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| **Executive**  Date: **Tuesday 26 September** **2017**  Time: 6.30**pm** Number: 2 Venue: **Volunteers Lounge, Student Union, Edinburgh Campus**  |

**In the Chair**: Diarmuid Cowan, President

**Also Present**: Aashna Bakshi, Vice President Wellbeing

Lucy Graham, Vice President (SBC)

Hugo Barker, Executive Academic

Aoife Clarke, Executive Activities

Ellis Dick, Executive Welfare

Xander Mcdonald, Executive Events

Toby Nadal, Executive E & D

Yusuf Ashraf, Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic Officer

Leila Collie, Women’s Officer

Ari Finnie, LGBT+ Officer

**Apologies**: Jay Clifford, Vice President Community

Quan Liang, International Officer

Mehul Vij, Charities Officer

Martyn Dewar, Disabled Students Officer

Gail Edwards, Chief Executive Officer

**In Attendance**: Gillian Fortune, Executive Assistant (Minute Taker)

**ACTION**

**2.4 Improve Promotion for Workshops Have A Go Campaign VP Community**

**3.3 Complete Doodle Poll for Volunteers for Diversity Month All**

**4.1 Suggest Sponsors etc for Big Pink raffle All**

**5.2.1 Email students re Microwave locations President**

**5.5.1 Organise meeting re Events Crew for society events VP Community**

**5.6.2 Organise Consent Talks at SBC VP Community**

**5.7.2 Be Proactive and promote NUS discussion with students All**

**5.8.1 Improve FH recruitment process VP Community**

**5.12 Inform students of follow up to their topics All**

**5.13 Three Topics from different students to next Executive All**

**6.3 Inform Floorplay of deadline for requests re promotions VP Community**

1. **FORMAL BUSINESS**

1.1 **Matters Arising**:

**Voting**: The President reiterated that the Officer proposing a vote has to ask for Office Bearers to be included in the vote, if they wish this to happen, on each occasion.

**The Plan**: Several copies were circulated at the meeting. DC asked everyone to check over The Plan to make sure everyone know what do, when, and will work towards the goals set. October was a big month with lots planner.

**Reports**: The President reiterated the new format of the Reports.

**JW Commons**: Some discussion ensued on the bad acoustics in this area. The President stated that the University were aware of the problems.

All other Action Points had been done. Progress was noted for future plans on LGBT+ and LGBTQ+ discussions and Working Group to discuss questions on Officer membership etc.

1.2 **Factual Corrections**:

**Officers Verbal Reports**: The Women’s Officer’s report was missed off the Minutes. It should have read: “Over summer the Women’s Officer answered emails from incoming Freshers and other students and planned the Women's Brunch for Freshers Week. Also attended Sexual Harassment Training with some of the Executive and Officers. The Women’s Officer is planning for the Brunch and Freshers Fair, and working with the VP Wellbeing on Diversity Month and The Big Pink, in October.”

1.3 **Notice of AOCB**: Executive Activities asked that item on Event Management company Floorplay’s request for radio coverage be added to the Agenda. This was agreed.

1.4 The Minutes were approved and duly passed.

1. **SABBATICAL UPDATES**

2.1 **President**: The President’s report had been circulated with the meeting papers. No questions were asked about the report. The President informed the Meeting that he would be visiting the Dubai and Malaysian Campuses with the CEO at the end of October. They would have a week in Dubai helping with welfare issues and trying to get a service level agreement made. They would be overseeing various issues in Malaysia for the following week.

2.1.1 **Microwaves**: The President reported that the microwaves had been purchased. They were currently awaiting cleaning awareness posters, before being placed in the University sites. A joint University/Student Union logo was being designed by our Design and Marketing Co-Ordinator. This logo would be used to let students know when a project, such as the provision of microwaves, had been done for them by a joint effort of the University/SU.

