

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST STUDENTS' UNION

MINUTES

Statutory Meeting of the Students' Union Council
held on 7 February 2013 in The Space, Level 1, Students' Union

Present:

Aaron Cooney (Open)
Aaron McGuinness (School Rep, Nursing and Midwifery)
Aidan Bannon (Medicine, Health and Life Sciences, MHLS)
Aidan Hughes (Executive Management Committee)
Aisling Gallagher (Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, AHSS)
Alexander Arrell (AHSS)
Andrew Carruthers (AHSS)
Anthony McKee (Open First Year)
Aoibhin McNeill (Engineering and Physical Sciences, EPS)
Aoife Boyle (Postgraduate, PG)
Bobby Kane (Open)
Brent Diffin (School Rep, Management)
Brian Mahon (PG)
Caoimhe McNeill (AHSS)
Catherine Madden (School Rep, Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work)
Cathy Corbett (EPS)
Chloe Minish (PG)
Christopher Smyth (EPS)
Ciaran McKinley (PG)
Clare Rea (MHLS)
Connor Daly (EMC)
Cormac Kerr (AHSS)
Daniel Hogan (EPS)
Daniel Lowe (Open First Year)
Derek Crosby (PG)
Eoin Deeney (PG)
Eoin McGarrity (AHSS)
Eoin McMullan (Open)
Fergal McFerran (Open First Year)
Fiachra O'Maolcraoibhe (Open)
Gareth Calvert (Open First Year)
Gary Spedding (MHLS)
James Surgenor (School Rep, Creative Arts)
Jamie Pow (AHSS)
Jason O'Neill (EMC)
Jason Sime (AHSS)
Jennifer Lau (AHSS)
Jessica Kirk (EMC)
Joanne O'Neill (EMC)
John Graham (AHSS)
Jonathan Buckley (AHSS)
Kerrie McConnell (MHLS)
Kevin Cassidy (MHLS)
Kirsten McConnell (AHSS)
Laura Graham (MHLS)
Lauren Brown (Open)
Leo Hacking (MHLS)
Martin Lilly (Open)
Matthew Lowe (EPS)
Matthew O'Connor (AHSS)
Meghan Rafferty (Open)
Meghann Ward (School Rep, Psychology)
Neale Watson (School Rep, Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering)
Niall Bole (EPS)
Niall McShane (EMC)
Nualla McAdams (EMC)
Orry Robinson (EPS)
Paul Walsh (EPS)
Peter Agnew (EPS)
Peter Canavan (AHSS)
Rebecca Hall (School Rep, History and Anthropology)
Rebecca Murray (School Rep, English)
Ruairdhri McIlroy (AHSS)
Shannon O'Neill (School Rep, Pharmacy)

Sky Aughey (Open First Year)
Tara Pouryahya (MHLS)
Tara White (EPS)
Thomas Thompson (MHLS)
Tiernan McAteer (AHSS)
Tony Houston (AHSS)
Tyler McNally (AHSS)

In Attendance:

Dominic Doherty (Clerk of Council)
Damien Corridan (Deputy Clerk of Council)
Thom Hinds (Further Education and Union Development Officer, NUS-USI)

748. APOLOGIES.

Apologies were received from the following Councillors:

Christopher Gault (MHLS)
Denise McKeegan (MHLS)
Frank Taggart (School Rep, Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science)
Gerard McGuigan (AHSS)
Khor Ching Vei [Luke] (EPS)
Nicole McShane (School Rep, Geography, Archaeology and Palaeoecology)
Paul Fletcher (MHLS)
Victoria Boyd (School Rep, Education)

749. MINUTES OF THE STATUTORY MEETING OF 12 DECEMBER 2012

It was agreed that the minutes of the Statutory Meeting of Wednesday 12 December (SUC/M/12/8) were a true and accurate record of proceedings.

750. BUSINESS ARISING

There was none.

751. COMMUNICATIONS

751.1 Council noted that a Students' Union staff member was present to provide live Twitter updates of the proceedings of Council.

751.2 Council noted that Councillor Fiachra O'Maolcraoibhe had failed to attend the 31 January 2013 meeting of the Education and Welfare Committee without sending apologies and therefore was deemed to have resigned his seat on the Committee.

Fiachra O'Maolcraoibhe appealed this decision stating that he had been unaware that the meeting in question had been scheduled.

Council upheld the appeal.

752. BYE-ELECTIONS

There were none.

753. ELECTIONS

753.1 The Deputy Director informed Council that nominations for elections to the Executive Management Committee for 2013 open on Monday 11 February 2013 and close on Monday 25 February 2013, with the polling scheduled to take place from Tuesday 5 February to Thursday 7 February 2013.

754. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS / RULES AMENDMENTS

754.1 Proposed Recognition of New Clubs and Societies

Council was requested to amend Rule 8, Paragraph 820 in order to recognise the following proposed Clubs and Societies:

Queen's University Belfast Trading Club

Proposer: Anthony Dornan (40001830)
Secunder: Jason Elkin (29027161)

It was noted that the Society had provided all of the stipulated documentation, which was available for inspection upon request.

Recognition of the Queen's University Belfast Trading Club was approved following appropriate discussion and some minor clarifications by a representative of this group.

754.2 Proposed Amendment of Rule 2, Section 8.6

Amend: Rule 2, Section 8.6 by deleting the current wording of:

"There shall be a School Representative constituency whose membership shall be a School Representative from each School, elected by the Students of each School, as defined by University Regulations. All Students as defined in the Constitution shall be entitled to offer themselves as candidates and exercise the right to vote for the position of School Representative. There shall be a maximum of 20 seats in this constituency."

and replacing the above wording with the following:

"There shall be a School Representative constituency whose membership shall be a School Representative from each School and both the Institute of Theology and the Institute of Professional Legal Studies, elected by the Students of each School, as defined by University Regulations. All Students as defined in the Constitution shall be entitled to offer themselves as candidates and exercise the right to vote for the position of School Representative. There shall be a maximum of 22 seats in this constituency."

