

Student Parliament 2

29/10/2019

Alan Naqshbandi	Daniel Awomukwu	Michael-Sam Vidza
Alfred Amiolemen	Enas Magzoub	Paul Eweka
Benn Rapson	Eyram Ahadzie (VP Education)	Rachel Cairns (VP Inclusion)
Brendan Agu	John Agbonrofo (VP Welfare)	Ruairidh Wallace
Chelbi Hillan	Kayla Burns (VP Community)	Savvina Kritharidou
Christine Tambe	Maddy Watson (VP Sport)	Sophie Gwynne
Clodagh Halliday	Matt Crilly (President)	Thomas Fairbrother
	Max McKay	Vinny Williamson

Chair: Matt Crilly

Staff Support: Leo Howes, Andi Anderson, Adam Crawley, Tom Fairbrother

1) Introduction:

MC welcomes Student Parliament. Convening the meeting, as Democracy Convenor is ill. When it comes to accountability, MC will relinquish the chair.

MC explains voting procedure. MC notes at Student Parliament is not quorate. If quoracy is not met by half past the meeting shall be abandoned. If speaking, reminded attendees to introduce themselves.

Cannot approve previous meeting minutes as not quorate so moves to Executive Committee Minutes.

2) Executive Committee Minutes

MC welcomes questions to Executive Committee. No comments.

3) Executive Accountability

MC welcomes officers for accountability.

a. VP Welfare

Organised Freshers' Week inductions, working with advice service. Ran Help at Hand event. Monthly recharge Birthday celebrations to tackle social isolation. Ongoing development of guarantor scheme. Collaborating with VP Sports and University Wellbeing Manager to develop a Student Mental Health Partnership Agreement. Been promoting of ongoing mental health survey to provide insight. Working with accommodation providers to enhance student wellbeing. Also hosted the Naturally You project, in collaboration with other Universities in Glasgow and externals, promoted wellbeing support and positive self-image. 250 people in attendance to event, including guest speakers. Library will now be open 7 days a week, following complaints from post-graduate students. Marked World Mental Day on 10th October to raise awareness of mental health to tackle stigmatization. Welfare Week is coming back, due to be November 11th – 15th, there will be free events planned including First Aid training. Ongoing talks with University around accommodation.

MC welcomes questions. None are received.

VP Welfare leaves the meeting.

b. VP Education

Over past month, been working on Black History Month. Launched the Decolonise The Curriculum campaign following a panel discussion on Why Is My Curriculum White? Aim is to embed different backgrounds into the curriculum and looking at what the university provides. Keen to have people involved. Working on post-graduate engagement, been at meetings on PG training. Held PG coffee morning with the Doctoral Research Group, which was highly successful. Had rep training over the last month, really successful, had many class rep registrations over the last month. Talking to alumni office to develop opportunities, will update as progress happens.

MC Welcomes questions. None are received.

c. VP Community

Been working quite on environment stuff. Worked hard to get the results around the climate in the referendum, and will be taking this forward with the Principal. Common rooms – looking to acquire common rooms under the Union name. Because of developments on campus, it's proving a challenge, so looking at current spaces. Developing society training, looking at collaborative training sessions for societies. Looking for signups for big society take over week in refreshers. Going live soon.

MC welcomes questions. None are received.

d. VP Inclusion

Finished liberation room, have secured plans to start painting the walls with murals from different liberations. Currently in Black History Month, been good to see events happen. Own Voices project - proud of work that's come forward for it. Had someone ask for a copy of the poetry book for the exhibited artwork. Looking forward to seeing how it progresses. Women/non-binary swimmers paper – should be having women/non-binary swim sessions in January. Still in plans but working on it. This was handed down from previous years. Disability paper – collaborated with Disabled Students Rep, lots of work in the making. A group will be created around it and the paper circulated around estates. This could change the whole experience of disabled students for Strathclyde. 16 Days of Action and Disability History Month – marked out route for Fight for the Night. Multiple different campaigns will be taking place, including posters for invisible disability. Lots going on in planning stages.

MC welcomes questions. None are received.

e. VP Sport

Had biggest Sports Union Freshers' Week, in terms of Come & Trys, with 40 sessions, which is the most they've ever had. Ahead on Sports Union sign up – 400 ahead from previous year, only 200 away from year-end total from last year. Captains Dinner – 40 clubs attended, which is good so lots of different groups came. Successfully done First Aid training for all high risk clubs, e.g. surf. As John mentioned, working on Student Mental Health agreement, which is an initiative from NUS. After consulting, starting to draft the agreement. If want to get involved, get in touch with me or john. Current issue with floodlights. Got portable floodlights last year – they have not been moved, so completely overusing one sports pitch, battling with estates to get floodlights moved round the

pitches. Follow Sports Union to see What's On with What's On Watson. Strath Active – going well for some sports, e.g. netball and football, which are oversubscribed. Other sessions all doing well. Wednesday afternoon policy going to senate very soon as part of the wider timetabling policy – hopefully will be in action soon, which will make everybody's lives easier.

