

Scrutiny Panel Minutes

Present: Zach Barker-Williams (Panel Member), Amber Culley (Panel Member), Tom Jordan (Panel Member), Clara Martinelli (Panel Member)

Apologies: Sahar Anwar (Panel Member)

In attendance: Oli Killeen (Democracy Coordinator, Note Taker), Lucy Gill (Student Voice Manager)

The meeting commenced at 18.00

No	ITEM FOR DISCUSSION	QUESTIONS ASKED	ACTION
1	Welcome and Matters arising	It was noted that apologies had been received from Jo Park and Jess Small who are on holiday.	Noted
2	Activities and Employability Report and Questions	<p>The AEO delivered a verbal report to the Panel.</p> <p>Since the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redbrick approval process - nearing completion, and is currently awaiting approval from the insurers before being implemented. • Society Recognition Structure - awaiting implementation – working with our website provider to ensure that supporting evidence can be uploaded to the website. • Sponsorship Fair – There has been a lack of interest from external providers, so this is looking unlikely at the moment. • End of Year BBQ/Afterparty – Planned for 6th June • Student Groups Processes – New forms and training are out now <p>Q: You spoke about new Student Groups training is this ready, and how has this been rolled out?</p> <p>A: Yes it is now active and has been added to the Groups training module on CANVAS.</p> <p>Q: The 'alternative' careers fair you mentioned seems like an excellent idea, can you explain a little more about this?</p> <p>A: The original emphasis of this was going to be: "How Societies' shape my future", but I was unhappy with this as some people don't join groups to support their career, this focused on alternatives to careers such as freelancing or volunteering that students might have considered and was a useful way to make sure everyone could be involved.</p>	Noted

		<p>Q: Have you had any meetings with the International Officer about collaborating on a project like this?</p> <p>A: I haven't had meeting with them about this up to now, but it would be something it would be interesting to collaborate with her on so we can reach as many students as possible.</p> <p>Q: When do you think the Society Recognition Structure is likely to be fully implemented?</p> <p>A: Much of this is ready to go, we are in conversations with our website provider about the submission process as they are supporting on this at the moment due to staff absence. The process is unlikely to work well without this, but I want the process to roll out as soon as possible after this issue has been resolved.</p>	
3	President Report and Questions	<p>The President delivered a verbal update.</p> <p>Since the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selly Express – Final confirmation on further funding has not been received, although looking likely. Meeting with WCO-Elect to discuss continuity. • Mental Health Review – Meeting with AEO-Elect to discuss this. • Democracy Review – Work on this project is ongoing, but is looking at how the Guild can get more students to engage with democratic processes. • Safety in Selly Oak – Discussions regarding cameras in the local area are on hold, as there is a need to consult with the local community. • NUS National Conference – Attended National Conference in Glasgow in April. Overall Governance reforms passed and have been ratified at Company Law Meeting. • EU Hustings – Hustings event with local candidates taking place tonight (20th May). Hosting alongside the University. • Officer Training – Developing the process for the new Officer Team, looking at a shorter timeline. • Harm Reduction Campaign – This has been successful so far. Will be handing over to WCO-elect and AEO-elect. <p>Q: Will the Scrutiny Panel be able to look at the work of the Democracy Review?</p> <p>A: Yes, although the review is likely to go out for a wider student consultation, and will most likely go forward to a referendum so we can make sure that students are in favour.</p> <p>Q: You mentioned the Augur Review in your report, what is this and can you explain more about it?</p> <p>A: The Government Is looking into the way it funds Higher Education and is recommending a number of things including a cut in the overall fee rate from £9,000 to £7,500 and an emphasis on accelerated degrees, but universities are not happy with this as it could really impact their funding model.</p> <p>Q: Can you provide more information about the Part-Time Officer Review, how is this progressing?</p> <p>A: We are looking into a number of aspects including how Part-Time</p>	Noted

