

Union Council 23-01-20 Minutes

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| UC01 | Housekeeping | 5 Minutes |
| UC02 | <p>Statements from the Chair</p> <p>Chair thanked members for their attendance – and commented that there was a lot of items to get through in the meeting. Queried councillors as to whether they were happy for UEA:TV to livestream the meeting, and for the minutes to become more succinct.</p> <p>The former vote passed with a margin of 44% approve, 17% reject, and 39% abstain, while the latter passed by a margin of 49% approve, 6% reject, 45% abstain.</p> | |
| UC03 | <p>Code of Conduct</p> <p>Chair and Deputy Chair introduced councillors to the code of conduct (available at https://www.uea.su/union/memberscodeofconduct/) and reminded everyone to act in accordance with the rules set down in it.</p> | |
| UC04 | <p>Minutes of the last meeting / matters arriving from last minutes</p> <p>Chair directed councillors towards the minutes (available at https://www.uea.su/democracy/unioncouncil/councildocumentsand notices/).</p> <p>No matters arising.</p> | |
| UC04 | <p>General Q&A with Neil Ward</p> <p>Council approved allowing NWARD to speak, with 81% votes in favour.</p> <p>NWARD introduced himself, and expressed a desire to hear from council in regard to recent UCU industrial action. Briefly outlined the context behind the industrial action, and explained the reasons that UEA and Universities UK have taken the decisions they have in regard to UCU concerns over pensions and pay.</p> <p>LMartin (PGC Deputy Chair) asked about the way in which the pension fund was evaluated and formulated.</p> <p>NWARD accepted that there had been initial disagreements in regard to methodology, but that a joint panel had come to a consensus on the evaluation. Agreed that there were difficulties in making projections so far into the future.</p> <p>MGallagher (PGC Chair) asked why a significant amount of money was being spent on ‘sky house’ instead of pensions and staff. Further queried about reductions in numbers of AT’s (associate tutors).</p> <p>NWARD responded that in regard to ‘sky house’ the funding came from a different area of the budget, and represented a one off investment, and not continuous spending like pensions do. Stated that it was imperative to begin the work to refurbish parts of the Lasdun Wall, and that this could not commence unless ‘sky house’ was completed. Further responded that he perceived great value in Postgraduate students teaching, and rejected that there was any policy of casualising AT contracts. BPinsent (PGC Member) asked what NWARD thought about SOAS effectively terminating all of their staff on casualised contracts.</p> | |

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| | <p>NWard stated that he accepted there was room to improve in these contracts, but did not want to speculate in regard to SOAS.</p> <p>MPay (PGC Member) challenged that casual and fixed term contracts do not entitle staff to incremental increases in wages. Stated that this burden disproportionately affects young members of staff, especially women+ and BME individuals.</p> <p>NWard replied that he believed AT salaries do increase year on year, and that temporary contracts offer flexibility to react to increases or decreases in workload over short periods of time.</p> <p>LMartin cited friends and colleagues who have confided in him that they have to choose between taking part in the pensions scheme, or being able to afford to eat.</p> <p>NWard, responded that this is definitely an issue if staff perceive it to be unattractive or impossible to join the pension scheme. Mentioned the possibility of ‘tiering’ contributions as a potential solution to this.</p> <p>CPerry (UG Education Officer) thanked PG committee for their questions, and reminded UG students in the room that the SU are in constant communication with the university, and prompted more dialogue between students, the SU and the university.</p> | |
| UC05 | <p>Reports</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Trustee Board Report b. Student Officer Committee (SOC) Report c. First Q Accounts Summary 3 d. Full Time Officer Reports <p>A) Rolled over to the next meeting.</p> <p>B) TBell (Chair of SOC) stated that SOC have not met this calendar year, so there is nothing to update.</p> <p>C) Available at: https://www.uea.su/pageassets/democracy/unioncouncil/councildocumentsandnotices/First-Q-accounts-summary-3.pdf. APerez (Activities and Opportunities Officer) rose to explain the finance report. Explained that the union is short of finances. Highlighted that lower than expected receipts from social enterprise were concerning. Indicated that there have been conversations with the university to increase their contribution to funding.</p> <p>MMarko (PG Education Officer) asked what the SU were doing in regard to decreasing the SU’s reliance on selling alcohol to make up funding shortfalls.</p> <p>APerez responded that the primary hope was to secure more funding from the university to make up this shortfall.</p> <p>JAnnand (Cocktail Society) asked what students can do to help put pressure on the university to increase funding.</p> | |

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APerez replied suggesting that students educating themselves in regard to union finances would be helpful, and that corresponding with the Vice-Chancellor and executive team would also help put pressure on them.

