



UNION COUNCIL - MINUTES

Tuesday 30th Nov 2021, 3-4.30pm, via Google Meets

LINK: <https://meet.google.com/jco-zewx-zrt>

Administration

1 Officers in attendance:

Dan Bichener (Union President) (DB)
Beth Elwood (Campaigns & Societies) (BE)
Frankie McGregor (Community, Diversity & Inclusion) (FM)
Maddy Young (Engagement & Sports) (MY)
Amy Bromley (Postgraduate Research Students' Officer) (AB)
Jasmine Nikhwai (LGBT+ officer) (JN)
Olivera Ignjatovic (LGBT+ women's officer)(OL)
Benjamin D'Montigny (Chair) (BD)
Alice Lundy (Disabled Students' Officer) (AL)
Maximus Clinch (Environmental Officer) (MC)
Zane Kennedy (Faculty Representative (Arts, Humanities & Education)) (ZK)
Anusree Vijayakumar (Postgraduate Taught Students' Officer) (AV)
Anastasia Semaan (AS)
Hannah Ferguson (Faculty Representative (Medicine, Health & Social Care)) (HF)
Jade Knight (JK)

Others in attendance:

Kriss Bailey (KB) - UC secretary (student voice coordinator)
Phumuzile Sithole (PS)
Teme Binitie (TB)
Yvette Kearns (YK)
Esther Subhakar (ES)

Apologies for absence and check for quorum (should be 10):

Francis Booker (Student Parents' and Carers' Officer) (FB)
Tony Brimmicombe (Mature Students' Officer) (TB)
Tyler Williamson (Trans/non-binary officer) (TW)
Megan Ann Foxen-Freeman (Women's Officer) (MF)

Absence without apology:

James Hughes (Faculty Representative (Science, Engineering &

	Social Sciences)) (JH) Officers who must attend this meeting or risk losing their role: (N/A for this meeting) <i>Any officer who fails to attend three union council meetings without sending apologies is subject to a vote of no confidence at the discretion of the Council.</i>	
2	Approval of speaking rights of those in attendance	Chair
3	Declarations of conflict of interest	Chair
4	Matters arising to be discussed under Any Other Business	Chair
For Discussion and Approval		
1	Welcome from the Chair & Introductions	Chair
2	Minutes of the last meeting	Chair
3	Sabbatical Officer Reports (verbal) Dan - Worked with students to see that the Uni would return to 80% face to face lectures Worked with groundforce on their get employed event Sabbs attended events regarding contract cheating, national hate crime awareness week and climate day Consulting with students regarding what the Uni should be focusing on with regard to these Attended NUS conference regarding gaining student focus, covid recovery. Working with Sports and University to get students back on campus NSS survey outcomes and improvements. SAR committee formed. Maddy - Sports teams have returned after covid offering extended to support due to administration difficulties Facilities have been improved Final whistle Hosting / running quiz with DB open to all students on a sunday evening Membership model is now underway, and is going well working closely with CC sport Improving accessibility to sports for all students	

This Girl Can campaign has gone well
Sports and mental wellbeing has been a main focus - seen an increase in mental health issues.
Wellbeing - set up Thursday morning for wellbeing sessions for individuals affected by mental health issues. Seeing people engage more and break down the stigma.
The Organisation of Varsity is 3 months ahead of plan despite the change of venue.
UoT is set up and will be active on campus.

Questions:

BD asked about sports and the medway campus.

MY- has been working with students to set up sports teams on the medway campus and signposting to other clubs also established

JK - Could there be an opportunity to combine sports and societies at an event to improve community at CCCU

MY - To look at setting this up.

MY - informed that students are able to try a sport out for 3 sessions to trial before you purchase membership

Frankie:

Union hosted coffee mornings for the networks

Worked with canterbury council and police to offer advice on how to be safe and report anti social behaviour

Nighttime safety campaign - worked with the street marshals on how they look after people during the evening

A new safe space has been set up next to the SU

Challenged the accessibility of Canterbury and the university.

Contacting local business to map out accessibility for students

Housing campaign to launch information on how to find housing, know your rights and laws.

Creation of the CDI committee and are currently mapping out the projects for the coming year

Attended refugee walk in canterbury and supplied care packages to refugees who are in canterbury.

Working with Medway on how to make improvements concerning CDI issues.

Looking to support the nightline support service

Worked with Maddy on mental health and wellbeing support.

Beth:

The first three months have been very active.

Societies are now at 40 societies, which is double considering covid

Societies takeovers have great attendance and raising money

Lobbied University to allow students back on campus which has proven successful

Room bookings and soc bookings have been made easier

The SU team has improved efficiency with replies to societies

Soc and Teams had training at the beginning of the year

Campaigns - contract cheating, nighttime safety, period awareness week

Have had a lot of wins -

University will provide free sanitary products on campus and looking to improve facilities for the Trans community

Reclaim the streets event was a good turn out

Guaranteed 1 day a week to be present in medway

Campaigns will focus involving medway

New contract for christ church students between Greenwich and Kent societies.

More voice on the boards at medway

Freshers was SU responsibility and was a very positive outcome

Improvement on canterbury student engagement

OL - wanted to say that the amount of support that the SABBs have given has been amazing and they are doing an incredible job with the support considering the past year.

AV - found that a lot of societies and events times clash with lecture times so could not attend, could there be consideration as to the timings of these events.

FM - asked for people to contact them regarding evenings coming up as the times vary but will be working with wellbeing to make more times available.

EB - agreed with AV about timings

MY - with regard to events run by BUCS they run all their events across the UK on a wednesday afternoon so can't be addressed, however Maddy will also enquire about alternative dates and times from event organisers.

