

Durham Students' Union Assembly Minutes

Date: 09 May 2017

Time: 19:00

Location: ER201, Elvet Riverside

Attendance

Members present	27	Members absent	10
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Members who sent apologies	3	Members not yet elected	2
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Chair: Chris Waters (Vice-Chair)

The following staff members were in attendance:

Gary Hughes (Chief Executive), Christine Stretesky (Director of Governance & Compliance), Shelley McCormack (Director of Engagement), Georgi Lambert (Marketing Manager), Laura Wilkinson (Executive Assistant)

Welcome

The Chair welcomed members to Assembly.

Apologies

The Chair listed the apologies that had been received prior to the meeting (see table following the minutes).

Conflict of Interest

The Chair asked for notification of conflict of interest before the meeting began; the SU Officers all declared a conflict of interest for Item I – Changes to Standing Orders, and Craig Bateman declared a conflict of interest regarding the Model Westminster Society ratification.

Notification of AOB

The Chair asked for notification of any other business before the meeting began; none was received.

Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising from the minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were approved by Assembly.

Update on Officer Work

The President (AD) updated Assembly members on her objectives for the year, stating that she had been working hard with Queen's Campus representatives to help those who are moving 17/18 and are facing issues. The SU advice service has been working on this and the University have agreed to bring in a hardship fund. AD thanked the Queens' students who have been helping with the work. AD advised that she had also been working a lot on the SU Strategy, Accommodation Fee campaign, and had attended NUS National Conference. James Creer asked if AD knew anything more specific about Queens' students with accessibility issues that are moving to Durham, as he knows of one student that may have to spend £14k due to the move. AD advised that she had been meeting with the Academic Office who is looking at options. Gina Cuomo advised that there is a specific

accessibility fund and that any students that are affected can contact SwDA for help with applying for the funding.

The Academic Affairs Officer (LW) presented Assembly her objectives, informing them that she had been working a lot on the Academic Representation Strategy. She advised that the Higher Education Research Bill had passed and thanked all members that had helped promote it. Regarding study space, she had been working with the library to create a proposal to take to the University, which includes increasing space in Bill Bryson and looking for more areas across the city. LW stated that there is an Academic Year Structure focus group tomorrow with the PVC of Education, and asked members to come and ask her for more information if they are interested in attending. Thom Addinall-Biddulph asked if LW's PGR objective still looking positive and LW replied that yes it was, she hadn't worked on it as much as would have liked due to other commitments but she feels there is sufficient time to collate information and hand over to next year's PG Academic Officer.

The Activities Officer (KS) presented her objectives to Assembly, advising that she had been working on the Student Activities Participation and Impact Project, 250 people completed the survey. 25% said that being part of a student group would be a reason to stay in Durham, and 97% said being part of a group made their time in Durham more enjoyable. KS congratulated the 5 student groups that have been nominated for National Society Awards. She also advised that the SU Award Nominations have closed, and the Awards Night is 11th June, encouraging members to attend.

The Development Officer (AJ) presented his objectives to Assembly informing members that the employability campaign has launched. He stated that the website is in the process of going live which has training and development tools for students, and that the plans for the DUCK development day are being finalised. AJ also updated members that college exec training this year would be running at the best times for each college. AJ stated that other things he is working on are; looking for sponsorship for the Leadership Development Programme, planning officer inductions, creating the student group training plan and working on a collaboration between college reps, SU and Associations.

New Society Ratification

Ed Nathan from Societies Committee presented the below societies and stated that it is recommended that they be ratified:

Geology for Global Development

Latin Social Dance Society

Cross Fit

Buckfast Society

Stand-up Society

Model Westminster Society

Vote:

For: 27

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

The Assembly voted for the ratification of approving the above listed societies.

SU Strategy

AD presented the SU Strategy to Assembly members, encouraging them to be critical and ask questions, as it is still a work in progress. She advised that she would share the slides should anyone want them. Harry Cross stated that the strategy looks good, but said it was a shame we have to use the NSS as a measure of our success. AD stated that she agree that the NSS was not the be all and end all but it allows us to compare ourselves nationally, and it is important that we want to succeed for our students. AD stated that we would be using other measuring tools, but feels that the NSS has merit.

Motion: Give Durham Students a Voice: Integrate Voter Registration and Student Enrolment

George Walker presented the motion. James Llewelyn asked if it would be compulsory and GW stated that it would not, but there would be a form as part of the enrolment process, and if it's there, people are more likely to complete it. A question was raised whether things can be made easier for international students to vote, as currently they have to get a National Insurance number which can be difficult. GW agreed that this was a problem and could be added in to the motion. The chair asked members to vote on the motion.

Vote:

For: 27

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Motion: Rent Guarantor Scheme

Weiling Tay presented the motion. David Evans asked if the motion was for the Union to offer the scheme or for the Union to lobby the University to offer it, WT advised that it was the latter.

