

Annual Members Meeting Minutes

Notes of the inquorate Annual Members Meeting held at 6.15pm on 28 November 2023

Welcome

Reed, the Deputy Chair welcomed everyone to the Annual Members Meeting and invited them to use the attendance form. Students were reminded that they are not allowed to record the meeting and that this is a safe space.

Outline

Reed outlined the topics for discussion in the meeting, which are: the Financial Overview of the Students' Union, affiliations of the Students' Union, Students' Union Strategy Updates, NUS National Conference Delegates Results and the 2024 Executive Elections.

Financial Accounts

Reed invited Liam, the CEO of the Students' Union, to go through the Financial Overview, Affiliations and Strategy Updates.

Liam gave an overview of the Financial Overview from the 22/23 review with the Union being in a health position with significant reserves. The key points raised were:-

- The Students' Union is a separate legal entity to the University and are set up as a Charity.
- As a charity we are not permitted to make a profit; some years we make a small surplus some years we make a small deficit. As a charity we are not allowed to keep high levels of reserves.
- Trading income predominantly is from businesses when they pay a fee for visiting the Students' Union, such as for Freshers Fair stalls.
- We have made a loss of £25,078: this was a lower deficit than had been budgeted for. This is good and bad – we want to be as close as possible to hitting the budget. This was underspent due to staffing turnover and lower spend on some projects
- This was intended to utilise some of the significant reserves that had been built up over a number of years.
- Pension liability is significant but not unusual in the sector, it is due to be paid off in instalments annually until 2037. This poses no significant threat at this stage to student experience at this stage.

Liam invited anyone present to come in and speak to us if they wish any further details, it was noted that the financial accounts are made public on the Charity Commission Website.

The SU is a healthy position – it holds significant reserves (savings).

Affiliations

Liam outlined that NUS is the only significant affiliation that the Union with the breakdown of the costs being:-

- NUS Charity - £4725
- NUS UK Membership - £18,900

It was noted that in the past we would have been affiliated to BUCS2, but University now do this as they coordinate competitive sport.

Union Strategy/Annual Plan

Liam outlined the Union's Strategy to the meeting noted that this had been developed by previous Officer teams in conjunctions with the Trustee Board. The strategy is broken into three key themes.

- **Theme 1** – Students Leading Education – We'll build a coherent voice for students' academic interests, by being the critical friend of the University and improving members' education, we are currently outperforming the 65% goal at the moment.
- **Theme 2** – Vibrant Student Communities – We will widen the breadth of engagement with students in the extracurricular experience at Leicester and 62% of members will have been a member of two groups during their time at Leicester.
- **Theme 3** – A Fairer Student Life – To build an ongoing conversation amongst members about their student lives and drive continuous improvement in their personal wellbeing with Leicester Students Mean score on Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale will be 52.
 - There is a discussion taking place at the moment whether this is the best measure on fairness we will report back to Council if this changes.

There then is a number of Supporting Priorities that are important in enabling us to reach these goals:-

- **Theme: 1 People** – We aim to be an employer of choice by developing forward thinking people policies and creating an organisation staff want to join and stay part of.
- **Theme 2: Finances** – We will create a sustainable funding model over the lifecycle of this strategy, supported by a block grant that compares favorably with the University's benchmark funding for their Unions.
- **Theme 3: Communications** – In order to communicate and engage students effectively, we will develop segmentation models to help tailor messages based on the needs of our members.

NUS Delegate Elections

Reed told everyone that the NUS Delegate Elections was undertaken over the past couple of weeks. These elections were to elect 4 Delegates to go to the National Conference in April next year. Mention that the election received 120 votes in total and the four elected delegates are: Reed James, Jade Thomas, Roselle Silveira and Mattie Simpson. The delegates represent the university and will vote on policy and elect leaders of the NUS.

Executive Elections

Reed explained that these elections will run next term in February to March. It is the biggest election of the year for the Students' Union. These elections are where Part-Time and Full-Time Officers are elected for the next academic year. These officers will represent students and work on achieving positive changes for students by running projects and campaigns across the year. Students running to be a Full-Time Officer either take a year out of studying or do the role after graduating if they are a 3rd year. This is a paid full-time role. Part-Time Officers do the role alongside their studies and receive a bursary at the end of the year if they pass the Scrutiny process.

The Students' Union would like to know who might be interested in getting involved in the elections. Reed asked people who might be interested in running to scan the form or use the link to express their interest. The form will be open until the official nomination portal opens later in the year.

Hot Topic discussion about Executive Elections

Archie, the Students' Union President, gave an overview of the role of an elected officer and their own experiences, encouraging everyone present as engaged members/leaders to consider running for one of the roles.

There was a discussion with regard the Executive Elections.

Feedback from groups included:

- Showcasing the impact of holding the Executive Elections to engage students in the election process → more work should be done in this respect and the Students' Union could look at developing a mid-way impact report of the elections.
- Building students knowledge of the roles, the benefits and outcomes of each officer role is key.
- More help should be provided to candidates to ensure that manifestos include achievable targets/objectives.
- Guidance should be given to encourage candidates to be careful when approaching students so they do not put them off with engaging in the election. The Union should consider bringing in additional quiet/non-campaigning spaces.
- Q&A events to enable students to ask questions are important.
- Idea was put forward to have a polling station where students can vote in a quiet space, this more to reflect the process of voting in national elections.
- Manifesto write a bunch of things: it is really important that they are actually going to do it when in power and if students can trust them when they take it on.