4	Co-opting Vacant Officer positions application: BD opened the discussion regarding Co-opting Vacant officer positions. Phumuzile Sithole was invited to speak regarding co-opting for BAME Students officer BD asked the room if there is objections to co-opting PS was co-opted as BAME students Officers <i>As the other applicant was not in attendance, they were not considered at this time.</i> Yvette Kearns was invited to talk regarding becoming PT officer BD asked the room if there is objections to co-opting The UC had no objects YK was co-opted as Part time students Officer Esther Subhakar was invited to speak regarding co-opting for International Student's (Overseas) Officer. BD asked the room if there is objections to co-opting No objections ES was co-opted for International Student's (Overseas) Officer. Teme Binitie was invited to talk about co-opting for Black students officer BD asked the room if there is objections to co-opting No objections TB was co-opted as Black Students officer	
5	NHS learning Support Fund - BD BD discussed the current issue raised around the NHS funding support fund. BD made a request to open a campaign to open a dialogue regarding this. HF - raised the point as a nursing student that she does not receive the NHS support fund due to "repeating" a year. Due to administration conflicts she is not eligible for the additional funds. BD- explained that the lack of fund can have detrimental effect as students are unable to claim reimbursement for funds OL - raised that a number of her Overseas Peers aren't eligible for funding, placements can be up to an hour and half away which is	Action - SABBs to engage with the university regarding the NHS LSF as discussed

	expensive when having to commute. OL supports BD in their request to open this dialogue. BD - Students are having to pay out £300-500 which creates a barrier as if you can't complete placements you can't graduate. AL - Question: could the work experience fund cover this? BD - The information regarding this is convoluted and not accessible and a streamlined information source would be preferred. AV - international students are also affected by this and that there is very little information on where to get information and when told they would be reimbursed but still hasn't been reimbursed after requesting. HF - answer to AL that the work experience will not fund for placements, having attempted this and there is lack of information and lack of clarity. BD - System needs to be streamlined, better clarity with information, could the university streamline the process to prevent financial issues. BD - requested a vote DB - Mentioned this will be raised at the VC Q&A on Monday Vote was passed <i>UC to open communications with the university regarding NHS LSF, the UC voted to do a conversation/campaign with other SUs to challenge the inequalities regarding the funding, such as some of the examples shared, to make it a fairer process and for the University to support students financially that are not eligible for the fund with unavoidable expenses regarding placement, similar to how it had done prior to NHS LSF.</i>	
6	Practice Learning Unit - Padlet- anon? Can the SU look into the appropriateness of the PLU, seek alternative methods of establishing clinical placements, or ways the PLU's communication and effectiveness can be kindly improved? OL - This is a concern for a lot of placement students - it has been found that for the last 2 years there have been issues that have stemmed from being course specific, (do placements work differently in different	Action - Dan to discuss this article with the new Dean of Faculty and will return back to the UC

	departments?) We were told we would be informed as to placements 2 weeks before, this has never been the case. Placements are unaware of students being assigned to them, LSP have not been listened to and their LSP not been taken into account with travel or suitability. HF - agrees with OL and informs the UC that nursing students should have been told 6 weeks advance but only being told a couple of days beforehand. This has affected a lot of students with child care arrangements. Students are told there is nothing that can be done and the students have to handle it. Placements were unaware of students assigned. Students not informed of placement assignment meaning loss of placement hours. PLU staff communication was rude when students raised concerns over travel safety. DB - did not put to vote and is a definite issue for the council Dan - to take lead on this and will discuss this with the new Dean of faculty and return back to the UC.	
7	CCCU Shuttle bus between Medway and Canterbury - Padlet Anon? Beth - received an email from Greenwich and Kent unions that this issue is going to be looked into. Beth will look into this communication and will feedback to the UC AS - When looking to the shuttle bus can they be full accessible to all students Beth - Frankie attends the conversation regarding accessibility so that CDI is taken fully into consideration	Action - Beth and Frankie to report back to the UC regarding the outcome of the meeting
8	Encouraging Disability Support - JH JH not present BD - spoke instead AL - has a meeting on the 10th with the disability team and will be looking at how to make this process more streamlined BD - This is an issue which AL and Frankie could work on HF - Raised the issue that some students aren't being able to contact the disability team.	

	AL - Is looking to have regular meetings with the disability team to raise issues from the student body to improve communication and inclusivity between students and staff.	
9	Better student integration - JH BD - this was addressed with the sabbatical updates, as JH is not here he did not wish to expand upon it without JH present. BD - there is a lot of work being conducted by the SABBS but this should be brought up in a future meeting.	Action - deferred this issue to next meeting
10	Support with a Disability Awareness project - AL AL - International day of disabilities - wanted to ask for help from the SABBS and the UC to support this. Beth - this is was done last year and will be definitely be something beth and Frankie want to help with MC - Wishes also contributed to helping with this event and communicating it through the National Autistic Society.	
11	Institutional inequality/discrimination - JH JH was not present, DB read directly from the padlet. DB - this has been partially addressed by the co-opting of officers in this meeting. Has full confidence the sabbs are working towards filling these seats.	
12	Student Communications survey - MC MC - Finds there is difficulty communicating with the student body and university due to lack of information or multiple different platforms that are unclear how to gather information. MC would like to launch a survey to seek how improvements in communication can be maintained	Action - Beth and MC conduct the survey and report its findings to the UC.

	BD - This was an issue raised from last year and sees that the SU and SABBS were looking into this Dan - A comms review has been conducted from the SU side and areas of improvements are being built upon. Beth - The last 2 years we were in fully online engagement and we are looking to be more engaged with the student body in the person with UoT. A survey would be a great way to see how communication could be improved. BD - this is to be actioned for the next meeting to review the communication survey.	
13	Any other business BD - Wishes for better communication from the university regarding government announcements.	