

University of St Andrews' Students' Association
Meeting of the
Student Representative Council
Tuesday 14th October 2008, Committee Room, 7:30pm
Minutes

Present

Andrew Keenan	Association President
James Shield	Director of Representation (DoR)
Stacy Lee	Director of Events and Services (DoES)
Philippa Dunn	Director of Student Development & Activities (DoSDA)
Tom Cahn	Association Chair
Phil Pass	SRC Accommodation Officer
Andrew MacKenzie	SRC Education Officer
Meredith Wouters	SRC Equal Opportunities and Welfare Officer
Matthew Guest	Association Community Relations Officer
Sarah McCusker	Association Sustainability Officer
Sarah Lloyd-Thomas	Arts/Divinity Senate Representative
Ed Walsingham	Science/Medical Senate Representative
Emma Foley	SRC Member for Private Accommodation
Christopher Dickie	SRC Member from First Year
Kyle Mitchell	SRC Member for Sub-Honours Academic Issues
Mel Nethercott	SRC Member for Honours Academic Issues
Oscar Mitchell	SRC Member for Library and Learning Resource Users
Bradshaw Hawkins	SRC Member for International Students
Hatty Sahlberg	SRC Member for Students with Disabilities
Lukas Ross	SRC Member for Ethnic Minorities
Libby Parker	SRC Member for Widening Access
Laura Wilkes	SRC Member for the Faculty of Arts
Kathryn Garcin	SRC Member for Part Time Students
Beverly Macklin	SRC Member for Mature Students
Benjamin Bridgman	SRC Member for Sexualities and Gender
Martin Schmierer	SRC Member Without Portfolio
Hari Kumar	John Burnet Hall Representative
Iain Cupples	Students' Association

Apologies

Absent

Kat Stevens	SRC Member for University Accommodation
Molly Uzzell	SRC Member for Women's Issues
Daniel Fisher	SRC Member for Science Faculty
Marcus Mayo	SRC Member for Divinity Faculty
Marc Locherty	SRC Member for Medicine Faculty
Scott Platton	SRC Member for Men's Issues
Terry Fulton	SRC Member for Postgraduate Accommodation

1.0 Adoption of Agenda

Agenda adopted

2.0 Chair's Business

2.1 Apologies for Absence

As above

2.2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Accepted

2.3 Matters Arising

None

3.0 Presidential Business

3.1 *President*

3.1.1 Nominations for the Postgraduate elections are open and close next Monday. More

volunteers are needed for the elections committee to run the booths on election day. The President is waiting for final confirmation on the availability of voting booths but the publicity has been done and is ready to go.

- 3.1.2 The next meeting of the SRC will be with the Student Support Forum. The decision to hold such a joint meeting was made by the SRC last semester and there will be two a year. If anyone has any questions for, for example, Student Support or Estates, they should bring them to the next meeting. The Community Relations Officer asked if an email was to be sent to the whole student body; the President will check.

4.0 **Representation Business**

4.1 *Director of Representation*

4.1.1 Motion regarding the financial accountability of student events held on University land

The DoR said that he had been asked by some students about the financial accountability of events – all of the Students' Association's (SA) accounts are transparent, but private groups currently do not have any duty to make public their accounts. It would be nice to see where the money is going, especially if the event is being held for charity, and it may help students make informed decisions when buying tickets. If this motion is passed the SA will recommend that all groups holding events on university land be required to make their accounts available if asked, and that refusing to do so will result in being unable to hold further events on university property.

Questions and answers were as follows:

- What about events which are free entry?

The motion is not especially aimed at small or regular society events.

- Is such a rule actually helpful for students purchasing tickets, when profits won't be known until after the event?

A lot of the big events the motion is aimed at are annual, so students could look at their performance in previous years. The knowledge that accounts could be requested would hopefully cause societies to be more cautious with their budgets.

- This is simply the SA putting forward a recommendation – would such a policy actually go through?

The Proctor has already said he thinks it is a good idea. The university is very concerned with Charities Law and have recently created an Events Management Group (EMG) to coordinate bookings.

- Who would be able to request financial information?

Any student could ask the EMG.

- Shouldn't the right to request information be available to townspeople too?

The SA's role is only with regards to the student population. Similarly, events not held by students are outside the motion.

