

University of Leicester Students' Union

UNION PARLIAMENT

Minutes of the Union Parliament meeting held on Tuesday 6 December 2011 at 6.30 p.m. in Lecture Theatre 3 of the Kenneth Edwards building.

In the Chair: J. Grundy

Secretary: I. Bruce

Present:

A. Nutt	T. French
F. Ó Dughaén	S. Burtenshaw
H. Symington	C. Brady
C. du Couëdic de Kerérant	M. Danylchenko
J. Farndon	D. Flatt
E. Greathead	A. Green
J. Hill	D. Tinkler
J. Akajioyi	R. Neale
E. Webb	D. Mason
N. Short	D. Cavell
A. Dent	D. Fahey
L. Harris	H. Liu
J. Taylor	M. Young
H. Wright	T. O’Gorman
T. Pang	M. Rubin
J. Taylor	H. Walton
R. Cumpstey	J. Gouveia
J. Headington	Y. Liu
A. Thompkins	J. Wu
J. Crossland	A. Lombard
L. Yu	A. Obhi
M. Idres	J. Appleyard
C. Li	N. Sherratt
O. Dairo	H. Wainwright
O. Jones	H. Fu
T. Arnold	L. Brooker

K. Minnis (Staff Support)

Observers: A. Clarke

L. Wymer

Apologies for Absence were received from C. L. Davis, T. Y. Chan, O. Jones, I. Luqman, D. Schneider. E. Revell, S. Unhachirangrak, M. Mukwawaya and S. Sharkey.

Apologies for Absence were not received from K. R. Kamjula, J. Burton, M. Poland, W. Li, N. Albargothy, M. Tissera, S. Kelly-Walsh, R. Edem, V. Malhotra, C. Asmah and J. Adeluola.

61 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were not declarations of interest.

62 UNION PARLIAMENT MINUTES 22.11.11

The meeting voted and the minutes were ACCEPTED.

63 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES 11.11.11

The meeting voted and the minutes were ACCEPTED.

64 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES 18.11.11

The meeting voted the minutes were ACCEPTED.

65 STEERING GROUP MINUTES 08.11.11

The meeting voted and the minutes were ACCEPTED

66 STEERING GROUP MINUTES 21.11.11

The meeting voted and the minutes were ACCEPTED.

67 STEERING GROUP MINUTES 22.11.11

The meeting voted and the minutes were ACCEPTED

68 ATTENDANCE RECORDS

The attendance records were presented for information.

69 LGBTQ FORUM NOTES 01.11.11

69.1 Jack Hill said he felt the notes were not an accurate record of the forum which involved much debate. Thom French said he believed notes of forums to be a list of the key actions taken.

69.2 Thom French withdrew the notes and asked members who had attended the forum to email him details of what was discussed. The notes would be re-presented to Parliament.

69.3 Jack Hill expressed disappointment that the notes had taken a considerable length of time to produce. Thom French said he had apologised for this at the last meeting of Parliament and his apology had been minuted.

70 FINANCIAL REPORT

The report was based on the October 2011 accounts. Alex Nutt reported that the Union's finances are healthy and much better than last year. Overall the Union has made nearly £40,000 more profit than it had budgeted for. He reported that:-

- The slight loss in terms of non commercial income is due to receiving less than expected returns from Willingales and NUS Extra Cards.
- All commercial services are doing well with the exception of the Scholar which is expected to lose £80,000 across the year.
- The Union is looking at ways of making the Scholar profitable and is currently in the process of undertaking a market research exercise in this area.

