

# Agenda

## General Meeting

### 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022

There will be a meeting of the **Students' Union General Meeting on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> of October 2022** from 5:30pm via **Microsoft Teams**.

In order to ensure the meeting is kept to time please ensure all attached papers are read in advance.

#### IN ATTENDANCE

- |     |                              |     |  |
|-----|------------------------------|-----|--|
| 1.1 | Members Present              |     |  |
|     | Tash Miller                  | TM  | Union President                          |
|     | Murray Bushell               | MB  | Sports President                         |
|     | Jess Reid                    | JR  | Vice President Communities               |
|     | Dante Lopez                  | DL  | Housing Officer                          |
|     | Lucy Wilson                  | LW  | Engagement Officer                       |
|     | Juulia Spets                 | JS  | Co-Curricular Officer                    |
|     | Ciaran Sweeney               | CS  | Media Officer                            |
|     | Zoe Crosher                  | ZC  | Health & Wellbeing Officer               |
| 1.2 | In Attendance                |     |  |
|     | Megsavanh Warren             | MW  | Faculty Officer                          |
|     | Rohit Gangwani               | RG  | Faculty Officer                          |
|     | Fiona Kerr                   | FK  | Faculty Officer                          |
|     | Alex Graham                  | AG  | Faculty Officer                          |
|     | Raeven Izard                 | RI  | Faculty Officer                          |
|     | Barbora Svobodova            | BS  | Faculty Officer                          |
|     | Liam Wray                    | LW  | Faculty Officer                          |
|     | Aidan Wallace                | AW  | Faculty Officer                          |
|     | Mairi Calderwood             | MC  | Faculty Officer                          |
|     | Gellert Turkevi-Nagy         | GTN | Faculty Officer                          |
|     | Sara Brandt                  | SB  | Faculty Officer                          |
|     | Pranav Ram Hariharan         | PRH | Faculty Officer                          |
|     | Niamh Hickey                 | NH  | Faculty Officer                          |
|     | Ali Muqtadir                 | AM  | Faculty Officer                          |
|     | Gaja Zivec                   | GZ  | Faculty Officer                          |
|     | 104 Ordinary Student Members | OM  |  |
| 1.3 | Observers                    |     |  |
|     | Natalie Hay                  | NH  | Democracy and Representation Coordinator |
|     | Nick Manton                  | NM  | Communications and Activities Manager    |
|     | Al Lawley-Powell             | ALP | Chief Executive                          |
|     | Jordyn Austin                | JA  | Activities & Volunteer Coordinator       |
| 1.4 | Apologies                    |     |  |
| 1.5 | Absent without Apologies     |     |  |

#### MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

- 2.1 Minutes ratified by TM. No objections.

#### CHALLENGES TO ORDER PAPER

#### DATES TO NOTE

- 4.1 Education Zone – 15<sup>th</sup> November  
4.2 Equalities Zone – 23<sup>rd</sup> November

4.3 [Movember](#) – November



## ELECTIONS & RESIGNATIONS

- 5.1 Union By-Elections  
TM Congratulations to everyone who stood, and to all our newly elected Volunteer Officers.

## REPORTS

- 6.1 Union President  
TM Myself and VP Communities have been working on a cost-of-living project, so keep your eyes peeled in the next couple of weeks for some really exciting projects. We're really excited to launch it for you guys, I'm not going to give it too much away but you will see it all over our social media and quite a few adverts around campus.

I'm also working on a couple of reports and a couple of projects. We're having a look, particularly Education Zone, about what we can be doing for student educational support and particularly in the personal tutor realm. There will be a survey coming out in the next couple of weeks which we will be circulating to students. We'd really love your feedback on how you're using that service and how you're interacting with your personal tutors, it's going to be really valuable piece of work.

We're working quite well with Union colleagues and University colleagues to get a lot of projects off the ground as well. We're doing a lot of work on engagement, particularly again in the Education Zone, but also in the Equalities as well. I'm going to leave it there as there will be some more reports coming out at both Education Zone and Equalities, tune in there for more in-depth reports.

