

Student Council Meeting

Meeting held in MR1 Students' Union, Frenchay Campus, at 17:30 on Tuesday 28th November

001: The Chair introduced himself and welcomed those present to the first SCM of the year and set out the agenda and purposes of the meeting and role of the Democratic Procedures Committee.

002: The Student Executive had provided reports of activities to date that had been circulated to members beforehand. Members were able to send in questions requiring quantitative answers beforehand and the Executive answered these first.

Advance questions to VP C+W: How much money has the University pledged to Nightline? How much money has the SU spent in total on the Nightline project so far?

VP C+W: £7,500 has been budgeted by UWE, some of which has been spent on staff costs. So far, £354 has been spent on marketing with most likely another £30 to spend on this. There are at present two Nightline awareness weeks planned and each of these will cost approximately £100. Spending decisions are made by the Nightline Committee.

Derya supplemental: What is your level of direct involvement with Nightline?

VP C+W: It is very difficult to answer as setting up Nightline was a manifesto pledge but now we have a large and active committee who are fully involved in all discussions and decisions. At present, VP C+W says she is more hands on than she would like because the committee is so new but that she expects her direct involvement to diminish over time.

Advance questions to VP S+H: What was the result of the investigation into behaviour at last years' varsity rugby match? Is there a report? Where can it be found if so?

VP S+H: There have been 17 disciplinary panels with a variety of outcomes at level 2 and 3 which are confidential and as such there is no report available.

Derya supplemental: will TIGER training become mandatory for club committees?

VP S+H: Yes for some clubs (such as rugby) but not all but it will become an opt in for societies and this approach will be assessed for effectiveness.

VP C+W: A local school has approached the SU about providing TIGER training to them which is a very positive step that shows partnership working with the local community.

Advanced questions to VP S+C: What is the total amount that the SU gave to societies at the start of this year? What was the average amount of SU money given to societies at the start of the year? How does this compare to last years' average? How is this broken down into the regular society categories (Academic/Special interest/NFI)? How many societies are currently active? How many societies have shut down since the start of the academic year? How does this compare to this time last year?

VP S+C: £1,175 has been allocated to societies so far this year. This represents an average of £83 per society which is higher than last year's average of £74.8. Although there is no difference between how the allocation is made between the different types of societies, for reference the average per academic society is £63 and the average per non-academic society is £109. This takes into account the higher membership figures for academic societies and so they on average receive less from central funds. There are currently 84 active societies. 13 societies shut down over the Summer period and 1 society has shut down since the Freshers' Fair. VP S+C then clarified that these sums do not include the budget for Student Media as this is treated separately from the societies budget. The societies programme has a total budget of £6,000 whilst the media budget is £7,500 due to licensing and equipment costs and money for replacement equipment which rolled over from last year.

Freddie supplemental: Looking at the structure of Hub Media. What can be done to clarify where final decisions are made and also you talked about creating a Media Exec; what will this look like in relation to the existing media committees?

VP S+C: This would initially be getting the Editorial and Hub Committees together in order to allow for centralised decision-making but there are no plans for a Media Exec in the near future.

Derya supplemental: How has the media transition gone and what is your vision for the future of Student Media?

VP S+C: For the time being, I don't see Student Media being in a position where it is self-sufficient in a financial sense because the amount of money it requires is simply so large. Operationally, I would like it to become more independent but at the moment I am its only staff support and I do not wish to be managing it day-to-day.

Derya supplemental: Will the SU therefore allow Student Media to continue at a loss?

VP C+W: The money comes from the block grant anyway.

VP S+C: There will always be money in reserve to offset the costs associated with equipment.

Derya supplemental: Is there the scope for other societies to become embedded in the SU structure in the same way as Media?

VP S+C: I'm not in a position to look ahead to the future and give you a definitive answer on that but the position of Student Media at the SU is by no means unique in the sector.

Advance question to all: How much income has the SU estimated that it will lose as a result of the Lock In changing date?

