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| **Executive**  Date: **Tuesday 23 January 2018**  Time: **5pm** Number: **5**  Venue: **The New Big Meeting Room, Student Union, Edinburgh Campus** |

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

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

Jay Clifford, Vice President Community

Lucy Graham, Vice President (SBC)

Hugo Barker, Executive Academic

Aoife Clarke, Executive Activities

Xander McDonald, Executive Events

Toby Nadal, Executive E & D

Martyn Dewar, Disabled Students Officer

Stuart Beaton, Halls Officer

Yusuf Ashraf, Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic Officer

Vijetha Mohan, Postgraduate Officer

Mehul Vij, Charities Officer

**Apologies**: Ari Finnie, LGBT+ Officer

Leila Collie, Women’s Officer

**In Attendance**: Gail Edwards, Chief Executive Officer

Nicholas Chong, President Malaysian Campus

Franklin Thankachan, President Dubai Campus

Gillian Fortune, Executive Assistant (Minute Taker)

**ACTION**

**4.1.3 Request update on works in JW1 & 2 President**

**5.3 Motion to NUS Scotland Conference President**

**6.6 Motion Agreed to go forward with CCSC President**

**7.4 Court and Senate Membership to go forward President**

**8.2.1 Attend AGM on 13 Feb 6pm, Engage with Students to**

**Encourage attendance and bring five students to AGM All**

**8.2.4 Deadline 26 Jan for Photos etc to DropBox for AGM All**

**9.4 Comments etc to VP Community re SC Proposal All**

**11.1.1 Discuss phone access in halls VPC & DSO**

**11.2 Discuss Halal Option with T. Day VP Community**

**11.7 Improve access on web to room booking facility CEO**

**11.9 Past paper topic to School Officers President**

**11.10 Tweet campaign for hardship vouchers VP Community**

**11.11 Liberation Officers to Write report on activities for website Exec E & D**

**11.12 Investigate lack of Hoovers in laundry rooms VP Community**

**12.1 Source Prevent Posters VP Wellbeing**

**13.1.3 Further Work on Graduation Costs to next Executive VP Community**

**13.2.3 Ask UCU President to give SU information on action and ensure**

**Students informed re action President**

**13.2.5 Student Union will support UCU and issue statement CEO**

1. **FORMAL BUSINESS**

1.1 **Matters Arising**:

Sleep in the Park: FB Team was set up and the event was a success.

Events Calendar for Crew: Because there are only three core Crew Members this did not happen.

Self-Serve Tills : Notice for these tills will be produced.

Submissions Processes: This investigation is ongoing.

Erasmus Network: Work was ongoing to get more student involved.

Investigate Mens’ Day Campaign: This had been done.

Joint Executive Meetings with the Sports Union: Arrangements were being made to set up the first

meeting.

Remembrance Poppies in our Outlets: Poppies were supplied for sale in Libertys and the Shop. Next year they would be sent to us automatically.

The Big Ask Survey: This had been promoted.

1.2 **Minutes**: The minutes of the 4th meeting were duly approved and passed.

1.3 **Notice of AOCB**: The VP Community asked that the topic of Graduations be added in this section.

The President asked that UCU Business be added in this section.

1. **SABBATICAL UPDATES**

2.1 All Sabbaticals had submitted a written report which had been circulated with the meeting papers.

There were no additions to the report and no questions on the reports were raised.

2.2 The President thanked everyone for their very good reports.

1. **EXECUTIVE UPDATES**

3.1 Nearly all Executive had submitted a written report which had been circulated with the meeting papers.

3.2 Reports not circulated were tabled at the meeting. There were no additions to the reports.

3.3 A question was raised on the need for the approval of the University Survey Committee re the questions in all surveys done on campus. The Deputy CEO had attended a meeting of this Committee very recently and had asked about approval for the Student Union surveys. The Committee agreed that they would not need to oversee the questions the Student Union were putting forward in their own surveys. The CEO asked that we make sure we were not repeating questions covered in other surveys.

3.4 The President thanked everyone for their very good reports.

1. **OFFICE BEARER UPDATES**

Each Officer was asked in turn to give a brief verbal update on their recent activities and their future plans.

