

# Welfare and Inclusion Council Minutes

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023, 12:30-2pm, BY 1150

Agenda Item		Owner	
1.	Welcome and introductions	AL	5 mins
2.	Apologies	AL	2 mins
3.	What is Welfare and Inclusion Council?	ASB	3 mins
4.	Minutes Approval	AL	2 mins
5.	Matters arising	AL	2 mins
<b>Approval items</b>			
6.	Terms of Reference	AL	4 mins
7.	Policy Approval	AL	10 mins
<b>Updating items</b>			
8.	President Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of Living</li> </ul>	AL	3 mins
9.	Network Update	Networks	15 mins
10.	SU EDI Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is EDI?</li> <li>• Updated Annual report and EDI Policy</li> </ul>	AL	5 mins
11.	Sustainability	ASB	3 mins
<b>Discussion Item</b>			
12.	Cultural Calendar/Timeline for Networks	ASB	5 mins
13.	Hangar/SU Spaces	AL	6 mins
14.	Student Council	AL	4 mins
15.	Police/Hate Crime Officers	SW	10 mins
16.	Group photo Opportunity	AL	3 mins
<b>Any Other Business</b>			
17.	AOB	AL	10 mins
Date of Next Meeting:		Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2023	

Attendance

<b>Name</b>	<b>Network/Society</b>	<b>Initials</b>
Emily Hatfield	Commuter Students' Network	EH
Christian Wilson	Disabled Students' Network	CW
Mattie Osborne	LGBTQ+ Students' Network	MO
Rishika Gour	International Students' Network	RG
Emmalee Swift	Women's Network	ES
Laura Underwood	Mature, Parents and Carers Network	LU
Marvellous Sholademi	African Caribbean Society	MS
Ronke Akintan	Nigerian Society	RA
Kristine Mendoza	Oriental Society	KM
Abi Pond	Christian Union	AP
<u>Also, in Attendance</u>		
Al Linforth	Chair	AL
Anna-Symone Bateman	Student Communities Coordinator (minuting Secretary)	ASB
Sophie Williams	Chief Exec	SW

Minutes

<b>Agenda Item</b>	
1.	<b>Welcome and introductions</b>
	Council members introduced themselves
2.	<b>Apologies</b>
	Apologies received from ARE

3.	<b>What is Welfare and Inclusion Council</b>							
Explanation regarding Welfare and Inclusion Council being a space for liberation groups to have their voices heard, form policies and drive debate.								
4.	<b>Minutes Approval</b>							
Minutes approved by those who were present during the last council								
5.	<b>Matters Arising</b>							
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="331 701 464 779">No.</th> <th data-bbox="464 701 1018 779">Action</th> <th data-bbox="1018 701 1544 779">Update</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="331 779 464 965">01.</td> <td data-bbox="464 779 1018 965"><b>ACTION 01:</b> ASB to email Networks updating them on elections and bursaries</td> <td data-bbox="1018 779 1544 965">Completed.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			No.	Action	Update	01.	<b>ACTION 01:</b> ASB to email Networks updating them on elections and bursaries	Completed.
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01.	<b>ACTION 01:</b> ASB to email Networks updating them on elections and bursaries	Completed.						
Approval items								
6.	<b>Terms of Reference</b>							
Terms of reference was shared and approved. Action 01: ASB to update the names of Networks and student union staff on the Terms of Reference.								
7.	<b>Policy Approval</b>							
<p>Two policies were shared prior to the council both submitted from the Disabled Students Network (DSN). Council Members had the opportunity to ask questions regarding the policies and the Disabled Students' Network Chair was the given the opportunity to present his policies further.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>DSN Toilet Policy</u></p> <p>The first policy was a Toilet Policy, that looks at separating the all-gender toilet space from the disabled toilet space to improve the accessibility needs to disabled students. Questions arose from the council regarding the logistics of separating these toilets and creating new ones. The DSN suggested no new toilets need to be created,</p>								

rather the signage on toilets need updating to reflect the needs of students. There was also a discussion that not all campuses need this, but some like St John's do. It was also brought up by ES that on campus maps, it doesn't state where all gender toilets are located, but it does for men, women and disabled toilets. Action 02: AL to contact Mark Evans regarding getting signage marking all gender toilets on campus maps.

