Meeting Minutes

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| Student Council | | | | | | | | | | |
| Date: 19.02.25 | | Meeting Time: 5-7pm | Meeting Location: Coleraine (H113A) Magee (MD008A) Belfast (BA02-012) | | | | | | | |
| Chair | Ethan Davies (President) | | | | | | | | | |
| Clerk | Mark Francos (GPC) | | | | | | | | | |
| Attendees  (Student Councillors) | To be noted in due course. | | | | | | | | | |
| Apologies |  | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Rollcall and Quorum | | | | | Presenter: Chair | | | | | |
| Key Points | * The Clerk of Council recorded the attendees who were attending in person to reflect in the attendees box above. | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Apologies | | | | | Presenter: Chair | | | | | |
| Key Points | * The Clerk of Council recorded the attendees that have submitted apologies and are reflected in the apologies box above. | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting | | | | | Presenter: Chair | | | | | |
| Key Points | * Proposed by: Daniel Sanusi * Seconded by: Lauren Clarke * The minutes of the previous meeting were approved. | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Matters Arising | | | | | Presenter: Chair | | | | | |
| Key Points | * No matters are arising. | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. Deputy President’s Communications | | | | | Presenter: Chair / Deputy President | | | | | |
| Key Points | * Received Deputy President’s Report as the President is currently on a leave of absence. * Outlined how the Presidency role would be allocated within the existing officer team. Focusing on the pastoral element alongside the representative element. DP outlined where the focuses were required, primarily around the pastoral support and ensuring the team could function as effectively as possible. A lead on advocacy was led in the North West by VPM/DP and in the Belfast area by the VPE. * Provided an overview over the work that took place in delivery of RAG and SHAG weeks that have taken place in the last few weeks. Outlined that a review process is due to take place in the next couple of weeks to look at improvement practices. With initial thoughts on focusing on delivering less but with greater focus on those events. * Membership Outreach has continued through multiple campaign events, Christmas Cheer and thank you as well as through refreshers. * Provided an update on the ongoing Officer Role Review as we look to how roles change and are delivered over the next few years. * Provided an update on developments for the Magee Campus including the launch of the Magee Taskforce Report and the continuing development of the Magee Dome. | | | | | | | | | |
| Question(s) | | | | | | | Question from | | Question to | |
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| 1. Student Officer Updates | | | | | Presenter(s): Chair / Student Executive | | | | | |
| Key Points | The Chair welcomed the officers to provide an oral report to each of the student councillors in attendance.  VP Belfast   * Provided an update on the delivery of Green week that took place at the end of the last semester. * Provided an update on the further work that the Union is taking part alongside the University Sustainability Team, including work that contributed towards the second most engaged survey of all universities that took part across the UK. * Refreshers was incredibly successful on campus * Highlighted the great work and the gratefulness for the donations made towards the great work of Women’s Aid. * Been engaged on work for Student Safety, including developments in developing the Safety App to work outside the direct university environment. * Been engaged on work on accessibility on campus, including door access that has been passed to the estates team in Belfast. * Been collaborating on World Mental Health Day with Student Wellbeing to deliver joint projects during that time. * Lots of work has been involved in the development of the Student Pantry on campus and delighted that it will be launching in early March. * Thanks to the Estates Team that the Baby Changing Facilities on Belfast have been improved and are now functional on site in the BC Building near the Mailroom. * Outlined future upcoming events including the repair cafes, all contributing towards a welcoming and inclusive environment.   VP Equality and Belonging   * Attended the winter graduations, supporting and celebrating graduating students. * Supported the launch of the NeuroNetwork on campuses * Provided an update on the development of the International Student Conference due to take place on campus later this semester. * Currently analysing responses around discrimination and harassment that we have got back from our recent survey. Working with SV to look at next steps for awareness. * Been engaging with the Dean of EDI to support high level development of policy objectives including on Bidet’s, gender neutral toilets and others. * Been working with colleagues in SV and the university to develop training for School Reps to support diversity awareness on campus. * Met with the Mayor of Derry and Strabane around supporting the work of the Mayor’s chosen charity and linking the student population to their work. * Been engaged in work with USI reviewing policy and constitutional processes including the proposal to transfer to being primarily operated in Irish, including a change in name to AMLE. * Highlighted events that have been on campus including collaborations and events that have took place around cultural holidays such as Chinese New Year and Diwali.   