



Location: The LCR Chair: Chanel Munroe  
Date: 23/05/2024 Deputy Chair: Ali Sabba  
Time: 5pm

DPC: Serene Shibli Sexton, Erin Whitby, Oscar Welchman, Harvey Rose, Josh Bell, Charlotte Miller, Liv Mukiibi, Matthew Mclaughlan

### **Useful Information:**

#### ***Code of conduct***

All students are members of the union, and so should behave appropriately in line with our Code of Conduct.

<https://www.ueasu.org/union/memberscodeofconduct/>

#### ***Expenses***

Remember – the Union (of UEA students) may be able to reimburse you for travel or career expenses that you incur attending this meeting. Please contact [su.voice@uea.ac.uk](mailto:su.voice@uea.ac.uk) for more details.

<https://www.ueasu.org/democracy/unioncouncil/councilinfo/>

#### ***Articles of Association and Bye-laws***

The Union's governing document, the Articles of Association, and its rule book, the Bye-Laws, can be found by here:

<https://www.ueasu.org/union/governance/constitution/>

#### ***Support for writing policy***

Information on how to write policy and the policy template is available here:

<https://www.ueasu.org/democracy/unioncouncil/writingpolicy/>

#### ***How to access the online meeting facility***

If you cannot attend in person on Thursday and would like to use the online facility, please join via the Teams link in your Outlook calendar. If you have any issues accessing this, please email [su.voice@uea.ac.uk](mailto:su.voice@uea.ac.uk).

#### ***Attendance***

Full list of union councillors can be found here:

<https://www.ueasu.org/democracy/unioncouncil/listofunioncouncillors/>

## **Quorum**

"1.15 Business shall not be conducted by the Union Council:1.15.1 unless over 40 representatives are present at a meeting;"

# **Agenda**

## **SECTION A: Standing Items**

### **001 Statement from the Chair**

Chair begins by welcoming members to the council and inviting members to complete the quoracy check.

Council is quorate with 73 members with present.

Chair invites the council to participate in the event downstairs.

### **002 Approval of the Minutes from the Last Meeting**

Minutes are approved with 94% approval.

### **003 Matters Arising**

There are no matter arising.

## **SECTION B: Housekeeping**

### **004: Annual Report and Accounts for year end**

Council notes the annual reports.

NW invites questions from Council. None are taken.

### **005: Appointment of the Auditors**

Council notes the approval of the auditors

### **006: Financial Estimates and Approval of Budget**

NW explains the scope of the financial estimates and asks Council to turn to page 5.

NW explains that this shows all of the budget for this year compared to

next year.

NW notes that many of the budgets have been trimmed as it is based on allocation so that the organisation can use its budget more effectively, but that the changes are not hugely significant.

**Question:** Vogul asks if there is a metric on actual spend against allocation..

**Answer:** NW responds that that information would be in the annual accounts and may not be expressed as a percentage. He responds that this sort of information is difficult to get hold of due to the complexity of the organisation.

**Question:** Mitchell asks about the cut in spending from the contingency budget.

**Answer:** NW responds that it is not needed anymore as the new budget is based on last years spend.

**Question:** ME asks if the document refers to the estimated spend of last year or the actual spend of last year.

**Answer:** NW responds that it is the allocation not the specific spend.

NW invites further questions. None are taken. NW invites Council to approve the budget.

Financial estimates are approved with 91% approval.

## **007: Affiliations to External Organisations**

Chair invites Council to approve the affiliations.

Affiliations are approved with 88% approval.

## **SECTION C1: Policy making**

### **008: Democracy Review**

SSS introduces the democracy review.

SSS explains the current structure is a representative democracy, which means that everybody represents a group of people rather than themselves.

SSS notes that the current system is very complex and over complicated.

SSS explains that the democracy review will rearrange the democracy to allow individual students campaign for what they are passionate about.

SSS explains that many motions get lost in system as they are delegated down and the passion is lost.

SSS notes that the new structure will amend the issues of the old one, giving the individual student more power.

SSS explains that the accountability of Union Council will remain.

SSS explains that the sub-committees will be open to everyone, have more power, and more specific interests

SSS explains that a wide diversity of voices will be heard and students voices will be heard.

SSS explains that a lot of students burn out as they are overworked.

SSS notes that the students who get motions passed are not able to see those changes through to completion.

SSS explains the process for motions and campaigns that might affect more than one group.

SSS invites questions from Council.

**Question:** EM asks if the process for year abroad students will change.

**Answer:** SSS responds that as long as students are members of the union then year abroad students will be treated no differently from students in the UK.