2.2 **Vice President Wellbeing**: The VP’s report had been circulated with the meeting papers. The main focus was now on Diversity Month, with over 22 events taking place. These events were now booked. The VP had attended the Survey Management Committee about helping with a survey to set up the Guarantor Scheme with the Executive E & D. The VP has also met with the Global Liaison Committee. The VP explained what the BAG (Black Attainment Gap) was and why the President was helping with a campaign to gather information on this issue. Discussion ensued amongst the Officers on the definition of “black”. The President informed the meeting that Key performance indicators have shown that this needs to be done at HWU, as we have no information on this issue, and don’t know if it is a problem at HWU or not.

The VP Wellbeing updated the meeting on plans for a commitment by the University on mental health. There was no provision for this at Malaysia and Dubai Campuses. Welfare Services would be audited and this needs approval at GLC and then some work would be done on what’s needed to keep up with the demand for these services.

2.3 **Vice President SBC**: As the VP had been on holiday the report was tabled at the meeting. The VP gave more details on the various points in the report. The VP informed the meeting that they would be focussing on wellbeing in the near future, as most Freshers now started to feel homesick at this time in the semester. The VP would also be looking to increase the number of societies based at SBC. A Colour Run was planned at the SBC Campus for the very first time and all the students were very excited. SBC would be doing events and campaigns for Diversity Month. There had been an increase in the number of international students attending at SBC and the VP would be concentrating on Welfare as an issue needing attention.

2.4 **Vice President Community**: The VP’s report had been circulated with the meeting papers. The “VP” gave a brief update on the Open Day plans and asked that Officers and Executive try and attend on Saturday 30th September to give visitors a flavour of a busy, friendly Student Union. The “VP” also asked for around 12 volunteers to help with the Haunted House which would be taking place on 27th October. The Have a Go campaign would be progressing and the VP would be looking at the promotion of the workshops to ensure as many students as possible knew about the events and wanted to attend.

1. **EXECUTIVE UPDATES**

3.1 **Executive Academic**: The Officer informed the meeting of his attendance at SHEEC (Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee). They were going to be picking a new theme for their work during the next three years. Currently the hot topic was how we share data and keep control of this data, keeping within the new Data Protection rules. The Executive Academic had also attend various University committee meetings. Lecture Capture was now launched, with a few issues. Feedback was being looked at and any teething problems were being looked at.

3.1.1 The Executive Events informed the meeting of several problems with one lecturer who did not want to be filmed during his lectures. The Executive Academic informed the meeting that it was only a pilot scheme which had been launched and it was hoped that when others saw how successful the scheme was they would want to participate more.

3.1.2 The LBGT+ Officer asked if the sound was flattened or stereo, as this could affect the quality for several students, who had audio issues. The Executive Academic said it would be investigated.

3.2 **Executive Activities**: The Officer informed the meeting that they would be looking to do more workshops in Semester 1. They would also be planning to continue the Give it a Go campaign in Semester 2. The Officer was currently working on Diversity Month events and the Haunted House with the VP Community. Meetings were being organised to get the Pub Quiz up and running regularly again.

3.3 **Executive Welfare**: The Officer informed the meeting that the campaign for the Bridge Link during Diversity Month was coming together. Alpacas and Therapets was organised but some volunteers would be needed for these events.

3.3.1 Everyone was asked to complete the Doodle Pool the VP Wellbeing would send out to organise volunteers.

3.3.2 The Executive Welfare had attended the Mental Health Training recently and found it really useful, others were encouraged to attend if they could. The VP Wellbeing informed the meeting of the Mental Health training which was taking place during Diversity Month, on 16, 18 and 20 October. A session would take place at SBC on 24th October. The VP explained the difference between Emergency Mental Health training, which concentrated on noticing other people and helping them in an emergency and these sessions, which concentrated on personal health and suicide.

3.4 **Executive Events**: The Officer informed the meeting that the Halls Party was planned as part of the Open Day events on 30th September. The Officer would be helping the Events Crew become more efficient and hopefully gather more volunteers to help with events.

3.5 **Executive Equality & Diversity**: The Officer had been working with the VP Wellbeing on the Guarantor Scheme as well as investigating sites for the Quiet Spaces, meeting with University staff to find locations. The Officer was also starting to plan Global Day.