Vote:

For: 27

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Motion: Changes to Standing Orders Regarding Start Date of Officers

The Chair of Assembly asked all SU Officers to leave the room due to the conflict of interest, and then presented the motion, and the amendment to the motion. James Creer asked if the motion was a result of the changes to the officer roles, and the chair advised that it was not, and that as far as he was aware it was to align start dates with how the annual University meetings fall. David Evans asked if there may be a legal issue if the motion passed, due to one of the Officers already being in term for the maximum allowed 2 years. Gary Hughes advised that there would be no legal issue and that this had already been checked with the University. Megan Croll spoke against the amendment (for it to be effective as of August 2018 rather than immediately), advising that all incoming Officers would like the changes to standing orders to be effective immediately. Thom Addinall-Biddulph asked what would happen if the motion was passed without the amendment and current Officers chose not to stay for an extra month and therefore no-one was in office. Gary Hughes advised that this is not unusual and that Student Unions' cope in this situation.

The Chair asked members to vote on the **amendment of the motion**.

For: 0

Against: 20

Abstain: 3

The amendment was not made.

The Chair then asked members if anybody would like to speak in favour of the motion. Megan Croll spoke in favour. No member wished to speak against the motion and so the Chair called a vote.

For: 22

Against: 0

Abstain: 1

The motion was **approved** and the standing order change would be effective immediately.

Motion: Campaign to Cut College Costs

Alice Dee presented the motion. A member of Assembly asked if she had considered the potential damage to the Union's reputation if the campaign did not succeed. AD advised that she felt passionate about the issue and felt that the campaign was the right thing to do and would hopefully be successful, as a Union we should fight for the ideological. Ted Coward agreed that the campaign was worth the risk. James Llewelyn asked what the outcome possibilities would be in order of preference and AD advised that the ideal would be decreasing fees, increasing bursaries and upgrading accommodation. Next option would be freeze fees and undergo a review, and then the next option would be differential pricing. Gina Cuomo asked how it would impact the living wage campaign and AD advised that she is always lobbying for living wage and that hopefully the accommodation campaign wouldn't affect this. AD also advised that she would be lobbying for a substantially differentiated model, meaning that disabled students wouldn't have to pay the difference in accommodation. Harry Cross stated that it was an excellent policy and that he hoped people voted for it.

The Chair asked members to vote.

For: 24

Against: 0

Abstain: 3

Motion: Policy on Assembly Engagement

Charlie Walker presented the motion. Harry Cross asked how the motion was a solution. CW advised that although it is currently not a huge issue, it is more about looking for informal political information, and members knowing what they can get out of Assembly. Gina Cuomo advised that SwDA had worked on the motion with CW and supported it.

The Chair asked members to vote.

For: 25

Against: 0

Abstain: 2

Questions to Officers

Question from George Walker to Alice Dee –

What plans do the Officers and the Students' Union have to engage students in the upcoming General Election which will take place on 8th June, ensuring that as many Durham students as possible register to vote before the May 22 deadline and turn out to vote on polling day?

AD replied that the Officers and SU would be doing a variety of things including something on the website, emails, email signatures, officers and staff out on campus chatting to students, resources sent to colleges to make students aware of where their nearest polling station is. AD stated that it was too late to arrange husts but we would be arranging something with the University regarding candidates. Tyne and Wear Citizens Hub have also contacted us and want to help promote Voter Registration. AD advised that if anyone is interested in helping with the campaign, please let her know.

No more questions were asked.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 20:45, and announced that the next meeting will be on 1 June 2017, at 19:00 in ER201

#	Chris Waters on behalf of Andy Corkhill	Chair	
1	Alice Dee	President	
2	Kara-Jane Senior	Activities	
3	Lisa Whiting	Academic Affairs	
4	Adam Jarvis	Development	
5	Jo Gower	Community	
6	Adeline Chow	ISA	
7	Ted Coward	LGBT+a	
8	Gina Cuomo on behalf of Courtney Cliffe	SwDA	
9	James Colville	Mature Students Association	
10	Iris Lang	People of Colour Association	
11	Anna Greenall	Academic Affairs Committee	
12	Ed Nathan on behalf of Thea Burton	Societies Committee	
13	Megan Croll	JCR PresComm	
14	Bethany Fleming	DUCK Exec	
15	David Evans on behalf of Matthew Kirk	MCR PresComm	
16	Charlie Walker	Governance & Grants	
17	Dewi Erwan Humphreys	Environmental & Citizenship	
18	Rosa Tallack	WED Comm	
19	Craig Bateman	Media Rep	
20	Mitchell Langcaster-James	St. Cuthberts	
21	Thom Addinall-Biddulph	Ustinov	
22	George Cowley	St John's	
23	George Walker	Van Mildert	
24	Tom Harwood	St Mary's	
25	George Peat	St. Chad's	
26	David Jones on behalf of George Stanbury	Grey	
27	Meghan Hosch	Hatfield	
28	Jazz Beard	John Snow	
29	Clara Gallay	St Aidan's	
30	Shayon Banerji	Collingwood	
31	Tom Henderson	St Hild & St Bede	
32	Laura Doherty	University College	
33	James Creer	Stephenson	
34	Darcy Van Eerten	Trevelyan	
35	Rachel Meyer	Josephine Butler	
36	Harry Cross	Open Position	
37	Johan Seidenfaden	Open Position	
38	Dominic Birch	Open Position	
39	VACANT	Open Position (freshers)	
40	Dominic Robson	UG Academic Rep	
41	Hannah Britt	PGR Academic Rep	
42	VACANT	PGT Academic Rep	
Attended		Sent Apologies	No Attendance or Apologies
			Not in post