**Question:** Member asks how execs for each subcommittee that get a vote at the SUE would be decided.

**Answer:** SSS responds that the quoracy for exec meetings would be made up by people who are already elected.

**Question:** Maddy asks what will happen to the new people elected to Union Council.

**Answer:** SSS replies that it depends on which society they are elected under, and that they will be able to attend any meeting.

**Question:** Oscar states that union council works because people turn up frequently to hear everything and asks what the reasoning is for the people that now need to go to 7 meetings rather than one.

**Answer:** SSS responds that union councils are too frequent and that these meetings will be shorter and less tedious.

**Question:** ME asks how people can be expected to go to multiple committees.

**Answer:** SSS responds that people will only attend what they are interested in, but that anyone can go to this meeting and have their voice heard

and if they don't want to go, they don't need to as there will be less bureaucracy.

SSS explains that a referendum was passed in 2019 which demonstrates that most people don't think our democracy is working.

SSS explains that under this structure every student would be entitled to a vote.

**Question:** Member asks if people are only expected to show up to these meetings when the motions or agenda are relevant to them, how it can be expected that the quoracy requirement will be met.

**Answer:** SSS explains that the quoracy number is made of elected representatives, not every union council rep.

**Question:** Elana asks if there is still a level of quoracy that needs to be achieved.

**Answer:** SSS states that there needs to be a quoracy of 50% + 1 so you just need to get half of the execs to be present.

### ***Speeches against:***

Ben Stannard states that he has been a critic of Union Council, but that he believes it is better than the proposition. BS states the smaller committees would allow anyone to turn up to vote so people could gather a group of friends and pass a motion.

BS states it would be difficult for Union Reps to know what's going on in other committees.

BS states that the new system will be more complicated and would give a disproportionate amount of power to student officers as they are not held accountable by Union Council.

Member states that these proposers are very vague and difficult to explain and that the motion is not fit for purpose.

Member urges Council to vote against this motion.

Chair invites questions from Council.

**Question:** Vogul asks if member has any arguments for the proposed system.

**Answer:** Member states that it would be good for students on a year abroad to have their say.

### ***Speeches for:***

SSS states that the proposal is broad as it is meant to be adaptable. SSS states that this will allow students to be more vocal.

SSS notes that this proposal will allow students to campaign on what they care about and allow minorities to have their say.

SSS states that while Union Council makes decisions, very few actions are actually taken. SSS suggests that the new proposal makes students responsible for their own motions. SSS states that this new system is more easily accessible as it's more intuitive.

SSS states that education issues are not given the time they deserve in SOC.

SSS states that the aim is to have fewer closed doors with students having more of a say in what's happening, and greater accountability.

**Question:** Mitchell Layzell asks if SSS thinks there could be more of a bias for pushing motions in the SU if we allow anyone to vote, as people could mass gather students to vote for one side without listening to why it should be rejected or approved.

**Answer:** SSS responds that if a lot of students want something to happen then it should happen, and if the motion is going to impact people outside of that committee then it will go to SUE for accountability.

### ***Speeches against:***

MM states that whilst Union Council does not work, it could be fixed with smaller changes rather than a complete overhaul. MM suggests that this should be achieved by encouraging people to stand for Union Council. MM notes that Union Council is not a closed-door meeting.

MM states that these issues can be fixed by involving more people in Union Council and that the proposal is not the way forward.

MM acknowledges that not everything that is being passed is getting done and that this is an issue but does not believe that this is the way forward.

Chair invites questions from council.

**Question:** SSS states that Union Council has had meetings with a high voter attendance asks MM why those voters have not come again.

**Answer:** MM states that early meetings were divisive and affected the mental health of participants but that this is not a failure of the structure.

### ***Speeches For:***

EP states that this is the first democratic review that considers postgraduate needs.

EP states that the academic rep system has been reformed and that there is university support for the new system.

EP notes that the cycle for electing Union Council Reps does not work for Postgraduates.

EP states that there is university support for the revised democratic structure.

EP notes that fear of change shouldn't hinder the progress and that the new structure is to be shaped by students.

**Question:** ES asks how SSS plans to prevent groups of friends from submitting and passing any motion as they can be exploited if anyone who shows up can vote.

**Answer:** SSS notes that a society is a group of friends with a common interest. SSS states that if 50 students turn up to something then it's important to 50 students. SSS notes that they do not see a problem with groups making decisions for their own group. SSS restates that if something is brought to a committee that affects more than that committee, then there would be a separate process for that.

