Student Council Agenda

# Thursday 31st January, 17:15-19:15, EE2009

**Agenda**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Welcome and introductions |
|  | Apologies |
|  | Declarations of interest |
|  | Minutes of previous meeting |
|  | Matters arising |
| Approval Items | |
|  | Approval of Societies   * Archaeology Society * University of Worcester Islamic Society (ISOC) |
|  | Approval of Motions   * 2018-19\_006 Single Use Plastic * 2018-19\_007 Wellbeing Space * 2018-19\_008 Women’s Officer Rename |
| Discussion Items | |
| 8. | NUS White Paper |
| 9. | Unconditional Offers |
| Reporting Items | |
| 10. | Update from Executive Committee |
| 11. | Update from the Board of Trustees |
| 12. | Update from AROG |
| 13. | Update from Education Council |
| 14. | Update on Change Week |
| 16. | Update on Leadership Elections |
| 17. | Update on All Student Meeting |
| 18. | Officers’ reports – questions/comments |
| Any other Business | |
| 19. | Any other business |
| 20. | Date of next meeting: Tuesday 26th February 17:15, EE2033 |

**Attendance**

**Councillors present:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Chair | Katie Watts | KW |
| Vice President Student Activities | Harrison Jarrett | HJ |
| Vice President Education | Euan Morrison | EM |
| President | Lucy Conn | LC |
| SU Society Rep (academic) | Georgie Cooper | GC |
| SU Society Rep (general) | Ellie Siviter | ES |
| SU Sports Rep (non-BUCs sports) | Olivia Clifford | OC |
| LGBTQ+ Officer | James Gould | JG |
| Women’s Officer | Alia Moorhouse | AM |
| Sustainability Officer | Shannon Bolton | SB |
| School of the Arts Rep | Emmy Khan | EK |

**Also in attendance:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Student Union Chief Executive | Sophie Williams | SW |
| Student Engagement Manager | Tim Hewes-Belton | THB |
| Student Voice Assistant (minute-taking) | Jodie Stilgoe | JS |

**Apologies Received:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| International Students’ Officer | Yanzhe Li | YL |

**Not Present:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| School of Nursing and Midwifery Representative | Valerie Deeley | VD |
| SU Sports Rep (BUCs Sports) | Chloe May Barton | CMB |
| Student Disability Officer | Kaya Tveito-Duncan | TVD |
| Welfare Officer | Christopher Wolff | CW |
| BAME Officer | Hannah Barnett | HB |
| School of Sport and Exercise Science Rep | Harry Lonsdale | HL |
| Worcester Business School Rep | Gianina Ratiu | GR |
| Postgraduate Rep | Alex Gardener | AG |
|  |  |  |

