

Student Parliament 5

19/3/2019

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Andy Cunningham	Jennifer Blackledge	Stephanie Glen
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Christopher Ibeh	Matt Crilly	Titi Farukuoye
Damola Akano	Max McKay	Yacine Benrahal
Daniel Awomukwu	Nicola Biggerstaff	

DPO: Daniel Awomukwu

Staff Support: Leo Howes, Adam Crawley, Kyle Scott

1) Introduction

Chair introduces meeting. Chair notes that if the meeting is not quorate then policy motions will not be discussed.

Chair re-arranges the agenda to cover items that do not require quoracy.

2) Executive Accountability:

a. Vice President Education

Eyram, VPE: Been involved in policy development working group; fitness to study, misconduct policy, what non-academic policy is at Strathclyde University. Working with post-grad students and reps. Thank you to everyone who voted me in, here's to another year at Strathclyde.

b. Vice President Diversity

Titi, VPD: Traveling to Falkirk to facilitate BME focus groups at the college, attended black students conference and put feedback into NUS UK and what issues that they face. Involved in World at Strathclyde fair, which is an event celebrating culture and liberation, we still have spaces and an £80 budget if people are interested. Attended the violence unseen exhibition on Friday, with a workshop on gender-based violence and the media. These events examine how women are mostly victims of gender based violent. Been a part of Divest Strathclyde,

including being involved with climate strike. Discussed BME counselling services at Strathclyde. Been involved with Brexit discussions and how we support students post Brexit.

c. Vice President Sports & Wellbeing

Alex, VPSW: Tomorrow is our biggest event, the Glasgow Taxi Cup, which is competition between GU, GCU and ourselves. Been lobbying BUCS for mental health and wellbeing provision. If you are on voluntary or academic suspension on mental health grounds in Scotland, then you can still take part in the events. 1000 people will be involved with the Glasgow Cup. Been doing Wellbeing Wednesdays, finding right time to put policy forward to the university and we are hoping to have a draft policy to education committee and then to senate, to hopefully become policy.

d. Vice President Support

John, VPS: Since last parliament, been organising exam wellbeing event to ensure that students have good wellbeing during their exams, to deal with stress, this will be in April. More first aid training sessions in the first week in April. Had a meeting with the admissions team, discussing ways in which we can help students with scholarship and how we can retain them. Met with director of finance to discuss potential rent increases. Monthly birthday celebrations to tackle social isolation on March 22nd, even if it is not your birthday.

Benn: In your manifesto, you said you were going to prioritise affordable housing and alternative housing?

John, VPS: Having a variety of options, social housing has not been fully explored and we have had successes in this field.

Benn: There have been Issues in halls, with flats being plagued with mould etc. What's been done about this.

John, VPS: This is being taken forward, we have had some successes and have been working with living conditions to improve.

Benn: Have they said when they will eradicate mould?

John, VPS: They are working and we will try to ensure that they eradicate mould.

Benn: In the constitution we have the provision of a support committee, would you be interested in re-establishing the support committee.

John, VPS: That is something we are looking forward to creating and we have already elected positions to that committee.

Max: Is James Blyth being refurbished by next year?

John, VPS: Have a meeting later this week when we will discuss.

Student (name not called): Islamophobia and what happened in New Zealand, do you have any plans for islamophobia and students wellbeing?

John, VPS: Have been campaigning to create a more supportive and inclusive community, that is why we host events for us to gather as a community.

Student (name not called): What are you actually going to do to tackle islamophobia>

Adrian: We have islamophobia, we have racism and antisemitism. It is not just one pronged approach, has to be systematic. We have to ensure that we are all one.