1. **OFFICE BEARERS UPDATES**

4.1 **Women’s Officer**: Freshers Week had been really good. The Women’s Brunch had 50 students attending and everyone had really enjoyed themselves. The event would be run again at some future date soon. The Big Pink was the big event for the Women’s Officer during Diversity Month. This was a breast cancer campaign event, the Officer was currently trying to find sponsors and prizes for the raffles.

4.2 **BAME Officer**: The Speed Meeting during Freshers Week, could have been better attended, however 16 students turned up for the event and seemed to enjoy it. The Officer was trying to find a new project to work on. Currently the Officer was working on Diversity Month, featuring Black History and organising a presentation by Godfrey Palmer (Sir Godfrey Henry Oliver Palmer OBE is a Professor Emeritus in the School of Life Sciences at Heriot-Watt University, and a human rights activist). The Officer was also helping the ACS with their party event for Black History Week.

4.3 **LGBT+ Officer**: The Officer informed the meeting that 30 Freshers had joined them on the Freshers Night Out. They had met up, not planned, with the QMU LGBT+ Officer and now planned some joint events for the two university groups. Tea and Chat had attracted 15 attendees. Other projects the Officer was working on were Gender Identity campaign, Ceilidh Band for Red Party and a clothes swap for transgender students.

1. **LISTEN / DISCUSS / ACT**

 The President reminded everyone that at least three topics were expected from each Officer.

5.1 **President**

5.1.1 **Complaint**: A student had complained about a member of staff. External support for staff and student was forthcoming, as the person of interest was management level.

5.1.2 **Graduate Level Apprenticeships**: this was a pilot scheme currently running at HWU. There was currently 50 student apprentices on campus, he would email them to let them know we were here for them for any support they needed and that they were part of the Student Union.

5.1.3 **Student Shop**: There were signage complaints and it wasn’t clear what was in the meal deal. Students were annoyed. The CEO and the Retail Manager were working on this with NUS to get it sorted. NUS had caused the delay with the signage.

5.2 **Executive Welfare**

5.2.1 **Microwaves**: the President had now updated the meeting on this topic. It was agreed an email would be sent to let students know the locations of the microwaves.

5.2.2 **Postgraduate Centre**: the Disabled Access Door was not working, again. When can it be fixed. The President reported that the University were aware of the problem. They were really busy and not enough engineers were on site to deal with current demands. The door would be a priority and be fixed as soon as possible.

5.2.3 **Mental Health**: The Officer explained that mentors were unsure where to send students who needed help. The VP Wellbeing informed the meeting that the University had recently appointed a Mental Health Officer, who was a permanent member of staff. When the Wellbeing Centre was fully complete it would be easier to signpost students.

5.2.4 **Jobs at the University for Students**: The President explained that at present all jobs were being advertised internally only. This is making it difficult for any recruitment of new students.

5.3 **Womens’ Officer**

5.3.1 **Meetings**: The Women’s Officer had been disappointed in the lack of attendance at the Group’s meetings. The Officer wondered if anyone had any ideas. Should Brunch events be organised rather than meetings, as this had proved popular with Freshers.

The President suggested asking the Alumni Office for names and contacts of inspiring women graduates who would like to give a presentation at the meetings, turning them into networking events rather than just meetings.

5.3.2 **Web Page**: The Womens’ Officer also mentioned that the page on the Union website needed updating. The Officer would work on this as soon as possible.

5.4 **Vice President Wellbeing**

5.4.1 **Tier 4 Visas**: There was some confusion among the Tier 4 students, different information being given by two University staff. The VP was currently trying to co-ordinate with the University to try and help the students. Work and information was also needed on After Study Work Visas for students.

5.5 **Executive Events**

5.5.1 **Events Crew**: There had been talk that societies were being asked to pay for the crew’s time when they were organising events. The Officer felt this would cause problems for smaller societies. The President asked the Officer to contact the Vice President Community and ask the VP to contact the Bar and Events Manager to organise a meeting between the Manager, the CEO and the Executive Events to discuss this situation and come up with a solution that suited everyone.

