

NAME: Minutes of Student Council

PAPER: 02_SC_15_01

DATE: 15/04/15

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER STUDENTS' UNION

STUDENT COUNCIL

15^h April 2015 5PM at all Campuses by Video Conference

IN ATTENDANCE:

STEPHEN AITKEN (DEMOCRACY CO-ORDINATOR)

AVRIL HONAN (STUDENT ENGAGEMENT MANAGER)

MARK BELL (CHAIR)

MICKY QUIGG

SARAH GORDON

VIKKI LUTTON

FERGHAL O HIR

COLUM MACKAY

ANDREW MCANALLEN

CHRISTINE CAMPBELL

GILLIAN BELL

SOPHIA HEIKININ

MICHAEL SHAW

ETHAN MCNICHOLL

ROBBIE BANHAM

SARAH CURRAN

DECLAN SHIELS

NATHAN MOUNT

EUAN CANTLEY

BECKY BRENNAN

KEVIN MCSTRAVOCK

JENNIFER HILLMAN

YASMIN MCELHINNEY

JUDE DOHERTY

EAMON MCCUDDEN

ARTHUR CAULFIELD

APOLOGIES:

DARREN CROOKS

RYAN MCGAVIGAN

JOSH CATTERSON

LIAM MULVENNA

DYLAN CUMBO

FABIO CRISTIANO

CRAIG STAFFORD

AOIFE GARVEY

NOEL FLOOD

JAMES MCCAFFREY

LAURA QUINN

GERARD MCDONALD

MEGAN MCDONAGH

DAVID RAFFERTY

MINUTES

02_SC_15_01 OVERALL PRESIDENTS COMMUNICATIONS:

The Chair began the meeting by welcoming all councillors to the session and explaining due to the timing of the meeting after Easter the motions being considered are emergency motions and as such are important to the running of UUSU. Chair put this to a vote of council for their approval which passed unanimously.

In line with this the chair notified council that they were using their executive power and reordered the agenda that after Chairs' communications council would move straight to agenda point 6.

Council noted and approved this.

Chair notified council of the recent conferences at USI and NUS/USI. The Chair thanked the delegations and highlighted the engagement and contribution from Ulster students at these conferences.

The Chair also mentioned the recent UUSU Sabbatical elections and stated to council that he was impressed with the level of all the candidates and their respective manifesto's. Chair was satisfied with the running of the elections and also wished Colum Mackey and Micky Quigg congratulations on their re-election as sabbatical officers.

Vice President Magee proposed to the chair to introduce a guillotine time for Council as to ensure that council would not overrun and would keep to its timings.

Chair accepted the proposal and put it to council for approval. The vote passed for a guillotine with a two thirds majority.

02_SC_15_03 SCHEDULES 1, 2, 4, 5 (Emergency Motion)

The Chair began this point with highlighting the work that has been ongoing this year in relation to a governance review. Chair noted that council has already been involved previously with the process and the presented documents will provisionally be the new documents to come into effect next year. For the benefit of a concise discussion the chair moved on to present the main points for discussion from the documents but made it clear to council that at any time council could bring up a point or note a change within these documents as the discussion progressed.

The chair then proceeded to lay out the new changes within the documents highlighting the change in structure and shape of Student council, referencing changes within the presented documents and the Constitution. Changes to the standing orders in terms of how council meets and votes. The delegation of powers to the new Student Executive in Council is inquorate two meetings in a row.

Vice President Jordanstown proposed an amendment to Schedule 1, 3.7.7:

To include, in the two week after elections a clause that stipulates that another election is run offering open 5 seats per campus with no stipulation upon who can run for the position.

The idea behind the amendment would be for councillors who failed in running for a particular seat or another who would not want a particular titled mandate would have the availability in running for these “open” positions.

There was concern from some members of council that 5 extra councillors would be a lot after an already large election and council make-up. Vice president Jordanstown noted that in terms of the council as a whole 20 extra seats would not be a significant increase as council without the extra would already be sitting around 120 councillors.

When put to the vote council voted unanimously to approve the amendment.

The Chair then listed out the new structure to help provide further clarification to help with council’s deliberation.