- 6.2 Sports President  
MB We have reached over 2000 Members which is great to see, good to see so many people joining sports clubs and getting involved which is amazing. From my point of view, it's been to get more visual on Wednesdays and weekends. For me, that's been the key, just getting out and speaking to people, having informal chats, and just getting to know what the problems are and what the successes are. Another success we have had is claims are being paid out faster. That's one of my manifesto points. So that means less time out of pocket for students, so that's great to see.

Another one of my goals was to get a more inclusive Sports Union. Yesterday, we had the very first national Boccia tournament. We had 17 people turn up, and it was a great success and just shows how inclusive it is. We're now looking to get a Boccia / Disability Sports Club started at the University.

In terms of Movember, at the time of this meeting, we are sitting at £8236 raised which is amazing to see. Coming up is an inside-out day, which is like wearing a bit of clothing inside out to try and promote getting your feelings out and what's inside out which will be great to see. And then the event at Stirling County Rugby club on the 23rd of November coming up as well. So that'll be really good.

It was really good to see some representatives of the Sports Union at First Responder training. Thank you to VP Communities for sending that invite across to some of our people for that and it'll be good to see a few more sessions run in the future. Thanks!

- 6.3 VP Communities  
See the [Communities Zone minutes](#) for the VP Communities Update given in the Zone immediately prior to this meeting.

## UPDATES, DISCUSSION AND DECISION TOPICS

- 7.1 Schedule Two (Elections and Referenda) Update Motion  
JR This update to our Schedule is something we do regularly because we want to ensure that we are operating effectively. The proposed changes ensure that the Student Union are up to date and in line with best practice throughout the country and it comes from a lot of research that the Union have done. The main changes include that we're removing barriers for students to nominate themselves in elections. So that means that you will not have to have 50 or 15 seconders whatever position you're running for. So removing that barrier.

We have also updated and clarified points about campaigning, specifically you can now campaign within the Union. So the spaces such as Studio and Starbucks, which you previously couldn't campaign in. Candidates can now receive endorsements or statements from support from individual members or committees of Societies and Sports Clubs. So those are the key changes we've made to this Schedule and we want to ensure that everyone can get involved in our elections and we can make them successful as possible.

7.1.1 Amendment 1

- JR So based on research on other institutions because we did keep researching as we had written this motion, we have made two amendments to the original Schedule Motion. Again, this is to make our elections as accessible and inclusive as possible, and it's to ensure that no student is prevented from hardships or prevented from standing. We're introducing hardships for election expenses and enforcing our commitment to sustainability regarding limited printed publicity. Again, it's all about reducing those barriers to election engagement.

*No speeches in favour or against the motion.*

*No summation was provided.*

**AMENDMENT MOTION PASSED (100% IN FAVOUR)**

*No speeches in favour of the motion.*

- OM I'm not really speaking against this because it's a bad idea, I'm speaking against because I feel like the Schedule Two has introduced now a depreciated section. On nominations, if you are bringing in a requirement for no nominations you've left the entire nominations schedule in place, and it's seemingly done. I could be mistaken as entirely at some point in the motion is to make it one nomination. But if it is to make it that you don't require a certain number of nominations, you have left it depreciated section within the schedule. That's pretty much it.
- JR So again, iterating that this is to remove barriers around running for election. Actually I think there's a little bit that has been misunderstood. It becomes a nominations period so there is still a nominations period involved. It just means that you don't need the 50 nominations. It's all about removing those barriers, making our elections more accessible so we can get that key engagement from students to make sure our elections are as successful as they can be. So I hope you vote on this motion. Thank you.

**MOTION PASSED (96.4% IN FAVOUR)**

7.2 Student Representation Reform Motion

- OM This is of the back of a motion that passed a good few years ago now. I believe it's 2019. We had a reform to the way that the Students' Union worked when it came to commenting on issues outside of core Union Policy with these quick-fire policies introduced. However, as to my knowledge, at the very least these quick-fire policies have never been used and is in the interest of students for better representation for this to be amended. I have put that 15 students asking for

comment on an issue out with core Union Policy or a Media Society asking for comment of the Union will require the Union to actually use this 48-hour quick-fire policy introduced a couple of years ago to make further comments on the issue. And that's pretty much it. Thanks very much. It should be more useful than the last motion which did unfortunately fail.