MC noted that the meeting is still not quorate after 30 minutes, so it should be abandoned. MC continues with questions to officers.

MC welcomes questions:

Enas: what are you going to do about men hogging the weight racks.

VP Sport: Can book out weight racks. The problem is the gym isn't big enough, always over capacity, particularly on the weight racks. Appreciate it's a barrier – can take up with staff members.

President stepping down from chairing for accountability. VP Sport setting timer for accountability.

f. President

Lots going on. Halls funding – kind of disappointed that the University was planning on cutting investment in halls, at least on the short term. Threatened to share pictures of mould etc. This is unacceptable – won argument, made them backtrack. Halls developing proposals on things that need developing immediately. More information in new edition of the Strathclyde Telegraph – expect it to be several hundred thousand at low end. Circuit Laundry – collected initial data. Really interesting and frightening info, like people travelling up to Aberdeen with washing because they have been overcharged and can't afford to use Circuit. Leading at a national level. Noted work on decarbonisation. UCU industrial action – will find out if staff going on strike. Looks unlikely – at national level, may have hit at a local level. Not confirmed.

MC welcomes Questions

Sophie: What are doing about increase in fees for international students, is anything planned? Been receiving concerned.

MC: Need to create a coherent plan – has been disagreeing with the University on this at every level. Like banging head against a wall – whole sector is built on this, worrying where this is going. Increase in fees is enormous – need a more coherent strategy. Need national leadership on this, it's happening at every institution. It's up to government to intervene – they've built an education system where they charge international and PG huge fees to subsidise Scottish students. No investment in HE – kind of pushing unis to do more. It's the whole system that needs challenged. Difficult to do.

Brendan: What are the strategies to take it to a national level?

MC: Need a very clear vision of what we want education to look like. Need to say it publicly and need to convince the public. Have raised with ministers – quite frankly they aren't interested. For their voter base, they get to say that they have free education, which pacifies populations. It's a fallacy to say that it's free – I have 30,000 pounds of debt. It's a national question. Positive developments down south – education is devolved. Thankful to have national president setting forward plan for National education system – need to make sure it's transplanted in Scotland.

No further questions.

MC notes that the meeting is still not quorate. Can't pass policy proposals. Worth saying that the Democracy review which went to referendum was passed. Reached quorate, 92.6% said yes. Hoping to bring to student parliament for approval.

Ruairidh: If not quorate, does this mean that it can't be approved.

MC: Would expect the next parliament to be quorate. Next Parliament is 28th November. Can't offer a definitive answer. Will go to the next student parliament.

MC welcomed questions on the Democracy Review:

Max: Suggestion to have an extraordinary student Parliament. If it's promoted heavily it could work.

MC reads out statement from Chief Executive of NUS.

MC: Essentially, the statement from NUS states that the referendum takes supreme precedent in democratic structures. If can't convene quorate parliament, referendum takes precedent. Wouldn't necessarily require a student parliament to approve.

MC: Notes that the Exec have power to pass policy. As Parliament is not quorate, Exec could consider. Encourage those who have submitted, pass to Matt if you wish. Can decide if Union should take a stand.

Eyram: With Student Partnership Agreement – not got endorsement. What happens with this, do we take a decision?

MC: Can't take a decision at the moment. If looking for wider decision, it will have to wait.

Savinna: Basically, since referendum has been voted, does this mean that Parliament could theoretically say that they could disagree. Doesn't make much sense if they can.

MC: Would maybe compare to proroguing Parliament. Parliament could vote against but could plunge Union into constitutional crisis. In terms of governance, Trustee Board may take a view on this, may end up at NUS. Referendum should take precedent.

Savinna: So why should it go to next Parliament if we're waiting for it to be quorate?

MC: Next Parliament will be constituted differently. It should hopefully be quorate.

Clodagh: Advertising methods, maybe we need to put out more information about it, maybe we should put out more. How do we get the message out more?

MC: Currently open to everyone – everyone still welcome to attend, though quoracy is the democratically elected. Completely get the point – been doing shout out, out of all the shouts, only 1 attended parliament. Always accept advertising could be better – think there's a general apathy. Can get drowned out. Continue to promote Parliament – wanting to digitize some of the stuff that Parliament does, e.g. streaming Parliament.

Benn: Initial question, was similar to Max. In response to the statement, which was the response to a complaint, where they held that the vote should have to go back to parliament for ratification. This is two different rulings – this was quite confusing. Currently in favour of passing reform.

MC: Chief Executive of Union felt that it was appropriate to come back to Parliament.



Benn: NUS upheld original compliant and said that a referendum could overrule Parliament. Other question: When is the other question going to be approved, the one regarding the changes to the articles?

MC: Plan to take the rest of it to referendum during the spring elections.

MC encourages those to put forward policy to send them to Matt. MC thanks everyone for coming along

MC closes the meeting.