

Minutes of the meeting
Student Senate
Tuesday 3rd November 2015
HG147, 4pm-6pm

Present: Aidan Laycock (LOS), Nathaniel Abakah-Phillips (NAP), Lucinda Izzard (LI), Gabby Wilson (GW), Jayne Spence (JS), Izzy Tooke (IT), Grace Mason (GM), Nikki Foster (NF), George Coombs (GC), Vickky Firth (VF), Mel Perkins (MP), Katherine Armstrong (KA), Caitlin Smithson (CS), Danielle Ward (DW), Sophie Walker (SW), Vicky Weekes (VW), Caitlin McDougall (CM), Katie White (KW), Angus Williams (AW), Fran Rhodes (FR), Sven Kluever (SK), Nicola Camp (NC), Jack Clifton (JC)

In attendance: Paul Murtough (Minutes), Louise Aiken (Membership Engagement Manager, LA), Chris Bateman (CEO,CB), Matt Allton (Social Media), Matt Walton (Sports & Activities Manager, MW), Karl Swales (Sports Co-ordinator), Harrison Rimmer (Student Engagement Co-ordinator), Emma Wilkins (Director of Student & Staff Services, Guest speaker, EW)

Apologies: Ellen Gambles (HLS representative), Nicole Freeman (HLS Faculty Chair), Faye Atherley (Student Champion), Rachael McGivern (Student Champion), Brogan Hume (Sports & Societies Committee)

Maximum number of voters: 22

1. Apologies

As stated above

2. Declaration of Interest

NAP – Motion S46

LOS - Motion S47

3. Membership

As apologies were noted it was decided there was no need to review the membership.

3.1 Deputy Chair Election

LOS requested for anyone interested in acting as the Deputy Chair of the Senate for the coming year to put themselves forward.

NAP and LI expressed their interest. Each gave an introductory speech stating their reasons to be elected and demonstrated their understanding of the meetings, knowledge of Students' Union procedures and policies and knowledge of how to lead.

Vote for Deputy Chair:

NAP was voted as DC for the remainder of the year with 15 votes.

4. Senate Motions

Motion S46: Slating the Slate

GW was requested by LOS to introduce the motion and discuss its scope. GW read through the motion stating Senate believes, resolved and mandates

LOS requested speeches for and against.

For: GW – It has never happened before at YJSU, but candidates from other institutions have crumbled due to the pressure that slates place on individuals in an election.

EEK! Presented:

KA: What is a 'slate'?

GW: Explained it was a team of people working together for the different positions available within an election.

For/Against: No speeches were presented for the remaining number allocated.

Vote for the motion:

For: Against: Abstain:
21 0 0

Motion Passed

Action: PRES

Motion S47: Vice Presidents to Officers

NAP introduced the motion stating the current titles of 'Vice President' often indicates a hierarchy, that people visualise the President as having responsibility for each of the subsequent areas (education, Welfare & Diversity) and that GW, LI work dependant on the tasks delivered to them when this is not the case. 'Officers' provides a neutral term which gives a clear indication of a lack of hierarchy.

EEK! Presented

GM: Would Nathaniel's role change?

NAP: No, there would just be a need for more clarity.

Procedural Motion submitted

PCM 5: GW spoke for this stating that it had been discussed as a team prior to Senate and they wish to change the titles to 'President' for each individual area.

For: GM stated it gives a bit more clarity

Against: AW Stated the term President (for the SU) still gives a sense of hierarchy above the other 'Presidents'

For/against: No speeches were presented for the remaining number allocated.

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Vote for Procedural Motion:

For: Against: Abstain:
20 0 1

Procedural Motion passed

Senate returned to discuss the motion which now instates the 'President' titles.

For: GM, it makes more sense

Against: AW still hierarchical

EEK! Presented

DW, don't understand the outcome?

NAP: Currently, the 'VP' provides a lesser sense of being central to the SU and the President is still seen as the first point of contact regardless of their responsibility.

LI: University will immediately go to the President

GW: 'VP' removes the urgency when it has to pass through channels

EEK! Presented

AW: Is there evidence it works?

NAP: Aberdeen use President for each role who then have subsequent VPs but no data.

EEK! Presented

VF: What do other Unions have?

GW: Very few use VP, most use Officers but it is dependent on the individual SU.

For: VW, students do tend to go Nathaniel, it would give some clarity.

Against: MP wouldn't it be confusing to have three Presidents?

Summation: NAP summated the points for and against and the criticisms towards the clarity of the motion.

