

Graduate Students' Association Council

20/05/2019 5pm

Venue: Vanbrugh VN/044

Minutes

Present: Sarah Wright (Equality Officer)
Amy Bullard (VP: Wellbeing and Community)
Sehrish Shafi (President)
Charlotte Chamberlain (VP: Academic)
Kate Densley (Sports Officer)
Neil Cox (Volunteering Officer)
Daniel Lock (Chair)
Killy Zhao (Faculty Rep: Social Sciences)

In attendance: Peter Gorbert (CEO)
Chris Bovis (Minutes)

Apologies: Sofia Sarabia (Events Officer)
Miguel Santos (Faculty Rep: Arts and Humanities)
Rounak Ghosh (Faculty Rep: Sciences)
Maha Naeem (Communities Officer)

Absence: Veerle Kappen (Colleges Officer)

1. Welcome
2. Apologies (as above)
3. Approval of previous minutes
 - **C** and **VP:A** approve minutes of previous meeting.
4. Matters Arising
 - Smoking Areas: **VP W&C** agreed with the University that there will be a review, however the Uni seem to have delayed it. It has been mentioned at Equality and Diversity Committee. **VP W&C** raised that there will be a meeting tomorrow, so it's on Matters Arising there. No activity from uni so far. (Ongoing)
 - Volunteering page (Ongoing). **CEO** stated that the website may be changing after the elections to include activities. So update pending in later Council meetings.
 - Travel and Transport (Buses) - **CEO** in contact with Estates, and the report will be some months, so will feed back to Council when there is an appropriate update. (Ongoing)
 - Buses project walking (Ongoing) - as above.
 - **VP W&C** met with **CO**. **VP:W&C** is going to lead on wellbeing events over the summer. (Closed)
 - LoA (Closed) has been delayed until the next academic year because of delays in the University.

- **CEO** and strategic plans (Ongoing). Some more work, feedback with officers, so all the information will be distributed. CEO apologises.
- Transport (Closed) As above.
- Election Platform Donation. The funds raised are going towards MAs scheme for Refugees at York. **CEO** looked at it, and it's possible. Authorisation given by Council to allow **C** to approve its use, once opt-out is included. (Some Discussion around whether people will be put off with donations. (Closed)

5. Reports

a. Written Reports from the Officers

C thanks all for using template.

i. PRES

- No questions. Requests English Language workshops promotion.

ii. VP: W&C

- No questions.

iii. VP: A

- No questions.
- PRES closed, 40% response rate. Thanks to all the help that spread the information.

b. Verbal Reports from Council Members

i. Volunteering Officer

- Volunteering Index - There's 95 people on the list now. **VO** has been talking to York Mind who organise regular events throughout the summer. (monthly) These can be emailed out. **VO** wants to know about response rates. Would require a manual follow-up with charities, to see if people turn up and engage. **CEO** recommends it for consideration, as it would help the GSA build closer ties with the community.
- Potential event by York Mind specifically for GSA volunteers. **VO** worried not enough people would show, but **VP W&C** and **P** recommend asking volunteers if they were interested first.
- **VO** working on creating a list of individual opportunities for postgraduate volunteering. GSA need to check with them about opportunities before they can go online. So far, **VO** has confirmed with Cats Protection, York Mind, York Age, Sue Ryder.

ii. Sports Officer

- Helped organise the Family Networks Sports Day (it was postponed due to bad weather).
- Spoke with **Advice and Welfare Coordinator** about a softball session for families over the summer.

- The Postgrad Sports Day has been postponed, but is still in the pipeline. Maybe over the Summer?
 - Thinking of hosting a Postgrad GSA Challenge - a mountain climb or something. Potential to raise money for charities, but laying the groundwork to see if postgraduates would be interested.
- iii. Equality Officer
- Request for **VP A** to look into feedback days.
- iv. Faculty Representatives
- No updates.

6. Discussion and Approval of By-Laws

a. Association Council By-Law

CEO introduces by-law that formalises the arrangements already in place. A lot is repeatedly and its been supplemented by the information in the Council intro packs. With some influence by the work of other SUs to ensure the governance works properly.

- Amendment 1 (13.1 and 13.2) - Voting Records
 - To change 'member voting record' to 'council voting record'. **C** presents motion. No speeches against.
Votes in favour: 8, Votes against: 0, Abstentions: 0
- Amendment 2 (3.1.2) - Change of Phrase
 - 'Three representatives' should change to 'three elected representatives'.
VP:A presents motion. No speeches against.
Votes in favour: 8, Votes against: 0, Abstentions: 0
- Amendment 3 (Section 3) - Inclusion of Faculty Rep in Council Role Remits
 - Motion to add entries to this section regarding the role of Faculty Reps.
VP:A to write a motion, to be approved then added to the section by **C**.
No speeches against.
Votes in favour of addition, pending C's approval of draft entry: 8, Votes against: 0, Abstentions: 0
- Amendment 4 (7.1), 'Dates of Council'
 - Motion to request that 'dates of Council to be published at the start of the academic year' changed to 'academic term'. **VP: A** presents motion.
CEO raises possible problems. No speeches against.
Votes in favour: 7, Votes against: 1, Abstentions: 0
- Vote on the Association Council By-Law
Votes in favour: 8, Votes against: 0; Abstentions: 0

b. Principal Officer Team By-Law

- Amendment 1 (3.1.7; 3.1.9; 3.1.13) - **VP:A** considers these points to be part of the Trustee Board remit, not the Principal Officer Team remit. After discussion between members, the **CEO** and **VP:A** will withdraw amendment until later council meeting, in order to seek clarification.
- Amendment 2 (6.8) - Concern raised about practicality by **VP: A**. **CEO** discusses the practicality it would be difficult to implement, because there's no way to measure which Officer would be paid what, given they are already working FT. Then assigning value to the tasks they undertook. Easier if Council undertook a responsibility. **SO** raises consideration of by-election in such circumstances. **CEO** says yes, but this is for positions that become vacant during a voting period, or within the last four months. Amendment (6.8) put forward. To change 'must' to 'may'; and add 'in agreement with the Board of Trustees'
Votes in favour: 8, Votes Against: 0; Abstentions: 0.
- Votes on the Principal Officer Team By-Law
- Votes in favour: 7, Votes against: 0, Abstentions: 1

7. Academic Representation Strategy

- **VP:A** introduces item. Aimed at bringing GSA representation for reps up to scratch, and was seeking comments, queries and questions. No questions raised.

8. Any Other Business

- **EO** and **SO** are wished Happy Birthday.
- **CEO** raises Efficiency Review of the GSA. There was a review carried out by the University to see if YUSU and GSA could work collaboratively more closely, with the possibility of cutting funding to the GSA. **CEO** reports it seemed to go pretty well and the funding agreed for next year. No immediate concerns - 16th June the findings and recommendations reported.
- Elections are taking place. Hopeful for 1,000 votes.

Meeting adjourned.