In addition:

Amend: Rule 2, Section 8.2 by deleting:

"The total membership of the Council shall be one hundred (100)."

and replacing the above wording with the following:

"The total membership of the Council shall be 102."

Proposer: Nuala McAdams (Vice President Education)
Secunder: Fergal McFerran (40043035)

Nuala McAdams, moving the amendment, stated that the purpose of this amendment was to ensure that students of the Institute of Theology and the Institute of Professional Legal Studies have equal representation at a School level.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Ms McAdams waived her right to summarise.

A display of voting cards indicated that 67 Councillors were in favour; this proposed amendment to the Constitutional Rules was therefore accepted.

754.3 Proposed Amendment of Rule 2, Section 9

Delete: Rule 8, Section 9 and replace this with the following:

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST

STUDENTS' UNION CONSTITUTIONAL RULES

Rule 8

SOCIETIES

9 CONDUCT

- 9.1 The Students' Union Executive Management Committee shall have the power to impose such penalty or penalties as it deems necessary upon any Recognised Club or Society which in its determination has acted in a manner contrary to the terms and spirit of the Constitution, subject to a right of appeal to the Students' Union Council. Any such imposed penalty shall be reported to the next meeting of the Students' Union Management Board.
- 9.2 Misconduct under these regulations is deemed to be improper interference, in the broadest sense, with the proper functioning or activities of the University and the Students' Union, or those who study or work in the University and the Students' Union; or behaviour which brings, or may bring, the University or the Students' Union into disrepute. This applies whether or not the misconduct takes place on University property.
- 9.3 These regulations apply to misconduct occurring in any place to which a Club or Society is permitted access by virtue of its Club or Society status that may result in the name of the University or the Students' Union being brought into disrepute (for example, visits to competitions and intervarsity events).
- 9.4 Any formal Complaints concerning the activity of a Club or Society, or concerning the activity of a committee member, or other authorised officer of a Club or Society acting on behalf of that Club or Society, shall be made to the Director of the Students' Union.
- 9.5 Complaints will be investigated by an Investigating Officer, appointed by the Director of the Students' Union, who will prepare a report for

consideration by the Executive Management Committee prior to any decision being taken. The Executive Management Committee reserves the right to refer complaints against individual students to the University if, in the view of the Committee, the actions of such students may constitute a breach of the University's disciplinary regulations.

- 9.6 The Students' Union will take all reasonable steps to limit the disclosure of information as is consistent with conducting an investigation and the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998, the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and any other relevant legislation. All staff and elected student officers who become involved in the Disciplinary Proceedings are required to respect the integrity of the process and the confidentiality of information arising from it.
- 9.7 The regulations are intended to ensure a timely and efficient resolution of issues. Reasonable time will be allowed for the preparation of representations and the investigation of the circumstances of any allegation. The aim is to prevent unnecessary delay whilst ensuring a full and fair assessment of any individual case.
- 9.8 If, upon receipt of a complaint, it is apparent that a potential criminal offence(s) may have been committed, the Director of the Students' Union shall refer the matter to the appropriate authorities. Where the alleged misconduct would constitute an offence under the criminal law, action under these regulations may continue and, if so, an internal investigation into the allegations will be carried out, normally within five working days of the matter being referred to the University.
- 9.9 The Director of the Students' Union shall normally, within five working days of receipt of the Complaint, initiate an investigation into the matter. This shall include the examination of all written evidence from the person(s) bringing the Complaint, evidence from the Club or Society involved, and other relevant evidence.
- 9.10 The Director of the Students' Union shall notify the Club or Society in writing via email of:
- (i) The details of the allegation(s) against the Club or Society, giving sufficient detail to enable the Club or Society to properly understand the case being made.
 - (ii) Any suspension or other precautionary penalties that are to be imposed during the period of the investigation.

The imposition of any such suspension and / or any other precautionary penalty shall be reported by the Director of the Students' Union to the Executive Management Committee for approval at the earliest opportunity.

- 9.11 The Investigating Officer shall make a written report to the Director of the Students' Union outlining the results of the investigation. The Director of the Students' Union shall then make a written report on the matter to the Executive Management Committee at the earliest opportunity.

- 9.12 The office bearers of any Recognised Club or Society that is the subject of a Complaint have the right to be in attendance at the meeting of the Executive Management Committee at which the Complaint is to be considered. No legal representation will be permitted. Club or Society Representatives may be asked to leave the meeting in order to enable deliberation to take place regarding any penalty or penalties to be imposed.
- 9.13 The level of disciplinary action which will be pursued in each case will be determined by the particular circumstances.
- 9.14 Having considered the allegation of misconduct by a Club or Society, the Students' Union Executive Management Committee may dispose of the case using one or any combination of the following:
- (i) Dismissal of the case.
 - (ii) Conditional discharge – that no further action be taken provided the Club or Society fulfils any conditions that are laid down by the Committee.
 - (iii) A written warning.
 - (iv) Payment for any loss or damage that resulted directly or indirectly from the Club or Society's misconduct.
 - (v) Referral of the matter to the University.
 - (vi) Exclusion of the Club or Society from the facilities of the Students' Union or the University.
 - (vii) Any other penalty, as determined by the Executive Management Committee.

If further breaches of discipline occur in the future, any present offence may be taken into consideration in making a decision on any penalty to be imposed against a Club or Society in relation to such future offences.

As outlined in 9.5 above, the Executive Management Committee reserves the right to refer complaints against individual students to the University if, in the view of the Committee, the actions of such students may constitute a breach of the University's disciplinary regulations.