FNorton (Alt Rock Society) queried whether this would impact the budgets of societies going forward.

APerez responded that in the event of further budgetary issues then there would be cuts in regards to provision of services.

- D) APerez presented their report, directing councillors to look the report, which was attached to the agenda. Commented that she has been busy with clubs and societies, and assisting with STIGMA, leading one session herself.

AKhan (Ethnic Minorities Officer) asked how well APerez's 'say hello to a mate' training session went.

APerez responded that there was a lack of participation in her session, but invited ATrew to comment further on STIGMA as a whole.

ATrew (Welfare, Community and Diversity Officer) presented their report, stating that the full detail could be found on the agenda. Commented that there was a lot of student engagement with STIGMA, especially with those events in the Hive and LCR. Considered the events to be successful.

CPerry presented their report, again directing councillors towards the full report in the papers. Reminded council of upcoming events.

MMarko presented their report, commenting that they have been working with the library in regard to provision for PG students. Further highlighted liaising with PG students in regard to the Enlighth app, and work in regard to securing PG access to sport.

SAtherton reiterated that the report is fully available in the papers. Highlighted meetings in regard to accommodation, and updated council on the progress of the democracy review. Encouraged members to nominate themselves for election. Reminded council of 'reclaim the night.'

UC06 Policy Lapse

LM moved a procedural motion to move Policy Lapse to the next meeting of council.

This motion succeeded, with 38% indicating supporting not moving, 39% supporting moving, and 23% abstaining.

This caused confusion as to whether these policies now automatically lapse and need to be re-voted on.

SA explained the purpose of Policy Lapse, and after checking the bye-laws, a new vote was held on completing it during this meeting.

This vote passed, with 76% supporting, 13% opposing, and 9% abstaining.

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Chair allowed councillors time to read the document, and to examine the 'policy to keep' section.

A vote was held on accepting these recommendations, with 88% approving, 5% rejecting and 7% abstaining.

Chair then allowed councillors time to read the section regarding policies to become precedent.

A vote was held on accepting these recommendations with 91% approving, 4% opposing and 5% abstaining.

MGallagher asked whether the 'ask for Angela' campaign is being used in the gender neutral toilets.

ATrew responded that the 'ask for angela' campaign is covered through the good night out campaign, and thus does not need to be signposted in the toilets.

Council did not decide to pull out any policies from the 'lapse' section – so all listed policies lapsed.

Council proceeded to debate the remaining motions.

In support of international law and human rights in Palestine – 1714

AKhan rose to support the motion, outlining their reasons for supporting it.

DBurns (Jewish Society) rose to oppose the motion and outlined their reasons for doing so. Perceived there to be a double standard in regard to BDS (Boycott, Divest, Sanction) of Israel and not other nations.

AKhan rebutted this, arguing that sanctions and boycotts do work.

DBurns argued that BDS was not the right way to go about changing the behaviour of the Israeli government.

SEsiri-Bloom closed the debate by arguing that it was important to undertake these measures.

Vote to keep or lapse the policy; 64% keep, 9% oppose, 27 abstained.

Dodgy Sugar in my dodgy coffee (Starbucks and Tate & Lyle Boycott) – 1688

LMartin rose to support the motion, stating that neither of these companies pay tax, and thus should be boycotted.

Vote to keep or lapse the policy; 79% keep, 9% oppose, 12% abstain

Amendments to Sun Boycott and Sun Boycott later amended to include Daily Star – 1398

LMartin rose to support the motion, arguing that these newspapers have previously targeted students at UEA, and in addition were commonly racist and homophobic.

Vote to keep or lapse the policy, 88% keep, 7% oppose, 4% abstain.

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Sweatshop Free UEA - Electronics Watch – 1558

LMartin rose to support the motion, arguing that this would facilitate more ethical buying of computers and computer parts.