4.1 **Disabled Students Officer**: Reported that the Bar Manager had investigated Alcohol Free Beer for sale in Geordies, so this was progressing agreeably. The Officer had been involved in several mitigating circumstances cases by several students. The acoustics and other problems in JW1 and 2 were being sorted. Some had already been alleviated, but the University were having problems with the contractors who did not appear to have done the work to the agreed specifications and this lack was causing the problems and now having to be remedied.

4.1.1 The Executive Events Officer confirmed there were also problems with seating as several groups of seats were not attached to others and were unstable. The speakers and acoustics in JW2 were bad.

Yusuf Ashraf, BAME Officer entered the meeting.

The Disabled Student Officer informed the meeting that the acoustics problems in JW1 had been fixed, although there were several other problems the contractors needed to sort out.

4.1.2 The President thanked the Officer for his good work.

4.1.3 The President would ask J. Sawkins for an update on the work and make sure all was being done to rectify the problems.

4.2 **BAME Officer**: The Officer had been asked to give a speech at the Holyrood Magazine Conference, Improving the BAME Experience in HE, a very prestigious event.

4.2.1 The Officer was thanked for his input and for taking on this task. Well done.

4.3 **Postgraduate Officer**: The Officer had attended a meeting for the James Watt Scholarships and a decision on the funding would be made next Thursday.

4.4 **Charities Officer**: The Yard, one of our charities for the year had been in touch to ask about the payment of the donation we had promised. The VPs agreed they would look into this matter. The meeting was informed of a Charities Event which would be coming to the Student Union soon, run by Boohoo Clothing. We were just awaiting agreement on a date for the event.

4.5 **Halls Officer**: The Officer informed the meeting there would be a special Halls Events on 24 February, a Burns Night with haggis etc etc. The meal would be free to all students resident in Halls.

1. **MOTION FOR NUS SCOTLAND CONFERENCE**

5.1 **Union Development**: The President presented the reasoning behind the Motion. It was felt that change was needed to bring NUS Scotland procedures in line with National procedures at Conference.

5.2 Several questions were asked about the circumstances around this difference. The President answered all questions.

5.3 A vote was taken with Executive only voting: the result was unanimous agreement for the Motion to go forward.

**6. MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE**

6.1 **Cross Campus Student Council**: The President presented the background information for this Motion.

6.2 Hopefully it would keep all dealings with each campus and between the campuses clear and transparent, it was very important such a structure should be put in place and able to be taken forward, regardless of who was elected to the Sabbatical posts in future years.

6.3 The CEO explained how it would work with the current rules in place, there would be Bye Law changes, but there were some weeks to go yet, so everyone should be able to work it through. Feedback would need to be handled.

6.4 The President added more details on the working of the new structure. The President reiterated that the Motion would formalise what was already happening and ensure it continued to happen in future.

6.5 The President answered several questions and gave more details as requested. The CEO added more details on how the Bye Laws would be affected etc.

6.6 A vote was taken with Executive only voting: the result was unanimous agreement for the Motion to go forward.

1. **APPOINTMENT OF STUDENT MEMBERS TO COURT AND SENATE**

The President reported that it had taken him a year to have these appointments formalised and put into the ordinances of the University. The President gave a brief report on the background as to how the changes will happen and how it will all fit in with current remits etc.

7.1 **Court**: This Committee had a more formal structure and a decision would be made by the Executive and Sabbaticals as to who the student representative would be. This is current procedure for this Committee, the representative needs to be able to devote a lot of time to this role, as it is very time consuming, so probably less suited to a voluntary Officer.

7.2 **Senate**: This was a less formal Committee structure. The President explained that both posts were attempting to get Student Union representation at a high level on University Committees. The post on Senate for Malaysia and Dubai would ensure they had direct contact with the University rather than relying on Edinburgh to take their business forward.

7.2.1 Several questions were asked about existing roles etc. The President clarified each point. The time needed for attending the Senate as the representative would be allocated to suit each Officer. The new posts would not be taken up until next year, but we need a decision to say this is our future intent, which has then to go through the proper processes and systems.

7.3 The Executive thanked the President for his hard work and perseverance in this matter.

7.4 A vote was taken and it was agreed that both Ordinances would be carried through.

1. **GOVERNANCE**

8.1 **Articles of Association**: The CEO had sent an email to all Officers enclosing the paperwork to update the Articles of Association for the Student Union. The CEO reported that the changes had already been approved by the Trustee Board.

