



Student Council Meeting 3

Minutes of the meeting held on 12th February 2019 via videoconference.

Rollcall and quorum

Present:

Thomas O'Neill, Oisin Kinsella, Amy Magowan, Sean Martin, Niamh Curran, James Graham, Joseph Armstrong, Rachel Robins Vauls, Andrew Wilson, Errol Magill, Ciara Beattie, Adam McBurney, Emma Bonner, Cori Hamil, Shannon McCullagh, Ben Sharkey, Holly Neil, Beth McPhilomney, Jade Nelson, Georgia Gilmore, Emma McPeake, Owen McCloskey, Clement Gama, James McCarthy, Philip Armstrong, Jacqueline Hanlon, Mark Francos (Chair), Matthew Harrison, Josh McAvoy, Tanith MacLynn-Hill, Matthew Dodge, Saorise Duggan, Jack Quinn, John McGlinchley, Bod, Collette Cassidy, Kevin McStravock, Andy McAnallen

In Attendance:

Avril Honan, Membership Director (Secretariat)

Apologies

Received via email

Additional item: Student Support to present the Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Consultation.

- Ann provided an overview of the mission statement and asked students to feed back on the language.
- Noted that there are seven strategic goals to ensure students feel secure and engaged on campus.
- Noted the partnerships within the University and UUSU and the levels of engagement with Uni spaces and services.
- Ensuring there is an inclusive curriculum and students feel they are included within this.

- A key goal is to support staff to speak to students about mental health and ensure they can feel comfortable to support students when appropriate and they are educated enough to sign post students in need.
- The Student Support staff highlighted the increase in need from students this year, and the restructure and refocussing of staff within the teams on each campus. Clearly stated the message to Councillors to ensure students are aware of the support available for them and to ensure help is sought before a point of crisis.

ACTION:

There are four questions to be completed by members following discussion – these have been emailed and also posted on the Facebook group.

1. Minutes

Approve: Minutes of meeting held 20.11.18 – SC2-12.2.19

Ciara Beattie, Adam McBurney to be added to the minutes.

Approved

2. Matters Arising

None arising.

3. President's communications

Receive: President's report

Pass to Kevin

- Belfast – furniture has been purchased for the Level 5 space, and this will be launched later in semester 2;
- J'town – there will be a significant upgrade
- Magee – upgrade completed for S2
- Coleraine – moved offices to a more central space and the E019 space will be improved

External lobbying:

- Brexit plans to lobby were delayed because of changes in govt, however KM has been working on Brexit information with the University
- KM noted the media he completed with the BBC World Service on the impact of Brexit on students in NI
- Sexual consent survey with NUS USI has closed, UU students contributed over 1000 submissions
- Working with QUBSU to discuss joint campaigning in Belfast on Council elections

Diversity of members:

- Diversity brunches took place on each campus, and follow up meetings will take place over the following weeks.
- Liberation conferences: these are happening within NUS USI and Councillors were encouraged to contact Kevin if they would be interested in attending.
- There are further plans with the University to promote involvement with the three Pride Marches in NI next year.

Others:

- Funding for a mental health project is being sought
- Campaign for
- Election nominations have now closed and President will be preparing for this.

A Councillor if there was any further progress on privatisation of the commercial services.

KM noted that the tender is currently going out at the end of this month and the discussions will recommence with students around April to ensure their voice is included.

A Councillor asked if Belfast Greater Development completion had a date:

KM stated that they will know more in Spring, but at the moment they are still sticking to the 2020 date.

4. Subcommittee reports

Receive: Subcommittee reports – to follow – verbal if required

- a) Student Executive; - President – nothing to report
- b) Societies Committee; - pass to the Chair Ben Sharkey to note any new affiliations or unusual budgetary requests/approvals
 - No irregularities with finance applications and all were approved;
 - New societies approved Ulster Young Unionists, Wood Working, SDLP Youth, Community Radio Society, Magee LGBT was renamed to LGBT+
- c) Sports Union Management Committee; nothing to note
- d) Democratic Services Committee; - will be noted under Returning Officer update
- e) Green Impact Committee; nothing to update
- f) Governance subcommittee - hasn't met since last Council

5. Student Officer elections

The Membership Director gave a brief update on candidates and timelines for upcoming elections.

Noted that the NUS-USI nominations are still open – encouraged councillors to nominate themselves and to contact Emmet to express interest.

6. Lapsed Policies

Policy: Anti-Semitism

Clearly Passed.

Policy: Commemorating the victims and survivors

Revised by Thomas O'Neil – add to resolves: 'in conjunction with the University

P: James

S: Philip

Clearly Passed.

Policy: Condolences upon the death of Martin McGuinness

Lapsed

Policy: Cups in SU Catering

Lapsed

Policy: Decriminalisation of Abortion

P: Jaclyn

S: Ben

Clearly passed

Policy: Divestment

Lapsed

Policy: Emergency Phones

Lapsed

Policy: Good Relations

Passed already

Policy: Higher Education and Research Bill

Deferred until next Council

Policy: Homelessness

P: James

S: Andrew

Clearly passed.