- 9.15 The Director of the Students' Union shall notify the Club or Society in writing via email, normally within two working days, of any decision that is taken in relation to a Complaint.
- 9.16 The following are the grounds of appeal that will be considered by the Students' Union Council:
- (i) New evidence has become available that could not have been provided to the Executive Management Committee prior to the original decision being taken and any resultant penalties implemented.
 - (ii) There has been a procedural irregularity.
 - (iii) The decision of the Students' Union Executive Management Committee was too severe or inappropriate.

Upon receipt of any appeal, the Students' Union Council has the power to confirm, reduce, quash or increase the original penalty.

- 9.17 Clubs and Societies are required to adhere, at all times, to the University's Financial Protocols otherwise these regulations may be invoked.
- 9.18 Any ruling by the Vice President Clubs and Societies regarding the Constitution of a Proposed, Conditional or Recognised Society shall be final, subject to the right of appeal to the Council. The Clubs, Societies and Student Development Committee of the Council shall be informed of any such ruling at the next meeting of the Committee.
- 9.19 In accordance with 9.14 above, the Executive Management Committee may suspend a Proposed, Conditional or Recognised Society that has failed to fulfil any of the obligations contained in its Development Plan or stipulated as part of its recognition, subject to ratification by the Council at the next available meeting. The Clubs, Societies and Student Development Committee of the Council shall be informed of any such ruling at the next meeting of the Committee.
- 9.20 In accordance with 9.14 above, the Executive Management Committee shall have the power to impose such penalty or penalties as it deems necessary upon any Proposed, Conditional or Recognised Society which has acted in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the student body, subject to the right of appeal to the Council. The Clubs, Societies and Student Development Committee of the Council shall be informed of any such ruling at the next meeting of the Committee.
- 9.21 Proposed, Conditional or Recognised Societies shall not make any public statement (which shall include any statement on the worldwide web) on behalf of the Society, unless such a statement complies with the terms and spirit of the Students' Union Constitution.
- 9.22 Neither the Union President nor the Students' Union shall be responsible for the actions or opinions of any Club or Society.
- 9.23 The Management Board shall be responsible for the implementation of these regulations.

Proposer: Niall McShane (Vice President Clubs and Societies)
Seconder: Niall Bole (Chair – Clubs, Societies and Student Development Committee)

Niall McShane, moving the amendment, stated that the purpose of the this amendment is to formalise the disciplinary procedures for Clubs and Societies, to provide more transparency to the process, nothing that the proposed amendment had been considered by the Clubs, Societies and Student Development Committee, the Executive Management Committee and the University.

Niall Bole, supporting the amendment, stated that the proposed amendment had received detailed examination by the Clubs, Societies and Student Development Committee and was unanimously supported by the Committee.

A proposal to proceed to the vote was accepted and Mr McShane waived his right to summarise.

A display of voting cards indicated that 63 Councillors were in favour; this proposed amendment to the Constitutional Rules was therefore accepted.

755. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Report of the Union President (**SUC/P/13/1**)

Report of the Vice President Welfare (**SUC/P/13/2**)

Report of the Vice President Education (**SUC/P/13/3**)

Report of the Vice President Equality and Diversity (**SUC/P/13/4**)

Report of the Vice President Campaigns and Communications (**SUC/P/13/5**)

Report of the Vice President Community (**SUC/P/13/6**)

Report of the Vice President Clubs and Societies (**SUC/P/13/7**)

755.1 Report of the Union President (**SUC/P/13/1**)

The Union President highlighted the following matters:

- Recently achieved University approval for Student Experience Bursary funds to be permitted for use to pay for subject-related magazines and journals in the SU Shop.
- Recent additions to the Students' Union's staff team arising from funding received under the new Strategic Plan
- On-going work on a review of Union entertainments, to provide a more student-focused offering and drive increased revenue.
- That all undergraduate students have been migrated to the University's new email system.
- Increases from 100MB to 300MB in email mailbox sizes for Clubs and Societies, with plans to increase this to 1GB in the future.
- The recent successful hosting of an Aldwych Group event by Queen's Students' Union. The Union President expressed his gratitude to the Vice President Education for her efforts in organising this successful event.

Paper SUC/P/13/1 approved.

755.2 Report of the Vice President Welfare (**SUC/P/13/2**)

The Vice President's report was taken as read.

Paper SUC/P/13/2 approved.

755.3 Report of the Vice President Education (**SUC/P/13/3**)

The Vice President highlighted the following matters:

- There has been a response rate of 26% to date in the NSS. All Councillors were asked to encourage any of their final-year colleagues complete the survey.
- Councillors are invited to a meeting to discuss experiences of personal tutors.
- There is an Enrolment and Registration Focus Group scheduled to take place on 8 March 2013, to inform future plans for enrolment and registration.

- The previously discussed Aldwych Group event involved informative debate and discussion on a number of higher education issues, including: innovative education, employability and course representation.

Paper SUC/P/13/3 approved.

755.4 Report of the Vice President Equality and Diversity (SUC/P/13/4)

The Vice President's report was taken as read.

Gary Spedding stated that he commended the Vice President's organisation of a marking Holocaust Memorial Day.

In response to a query from Matthew O'Connor regarding the number of complaints received concerning the display of the 'rainbow' flag from the front the Union Building, the Vice President Equality and Diversity stated that the flag was there to stay during February of every year.

Paper SUC/P/13/4 approved.

755.5 Report of the Vice President Campaigns and Communications (SUC/P/13/5)

The Vice President highlighted the following matter:

- On-going work in relation to securing additional ATMs in the MBC and the McClay Library.

In response to a query from Bobby Kane regarding the security of ATM machines, the Vice President Equality and Diversity stated he would ensure that any security concerns were taken on board.

In response to a question from Matthew O'Conner regarding the NUS Digital Platform, the Vice President stated that it was an online, cloud-based, web solution available to NUS members and that it incorporated many features that are of benefit to Students' Unions.

