

NAME: Agenda of Student Council

DATE: 25/11/14

PAPER: SC_14_09

UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER STUDENTS' UNION

STUDENT COUNCIL MINUTES

An emergency meeting of the Student Council will take place on 25th November 2014 Video Conference at 6pm.

Council

Mark Bell (Chair)	Chris Shannon
Robbie Banham	Ryan McGavigan
Sarah Gordon	Vikki Lutton
Colum Mackey	Christine Campbell
Micky Quigg	Liam Mulvenna
Jude Doherty	Nathan Mount
Aoife Garvey	Gillian Bell
Eamon McCudden	James McCaffrey
Noel Flood	Andrew McAnallen
Arthur Caulfield	Ethan McNicholl
Craig Stafford	Dylan Cumbo
Jennifer Hillman	Becky Brennan
Euan Cantley	Megan McDonagh
Kevin McStravock	David Rafferty
Andrew Kullas	
Laura Quinn	
Darren Crooks	
Sophia Heikinin	

In attendance:

Stephen Aitken
Avril Honan
Emmett Mullally

APOLOGIES

Sarah Curran
Joshua Catterson
Yasmin McElhinney

MINUTES

10. Chair began the meeting by setting out the nature of the council meeting. Council noted that this was an emergency session due to events occurring out with the Union. Chair then passed the floor to Vice President Jordanstown. VP J began by notifying council of the availability of 3 vacant seats upon the Jordanstown Campus Council. There were four potential candidates that were standing to fill the seats available.

The candidates standing were:

- Renwick Sharp
- Gerard McDonald
- Michael Shaw
- Fabio Cristiano

The candidates made a short speech to council as to their suitability to council, the vote was scheduled to be held online after the council ended. The vote was carried out over three days online and three candidates were elected:

- Gerard McDonald
- Michael Shaw
- Fabio Cristiano

11. The chair then moved on to notify Council of the current UCU marking boycott that was underway. He explained the situation leading up to the situation in relation to the deficit in the pension scheme that Ulster was associated with and the proposed changes to members pension schemes. This led to the UCU balloting members for Industrial action which has led to the current marking boycott.

Chair explained how this has left UUSU in a difficult position as UUSU and UCU have worked and supported each other over a number of issues of the years and with the current climate of the DEL cuts UUSU would look to UCU for support against any cut or fee rise. Though on the flip side any marking boycott that is leading to members coursework and exams not being marked was not acceptable as this could lead to issues with member's progression.

A Coleraine council member noted that we should show support with UCU and their industrial action though we should ensure that support is given to final year students and post-graduate students as any delay in their coursework/exam marks could affect their progression/graduations.

Council debated possible views and responses.

Chair proposed to support the action by UCU but call for both parties to resolve the situation in the quickest way, while we also provide full support to all our members that are affected by the strike.

Council approved this option.

Chair stated that if there was any change in the situation that it would be brought back to council for review.

12. Chair outlined the situation surrounding the issue of the budget cuts that was occurring across every department within Northern Ireland. The executive within Stormont released a draft budget that would cut 10.8% from DEL. At the time of council UUSU, Individual sabbaticals and NUS/USI were drafting responses to the draft budget as the executive had opened the budget for consultation. The chair welcomed any all participation from councillors in this process as he highlighted by law that the government cannot ignore any response that they receive through a public consultation. Chair directed all interested councillors to get in touch with their site VP to receive more information.

The Chair also notified council that they and other UUSU VP's took part in a NUS/USI conference to plan a combined action to fight against any cuts aimed at the Higher Education sector.

The Chair opened the floor to comments from council. Views returned ranged from council needing to ensure that UUSU holds the University to its standard of education and expectation of current plans. Cuts in Higher Education could lead to an eventual rise in fees and the marketization of education. The "Brain Drain" of graduates going overseas for education in which a recent report highlighted that two thirds never return.

Chair stated they were working closely with internal and external partners on his response and wanted a mandate and support from council to condemn any and all cuts, protect education standards and ensure that students are protected.

Council unanimously approved this stance and would work to formalise this union wide.

13. Chair passed the floor to statements that had been put to overall council from individual sites. These are in relation to site commercial services.

Coleraine Bar and UUSU: Council stated that when tender was issued to Mocha and U:Eat it was never communicated that no other outlet could provide hot food on its premises. The

motion was put to council that when the tender is up for renewal, UUSU enters negotiations to ensure that our own premises have the option to serve hot food.

Belfast student space: VP Belfast- the current space in Belfast is due to be closed in the summer of 2015 due to the GBD. At present it is an old space that has been redecorated by the students' themselves. It is run by a network of volunteer staff drawn from the student body. VP Belfast updated council on the paper that is being drafted highlighting that with the closure of the Bronze space in 2015 there would be no student space within the new GBD and stating any and all requirements that UUSU would need to ensure a suitable space for students.. They stated that a campaign would be launching in January to increase visibility around the issue.

Magee Bar:

VP Magee- At Magee campus a bar committee was elected to help reinvigorate the Union space and bar within the Magee campus. This would help increase student participation, engagement and also the numbers attending Union events. Updates would follow as the year progressed.

14. The chair outlined the Good Relations Policy and explained again its purpose and how it works. This Agenda point is to submit for council approval two further supplementary documents that are tied to the GRP. These documents exist to help support and hold political events, activities in a post conflict society within UUSU.
Chair reminded Council that both these documents must not be followed individually but within the greater framework of the GRP.
Council passed the two policies unanimously.
Council ended.
15. Date and time of next meeting: Thursday 29th January 2015.