**University of Suffolk Students’ Union**

**Annual General Meeting Agenda**

**27th April, 2022, 1pm**

**To be held in the Hold Lecture Theatre and via zoom**

**Attendees: ALICE LENTON (AL), SHANNON PILSWORTH (SP), ROBER GREY (RG), KATHERINE PICKARD (KP), Michell Deck (MD), Alex Gooch (AG), Meg Wright (MW), LEESHA DANIELLS (LD), Bernard Harrison (BH), HENRY KIDDY (HK), BEN DAVIDSON (BH), HANNAH BROWN (HB), Bradely Alsop (BA), OLAOLU ADEPITAN (OA), Darragh Briscomb (DB), Laura Bilverstone, Sarah,Ruggier, Aliyu Muhammad, Connor Parish, Patrik Sramka, Peter Knights, Dumitru Bogdan Buburuz, Steve Colmer, Cristina Emilia Stinga, Francis Opoku, Adam Ptak, Valentina Volimbovschi, Lidia,Cravid, Abdinur Abdella, Andrei Stavar, Mihaela Lung, ADEBOWALE AKANBI, Bogdan Vlad Chereji,Jana Dancova, Iulia Catalina Beleaga, Nafiza, Ali, Anna Janik, Ceri Archer, Nosakhare Uwugiaren, Dina Bedwell, Daniel Bundi, Bibi Haukim, Celine Strange, Gabor Bajnoczi, Georgeta Glont, Christina Hall, Jasmine Winterburn, Jessica Howard, Kym Older, May Collins, Leo Carden, Denise Parkinson, Jonathan Gibson, Bronwen Swift, Claire Holland, Cheryl Chandler, Kimone Brown**

**Chair:** Shannon Pilsworth

**Minutes:** Tim Cater

1. **Chairs Welcome/how the meeting will work**

**Chair:** A welcome was given to all attendees-online and in person-to the AGM. SP explained that due to insufficient quoracy being obtained (50 attendees required), no voting would be taking place on any motions. However, attendees were still welcome to ask questions and comment on any agenda items presented.

SP provided guidance on how the meeting would be held and expectations of how attendees should participate. SP then invited BA to provide an outline of the purpose of the AGM.

**BA:** Explained that the AGM is a once-a-year event, which allows for the student body to scrutinise the work of the Student Union and the Union’s financial accounts. Also, it allows for attendees to ask questions about the reports presented and make any suggestions for any improvements they would wish to see.

1. **Announcements**

**Summer Ball:**

**GI:** Provided a reminder about the forthcoming SU Summer Ball on the 13th of May. This would be a great chance for students to celebrate all their hard work and a fun night for all who come. GL outlined the various entertainments being put on, the meal, photo booths and a DJ with dance floor. Following the conclusion of the meeting, she would be available to sell tickets and the link to purchasing this will be posted in the online chat and is also on the SU website. Finally, if anyone had any special dietary requirements requiring accommodation, there was a form available online to do this or please email her with any other questions regarding the event.

**RG:** Inquired as to how many tickets were left for the event, as he had been asked by course friends. **GI:** Currently, there are 100 left.

**AG:** Asked when the deadline was purchasing tickets.

**GI:** 12.00am on the 02.05. This deadline is necessary due to arranging a seating plan and to allow the venue time to prepare the right meals. There are five more days to purchase your ticket.

GI confirmed that the dress code expected is formal attire, tickets are £45 (the cost of which is being subsidised by both the SU and University).

A reminder was given that obtaining a Gold Ticket through Suffolk Plus obtained hours can win a free ticket, just ensure that your volunteering hours are logged through the website.

**SU Shop:**

**MD:** Announced that she had taken over the running of the SU shop and was looking to offer different items for sale. The shop machine offers diary-free drinks as well as dairy drinks. In addition to the standard hot drinks, we have oat drinks for: Latte, latte macchiato, flat white, and cappuccino. The price of these are £2.10. MD made it clear that tea wouldn't be available in this machine, but it would still be available in the kitchen machine.

**RG:** Expressed his view that this option would be helpful and useful for those students who wanted it.

**MD:** Clarified that the choices available were limited, due to the importance of ensuring there was no coffee contamination when separating the dairy from non-dairy drinks.

**RG:** Asked if it was possible to have a kettle provided in the Social Space, as this would be of use for society events held here.

**MD:** Did not think this was possible, due to University Health and Safety.

**AG:** Confirmed that he thought this was the case and had been the conclusion of the University Estates department, made three years ago. However, their position may have changed, and this could be investigated.