*No speeches in favour or against the motion.*

*No summation was provided.*

### **MOTION PASSED (87.7% IN FAVOUR)**

#### 7.3 Housing Emergency Motion

*Point of Order was discussed and, at the Chairs discretion, was not accepted.*

OM I'll speak first to the motion. This motion intends to introduce a Housing Committee out with the existing Housing Forum in order to produce an investigation into the current housing situation for students in Stirling and out with who are travelling to University and to report to this Union within either this academic year or the next. To allow for an easier understanding for all students; prospective, current and those currently here advocating for the betterment of housing. The reason that I propose this is separate from the Housing Forum and not separate from the Housing Officer who does hold a seat ex officio on this committee, but the reason I propose it is that we are more likely to have a decent report from an independent investigation. The Housing Forum is already involved in the housing situation in the University and to put it back under that body, in order to have the investigation, seemingly just puts the entire thing a bit of a moot point.

##### 7.3.1 Amendment 2

DL So the motion is very good. It's a good motion and the amendments that we posed are just to kind of refine it a bit more and give it a bit more scope. So it's adding in some information about the financial strains and the composition of the committee. I don't believe that it says in the original motion that it is an independent inquiry into housing but it is to look at the situation of housing in Stirling, which is why it would we believe it should sit under the Housing Forum. Thank you.

JR Speaking for this amendment. I'd like to make clear that the original motion didn't include anything to do with it being an independent body and the reason we wanted to set it under the Housing Forum is because the Housing Forum is developed as a democratic and representative body for students to come forward about housing-based issues. It's vital we have both the Housing Officer and the Vice President Communities part of this committee because we are both within the University understanding the situation there and out with the Stirling Council. It's to prevent duplication of information, essentially, so rather than the Housing Committee going to council to say, "hey what you doing here". The VP Communities and Housing Officer can turn around and say; "oh, we actually have these updates already". So it's to prevent duplication of information and to ensure that a representative committee remains under the representative body of the Housing Forum. So I really hope people vote for this motion amendment.

OM In essence I did specify in the original motion that this was to report to, not to the Communities Zone or to the Housing Forum, but to report to the General Meeting. I understand that being at University we can't necessarily create an endpoint independent body unto itself, but reporting it onto a general body with the membership of every member in the Union is surely better than reporting to the Housing Forum. And on

another note, the original motion allowed for the free election of a chair from the members elected to the Housing Committee. That has instead been replaced by the designation of the Housing Officer as ex-officio chair of this body. The Housing Officer, while admittedly doing good work, should not chair a body that's necessarily looking at all aspects of housing in Stirling when they are part of the aspects of the Union's representation of housing. This body and its definition is deliberately wide reaching and vague in order to investigate all aspects to produce a better advocacy platform. It's not to back up necessarily the current Housing Forum position.

It also allows the CZEC by itself to appoint members where positions are empty rather than the Union meeting, and I understand it's more convenient but this is not a committee which is mandated to sit at certain periods. It's mandated to sit at least once a semester. It's not like it would be an impossibility for the General Meetings to appoint members and they shouldn't get appointment to open up members to make quorum anyway. I see this as simply a way for the executive to take over a committee which is made to report to the entire body.

*No summation was provided.*

**AMENDMENT MOTION PASSED (79.1% IN FAVOUR)**

JR I would like to speak for this amended motion. I think it will allow our Housing Forum to be both representative and wide-reaching in what it's looking at for students. I think that it is vital that we get an idea of what this housing emergency means for students in our area and how it affects long-distance students who have been forced to stay in the surrounding areas. So I hope you vote for the motion. Thank you.

*No speeches against the motion.*

OM This motion, while not in its intended form, should at least produce some benefit to the students of Stirling. Not, admittedly, it is not how I intended it, but it will indeed produce at least some view of the housing range in Stirling and allow for further advocacy on the point.