5.5.2 **Booking Rooms**: The Officer stated that a society had reported difficulties booking a room at the Union, through the web site and at Reception, last semester. The Executive Assistant was surprised at this and asked which room was involved, the Officer did not know. The Executive Assistant asked the Officer to contact the society and ask them to visit the Office where they would be helped with any room bookings.

5.6 **Executive Academic**

5.6.1 **Recorded Lectures**: The current feedback indicated that students like the recordings and consider it to be a good option. Distance Learning students would be helped especially by this new option.

5.6.2 **Consent Talks**: The current feedback was that the lecturers welcomed the talks as they felt them beneficial for students.

The Vice President SBC asked about Consent Talks at SBC. The Vice President Community would be asked to organise these.

5.7 **BAME Officer**

5.7.1 **Car Parking**: The Officer reported that several complaints had been made over lack of parking spaces. The President informed the meeting that the University were considering permits for all cars being brought onto campus. The President also said that the University were going to encourage car sharing, cycling to work and other schemes to cut back on the number of cars coming onto campus. The Permits would be done on a tier system which needed to be fair and so, would probably take some working out.

5.7.2 **NUS Affiliation**: The Officer had been asked by several students why we were part of NUS and not independent, 16 people had asked in recent weeks. The President explained that all the Officers should be ambassadors for NUS and able to answer this question positively and helpfully. The President admitted there were misconceptions about NUS and what it stood for and what it did to help Unions and students. EUSA had been independent for several years and had realised that they were limiting the help they could give students in so many ways by not being part of the National network, so they were now affiliated to NUS and able to engage in national issues. The President suggested that the students enquiring should be directed to stand for election and go to the NUS Conferences and see what it was all about. He asked all Officers to be positive and get students on side. Officers should be proactive and open the subject with students, to inform them first.

The Executive Academic asked if we should be educating students on NUS, as this ignorance of what NUS is and does was an issue everywhere. Most students just need to be informed and they are then onside.

The President informed the meeting that perhaps this could be a new campaign for the Executive to consider doing this year, they had a campaign budget for their use. The President also understood that NUS was seen as a “clique” organisation and that the more people interested in the organisation the more would stand for election and open it out to more influences.

5.8 **Executive Activities**

5.8.1 **Freshers Helpers**: The Officer explained that several people had commented on their disappointment in the lack of numbers and personalities of the Helpers this year. Perhaps the recruitment process could be looked at to get more students involved and more outward looking individuals interested. It was agreed the Vice President Community should look at this topic with a view to improving the recruitment process.

5.8.2 **Enrolment**: Several students had complained about the lack of communication between mentors. Half a class had been told they did not have the right accreditation, no one knew what was happening. With 2nd to 3rd year students the University needs to put out more information. The President explained that the University understood there had been problems and they were working on improving this issue.

5.8.3 **Halls Warden**: Students had complained about sectarian language being used by other students, which can cause tension amongst student groups. This was suggested as a future campaign. The Executive Welfare Officer suggested that if people knew the history behind derogatory words they would be more reluctant to use them in a modern setting, most people did not know how such words came about. Discussion ensued on whether we should run a campaign on this topic.

5.8.4 **Engagement**: Some students asked if the Union was like this all the time. The difference between the buzz of Freshers Week and the following weeks should be addressed. The impetus and interest shown during Freshers Week should be kept up by social media and events done to keep interest up and keen.

5.9 **Executive Academic**

5.9.1 **Communications**: There were communication problems everywhere, between everyone. This led to making other problems throughout the University and the Student Union. The Officer had met with John Sawkins about encouraging innovative ideas. The Management Structure of the University had been explained during the meeting and the structure did not help new and innovative ideas to be encouraged and taken up. The Officer had heard about a leaner way to make decisions and he felt the University should be looking to streamline their processes.