8.1.1 After the Executive Committee had approved the changes the Articles would then go to the AGM and have a quorate vote at the AGM by the students present to make the paperwork legal.

8.1.2 It was noted the CEO needed to publish the Articles so students would be able to see them and make an informed decision at the AGM. There would be a brief summary given at the AGM.

8.1.3 The Executive Committee voted unanimously to accept all the updates and changes.

8.1.4 It was noted that changes for SBC would be circulated at a later date.

8.2 **AGM**: This would be taking place on Tuesday 13th February 2018 at 6pm in Zeros in the Student Union Building.

8.2.1 All Officers were asked to attend, with no excuses accepted for absence. Each Officer is asked to engage with as many students as possible to encourage them to attend the meeting. The President asked that each Officer bring at least five people with them to the meeting. The CEO reminded everyone that we have a Proxy Voting System in place for students who are unable to attend and vote in person. Quorate for the meeting was 40 students.

8.2.2 The AGM details and papers would be published and advertised from Monday 29th January. If any Officer had ideas to encourage students to attend the AGM they were to let the Executive know. Executive of the Sports Union would be invited to the AGM and asked to let their members know about the meeting.

8.2.3 Executive Reports and Questions: The set up would be similar to the Election Hustings, as all Officers should be held accountable. Students will be asking questions. There would be a report by each Officer given to the students, this arrangement worked very well last year. Each Officer was asked to send in 2 or 3 key points which would be included in the general presentation to be given to the students at the AGM. Any photos, reports, accounts of awards received etc etc should be sent to the Drop Box the VP Community will organise for the purpose. Friday 26th January at 5pm is the deadline for inclusion in the Presentation, everyone was asked to participate fully.

8.2.4 The Agenda for the meeting would include updating our Tolerance and Nestle policies, cover Unconscious Bias and the Attainment Gap for example.

1. **SOCIETY COUNCIL**

9.1 The latest minutes of the Society Council had been circulated with the meeting papers.

9.2 The VP Community reported that approval of funding applications would be amended so that any application for funding up to £300 would be approved by the VP Community and the Activities Co-Ordinator. Any application for funding above £300 would need approval by the Council.

9.3 Events Crew had been discussed at a separate meeting and the result was that two new posts would be created and advertised for any student to apply for. The posts would be advertised soon.

9.4 **Proposal**: The VP Community asked everyone to look at the proposal, if they wanted to discuss any aspect they should contact him. Several students had asked for personal clothing to be included as an option for funding. This proposal had been turned down by the Society Council.

Franklin Thankachan, President Dubai arrived at the meeting.

1. **INTRODUCTIONS**

10.1 The President asked everyone round the table to introduce themselves.

1. **LISTEN / DISCUSS / ACT**

Each Officer was asked to report one topic which a student had brought to their attention.

11.1 **Disabled Students Officer**: Had encountered a lot of enquires and had dealt with them already. The latest was that students could not contact the Samaritans Helpline direct from their rooms in Halls. The University hadn’t attempted to sort the problem. The latest information was that the extra facility to call outwith the current allowance would be treated as “service enhancement”. Whether this carried a charge or not was unclear.

11.1.1 The VP Community and Disabled Student Officer would discuss this topic further and note that a review was in place for 25 February.

11.2 **BAME Officer**: Several students were unaware that most of the chicken used in University catering was Halal standard. The Officer asked if this option could be made cleared on the menus as well as advertised in the outlets. The VP Community would speak to Thomas Day about this matter.

11.3 **Executive Academic**: Problems with booking rooms in the University. This was being dealt with.

11.4 **VP SBC**: Problems encountered with visibility of the Student Union and engagement with students. However, a new office space within the Library would help with this. Continuous work was being done to alleviate this problem.

11.5 **Executive Events**: The University Letting Scheme being withdrawn had caused lots of worry for lots of students. Perhaps the Guarantor Scheme would help alleviate this. The VP Wellbeing was attending a meeting on 29th January to discuss this issue, she thought the project would be progressed at the meeting.

11.6 **Postgraduate Students Officer**: In School of Life Sciences several students were concerned that their results were not made available when needed. This was being addressed.