VP Coleraine   * Provided an update on SWANN developments that has been worked in conjunction with the VPEB. * Provided an update on delivery of campus based campaigns including Brew Mondays. * Outlined the work has been ongoing to support male health including the work with Oddballs on Movember. * UBelong Bursary has been launched, this allows students to apply for a dedicated pool of funding to allow students to deliver their own mental health campaign on campus. * Provided an update on the Student Housing Campaign including social media initiatives to follow soon. Main delivery has been around renters rights booklets that are available across campus, this includes what you should do when viewing a property, provides support to dealing with landlords and other useful information. * Provided an update on the delivery of Refreshers on the Coleraine campus including the work promoting SWANN and the Women’s Empowerment Network. * Provided an update on the wins and the development of social media and the connection with our membership along with the local work developing and supporting the establishment of a local committee for SWANN on Campus. * Highlighted the work ongoing on the Renters Rights Bill currently under passage in the House of Lords. * Pantry is due to be launched on the 10th March.   VP Sport and Wellbeing   * Provided an update on the challenges on engaging with Sports Provision within the University, with an update on the fact that meetings are now up and running with appropriate staff across the campus. * Focused on providing an update on the delivery on supporting Clubs across campuses. * Provided a brief update on what is currently happening in relation to the keep Wednesday afternoon Free Policy that is a union mandate. * Provided an update on the work that has been taking place around supporting male mental health including the removal of the famous moustache, that aimed to raise money and awareness most importantly! * Sports Club Forums took place during Refreshers across each campuses, sports committee members were provided an update on what to expect during this semester. * Provided a brief explainer on the current financial difficulties facing clubs across campuses, with an emphasis on the requirement for fundraising to support engagement in the latter stages of tournaments and competitions. * Provided an update on the main fundraisers that have raised at the last count, £1800 in Coleraine for GAA clubs, Magee fundraising that raised £3000 for all four GAA clubs. Magee Dance Club – Raised £2100, all of which allows for further competition and travel costs to be covered. * Lighthouse Project has been a major focus to support wellbeing on the Magee Campus working with Foyle Search and Rescue to launch as of last week on campus. Keep an eye out in bathrooms for the stickers to find out more. Currently engaging with ResLife to ensure they can be put into DSV. Currently exploring options to look at delivery for other campuses. * Provided an update on the Sports Survey that has been developed alongside Student Voice, to provide an update and gather feedback on the recent move of sports club from UUSU control to the University. Been developing additional video content and recordings from clubs to support advocacy work with university partners.   VP Education   * Provided an update on Educational Policy developments as well as the requirement to have a policy day post elections between the whole officer team and SV. * Provided an update on the Student Voice Forums and the campaigns that have developed from those, including Thriving Not Surviving and the drives that have been provided from direct on the ground conversations. * Engaged with the Student Panel. * Been engaged with external accommodation providers providing support and advocacy advice for students. * Led on ensuring that transparency for students is at the heart of work on SeATS. * Been taking an active role in the Officer Role Review and work that has been taking place around the Article and Bye Law review process. * Been working and got guarantees that exams are to be removed in courses that have no direct legislative or accreditation requirements from later in 2025. * Provided an update on work that is ongoing to support students in the Coleraine area, including the work to support challenging violence against women and girls. * Been engaging with the team in the university around the risk of withdrawal process to ensure the process is clearer and student friendly. * In Module Assignment Recovery – Provided an update on developments that when a student is close to a grade boundary they will be given the opportunity to resubmit while not directly having cost or implications on transcripts. * Engaging with the Policy Team within UU on developments around KWAF. * Announced that a review into ticketing process within UUSU is taking place. * Working alongside the rest of the team and UUSU on multiple projects. * Announced that we are three weeks out from the launch of the Student Charter and response against violence against women and girls that will have political representation and signatures from all NI institutions. * Provided an update on the work that took place to support the expansion of Student Loan limits in NI. * Provided an update on developments within EC1 process and the replacement that is due to come into place soon. | | | | | | | | | |
