

**Union Council Minutes**

**15th March 2017**

**1. Attendance was acknowledged and apologies noted**

Attended: Ruqiya Ali (RA); Habiba Amjad (HA); Andy Aston (AA); Joshua Barden (JB); Dale Bennett (DB); Nicole Berroa (NB); Sohaib Farooqui (SFa); Ewelina Florczak (EF); Iman Hussain (IH); Jenny Plant (JP); Issic Romel (IR); Afsheen Saleem (AS); Liam Slough (LS).

Apologies: Rebecca Baker (RB); Stewart Boyd (SB); Jessica Edwards (JE); Latoya Goldbourne (LG); Rachael Healey (RH); Katie Minchen (KM); Ziya Mohamed (ZM); Daniel Raw (DR); Joshua Richardson (JR).

Absent: Steven Fellows (SFe); Shazab Islam (SI); Joshua Largent (JL); Nishalini Ravindran (NR).

Staff present: Ann Gough, CEO (CEO); Robin Eves, Chair’s Aide (SV&DC); Thomas Swainson, Secretary (C&DA).

**5. Student trustee ratification**

Council members ratified the appointment of Matthew Roberts as a student trustee.

**Council Vote:** 91% yes, 0% no, 9% abstain

**2. Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes from the last meeting, 24th January 2017, were approved.

**3. Matters arising**

Due to technical issues the matters arising from the last meeting were not discussed. Since this council meeting we have full Basecamp functionality again.

**4. Student Issues**

LS stated that Telford students wanted to move the Students room as the current facilities are too small and poorly located. There are existing facilities in Telford that may be fit for purpose. IR and HA said that the officers and the CEO are already going to be discussing provisions at Telford.

**Action: Full time officers**

LS also said that a lot of students are feeding back that catering is also a huge problem at Telford with variety lacking and the food being overpriced. There are no real alternatives for students studying on campus to get a hot meal in lecture gaps. JB asked if all catering outlets were managed together. FTOs stated that there are different managers operating at the other campus. DB questioned if it was profit driven at Telford because they know students have no alternative. HA said that city takings have gone up even though they are competing with local trade. LS said that the variety is more of the problem. If students had more choice this would justify the spend. IR said he has spoken to students and they agree with food pricing being too high and has fed that back to the University but they won’t do anything as they see the outlets being successful. AS said they just want their money’s worth so offering more variety. JP asked if Telford students had microwave access as this would help partially with the problem. Self service facilities for food would drastically improve some of these issues. HA said that students in MK have access to a microwave on the ground floor but JP responded saying that this is still an accessibility issue.

DB said that the issue on the table would need an engagement campaign that addresses catering holistically rather than looking at smaller issues independently and have a conversation with students to improve catering.

AA asked about the microwave situation to be offered on campus. HA responded saying that plans will be put in place over the summer.

RE shared with students the MU facilities.

**Action: Campus Officers, Iman Hussain, Habiba Amjad and Issic Romel.**

IR spoke about the issues separately and said tackling the issues separately and realistically will gain more momentum as it goes. DB said that if these are issues that came through his OOTs then why are we now discussing this instead of him already taking a lead if this is a historic issue. IR said that they should be separate entities. DB and HA said they should be tackled together.

IR asked that council members should respect the speaker and not talk over them and asked the chair to enforce this respect.

NB said that they are separate issue but fall under the same umbrella so should be tackled as individual issues but under the same umbrella.

DB said that this is on an ongoing issue and should have been tackled before and IR cannot offended that another officer is willing to tackle the issue and as he has had the opportunity to tackle it.

JP raised that issues that she has raised in previous councils have still not seen solution. The dean is aware but no progress has been made. This involves security, vandalism, printing, disability access with car parking, fire evacuations have left a disabled student without support, lack of support for hard of hearing students.

AA said there was a meeting with hard of hearing students with actions coming from that. IR asked for more information on the parking situation and JP said it was a lack of provision. IR said that parking is constantly an issue and can look at parking provisions for disability students as a priority. JP said that art students typically carry a lot of equipment to.

**Action: IR to look at parking.**

IH said that there have been computer issues in MI and asked reps if there were any issues in other places. LS said that he hasn’t heard anything but would check. A student said that there are computer issues in Walsall and Telford.

**Action: IH, LS, NB and IR to lead IT project.**

**AS left at 16:00**

**6. Democracy Review**

C&DA ran through a presentation outlining ideas to change our democratic structures. Council members discussed the changes and how we should move forward. This discussion will feed into a proposal to be brought to a future Union Council.

**7. Policy motions**

No motions were submitted.

**8. Executive Officer reports**

**HA report accepted.**

DB asked IR why engineering in particular. Issic explained current issues that are currently faced by students on specific FSE courses around accreditation.

DB said extenuating circumstances is a huge problem and that more information should be shared.

**IR report accepted.**

DB asked NB where we were with the attendance policy. NB said that we had 4000 students responded to the survey and a draft policy will be submitted soon around that feedback.

DB asked if we know when the proposal will be submitted, NB said it should be ready by Sept 2017. DB said he was concerned that the University would push through the changes without adequate engagement. NB said that the University are now looking at the policy from a safeguarding issue. DB said he’s worried that vulnerable students may feel harassed. HA said the Union stance is very much for safeguarding and that students’ responses far outweighed the staff’s.

**NB report accepted.**

JB gave a verbal update and stated he and JR were meeting with Campus operations around security intruding student accommodation and entering their flats.

**Action: Issic to attend the meeting too**.

IH gave an update on the MI open deck project and pedagogy within the department leading student feedback surveys on their lecturers teaching.

SFa has been working with Nicole around engaging international students.

**9. Faculty Representatives reports**

All part time officer reports were accepted.

**10. Council Representatives reports**

All part time officer reports were accepted.

**11. National and Regional Activity**

C&DA highlighted that NUS Conference had released some motions and that council members should try and engage with students around them.

**12. Executive Committee Minutes**

The last Executive Committee was not quorate and had to be cancelled.

**13. AOB**

IR raised that Council Members should be more audible when voting to accept reports.

**14. Chair’s closing remarks**

The chair thanked everyone for attending.