Policy: LGBT+ Lobbying

P: Josh

S: Ben

Clearly passed

Policy: Name Badge

Lapsed

Policy: Payment of Post-Graduate Tuition Fees

Lapsed

Policy: PhD Extension Fees

Lapsed

Policy: Re-enrolment Fees

P: Student Exec

S: John McGlinchey

Clearly Passed

Policy: Silent Computer Areas

Lapsed

Policy: Society Development

P: Tom

S: James

Clearly passed

Policy: Society Funding

P: Josh

S: Emma

Change the amount for societies from £16,000 to continue to increase the budget

Amendment and motion clearly passed

Policy: Society Membership Fee Discount

P: Philip

Josh

Clearly passed

Policy: Society Transparency

P; Philip

J: James

Clearly passed

Policy: Staff and Student Alliance

To be tabled at next Council

Policy: Student Officer Role Descriptions

Lapsed

Policy: Support for Breastfeeding Students

P: Jaclyn

S: Jade

Clearly passed

Policy: Vegan Cheese

Lapsed

7. Conference delegates and motions – deferred

8. Motions

Discuss: Hydration Station – SC3-12.2.19

P: Student Executive

OM - presented the paper to provide more signage for water fountains, and to rebrand these to encourage usage by students of reusable bottles.

No speeches against, moved to a vote.

Clearly passed.

Ecosia – **SC4-12.2.19**

AM spoke in favour of this motion, which is a search engine which benefits conservation projects.

Point of clarification sought that although this search engine would be the default site for UU, if adopted, that students could still chose to use other sites. This was confirmed by the proposer.

Motion clearly passed.

Plastic free – **SC5-12.2.19**

Amendment accepted:

The student union recognises that plastic use straws are a necessary item for many disabled people. Until an alternative that is acceptable to disabled people is found then plastic straw remain available as an option.

AM presented this motion on behalf of the Student Executive – noted that this would mandate the Union to audit the single use of plastics and look to reduce these.

Clearly passed.

Cruelty Free - **SC6-12.2.19**

Ben noted the aim of this policy was to rid the University and SU of cleaning products that have been tested on animals. He further noted that these products do not cost more, and asked that cleaning products are audited and any tested on animals phased out by 2020.

Amendment accepted for resolves section:

From: 'replaced by 2020' to 'Look to have changes made by 2020' .

Clearly passed.

UUSU against UCU Strike Action – **SC7-12.2.19**

AM took the chair to allow Mark to speak.

Amendment: change resolves to:

UUSU offer full solidarity with our friends in UCU and we fully support them in action short of strike action.

MF: spoke in favour of this motion.

Ballot ongoing on strike action which closes on 22 Feb, MF noted that the strike in 2018 impacted massively on their semester. Noted he sympathised with the position they have taken, however strike action impacts on students and that is who UUSU represents as our members.

KM: Speaking against

- Highlighted the strong linkages between trade and students unions and staff and student solidarity
- Noted that strike action will happen whether UUSU vote for or against this motion, this motion is about which side the students stand upon
- Notes that SU will continue to campaign for reduction of harm to students and their interests.

JM:

- Will stand in solidarity and will support demands, however the adverse effect on students outweighs this

MF clarified that this policy is on this specific ballot.

Against motion:

Andrew (J): Felt that strike action is a strong tool that should happen and feel that not supporting this would damage students' relationships with staff, and the SU should stand on the side of the staff who want to see more funding for higher education from the government and the University.

For motion – Josh

Seen first-hand the effect on students, and frustrations of two weeks without teaching. Feels students should be represented in this debate.

Against: Beth

Strike action needs to be taken case by case – however students need to work with the University staff, and want to continue partnership and support each other to ensure everyone works together.

MF: amendment – to apply only during 2nd semester of 2018-19 and can be amended by SC at any time

Point of info: KM – strike action will be during the exam period

CK: question – impact on students? Did the University take into account and compensate students impacted by the last strike? KM noted that considerations were implemented.

Andrew (J): this policy is blaming the wrong people, the blame should be on University and government for underfunding HE

Motion withdrawn by the proposer.

The Vegan Policy – SC8-12.2.19

The proposer argued that this policy aims to improve education on the impact of the livestock industry on global emissions.

Against:

Matthew Dodge:

Questioned the source cited within the facts of the policy – feels that the policy is sound, however the referencing may need updated and fact checked. Noted that the UN emissions cites 14.9% as opposed to the 51% in the a policy.

Ben agreed to remove the contested statistics, and amend in partnership with Matthew Dodge.

Amendment: on adding a note impact of deforestation for non-animal food production proposed by John McGlinchey.

Amendment fell.

Motion clearly passed.

9. Student Officer reports

Student Council agreed for Officers to produce written reports and circulated.

10. Trustee Board report

Has not met since the last meeting.

11. Tabled questions

12. Any other business

A Coleraine councillor appealed for colleagues to respond to the request to purchase UUSU Council hoodies.

13. Date of next meeting – 19th March 2019