**Phd Course Reps:**

**BA:** Provided an update on the election process. He explained that he was working with the Graduate School to arrange for students within the school to be elected. Please let him know of anyone who would be interested in standing for these positions.

**Suffolk Archives 80’s Night:**

**Cheslea Mok** from The Hold gave an announcement about an 80’s theme night taking place on the 28.04, at the Hold. She suggested that this would be a great opportunity for students and staff to escape from the stress of studies and deadlines. Aside from a DJ playing 80’s music, there will be a games room, photo corner and competition for the best themed dress. This is a paid event, but students or staff from the university who present their I.D will be able to attend for free.

1. **Approval of previous meeting’s minutes**

Due to insufficient quoracy at the AGM, no voting took place.

1. **Annual Officer reports**
2. **President Education and Engagement Annual Report**

**AG:** He explained that he wouldn’t be able to provide every detail in his report, due to its length. However, in general, he is very happy with the progress that has been made on meeting the aims of the manifesto he was elected on. He outlined progress in the areas of continuing improvements in careers links; the move towards a more sustainable campus; more mental health work with course Tutors, involving communications with the Vice Chancellor to facilitate improvements.

AG announced that the SU CEO, Sarah Tattershall, has now left. As a result, both Presidents are involved in the recruitment process for both an interim and permanent CEO.

As a result of currently being without a CEO, it was necessary for both himself and President Meg Wright to step up with taking on responsibilities that would normally have been for a CEO.

**RG:** Asked how the National Conference had gone.

**AG**: He would provide an update, later in the AGM, but in general he really enjoyed the networking opportunities.

**OA:** Asked AG to clarify what an interim CEO was.

**AG:** Outlined the ongoing recruiting process for both an interim and permanent CEO. It is hoped that the position of a permanent CEO will be filled by the start of September. In regard to the interim CEO, the SU has engaged with a recruiting agency to identify the best candidates. Two had been shortlisted and interviews took place last week. He informed the meeting that one candidate has been offered the position of interim CEO and the SU was currently in the position of negotiating their contract.

**OA:** Asked AG to provide an update on an issue he had previously discussed with AG: employability links between students moving onto their first jobs from university courses and local/national companies. OA gave the example of a local employer, BT, and the links that exist between university courses and employment opportunities here. He asked AG what his thoughts were on this issue.

**AG:** Explained that he was working to embed links between courses and employment opportunities. To this end, he was part of a working a group with university staff to establish ways to embed these links into the course curriculums. To facilitate this process, he explained that this working group wants to explore the creation of an employment database to identify the relationships and opportunities that exist between the university’s courses and employers.

**OA:** Asked AG to provide an update on where the SU was on providing free social sports activities.

**AG:** Explained that, to his current knowledge, it was the aim to provide free social sports from this coming September, However, President Meg Wrigt would be able to say more on this.

1. **President Activities and Wellbeing’s Annual Report**

Meg Wright has sent her report out for reading, but no vote was to take place in the meeting, due to insufficient quoracy.

1. **Annual Trustees report**

**AG:** Explained that, normally, this report would be delivered by the CEO, but in this current vacant position, he was happy to take it as being read. However, he was happy to take any questions, if any attendees had any.

None were forthcoming.

1. **Annual accounts of the Union**

**AG:** Explained that, normally, this report would be delivered by the CEO, but in the current vacant position, he would present this. He explained that he had received a detailed email from Peter Knights, the SU Finance Manager, and would outline the reports key points on the SU Accounts ending 31.07.21

* The covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the performance of the SU shop. This means the sales performance of the shop has been distorted by the pandemic and the time the shop has had to be closed. As a result, the shop had made a loss of 12k. However, the shop has benefited from a financial subsidy from the university to keep it going

**RG:** Wanted to know whether the impact from the pandemic was abnormal.

**AG:** Explained that the SU shop has never benefited from having a true year of open business. He added that, before the shop opened, there was very little in the SU Social space. However, shortly after the social space acquired the shop the pandemic arrived. This led to having few students on campus and low opening hours.

However, going forward, AG gave his view that the University views the shop’s presence as being important, as it serves to promote the image of the institution and attract more students to come here.

**AG:**  Continued to give some details from the accounts report:

* Income from UOS grants has increased
* The SU surplus has increased; up from 10k to 14k
* Because of the pandemic and its effect on the SU, there has been an underspend. This has enabled the SU to have the funds to afford the purchase of a minibus.
* The SU is engaged in ongoing negotiations for a new bloc grant from the University and seeking increased funding for its services.
* Overall, the total funds of the SU are up, and the finances of the Union were described as in a good shape.