VP Ed: Student behaviour on Tuesday nights was causing complaints from local residents...

Ayrden: The LTSEC annual report on Student Health and Behaviour 16/17 shows that 74 complaints were received, assuming all of these were about Lock In then that averages 2.6 complaints per event.

VP Ed:...with our license up for renewal, support from the University and local residents was needed which it appeared would not be forthcoming. The University would not offer its support unless the SU acted and so the decision was taken to move Lock In from a weeknight to a weekend in order to give local residents less cause to complain about noise at unsociable hours. The University then agreed to ensure a zero night loss to the SU as a result of this. VP Ed stresses that it is the role of a Trustee to take action to protect the SU (in terms of both reputation and finances) and that this sometimes requires taking unpopular decisions.

Ayrden: How much will the University give the SU?

VP C+W: We can't disclose that figure.

Derya: Since the University is providing replacement funds for any loss, the estimated net loss will be £0 and therefore you can't tell me how much the SU would lose. What figure is the University providing?

VP Ed: I don't know that figure off the top of my head.

VP C+W: It took considerable effort to keep the Lock In at all even on a Saturday; this wasn't an easy choice to make but it was the right one. VP C+W agrees with VP Ed that the role of a Trustee is to think about the entire organisation and take difficult or even unpopular decisions for the wider benefit of the membership.

Derya supplemental: Where was the student engagement before this decision was taken?

VP S+H: The question would have been a simple choice of keeping the Lock In on a Tuesday but have it finish at 23:00 as a dry event or move it to Saturday. Those were the only options.

Ayrden supplemental: When were you first told of the possibility that the Bar could lose its license?
VP Ed: This has been a long process beginning last academic year.

Ayrden supplemental: According to the LTSEC report, in 14/15 there were 16 complaints for anti-social behaviour and 48 related to noise, this went down the following year and crept back up the year after so that in 16/17 there 51 anti-social behaviour complaints and 88 related to noise. This increase is clearly linked to the opening of the Wallscourt accommodation.

Derya: Were these numbers studied when making representations to the University?

SUP: Reminds the room that he, VP S+H and VP S+C were not in post when the decision was taken but that they fully support it.

Bella supplemental: Was the timing of the decision solely based on the issue of license renewal?

VP C+W: Yes. VP C+W then asks Council to think about what the purpose of the SU is; is it a club night or is it far more than that and does that mean taking a broader approach. VP C+W says that being a Trustee means taking difficult decisions.

Derya supplemental: Was the Bar guaranteed to lose its license?

VP C+W: Local residents were beginning to organise to lobby to that effect and thus the University would not support renewal.

Ayrden supplemental: Another reason cited for the moving of Lock In was academic performance; has there been any evidence that his decision has had a positive impact on academic performance for that complaints have reduced?

VP S+H: It is too early to tell either way.

Derya: There are so many club nights in town anyway (including on a Tuesday); is students going to these not less safe and inductive to good academic performance especially for level ones?

VP Ed: That is a very Frenchay focused perspective.

VP C+W: If clubs in town advertise with the SU they should have safe night out training. Additionally, the SU has its 'Late Night Do IT Right' programme as part of HallsLife which goes to clubs in town and we are working with them to expand this.

Ayrden: Coming back from town can be dangerous, especially with the poor level of bus service.

VP S+C: If we lost our license that would still be the case.

Ayrden: Will the SU be discouraging Varsity club nights in town because of the impact on attendance at Thursday morning lectures? If attendance at Wednesday morning lectures is so important, will the SU be leaving BUCS?

VP C+W: Students missing lectures on a Thursday morning has not been raised as a problem unlike missing lectures on a Wednesday morning.

Derya supplemental: A Student Idea has passed with a 1st and the second highest number of votes for any Student Idea proposing to move Lock In back to Tuesday; what will happen with this Idea.

VP S+H: Like all Ideas, this will be discussed by the Board of Trustees.

Ayrden to VP C+W: What pressure is the SU putting on Unite to provide overnight security at Phoenix Court and Marketgate in town?