Vote for the Motion:

For: Against: Abstain:
14 6 0

Motion Passed

Action: PRES

CS joined the meeting. Total number: 22

Motion S48: Introduction of voting procedure

For the purpose of this motion LOS will be referred to as AL as the presenter of the motion, NAP took position as DC of the meeting and will be referred to as such through this section.

AL introduced the motion providing the reasons for this submission are many; however Sports and Societies dinner was a prime example and the limited time presented to members prior to the vote.

EEK! Presented

GM: Will Senate be affected by the scope?

AL: It's mainly to govern groups (S&S) but technically the process could apply to Senate, particularly the anonymous voting.

EEK! Presented

GW, What is meant by 'Pre-vote'?

AL: It would determine the requirement for anonymous voting.

GW: Do you not feel that committees are responsible for the decisions made internally?
Anonymous voting would remove accountability

EEK! Presented

IT asked if any other examples were available as to this happening.

AL stated that some committees had reported to him but no feedback from other voting opportunities

EEK! Presented

VW asked if what Senate are voting for could be explained

AL For NAP to develop a procedure

EEK! Presented

VF, would it be a collective vote?

AL stated it would that which would be outlined in the procedure

EEK! Presented

IT when is the cut off exactly, where will its reach stop?

AL Only regards to Union internal elections.

EEK! Presented

AW asked if AL would be included in the writing

AL stated NAP would develop the procedure and open to all students for feedback

EEK! Presented

IT asked if a committee wished to vote in a position would they require an allocated amount of time to allow for decisions and to hold the vote?

AL stated yes, there should be individual procedures in place

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EEKI Presented

GM asked if there would be a procedure before Senate.
AL it would be preferred as a Motion

Procedural Motion submitted

PCM 3: GW requested that MW be invited as a guest speaker due to the extensive knowledge and being the manager specific department.

For: AW stated it would be good to hear from someone with extra knowledge

Against: No speech

For: IT said it would be good for clarity

Against: No speech

Vote for the Procedural Motion

For: Against: Abstain:

20 0 1

MW approached Senate stating that this was the first he had heard about any issues regarding votes. There is probably no procedure that could cover everything and please everybody. There was a 25-30 minute discussion period around the vote for Sports and Socs dinner and at the time the Committee (Sports & Societies) had not been elected so no discussion could take place prior to conference. Voting was done anonymously and there is definite confusion on what this motion is asking.

EEKI Presented

AL asked it was discussed to have it as an anonymous vote?

MW stated it was always an anonymous vote, the discussion took place behind the scenes from a staffing perspective and did not really require the input of students for the operational side of the conference.

EEKI Presented

FR asked if there could have been an e-mail for the dinner vote prior to conference as surrounded by experience committee members put a lot of pressure on a new member.

MW the agenda was distributed to chairs of the committees three weeks earlier

FR stated she received no agenda.

MW stated it was good feedback to have and chase up in the future.

EEKI Presented

VF Would the vote really have a different vote if there was more time allowed?

MW it could be argued that more time gives people more time to influence voting

EEKI Presented

DW stated the motion needed refining, contradictory speeches and unsure what is being voted

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on.

AL No agenda was received and no prior notice of election.

Procedural Motion submitted

PCM 1: GW submitted the motion to move straight to the vote.

For: GC stated Senate should just get down to the vote.

Against: AL don't vote because of time constraints.

For: VF stated that Senate was just moving in circles

Against: No speeches

Vote for the Procedural Motion

For:	Against:	Abstain:
20	2	0

Procedural Motion Passed

DC called for a summation of the motion before a vote would take place

AL summated the motion clarifying points of the discussion

Vote for the Motion:

For:	Against:	Abstain:
1	14	6

Motion Failed

NAP returned to Senate and AL to LOS for the remainder of the meeting.

MW and KS left the meeting

5. Previous Minutes

Minutes of the previous meeting were passed by ascent, spellings of Senators names were raised and will be amended.

6. Matters arising

LOS called for the Sabbatical Officers to report on their matters from the final meeting of 2014/15

S41: National Conference

GW explained the motion and stated that due to the time frame of NUS motions and National Conference nothing would be done with the motion currently until early 2016.

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EEK! Presented

VF can we guarantee there will be a Senate before conference?

GW, no but we can hold an emergency meeting

S42: Self-definition of gender

LI informed Senate she was not aware of the motion until the setting of the agenda and will report back on the results of the policy.

S43: Pay Day Lenders

NAP refreshed members of Senate on the scope of the motion and that to the best of his knowledge we do not advertise, CB confirmed this.

EEK! Presented

VF asked what would happen with television adverts.