AG was open to any question regarding the financial report, but none were forthcoming.

1. **Affiliations of the Union**

**BA:** Provided the AGM with an explanation and outline of the various, current affiliations of the SU.

He explained that four of these were Union wide affiliations and were with national organisations. Examples outlined included the National Union of Students and BUCS (British universities and colleges sport). The list of remaining affiliations were organisations that individual societies within the UOS SU had decided they wanted to affiliate with. BA pointed out that some of these affiliations come with a fee to be a member of. For example, the affiliation with Badminton England has a fee of £90 and this was a professional membership that the whole of the SU was a part of.

As there was some confusion on why Badminton England was a SU wide affiliation and why this membership was in place, GI provided some explanation.

**GI:** The fee for membership was partly for the guidance this organisation provides-particularly in getting advice on covid safety measures for sport participants.

**BA:** Offered the opportunity for attendees to ask any questions or make any suggestions to the list of affiliations. He explained that, normally, a vote would take place to approve the list, but due to the meetings insufficient quoracy this was not possible.

**LD:** Asked if the SU could investigate the £90 fee for the Badminton England professional membership and whether this represented value for money.

**AG:** Confirmed that this can be done and would be followed up.

1. **Advertising veto list of the Union**

**BG:** Proceeded to explain and outline the list of any affiliations that the SU has vetoed. The list of these was displayed for attendees to view.

**DB:** Suggested that the SU have a general veto any affiliation with anything associated with all sorts of bigotry (currently, vetoes were for specific examples).

**AG:** Expressed his agreement with DB suggestion.

**BA:** Confirmed that the current advertising list could be amended to reflect this change.

**AG:** Explained the reasoning behind the advertising veto on essay writing services. He explained that this was to support the work of the university's library services.

1. **NUS conferences reports**

**AG:** Overall, he really enjoyed the event in Liverpool. It was a great to meet other delegates in person and an opportunity to network with people. The conference was an opportunity to vote for the next leader of the NUS and its polices and priorities.

However, he felt some things had gone wrong at the conference. Regarding discussions on policies, he was unhappy that there was no means to amend these. Also, he felt the break-out rooms that had been planned to discuss policies had an unclear purpose and lacked structure. This resulted in feeling he couldn’t make the necessary input into debates. AG stated that he did vote for all the policies discussed but, due to issues highlighted, he abstained from any of the suggested amendments to these.

AG informed the meeting that he had voted for all those who were elected to NUS positions. However, since their election to the position of President Elect, an issue has emerged regarding allegations that they have been associated with an antisemitic, bigoted past. As a result of these accusations, an open letter was written by conference delegates asking for the president elect to either apologise or to stand down from their role. AG informed the meeting that the President Elect has since given an apology.

**DB:** Presented his report on his experience of the Liberation NUS Conference. He expressed a similar disappointment to AG, regarding the frustration with the way the democratic procedures were managed at the conference. In this regard, he was unhappy about not being able to vote on policy amendments. Also, he reported that out of over 600 student unions, only 60 had been surveyed on conference issues. As a result of the above, he felt he had to abstain on votes.

**BH:** Asked if the open letter about conference, signed by some delegates, could be seen.

**AG:** Agreed that this can be shared online and this to be made an **Action Point.**

1. **Motions**

Due to insufficient quoracy at the AGM, no voting took place.

1. **Any Other Business**

**JB:** Announced that nominations are now open for the re-election of sports and societies representatives, whose roles will start in September this year. The closing date for nominations is the 08.05. The link for making these nominations will be posted in both the meeting chat and on the SU website.

**Nosa Uwugiaren Part-tine Students Officer:** NU raised two issues that he felt were beyond just one person in his role could handle. He felt that it would be much easier with the whole of the SU giving its support with these issues. Firstly, he informed the meeting that there had been a significant number of student complaints regarding such issues as courses, modules and results notifications. He felt it would be better if he had the support of all the SU in dealing with these issues.

Secondly, he raised the issue of improving the means by which information is disseminated to part-time students.

**BA:** Suggested that the dissemination of information to part-time students could be done better through the SU Facebook pages.

**AG:** Reported that he had received a lot of feedback from UNICAF students, and he has been relaying this back to the Partnership’s Team. He explained this was in order to work on improving the relationship between the University and part-time students and thereby ensure that these students views were being heard.

1. **Date of the next meeting: Student Council, 1pm May 25th**