**MOTION PASSED (90.1% IN FAVOUR)**

7.4 UCU Motion

OM I'm sure everybody's aware that UCU (University and College Union) is going to be on strike later this month. That's over pay, working conditions, and pensions. They've received an offer of a real terms pay cut and we can all see that they're overworked and underpaid. Those at the start of their careers especially are often barely or in a minimum wage. So the main purpose of this motion is to officially affirm that the Student Union supports first strike action.

It mandates the Union to meet with UCU representatives, which I'm delighted to know, has already happened and I'm sure it will continue helping them. It also asks the Union to communicate the reasons for these strikes clearly to students. To be clear it's lecturers, it's administrative workers, it's postgraduate students who just can't afford another pay cut.

The biggest asset to this University is the staff. It's them. It's not that the new buildings that make our experiences at University but they are underpaid, they're not on secure contracts and they can't afford to retire. Why would they stay on the job? We're at risk of losing the best asset this University has and they need the support of us as students and passing this motion will show that support. Thanks.

JR As a Sabbatical Officer Team, we would like to support this motion and support the UCU. We want students to be able to hear from our UCU about why they're striking and offer support when they are on the picket lines. We would like to ensure students know we are supportive of this motion for active involvement in what the strikes mean for students. Thank you.

*No speeches against the motion.*

OM This is not a question necessarily of whether or not we should support the strike, this is beyond the question. We are a Student Union and we should also subscribe to unionism as it will protect us going forward. And if we did not allow the generations that have come before us to see those protections, it is going to be more and more eradicated by the time it gets to us. If any of us hope to enter academia, we will likely be on temporary short-term contracts rather than the tenured vessels of old. These conditions will continue to deteriorate.

If any of us have teamed up in these positions at any point in the future we will be seeing the effects of the degraded pay conditions. We're seeing them now with the worsening in the quality of teaching, not any fault of theirs. They are overworked and underpaid, they have no assistance as they use to. They have to teach almost everything themselves. They are entirely exploited by the University which continues to build buildings ranging into the multiple millions. I encourage you to vote for this motion.

*No speeches against the motion.*

OM I'm very happy that so many people supported. Just use this opportunity to pass on from the UCU that when they are on strike there will be picket lines, presumably University entrances, and they would love as many students as possible to turn up and show their support at the picket lines as well.

### **MOTION PASSED (95.6% IN FAVOUR)**

#### 7.5 Llama's Removal Motion

OM It has become a cornerstone of this Union Freshers activities for Llamas. This is certainly presenting with some moral and ethical qualms and instantly questions over the use of these animals as sustainable. The use of these live animals who are captive and are a) environmentally harmful and b) are posing this captivity on them, to use them for entertainment at Freshers Sustainability Fayres which in reality are just corporate shows. These Llamas being brought out to a bunch of freshers to do what they will with is just morally and ethically and environmentally wrong. I don't think a Union which is committed to net zero and which has acknowledged the climate emergency, should really be encouraging the use of live animal displays and therefore I propose that we adopt this motion.

OM I do agree with what you're saying. I believe it makes sense but it's of course very important to have good mental health, and I think that animals can help very much with mental health. My question is, does this include all animals?

OM My answer would be that admittedly, being an ethical vegan, I don't necessarily agree entirely. But to bring your points to what they are, we shouldn't be allowing these animals to be brought in and commercially exploited. I mean you could say for pets and that's not something this applies to, the commercial exploitation for entertainment which the Union does. The Union, as far as I'm aware, doesn't have these mental health animals. We have the Llamas at Sustainability Fayres. We could say that we could check on their sustainability and we could check on their health and we could check on how they have been treated. But the burden on doing that, the fact that if it's not already being done or the question is how do you ensure these standards any time. I mean there are failings with actual governmental bodies and ensuring the welfare of animals repeatedly and

demonstrably over decades. This is something I don't think we can ask the Union to ensure. I don't think we should be allowing this exploitation on a what if basis.