Matt, President: We have had contact with University services as SUMSA receive abusive messages etc. We reached out to them immediately and had security services outside SUMSA. We sent out a statement to support the Glasgow vigil that occurred that night. This was welcomed at Friday prayers.

e. Vice President Volunteering & Development

The VPVD was unable to attend Parliament. Alternative arrangements will be made for their accountability report.

f. President

Matt, President: I apologise to VPS, I had a meeting an hour ago, I had a premeeting and the halls rents are going up between 0-6% this year. More expensive ones going up by 6%, working its way down. Got halls reps to send them photos of their accommodation of their mould in their buildings, including in the flats at the most expensive. The most expensive rents will be at £580 a month. Submitted an emergency motion to NUS Scotland against graduation fees. Wanted to check with Parliament, though policy has been passed on this topic already. Looking for a new space for SUMSA. Library extension when through estates committee, is being funded. We are having a meeting with the new union extension. Met with new women's rep; we discussed sexual health provision at Glasgow. We are looking to create a sexual health clinic or even a GP. We found 5 institutions in ten minutes that had that provision.

Student (name not recalled): There is a £100 budget for elections, some people had adverts on Facebook etc. Is there a way in which we check elections expenditure. I feel sometimes that upcoming elected people have a better chance. How is the budget controlled and do the staff control it? In Livingston tower, people wrote on the whiteboards and left leaflets on tables.

Matt, President: We wouldn't support endorsements from lecturers. We have £100 per campaign, if we see a social media ad but don't see it on expenses then it raises a question. Have to submit all receipts by end of election. Incumbent officers can endorse other candidates when they take annual leave, which is mandatory. If a candidate is friends with an incumbent it is a bonus aye.

Student (name not recalled): Is it ethical though?

Matt, President: When I ran the first time, incumbent president backed the other candidate and I did beat them, it is an uphill battle. It doesn't matter much to the voters, the voters don't care if someone has put on a Facebook post. You have to actually campaign on the ground but it does through in questions. It is not the worst thing though, if an incumbent spots someone who they believe to be a good job it is understandable.

3) Approval of previous minutes

The Chair took the minutes as read.

a. Student Parliament 3 (19.22.2019)

These minutes were approved

b. Student Parliament 4 (22.2.2019)

Benn: Under the section regarding a point of order discussion on SPA, slight correct to say that deeming a motion was unamendable was unconstitutional.

The minutes have been amended and were approved.

4) Policy motions

a. Charging for course materials

Emily: Covering lapsing policy. Students shouldn't be in a position in which they are disadvantaged when looking at required course materials. If you would approve this policy, we would be going forward to the university to argue that students should have to pay for core materials. We want to lobby the university to create electronic provision. It would be university wide policy, to look at different faculties to suit different needs of faculties.

No speech against. DPO moves to a vote.

Approve: 100%

Abstain: 0%

Against: 0%

This motion was passed.

b. Parliamentary Provision Act 2019

Max: This motion calls for the Union to promote parliament better, as we have problems with quorate and how it promoted and advertised. We need to market it properly. We need to have food and drink provided, makes it easier to plan for people who don't have to go home for food etc.

An amendment was received to this motion. DPO invited Benn to speak on it.

Benn: We wanted to give parliament the option of discussing this amendment whilst still retaining the original policy. Calls for the Union to give the parliament a £7000 budget to create a credit scheme, with YOYO points equivalent to the money. If this is well advertised we would have 50 people in the room.

DPO invited speeches against the amendment:

Matt, President: Worth saying it is an odd thing to pass policy to have free money to here. We have had to tighten our belts, we have lost staff in this process. I cannot advocate for this amendment in which it costs £1000 per parliament. Free food is great and that and we should have. Implementing a credit system, don't know how to administer that service. I can't advocate as the Union cannot afford it, the motion is great but the amendment is not achievable.

Alex, VPSW: Have to question the legality of money in kind.

Sophie: Has this been costed?

Benn: This is more radical than I thought it was. Its why the end of the motion doesn't instruct the union to implement it. The end of the motion says that if the board of trustees to deem it unaffordable then to find something that is financially viable. I urge you to consider voting for this.

