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# **Union Council**

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| **Date:** | 18.01.24 |
| **Time:** | 5.00pm |
| **Location:** | S3.01 and Online |

## **Minutes**

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| 1.0 | 1.1 | **Present:** Lucy Ryan, Brandon Tester, Will Deeley, Ana Silva Timoteo (Chair), Sruthi Subhash, Amy Pile, Matthew Kitching, Ian Tuazon, Sarah Jackson, Natasha Neal, Tristan Tipping, Jess Bradbury, Arjun Anilkumar Nair, Ashleigh Chirenda, Ayesha Chaudhry, Bethany Hirst, Chloe Hayes, Daniel Wallace, Dhanya Mohan, Eleanor Lee, Emily Crawshaw, Freyja Pattrick, Grace Paisley,  Harry Copeland, Jacob Hosanee, Jasmine Young, Kristen Clarke, Liv Ross, Marissa Leydon, Maureen Natumni, Mia Walford, Mikhail George, Mohit Nayal,  Nikola Milkiewicz, Olivia Stocco, Patrick Fillingham, Penny Connell, Reece Newey, Rita Ekokotu-Odigie, Ritamary Benny, Saima Zuhra, Thejaswi Berawada, Esther Stephenson, Dee Whyte, Camille Da Fonseca Teixeira,  Lauren Feagan, Felix Swallow, Bethany Jackson, Abi Birch, Tricia Glassborrow,  Tyler Smith, Ben Turnball, Rob Freeman, Ellie Lynn, Erika Van De Vyver,  Rishabh Jindal, Preeti Kumari, Om Dhadwal, Eva Dzyubenko, Anish Khuttan,  Will Johnson, Amber Ogles, Evie Mehrtens, Luca Annibale, Wren Sell, Keisha Russ, Jacob Afedi |  |
|  | 1.2 | **In attendance:** Sarah Nawaz |  |
|  | 1.3 | **Apologies for Absence (Union Officers only):** |  |
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| 2.0 |  | **Opening and Key Dates** |  |
|  |  | * Election Nominations: 9th Jan to 16th Feb * Boycott You Bed: 27th Jan * National Apprenticeship Week: 5th to 11th Feb * RAG Week: 29th Jan to 2nd Feb * VikkStar at the Venue: 2nd Feb * Elections Hustings: 29th Feb * Varsity Launch Night: 25th Jan * Varsity: 10th and 13th March * Strive 26th Feb to 1st March |  |
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| 3.0 |  | **Updates** |  |
|  |  | Sabbs  BTe:   * All Party Parliamentary Group: meeting with MPs to discuss housing crisis * NUS manifesto meeting on 30th Jan * University Management Away Day * Attending university council: hoping to get an update on accommodation * Monthly Meals: potentially receiving more funding from the local council   JB:   * Varsity planning is underway, launch night is 25th Jan * Writing a sustainability paper to apply for funding for planters in halls * Strive employability festival planning underway * Completed final Strengthscope   SKS:   * Attended first education committee since returning from the break * Will be attending the Mitigating Circumstances meeting as a panel member * Working on a project with the lounge called ‘Suggest your meal’   AP:   * Placement travel survey and placement booklets are complete * Aylesbury SU is now established * Has attended academic integrity and education forum * Currently working on her manifesto * Working on Sunflower and Anti-bullying campaigns * NUS Conference coming up.   Student Trustee:   * Update given by BTe on behalf of PA * Attended first governance meeting of the year * Attended a strategic planning staff day * Also attended the trustee board meeting at the start of January |  |
|  |  | Ratification of new Lay Trustees   * Presented by TT (CEO) * Explanation of Lay Trustee role within the SU given * Recruitment took place to recruit 2 new lay trustees * Following application and interview processes, Chris Smith and Jenny Wade were appointed * The final part of the process is for the student body to ratify their appointment which will be done in this meeting * Vote to approve Chris Smith and Jenny Wade as Lay Trustees: Approved unanimously |  |
|  |  | Executive committee update   * LGBTQ+: working on a resource for those students who have not come out and for transgender students * International: working on a diversity campaign and mixers for students, looking to take part in Strive * Postgraduate: waiting on a second mentor meeting, looking to work with the international exec officer on mixers and campaigns * Womens: Self defence seminar taking place tomorrow, looking to do something for international women’s day. Also working on creating a quiet space during night events in the Venue. |  |
|  |  | Elections   * Presented by LR * Explanations of roles and positions available given. * Speak to the team if interested or have any questions. |  |
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| 4.0 |  | **Guest Speakers: Paul Morgan (Pro-Vice Chancellor of Education) and Matthew Rogers (Head of Civic Engagement and Communications)** |  |
|  |  | Paul Morgan, Pro Vice-Chancellor of Education:   * First time attending union council * Has been at the university for some time * His background is as a sports psychologist, and he still supervises PHD students * In his current role, and alongside Karen Buckwell-Nutt (Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor for Student experience), he is aiming to prioritise being available for students and to respond to any feedback received to improve the student experience. * Also meets regularly with the SU officers to hear any feedback. * Although he is based on the 5th floor, students are always welcome to come and speak to him directly * Following feedback from last year a student feedback forum was created * Spoke about some of the issues that have recently been raised. * Hidden and additional course costs – there should be not additional costs for students. * Library – a new library director has been appointed and a new system for library and archive resources is being put in place * Blackboard – all staff will be put through VLE training to ensure Blackboard is used better. This will include captured content being made available * Module Evaluation: module evaluation was removed a few years ago but will now be reinstated. * Attendees were given the opportunity to ask him any questions. |  |