Vote to keep or lapse the policy, 92% keep, 3% against, 5% abstain.

Ethical Careers Fair – 1393

LMartin rose to support the motion, and outlined that many of the companies who attend the UEA careers fair conduct unethical business practices, and that the SU should step in to arrange an ethical careers fair to fill in this shortfall.

EWignall (Cheerleading Dance Society) asked a question over whether this impacted against those with an interest or involvement with the armed forces.

LMartin responded that this was a fair question, but stated that this would run as an alternative to this careers fair, not as a direct replacement.

AShaw (Soc Executive) queried whether employers and students would engage with this.

LMartin responded that this was a good question, and that the SU would need to run it to find out.

APerez interjected that similar events had been successful in the past, so there was no reason to not think that this also could.

Vote to keep or lapse the policy, 69% keep, 22% against, 9% abstain.

Responsible Alcohol Consumption – 2243

ATrew rose to support this, stating that it was important for the SU to remain focused on encouraging the responsible consumption of alcohol.

APerez reiterated that this includes a commitment to education and information, not on punishment or punitive measures.

Vote to keep or lapse the policy, 58% keep, 2% against, 39% abstain.

Nothing Rhymes With Orange – 1819

ATrew clarified that this policy includes legislating for fundraising for a society that is no longer active, and that councillors should bare this in mind.

Vote to keep or lapse the policy, 18% keep, 68% remove, 14% abstain

Hepatitis C Awareness – 1812

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| | <p>Chair clarified what Hepatitis C was.</p> <p>ATrew stated that many councillors did not know what Hepatitis C was, which shows how important the campaign was.</p> <p>Vote to keep or lapse the policy, 85% keep, 10% remove, 5% abstain.</p> | |
| UC07 | <p>Policy Papers</p> <p>A) Amendment to the byelaw 10: The Budget Definitions</p> <p>APerez rose to explain the motion, clarifying the specifics of it.</p> <p>SAtherton put forward a procedural motion to remove resolution 4 from the motion.</p> <p>Procedural Motion on removing resolution 4 passed by a margin of 41% remove, 36% keep, 22% abstain.</p> <p>Vote on the amended motion, 75% pass, 5% reject, 17% abstain.</p> <p>B) Who Runs the World? GIRLS: Womens+ History Month</p> <p>SA rose to support this motion, highlighting the importance of running this month.</p> <p>Vote on the motion, 80% pass, 7% reject, 13% abstain.</p> <p>C) Decolonise UEA</p> <p>AKhan rose to support this motion, commenting that the SU has been working on decolonise UEA for several years now, and that this motion ensures that this campaign remains in place for future years.</p> <p>Vote on the motion, 91% approve, 2% reject, 7% abstain</p> <p>D) Adoption of official International Holocaust Remembrance</p> <p>DBurns rose to support the motion, highlighting that antisemitism was on the rise in the United Kingdom, and that as a form of racism it is unacceptable – and the SU should officially take actions against it.</p> <p>Vote on the motion, 88% approve.</p> <p>E) Mental Health Toolbox for Councillors</p> <p>RPitt (PSI Faculty Convenor) rose to support this motion, stating that this policy would allow the SU to create a ‘toolbox’ to assist training of students to provide mental health advice and assistance.</p> <p>Vote on the motion, 95% approve.</p> <p>F) Defend Erasmus Funding</p> | |

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| | <p>RPitt rose to support the motion, arguing that with uncertainty deriving from Brexit, that the SU should lobby and campaign to defend funding for the Erasmus programme as it benefits many students from UEA and other institutions.</p> <p>Vote on the motion, 92% approve.</p> | |
| UC08 | <p>Approval of Society and Peer Support Group Constitutions</p> <p>Chair explained this part of the process; that council needs to approve these societies.</p> <p>Vote on approval of all societies, 77%, approve, 6% reject, 17% abstain.</p> <p>All societies approved.</p> | |
| UC09 | <p>Any other Business</p> <p>Chair reminded councillors that nominations to run to be an officer were open until the 25th of February.</p> | |
| UC10 | <p>Date, time and place of next meeting: 13/02/20 – 6-9:30PM – LT2</p> | |