

WSU Student Activities Council

Thursday 11/04/2024 at 11:30 (EE1061)

Staff in attendance: Isobel Price (IP), Sophie Smith (SS), Barney Blake (BB), and Hannah Heskin (HH).

Clubs in attendance: Boccia, Cheerleading, Netball, Paddlesport & Surf, Social Sports, and Women's Cricket.

Clubs not in attendance: Aerial Fitness, Archery, Athletics, Badminton, Boxing, Dance, Dodgeball, Equestrian, Fencing, Gym Club, Men's Football, Men's Hockey, Swimming, Tennis, Trampolining, Ultimate Frisbee, Volleyball, Women's Football, Women's Futsal, and Women's Hockey.

Clubs sending apologies: American Football, Climbing & Mountaineering, Lacrosse, Men's Basketball, Men's Cricket, Men's Futsal, Men's Rugby, Wheelchair Basketball, Women's Basketball, Women's Rugby, WorcHike, Worcester Strikers, and Yoga.

Societies in attendance: Anime & Manga, Book Club, Gaming, LOCO Show Co, and Paramedics.

Societies not in attendance: African & Caribbean, British Sign Language, Chess, Creative Writing, Dungeons & Dragons, Film, Knit N Knatter, Law, MedSoc, Midwifery, Music, Nigerian, Professional Policing, RockSoc, SSAGO, and The RAG Team.

Societies sending apologies: Allotment & Gardening, Biomedical Science, Business, Christian Union, Debate, Education Enhancement, Nature, Oriental, PENSA, Physiotherapy, Poetry, Spotlight, and Uni Boob Team.

Agenda Items

1. Welcome and Introductions

- IP welcomed all members to the final Student Activities Council meeting of 2023-24 and introduced the agenda
- Attendance and apologies are listed above

Approval Items

2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

- Student Activities Council Meeting minutes from 5th February 2024 were unanimously approved

3. Actions from Previous Meeting

- Query raised at last meeting regarding the fairness and equity of the TeamWorc Points criteria relating to voting in SU Leadership Elections, when considering Societies with large membership numbers
 - HH advised that the SU Activities Team had reviewed the criteria, and the team feels that percentage of membership is the fairest way to compare Student Groups of differing sizes, so won't be looking to change this element of the criteria.
 - HH noted that while larger groups may struggle to engage large percentages of their membership to vote, they benefit from other elements of the TeamWorc Points criteria, e.g., membership figures and larger group activities.
 - No questions raised in response.

Reporting Item

4. Student Council Summary Report

- IP delivered a summary of the Student Council meeting held on 22nd February 2024
 - Due to difficulties with Sub-Councils being quorate, the International Students' Network policy and the Inclusive Period policy could not be approved but Al Linforth explained that they would continue to do the work without a policy in place.
 - An update was given on WSU Executive Committee and an update on the three Sub-Councils. An update on live (current) policy and ideas progression was passed over in favour of an email update due to time constraints.
 - Al Linforth ran through the timeline for SU Leadership Elections and provided an update on the Student Choice Awards.
 - A discussion was had around current student issues, with a particular focus on Chartwells/Food.

Approval Items

5. Student Activities Council Reps

- No applications were received for the vacant Team Sports Clubs Rep and Individual Sports Clubs Rep.

6. Policy Proposal: Non-Monetary Societies

- Luke Marshall-Watkin (LMW) not present at the point of beginning this agenda item, so IP presented the policy on the proposing students' behalf.
- IP then presented counterpoints to the arguments raised in the policy:
 - All Sports Club & Society members are insured as part of their membership, so there is a monetary cost to this.