Other changes included:

- Role titles as current with portfolio removed. Just as Councillor.
- Sabbatical terms:
There is a discrepancy in the Constitution compared with Schedules.
- 3 options presented to council.
Council approved option to allow 3 years terms total, 2 years and 1 in another overall position.
- Schedule 2 changes bring the standing orders in line with Schedule 1.
Chair passed to Sports Pres about new Sports Union changes Schedule 4:
- Title changes mainly already passed through sports union open meetings
- Schedule 5:
- Societies through Student Council rather than Site Council.
- Student Executive will be responsible for budget allocations along with relevant staff rather than VP.

The Chair then put the documents to council for approval.

Council voted unanimously to approve the new schedules.

02_SC_15_04 Academic Standing Clause (Emergency Motion Substantive)

The Chair presented this policy to council and explained the reasoning behind it. Under the current UUSU schedules there is a stipulation for students standing for election that they have good academic standing. This term has not been defined and as part of the current governance review UUSU has aimed to place a definition to this so as to ensure that there is more clarification for students in subsequent elections.

The chair opened up to council for discussion,

A councillor from Jordanstown asked what would happen if a student had bad academic standing though also had extenuating circumstance around that standing.

Chair replied as to this is the reason for the further clarification as it is up to the University if a student is in good/bad academic standing.

The councillor further asked if there would be a route for appeal.

In the current clauses within the schedule there is no route for appeal, the policy paper only seeks to add clarification to the term and not the structure of the process there would not be an appeal, though it was put to council that if they wished to change this then they can bring a paper to the next council meeting.

A councillor from Coleraine stated to council that extenuating circumstances should already be included in the University's academic standing determination due to the availability for students to submit an EC1 form that would be included in the University's progression boards determination.

The Chair put the proposal to the vote and Council passed this paper unanimously.

02_SC_15_10 NUS UK National Conference- Delegate Selection (Emergency Substantive)

The Chair began by outlining the reasoning behind this policy. It was to allow council a say in who should represent UUSU at NUS UK National Conference. The Chair outlined two options that were available to council to vote on due to the small size of the conference delegation entitlement.

The two options that were available were for only current and newly elected sabbaticals to make up the delegation for UUSU. The Second was that it would be open to sabbaticals and council to make up the delegation.

A Coleraine councillor stated that in their opinion it should stay within the sabbatical team as they were elected representatives. Other opinions in favour of keeping the delegation to sabbaticals were:

It would also be advantageous for the president elect and other sabbaticals, it would help increase contacts and networks and help the sabbaticals in their roles.

Opinions for the split between sabbatical officers and councillors were that the delegate should be the best person for the job and not just the sabbatical. Conference is about representation not experience building or networking for sabbaticals.

The chair outlined that NUS UK conference was markedly different from USI and NUS/USI as it was much larger and a sizeable increase in the amount of motions that would be read and debated.

Vice President Magee suggested a compromise that if the delegate positions were not filled from the sabbaticals that the vacant positions be filled from the council with the provision that the delegation retains is 50% gender split.

This was passed with a two thirds majority.

VOTE:

Council Open: 4

Sabbatical: 14

Passes sabbatical option

02_SC_15_05 LGBTQ Lobby (Emergency, Substantive)

The Proposer began by laying out the reasoning behind this policy. It already is standard practice for most other student organisations i.e. Queens, NUS

Amendment was put to council to change the wording on one section.

Change section:

That a large portion of our student body are of the LGBTQ community

To:

Student body includes members of the LGBT community.

Unanimous pass

The proposer stated to council that this policy would allow elected reps to more effectively represent and attend LGBT marches and protests. Though any voting on any issues would still require a mandate from council.

Policy Vote : pass by more than two thirds majority (one against)

02_SC_15_06 Delegate Election Rules (Emergency, Substantive)

Chair passed to Vice President Belfast as the policy was submitted by Belfast Student Council. VPB stated to council the premise behind the policy is that the best suited sabbatical/student is elected to become a delegate and represent UUSU.

This is to ensure that the students are represented by someone with the best experience.

It was then opened to council for comment and debate before a vote.

Councillors from Coleraine stated that unforeseen circumstances could mean that set elections were not possible and would mean that delegates could be up to the Presidents discretion.

Councillors from Magee stated that it shouldn't be limited to Council or the Student Executive, it should be open to anyone interested in the specific policies or motions.