71 PROPOSAL: Becoming a Zero Tolerance Union.

Thomas French presented the following proposal:

This Union Notes:

The NUS Hidden Marks report, published in March 2010, shows these key findings:

1. 68% of respondents had experienced sexual harassment whilst at university or college.
2. 1 in 7 survey respondents has experienced a serious physical or sexual assault during their time as a student.
3. 12% have been stalked while at university or college.
4. 16% of respondents have experienced unwanted kissing, touching or molesting during their time as a student.
5. More than 1 in 10 respondents have been a victim of serious physical violence.
6. Students were the majority of perpetrators in most categories (except physical violence where 48% of offenders were students).
7. In the majority of cases in all incident categories surveyed, the perpetrator was known to the victim.
8. In the incident categories for which relevant data is available, the majority of perpetrators were male (89% for stalking and 73% for physical violence).
9. Only 4% of women students who have been seriously sexually assaulted have reported it to their institution.

10. Only 10% of women students who have been seriously sexually assaulted have reported it to the police.
11. Of those who did not report serious sexual assault to the police, 50% said it was because they felt ashamed or embarrassed, and 43% because they thought they would be blamed for what happened.

This Union Believes:

1. In order for our Students' Union to be a safe space for all of our students we need to adopt a zero tolerance policy.
2. It is better to *hollaback* than to slut shame, it is important for students to be empowered to dress how they wish and feel safe to call sexual harassment when they see it, rather than reigning in personal expression over safety.
3. This proposal is to make the University of Leicester Students' Union a zero tolerance union: to tackle sexual harassment and to end the culture of acceptability that leaves such behaviour unchallenged.

This Union Proposes:

1. To inform our students and participants at Union events that the zero tolerance policy is in place, including the understanding of what constitutes as sexual harassment, and that is not tolerated, but to create an empowerment culture not a victim culture.
2. To mandate the Chief Executive Officer of the Students' Union to write a Human Resources document on sexual harassment training for current and future staff.
3. To review the current disciplinary and complaints procedures in the Students' Union, ensuring that they fit in with the zero tolerance policy and to mandate the Student Activities Officer to ensure that sports and societies are aware of this policy through their training.
4. To identify a clear path for those who wish to complain about sexual harassment, including selecting a forward facing member of staff who is highlighted as the person whom to complain to and what happens once the complaint is submitted.
5. To ensure students know about support services provided by both the University and the Union.
6. To work with local police to ensure their support, and to make the process for reporting serious crimes easier.
7. For the Welfare and International Officer to submit a report to the NUS Women's Officer to become an NUS accredited zero tolerance union.

8. To allow the Campaigns and Involvement Officer to use this policy as a launch pad for campaigns about sexual violence against students.

Parliament discussed the proposal.

The meeting voted and the proposal was CARRIED

72 PROPOSAL: Campaigning to improve the conditions for those with Dietary Requirements at the University of Leicester.

David Cavell presented the following proposal:

This Union Notes:

1.
 - 1 in 100 people have a food allergy
 - 3 in 4 people have a Dairy intolerance
 - 1 in 3 people have Yeast sensitivity
 - 1 in 7 people have Gluten sensitivity
 - 1 in 3 people have Fructose or Sugar sensitivityⁱ
 - One in a hundred people in the UK have Coeliac disease (one in ten amongst families where the condition already exists)ⁱⁱ
2. That dietary requirements are a commonly occurring condition in modern society, and that the younger demographic group, many of whom are students are entering University either unaware they have these conditions or as recently diagnosed sufferers of them.
3. That conditions such as intolerance to lactose, gluten, nuts and numerous other products as well as auto-immune conditions like Coeliac disease need to be well catered for, as their effects can be severe, lifelong and even fatal in some cases. Even a slight contamination of food during preparation can have these effects.
4. That the current state of safety and availability of “free-from” food both on campus and in catered halls is, by accounts from current students, below standard for those with dietary requirements. In the worst case, a student has been promised good provision prior to entering catered halls and has had repeatedly bad experiences, despite being proactive in trying to gain recognition of their condition before and during their time at University.
5. That when looking at these issues from a legal standpoint, it is important to note that:
 - The Food Labelling Regulations 1996 specifically states that if there is an allergen present in food, its presence must be clearly labelled alongside ingredients.ⁱⁱⁱ
 - Legal requirements such as European Directive 2003/89/EC mean that only foods that contain 20 parts per million of gluten will be allowed the label

“gluten free”^{iv}. As some gluten foods are manufactured on campus (ie: freshly prepared) it is vital that those preparing such items are both aware of what gluten free foods there are and correctly label these to protect students and adhere to the law.

