

Student Council

**12/01/20**

*Present:*

Bethany Robinson – BR

Chelsey Grooby – CG

Christopher Dow – CD

Huba Ali – HA

Jasmine Grewal- JG

Rachael Chapman – RC

Rachel Powell – RP

Rebecca Mills – RM

Vinay Verma – VV

*Staff Present:*

Lucy Smith – LS

*Absent with Formal Apologies:*

Briony English – BE

Joseph Nelson – JN

Muhammad Tahir – MT

Niamh Burton – NB

Olivia Bartlett – OB

*Absent without Apologies:*

Dorina Glejdan – DG

Laura Pickering – LP

### **Item 1 – Welcome from the Chair**

VV welcomed Council to the first meeting of 2021 and thanked everyone for their work over the last couple of weeks

VV commended Council for reaching out to students during lockdown

### **Item 2 – Approval of minutes from the previous meeting**

VV moved to item 2 and asked Council to approve minutes of the previous meeting

VV moved to a vote

Council voted unanimously to approve

### **Item 3 – Resignations from Council**

VV moved to Item 3 and asked for clarification from LS

LS explained that Byelaw 1.32 had been triggered and the procedure following this

VV moved to the resignation of Dorina Glejdan

VV moved to a vote

Council voted unanimously to consider DG as having resigned from Student Council in line with Byelaw 1.32

CG noted that with the current leadership elections being open, a by-election might confuse students

VV asked whether Council wanted to hold a by-election

VV moved to a vote

No Councillors voted to hold a by-election

VV asked Council if they wanted the International Students' Officer role's election to be postponed to the next academic year

Council voted with 7 votes for and 1 abstention

VV requested that Council ensure they receive feedback and engage with International students for the rest of the year

CG mentioned her upcoming meeting with the Coordinator of International students

### **Item 4 – Matters arising**

VV moved to Item 4 and asked each member of council for an update

HA said her focus had been on assignments

JG noted that students are disappointed with most things at presents, including placements

VV asked if there was any information on My Future

CG responded that there was which she and CD would be updating Council on

JG expressed concern at both the delay in placements and their lack of relevance

JG also noted a concern regarding a lecturer

VV responded that comments offending students should be challenged

LS suggested JG email herself and CG for advice

RM echoed concerns around placements

RM express students' disappointment with the course due to Covid-19

VV noted that it was Council's role to productively scrutinise

RM responded that in the event of another lockdown there is a lack of contingency plans regarding placements

VV pointed to CG and CD update

RC said that lots of Postgraduate students are feeling left out of University life and feel the focus is on Foundation and Undergraduate students

RP noted that she had not heard much from disabled students which she viewed as positive

VV asked if RP had felt well supported

RP responded that lecturers had been very responsive on Teams which was helpful

RP expressed concern around library website crashing throughout the day

VV asked she had raised this with IT services

RP responded that she will send an email tomorrow

VV suggested that CG and CD check if this is a University wide issue

CG noted that she is in conversation with the University about learning spaces and working from home

CG to get feedback and message RP

BR said that a lot of messages she has received from students are in relation to general course worries including essays, Moodle, and a delay in response from Personal Tutors

BR inquired about circumstances around marking and argued that students should not be expected to work at the same level in light of the circumstances

CG responded that there will be an update on this

BR also noted mental health concerns of students in halls and asked whether there was a way to anonymise submissions on the LTU app

#### **Item 5 – Sabbatical Officer Reports**

CG highlighted updates for December so Council are able to see campaign progress

CG explained that their priorities need to be redirected due to the current lockdown so the new format is based on questions, concerns, and feedback from students

CG noted that there are some promising updates since the agenda was sent out

CG updated Council on discussions regarding the No Detriment Policy and said that it will be known as the Safety Net

CD and CG updated Council on rent credits in halls

CD updated Council on his work with other Leeds unions on rent reductions for those in private accommodation

CG noted an update from University staff on the campus washing machines and thanked Council for their support with the policy

CG also updated on Heritage Halls

CD updated Council on the additional support available for PGR students and explained the extra support put in place by the University

CG updated Council on the food made available to isolating and vulnerable students

CG moved to addressing digital poverty and the support available to students

CG addressed concerns regarding placements and encouraged officers to find their own placements with the support of the placement office

CG noted meeting with University staff around digital placements

CD moved to student wellbeing, updating Council on LTUnity and other events

VV thanked CD and CG for ongoing work

VV asked if Council had any questions or comments

JG expressed concern around post room procedures during lockdown

CG and CD to look into this

VV asked for other comments

None were forthcoming

VV asked if students were required to pay for food parcels on campus

CG responded that they would not have to pay if they are vulnerable

VV asked about possibility of student support live chat and expressed gratitude to University at two more support staff being employed

CD said this would have to be monitored by a professional but could look into options if Council felt it would be beneficial

VV asked if the University could expand the Placement Team for a short period of time

CG said this would be difficult and to get in touch with the office regarding placement concerns

VV asked for a review at the next meeting

**Item 6 – Action Tracker and Attendance Log**

VV asked for a quick update on the action tracker

VV moved to Policy 024 – Gender Neutral Bathrooms and asked for any significant updates

CD responded there were no updates since Christmas and he was waiting to hear back from the University

CG mentioned possibility of gender neutral bathrooms in halls renovations

**Action: update in February meeting**

VV moved to Policy 025 – Staff members to wear pronoun badges

CD noted that this was in place on email signatures now and that the SU will be ordering badges for staff and councillors who would like one

VV moved to Policy 026 – Mental Health Signposting Coasters in StUdio

BR updated on upcoming meeting with CD

**Action: update in February meeting**

VV noted previous update on policy 027 – Update Heritage Halls

VV moved to updates on all motions relation to menstrual health and equality (028, 032, and 001)

CD responded that these were reliant on funding from the University and would hopefully be in place when students are back on campus

VV noted previous update on policy 027 – More washers on campus

VV moved to Policy 033 – SU to ban single-use plastic and freebies

CD said this was approved by Trustees and is now in place

VV congratulated CD on this

VV moved to Policy 002 – Cut the Placement Costs

CG said the focus was on hardship funds at present but that she is waiting on a figure back for each course

VV moved to Policy 004 – LGBT+ Inclusive Sport

CD mentioned plans for LGBTQ+ History Month

CD noted that BUCS had cancelled sport for the year

**Item 7 – Decisions on policy due to expire**

VV moved to Policy 010 – Reading Weeks for all Courses

VV asked if all courses have reading weeks

CG was unsure how far this policy got

VV noted JN comments submitted before the meeting, including his support for this policy and the benefits of it

VV moved to vote to retain policy

Council voted unanimously to retain

VV moved to Policy 011 – Vegetarian and Vegan food on campus

CG noted work towards this in StUdio and the options now available in the canteen and SU Shop said working towards options in studio; asked about Bombay food stall in canteen

RP expressed concern around the suitability of the Bombay food stall for those with Crohn's disease

CD said there should always be a vegan option in the canteen but the issue is often signage

CG suggested an amendment to the policy

VV said to change the policy wording from 'cheap and adequate food' to 'a variety of food across'

VV moved to a vote on this amendment

Council voted unanimously

### **Item 8 – Motions debate**

VV noted that nothing had been passed through Student Say

### **Item 9 – AOB**

CG highlighted the Academic Voice form being active from December and asked councillors to direct students to this

CG asked LS for clarification about anonymity

LS explained anonymity options

VV highlighted election nominations being open

LS offered support to councillors considering nomination

CD echoed this

VV thanked everyone and closed the meeting