**Vote to approve was held:**

Votes for: 7

Votes against: 1

Abstentions: 1

This Policy successfully passed at W+IC.

DSN Action for Sustainability

The second policy submitted by the Disabled Student Network also calls for the University's and the SU's communication to be more accessible to students who have hearing and sight impairments. This affects some students as it can make the University experience more isolating when students don't have equity of information as other students without hearing and/or visual impairments.

**Vote to approve was held:**

Votes for: 9

Votes against: 0

Abstentions: 0

This Policy successfully passed at W+IC.

Both Policies have been submitted to Student Council for further approval.

## Updating Items

### 8. **President Update**

AL updated on:

Cost of living objective - community cupboard is continuing this academic year; donations have been received. Free and sustainable period products are now available as the SU are community partners with Hey Girls, aiming to get these products across campuses and not just in the SU.

International Hardship funding - AL has found support from some University Executive Board (UEB) members to implement some sort of hardship funding for international students as these groups do experience financial hardship, the plan is to continue these conversations with UEB.

Improving Campus Facilities - Continuing this work across campuses. Currently looking at getting signage in The Hangar to emphasise the accessible lift as feedback from students suggested they didn't know a lift existed.

Sustainable Network Offering - The University have agreed to pay the bursary of three out of the seven Networks and the Networks will fund the rest, however, if the SU can show to the University how the bursary has been beneficial, they will retrospectively pay the bursary of the other four Networks.

Network Recruitment - is going well, applications are still coming in and almost all positions are now filled.

University EDI Forum - The University EDI Forum is going ahead and are working on an EDI Action Plan. SU is keen to get students voices on the forum as it will be quite staff heavy.

OfS Equality of Opportunity Risk Register Focus Group - Risk Register shows what different student populations are at risk of not achieving awards or continuing their studies at university. SW also updated on

	<p>the Access to Participation Plan which is the plan the University has to submit to show how they will make it easier for students to attend University and stay at university as research shows certain areas of the population do not succeed at university. This year, the SU will be maintaining student consultation (paid opportunities) for the OfS/APP to hold the University to account and Welfare and Inclusion Council members will be contacted first regarding this student voice.</p> <p><u>Multi faith prayer space (Thomas Telford)</u> - Space is now open and available for students</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><b>Network Updates</b></p> <p>Women's Network - Have been working with Uni Boob Team to raise awareness for Breast Cancer Awareness Month. They are organising a talk where they are inviting a member of staff to talk about women in fitness. They are also planning a fundraiser - a RAG open mic night. They had their first session last week asking members what it is they wanted to see from the Network</p> <p>LGBTQ+ Network - They are collaborating in the local community in particular with Sugar Daddy's café in the City Centre which is looking at how to get LGBTQ+ students involved in the arts and activism. They are planning an LGBTQ+ rights protest on 15<sup>th</sup> October and aim to have community speakers at the protest. If they have enough time, they would like to hold a sign making session in the Hangar. Planning a coffee social next week also.</p> <p>Disabled Student Network/BSL - Running a campaign for dyspraxia and deaf awareness, they have been collaborating with others and are also continuing to plan a wheelchair basketball charity match this year.</p> <p>Commuters network - Held a coffee morning, have been receiving good engagement via direct messages on social media. Car Parking</p>