DPO moves to a vote:

Approve: 45%

Against: 48%

Abstain: 6%

This amendment is not approved.

A member of Parliament raised concerns about the ordering of the voting options on the slido app, stating that they changed as this affected their result. The DPO decides to recast the vote and informed students that the order of options on the voting app may change order.

DPO moves to revote:

Approve: 48%

Against: 48%

Abstain 3%

This vote is tied, so the decision is passed to the DPO. The chair decides to reject the amendment.

The amendment falls and the motion is discussed un-amended.

No speech against. DPO moves to a vote.

Approve: 81%

Against: 19%

Abstain: 0%

This motion is passed.

c. Exploring a Policy Council Act 2019

Benn: No big budget or financial implication. It is calling to create a policy council, very different to the previous one at Strathclyde. This one is pre-legislative, to ensure that policy submitted to parliament is looked at accordingly and this is for first timers etc, it gives them more support. If approved, we will have a working group to look at creating such council.

Alex, VPSW: How can you ensure you are impartiality in the members of this council?

Benn: No one is completely neutral, but any changes would be optional. It is not about the content of the motion, it is to tighten language and ensure motions are well resourced. Only exists as additional support.

Eyram, VPE: If the recommendations are not accepted by most motion submitters, then what is the point?

Benn: I think most students wouldn't turn down that additional support, I don't think that will happen.

Sophie: Would it better to have staff support, as they are not students?

Benn: The staff support thus far has been great, students may feel more comfortable speaking to other students rather than staff.

No speech against. DPO moves to a vote.

Against 56%

Approve 34%

Abstain 9%

This motion falls.

d. Reducing postgrad fees for widening access students.

Andrew: I'm a 4th year History Student. Whole point is to point out that post grad fees are extortionate. SAAS only offers £5.5k in support. This motion proposes that widening access students receive more support and cheaper fees. Widening access students. Union should push for the UNI to cap fees to 5.5k, max saas award. With more work to reduce post grad fees as a whole.

Student (Name not recalled): What is your definition of widening access?

Andrew: Based off the University's widening access policy, including schools with low progression rates, student carers. Looking at ways to making it more affordable for everyone, but priority is for widening access.

Student (Name not recalled): International students pay about £20,000. International students should fall in to this category.

Andrew: Reason I am looking at widening access is who the university are seeking to help already, we do need to do more research. I am going to keep looking at it, for now the focus is widening access with the aim of branching it out.

No speech against. DPO moves to a vote:

Approve 76%

Against 15%

Abstain 9%

e. Partnership approval process act 2019

Benn: Probably the most important motion. SPA (Student Parliament Agreement) is a document between Union and Strath University, sets out partnership structures etc. over a two-year period. It came to student Parliament 1 and student parliament voted down. The Union and University took on further consultation. Came back student parliament 4. It was agenda point, I asked to amend it but Union said that it could not be done. This policy states that SPA should be amendable. I have heard that the exec will just want to approve it that level. The Exec have power to do this, but only if it's impracticable to do so, and our exec haven't proved that it was impracticable.

The Chair opened this motion up to questions.

Alice: Is this motion just about this one policy, or is it about all policies in general?

Benn: Issue is that all motions are amendable, Union said it wasn't amendable. It needs to come back to parliament and has to come back to be amended.

Student (name not recalled): What if we include something that might not be beneficial to students, e.g. against climate change.

Benn: Because it is an agreement between the university and the union, the university might not approve it, until we get a motion is that is suitable to both parties.

DPO opens to speech against:

Matt, President: I'm not here to defend SPA. If exec committee approve SPA, it should come back to parliament. We have hundreds of agreements with external companies and groups, Tennents, mental health groups etc. What is the limits of this if we have to approve all partnerships? Do we need to wait months before the Union can go into partnership with other companies? Parliament still has opportunity to have a democratic say with other organisations. SPA will come back to parliament even if exec committee voted for.

Benn: Will it be amendable as a policy motion?

