**Heriot-Watt University Student Union**

**Annual General Meeting – Thursday 16 February 2017**

**Zeros, The Union, Edinburgh**

**In attendance**

Diarmuid Cowan (DC) – President (Chair)

Sheona Dorrian (SD) – Vice President Community

Corto Pimenta (CP) – Vice President SBC

Eloise McNeaney (EM) – Vice President Wellbeing

Craig Gillen (CG) – Executive Officer (Welfare)

Natalie Hay (NH) – Executive Officer (Academic)

Carl Thompson (CT) – Executive Officer (Activities & Events)

Emily Conning (EC) – Executive Officer (SBC)

Tom Garnett (TG) – Executive Officer (Activities & Events)

Aashna Bakshi (AB) – Executive Officer (E&D)

Pranika Borkar (PB) – International Officer

Ellie Dick (ED) – LGBT+ Officer

Alice Kerr (AK) – Women’s Officer

Jordan Graham (JG) – Disabled Students Officer

Zee Nnyaladzi (ZN) – Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Officer

**Observers**

Stefan Kay – Chair of the Trustee Board

Brian Hay – External Trustee

Jonathan Kean – Student Trustee

Gail Edwards – Chief Executive Officer

Jamie Nutter – Head of Corporate Services and Deputy CEO

Denise McCaig – Student Engagement Manager (Minute Taker)

**The meeting opened at 6.35pm**

1. **ATTENDANCE** 
   1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the Annual General Meeting 2017.
   2. The Chair introduced herself and the other Student Union Officers in the meeting, as well as introducing the members of the Trustee Board present.
   3. Copies of the Agenda had been handed out. The Chair informed the meeting that on the other side of the Agenda they would find a summary of the main rules which may be used to influence how the meeting runs. If anyone needed help at any time, they were asked to approach the Chief Executive Officer, Gail Edwards
   4. **Quorum Count**: the Chair called for all Ordinary Members present to hold up their hands to check the numbers in attendance at the meeting – the result was 58 members present. Quorum was therefore reached.
2. **MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**
   1. The Motion on International Food had been raised with the university and action was promised but thus far little progress has been seen. The Student Union international options are being offered from this semester.
   2. Exam study leave in Semester 1 was raised with the university but the knock on effect for either the start of semester or exams was felt to be too disruptive to merit the addition of study leave.
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
   1. Copies of the previous Minutes were included in the papers circulated at the meeting.
   2. The Minutes of the AGM 2016 were duly passed by a simple majority.
4. **AOCB**
   1. A request for a Sustainability Officer had been received by the Student Union prior to the AGM and this has been placed under AOCB.
5. **CHALLENGES TO ORDER PAPER**
   1. There were no challenges to the order paper.
6. **RESIGNATIONS AND ELECTIONS**
   1. **Resignations**: The Chair informed the meeting that James Senior had resigned in Semester 1 as Societies Officer. The post was not refilled at the by-election and has remained unfilled throughout the year.
   2. **Elections**: The Chair informed the AGM that the Big Elections 2017 nominations would open at the end of the AGM. Nominations would close at 12pm on Wednesday 1 March. If anyone had any questions about the election process they were asked to speak to the Deputy Returning Officer (Denise McCaig) at any time.
7. **AFFILIATIONS TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**
   1. The Chair informed the AGM that as part of the Student Union Articles we are required to tell the meeting the organisations we affiliate to. Current these are:
   2. **National Union of Students (NUS)**, which we use for support for Offices and Staff as well as to participate in national campaigns. We also have access to NUS Services Buying Consortium. The Chair asked whether the AGM would wish to debate affiliation. A vote count was taken as follows: For – 12; Against – 19; Abstain – 19. Therefore a discussion was not held.
   3. **UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA)**, whose services we use to keep up to date with any international student issues such as visa changes, requirement changes, government updates etc. There is an advice line for our Student Advisors and we can also direct students to this organisation for free advice.
8. **DATES TO NOTE**
   1. There were no dates to note.
9. **REPORTS**
   1. **Audited Accounts for 2015-16**: The Chair informed the AGM that the Union has their annual accounts audited by external auditors. This is a requirement of the Union as a Charity. Full set of accounts are shown on the wall as the exit doors and some copies circulated throughout the meeting.
   2. The Chair informed the meeting of key bits of information covering the accounts, which are:
      1. The accounts reflect the first year as a limited company reflecting the best governance structure to support the aims of the charity. Figures in this years accounts are skewed by the transfer of assets and liabilities from the “old” unincorporated charity.
      2. The Union has over the past three years moved from a position of being in overdraft to building up reserves required by OSCR for the proper management of the union.
      3. The annual contribution from the university has grown by over £100k in the past few years to £550k.
      4. Alumni funds continues to support specific projects and societies annually by over £20k per annum.
   3. The Chair asked the meeting if they were happy to accept these accounts as showing the correct management of the Student Union.
   4. The accounts were accepted on a majority vote.
   5. **Officer Reports**: The Chair informed the meeting that the Officer Report was included in the papers circulated.
   6. Emily Conning asked for an update on the campaign about food prices on the SBC Campus. CP stated he has raised this with the campus committee and is working with the Borders College SA. He is conducting a survey of students and will bring the report back to the campus committee for further discussion.
   7. The Officer Reports were accepted on a majority vote.
10. **MOTIONS**
    1. **MOTION 1: Street lighting on campus.**
       1. The Proposer was asked to speak on the Motion and was given 2 minutes to do so. Alice Kerr proposed the motion.
       2. The Motion reads:

The Student Union notes:

1. As Women’s Officer I have received a lot of complaints that female students don’t feel safe walking around campus and to their cars at night as the campus is too dark In

The Student Union believes:

1. It is important for female students to feel safe wherever they are at university.

The Student Union Resolves:

1. The Union should lobby the university to get more street lights in place.
   * 1. The Chair asked if anyone wished to speak against the Motion. Marnoch Hamilton-Jones had a query rather than a speech against. He was given one minute.
     2. A speech for was taken by Savannah Banks.
     3. The Chair offered a speech against but no one wished to speak.
     4. The Motion was summated by Craig Gillen.
     5. A vote was taken and the Motion was carried by a majority vote.
   1. **MOTION 2: Provision of a quiet chill out space for students.**
      1. The Proposer was asked to speak on the Motion and was given 2 minutes to do so. Martyn Dewar proposed the motion.
      2. The Motion reads:

The Student Union notes:

1. There are a growing number of Students at HW who have impaired sensory processing capability (for example Autistic Spectrum Conditions, Sensory Processing Disorder) and those who simply need time to chill out after intensive periods of lectures / study. The University does not have any facility that would allow for students to relax in a quiet space, which is extremely unfortunate

The Student Union believes:

1. It is important for female students to feel safe wherever they are at university. That the University should use some of the empty space in the Hugh Nisbet Building (created by the departure of RBS and Blackwells) to create an appropriate space that would allow students to relax in a peaceful environment, while remaining connected to the University environs around them. This would intentionally not be a study space (nor a catering venue, albeit, a kettle would be useful), rather, a space to enable students relax, chill out (perhaps even meditate) and take time to process things around them. This has the potential to be extremely beneficial to Students mental health and wellbeing.
2. The location in particular is important, as it is close both to the Advice Hub, Student Support and Accommodation office (Counselling) and the SSC, so allows for a link to complementary services owing to them literally being on the doorstep

The Student Union Resolves:

1. To lobby the Director of Campus Services to allow and facilitate the creation of an appropriate space in Hugh Nisbet at the earliest possible opportunity and work with the Student Union and Student representatives to ensure the orderly running of the facility.
   * 1. The Chair asked if anyone wished to speak against the Motion. Maks Roman had a query rather than a speech against. He was given one minute.
     2. A speech for was taken by Tobias Nadal
     3. The Chair offered a speech against but no one wished to speak.
     4. The Motion was summated by Jordan Graham.
     5. A vote was taken and the Motion was carried by a majority vote.
   1. **MOTION 3: Include a wider range of healthier foods in the Student Union menu to better accommodate different diets**
      1. The Proposer was asked to speak on the Motion and was given 2 minutes to do so. Rosanna McDermott proposed the motion.
      2. The Motion reads:

The Student Union notes:

1. Currently the Student Union has a reasonably limited range of food which caters to different diets and can also be considered healthy, such as the Mediterranean vegetables in the side orders section. The side salad in the same section is very limited as a salad and there could be more options for dressings.

The Student Union believes:

1. The student body has a huge range of diets, very few of which are catered for within the Union itself, particularly for those of us making a conscious effort to eat healthily.

The Student Union Resolves:

1. While I am aware that the menu in the Union has recently been changed, I believe it needs to undergo further changes before it could be considered to be varied and considerate of all diets
   * 1. The Chair asked if anyone wished to speak against the Motion. Sheona Dorrian clarified the logistical constraints within the SU kitchen. She was given one minute.
     2. A speech for was taken by Alice Kerr.
     3. The Chair offered a speech against but no one wished to speak.
     4. The Motion was summated by Savannah Banks.
     5. A vote was taken and the Motion was carried by a majority vote.
2. **ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**
   1. **Sustainability Officer**
      1. The Chair asked the proposer of the Sustainability Officer to speak on the proposal. Tim Elliot was given 2 minutes to do so.
      2. The Chair asked if anyone wished to speak against the Motion. Craig Gillen was given one minute.
      3. A one minute speech for was taken by James Clark.
      4. A one minute speech against was taken by Rosanna McDermot.
      5. The Chair asked for an indication by a show of hands whether more rounds of debate were required. There was insufficient support for more rounds.
      6. The proposal was summated by Lenka Svorcova.
      7. The Chair reminded the AGM that the vote was to indicate whether Executive Committee should consider the proposal. A vote was taken and a vote count taken as follows: For – 16; Against – 12; Abstain – 19. Therefore the proposal passed to Executive for consideration.
   2. The Chair asked for any other competent business.
   3. Ellie Dick raised the issue of university guarantors for disowned LGBT students. This should be demitted to the Executive Committee.
   4. Emily Conning raised the issue of fashion show funding cuts. DC noted this and will raise with the appropriate university contacts.
   5. Martyn Dewar raised the issue of university catering quality and pricing. DC stated there was progress on pricing but quality was another issue. It is on the Principal’s radar.
   6. James Clark asked whether the student shop self-serve tills could have a mechanism to cancel items and that there is a reduction in the minimum card spend. DC said this would be passed on to the appropriate people.
   7. Katya Moncrieff raised the issue of microwaves in crush areas for students. A discussion ensued with other students in the room. DC said this has been raised before and will raise again.
   8. Various issues were raised by a number of students regarding parcel delivery in halls of residence. DC stated the university are working on installing parcel drop off points in Christina Miller.
   9. Brett Bowman raised the issue of real ale selection in the bar. SD stated a new Bar and Events Manager had just started and was looking at exactly this issue.
3. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

12.1 The next AGM would be held in February 2018.

1. **CLOSURE**

13.1 The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting and taking part. The meeting closed.