		<p>Officers can be supported within the Guild, whether the structure is still appropriate, and how to make it more of an attractive proposition. Focus groups and other meetings are happening now, with the whole review scheduled for consideration at the July Trustee Board Meeting.</p> <p>Q: Can you provide more information on the changes made to the NUS structures, and the Company Law meeting you mentioned?</p> <p>A: Proposed Governance reforms passed at National Conference in April to try and ensure that the NUS remains a financially viable institution. In order to be put in place, the needed to be ratified at a Company Law meeting attended by Presidents and CEOs of its constituent members, of which the Guild is one.</p> <p>Q: Can you explain a little more about why the issue of cameras in Selly Oak has stalled?</p> <p>A: This needs to go out for consultation in the local community, to see where they could be situated, to make sure that residents' privacy is respected. It is important to note also that Selly Oak has one of the lowest crime rates when compared to the rest of Birmingham. We are unable to share this data as it is considered sensitive by the police.</p> <p>Q: How have you interacted with the Welfare and Community Officer on your mental health campaigns?</p> <p>A: We have been working closely together on this and have consulted with each other to make sure we work on different aspects of the project to the same aim. I as the President took on Selly Express and the WCO has worked on Safety in Selly Oak.</p> <p>Q: What are you planning to handover to the President-elect as you prepare to leave your role?</p> <p>A: I am planning to discuss democracy, and the President's role within that to make sure he is fully aware that this is part of his brief.</p>	
4	Commuter Students' Officer Report and Questions	<p>The Commuter Students Officer provided a verbal update.</p> <p>Since the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commuter Student Parking – The Council are currently consulting on whether to make local parking in Selly Oak for residents only, this may impact on Commuter Students, so I am working to feed into this. • Commuter Student Engagement Report – I compiled a report on Commuter Students Engagement which has been shared with the Academic Registrar and Director of Student Affairs to discuss what can be done for commuter students. A follow up meeting is planned for June. <p>Q: How soon is the follow-up meeting planned with the local council?</p> <p>A: A meeting is planned for June, but I am awaiting confirmation from the Councillors themselves.</p> <p>Q: Will the results of this consultation be known in time for when new students arrive?</p>	Noted

		<p>A: Yes this is the aim.</p> <p>Q: Do you think these changes will impact on Part-Time students and what can be done about this?</p> <p>A: There may be a lot of intersectionality between commuter students, some are part-time, so there might be impact at some times of the year, for specific events, but the overall outcomes aren't known yet.</p>	
5	Education Officer Report and Questions	<p>The Education Officer delivered a verbal update.</p> <p>Since the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Rep System Review – This system is currently being reviewed to make sure there is consistency across the University and that it works effectively. • Student Experience Conference – I co-ordinated a Conference involving Student Experience staff across the University to make sure that we can work together and build relationships to make sure that students get the best of their experience. • Access and Participation Plan – The APP is something that the University must produce and address how it will support people from less advantaged backgrounds to attend University, and commit to targets for improvement, I have been working with the University on this. • Assessment and Feedback – The University are currently developing an Assessment and Feedback strategy. • TEF Review - The Government is conducting a review of the Teaching Excellence Framework, the current method for measuring the quality of teaching within Higher Education. • Timetabling – Changes to timetabling are ongoing. Postgraduates will have Wednesday afternoons free in future. • Tuition Fees (How are they spent) – There is a meeting with the University booked tomorrow (21st May) • Access to Journals for research – Success on this is dependent on the Library budget, which is currently under review. <p>Q: There are a lot of parts in your report that have no updates why is this?</p> <p>A: I have tried to provide updates where this is possible, some meetings are taking place within the next few weeks, it can be quite difficult as the University works very slowly.</p> <p>Q: What are you doing in relation to handover preparation?</p> <p>A: This is something I haven't started yet, but will be working on it over the next few weeks.</p> <p>Q: How are you progressing with the Student Rep System Review?</p> <p>A: Focus Groups have been held, a student rep survey was also sent out to reps at all levels. We are aware that there is a lack of consistency in application across the University, and is not well publicised. I hope that the review will be completed by June for implementation next academic year.</p>	Noted

		<p>Q: What impact does Guild membership have on the University Committees?</p> <p>A: One of the key things is being able to lobby the University to work better for students. It has been good to provide feedback on something that is quite complex, that many students might not be aware of, like the Access and Participation Plan for example. I think it's always good to have more consultation, but this may not be the University's top priority.</p> <p>Q: What work is being done to inform students of the work being done relating to the Access and Participation Plan?</p> <p>A: Ideally the University and the Guild will co-ordinate events to try and tell students about this, but this will be handed over to the new Education Officer to work with the University on this.</p>	
6	AOB	The Panel noted disappointment that fewer Officers had chosen to participate in this meeting. It was noted that as this process is only a trial, Officers cannot be compelled to attend at this time, but this would change if the Panel was formally adopted as a result of the trial.	Noted

The meeting closed at 19:30

Date of next meeting: 10th June (6-8pm) Mandela Room, Guild of Students