|  |  | Matthew Rogers, Head of Civic Engagement and Communications:  ‘Public and Community Engagement Strategy Draft’   * Gave a brief background on himself and his role at the university. * Spoke about what public and community engagement is – goal of using activities and the benefits of higher education to be shared with the public and local community. * This is part of the universities’ Thrive 2028 strategy which is to help improve public confidence in the institution * Students can help take part in this research which would benefit them by creating new opportunities to use their degree, develop skills and social awareness of real-life situations, boost confidence and other skills which are valued by employers. * Research was carried out last year to look into the public confidence in BNU. * Key findings were that the public in Wycombe were more aware of the university compared to where the other campuses are based (Uxbridge and Aylesbury), only 1 in 2 of the public has visited the university and they are most likely to engage with BNU if they know someone who studies or works here. * Key findings: 70% believed that BNU has a positive effect on the local area with 29% expressing a neutral opinion. Only 45% would recommend BNU to family and friends with 39% neutral. * The study has 4 main priorities * Priority 1: Contribute to better health and wellbeing of our communities * Priority 2: Advance social inclusion in our communities * Priority 3: Deliver economic prosperity in our communities * Priority 4: Contribute to a more sustainable environment within our communities * Have identified 8 mechanisms to do this including communications, volunteering and advocacy * Measuring impact and success: through case studies and measuring perceptions in a few years’ time. * Attendees were asked what their thoughts were on the public community engagement strategy and to submit their questions and comments via Menti. |  |
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| 6.0 |  | **Sabb Hot Seat** |  |
|  |  | Shuttle Bus: the bus from Wycombe to Uxbridge leaves at 8am with the next bus leaving at 10am. Some students have lectures that begin at 9am so if they miss the 8am bus they will be late for their lecture, is there anyway of having another bus in between?  AP: there is a resource available that outlines alternative transport for students who miss the 8am bus  TT: there is a cost to putting on more buses and students could still be late due to other issues such as traffic. The 8am bus was moved from 8.15 to help accommodate for 9am lectures. If students are or will be late, they should get in touch with their lecturer or course leaders.  How would you support students who are looking at the sabb roles?  JB: Current sabbs are happy to talk about the roles and the rep team can help to support any student applying  BTe: The rep team will be bringing out videos soon showing the day-to-day aspects of the role  AP: Roles open to everybody, happy to talk to you.  Where abouts does the campus link from Aylesbury depart from?  AP: Outside the campus, will take a picture of where to get bus so it is clearer  Where can we sign up for Strive sessions?  JB: On the What’s on page, students can also sign up on the Monday networking event on the 26th  Jess and Brandon, this being your last year, do you feel you were able to make the best out of your role and help the student community?  BTe: Has enjoyed the role and does feel he has helped students. There are still 6 months to go to continue making a difference.  JB: Has been amazing. She has been at the university for 5 years, strange to think time is coming to end  AP and SKS how do you feel about what you have done?  AP: Difficult to answer, but feel I have done my best  SKS: It has been a rollercoaster but a good experience, satisfying to see the results of actions  AP: Both are still available so any ideas, please come to them.  Any advice for someone who wants to run for a sabb role?  JB: Just do it, put yourself out there  AP: Think about how your ideas would link to the role  Buses are a big issue for Pinewood students, especially since it leaves a few mins early sometimes.  JB: Please email us with more information  What is being put in the Venue gardens?  TT: Umbrellas with heaters  Who should we contact regarding the attendance of classes that we have attended but are still showing not on Blackboard and the lecturer for that module says they can’t do anything about it?  PM: Please contact him know directly  BTe: Let sabbs know and they can pass this onto PM  How much do you get paid for the sabb role and is it a good gateway into the real world?  LR: The salary is listed in the opportunity profiles  AP: Yes, it is a good gateway, lots of development and experience which prepares you for the industry you are going into.  TT: International universities look to the UK for the SU’s and in a sabb role you will be in a senior position in the best SU in the country. You will be supported by other staff within the SU management  Sruthi what is your main educational focus over the next three months?  SKS: to look and improve the situation between students and graduate outcomes  Jess- can you talk more about what’s happening at the upcoming Uxbridge takeover on 26th Jan and how students can get involved?  JB: there will be lots of activities from the sports, volunteering, activities team. If any students want to get involved, come and speak to the team.  Amy- as a student rep during your whole course, why would you recommend being a student rep?  AP: I wanted to advocate for others and make changes. I have been gained leadership and communications skills, found out about other specialities outside of my course and was able to integrate with all students. It is also good when applying for jobs.  PA: Feedback AP received in her role as student rep led to changing rooms for nurses being put in at Uxbridge so it can lead to change.  Brandon as a previous student trustee why would students stand in the election and volunteer their time for this position?  BTE: It gives an insight into how the SU runs, the financial side and management. You also get to sit on a board with different professionals and gain more knowledge  Any advice on deciding which sabb to go for?  AP: Read all the opportunity profiles and see which would resonate with you. But overall, you all work together as a team. |  |
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| 7.0 |  | **Any Other Business** |  |
|  |  | * General Elections: Are you registered to vote? * Nominations for Union and AU awards are open * 3rd Year’s Dance: are taking part in a show on 16th April in Chesham. Please buy tickets and come and support them. |  |
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| 8.0 |  | **Date and time of subsequent meetings:**  29th February 2024 at 5.00pm, Room S3.01 and Online |  |