The Vice President Wellbeing stated that communication was bad at the base level. Lecturer to lecturer, this needs to be more co-ordinated. Students were being overloaded with work. The President stated that this had been noted in NSS and the issue was being worked on during the year. All disciplines would use a calendar to co-ordinate and stop overloading students.

Executive Academic explained that there was loads of useful resources out in the wide world that could help. The whole situation was a waste of resources and staff.

5.9.2 **Mental Health Problems**: the Executive Academic had heard about a student who was anxious about mental health problems, a Fresher. Staff and Officers need to be aware that many people will feel daunted during Freshers and beyond. The LGBT+ Officer told the meeting that the Support Centre had run a social anxiety support group last year. It was a national problem and needed to be spoken about more often to help reduce the stigma attached to this health issue.

The Vice President Wellbeing reported that the Streetwise volunteers had noted 4 people out of the 25 helped during Freshers Week had mental health problems and two of the four were taking medication.

5.9.3 **Sound Quality**: the Officer mentioned that the sound quality in some lecturer theatres wasn’t good and this was reflected in the video recordings.

5.10 **Vice President SBC**

5.10.1 The VP mentioned the usual complaints from students at SBC, such as car parking, no student bar and lack of studio space. More studio spaces were being made and the situation was getting better.

5.10.2 Parking would always be a problem as there was no more space to expand the current parking areas and sharing with the college made this more difficult. Car sharing and cycling were being encouraged.

5.11 **LGBT+ Officer**

5.11.1 **Queues**: The Officer had heard of problems with student ID Cards. More tills and staff had been needed as there had been long queues. The VP Wellbeing reported that because this was the first year the administration had been split, the queues had not been anticipated, but the department was not aware of the demand and would be looking to improve for next year.

5.11.2 **Disabled Access**: Several students had complained about several access issues. The President informed the meeting that because of movement at the construction/demolition site the positioning of a ramp for disabled access had proved difficult. This would soon be remedied. The President asked for students to take photos of the difficult areas and then tag them and direct them to the Estates Office, informing them of the length of time the area had been a problem. The President was aware the Disabled Students Officer was working on this particular problem.

5.11.3 **Clothes Swap**: The LBGT+ Group were organising a clothes swap on line, a project that was much needed.

5.11.4 The LGBT+ Officer informed the meeting that NUS were making a training pack/video for their staff about transgender issues. If we wanted we could get a copy at a later date for our use.

The Executive Welfare indicated that personal tutors training was not going well. The training included mental health but did not include anything about diverse students.

5.12 The President was very pleased that all the Officers had such a good variety of topics. Everyone was asked to go back to the students who had originated the topics and let them know their topic had been raised Executive and inform them of what progress, advice, options had been discussed and what would take place regarding the topic in the near future.

5.13 The President asked again that everyone come to the next Executive with three different subjects from three different students. Everyone was asked to buy into the concept and keep their engagement with the students going.

1. **AOCB**

6.1 **Floorplay**: The Executive Activities reported on a request the Vice President Community had received from the owner of the management company Floorplay for permission to use our name, (Heriot-Watt University Student Union), among other Student Union names, in a radio commercial to promote and endorse their Love University Card and event. The events were staged in Why Not Nightclub.

6.2 Executive Academic asked what would happen if Floorplay did something that would bring us into disrepute. Would we be able to back out of the deal. The Officer would like to check the Contract we have with Floorplay before making a decision. The President stated that all previous links during Freshers had proved that Floorplay had a good control of the event and would sort out any problems which may arise with the venue. He did not think this would come up. The Executive Activities phoned the VP Community to ask about the contract and the endorsement in the radio commercial. The VP Community replied to the questions. He felt that we had good control over any situation. A discussion ensued.

6.3 It was agreed that in future any such requests should be made at least two weeks in advance so we could make sure we knew exactly what was happening with time to make a decision. The Vice President Community would be asked to inform Floorplay of this decision. On this occasion the Executive members said yes to the request for this occasion only.

1. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

7.1 The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 17th October in Committee Room 1 at 6.30pm.

7.2 Arrangements for an Executive meeting at SBC campus would be discussed at the next meeting.