This Union Believes:

1. Information available to those with Dietary requirements of free from foods when eating at campus outlets (such as the Library Café) is currently very poor.
2. That correct labelling of food is a matter of particular importance to those with dietary requirements.
3. That past and current students have suffered due to a poor understanding of, and provision for such conditions, and that this Union should fight to improve this situation both now and for future generations of students’.
4. The ability to eat safely and be healthy as a student is not only integral to an individual’s studies and their student experience, but more fundamentally is a human right.
5. Simple steps can be taken by those involved in the sale and distribution of food to prevent problems such as better education for catering staff about such conditions, putting procedures in place to prevent contamination, and providing “free-from” menu’s at campus outlets. These objectives should be campaigned for too happen comprehensive both on and off campus.

This Union Resolves:

1. For the sabbatical/ team to review this issue, as well as the cost and provision of food on campus at least once per annum and campaign so that our Institution strives to both maintain and improve provision of and access to free-from foods to all students who need them.
2. For the Campaigns and Involvement Officer to work alongside the Dietary Requirements Society to look at the setting up of a national campaign on this issue, but over the coming academic year to build a campaign to achieve this in the short term, by raising awareness of the issues surrounding dietary requirements as well as improve the student experience overall for those with these conditions.

The proposal was not discussed, therefore it was CARRIED.

73 WHITE PAPER: Reintroducing the free Safety Bus for members of Union staff working late shifts.

Michael Rubin presented the following white paper:

This Union Notes:

1. Last year, a Safety Bus was provided for bar staff after late night shifts.

2. This provides a safe mode of transport late at night.
3. This service was abolished this academic year. This was due to the Safety Bus over charging the bars department, after being told it needed to make a profit.
4. This means bar staff have to walk home, often across Victoria Park and Evington.

To quote PC Harvey Wilson on his Facebook "Campus Cops".

"We have had several people approached and had items stolen from them on Victoria Park or nearby on London Road Evington Footpath. All areas of some isolation. PLEASE stick to the lit areas, use the Safety Bus or public transport or walk in a group. DO NOT WALK across the park as you make yourself a target".

5. The Leicester Mercury website is littered with reports of muggings in Victoria Park, predominantly late at night/early morning, on students. (www.thisisleicestershire.co.uk). In February 2010, a female student walking across Victoria Park at 4:10 am was indecently assaulted.
6. A large portion of the bar team are female, and are more likely to be victims of these crimes.

This Union Believes:

1. The Union has a duty of care towards all its staff.
2. The Union should put the safety of its staff above profit.

This Union Resolves:

1. To return the use of the safety bus for any member of union staff finishing a shift after 9 pm.
2. An email to be circulated to all members of union staff, advising them that this service has returned.

73.1 Michael Rubin will be invited to the next Management Board to discuss the matter. If he is not satisfied with the outcome he will present a proposal to Parliament.

74 WHITE PAPER: Open Up Parliament

Michael Rubin presented the following white paper:

How do we make Parliament more open, more accessible and more accountable?

Possible ideas:

1. Making it easier for non-Parliament Members to submit white papers.
 2. Live streaming sessions of Union Parliament.
 3. Releasing data on the performance of members (attendance, number of submissions etc).
 4. Releasing of regular reports/information about what Parliament has done.
- 74.1 Michal Rubin will meet with Helen Senior, Director of Sales and Marketing, and set up a working group to examine the issues raised in this white paper.
- 75 WHITE PAPER: The Living Wage

Michael Rubin presented the following white paper:



Low paid staff often have to work long hours or work several jobs to make ends meet. This means they have to choose between living in poverty and spending less time with their families. To earn enough to support their family at the National Minimum Wage someone would need to work 48 hours a week. One in five children currently grow up in poverty despite living in a family where their parent or parents work.

