# MINUTES

# General Meeting

# 17/02/2022

There will be a meeting of the Students’ Union General Meeting on **Thursday 17th February 2022** from **5:00pm via Microsoft Teams.**

**IN ATTENDANCE**

* 1. Members Present

Nela Cadinanos Gonzalez NG Union President

Sophie Charlton SC Sports President

Alyson MacKay AM VP Communities

Calum Brown CB VP Education

Ordinary Member OM

* 1. In Attendance
  2. Observers

Rosamund Vickers RV Democracy and Representation Coordinator

1.4 Apologies

1.5 Absent without Apologies

**MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

2.1 Approve the minutes of the previous meeting

Proposed: Alyson MacKay

Seconded: Calum Brown

**CHALLENGES TO ORDER OF PAPER**

NC Given there are several motions to be considered today and that the meeting was preceded by an Education Zone, hence it the meeting has already been running for some time, as chair I propose we first consider the Discussion and Decision topics, and then move to consider the Reports and Presentations.

**DATES TO NOTE**

4.1 LGBTQ+ History Month – February

4.2 Pride Week – 21st February to 25th February

4.3 Sports Zone – 24th February

4.4 Fairtrade Fortnight – 22nd February to 2nd March

4.5 Womens History Month – March

4.6 Wellbeing Week – What the Health? – 7th March to 11th March

4.7 Communities Zone – 10th March

**Elections & Resignations**

5.1 [Stirling Students’ Union Elections](https://www.stirlingstudentsunion.com/representation/elections/)

Nominations close 25th of February.

Voting open on the 14th and 15th of March.

Equalities Zone elections at the Equalities Zone meeting on the 16th March

**REPORTS / PRESENTATIONS**

6.1 Union President

NC Met with the Equalities Zone Executive committee to discuss concerns regarding accessibility within the university, and there has been a good response from the University. Supporting Louis (BAME Officer) who is running the Diversity Awareness Week, information will be released soon. Working with Rosamund to implement some suggestions raised by previous Part Time Officers to improve support for Part Time Officers in future. Working with the NUS Delegates to prepare for the NUS Conference. Working with NUS Scotland on the New Vision for Education campaign, updates to come soon. Next week there will be the Fair Future Festival, which is a sustainability focused careers event hosted with Careers and Employability. Been consulted by the university sustainability plan and it is now opened to feedback from all students, so please provide your feedback before the 25th of February. Created a campaign regarding protecting our soil and the challenges of soil degradation. Working on plans for Wellbeing Week. Presenting to proposal to Universities Scotland for Stirling to be used as a focus group to create a values driven university and link up with the NUS New Vision for Education campaign.

6.2 VP Education

*See the Education Zone minutes for the Zone immediately prior to this meeting.*

6.3 VP Communities

AM Working with Nela on several aspects already covered. Supporting the LGBTQ+ society on the Stir Pride event. Hosting the Care Day event, which is for any students who are carers, care experienced or estranged students, and will share guidance on support available and for a chance for students to meet other. We have the return of Uni Link bus routes around areas of campus at night. It is not as large a return as hoped, but the more students who use this service, the more they will expand the service. Working on plans for Wellbeing Week, which lines up with our Inspirational Womens Awards in March. Tickets and nominations for the Clubs and Societies ball are open, please come along and nominate individuals and clubs in our awards.

6.4 Sports President

SC Working on an Accessibility and Inclusion in Sport Week, with various sessions held throughout the week, encourage all students to participate and reenforce sport is for all, with sessions such as sit volleyball and wheelchair tennis. Preparing for Sports Ball, the date will be announced at the next Sports Zone. Working with St Andrews for a varsity event on the 30th of March, please get engaged as a club and spectators.

**DISCUSSION AND DECISION TOPICS**

7.1 Help Not Harm Motion

Proposer The motion is related to how the University and Union can handle drug use on campus. We want to follow work already been done at Bristol University as well as others, where harm reduction is the main focus in how they deal with drug use at university. The Union would move to provide harm reduction guidance in partnership with relevant charities and will provide drug testing kits to ensure any drugs they do take have not been cut with other dangerous services. The Union will also discuss with the university ways to move their attitude to drug use toward harm reduction and guidance to reduce the risk to students.

NC Any questions?

OM I am in favour of the motion, however I am concerned there may be a grey area. Regarding students who are under the influence of drugs and cause harm to others, what action would be taken in relation to this.

Proposer If there was any harm to others, in the first instance I believe this would be taken up with Police Scotland. The aim of this motion is to provide help to those who use drugs or know others who do and want to get the help to reduce drug use and harm caused by this.

AM To add a further point, any individual who broke the law or breached Union or University policy regardless of if they have taken any substances or not would still be held responsible and referred to the relevant processes such as Police Scotland or university discipline. The aim of the motion is to have support in addition to this so those who have taken drugs can also get help and guidance to reduce drug use and the risk to themselves and others.

OM Regarding the test kits that would be made available, will the test kits be available in toilet for example, so individuals can get them in a discrete manner, or will you have to go somewhere specific to collect them?

Proposer In the motion we propose that individuals should be able to access them anonymously and available at any time, such as in toilets on campus.