VP C+W: SUP and I met with Unite in September about how we can work better together; nothing about anti-social behaviour requiring overnight security has been raised with me.

Ayrden: There is overnight security for campus accommodation.

VP C+W: I will ask Unite for a meeting about this. VP C+W requests any additional information Council members may have about this matter.

Ayrden to VP Ed: Will the Executive back a motion to prevent the further removal of ACE resources from the library and return already removed resources?

VP Ed: If there is student demand for such action, then yes.

Ayrden: A student report on this has already gone to the Faculty ASQC. The Faculty librarian agrees that the current consultation is too narrowly focused on e-collections which does not serve the needs of ACE students, as such considerable amounts of the physical collection have been lost.

Freddie to SUP: You spearheaded UWE's IAMBristol campaign, with the laudable ideal of improving relations between Muslim and non-Muslim communities. How familiar are you MEND who began this campaign?

SUP: Quite familiar.

Freddie: Would you agree that MEND's dubious history and unacceptable statements by its members means that partnering with them is not helpful to inter-faith and inter-community relations?

SUP: Student Islamic Societies from across the country collaborated with MEND to cofound the IAM campaign.

Freddie: MEND's Director of Communications has called on UK and US troops in the Middle East to be killed and a UK Parliamentary Select Committee has said the organisation is at risk of inflaming tensions between Muslims and Jews.

SUP: I do not speak for MEND and the SU does not have to share their values in order to work with them but engagement across the country is very important. In February, ISOC's own Islamic Awareness Week was a let-down and so work began early to ensure a more successful campaign. Cardiff Met's ISOC's President leads on student engagement for MEND and a nationally collaborative approach was agreed. No issues about the campaign have been raised prior to this.

Freddie: Students I have spoken to are very worried about the SU working with such an organisation as the SU is meant to represent all students including those belonging to groups about which MEND has used unacceptable and offensive language.

SUP: That this campaign was taking place was public knowledge and it is now at an end. No issues were raised before or during the campaign when it would have been more effective to do so. SUP encourages all present to raise all future concerns at the earliest opportunity.

Freddie: If hypothetically this was brought to your attention early then, would you have considered not working with MEND?

SUP: I would have considered it.

Ayrden supplemental: Why was the cost and effort that has gone into the IAMBristol campaign not mentioned in your manifesto for students to scrutinise?

SUP: This was not necessary as it falls within my remit as SUP.

Derya to all: Referencing the discussion in the previous SCM regarding Prevent to remove the wording about refusing to comply with the agenda, is the Executive aware that the Prevent Duty has been used on two occasions; once for a student who believed in anarchy and was willing to kill or be killed and the other for a student considering hostile action who had mental health issues?

VP C+W: It is the implementation nationally that the policy passed by the SCM refers to; UWE's handling of Prevent is much more hands off than other institutions so does not necessarily raise the same issues.

Derya: These students received help because of Prevent; would the SU refusing to comply with Prevent have stopped them from receiving this help? Was this implementation of the Prevent Duty "overarching" and the "referrals unnecessary". Derya clarifies he is quoting SUP from the previous SCM mentioned above.

SUP: The University would have taken that action regardless of the SU stance.

VP C+W: The SU would most likely have picked this up through our own safeguarding procedures.

Bella to all: What alternatives have been discussed to the 'Big Convo' to make it more effective in gaining student feedback?

VP S+H: We are very open to ideas and want to hear from students about what they think will be effective.

VP S+C: I'm looking to use Student Media to create a platform for a dialogue and build a greater sense of student community.

Bella: Attendance monitoring to capture students in need of support sounds like a positive move but what about students who simply do not want to attend lectures; what will happen to them?

VP Ed: There will be no penalties for students and this is being used to check student progress and help where necessary. It is an additional tool available for staff to use.

Mohammad to VP C+W: What of the additional costs in relation to mental health awareness training and is the University prepared to pay this?

VP C+W: The benefits of such training will outweigh the costs and the SU is in discussions about how to deliver this.