Matt, President: If you have a vote between two sides, there should just you need a vote against and a vote for.

Benn: Consider consultations rather than something like amendments, amendments should be done through consultations. My definition of partnership agreements, not contracts but democratic partnerships. Ultimately it is about democratic partnerships. Main body is all about democratic process. If the Union would have been open to amendments, in line with constitution, then there would be no need for this.

DPO moves to a vote:

Against 58%

Approve 27%

Abstain 15%

This motion fails.

5) Lapsing policies:

DPO explains that if a member of Parliament would like to retain a policy, they will need to make a speech against. If no-one speaks the policy will lapse.

a. Timetabling at Strathclyde

Eyram, VPE: Keep it, makes sense we don't want clashing classes.

DPO moves to a vote:

Approve: 83%

Against: 13%

Abstain: 0%

b. Increasing beds at Strathclyde

This motion lapses.

c. Getting back to Bursaries

This motion lapses.

d. Creating a letting agency

John, VPS: Students face scams in accommodation. We have developed partnerships with housing associations and this gives uni more impotence.

Benn: What is the purpose of the policy, when trustee board haven't come back to us already, since it was passed 5 years ago.

Lewis: Would be much more beneficial if parliament submitted a stronger motion at the next parliament, we would have a positive outcome if we proposed a stronger subsequent policy.

Approve: 41%

Against: 47%

Abstain: 13%

This policy lapses

e. Jobs for students studying at Strathclyde

Eyram, VPE: Urge to vote because who doesn't need extra income. Been working in the past year at various committees and hasn't been met with a good response so lets keep pushing it.

Approve: 94%

Against: Against 6%

Abstain: 0%

This motion passes.

f. End the blood donation ban

This policy lapses.

g. Let them...wear capes

Titi, VPD: This has been a motion to speak up and pledge solidarity to allow women to wear whatever they want.

Approve: 70%

Against: 27%

Abstain: 3%

This policy is retained.

h. Protect our human rights:

Max: Withdrawing from ECHR, this may happen and should be policy and may come back in very near future.

Ruaridh: Shouldn't we have a better motion that is more timely.

Lewis: Better to have a policy in the interim.

Approve: 79%

Against: 7%

Abstain: 14%

i. Ensuring a legacy of commonwealth games:

This policy lapses.

j. Impact on independence on student sport

This policy lapses.

k. Student support over the summer

Student (name not recalled): Students need support over summer, post grad students will still be on campus.

Approve: 93%

Against: 7%

Abstain: 0%

l. A win that is not a win

This policy lapses.

m. Supporting industrial action:

Matt, President: Need to update, worth having on the books until the next parliament. We supported the strike last year and supported the lecturers. A lot of will be future masters or PG workers and it isn't worth for us to face pension cuts.

Approve: 87%

Against: 10%

Abstain: 3%

This policy is retained.

n. Increasing our volunteer skills

This policy lapses.

o. Referendum 2014

This policy lapses.

6) AOCB

Benn: Just want the Union as a whole, going in to next year, advertise parliament more. In the run up it hasn't been on in the Facebook page in weeks. This body was not there, when we had external organisations like student housing.

DPO thanks everyone for attending and closes the meeting.

Table of lapsed policy

Policy which LAPSED	Policy which was RETAINED
<i>Increase the number of Beds at Strathclyde</i>	<i>Timetabling at Strathclyde</i>
<i>Getting back to bursaries</i>	<i>Jobs for Students studying at Strathclyde</i>
<i>Creating a Letting Agency</i>	<i>Let them... wear capes</i>
<i>End the Blood Donation Ban</i>	<i>Protect our Human Rights</i>
<i>Ensuring a legacy for the commonwealth games</i>	<i>Student support over the summer</i>
<i>Impact of independence on Student Sport</i>	<i>Supporting industrial action</i>
<i>A win that's not a win</i>	
<i>Increasing our volunteer skills</i>	
<i>Referendum 2014</i>	