Paper SUC/P/13/5 approved.

755.6 Report of the Vice President Clubs and Societies (SUC/P/13/6)

The Union Speaker notified Council that the report of the Vice President Clubs and Societies had not been submitted to the Clerk of Council within the timeframe set down in the Standing Orders and was thus considered to be rejected by Council, subject to right of appeal to Council.

The Vice President Clubs and Societies requested that Council consider his report, apologising for the delay and stating that a wide variety of work commitments had prevented him from submitting his report within the necessary timeframe.

A display of voting cards indicated that Council assented to consider the report of the Vice President Clubs and Societies.

The Vice President highlighted the following matters:

- The increased attendance at the Re-Freshers' Fair.

- On-going efforts to develop a mechanism to practically realise the use of Student Experience Bursary monies to pay for Club and Society membership fees.
- Increase marketing of Clubs and Societies activity.

Paper SUC/P/13/6 approved.

755.7 Report of the Vice President Community (SUC/P/13/7)

The Vice President highlighted the following matters:

- All students are encouraged to get involved in RAG Week, on the week beginning 11 February 2013, including the launch of PTQ and the RAG Pub Crawl.
- A number of taster sessions have been organised for Student Volunteering Week.
- An Are Ye Well? event scheduled for Tuesday 12 February 2013, to incorporate activities supporting National Student Money Week.

Paper SUC/P/13/7 approved.

756. REPORTS FROM OTHER UNION COMMITTEES AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

756.1 Report of the Education and Welfare Committee (SUC/P/13/8)

The report of the Committee was taken as read.

Paper SUC/P/13/8 approved.

756.2 Report of the Campaigns and Communications Committee (SUC/P/13/9)

A proposal to consider the tabled report of the Committee was accepted by Council.

The report of the Committee was taken as read.

Paper SUC/P/13/9 approved.

756.3 Report of the Campaigns and Communications Committee (SUC/P/13/10)

A proposal to consider the tabled report of the Committee was accepted by Council.

The report of the Committee was taken as read.

Paper SUC/P/13/10 approved.

756.4 Report of the Community, Equality and Diversity Committee (SUC/P/13/11)

A proposal to consider the tabled report of the Committee was accepted by Council.

The report of the Committee was taken as read.

Paper SUC/P/13/11 approved.

756.5 Report of the Education and Welfare Committee (**SUC/P/13/12**)

A proposal to consider the tabled report of the Committee was accepted by Council.

The report of the Committee was taken as read.

Paper SUC/P/13/12 approved.

757. REPORTS FROM UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES.

There were none.

758. CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS.

There were none.

759. QUESTIONS.

To the Union President

759.1 In review of the following which is taken directly from the Live Policy File (29 January 2013), in specific relation to policy 8.15 (Right to Education) which mandates:

“Council resolves to mandate the Executive Management Committee to openly condemn the Iranian government for its policies and activities towards the Baha'i community by releasing a public statement to this effect.

Council further resolves to mandate the Executive Management Committee to promote the right to education for members of the Baha'i faith in Iran specifically by engaging with the Queen's University Baha'i Society and their campaigns whilst also adopting a policy to assist The Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education (BIHE) thus allowing us to build links through education and resource sharing that will benefit the Baha'i community in Iran during a time of oppression and open persecution.”

Could the Union President update us on this policy? Tell us why this policy has never been publicly discussed or drawn upon, considering that it was passed on 26 April 2012? Does the Executive Management Committee not think that, given current sanctions on Iran preventing students from studying at European institutions, that it is an opportune time to publicly use this policy?

Can the Union President explain the inaction of the Executive Management Committee on this policy?

Proposer: Gary Spedding (40046946)

Seconder: Daniel Hogan (40075047)

The Union President stated that he had met with the Society last year to discuss possible avenues to progress this policy, with the Society agreeing to take the lead on the issue.

The Union President further stated that the Society does not appear to be active this year and, this being the case, he is happy to meet the proposer to discuss how to progress the policy.

Gary Spedding, in a supplementary question, enquired as to why the Executive Management Committee have not progressed the issue, stating that the Committee is mandated to do so, regardless of the level of activity of any Society.

In response, the Union President stated that was willing to meet Mr Spedding to discuss the matter.

759.2 In review of the following which is taken directly from the Live Policy File (29 January 2013), in specific relation to policy 3.4 (Rape Campaign) which resolves:

"This Union resolves to instruct the Vice President Campaigns and Communications, the Vice President Equality and Diversity, the Campaigns and Communications Committee and the Community, Equality and Diversity Committee to produce a more effective strategy around rape and sexual violence that places perpetrators of crime at the centre of blame and aims to educate the wider student body on issues around patriarchal attitudes, women's rights, LGBT issues and all other issues deemed relevant to the prevention of sexual offenses."

What steps have been taken on this mandate? Can the Executive Management Committee or even the chairs of the relevant committees respond as to whether anything has been taken forward on this particular policy? Are there any plans to strengthen this policy to include the VP Welfare?

Proposer: Tyler McNally (40038987)
 Seconder: Sarah Wright (40002922)

The Union President stated that the mandate was directed towards the Vice President Campaigns and Communications, the Vice President Equality and Diversity, the Campaigns and Communications Committee and the Community, Equality and Diversity Committee and that the Vice President Welfare was leading on the initiative.

759.3 In review of the following which is taken directly from the Live Policy File (29 January 2013), in specific relation to policy 4.1 (Ensuring Focus on Council Motions in Student Officers' Plan of Work) which resolves:

"This Council instructs the Executive Management Committee to ensure that live policy motions and associated actions to enable these are included within the Plan of Work for sabbatical officers from 2011-12 onwards."

Does the Executive Management Committee accept the fact that their role requires them to ensure that the live policy from motions and the required actions are followed through and included in their plan of work? Does the sabbatical team accept that what appears to some on Council as inaction on live policy is a failure on the part of EMC?