Council also noted that it stated in the policy as an example that it is only right that Sports President votes on sporting matters though it also shouldn't limit what sabbaticals can vote on. That sabbatical mandate should not be a limiting factor.

Vice President Jordanstown put to council to amend the policy to:

Resolves when redrafting the current schedules, that this policy is reflected in the new documents.

This was put to council as VPJ felt that the current wording of the policy would be difficult to implement.

Note Amendment passes.

Council members from Coleraine raised the issue of how can you define experience?

Vice President Belfast stated Conference reps should be elected as per how council is elected. Council will then mandate the representatives.

Policy Passes with over a two thirds majority

02_SC_15_07 Conference voting (Emergency, Substantive)

VPB laid out the idea behind this policy which is to ensure that conference delegates have a mandate from council. This will mean that it is the representatives of the students on council ensuring that the students' views are the ones that are reflected upon when the delegates vote on their behalf.

Council also noted that this is standardised across the vast majority of other Students' Union's, Trade Unions, charities etc.

The Vice President for Jordanstown stated that we would need to ensure that this is included in the governance review if the policy passes.

VPJ moves to amend and add a resolution that if the policy is passed it is included in new rewrite

VOTE: unanimous

Council resolves that the drafters of the schedules have cognescence of this motion.

Amendment VOTE: unanimous

The Chair then put this policy to the council for a vote.

Policy: passed unanimous

As the guillotine deadline approached the chair put to council to extend the meeting by another 15 minutes:

Passed

02_SC_15_08 Election rules (Emergency,)

This policy was put to council as a discussion point and centred around some issues that arose from this year's elections for the 2015/16 sabbatical officers. Some key points were that some members of council felt that there should be spending limits put in place as financial advantage should not help a candidate be elected as a representative. A counter argument to this was how would it be enforceable as receipts were not enough proof of cost.

Another point raised was the use of branded goods/freebies. Some members of council felt that this was "incentivising" students to vote for a freebie rather than policy, that again this would unfairly disadvantage other candidates that did not have access to this.

Again counter arguments arose that it shows ingenuity and a willingness to get deals for the students.

As this was a discussion piece with no referendum the chair noted that they would put this piece to UUSU's Democracy Coordinator to research this issue and create a policy paper to be put the next Student Council.

02_SC_15_09 Arts Union Proposal (Emergency,)

A councillor from Coleraine submitted this piece to council for discussion. This was not a substantive piece and contained no resolutions.

The proposer laid out the policy piece to council. The key point were that this was a multi-channel idea, that would be for all arts societies, it would contain membership packages like those that the Sports Union offered currently.

The proposer believed that this would lead to a better community, communication and retention. It would also increase activity between Arts faculty Coleraine and Arts societies. They stated that more research and discussion would be needed before a finalised policy could be compiled. They then opened the floor to council for discussion. VPJ likes the idea but not formalised union, they believed it should be more an ad hoc association that would ensure flexibility each year.

A UUC councillor stated a formalised union maybe not realistic due to the lack of demand at other campuses apart from Coleraine and it should ensure it was inclusive. Look to create a feasibility study. Chair moves to move to next council with more research etc.

02_SC_15_11 SOCIETY AFFILIATIONS: MAGEE

The Student Councillors from Magee discussed and passed the affiliation application of the Magee Sinn Fein society.

The Chair then noted that the guillotine had been reached and called the meeting to a close.

02_SC_15_02 MINUTES

Guillotine Reached, not discussed

02_SC_15_12 MATTERS ARISING

Guillotine Reached, not discussed

02_SC_15_13 OFFICER REPORTS

Guillotine Reached, not discussed

02_SC_15_14 REPORTS FROM SUB-COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

Guillotine Reached, not discussed

02_SC_15_15 To Be Actioned:

- (UUSU) Include new clause into Schedule 1, 3.7.7:
To include, in the two week after elections a clause that stipulates that another election is run offering open 5 seats per campus with no stipulation upon who can run for the position.
- (UUSU) In the rewrite of the Schedules incorporate the spirit of policy papers
02_SC_15_05/6/7.
- (Andrew McAnallan, UUSU) research into the points raised in the Arts Union paper.
- (UUSU Democracy Coordinator) Research into election regulations and best practice.