

STUDENTS' COUNCIL (SRC) AYR

Wednesday 21st March, 12.00pm, GT 46

In the Chair, Daniel Copithorn, Campus President Ayr

MINUTES

1. Sederunt

Daniel Copithorn	Campus President Ayr
Cara Lee	Depute President Education and Welfare
Tabita Witvliet	Digital Arts
Paul Moran	Football team
Mathew Shields	Football team

2. Acceptance of Apologies

Caroline Sharp	General Manager
Garry Quigley	President
Alastair Adamson	Sports President
Stewart McKay	Mental Health Nursing

3. Acceptance of Minutes from the previous meeting

(a) Matters arising from those minutes- None

4. Acceptance of the report of the business of the Association

CPA reads through the report of business, outlines that elections open now and will close on Friday at 11am, adds that this will be further discussed later. States that he has been focusing on trying to get better living arrangements, held a meeting with Marcus Ross of Estates and Buildings department, suggests that the University are also trying to raise rent for next year, adds that a paper was sent to the Policy and Resource Committee (PRC) and held their first vote ever, however did not pass. States that the item will now be pushed up to be discussed at University Court, DPEW outlines that there is a petition going round regarding the state and price of Halls and encourages students to sign it whether they live in halls or not. CPA further outlines the next main activity for this campaign will be sending letters to court members outlining students views on the changes, all students need to do is sign the bottom of the letter, CPA asks council to look into the cost of living and what they get from SAAS and what their rent is. Students present who live in Halls at Ayr are not happy with the conditions as it is a brand new residence, Paul Moran comments that one student had to move rooms because the roof leaked and the heating didn't work properly. SR Co-ord suggests this can be further discussed below, council members agree to continue this later.

DPEW informs Council that the Learning and Teaching Awards are being held on Paisley Campus on Thursday 22nd March, explains that the awards recognise excellence and innovation in Learning and Teaching with lecturers being nominated by students.

There are no questions from the floor, report is unanimously accepted.

5. Acceptance of the reports and minutes of committees- None

6 Business Introduced by Officer Bearers-
(a) Accommodation issues

CPA reiterates that he met with Marcus Ross in light of a recent disciplinary, adds that the Estates and Buildings department are looking through all complaints and are also looking into getting things fixed. CPA suggests Marcus Ross is commercially based and believes in a service with a good experience. Suggests there will be some policy changes and more information on how things work and what to expect e.g. providing the lease at the beginning of the online process instead of at the end, we are also looking to change the lease to read that students are bound by the lease up to the end of term. Paul Moran suggests that those on the Erasmus exchange programme had to pay for Halls accommodation up to the end of January but they are only there from September to December meaning the University are getting an extra months payment.

CPA suggests that we will also be asking for waiting list for those interested in staying at halls but who don't want to be tied into the lease, Council agree this would be good. Adds that finance and rent arrears information and advice on debt management will also be looked at to make them more student friendly, it will cover things like how to set up a payment plan, Council members suggest they didn't know how to pay the rent through the bank, Paul Moran explains that he had payed the rent but then got a letter saying he was in debt. Council suggest students really need more information, CPA suggests perhaps a letter sent to students close to payment day and have it better worded in order that students feel able to talk about their financial situation, Council agree these changes would be good.

CPA makes a final suggesting for improvements asking Council members if, when moving into halls, students should be asked to pay the 1st and last rent immediately as there is no deposit scheme, it can give halls residence a bit of leeway, Paul Moran comments that SAAS is not always processed in time for this, Council agree however that it is a possibility that should be look at. Paul Moran further comments that the University had somehow taken 2 months' rent out of his account at once and it took a while to get back

CPA outlines that the Students Association are also looking into welfare issues if there are emergencies, for example if a student has to leave halls or University due to unforeseen circumstances, we are looking into a way of appealing to not pay rent in this type of situation, notes that this would only be considered and accepted if there is a doctor's note and an academic reference backing up the students claims, adds that it will be looked at on a case by case basis. Council members agree with this, Paul Moran notes that when his colleague had to leave, they had to continue to pay rent.

Council members present who stay in Halls like it for the social aspect however recognise there is a real and urgent need to make available more detailed information early on in the application process for halls. Members also comment on the poor conditions of the new Halls of Residence at Ayr, state that it is a new building which is already crumbling to pieces, there was no common room until November, the washing machines keep braking and there are only 3 for what could be 200+ students, further note that it didn't look like the rooms had been cleaned before student moved in as there was dust everywhere. Also believe the windows were not fitted correctly, it was very cold as heaters didn't work until February, the Bathroom doors don't fit properly, the toilets did not working properly in some rooms and the ventilation in bathrooms is poor as they are steamed up and stuffy for hours. In addition, keys did not work in some doors, fob entry system beeping is an annoyance and very distracting, also not allowed toasters, CPA points out that toasters can be used so long as they are PAT tested. Halls students also comment on halls staff and security coming into their rooms without giving the 24 hours' notice as required, state that they have also said they would come and then don't, but turn up a couple of days later. The internet does not work properly including the Ethernet points.

Council members conclude discussion by stating that halls are generally too much money for poor conditions and service. Reiterate that there is a real and urgent need for improvements, comment that if this was private letting, many of these issues would have been resolved.