| Question(s) | | | | | | | Question from | | Question to | |
| VPB asked the VPSW have we achieved our target on the number of responses we require on the sports survey.   1. Currently not focused on an end number but currently focusing on ensuring we have at least one response from every club committee. | | | | | | |  | |  | |
| 1. Leadership Elections 2025 / NUS-USI Referendum Update | | | | | Presenter: Chair / GPC | | | | | |
| Key Points | | * The GPC provided a brief update on the current situation relating to the NUS-USI Referendum and the Leadership Election, including the upcoming Campaign Period, the role of endorsements, and supporting campaigners and candidates. | | | | | | | | |
| Question(s) | | | | | | | | Question from | | Question to | |
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| 1. UUSU Reform (Article Review Group) | | | | | Presenter: Chair / IHOM | | | | | |
| Key Points | | IHoM provided an update on the Article Review Process and the Governance review process that determines how we are accountable to our membership and fit for purpose for the next 5 years.  Including the core changes to the articles to ensure they are more layman friendly as well as the current focus around Bye Law 1 focusing on our democratic procedures, ensuring our Student Executive is fit for purpose, alongside the individual roles and how they link into staff connections, campus balance, workload and the expectations of students on the ground. | | | | | | | | |
| Question(s) | | | | | | | | Question from | | Question to | |
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| 1. Senate Update | | | | | Presenter: Senate Representatives | | | | | |
| Key Points | | * CD provided a brief update on Life and Health Sciences and a general overview of what was discussed on behalf of Senate members in attendance. | | | | | | | | |
| Question(s) | | | | | | | | Question from | | Question to | |
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| 1. Cross Campus Concerns | | | | | Presenter: Chair / VPC / VPE | | | | | |
| Key Points | | VPC provided an update that no advance notice was provided for the closure of the Sexual Health Clinic on campus. No details were provided on why the closure took place, just that it is moving to the Causeway Hospital. Provided an update that the VPSW and VPC are currently working on bringing back the service and ensuring that we lobby to ensure that our students are supported to ensure that preventative measures are put in place to support student’s health concerns.  VPE provided some additional information around travel challenges and accessibility challenges that this has caused including a campus imbalance that will be focused on with our university partners, currently a taxi from campus to attend the clinic in the hospital would cost £10 one way, a £20 total cost to attend. We will be focusing on ensuring communication issues like this don’t happen again and that students are supported on campus.  Chair of Council provided an update that several music students and musicians have informed us that Music Space 4 has closed without warning, to be replaced for a different course area, despite being in constant high demand!  VPE advised this to go through the Representation system and to include the VP Magee, the VPE highlighted that the university are transparent but have work to do to ensure that messaging isn’t lost among other content! Promises an update within the Council Update next Friday and via email. | | | | | | | | |
| Question(s) | | | | | | | | Question from | | Question to | |
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| 1. Tabled Questions | | | | | Presenter: Chair / GPC | | | | | |
| Key Points | | We have received no tabled questions for this meeting. Student Councillors were reminded of their ability to submit written questions upto 24 hours in advance of meetings, with the ability for the Student Executive to provide a more comprehensive response. | | | | | | | | |
| Question(s) | | | | | | | | Question from | | Question to | |
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| 1. Any Other Business | | | | | Presenter: Chair / GPC | | | | | |
| Key Points | | The Chair outlined that there was no business brought forward under this agenda item. | | | | | | | | |
| Question(s) | | | | | | | | Question from | | Question to | |
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| 1. Date of Next Meeting | | | | | Presenter: Chair | | | | | |
| Key Points | | * The next meeting is currently scheduled for Wednesday 19th March at 5pm in the immersive suites on each campus. | | | | | | | | |