NAP stated we can't control the programming and what appears

CB stated the screen is often muted.

Honorary Life Membership

NAP stated he was to contact previous sabbaticals to inform them of the title.

EEK! Presented

IT asked how far back was this to go?

LA confirmed 10 years.

7. Scheduled Business

to receive accounts of the Exec team reports

LOS introduced each office to deliver their reports.

President:

NAP delivered a verbal report and asked for any questions.

AW asked how many attended the Question Time event.

NAP stated the number was around 20 students,

VP Education:

GW delivered a verbal report and received no questions from members.

VP Welfare and Diversity:

LI delivered a verbal report of activities

EEK! Presented

LOS asked how the agents for the housing fair were picked.

LI stated it was via phone calls to externals and student feedback

Faculty Chair – Arts

JS delivered a verbal report and received no questions

Faculty Chair – Business School

GM delivered a verbal report and received no questions

Faculty Chair – Education and Theology

IT delivered a verbal report and received no questions

Faculty Chair – Health and Life Sciences

NF was absent from the meeting but feedback was taken by LOS

JS stated there is no clarity from the report, what work has been done?

LI asked if there could be an expansion on the activity as the report shows a lack of confidence.

GW, Why does everyone appear to have done a lot more?

IT, How committed is she?

CS stated it shouldn't be such a limited report

8. Items for discussion

8.1 The title of Senate and its approachability

LOS asked for feedback to whether Senate should remain as titled.

GC stated the title gives it a sign of importance

JC, despite the name there will always be a sense of being unapproachable to students

VF stated that people just need to know what it is

VW stated we should raise more awareness as students don't have a clue as to what Senate is.

FR Senate gives an identity and we should reflect that, t-shirts?

8.2 Freedom of speech code of practice

LOS welcomed EW to the meeting

EW approached Senate to provide information in relation to the University's duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism in line with then Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the '*Prevent*' duty). As well as providing information about how the University was proposing to respond to the legislation in terms of safeguarding and external speakers, EW also invited comments and observations on the approach. It was noted that any member of Senate could approach EW during office time should they have any questions after the meeting.

In relation to *Prevent*, the local counter terrorism profile highlighted that the main issues for York were in relation to protest activity (such as animal rights, fracking) that brought the risk of attracting others with more extremist or unlawful methodologies, and far right groups who promoted the white supremacist and anti-immigration agendas.

In relation to the *Prevent* duty, EW reiterated the University's approach towards safeguarding its students and confirmed that the new responsibilities were regarded as being part of this approach. Given the culture and environment at York St John this was deemed the most appropriate response.

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EW further covered that in relation to external speakers being invited on to campus, although the Students' Union and University already had approval approaches, the *Prevent* duty now called for these to be more prescriptive in terms of advance notice of their attendance and the need to check the background of the speaker. All requests for external speakers onto campus, including those invited by clubs and societies, would need to go through the University's central Conference & Events team. EW reminded Senate of the University's responsibilities to promote freedom of speech, and act in accordance with equality and human rights legislation; responsibilities that were not always compatible. Therefore when faced with a decision about a speaker, the University would need to balance these responsibilities.

VF asked how it would be presented to students. There has been discussion that the agenda could increase racist behaviour. EW advised that she was working with the Sabbatical Officers on how to communicate these additional safeguarding messages to students to ensure this was done as effectively and sensitively as possible. A detailed training programme was also being rolled out across the University for key staff. CB also stated that as a Union we are bound by charity objectives which mean we must take precautions to do the best for our members. DW asked if the speakers are required to possess a DBS. EW stated this was not the case as a DBS check was not appropriate for this kind of situation.

LOS asked what the potential for an invasion of privacy was when 'monitoring' students? EW responded that the University would not be 'monitoring' students in this regard. Our responsibilities were to safeguard our students and therefore should a situation arise where a fellow student or academic tutor was concerned about a student's behaviour then a University staff member (probably from the wellbeing team) would meet with the student to share the concerns; it would be managed in a similar way to that of any vulnerable student. There was a BIS Regional *Prevent* Coordinator who the University could also call on for advice or talk to the student if considered necessary. Extreme concerns would be reported to the relevant authorities.

EW ended by reiterating that it was important that student views were received so if anyone wanted to make any comments or discuss the University's approach to *Prevent* they should not hesitate to contact her.

EW left the meeting

9. Any other Business

IT asked if anymore EEK! Cards could be made and have one for each senator

LOS stated this would be looked to be done for January.

LOS also asked in which format exec reports should be presented and it was agreed that a month by month breakdown would be the most appropriate.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 26th January, 4pm – HG136