Voting: 20 in favour, 2 against, 4 abstentions. The motion was passed.

- 4.1.2 Other business: rector nominations are still open, the rector group meeting is upcoming and the DoR has also met with Ming Campbell regarding accommodation.

5.0 **Services Business**

5.1 *Director of Events and Services*

- 5.1.1 Upcoming events: Darkroom and other events in the union, a silent disco on Saturday and a big music festival the following weekend.

- 5.1.2 The bop rota has gone out, please get in touch if there is a problem. The DoES was asked about being on the rota more than once – there are fewer positions this year so this may happen.

6.0 **Activities Business**

- 6.1 The year has been very busy so far with the Charities Campaign raising a lot of money and new societies affiliating to the union. Lots of societies are getting together to hold

events for AIDS Week in December and there are various exciting things in the pipeline for next semester.

7.0 Officers' Business

7.1 Accommodation Officer

7.1.1 A meeting was held with current Senior Students to learn more about what goes on in hall committees. The Senior Student Guide now has lots of additional information and so will probably be published in two parts.

7.1.2 The committee has spoken to Sarah Pay about DRA's 'let-in' fee and the rules have been relaxed slightly – being let in during the night and at certain specified times during the day is free, but it still costs £30 at any other time unless it's an emergency (mitigating circumstances can be taken to the residence manager). The charge is allegedly because letting people in means that porters cannot get their work done, but doubts were cast over the actual amount of porters' work which might suffer. When asked why there was a charge and if it was allowed, the Officer said that all halls have some kind of deterrent but it varies, and DRA's policy has recently become much more severe. When asked what the money went towards the Officer was told "student stuff", but nothing has been thought of yet and it was pointed out that the hall committee already has enough money to support student activities within the hall. This reasoning also invalidates the argument that charges are down to interrupting the work of porters. The university is arguing that as around 200 people were locked out during Orientation Week and since the system has been introduced it has gone down to 10-15 a week, the system is working – but it was pointed out that no-one deliberately locks themselves out, and the high number in the first week was probably down to getting used to remembering keycards and being drunk.

7.1.3 Please look at the 'How to Rent' guide from last year and let the Officer know if there is anything you would like added.

7.1.4 After being asked what stance the committee was taking regarding 'affordable accommodation' last week, the committee has come up with a draft definition. This still needs refinement as it is uncertain what should be meant by terms such as 'standard student loan' with regards to students of different nationalities and the feasibility of cheap rents. It was pointed out that accommodation at a very low price is required for only a small number of students who genuinely cannot stretch to anything more. The term 'acceptable accommodation' requires less discussion as it is already governed by many legalities. It was asked if the definition could include a specific number of beds and cost per week.

7.1.5 The training session for landlords and property agents will be held next Tuesday.

7.2 Education Officer

7.2.1 The second hand book sale raised £2735 for students this year, up from £1600 last year. The Officer thanked everybody who volunteered their time to run it.

7.2.2 Training for Class Reps begins tomorrow, with further sessions on Saturday and the following Wednesday. There have been the usual problems regarding getting Reps' contacts from Schools.

7.2.3 The 'Don't Get It Wrong' campaign targeting academic misconduct will relaunch next week.

7.2.4 A Library Consultation is being held at 7:30pm on Thursday 30th October in the Committee Room to discuss plans for the redevelopment of the library with Jon Purcell – RSVP if you would like to attend (the meeting is for SRC members but if you know someone in particular who would like to come let the Officer know. This is only one of many consultations). A meeting was held with Jon Purcell yesterday to discuss issues with the new short loan system and how they might be resolved, such as the extra book fund for more copies of heavily used books.

7.2.5 The Officer was asked if the library purchases books for students in financial need – no, but students can apply to the hardship fund for help. Unfortunately there is not really anything offered for international students, although there are various merit-based scholarships for incoming internationals.

7.3 Equal Opportunities and Welfare Officer

7.3.1 The committee has been working on publicity for the contraception clinic and Student Support. Edith Rendell will be holding a law consultation from 1-2pm at 6 Bell Street on Tuesdays. The student experience office is closed until 20th October.

The Officer was asked about the lack of automatic doors at the far end on the SA building which is causing difficulties for wheelchair-bound students. The Member for Students with

Disabilities said she had asked Bruce about it but would ask again.