**Minutes**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. | **Welcome** |
|  | KW welcomed everyone to January’s Student Council. |
| 2. | **Apologies** |
|  | Apologies were received from YL, International Students’ Officer. |
| 3. | **Declarations of interest** |
|  | KW asked those present if there were any declarations of interest for any agenda items. SB declared that she is the policy proposer for 2018-19\_006 and would therefore abstain from voting on this motion. EM declared that he is the policy seconder for 2018-19\_006 and would therefore abstain from voting on this motion. AM declared that she is the policy proposer for 2018-19\_008 and would therefore abstain from voting on this motion. |
| 4. | **Minutes of previous meeting** |
|  | The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. |
| 5. | **Matters arising** |
|  | |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Action 01. JS to circulate the COP with Councillors once this document is formally approved and published** | The COP has not yet been published and so this action will roll on to next Student Council.  **Action 01. JS to circulate the COP with Councillors once this document is formally approved and published** | | **Action 02. EM to ask Aramark about the possibility of students using their Totum card to get discounted prices** | EM met with facilities and discounts would be unfeasible as profit margins would be minimal. Instead, the shop is looking to implement discounts for university merchandise. Councillors suggested talking to Starbucks around the implementation of discounts. EM to follow this up with facilities and report to Council at the next meeting. | | **Action 03. EM to circulate Fit to Sit Policy Briefing with Student Councillors** | EM circulated this document with Councillors. | | **Action 04. THB to arrange a meeting with KTD around RNIB and Access to Work to see how this can fit in with SU events e.g. Blindfold Mile during Volunteering Week and a Careers or Employability Event** | THB and KTD have not yet met and so this action will roll on to next Student Council.  **Action 02. THB to arrange a meeting with KTD around RNIB and Access to Work to see how this can fit in with SU events e.g. Blindfold Mile during Volunteering Week and a Careers or Employability Event** | | **Action 05. SW to give SB the contact of the Art student who is collecting plastics for her art project** | Roll on to next Student Council.  **Action 03. JS to send SB the contact of the Art student who did a plastic-art campaign** | | **Action 06. Councillors to feedback to JS re. Landlord experiences and JS to feed this back to CW** | Action completed | | **Action 07. JS to send CW NUS Accommodation Report** | Action completed | |
| Approval Items | |
| **6.** | **Approval of Societies** |
|  | Archaeology Society  HJ read out the description of this society, as stated on their application form. This society will be a space for students to put their educational information into proactive, fun and hands-on sessions, and will allow different year groups to socialise with one another. HJ noted that this society has a £10 membership requirement, which will help the society fund trips and secure guest speakers at events.  Vote to approve Archaeology Society  For: 11  Against: 0  Abstain: 0  **Council approved Archaeology Society**  University of Worcester Islamic Society (ISOC)  HJ read out the description of this society, as stated on their application form. This society exists to extend a helping hand to students, making them feel welcome at UoW and to encourage them to embrace their identity and socialise at their ISOC events. The society will act as a platform for members to share their skills and beliefs.  Councillors raised concern that the student body may not know what the acronym ‘ISOC’ means. HJ assured Councillors that this is a well-used acronym but the ISOC Society information page on the website will also list the full title of the society as well.  Vote to approve ISOC Society  For: 11  Against: 0  Abstain: 0  **Council approved ISOC Society** |
| **7.** | **Approval of Motions** |
|  | 2018-19\_006 Single Use Plastic  SB introduced the motion, stating that it will ban single use plastics within the Students’ Union and the University. This includes and extends to plastic straws, plastic cutlery, plastic bags, and water sold in single use plastic bottles. This motion would provide WSU with the formal standing to say, alongside the University and Worcester City Council, that they are signing up and helping the ‘Plastic Free Worcester’ movement. SB stated that within this policy, she would like to see plastic straws and plastic cups removed from the campus shop. There is also a desire for these to be removed from onsite coffee shops, The Hangar and the University canteens, with an alternative of metal straws or an equally sustainable straw. SB recognised that there would be individuals who, for medical reasons, may require straws; therefore, the motion states that the SU and University should always ensure there are straws available upon request. Finally, SB stated that the motion also prevents the sale of single use plastic bottles of water from the campus shop and other possible outlets onsite.  SB explained that, should this motion pass, Student Council would mandate the SU to undertake the following actions:   * Join the University and Worcester City Council in signing up with ‘Plastic Free Worcester’ * Work with the University to look at the removal of plastic straws and cups from the campus shop * Remove plastic cutlery from the canteen and encourage staff and students to bring their own or use the metal cutlery provided * Prevent the sale of single use plastic bottles of water from the campus shop and other possible outlets onsite * All drinks served in The Hangar to be served in glasses or possible alternatives that do not involve the use of single use plastic * Plastic bags to be replaced with recycled paper bags and students/staff encouraged to use their own reusable bags   SB also noted that similar sized universities and unions are undertaking these actions.  