- Membership fees allows Student Groups to buy resources for the activities, e.g., gaming consoles, book journals, board games, and costumes.
- Membership fees allow committee members to be reimbursed for Welcome Fair purchases - e.g., stall decorations, freebies.
- Memberships contribute to subsidising Student Group trips, running events, paying for décor, offering prizes at events.
- If there is no membership fee to join a Student Group and then a member is required to pay for something, this is a hidden cost that members wouldn't initially be aware of.
- First-year students are eligible for £50 to put towards memberships via the Get Involved bursary, which can cover membership fees for multiple Societies.
- While other Students Unions are able to run Societies with no membership fees, this is often down to a larger block grant from their institution, meaning they can offer high levels of grant funding allocations. WSU is not in the financial position to be able to this, so Student Groups must cover their costs.
- If some Student Groups are free and some charge membership fees, this would create disparity between Societies.
- Some Student Groups have to pay to affiliate with external organisations, so this cost must be covered by membership income.
- Discussion was opened for the Council to discuss the policy proposal:
 - Meea Emilia Honkaniemi (Book Club) noted that prospective members having to compare Student Groups with no cost against groups with a membership fee may make them think twice about joining Societies.
- Those present at Student Activities Council voted on the policy:
 - Approve - 1
 - Approve with Amendments - 0
 - Against - 11
 - Abstain - 0
- As attendance at Student Activities Council #4 was 11/46 Student Groups (23.9%), with apologies discounted, quoracy had not been met
- The vote on the Non-Monetary Society Policy proposal was then extended via email to all Student Groups not in attendance, to gather enough votes to reach quoracy
- Quoracy required for combined in-person and email vote was 22/72 Student Groups (30.5%)
- Following the extended email vote (deadline Friday 19th April 9am), the voting had reached quoracy (25/72 Student Groups, 34.7%), and the final tally was as follows:
 - Approve - 7
 - Approve with Amendments - 0
 - Against - 17
 - Abstain - 1
- Quorate vote carried for policy to not progress for discussion at Student Council

Discussion Items

7. Case Study: Appointing Committee Members

- SS facilitated discussion regarding a case study (BCU) where Sports Club committee members are interviewed and appointed, rather than elected.
- Council attendees completed worksheets to identify the pros and cons of this approach.
- Comments/themes from worksheets:
 - Overall views
 - Application/interview process may deter interest
 - Can see the benefits but might create a barrier
 - Might be appropriate for competitive Sports Clubs but not for social/casual clubs
 - If only one person going for a role, club/soc could be at risk if they are unsuccessful in their interview
 - Reduction of democracy - if implemented, could this process then be argued to appoint SU Officers?
 - May attract more/different members as it is a more private approach to getting onto committee than a members vote
 - May see more professional manifestos in application compared to informal nominations and member vote
 - Would be important who was conducting the interviews
 - Pros
 - Best person for the role gets it
 - May improve the committee
 - Interview experience for those who apply
 - Appointed committee members would have met SU team during application process
 - Professional, real-life approach (interviewing), takes away popularity contest element
 - SU can ask specific/tailored interview questions
 - Members just running for the sake of it wouldn't get chosen
 - Most capable and best fit would be appointed, not most popular
 - Committee candidates would have to have proposals to back up their application, so you may see more improvements/changes made to clubs & socs
 - May create/improve relationships between the committee & the SU
 - Cons
 - Students don't get to have their say
 - Less people involved
 - May struggle to get people to put themselves forward
 - A member could do well in their interview, but not actually know the running of the Student Group as well as others

- Interview anxiety
- Removes the personal choice of the members of the club
- Members will know the individuals standing for roles personally, so will have a different perspective
- For very specific additional roles, the members would likely have more knowledge than the SU
- Potential biases when interviewing candidates
- Time constraints for conducting application/interview process

8. Varsity 2024 Feedback

- SS gathered feedback on the recent Varsity 2024 events, summarised below:
 - Player Feedback
 - Netball loved Varsity
 - Great support from clubs & societies
 - Girls playing had a positive time
 - Not very challenging
 - Subjective/non-BUCS sports need fair judging
 - Gloucester don't bring supporters = makes it less of a competition
 - Social Media
 - Did see updates on Instagram, enough to follow along
 - Updates sometimes slow/delayed
 - Didn't seem that promoted in the build-up
 - Lack of live updates
 - Took over three weeks to receive photos
 - Posts weren't always clear
 - - Fan Zone (The Hangar)
 - Didn't know there was a fan zone and didn't attend
 - Wouldn't call it a fan zone, just a TV screen
 - Knew there was a fan zone, but didn't attend
 - Didn't attend due to lectures clashing with fixtures, followed on social media
 - Would be good to have it on in The Hive or City Campus
 - Live stream was a really good idea for those in lectures or competing at BUCS Big Wednesday
 - Wasn't anything at City Campus or Jenny Lind, so attending fan zone was a lower priority than attending lectures
 - Having a big projector would have been better
 - Not aware that games at Glos were streamed
 - Schedule/Timings
 - Mostly took place during lectures, so unable to attend
 - Event was too condensed, Football in the evening would help to offer different times of day