	<p>appears to be the main issue and is already taking issues and ideas to the University.</p> <p>Christian Union - Have had a range of speakers come in, have held a bowling social, Brew and Biscuits event, they are planning a Christmas carol service. They have been hosting events across campuses and thinking about how they use different spaces at the University.</p> <p>Mature, Parents and Carers Network - Have been approached by the Hive and looking at doing events with the children and parents during half term. They held their first open meeting today also Action 3 ASB to put in all student email about joining the Networks to gain traction.</p> <p>International Students Network - They are planning their open meeting a Christmas crafternoon event, Christmas trip to Birmingham, collaborating with Tao from the International office and a Mulligans social.</p>
10.	<p><b>SU EDI Update</b></p> <p>2023 EDI policy and annual report was shared with members. The EDI Working Group works towards an action plan and the plan for 2023-24 is almost ready. SU can update the accessible toilets for example, so issues coming from places like Welfare and Inclusion council can feed into the action plan.</p>
11.	<p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <p>Green Impact Students' Union (GISU) - Last academic year, the SU received Very Good in GISU. On reflection, the SU have decided that we will not be working towards an accreditation this year. Instead we will be taking areas we scored lower on and have room for improvement and will be creating our own sustainability action plan and working towards that for the year.</p> <p>Responsible Futures (RF)- ASB explained that RF is a two-year joint accreditation with the University and in June 2024, we will be up for reaccreditation and there will be opportunities for students to get involved in conducting the audit around that time.</p>

	<p>Sustainability Committee - The SU have a sustainability committee that discuss issues and students are welcome to sit on this committee if they wish.</p> <p>How does sustainability Affect your Networks - sustainability may affect members of the Network populations in different ways. If students wish to discuss how our sustainability efforts may impact their groups, then they should contact ASB, and we can discuss.</p>
12.	<p><b>Cultural Calendar/Timeline for Networks</b></p> <p>Members were given a reminder about the timeline they were given during Network Committee training and think about what awareness days/cultural events they wish to be celebrating, e.g., UK Disability History Month runs from 16<sup>th</sup> November to 16<sup>th</sup> December. Students reminded that they don't have to be limited to events that are on the calendar but can celebrate events outside of these.</p>
13.	<p><b>Hangar/SU Spaces</b></p> <p>Students were asked what they thought of The Hangar and the spaces around the SU. Students had no comments to make. Al encouraged students to email them if they wished to discuss anything further around the SU/Hangar space</p>
14.	<p><b>Police/Hate Crime Officers</b></p> <p>SW met PC Gary Otun at the Welcome Fair and had honest conversations about different groups of people and how they are perceived in Worcester. Worcester has a majority white and middle class population and this affects the relationship between residents and a more diverse student population. International students for example come with a richness in culture, they are learning a new language, and getting their degree, however international students are not always perceived very nicely. The Worcester Community is not used to seeing people with a different skin colour and by having these conversations with students, community partners and PC Gary Otun, we are trying to make sure the SU isn't being discriminatory to students who are ethnically diverse. The following week is National Hate Crime Awareness Week and SW shared with the council what she suggested to the Police. SW suggested to PC Gary Otun that we invite his superiors, Chief Inspector Brian Gibbs to talk to students about hate crime, what the police are doing in response to this and offer students a chance to hold the Police to account and ask questions.</p>



	There was a good interest of this idea from council members namely the Nigerian Society, LGBTQ+ Network, Women's network and the Disabled Student's Network and discussion around what this would look like, such as people submitting questions beforehand, and they get answered and then 5-10 minutes for additional questions at the end to make good use of time.
15.	<b>Student Council</b>
	AL updated that the first Student Council of the year is on Tuesday 24 <sup>th</sup> October and is their chance to inform policy and SU activities at the highest level. AL also shared that a Student Council introduction session was being held on the 18 <sup>th</sup> of October, led by the SU, aimed at equipping Student Council members with what they are expected to do at Student Council, so they have the confidence to be able to attend and participate at Student Council to the best of the ability. ACTION: ASB to check that Student Council invite has been sent to members of welfare and inclusion council.
16.	<b>AOB</b>
	No matters raised.

Date of next meeting: 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023

## Actions

Action 01: ASB to update the names of Networks and student union staff on the Terms of Reference.

Action 02: AL to contact Mark Evans regarding getting signage marking all gender toilets on campus maps.

Action 03 ASB to put in all student email about joining the Networks to gain traction.

Action 04: ASB to check that Student Council invite has been sent to members of welfare and inclusion council.