Yasmin to VP C+W: What work is being done about the lack of diversity in the UWE wellbeing staff?

VP C+W: Wellbeing is very aware of this fact and they have given assurances that it is something they are working on and the SU continues to lobby on this.

The Chair draws questioning to a close. James and Derya request more time for questioning citing the importance of holding the Executive to account in a public forum. Council votes to continue questioning by 10 to 7.

James to SUP: Have you achieved your manifesto pledge to expand OneZone?

SUP: It is not a literal expansion of the physical space but involves getting more space and seating available as both study and social space. This is currently on course.

James: Have you not settled for something inferior to your pledge and what financial plans are in place to make this an achievable goal?

SUP: I made a pledge based on discussion with and ideas from students; now that I have been in post for a while I have new information and in the future I will choose my words more carefully and deliberately. But the spirit of the pledge, to increase space available to student, especially to bring in their own food, has been met.

Derya to VP S+H: Can you explain the decision behind changing the Varsity to a series of yearlong events as opposed to a week of events?

VP S+H: This happened before I was in post but the idea behind the decision was to boost participation in all events and allow for mass participation events such as the colour run. This will be reviewed to see if it has improved participation levels, especially for events close to the end of the year because of students' financial situations.

Derya supplemental: Do UWE and University of Bristol have an allocated number of tickets for events?

VP S+H: At first yes there is an allocation but this is reviewed based on ticket sales at each institution and either can choose to surrender some of their allocation to the other. Varsity Board is investigating why disparities in ticket sales exist and what can be done about this.

Derya to SUP: You were listed as a speaker at an event in October 'Stand Up to Racism'...

SUP corrects that he did not in fact speak at this event.

Derya:...also appearing at this event was a speaker from CAGE which is a highly controversial organisation which has made inflammatory comments of a racist, anti-Semitic and homophobic nature. How did you get on to this panel and why did you not attend in the end?

SUP: I was asked to attend by a director at Stand Up to Racism (Bristol) and I was going in my personal capacity and my job role was used for marketing purposes by the organisers. I did not attend for personal reasons. Although the Vice-Chancellor called a meeting with me to discuss this, my involvement did not raise any complaints from students or from the University.

Questioning ends. Material referenced by Council members and presented to the Executive is available upon request from the Secretary.

003:

Water fountains to be shown on maps around campus

Votes to veto: 0

Outcome: **Pass** (without discussion)

The SU to arrange onsite blood donation opportunities

Votes to veto: 0

Outcome: **Pass** (without discussion)

Campaign to reduce the additional course costs that students have to pay to complete their degrees on top of tuition fees

Votes to veto: 0

Outcome: **Pass** (without discussion)

Increase the quantity and variety of vegan food options sold in all SU shops and bars

Votes to veto: 0

Outcome: **Pass** (without discussion)

Swimming pool for Frenchay campus

Megan: Where would this go and why do we need to spend so much money on this?

Tristan: The issue for clubs is a lack of certainty and consistency as they have to rely on other institutions' facilities.

David: It is difficult for clubs to book pools on weekly basis. Supporting this Idea won't cost the SU anything but puts us on the side of students.

Votes to veto: 0

Outcome: **Pass**

The SU to install solar panels on its buildings

Votes to veto: 0 Outcome:

Pass (without discussion)

The SU to commit to only stocking products containing palm oil that is Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) certified

Layla Redway-Maguire (SU Sustainability Committee Procurement Officer) presents on behalf of the Idea Proposer: Palm oil is in approximately 60% of our products and it yields twice as much as other options so it actually keeps costs down. This issue is not about getting rid of palm oil but making sure the palm oil we use is sustainable. Child and slave labour goes into producing the palm oil used in products sold in the SU whilst at the same time UWE is involved in research into sustainable palm oil. There is going to be a permeant display about this in S Block and so it seems hypocritical that non-sustainable palm oil can still be purchased in the bars and shops.

Ayrden: Sustainable palm oil does come with an additional cost but this would most likely be offset by the fact that the SU has its own specific suppliers.

