

DURHAM SU ASSEMBLY

MINUTES OF THE MEETING 25 November 2021

Virtual Meeting, Zoom

1. OPENING OF MEETING

ST opened the meeting, welcoming members and attendees, explaining zoom etiquette, outlining that no offensive or unacceptable behaviour would be accepted and would result in being removed from the meeting.

ST explained that Assembly members had been circulated manifestos and a ballot paper to vote in the Assembly open place elections, which should be sent ahead of the access break and the results will be announced after the break.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS ON 3 JUNE 2021 AND 24 JUNE 2021

There were no amendments to minutes of the last meetings.
Minutes from the last meetings were approved.

3. RATIFICATION OF DECISIONS FROM THE LAST ASSEMBLY MEETING

Assembly members ratified Democracy Review Part 3: Membership and Purpose and Honorary Life Membership decisions from the last Assembly meeting.

Routine business items

4. BOARD REPORT

The Board of Trustees met on 5 October 2021. Graeme Osborn was appointed the Chair of the Board, and Seun Twins was appointed Vice-Chair of the Board. The trustees confirmed the terms of reference for two committees, to oversee Durham SU's people and culture work, and performance and delivery. The Finance Report confirmed Durham SU had ended the year with a small surplus, reflecting difficult choices made to control costs after a substantial deficit in previous year. The trustees agreed a framework for the delegation of their authority, and the powers that committees and staff could exercise on their behalf. A discussion on strategic development helped the trustees to plan how they wished to develop Durham SU's work from 2022 onwards.

Since the meeting of the trustees, two students have been elected to sit on the Board: Denis Antor, and Christian Meadows.

Assembly members ratified Peter Robertson as the Returning Officer.

5. OFFICER UPDATES

Updates were provided from the SU Officer Team on their priorities for the year. Updates were provided by:

Seun Twins, SU President
Charlie Procter, Undergraduate Academic Officer
Declan Merrington, Postgraduate Academic Officer

Jack Ballingham, Opportunities Officer
Jonah Graham, Welfare and Liberation Officer

6. COMMITTEE UPDATES

JCR PresComm
MCR PresComm
Union Rep Committee
DUCK

(Apologies from Student Groups Committee and Academic Affairs Committee)

Governance and Grants Committee Chair had not yet been elected at this meeting.

7. ASSOCIATION UPDATES

International Students' Association
Women's Association
LGBT+ Association
Durham People of Colour Association (DPoCA)
Mature Students' Association (MATSA)

(Apologies from Trans Association, Students with Disabilities Association (SwDA) and Working Class Students' Association)

*****ACCESS BREAK*****

8. CHAIRS ELECTION

ST explained that there had been no nominations for Chair so this would roll over to next meeting.

ST will Chair Assembly until someone is elected.

9. OPEN PLACES ELECTION

ST announced the results of the Open Places elections:

Open Position: Laura Curran
Postgraduate Position: Ansh Bhatnagar
Women/Carer Position – Maddie Hourigan

There were no nominations for the first year undergraduate position so this will roll over to the next meeting.

10. GOVERNANCE AND GRANTS ELECTION

ST announced the results of the Governance and Grants Committee elections:

Governance and Grants Open Position: Oliver Jervis

There was only one nomination for the Governance and Grants open position and no nominations for the Governance and Grants student group's positions so these will roll over to the next meeting.

11. HARM REDUCTION POLICY AND PRACTICES

Sophie Hofels presented the motion and said that Durham University needs to update their current drugs policy in order to prevent more harm being caused to its students. Two in five university students in the UK are regular drug users, with 56% having admitted to trying them at least once during their studies. The current 'no tolerance' drug policy at the university has tremendous negative effects on students. Students don't have easy access to information on how to sensibly consume drugs and on what to do in an emergency, they don't have drug testing kits accessible and are reluctant to seek help in emergency situations because of the fear of punishment.

There were no speeches against the motion.

ST moves to a vote.

The motion passes.