THB noted that this policy would have a financial impact on the Students’ Union bar because reusable plastic glasses would be more expensive than single use plastic glasses. Therefore, if Councillors pass this motion, it would need to also be approved by the Students’ Union’s Trustee Board.  Vote to approve 2018-19\_006  For: 7  Against: 1  Abstain: 2  **2018-19\_006 was approved by Council and mandated to SB**  2018-19\_007 Wellbeing Space  KW read out the motion to councillors as HL, the policy proposer, was not in attendance. This motion proposed the creation of a wellbeing space for students and staff where they would be able to relax and rest in quiet.  KW noted that, if this motion should pass, Student Council would mandate the SU to undertake the following actions:   * To start talks with the University to see how this matter could be approached * To think about where this could fit on St John’s Campus for logistical reasons * Find out what students really want in order to relax e.g. sensory or comfort for example   Councillors raised that there are already quiet spaces on campus e.g. the Chaplaincy. There was also discussion that actually getting a room, for logistical reasons, may be unrealistic but providing furniture items may be an option and this motion will help set up those initial discussions.  LC expressed the concern that providing nap rooms may give students the impression that the University is encouraging students to work too much that they need to sleep from exhaustion. LC also expressed a concern around health and safety and that nap rooms may be dangerous if left unsupervised.  JG reminded members that the actions the motion proposes Council to take is merely getting discussions up and running. Commuting students have raised the issue that they have to stay on campus all day and so providing these types of students with a wellbeing space where they can relax may help prevent students seeing lengthy days as an issue.  SB informed Council that Bristol has an SU Living Room, which is a quiet space and allows students to relax. All members agreed that relaxation spaces would be beneficial for students but members were divided over nap rooms and the implementation of sleeping pods.  Before the vote, KW reiterated JG’s point that the motion solely asks the SU to discuss options with the University around the possibility of having a wellbeing space with the University.  Vote to approve 2018-19\_007  For: 3  Against: 7  Abstain: 0  **2018-19\_007 was rejected by Council**  2018-19\_008 Women’s Officer Rename  AM read out the motion, stating that she wishes to change the name of Women’s Officer to Gender Equality Officer and allow men to run for the role.  Men are not represented solely through any title on Student Council even though there are many ways that men are not equal to women e.g. court proceedings, family custody battles, and mental health stigma.  AM noted that ‘Women’s Officer’ may discriminate against LGBT+ individuals who do not fit into one particular gender.  Councillors noted that some women may feel more comfortable talking to a woman about certain topics e.g. sanitary products or sexual harassment. Councillors also made the counter-argument that some men may feel more comfortable talking to a man about mental health, for example.  EM noted that the SU mirrors NUS’s governance structure and it is important that WSU has a strong women’s voice. EM suggested waiting until NUS have had their governance review in April before decisions around officer names are made.  LC explained that women are an oppressed group in society and by replacing the ‘Women’s Officer’ with ‘Gender Equality Officer’ may make women feel undermined and may make them think that they are unable to speak out against equality. AM agreed that women are an oppressed group but also noted that men are within that oppression bracket, too. LC agreed but suggested that men can turn to the LGBTQ+ Officer or Welfare Officer for the aforementioned issues, and that removing the Women’s Officer role could have a detrimental effect.  **Vote to approve 2018-19\_008**  For: 4  Against: 5  Abstain: 1  **2018-19\_008 was rejected by Council** |
| Discussion Items | |
| **8.** | **NUS White Paper** |
|  | Councillors were sent an electronic copy of NUS’s White Paper before the meeting.  Student Council had mixed views on NUS Conferences. Some felt that many conferences in one day might not achieve a great deal. Separate conferences, however, has the potential to be very costly to SUs and so more clarification on how this will work in practice is needed to be provided by NUS. Councillors accepted that National Conference could not continue in its current guise. Some Councillors also felt that there should be more clarification on zones committees. Councillors also suggested that remote voting should be enacted, especially for national conference.  **Question 2:1. What should the elected full-time officer roles be? Four options are presented in the White Paper. Councillors were asked which option they preferred:**  Option 1: 0 votes  Option 2: 3 votes  Option 3: 7 votes  Option 4: 0 votes  Councillors were concerned around option 3 in terms of how the liberation issues will be covered and given priority under option 2. Councillors agreed that VPFE and VPHE should not be combined  **Membership Model**  Councillors voted in favour of single membership (8 votes). They felt that affiliation to SU support should not be dependent on the ability to pay and that a range of fees should be considered for smaller and struggling SUs. SW noted that larger and more lucrative SUs made it clear at the Strategy Conference that they would be willing to pay if it means those less affluent can survive and grow. If smaller SUs have not signed up to SU support, they will be unable to access any support if in crisis which goes against the spirit of collectivism. There was also a concern that multiple membership will result in NUS gearing its activities to satisfy those who have paid more.  Overall, Student Council agreed with the idea of a more focused NUS Manifesto that is clear to SUs and Officers. NUS needs to demonstrate more unity amongst its officers but be mindful not to forget key areas when drawing up one manifesto. |