- Avoid clashing with BUCS Big Wednesday
 - No momentum built because event was too short
 - Evening games would allow people to go outside of lectures
 - Sports were left out who normally have a big event, e.g. Cricket
 - There were clashes throughout the day
 - Sport dissertation due date was the same week which made it more stressful & less enjoyable
 - Wednesday was very long
 - Event crammed into 3 days was not ideal, better spread over 1 week
 - Overlapping events meant you couldn't watch everything
 - Wed Arena PM was a predominantly female audience and a lack of male supporters. More males = more of a drink. Get basketball back at UW Arena
- Things enjoyed?
 - The Hangar running arena bar - more affordable
 - Winning
 - The vibes, the sports, the nachos
 - Positive vibes in crowd, music
 - Atmosphere, people, brings clubs together, dancing/music
 - The atmosphere was good
- Did you buy a ticket?
 - Lots of Yes: Football, Arena PM, Rugby, to watch a friend compete, tickets nice & cheap, went for friend's birthday
 - Some No, reasons given: not interested in sport, couldn't afford it, no friends, scheduled on busy days, focusing on university work, watched on live stream instead
- Aware of #ShapeYourSport campaign?
 - Was good for sports included, would have been a good campaign for sports that didn't have varsity
 - I was aware, but I didn't see much coverage on it on social media
 - I didn't hear anything about it, I don't know what it is
 - Heard about it once or twice but didn't hear much about the engagement with it
 - I think that more awareness could be made for it
 - We knew about it as Netball pushed it hard on social platforms
 - We didn't see much from many other clubs - was it necessary?

9. Committee Handover Content

- HH facilitated discussion on content to be included in Committee Handover
- Ideas were submitted via Mentimeter:

What is one thing you wish you knew at the start of your role? 🤔

Just try and work with other committee members as much as possible	A crash course on spreadsheets	Walk around of the committee resource hub.	The SU were very good at informing us of the overall professional role. Regarding the inside roles (eg behind the scenes), we weren't prepared from the previous committee
How much pressure there can be if you don't fully fulfil your role at all times	How much time it would require and also ideas from the previous committee to be implemented in the future.	How much work goes into committee and how many different societies you can join up with. Also how to handle mess left over from previous committee.	The additional committee responsibilities such as student activities council
What the weekly time commitment as a committee member specifically for our society was like, and how important communication is within the committee	At the start of the role this could be knowing what students expect.	Procedures for concerns of members	longer time to hand over to the next person in your role

What would be useful to include in the handover process? 🙌

Information on how to run committee meetings, how welcome fair booth running works and any tips for that, how to promote society's events not only through social media	Making sure the support is aimed and appreciate for people who have never been on committee before :)	A small presentation in what we cant have for welcome fest on the day as we prepare long in advance.	Potentially further information on the time management side of committee work?
A list of anything previous committee learnt from last year and what they would've wanted to improve on	Knowing what do do when you start. Also advertising well beforehand for people can plan.	How to run committee meetings. Calling all society meetings and to have difficult conversations.	The option for a meeting with an SU team member to go over the role.
We would like to have a meal with the future committee to inform them of the behind the scenes to ensure they are set up for September /smooth handover	Any documentation from the previous committee.		

10. Open Forum

- Nothing raised

Reporting Items

11. Reminders

- HH delivered reminders on three key topics:
 - AGMs
 - Activities Elections
 - Volunteering Hours

12. TeamWorc Points

- HH delivered a TeamWorc Points update
 - Bronze Societies: Poetry Society, Nigerian Society, Anime & Manga, Gaming
 - Silver Societies: Paramedic Society, Uni Boob Team
 - Bronze Sports Clubs: Cheerleading, Dance, Aerial Fitness, Men's Rugby, Women's Rugby, Netball, Women's Cricket, Archery, Women's Football

13. TeamWorc Wins

- IP shared the nominations and winners of Club & Society of the Month for March 2024:
 - Society of the Month nominees: Paramedic Society and Uni Boob Team
 - Society of the Month winner: Paramedic Society
 - Club of the Month nominees: Netball, Trampolining, and Volleyball
 - Club of the Month winner: Trampolining
- IP shared various TeamWorc Wins relating to Varsity, Worc Star, RAG, and Student Group events
- BB shared some BUCS Highlights, spotlighting some of the high-performing teams from the 2023-24 BUCS season