- Manifestos are interesting because you write about things that aren't possible because you realise that there are budgets and staff capacity afterwards: we can do more to help candidates to make them more realistic.
- Candidates who display a passion for wanting to make change and for the role is important to engaging with students.
- It is important to ensure that there is a full programme of marketing including emails to showcase how the election is progressing day to day and to keep it at the forefront of students' minds.
- Information/physical talks prior to elections would help students understand the roles and what they are voting for.
- You could look at role descriptions for each officer role and weigh up how this fits in with the manifestos.
- Q&A during the election week – you can ask questions directly to candidates.

Big updates from the Exec

The officers were invited to share their updates before closing the meeting.

Jack – Activities Officer

- Movember, is coming to a close this week with the closing ceremony taking place on Friday, we have raised £8500 so far
- Green Bubble Session 3.00- 5.00pm next Tuesday (5th December) all about sustainability. All students are welcome.
- University Challenge – try-outs are next Wednesday. There are 4 slots taking place, visit our **What's On Page to sign up**.

Archie - President

- Governance Review – overhauling all of our governance and democratic structures very shortly, so he will be in touch soon to ask your views. This project is very much student focussed and orientated.
- Union Centenary - the Students' Union is 100 years old and is currently planning how to celebrate last 100 years and look ahead at what we can do/support students for next 100 years. This will include launching our biggest fundraising campaigns to help students and would facilitate the setting up of a student hardship fund which could for example help with student group/sport membership.
- Elections – planning is underway if anyone is interested, let Archie know.

Jade – Liberation Officer

- Scrutiny Report – experienced a period of ill health, this is the reason that the report has been delayed.
- Black Students Experience Project at the University – improving student experience, currently focussed on collecting feedback from students.
- Peer Mentoring Review working with the Voice Team and Education Officer to ensure that peer-to-peer support is reflective and impactful for your student experience, making most of the connection.
- Festival of Culture – celebration of all the different cultures – keep an eye on more communications coming soon.
- Term 2 big focus on LeicsDecolonise – making your experience more inclusive.

Prachi – Education Officer

- Student resources have been created to help international students when they arrive at the University. This is available through the Advice pages of the Students' Union Website.
- Recruitment for School and College Rep Interviews have concluded and we have formed an internal Education Committee to coordinate, raise and resolve issues that have been raised by student leaders.
- Working with the University regarding Personal Tutoring.
- Helping to put together the plans for Destress campaign.
- Working with the Wellbeing Officer on the Peer Mentoring review.

Joe – Sports Officer

- Physio for students – training is coming up over the next few weekends.
- Flexible Gym memberships – half year memberships going to be available in January.
- Jack and Jo Give it a go – showcasing all the sports we are offering.

Close

Reed thanked everyone for attending the meeting and let them know that the minutes will be uploaded onto the website by the end of the week and the PowerPoint will be sent out. Reed reminded people to register their interest for running for the Executive Elections.

Meeting minutes compiled by Ian Bruce on 30 November 2023.

Attendance:

Aaisha Jagot

Abby R. Simpkin

Abigail R. Neilson

Afia F. Asumadu

Afra Sahaya Afra Johanna

Ahaan Cabral

Alice K.R. Brunning

Amira Kofi-Dhere

Amrou I.A. Atwa

Ansel M.J. Ong

Antara Nage

Anushka Agarwalla

Archie Robinson

Ayesha Z. Roked
Ayo I. Akinsinmide
Beatrice L. Jackson
Caitlyn J. Mensah
Cordelia Taylor-Byne
Daniel Teixeira
Daniel W.I. Chikanma
Darshleen K. Matta
Eden T. Mouri
Eleanor G. Norman-Brown
Ella Chadwick
Ellie Light
Evelina Buchner
Evelyn M. Watkins
Hephzibah Maria Selvam
Holly Saini
Isuri Dimasha Mannapperuma
Jacey
Jack McDonald
Jade Thomas
Jahnvi Velore
Janani Sri Ponnuchamy
Jennifer Adeloye
Jenson Y. Lok
Jessica B. Manuel Paes
Jessica Ryan
Jodie Hall
Joseph Hyett
Julia A. Kozlowska
Kaila Anderson
Kainat Fatima
Koki Ogawa

Komal Rani
Lyla N. Thapper
Manprabh Singh
Manshi Liladhar
Marguerite
Maria Isabel I. Campos Da Silva Menezes Cortes
Mariam Mourabi
Maryam-Fatema Chandoo
Max Holy
Melika
Melissa Barwell
Mikaela G. Thornton
Molly Mather
Nandini Chatterjee
Natalie K.E. Hayward
Ninu King-Akins Adubiagbe
Prachi Bhatt
Priya Patel
Raema Saman
Rajdeep Dulkoan
Rajkumar Alagiri
Reed T. James
Renée Samra
Rianna T. Kelly
Roselle T. Silveira
Sabiriin Bin Ali
Sakthekannan Mohan Raj Sivagama Sundari
Sarah E.K. Batchelor
Shiva V. Patel
Srinidhi M
Stuti Balakrishnan Saravanan
Sylwia Glanc

Timsi Bajaj

Vaishnavi S. (Dr.) Chaudhari

Vardy Pentakota

Zayba Hassem

Zoe F. Newnham