7.4 *Association Community Relations Officer*

7.4.1 Motion on societies' fly-postering

This is the amended motion passed by SSC. The reasoning behind the motion is that, as fly-postering is illegal anyway, formally prohibiting it would give us a response to community complaints. It was also noted that the university has earmarked £2000 for the creation of noticeboards on Muttoes Lane and Crails Lane (these are currently awaiting planning permission), and societies would not need special permission to use these.

Questions and comments were as follows:

- It seems hypocritical to pass this when Starfields is currently advertising in this manner. It was pointed out in reply that the Association cannot force any group to comply with these rules, it can only make recommendations.

- If the SA has no actual power, is this motion simply to give the Officer a response when dealing with complaints?

It would help community relations to be able to say that we had formally told societies about the law and that the SA did not condone this kind of advertising. This is really as much as the SA can do; after all, the Council is no more able to stop members of the public from fly-postering.

- What exactly would be the 'at the discretion of the Societies Committee' punishment? The DoSDA said that this would probably come to her. After discussion it was decided that, although punishment would act as a deterrent, it was not actually the SA's job. If fly-postering is illegal, it should presumably be the responsibility of the police. It was also noted that not all events aimed at students are run by them.

- Why is it the university's responsibility to provide public noticeboards anyway? The Community Council agree on this point as their own noticeboard on South Street was removed by the Council and has not been replaced.

Amendments were agreed unanimously as follows:

- The final bullet point under 'This SRC/SSC resolves' regarding punishment was removed.

- 'To mandate the Officer to lobby the Council to put up more noticeboards in prominent positions' was added under 'This SRC/SSC resolves'.

- The first bullet point under 'This SRC/SSC resolves' was removed, and the third bullet moved up to first place.

- The word 'prohibiting' in the second bullet point under 'This SRC/SSC believes' was changed to 'acting responsibly with regards to'.

Voting: 8 in favour, 5 against, 11 abstentions. The motion passed.

It was clarified that the motion will now be passed to the Executive Committee for moderation as it was not passed by the SSC with tonight's amendments.

7.4.2 The St Andrews Festival is being held from 26th November to 3rd December – if any societies wish to put on a related event get in touch to see if free publicity is available.

7.4.3 St Andrews' Christmas lights are now going ahead as new lights have been purchased.

7.4.4 *In Focus* is running a competition for all first year science students, with £200 being offered for the winning 1000 word essay.

7.5 *Association Sustainability Officer*

7.5.1 The Interhall Energy Competition starts on 1st November – if anyone would like to help with publicity let the Officer know.

7.5.2 The Green Living Guide will be online shortly, and hopefully some printed copies will be made available. The Societies Guide is also being worked on, as is the Fairtrade Policy.

7.5.3 The committee is ordering some reusable bags with the logo.

7.5.4 The university is considering a shared bike scheme as piloted in cities such as Paris and would like feedback. It was suggested restricting it to students would be easiest as

matriculation cards could be used to access and track the bikes.

8.0 Sabbatical Question Time

8.1 The DoSDA was asked about the Buchanan Theatre, as the Expeditions society was trained to use the AV equipment then a week later told that they could not use it. There have been lots of issues with use of the Buchanan and the DoSDA will deal with the problem.

8.2 The Equal Opportunities and Welfare Officer asked if LGBT event funds were to come from last year's or this year's budget. The DoR and DoSDA will discuss it after the meeting.

8.3 The DoR was asked about figures for the new Fife Park. Neither the SA nor the university have figures yet and are waiting for them impatiently.

9.0 Officers' Question Time

9.1 Is the EOW Committee meeting being held tomorrow? Yes.

9.2 The Accommodation Officer was asked if the committee has taken a stance on the planning permission sought for the new Fife Park. No, they are waiting until they have more information.

10.0 Notices

10.1 Next Meeting of the SRC:

Tuesday 28th October, 7:30pm, venue TBC. The Chair will be absent due to other commitments.

10.2 Next Meetings of Sub-Committees:

Accommodation: Tuesday, 1pm, Committee Room

Education: Monday, 1pm, Committee Room

Equal Opportunities and Welfare: Wednesday, 3pm, Committee Room

Community Relations: Monday 22nd November, Committee Room

Sustainability: Monday, 4pm

11.0 AOCB

None

12.0 Close of Meeting