- JR I'm not against the motion itself, just more in the motion how it's written currently. I think Sports President raised the concern in the group chat about how this could affect our Equestrian teams because obviously those getting involved in those events, that is for entertainment, but that is also a University Society. Also it does say live animals for entertainment and obviously in the past the Union has run events to do with Paws for Distress. So that's like puppies being brought in and they're not officially therapy puppies, but they're like puppies for distress and that counts as a Union event. Therefore, with how the motion is written currently, that wouldn't be allowed, and I'm just concerned with that element of it, not necessarily the motion itself.
- OM I understand the concerns about the Equestrian teams, and we could include a clause that this does not include the Sports Union Clubs for the purposes of this motion.
- TM We could accept that wording clarification into the motion.
- OM I'm speaking in support. I was just going say in response to some of the concerns, I think like if we have to sacrifice certain other things that have to do with animals that maybe aren't being mistreated, if we have to sacrifice that in order to ensure that we're not commercially exploiting other animals, that seems like a fair sacrifice to make. I think having mistreated animals on campus in general is one we should avoid at all costs, even if it means that these other things that we like we don't get.
- OM I'm going to move that the motion now be put.

#### **MOTION FELL (40% IN FAVOUR)**

##### 7.6 Plant-Based Commitment Motion

- OM I bring this motion on behalf of a larger group that is the Plant Based Universities Campaign. This motion comes from the campaign's commitment to 100% plant-based food system at Universities by 2025. It has been demonstrated by this Union that the climate crisis is of course real and animals have been a main cause of this. In some reports that I have listed in the motions substantial body, the majority of food carbon dioxide emissions come from beef and other such cattle with even the worst producing plant be much, much lower than that.

We have a emergency which is presented itself even with the current changes in climate. We have seen a noticeable change in many places across the world, from wildfires across Europe to droughts and famines. We will experience more and more of these unless we commit to a sustainable food system and therefore proposing this motion to bring 50% of plant-based food to the Union by the next academic year and by the 2025 academic year to have the Union 100% plant based subject to the commercial considerations.

*No speeches in favour or against the motion.*

*No summation was provided.*

#### **MOTION PASSED (55.4% IN FAVOUR)**

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 10.1 OM I'm not speaking against the last motion but we are voting for more than thousands of students, so I believe this vote must be extended to much more students.

- TM General Meetings are open to every member of the University, so if they are a registered student, they hold an open invite to these meetings. We do have to meet quorum and when we meet quorate, we are representing the wider body of the Students Union and anything that is voted on is acceptable, but everyone does have the opportunity to come and vote for the motions this evening.
- OM The last motion that was raised, I need to understand, are you saying that there should be no food that includes meat at all on the University premise?
- TM It is only for the Union. We don't have jurisdiction of University Outlets, so this would only be for food within the Union.
- 10.2 TM While we wait on the vote, as Chair for the purpose of the minutes, I would like to reflect that animals which we have brought previously onto campus for Union activities are all treated humanely and have never been mistreated to the best of our knowledge.
- 10.3 OM Is there a place or a roster that helps us know when these meetings are scheduled for?
- TM There are a few different places, they are in the Student Bulletin and when we can, they are also all listed in advance on the Student Union website, you can find that under the drop-down tab "about us" and then "union meetings". You can also follow us on our social media accounts, for the Union and Sabbatical individually, as they will be shared in advance there as well. If you are a Student Representative, this will be shared on Canvas and teams pages.
- 10.4 OM Pursuing to the note that you entered into the Minutes, will the Chair commit to providing a list of any instances where risk assessment has been done for the condition of any animals that have been used by the Union?
- TM Whether this could be made public would need to be decided by our Events team, they will be able to look into this and see if we can provide links to the companies we have used.

#### DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 9.1 General Meeting 2<sup>nd</sup> February (5pm) via MS Teams.
- 9.2 Motions for the next General Meeting can be submitted to [natalie.hay@stir.ac.uk](mailto:natalie.hay@stir.ac.uk) until 5pm 26<sup>th</sup> January.

#### RESERVED BUSINESS

- 10.1 No Reserved Business.