Students' Union Council resolves:

1. To put on record a public statement in support of net neutrality and in condemnation of the FCC's decision to repeal these laws in 2017.
2. To raise awareness and encourage all students to hold our government accountable for the transferral of net neutrality laws from the EU if the UK leaves.
3. Release a declaration of the SU's position on the SU website, as well as in one of the scheduled "SU Highlights" emails.

Name of Motion: Condemning Chris Williamson MP

Full Name of proposer: Russian & Slavonic Studies Councillor Gabe Milne

Sheffield Students' Union Council notes:

1. An event being held by a society on campus with Chris Williamson MP was originally scheduled to be held on Thursday November 8th, but was cancelled.
2. A non-SU affiliated group then went ahead with the event, holding it in a location off campus.
3. Chris Williamson MP has in the past shared platforms with multiple people expelled from the Labour Party who have made antisemitic statements.
4. Hours after the Pittsburgh synagogue massacre, Williamson tweeted an attack piece on the Board of Deputies – a Jewish community representative organisation – hours before eventually retweeting condolences from Jeremy Corbyn.
5. Williamson spoke at an event run by the organisation 'Labour against the Witchhunt', Williamson has called antisemitism concerns in Labour 'proxy wars and bullshit'
6. Sheffield Jewish Society have stated that Williamson's actions have 'encouraged a culture of antisemitism'

Sheffield Students' Union Council believes:

1. Antisemitism, along with those who apologise, enable or encourage a culture of it, are completely unacceptable
2. Sheffield Students' Union has a duty of care to Jewish students on campus, and given recent events must show solidarity with them
3. Chris Williamson MP encouraged a culture of antisemitism

Sheffield Students' Union Council resolves:

1. To condemn Chris Williamson MP for encouraging a culture of antisemitism
2. To privately issue a statement to Jewish students, via the Jewish society, expressing the SU's solidarity and commitment to combating antisemitism
3. To continue to liaise with Jewish Society and Jewish community organisations including the Union of Jewish Students and the Community Security Trust to ensure the safety of Jewish students (and all students who may be subject to discrimination) on campus