Could the Union President discuss or explain why the Student Officers' plans of work have not been available for public scrutiny? Why do the current plans of work not contain explicit reference to our live policy file in some instances where it should be required?

Proposer: Aisling Gallagher (40055120)

Seconder: Gary Spedding (40046946)

The Union President stated that:

- Each approved policy is assigned to a designated elected student officer, and to a supporting staff member.
- A plan of work can be difficult to get right, as there is a difficult balance to be maintained between changing priorities, officer enthusiasm, experience and the practicality of delivering on a large number of projects.
- Council is kept informed of officer progress by means of officer reports and scrutiny provided by the Committees of Council.

Aisling Gallagher, in a supplementary question, queried if this is the case, as it was obvious in her opinion, that some elected student officers were unaware of Union policy in certain area.

In response, the Union President stated that it was more likely the case that elected student officers already had a full work-load rather than being unaware of an area where action is mandated. The Union President further stated that he was willing to meet with the proposer to discuss any particular concerns that she may have.

759.4 Taken from the Live Policy File, Policy 5.2 mandates the following:

"Council mandates the Executive Management Committee to bring forward enabling measures to formalise the support role of the Vice President Equality and Diversity within the Queen's LGBT Society, in a manner similar to the support role played by the Vice President Community within RAG. These enabling measures shall include:

- Supporting any Constitutional Amendment that is required to formalise the role of the Vice President Equality and Diversity within the LGBT Society.
- Supporting any amendment to the Constitution of the Queen's LGBT Society brought before Council that gives effect to this motion"

Can the Union President comment on what enabling measures have been brought forward to formalise the support role of the Vice President Equality and Diversity within the QUB LGBT Society?

Proposer: Peter Agnew (40030191)

Seconder: Daniel Hogan (40075047)

The Union President stated that any proposals would require the support of the LGBT Society and their members at an Annual General Meeting and that it would be appropriate if the LGBT Society met with the Vice President Equality and Diversity, in the first instance, to discuss the formalisation of the

role of the Vice President, while ensuring that all under-represented groups remain equally represented.

To the Vice President Campaigns and Communications

- 759.5 In review of the following which is taken directly from the Live Policy File (29 January 2013), in specific relation to policy 4.8 (Student Membership and Awareness of Student Councillors) which Mandates:

"Council mandates the Executive Management Committee to implement, as part of the new Students' Union website, a section that provides transparency through provision of an overview of what the Students' Union Council is and a list of elected Councillors with their positions within Council highlighted."

What steps have been taken by the VP Campaigns and Communications and the Students' Union President in actually achieving this policy? Why is there little to no progress being seen as an interim, given we shall be moving to the new NUS Cloud service? Can an explanation be provided as to why, six months into the mandate, no action has been feasibly taken which would have allowed some progress whilst we wait for the 'Cloud' service? Will the Executive Management Committee provide some kind of material or activity to assist students in being able to find out and get to know their student Councillors on campus?

Proposer: Gary Spedding (40046946)
 Seconder: Daniel Hogan (40075047)

The Vice President stated that he had already provided an update in relation to this matter in his officer report and that he was awaiting a broad timeframe for implementation from NUS, noting that this is a pilot project.

- 759.6 In review of the following which is taken directly from the Live Policy File (29 January 2013), in specific relation to policy 2.9 (Action Group against Cuts and Closures) which mandates:

"This Council resolves that the Vice President Campaigns and Communications will maintain the 'Action Group against Cuts and Closures' in the coming year(s) and will prioritise the campaign against cuts to Higher Education as a matter of urgency by allocating sufficient time, energy and resources to the Group."

Could the Vice President answer regarding progress on this policy and why has this Group disappeared? Clearly this is a failing on the part of the Vice President and must be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Proposer: Tyler McNally (40038987)
 Seconder: Gary Spedding (40046946)

The Vice President stated that he was unaware of this policy as it was not covered during his crossover training with his predecessor.

Gary Spedding, in a supplementary question, asked why officers are not more aware of Union policy.

The Vice President stated that he would look forward to progressing this matter.

759.7 In review of the following which is taken directly from the Live Policy File (29 January 2013), in specific relation to policy 2.8 (Defend EMA Campaign) which mandates:

"Council therefore mandates the Executive Management Committee to work with NUS-USI to join and actively participate in their Defend EMA campaign, until the desired result is achieved."

Can the Vice President Campaigns and Communications outline what action has been taken to contribute towards and work with the NUS-USI President and the FEUD Officer on actively participating in the Defend EMA Campaign?

Why have we not been actively encouraged as students to use our voices to lobby our MLAs on this issue?

Proposer: Aisling Gallagher (40055120)
Seconder: Thom Hinds (40066142)

The Vice President, stated that he had been in regular contact with the NUS-USI President in relation to the matter and is more than happy to offer support or work on follow-up campaigns if required.

Aisling Gallagher, in a supplementary question, queried why the Executive Management Committee were not taking action on an issue that was important to students, one that they were mandated to take action on, noting that the Committee had not even taken simple actions to campaign on the issue.

The Union President, stated that there were often less than ideal communications with NUS-USI, with a lack of consistency in the campaigns communications received, making campaigning on the issue more difficult.

759.8 Is it true that, at a recent Campaigns and Communication Committee meeting, you inferred that you would not go through the Policy File as though it were a "check-list" and that it would take too much time (therefore demeaning the use and effectiveness of the Council), and that you didn't feel that it was a topic that should be discussed in the Committee meetings (therefore demeaning the use and effectiveness of those meetings)?

And therefore do you not feel as though you are deliberately hindering your committee when it comes to holding you accountable as a Vice President of the Union especially when you are quite simply not following the Policy that you decide that you don't wish to follow?