(b) Student Elections

CPA outlines that this week Elections are open, explains that an email has been sent to all students' email accounts, this is where student get their unique username and password to access the election page of the SAUWS website. Elections will close on Friday at 11am and an announcement of those elected will be available later in the afternoon. Informs Council that SAUWS use transferable voting system which is used to allow for preference, i.e. give someone number 1 and someone else number 2 etc. Encourages Council members to vote and to get their colleagues to vote, adds that we are aware that some students have never accessed their student account, please encourage them to do so, it is how the university and the students association get vital information to students.

Council members comment that the Students Association should send out an email during elections as reminder. DPEW states that we can look into that's, also explains that we used to use paper ballot, it is now electronic to keep up to date with other institutions, this has resulted in a lower turnout.

(c) Student Association events/conference

SR Co-ord outlines that the 3rd annual Student Conference 'Student Learning in the 21st Century' is being held on Wednesday 28th March from 11am to 4.30pm at the Paisley campus, adds that there are still spaces left and to email studentconference@sauws.org.uk for a registration form. Details that travel expenses will be paid with receipt, there is authorised absence from class, a free lunch and a free hoodie for all those in attendance. Informs council the focus for this year is the curriculum as part of the new Enhancement Theme. Outlines that we will be asking student what they think the curriculum is and what should be included e.g. involvement in sports teams or societies and should this be credited, we will also be asking students what they think inclusivity and internationalisation are and how this should relate to the curriculum. This year we will also be holding a plenary session on what the quality framework is and how students can influence what and how they are taught.

Adds that this conference will directly influence the university's policies and encourages students to come along, it is open to all UWS student.

DPEW outlines that this years' Sports Ball will be held on the 27th April at Paisley Campus Union, tickets will be on sale next week. Adds that it is open to all sports clubs and societies and anyone else who wants to come along. Tickets will likely cost £16, this includes a 3 course meal and drinks reception, a goody bag and a live band. The Sports Ball will also host the Sports and Societies Awards, email will be sent out next week on how to nominate. Informs Council that after the event there will be a Casino night on the 3rd floor, sports ball attendees will be given some free chips to play. Adds that all chips have the same value but there will be prizes with a leader board and all money raised goes to Scottish disability sports hosted by Events students who are sports members. Players can also win prizes throughout the night.

(d) Constitutional change

DPEW states this is a discussion point and informs Council that consideration is being given to changing the setup of the Sports Union Executive. States that the Sports Executive meet each year, however the current constitution has a different breakdown of roles and would like to change these to fit how the Sports Union actually runs. Explains that the main changes would be the removal of some roles and the introduction of New Vice President roles for each campus who will assist clubs and societies on the Sports Presidents behalf and have 2-3 people from the sports teams to sit as reps on the executive. Adds that each month the executive will focus on something else, whether this is recruitment, development, finance etc. Sports President invites council to comment

Council members think this is a really good idea, Paul Moran states that he has wanted to meet with the Sports President on a couple of occasions however he was unavailable, having a VP on campus could benefit all sports and hopefully get more teams set up as well. DPEW also suggests that if the changes are implemented budgeting would be considered by a group rather than just the Sports President and there will be equal representation.

7. Motions-

(a) Armed forces recruitment

Speech for is taken by DPEW, argues that this was a policy lapse, the current stance is that armed forces weren't allowed into our unions for recruitment purposes, this motion asks for that to be changed so they can. Suggests it's the students' choice to join which is unlikely if they have just registered for Uni. The Armed Forces also have positions available for graduate students and hold summer placements/courses. Adds that the policy will only apply to the Union buildings, not campus.

Speech against is not taken

Council move to vote

*For: 1
Against: 1
Abstain: 2
The motion fails*

(b) Library Fines Amnesty

Speech for is taken by DPEW, argues that if students are in debt they can't graduate, the maximum a student could ever owe in fines to the library is £150 as 15 books borrowed at maximum of a £10 fine each. States that the amnesty would allow a 1 week period where books can be handed back with the amount owed being set to £0. If they don't return books during this period would need to pay. If the motion passes we would need to PR it properly with lecture shout outs, flyers etc., notes that this wouldn't happen every year and if it was requested the motion would need to be put to Council for vote again.

Speech against is not taken

CPA notes that students who have returned books and payed their debt, then find out there is an amnesty may not be too happy

Council move to vote

For: Unanimous

8. Elections-

(a) Disciplinary Committee (Chair, Depute Chair, 4x Ordinary members)

(b) Elections Committee (1x Ordinary members)

SR Co-ord outlines the roles and responsibilities of each committee however no Council members wish to take part. This will be taken to next meeting of Council

9. AOCB-

Paul Moran asks if Paisley Union is selling 99p drinks and states if so, this is not fair. Adds that the Ayr Union is very popular with halls students however notes it can be expensive. CPA suggests this is within the Presidents remit therefor he should respond to students regarding this.

Tabita Witvliet comments that the Décor in the Union is quite sterile, asks if it would be possible to put the murals back up from the old Union or make it more appealing somehow. CPA suggests this will be look at and if possible this can carried out through the summer.

Start: 12.10pm

Finish: 1.10pm