

Scrutiny Panel Meeting

Monday 14th February 2016, 4:00pm – 6:00pm

Cavendish Campus, CG.02

Attendees

- Sabbatical officers: Jim Hirschmann (JH), Lauren Waugh (LW), Otis Kirby-Dunkly (OKD), Salsabil Al-Siri (SAS), Usman Mahmood (UM).
- Scrutiny panel: Ledonard Nedeleu (Interim Chair), Michelle French, Ethel Tambudzai, Mamuna Akthar, Bekeowei Okoro, Trea Boyce.
- Students' Union staff: Imran Sanaullah (Student Voice and Democracy Coordinator, Clerk)

Minutes

INTRODUCTION - All officers and panel introduced

Chair reappointed as per agreement of panel

SABBATICAL OFFICER OVER VIEW – Officers given 2 minutes to explain the work they had done for the last 2 months:

- UM
 - Employment event with JH
 - Now working with Career development centre
 - Working with Deputy Vice-Chancellor around employability
 - Creating more video content with Alumni for online employment support
 - Islamophobia event
 - Humans of Westminster
 - Dealing with welfare issues
- JH
 - January was quite
 - Coffee campaign launched
 - Employability month panel that went well but marketing could have been better
 - Site officers provided great support
 - Report being created
 - Working with CEO on subvention bid
 - £80,000 for new members of staff
- SAS
 - Standing for election during January
 - Gaining Postgraduate coordinator
 - No minimum payment for cards in all campuses
 - Working with faculty on various issues
 - Changing how Mitigating Circumstance works and the policy behind.

- Let's go event for Harry Potter
- Unique society going live 14th February
- Aiming to support disability services
- Looking at Prevent
 - Event in Cavendish on 15th March
- OKD
 - 'Live at the Loft' kick started in January
 - Ping pong table for Harrow
 - 'MADfest' being redesigned with the faculty
 - Aramark extended hours in Harrow and now provide better food
 - Staff better trained
 - Student pride event
 - Go green week
 - Each campus to highlight importance of living green
 - Looking to attain the NUS bronze award
 - Helping homeless humans
 - Over £500 raised
- LW
 - Budget for Liberation Officers secured and now mentoring Liberation Officers
 - More activity in Regent Street social spaces
 - Variety show on 18th March
 - De-stress week in April
 - Looking at puppy and bunny room
 - Two student going to France to represent sports and societies showing what Union is doing.

The officers left the room and the reports were read and discussed by the scrutiny panel.

The panel were given officer data from October and November plus the officer reports from Oct and Nov and their manifestos.

Panel received all relevant information in advance so had already assessed most information.

Sabbatical officer reports and statistical data assessed.

COMMENTS MADE BY SCRUTINY PANEL:

- Whole Sabbatical officer team
 - It is more important to see officers in action rather than through emails.
 - Some officers seem to not attend society events that they have no interest in.
 - Some have promised to attend events but failed to turn up.
 - Team needs to better support international students.
- UM
 - Low GOAL hours are a disappointment.
 - Very little advertising for employment month.
 - Advertising only seen on Facebook.

- Low number of meetings attended thought out the year raises questions.
- Untruthful about missing meetings and turning up late.
 - Missed NUS meeting and had been late to a number of meetings.
- No Marketing or mass student involvement with 'Humans of Westminster'.
- JH
 - Extremely low goal hours are a disappointment.
 - Very little advertising for employment month.
 - Advertising only seen on Facebook.
 - No meetings attended in January is a concern.
 - Where student tuition fees have not be disclosed.
- SAS
 - Lack of promotion for Syria to students.
 - Claimed to support international students but panel would like to understand what has specifically been done.
 - Has disclosed in report that some meetings have been missed. Panel would like to know what action has been take to rectify this.
- LW
 - Liberation officer packs not provided.
 - IT meeting in January – no outcome disclosed.
- OKD
 - Would like update on the hand book following green week
 - Lack of marketing around Helping Homeless Humans event on weekend

Officers returned to the room and were asked to provide an overview of their work and answer any questions the panel had.

OFFICER QUESTION AND ANSWER:

OKD

- Outcome of green book:
 - Deadline was Friday.
 - Last years the NUS bronze award was gained on a promise of achieving 9 extra requirements which was not reached.
 - Should be met this week.
- Homeless event:
 - Greater awareness of event.
 - Is it UWSU?
 - Student contacted OKD and worked with the dean, who financially supported the initiative.
 - Marketing has been very localised to test and hope to make it bigger.

LW

- Liberation officer packs:
 - Packs have been sent to some Liberation Officers.
 - Many still need finishing because of the amount of content.
- Outcome from head of IT:

- New silent student space to gain 24hr laptop hire but awaiting the trail to finish in Harrow.
- Waiting on the university to action.