Procedural motion to extend debate proposed.

Procedural motion passed with 52% approval.

### ***Speeches Against:***

ME reads the motion with regards to the Students Union Executive and states that it will be open to all members as non voting participants.

ME states that the SU exec will have final decision-making powers as the student officers will make up the majority of the SU exec and removes accountability.

ME states that there will only be ten members present at the SUE who are not Officers, giving the Officers a 2/3rds majority.

ME states that this is not democratic and gives more power to the student officers which goes against what the motion says it will do.

**Question:** EP asks how many students are currently in the executive.

**Answer:** ME states that the motion says that it is the elected students, full time and part time, with representatives from the other committees.

**Question:** EP asks again how many are in the current executive.

**Answer:** ME states that this is not relevant.

**Question:** MR states that ME is talking about a lack of representation and that currently one person represents 120 people. MR asks how the new system will be less representative than the current one.

**Answer:** ME states that the same voting power is given to different size groups. ME states that there are other ways that this can be combatted.

**Question:** MR follows up by stating that student officers are voted for and that the point around officers does not make sense.

**Answer:** ME states that FTOs are not students.

SSS adds a correction that Full Time Officers are students.

**Answer (cont):** ME clarifies that Full Time Officers have completed their degrees and that Council allows these officers to be censured and holds them accountable in this space.

SSS clarifies that the committees have the power of union council and that any committee can bring a vote of no confidence against an FTO.

SSS asks to hear an argument against that does not come from the white men in the corner.

Chair notes this comment as out of order, and states the point of clarification became a speech for, therefore there will be no more speeches for.

Procedural Motion to extend debate proposed

Rejected with 65% of the vote.

SSS issues an apology to the minorities in the group and clarifies that she was referring to the members consistently coming up to speak against.

Motion is not passed with only 51% approval. Changes to the Bye-Laws require a 2/3rds majority.

*Chair reorders agenda*

## **SECTION D: Approval of Society and Peer Groups**

### **015: Recommended for Approval**

Both recommendations are approved

### **016: Recommended for Rejection**

Both recommendations are approved.

*Chair reorders agenda*

## **SECTION C2: Policy Making**

### **013: Create a Charity Event Facilitation Grant Pot**



Chair moves motion to after club and society approvals.

NW explains the motion.

VV asks what the number in the grant pot will be.

NW responds that the aim will be £10,000

DH asks how this grant would differ from other pots and whether this would only be available to clubs and societies or to everyone.

NW responds that this will be extra money and that RAG and a panel of officers will be in charge of delegating that funding.

Chair invites speech against.

None are taken.

Motion passed with an 89% majority vote.

### **009: Change to bye-laws 1.10.5 and 9.10**

#### ***Speeches For:***

ME speaks for the motion. He states currently that societies (when they want to change their own inside laws). Currently they need to go through Union Council, the motion is to ensure that societies can create inner changes which then go through to a member of staff or officer to make sure that societies have the power to change their own rules, and the members will have more say in how their clubs are organised. He states this is for the benefit of the societies, whilst ensuring the student union still has a say to ensure societies don't blend into each other.

**Question:** Maddie (she/they) asks what would stop this from being rejected at a officer level.

**Answer:** ME states that this would then be taken to union council to prevent bias, they would have the option to take it to union council still if they wished.

Luke Johnson takes the stage, and requests to be made aware of changes to constitution is made. LJ states that if a society would want to blend with another society then this would need to be put through Union Council.

**Question:** CH asks if this is not equivalent to putting the laws of societies into the hands of FTOs.

**Answer:** ME elaborates that if it is not approved by FTOs, it is not rejected but rather goes to the Union Council. This means that the wait time is cut because it means it does not need to wait to go to union council.

**Question:** CH states he fails to see how this is a pro-democracy change, whilst the last motion was similar in terms of handing power into the hands of full-time officers. He wants to clarify what counts this not as tyranny.

**Answer:** ME states that it isn't because it puts the democracy change into the hands of the members of the society. ME restates that this will give more powers to their members.

OS makes a closing speech, indicating that societies have not been updated in a long time. He states you can make no changes if you wish. This puts power back in societies hands.

The motion passes with 2/3<sup>rd</sup> majority for bye-law change.

Guillotine is called. Meeting ends.

## **SECTION E: Reports**

### **020: Full-time Officer reports**

#### **Welfare, Community, and Diversity Officer – Nathan Wyatt**

*Written report from Nathan Wyatt taken as read.*