Paying the Living Wage will reduce poverty, household debt, stress and illness and improve family life for University staff. It will also lead to greater productivity and improved quality of service from more motivated staff. It is also more efficient for the University with staff staying in their jobs for longer, saving on the recruitment and training costs.

Paying the Living Wage is the right thing to do. Everyone should be able to afford what it costs to live and to bring up a family.

595 University staff are paid less than the Living Wage of £7.20 an hour.

We aim to make the University of Leicester Students' Union an accredited Living Wage employer and win the Living Wage for all University of Leicester staff.

- 75.1 Michael Rubin will bring the white paper back as a proposal to the next meeting of Parliament

76 AUTUMN TERM REPORTS

76.1 The Chair informed the meeting that several Officers had not submitted an end of term report. Steering Group ruled that all Officers who had failed to submit a report would be given an opportunity to do so for presentation to the next meeting of Parliament. Failure to submit a report would count as a black mark against the Officer.

76.2 Thom French praised Daniel Tinkler and James Farndon for being honest and open in their reports regarding the amount of time they had put in as an Officer this term.

The meeting voted and the Autumn Term reports were ACCEPTED.

77 VERBAL REPORTS

77.1 Alex Nutt informed Parliament that the Union is currently recruiting an 'election street team' to help promote elections. Anyone interested in joining the team will need to be confident that they can remain neutral throughout the election process.

77.2 Alex Nutt encouraged members, considering running in the Executive elections, to meet with the current post holder on a confidential, one to one basis, to develop a greater understanding of the role.

77.3 Alex Nutt invited everyone to join him for drinks in the Scholar after Parliament.

77.4 The Chair informed the meeting that when Steering Group meet each Thursday before a meeting of Parliament to discuss proposals, the proposer would be invited to attend.

77.5 The Vice Chancellor was extremely disappointed to hear about the issues regarding the student who had not received adequate levels of support from the University, in meeting their dietary requirements. Following this, Alex Nutt and Suzi Burtenshaw met with the Head of Residential and Catering Services and have received email correspondence and phone calls from the Halls of Residence. This is ongoing and the Executive will ensure that the issue is addressed as soon as possible.

77.6 Maryna Danylchenko thanked the Union for resolving the heating problem in the MSPGA common room

77.7 Fenian Ó Dughaén wished everyone a Happy Christmas and thanked them for making Union Parliament the most active he had seen in his 7 years.

78 OPEN QUESTIONS

- 78.1 In response to a question from Hayley Symington, Fenian Ó Dughaén would be working with Helen Senior the new Director of Sales & Marketing to develop a strategy for the Union's poster policy.
- 78.2 In response to a question from Maryna Danny, the meeting was informed that a Student Trustee had not been appointed as those students who had shown an interest in the role had not completed the application process. There is a majority of Officer Trustees on the Board of Trustees as not all the External Trustee positions are filled.
- 78.3 In response to a question from Jack Hill, Alex Nutt said it is his responsibility to appoint a Student Trustee, although originally it was the responsibility of the Campaigns and Involvement Officer. Alex Nutt asked Parliament if they knew of anyone who they felt would be suitable for the role, to encourage them to contact him.
- 78.4 In response to a question from Charles du Couëdic de Kerérant, Alex Nutt said that nominations for the position of Student Trustee had never been closed and that he had talked to interested students after the original deadline.
- 78.5 In response to a question from Jack Hill, Thom French informed Parliament that he was still working on the LGBTQ policy and that he would be consulting Jack Hill and other interested parties shortly with a view to presenting a policy, including smart criteria/objectives in January 2012.
- 78.6 The LUSH Controller informed Parliament that LUSH FM has a "State of the Union" show each Sunday at 3.00 pm. Any members of Parliament who are interested in contributing to the show were asked to contact LUSH@le.ac.uk.

The meeting closed at 8.10 p.m
