



Student Experience Zone: 4pm Tuesday 22nd October 2019

CD/001

Present:

22 individuals were in attendance

Chair

Kirsten Jolley, President of Wellbeing and Diversity (KJ)

Students' Union Officers/staff

Zaki Kaf Al-Ghazal – Student Voice Co-ordinator (ZK)

Tim Holmes – President of the SU (TH)

Donna Smith – Chief Exec (DS)

Ryan Newsam – Comms Assistant (RN)

York St. John University Staff

Ewan Thompson – Accounts manager (Sodexo ET)

Apologies

None recorded

Welcome & Introductions

The president of Wellbeing and Diversity welcomed all in attendance to the meeting and presented staff with the opportunity for introduction. At the beginning of the meeting, students were encouraged to try food samples from the options Sodexo had provided. These included both savoury and sweet foods.

Kirsten explained that the university's catering will open up for tender at the end of the 2019-2020 Academic year. The purpose of the zone was to create a dynamic forum for discussion, where students could give honest feedback about what they like, dislike and would like to see on campus in the future to aid the

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University tendering process with honest and up to date student feedback. The first part of the meeting essentially involved students trying out the different options. The vegan option and the falafel proved to be particularly popular on the evening as did the cheesecake.

Open Discussion

KJ utilised the open discussion to initially answer some questions. The questions and responses are listed below, students identities are anonymised.

A) DT asked If food was labelled vegan and you aren't, would you buy it?

Participants gave mixed responses and there was an almost 50/50 split. Some said they would have no hesitation whilst others wouldn't stray towards due to negative connotations surrounding veganism.

B) Why does the canteen close so early?

ET replied that this is simply due to food wastage.

C) Please tell us more about too good to go?

ET explained that this was a scheme in which students would pay for a "magic bag" of surplus food which was mixture of different types and which has not gone off.

D) ET asked: would students use an on-site shop?

Students were very keen on there being an on-site shop such as spar but were wary of its potential expense. Students were keen on the element of convenience it would provide.

E) ET asked – what would encourage you to go to the canteen more?

Students replied that they wanted the canteen to look more attractive and more aesthetically pleasing. More variety of foods was important to them too. And the idea of comfort food was mentioned in that food that would remind them of home would be welcome.

F) DS asked - Is the ethics of sourcing food more important or its cost?

There was a mixed response here in that some students wouldn't mind paying extra and ensure that the food was made locally but others were averse to having to pay more on a student budget.



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G) Is the canteen there to make a profit, or is it just a service?

ET replied that the canteen used to cost more to run than it currently does even now, it does not make a lot of money. What drives the canteen is not commerciality.

H) Why is there not more healthy food on the menu?

This led to an extended discussion by the students present. Most students were in favour of healthy food – but not at the expense of the price of the food. Most participants then said that they consider the price of the food more than the potential health benefits. It was suggested that calorie content of the various dishes should be put on the menu but then a student replied that it may be a source of discomfort for a student with an eating disorder. There was intense dialogue over the issue though the consensus favoured cheap food over healthy food.



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