Tiffany: How many brands will this affect and will it reduce choice?

Layla: I'm not sure how many brands would be impacted but the most important thing is building customer demand for sustainable products.

James and Freddie: The wording is purposefully non-committal in the time scale so this can be phased in.

Votes to veto: 1 Votes to abstain: 1

Outcome: **Pass**

Allow society treasures access to the clearest records that the SU holds (Consolidated General Ledger History Report)

The Idea Proposer requested it to be minuted that he was highly displeased that it has required the SU's democratic processes to gain access to this information.

Bella: Access to information and transparency are both essential for effective decision-making and so it seems obvious that this information should be available.

Votes to veto: 0

Outcome: **Pass**

The SU to have sanitary product donation points for distribution to homeless/refugee/asylum-seeking women

Bella: I have experience working for charities in this sector and they are inundated with such donations, so much so that they can't distribute them all. Researching the needs of local charities and acting accordingly is thus very important.

James: Should this Idea be returned to the Proposer to tighten up the language?

Votes to return to the Proposer: 3

Ayrden: We should give the SU the leeway to interpret this Idea and decide how best to proceed.

Votes to veto: 0 Votes to abstain: 1

Outcome: **Pass**

004:

Hot water dispensers at Bower Ashton Studios (Executive Pass)

Votes to veto: 0

Outcome: **Pass** (without discussion)

All lectures on a Wednesday morning should be event captured (filmed) and posted on Blackboard (Executive Pass)

Sagoon: When students know they are being filmed, it tends to limit the free flow of ideas and dialogue; there doesn't seem to be a demand for this from teaching staff.

Tiffany: Students should not have to choose between missing lectures and going to events; they should have the choice.

Megan: For our classes, if you aren't there then you miss the lecture. Are there copyright issues?

Sagoon: Lecturers should not feel constrained in what they say and teach.

Thomas: We have a lecture that requires a non-disclosure agreement so it would be impossible to mandate this universally.

Votes to veto: 1 Votes to abstain: 2

Outcome: **Pass**

All Academic Personal Tutors should receive mental health awareness training

Mohammad: The potential cost does seem prohibitively high.

Ayrden: There are trained staff on campus already who could provide this training; the costs would be outweighed in the long term by the benefits.

Freddie concurs.

James: The University has put substantial money aside for mental health and wellbeing.

Votes to veto: 0

Outcome: **Pass**

Normal hours for traders and the Glenside SU shop and bar across Easter and Summer (Executive Pass)

Freddie: What will the cost be? The trade available at these times will be very small so this does not seem worth the additional cost.

Bella: The Idea gives the impression there would be customers.

Ayrden: Even with the different shape of the academic year for Glenside courses, there is still no need for normal hours as the demand is barely there with the current reduced hours.

Votes to veto: 13

Outcome: **Veto**

The SU to run a continuing campaign to raise awareness of Meningitis and encourage students to get vaccinated (Executive Pass)

Votes to veto: 0

Outcome: **Pass** (without discussion)

Simplify the SU registration process (Executive Pass)

James: What does this mean in practice? Maybe it would be better focused on the phone service for the website which is currently poor? Greater clarity is required.

Votes to return to the Proposer: 9

Action: Secretary to contact Idea Proposer

The SU to organise more social events for postgraduate students (Executive Pass)

Votes to veto: 0

Outcome: **Pass** (without discussion)

Education about consent should be given to all students (Executive Pass)

Freddie: What does the Proposer mean by "consent" and will this be mandatory? Should the consent element relate more to effective sex and relationships education?

Votes to return to the Proposer: 13

Action: Secretary to contact Idea Proposer

005: The Secretary introduced and explained the bye law amendments which Council members had received prior to the meeting. The amendments were approved by a unanimous vote of Council.

006: No AOB was presented. The Secretary will work with DPC to develop solutions to address the timing issues of SCM to ensure adequate time for both Executive scrutiny and Ideas discussion.