14. Officer Updates

- IP shared a review of the Varsity 2024 #ShapeYourSport campaigns
- IP shared updates on VPSA Objectives:
 - IP facilitated feedback discussion about the Give it a Go Campaign Week:
 - Emma Nicholson (Netball) - GIAG is brilliant in September but didn't work in January. Netball have Rec Net running throughout the year to welcome new members at any time. While January GIAG week didn't work for Netball, it did work for other Sports Clubs, some Netball members attended Tennis & Tag Rugby sessions.
 - Natalia Taneska (Social Sports) - GIAG led to great interest in September but had a dip in January compared to last year. Possible cause of dip was no Refreshers Fair - Social Sports gained lots of international students and mature students in Jan 2023 during Refreshers as they transitioned into 2nd Semester. There was a clearer lack of awareness around Refreshers this academic year.
 - Luke Marshall-Watkin (Gaming) - GIAG week didn't work as well in terms of awareness of activities that were taking place on City Campus.

- Lily Wood (Women's Cricket) - Refreshers Fair coming back would be a good idea, maybe as a scaled down version of the September Welcome Fair.
- IP advised that Battle of the Socs is back for 2024, being held on Friday 19th April, with sign-up still open
- IP noted that the SU Activities Team had been working on a strategic plan to target the development of Academic Societies
- IP discussed the financial constraints around physical rewards for students, but reminded all that the Worc Star scheme was still taking nominations for recognition

15. SU Activities Updates

- HH offered appreciation to all Student Groups who have raised money for RAG and specifically for Behind the Smile, and advised that nominations have opened for the 2024-25 RAG Charity of the Year and close on Friday 26th April
- HH advised that RAG Applications now open for 2024-25, with six roles available, closing on Tuesday 16th April
- HH advertised the upcoming Battle of the Socs event, taking place on Friday 19th April
- HH noted that Thursday 11th April was the final day for Student Groups to vote for TeamWorc Awards, then presented the details for the Awards night
- SS provided guidance on the timeline and process for completing TeamWorc Honours nominations

- IP facilitated discussion via Mentimeter about the committee members' favourite memories and what they most enjoyed:

What is your favourite memory of your Sports Club or Society?

Joint socials	Having people come up and say thank you after a good session	Working with and meeting members and other committees	The time spent with the TAG team setting up events and collaborating with each other. Setting up the games society with my fellow committee members and friends.
Just having a good time with members	Meeting new people in the university and seeing people laugh and have fun.	Organising events for members	I have LOVED my committee. We have worked hard to provide an inclusive environment for our members, raised money, raised memberships/turnouts. Varsity was a big moment that brought our club together.
Coming 3rd at Indoor Nationals The society backing each other and how well we get along.	Having that strong sense of community on and off court in netball	Hiking society train to Colwall, snowing hiking to Ledbury train back, magical winter. Meeting new people	raising money for CPR Marathon
Our last big competition involving all teams last month [] all teams were there and it was just a wonderful day with everyone involved !! ♡ so many celebrations and a great final comp for our final yrs	We have had such a great group of girls on committee this year all working collaboratively		

One thing you enjoyed about being a committee member...

Meeting new people and having a good laugh with them.	Getting to throw around ideas on what our society can do together, but also meeting people outside of my course and finding similar things in common	Seeing everyone enjoy the game and socials	Creating friendships with members and other people from clubs and societies
Working with friends to bring back resurrect a society.	Seeing members grow through rehearsals	Seeing our group grow	Organising events
Meet new people, and sharing the stories with them.	Organising events to collect team worc points		

Any Other Business

16. AOB

- Luke Marshall-Watkin (Gaming) requested feedback on why the Council's had a generally negative response to the Non-Monetary Society Policy proposal
 - Sophie Ware (Netball) - not feasible for competitive Sports Clubs due to the cost of competing
 - IP briefly ran through counterpoints previously delivered (agenda item 6) that Luke was not present for

Date of Next Meeting:

Committee Handover
Friday 17th May 2024 13:30-16:30
EE1106 & EE107 (Cotswold Suite A & B)

IP thanked all attendees and closed the meeting.