Proposer: Anonymous
Seconder: Anonymous

The Vice President stated that:

- He had said that it is difficult to go through the entire policy file on one sitting.
- Committee members should have input into Union campaigns
- He would never wish to demean the work of Council.

To the Vice President Equality and Diversity

759.9 In review of the following which is taken directly from the Live Policy File (29 January 2013), in specific relation to policy 8.16 which mandates:

"This Council resolves to mandate the Vice President Campaigns and Communications and the Vice President Equality and Diversity to establish a working group, open to all students, within the Students' Union, which will focus on the issue of sexist advertising and seek to end it."

Could the Vice President Equality and Diversity elaborate on where this working group is? Has it been established yet or does the Vice President plan on establishing it?

Could the Vice President Equality and Diversity update the Council and students in general on this policy?

Proposer: Gary Spedding (40046946)
 Seconder: Tyler McNally (40038987)

The Vice President stated that she was recently performed an audit of advertising in the SU Shop, arising from a complaint received and, now that there was a new Marketing Manager in place, a new process for reviewing advertising will be put in place.

759.10 In review of the following which is taken directly from the Live Policy File (29 January 2013), in specific relation to policy 8.12 (Feminism, Equality and Liberation) which mandates:

"Council mandates the Vice President Equality and Diversity to ensure that the Students' Union does not fall victim to the hierarchy of discrimination. The Union shall work alongside interested parties in order to champion such issues, including taking steps to work towards the NUS Zero-Tolerance of Harassment Accreditation."

Could the Vice President Equality and Diversity comment on whether any plans are being made to further this particular mandated policy? If yes, then please elaborate. If no, then please discuss reasons why this policy has been placed on the 'backburner' and when can we expect to see it tackled appropriately?

Proposer: Tyler McNally (40038987)
 Seconder: Sarah Wright (40002922)

The Vice President stated that

- There was a motion before Council this evening to specifically address this issue.
- It was currently the responsibility of the Vice President Equality and Diversity, the Vice President Campaigns and Communications and their associated Committees to progress it matter.
- The NUS Zero-Tolerance of Harassment Accreditation at Union Committees with ideas being explored.
- It is hoped to develop a campaign that will include Clubs and Societies and enhanced staff training.

- The planned Steve Wessler engagement workshops may assist with the development of this policy.

759.11 Taken from the Live Policy File, Policy 3.3 states the following:

"Council notes that Transgender issues can often be overlooked under the wider umbrella of LGBT.

Council further notes the growing transgender community at Queen's and within wider society and acknowledges that the term 'transgender' is fluid and all encompassing – with individuals self-identifying.

Council believes that education surrounding transgender issues should be a priority of the Students' Union...

Council also mandates the Vice President for Equality and Diversity to work with our National Unions in order to share best practice with other campuses on this issue."

Can the Vice President for Equality and Diversity update us on what work has been achieved with our National Unions in order to ensure best practice in relation to transgender issues?

Proposer: Peter Agnew (40030191)
Seconder: Aaron Cooney (40020435)

The Vice President stated that she has been utilising NUS resources to research the issue and that it is hoped to arrange workshops, training sessions and a commemoration event.

760. MOTIONS.

760.1 Council notes that the vending machines in the Space are often left unstocked or out of order for long periods of time. In addition, products are more expensive from the machine than from the SU Shop.

Council believes that this is not an ideal state of affairs, as it means that students who use The Space as a social or study area when the SU Shop is closed (evenings, or out of term time) must pay more, or simply have no access to food and drinks.

Council instructs the Executive Management Committee to ensure the existing machines are removed as soon as possible and replaced by machines operated by the Students' Union Shop, which can offer products at the same price as the Shop and ensure that all profits are reinvested into Students' Union activities.

Proposer: Niall Bole (12320056)
Seconder: Paul Fletcher (40008556)

Niall Bole, moving the motion, stated that the motion was relevant to students, with vending machines not being restocked regularly, with goods currently

sold from the machines being more expensive than those available from the SU Shop.

Jason O'Neill, speaking on the motion, stated that he was unsure if the motion was feasible due to tendering arrangements in the University.

A proposal to move to the vote was agreed.

Niall Bole, summarising in support, stated that the Students' Union Retail and Premises Manager believes that it is feasible to implement this proposal.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was carried.

- 760.2 This Council recognises that one of the Student Union's main methods of communication with the membership is through social media outlets.

Council agrees that the use of social media, although generally high quality, is not perfect; a significant proportion of the student body does not utilize social media, or they are not connected to the Student Union through it, and therefore many students are not able to access the rapidly updated information that is provided via this medium.

This Council therefore mandates the Vice President Campaigns and Communications, alongside the Executive Management Committee and relevant Union staff, to look into the possibility of a sustainable method of ensuring that all students can access relevant information about the Students' Union and our democratic decisions on a regular basis.

Proposer: Daniel Hogan (40075047)
Seconder: Aisling Gallagher (40055120)

Daniel Hogan, moving the motion, stated that social media is used by students, and it seems to be how the Union performs most of its communication, yet nothing is being done for those who don't use social media extensively.

A proposal to move to the vote was agreed and the proposer of the motion waived the right to summarise. Following a show of voting cards, the motion was carried.

- 760.3 This Council notes that improvements are needed in relation to how the Students' Union communicates with its membership.

Council recognises that one of the main methods of communication takes the form of the weekly email 'Student Stuff' which, on the most part, has become ineffective and unused by most students in recent years.

Whilst Council acknowledges and understands that a new website for the Students' Union is currently being developed, we as a Council agree that cultivating and developing alternatives, allowing effective methods of communication, must be prioritised.

This Council therefore mandates the Vice President Campaigns and Communications, alongside the Executive Management Committee and relevant Union staff, to report to this Council and to the Campaigns and

Communications Committee, outlining how they intend to make changes to 'Student Stuff' so that it is fit for purpose.