JH

- Low goal hours and no meetings in January
 - Did have meeting in January but was not reported correctly.
 - GOALing:
 - Students seems to be less interested
 - Tried to meet students in cafeteria
 - “No decent explanation”
- Transparency of student tuition fees:
 - University has shown what they have produced.
 - Has been sent to the web team but has not yet been uploaded.
- Is there going to be an SU event on the EU referendum:
 - Students of Europe event attended by JH and working with Global Ideas.
 - Trying to push students to vote.

SAS

- February report – Celebrating Syria report clarification:
 - Event run with David Shacklady and invited Alumni.
 - SAS went to represent UWSU.
- February report – missed a few meetings
 - SMT has now been rescheduled due to SAS academic commitments.

UM

- Working with political engagement organisation
- Consistently underperformed in comparison to other officers:
 - Working on welfare cases and has been busy
- Low GOAL hours:
 - Failed to properly document hours since September
- Report states no meetings have been missed:
 - NUS meeting missed but was not documented.
 - Had informed JH that he would not be attending meeting.
- Finalising photo for ‘Humans of Westminster’ – when is it happening?
 - Project to promote mental health and showing the struggles students are going around.
 - Welfare cases have taken priority.

General Questions:

- What is counted as a meeting?
 - Anything sitting with other people
 - Try to prioritise meetings – UM
 - Forums not generally counted – LW
 - Meeting students at lunch – OKD
- What have you been doing for international students

- JH
 - Nothing specific apart from reps.
- SAS
 - International fair has increased engagement in UWSU.
- LW
 - Bye laws exists for international students being represented. Possible addition to liberation officer team.
- OKD
 - International welcome fair has been a highlight.
 - Trying to engage more with students.
- UM
 - Useful to have officers engage with international fair.
 - Supporting cultural societies to provide some comfort to international students.
- Favouritism of societies and failing to attend
 - UM – Pakistani society launch event was a priority for most Officers.
 - JH – favouritism professionally does not exist in funding or booking but may be done in personal time.
 - LW – tries to attend as many events as possible. Trying to improve officer engagement over previous years. Ensure societies to invite officers.
 - SAS – After hours are allowed to attend anything we want. Sometimes there are more events than officers. Has tried to attend event even when there is no personal preference.
 - OKD – Does not get home before 11pm but attends numerous number of events.
- Problems with promotions on events
 - JH – Large communications team with funding over £300,000+ which have a number of budgets. UWSU looking at prioritising campaigns in the long run. Sometimes hard to prepare communications plan.
 - LW – Asked panel what they think works best (Panel reply: for people to interact in person with full information and a lack of student shout outs for IR and Politics)
 - SAS – send emails to students and regular shout outs.
- Lack of advertisement of Employability month in Regent and LTS
 - Officers personally put up posters and done lecture shout-outs.
 - Event held in law school.
 - Issue is students not being proactive enough to engage with extracurricular activities
- Do officers consult students regarding projects and campaigns:
 - JH – is important but hard to do. Engaging with societies and reps so understand general issues. Campaigns coordinator should help this. Potentially controversial issues typically put out to students.
 - UM – try to consult students but don't want to hound them. Agrees that research is always needed. SU's are typically very reactive so don't always have time to consult.
 - LW – working groups have been set up to engage more students to run initiatives. Public student engagement

Decision of Scrutiny Panel

JH - COMMENDED

- Prioritise the visibility of the SU via GOALing as the president.
- More time face to face with students rather than emails.

OKD - COMMENDED

- Keep up the good work.
- Someone needs to be in the office in Harrow.

LW – COMMENDED

- Keep up the good work.
- Making sure you feedback outcomes to students clearly.

SAS – COMMENDED

- Using the officer platform to promote issues.
- Good job on employment event.

UM – ACTION REQUIRED

- Underperforming from the start of the year
- If personal issues are being an issue, delegate tasks
- Taking time out to fix personal issues

NOTES AND ACTIONS FOR ALL OFFICER TEAM

- Do a UWSU campaign to explain what the SU does from the basics.
- Further engagement with students on projects.
- Clarify when officers are in and out of office.
- Making sure you feedback outcomes to students clearly (ie in reports)
- Accurately record information on report. Failing to record data will not be considered a reasonable or valid defence moving forward.

COMMENTS BY PANEL

- During fresher's highlighting the work the SU does to 'get to know the SU'
 - Induction shout out and freshers is very packed.
 - October to be used as SU awareness month as a proper campaign.
 - Pre-elections to be used to highlight importance of SU.
 - To be handed over to new officers.
 - UWSU needs to explain to faculties the importance of student engagement – Student Union needs to become a priority.
 - Level 6 is quite hard to gain traction with because of optional and core courses.
- GOALing

- GOAL should include forums when listening to student issues. Clerk to write up clear definition of GOAL and sent to Chair for approval.
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