11.7 **Executive Activities**: Several students had complained about lack of group work space within the University. They didn’t know about the rooms at the Student Union. Can the room booking facility be made easier to access on our website.

11.8 **Charities Officer**: Recorded lectures. This was a good thing, however, several of the classes were now poorly attended as students relied on the recordings for their lectures. Several of the Executive had noted this as well. The President reported that in future the way students we taught would be changed and brought up to date with their needs. This was being looked at by the University. Attendance at lectures was still the best way to be taught a subject, recordings did not allow for questions and interaction with other students.

11.9 **VP Wellbeing**: Past papers were not being made available when students wanted them. Different Schools had different policies on this topic. The President stated that past papers were not the best way forward, the work involved to come up with brand new papers each year was tremendous for the Lecturers etc. He would however, take this topic to the School Officers.

11.10 **VP Community**: The VP stated that he and the VP Wellbeing had been involved heavily in helping some students who had been made homeless due to racial abuse while living in a private rented property in Edinburgh. The University had helped find alternative accommodation in Halls and the student were now in safe accommodation. The case had highlighted the need for a voucher scheme to help students with buying food, utilities etc when they needed emergency funding. Discussion ensued with several ideas being put forward.

It was decided that tweeting would be an appropriate way to highlight this need and to get some funding in place.

It was noted that The Hub now had some vouchers available for students to obtain free food at the Student Union catering outlets.

11.11 **Executive Equality & Diversity**: The Officer was pleased that the Events Crew situation was now sorted. The Officer felt that Liberation Groups had not engaged with the Big Ask campaign and would like them all to write a brief update on their activities to be posted and let students see what they were doing and what events and activities were being offered.

11.12 **Halls Officer**: Several students had complained that vacuum hoovers were disappearing from their Halls laundry rooms. So when they wanted to use a hoover they couldn’t find one. Despite complaining about the lack of hoovers, none had been replaced.

The VP Community was asked to investigate the topic.

11.13 **President**: Lincs students were receiving no information from their Schools. After a social media comment and a wait of two hours the students finally got a response. The School Officer reported that there was a big improvement, and much better help was being offered.

1. **PREVENT**

12.1 The CEO had noticed some really good posters for Prevent campaigns. The VP Wellbeing would try and track down the source and get some for our use.

1. **AOCB**

13.1 **Graduations**: The VP Community’s Manifesto for election had included reducing the cost of graduation for students. He had recently found out that the University were currently considering raising the cost of graduation. Having spoken to the Events Co-Ordinator he reported that the decision has not been made yet, it would be taken in early February. Apparently the cost of the venue (hired from Oriam) had risen along with other costs. The VP wanted to launch a campaign against raising the costs although it was apparent this was a national concern.

13.1.1 Some discussion ensued re the strategies we could employ during the campaign and how to go forward. This would be continued at the next Executive meeting.

13.1.2 The VP also wanted to launch a survey as part of the campaign to reduce the costs of graduations. The VP would like to offer a prize of a free graduation to encourage students to take part in the survey. However, it was noted that such a prize would only benefit fourth years who were graduating this year, it wouldn’t necessarily encourage other years to participate.

13.1.3 The VP Community would do further work on this campaign and bring it to the next Executive.

13.2 **UCU Business**: The University and College Union had recently balloted it’s members and they had voted in favour of strike action. The President had learned that there would probably be 12 days of strikes, dates to be announced later. If the UCU does a work to rule this will also affect students.

13.2.1 The President asked the meeting if they wanted to support the staff. Discussion ensued on the different points of view and on the many considerations to take account of. The President informed the meeting of the reasons the staff felt they had to strike and the CEO explained the bigger picture to the meeting.

13.2.2 It was decided that all information would be sent out to the Officers as and when it became available and they were all instructed to read and answer the emails. If extra Executive Meetings were needed these would be arranged.

13.2.3 The President would ask the UCU President to give us as much information as possible and to try and ensure students were made aware of days of action as soon as possible as well.

13.2.4 Further strategies were discussed.

13.2.5 A vote was taken to show our support for UCU : 5 votes for, 3 abstentions. The Student Union would show support for the UCU.

1. **DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

14.1 No meetings were scheduled at this point.