Proposer: Daniel Hogan (40075047)
Seconder: Fergal McFerran (40043035)

Daniel Hogan, moving the motion, stated that most students tend to delete 'Student Stuff' as it is dull and the Students' Union should make plans to invigorate it.

Connor Daly, supporting the motion, stated that the task is on the schedule of work for the Union's Marketing Team, and that he will personally look into it after the elections take place.

A proposal to move to the vote was agreed.

Daniel Hogan, summarising in support, urged Councillors to support the motion, to ensure that focus remains on improving 'Student Stuff'.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was carried.

760.4 This Council notes that a large portion of the student body are currently unaware of the on-going business of Council and that, at present, the only access the general student body has to this information is a small backwater area of the Students' Union website that holds minutes.

Council believes that being accountable to students is pivotal, and that making the topics discussed by Council more easily accessible is key for the improvement of accountability at Council meetings.

Council also believes that there is a need to get students actively engaged with both the Students' Union, and the Council, and therefore believes that the issues highlighted above need to be resolved.

This Council therefore mandates the Vice President Campaigns and Communications, alongside the Executive Management Committee and relevant Union staff, to consult with the Campaigns and Communications Committee in looking into the viable ways of allowing easy access to knowledge and understanding of Council, whether that is through an outlet on the upcoming Students' Union Website, monthly emails or some other solution.

Proposer: Daniel Hogan (40075047)
Seconder: Gary Spedding (40046946)

Daniel Hogan, moving the motion, stated that the work of Council was not well known outside of the Union Building, and without greater knowledge of Council amongst students, it ceases to have legitimacy in the eyes of students.

James Surgenor, speaking on the motion, stated that this motion only touched on much wider issue, that of the distance between the students and the Students' Union in general.

Jason O'Neill, supporting the motion, stated that with the addition of greater staffing support, engagement with the Union has never been higher – yet the Union must make greater efforts to engage with students.

A proposal to move to the vote was agreed.

Daniel Hogan, summarising in support, urged Councillors to support the motion, to ensure that the Union improves engagement levels with students.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was carried.

760.5 Model Motion – Supporting NUS Zero Tolerance to Sexual Harassment

This Union believes:

1. NUS' Hidden Marks Report was carried out between August 2009 and March 2010. 2058 women students were surveyed on their experience of stalking, harassment, violence, and sexual assault whilst studying at their current institution.
2. More than one third of women students reported that they sometimes felt unsafe when visiting their university/college buildings in the evening. This contrasted with perceptions of safety during the day (97% reported always / mostly felt safe).
3. Women students reported experiences of a range of unwanted behaviour during their time as a student, ranging from 'everyday' verbal and non-verbal harassment, to serious episodes of stalking, physical and sexual assault.
4. Over two-thirds of respondents (68%) experienced some kind of verbal or non-verbal harassment in and around their institution.
5. This kind of behaviour has become almost 'everyday' for some women students.

This Union further believes:

1. The report stated that reporting levels were low across all categories surveyed.
2. The most common reason for not reporting was that the student did not feel what had happened was serious enough to report.
3. The most common reason for not reporting serious sexual assault was that the victim felt ashamed or embarrassed; 43% thought that they would be blamed for what happened; one in three thought they would not be believed.
4. The NUS vision of "an education system in which all further and higher education students can participate confidently, without the restraint and fear of violence" should be adopted formally by QUBSU.
5. The NUS 'zero-tolerance' approach to harassment and violence, when combined with an institutional policy to tackle violence against women, has been adopted successfully in many unions throughout the UK.

This Union resolves:

1. To implement the NUS Zero Tolerance policy within QUBSU by the end of 2012-13 academic year (including implementing the Report's recommendations).

2. For the implementation of the Zero Tolerance policy to be of a high priority within the Executive Management Committee.
3. To work with relevant Students' Union Council committees and NUS / NUS-USI staff in order to best help and protect women students on campus.

Proposer: Joanne O'Neill (Vice President Welfare)
 Seconder: Aisling Gallagher (40055120)

Joanne O'Neill, moving the motion, stated that while there have been great improvements in the area of women's rights over recent decades, the issues of harassment, violence, and sexual assault are still daily challenges faced by women and the Students' Union needs to make greater efforts to challenge this scourge on society.

Rebecca Hall, speaking on the motion, queried if the substance of this motion was already contained in the officer plan of work.

Chloe Minish, supporting the motion, stated that the Education and Welfare Committee have already discussed this topic, with a view to maximising student support for the campaign.

A proposal to move to the vote was agreed and the proposer of the motion waived the right to summarise. Following a show of voting cards, the motion was carried.

760.6 Liberating Students' Unions to tackle Hate Crime

QUBSU Council believes:

1. That there are so called 'Confessions Pages' which have been appearing on social media sites which invite students to share their confessions of hate crimes and violence against women and to 'like' and encourage each other's 'confessions'.
2. There are also some student run media outlets publishing 'articles' which encourage students to gain social capital by instigating and participating in hate crimes, by reinforcing derogatory stereotypes of liberation groups and encouraging violence and sexual harassment against women students
3. These 'pages' and 'articles' are being presented as 'humorous' and 'entertaining'
4. Some examples include seeking praise and boasting of racially motivated attacks and 'terrorising' of black students as 'antics' and 'banter', humiliating people who 'confess' to having sexual relations with a student in a wheelchair, talking about trying out being LGBT as if LGBT people are an 'experiment' and encouraging public sexual harassment towards women on campus.
5. 18 per cent of black / black British, Asian / Asian British, mixed race and Chinese students have experienced at least one racial hate incident during their current studies.
6. Eight per cent of disabled students said that they had experienced at least one hate incident while studying at their current institution, which they believed was motivated by prejudice against their disability.
7. Thirty-one per cent of lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) students have experienced at least one hate incident related to their sexual orientation

some time during their current studies, compared to 2 per cent of heterosexual students.