| **9.** | **Unconditional Offers** |
|  | LC explained to council that there has been media attention around the topic of unconditional offers recently. Unconditional offers have risen by over 30% this year and students are more likely to pick the University that gave them an unconditional offer. Many media outlets have explained that, whilst unconditional offers can reduce the pressure of exams, universities should be more selective of unconditional offers and not use it as an ‘incentive’ or to ‘pressure-sell’.  Councillors discussed value for money around university offers e.g. free equipment or scholarships, and whether this would incentivise students to apply to a university.  LC asked councillors to email her if they have any views on unconditional offers.  **Action 04: Councillors to email LC if they have any views around unconditional offers.** |
| Reporting Items | |
| **10.** | **Update from Executive Committee** |
|  | The Executive Committee was flagged in WSU’s Audit because it had not met in semester 1 of the 2018-19 academic year and this does not act in accordance to WSU’s byelaws. Executive Committee met for the first time an hour before Student Council in which the FTOs and PTOs in attendance shared their manifesto aims and discussed the committee’s terms of reference. |
| **11.** | **Update from the Board of Trustees** |
|  | LC explained that at the last Board of Trustees meeting, there was a discussion around the following topics: NUS, December and November’s Management Accounts, and the current climate of Higher Education. The Trustees also approved the following items: an amendment to the risk register, and the new lease between the University and the Students’ Union. |
| **12.** | **Update from AROG** |
|  | AROG have not met since the last Student Council meeting. |
| **13.** | **Update from Education Council** |
|  | EM updated the group that Education Council met last week. There was a discussion around Change Week, the Course Rep Conference, learning spaces and rep awareness. |
| **14.** | **Update on Change Week** |
|  | Councillors were each given a Change Week factsheet which highlighted the events taking place throughout the week. Councillors were encouraged to submit ideas during this week and to encourage their classmates and friends to do the same. |
| **15.** | **Update on Leadership Elections** |
|  | THB highlighted that nominations for the Leadership Elections will open on Monday 11 February and will close on Thursday 7 March midday. Councillors were told that if they are considering running for a role to book onto an information session on the WSU website. Councillors who do not wish to run can volunteer to sit on Elections Committee. Councillors were asked to email JS if they would like to sit on this Committee. |
| **16.** | **Update on All Student Meeting** |
|  | Councillors were informed of WSU’s ASM which takes place on Monday 4 February. In order for this meeting to be quorate, 0.75% of the student body must be in attendance (78 students). Councillors were therefore encouraged to attend and to invite course mates. |
| 17. | Officers’ reports – questions/comments |
|  | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Officer** | **Highlights** | **Comments** | | **LC** | LC explained that the current 31-bus service has been extended until 7.30pm. The SU and University are still having discussions around the implementation of a night bus. During Fresher’s 2019-20, there will be a free night bus running from 1am-3:30am. This service will continue after Welcome Week with tickets costing an expected £1. | No comments | | **HJ** | Nothing to highlight | No comments | | **EM** | **Action 05: EM to send a specific email to Councillors around Learning Technology** | No comments | | **SB** | Highlighted the possibility of implementing a bin to recycle chewing gum. These are £169 for 1 bin. SB is going to conduct research within the University to decipher whether the costs of cleaning up discarded chewing gum is more or less than the price of the bin; if it is more, then the evidence supports buying a bin. | Councillors supported the idea of a chewing gum recycling bin. | | **JG** | Raised the issue of a lack of LGBTQ+ signposting on the SU website | THB liaised with the SU’s Academic and Welfare Advisor who will put LGBTQ+ links on the Advice section of the WSU website.  Councillors also discussed raising the profile of PTOs on social media. There was a consensus that PTOs want a ‘who am I’ feature on WSU’s Instagram. | | **KTV** | Absent | No comments | | **CW** | No report received; Absent | No comments | | **YL** | Absent | No comments | | **HB** | No report received; Absent | No comments | | **AM** | AM spoke about her ideas regarding collaborating with the LGBTQ+ society to work around her body image campaign | No comments | |
| Any other Business | |
| **18.** | **Any other business** |
|  | Council agreed to put a vote of no confidence on the next Student Council’s Agenda. |
| **19.** | **Date of next meeting: Tuesday 26th February 17:15, EE2033** |

**Actions**

**Action 01. JS to circulate the COP with Councillors once this document is formally approved and published**

**Action 02. THB to arrange a meeting with KTD around RNIB and Access to Work to see how this can fit in with SU events e.g. Blindfold Mile during Volunteering Week and a Careers or Employability Event**

**Action 03. JS to send SB the contact of the Art student who did a plastic-art campaign**

**Action 04: Councillors to email LC if they have any views around unconditional offers**

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