OM Regarding the second to last point, what is the purpose of the drug testing kits?

Proposer These tests are to test drugs to test the purity of the drug and if they have been cut with other substances. In Scotland, many drug related deaths are because the drug has been cut with other harmful substances or the dosage is completely off, hence causing an overdose or other harm. The tests would be to ensure the drugs are safe to consume.

OM Regarding making the tests more available, would this be on university grounds, or other anonymous methods?

Proposer Given this a Union motion, it would be on Union premises, and then the hope is we could expand this to other areas of campus with time.

NG Any wish to speak in favour of the motion?

OM On behalf of SSHES and Reclaim Stirling, we wish to support this motion as it follows the overall Union mindset of support and harm reduction. A suggestion is the kits could be available in the same way the period products are available online within the Union.

OM In favour as it provides information and can help make it safer for students.

NG Any wish to speak against the motion?

NG None wishing to speak against, so we now move to a vote.

For – 103

Against – 2

Abstain – 3

Motion is passed.

7.2 Constitutional Update Motion

Proposer (AM) The Constitutional Working Group of the Union has undertaken a review of the Constitution to ensure it is up to date with current practice and best practice. You can see the changes proposed in the attached document.

NC Are there any questions?

OM There is a proposed change of electing the 3 student trustees to instead appoint the student trustees. Why has this change been put in place?

RV This is something which is actually out of line with current practice. We have for some time now appointed the 3 student trustees instead of elected them. We could not change this wording sooner as the Constitution can only be updated every 5 years currently, so this change is just to reflect current practice.

OM So for the charitable institution it is more appropriate to appoint the student trustees than elect them?

RV We have 4 elected student members on the Trustee Board, which are the 4 Sabbatical Officers. The external trustees and student trustees are appointed. So, there are both elected and appointed trustees on the Union Trustee Board.

NC Any wish to speak in favour?

CB This change is quite administrative, but the Constitution is a central governing document, so it is important you all consider it, and I ask students to please vote for it as this update is integral in our move from an unincorporated charity to an incorporated charity.

NC Any wish to speak against?

NC No one wishes to speak against, so we will move to a vote.

For – 61

Against – 1

Abstain – 7

Motion is passed.

7.3 Schedules Update Motion

Proposer (AM) The Constitutional Working Group of the Union has undertaken a review of Schedules 2, 6, 7 and 8 to ensure it is up to date with current practice and best practice. You can see the changes proposed in the attached document. Each area of the Union has a relevant Schedule, and they outline governance for these individual areas.

NC Any questions?

NC No questions. Any wish to speak in favour?

SC There have been situations which have occurred this year, and it has been helpful to learn from these how we can improve governing processes to reflect this learning, and this is why we have put in these updates.

NC Any wish to speak against?

NC No one wishes to speak against, so we will move to a vote.

For – 54

Against – 3

Abstain – 5

Motion is passed.

7.4 Student ID Card Motion

Proposer The basis of this motion is that not all students get physical student ID cards, with students on single modules or at a campus oversees not being provided physical ID cards. The motion seeks to have the Union push the university to implement an opt-in system for physical student ID cards. This is important as a lack of a physical card can create a barrier for students, as they are reliant on digital cards which can malfunction, and students may be affected by digital poverty and have limited access to digital devices.

NC Any questions?

OM Very understandable in relation to technology issues, but for oversees students what is the benefit on them having a physical ID card sent to them given they will not be on campus to use it?

Proposer It can be used a free souvenir of their university experience, as other items such as hoodies can be costly, so it is a way to ensure all students feel part of the student community. Also, if a student was on campus, it makes accessing student services easier. It would be opt-in, so international students who do not wish to have the physical ID can choose whether they would want it or not.

OM Are you asking for all students to opt-in for a physical card?

Proposer No, I would advocate for students who are already given a physical card be provided one, but rather students who normally would not receive a card can opt-in to receive one as opposed to not being provided one and having no option to receive a physical card.

SC Is it based only on having a souvenir, or would it be for identification as well?

Proposer The souvenir aspect is one benefit which was favoured by many students I spoke to, but in addition to this it also ensures students have a physical card to access on campus services without being reliant on technology, which can malfunction and may exclude certain students who have limited access to technology.

NC Any wish to speak in favour?

CB As the seconder to the motion, Ryan approached me a while ago on this idea from an accessibility point of view and it can help gain access to student discounts such a bus travel discounts. We spoke to the university regarding this, but they unfortunately did not engage with the idea as they felt there was not enough student support behind the idea. I therefore encouraged Ryan to bring it as a motion as it can help given the Union a mandate to bring back to the University to hopefully show the university there is student support for this idea.

OM As a student nurse, it is very important for us to have a physical student card when on practice as we are not allowed to have our phones with us when working and we require the card for certain facilities, so I am in favour of this motion.

NC Any wish to speak against?

NC No one wishes to speak against, so we will now move to a vote.

For – 60

Against – 3

Abstain – 2

Motion is passed.

**RESERVED BUSINESS**

No reserved business.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

10.1 7th April 2022 at 5pm via Microsoft teams.