8. Fifty-five per cent of trans students have been a victim of threatening, abusive or insulting words, threatening behaviour or threats of violence.
9. Over two thirds of women students (68%) have experienced some kind of verbal or non-verbal harassment in and around their institution. This kind of behaviour includes groping, flashing and unwanted sexual comments.

QUBSU Council further believes:

1. Degrading and attacking students on the basis of being black, women, disabled and / or LGBT is a hate crime and seeking to redefine these crimes as 'banter' is about reinforcing the inequality which liberation students face in pursuit of their education, celebrating that inequality and seeking praise from other students for their actions.
2. That the intent of these sites and articles in receiving praise from other students is in order to further normalise these behaviours, relieve perpetrators of responsibility from 'wrongdoing' and reinforce the privilege which allows some students to dismiss hate crimes and violence against women students as 'banter' and 'harmless'.
3. This represents an attack on the values of liberation and the right of students who self-define into liberation campaigns to participate fully in their education. These confessions pages and articles are another example of the backlash against the fight for equality.

QUBSU resolves:

1. To help the Union remove and close down confessions pages and articles which contain sexist, disablist, homophobic and racist content.
2. To encourage our Union to establish itself as a 3rd party hate crime reporting centre to allow students to report Hate Crime.
3. To recommend that the Students' Union puts a website link to www.liberateyourself.co.uk on the Union website to help students to develop a better understanding of liberation and to develop their learning.

Proposer: Joanne O'Neill (Vice President Welfare)

Seconder: Aisling Gallagher (40055120)

Joanne O'Neill, moving the motion, stated that we should be making every effort to challenge the presence of confessional pages.

A friendly amendment accepted by the proposer, amending the following:

"To help the Union remove and close down confessions pages and articles which contain sexist, disablist, homophobic and racist content."

To read:

"To help the Union remove and close down confessions pages and articles which contain content which offends against ethnicity, gender, disability and/or sexual orientation."

Chris Smyth proposed an amendment, to the friendly amendment, so that it now reads:

“To help the Union remove and close down confessions pages and articles which contain content which offends against ethnicity, gender, disability and/or sexual orientation and religious belief.”

A proposal to move to the vote on the amendment was agreed and the proposer of the amendment waived the right to summarise. Following a show of voting cards, the amendment was carried.

Aisling Gallagher, proposed an amendment, to instate the original wording of the motion, stating that the new wording removes the focus away from the sexist content of many of the these confessional pages.

Brian Mahon, stated that the wording, in his view, maintained the spirit of the original motion.

A proposal to move to the vote on the amendment was agreed and the proposer of the amendment waived the right to summarise.

Following a show of voting cards, the amendment was deemed to have fallen.

Aisling Gallagher, informed the Union Speaker that she wished to withdraw her support, as seconder, for the motion.

The motion was deemed to be withdrawn.

760.7 This Union acknowledges:

1. That there was an incident involving students at the official opening of the UCD Student Centre in Dublin in November 2012 whereby eggs were thrown at Taoiseach Enda Kenny.
2. That, during said incident, the Taoiseach was not hit by the eggs, and four people were removed by Gardaí immediately following.
3. That members of the Free Education for Everyone (FEE) and Socialist Workers Student Society have taken responsibility for the incident.
4. That, by definition, the student body contains a diverse range of political opinions which may not be in line with those of the established students' union.
5. That, although students may politically disagree with the union, that the duty of a students' union is to protect the rights of students to continue with their education.
6. That UCD Students' Union Council voted last week not to support these students in their disciplinary process in regards to the aforementioned incident.

This Union believes:

1. Whilst it is acceptable and fair that Student Councillors make up their own mind as to the legitimacy of the act, it is not acceptable, nor is it fair, for a students' union to withdraw support of students undergoing the university disciplinary process.
2. Students' unions exist to help and support students throughout their time at university, and this includes representing and supporting students through the disciplinary procedure.
3. The fact that UCDSU has withdrawn any support for these students is a clear neglect of its duty as a students' union.

This Union resolves:

1. To encourage USI to publically support these students, and, furthermore, encourage USI to compel UCDSU carry out the most basic function of a students' union in supporting these students through the disciplinary processes at UCD.
2. To issue a public statement through the Students' Union's various media outlets supporting these students right to education and condemning the actions of UCDSU in neglecting their duty as a students' union.
3. That, if a similar incident was to occur at Queen's, that the Students' Union would offer pastoral support to students in their time of need.

Proposer: Aisling Gallagher (40055120)

Seconder: Tyler McNally (40038987)

Aisling Gallagher, moving the motion, stated that no matter what a student is accused of, their students' union should provide representation and support, especially when a student is involved in a university's disciplinary process.

Jason O'Neill, opposing the motion, stated that he did not believe that it is appropriate for one students' union to criticise the internal, democratically approved, decisions made by another students' union.

Tyler McNally, supporting the motion, stated that the motion was in support of three students that threw eggs at a politician, who should be entitled to support and representation from their students' union, as for decades students had to fight to the right to organise and be represented.

Chris Smyth, speaking on the motion, queried if people would take a different view if the eggs had seriously injured the Taoiseach.

Brian Mahon, opposing the motion, stated that there was a lot of internal politics on-going in UCDSU, particularly in relation to the Union's finances and its relationship with the University.

A proposal to move to the vote was agreed.

Aisling Gallagher, summarising in support, stated that this motion was not about the eggs, or even the alleged incident, but about the principle that students should receive support and representation from their students' union.

Following a show of voting cards, the motion was deemed to have fallen.

761. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

There was none.

762. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Union Speaker announced that the Annual Business Meeting of the 2012-13 session of the Students' Union Council shall take place on Wednesday 20 March 2013 at 6.00 p.m. in The Space, Students' Union.

Damien Corridan
Deputy Clerk to Students' Union Council