Equalities Council Minutes

Attendees

Willow Wong, VP Welfare and Diversity, Chair

Sophie Bury, Women’s Rep

Rhys Jones, LGBT Soc Secretary

Chris Keane, Disabled Students Rep

James Sullivan, Mental Health Network Chair

Lucy Simpson, Mental Health Network Vice Chair

Renee Landell, BME rep

Emma Underwood, Campaigns and Communications Coordinator, Secretary

Clem Jones, President

1. Introduction

* WW welcomed the attendees and introductions of names and pronouns were given

1. Officer Update – VP Welfare and Diversity

* WW gave updates on college council and the focus on wellbeing services. Significant attention was given to mental health as an issue, but it was acknowledged that they were failing to grasp the intricacies of minority groups
* Peer to peer mental health training has now been delivered to 20 student groups, and will now be rolled out to permanent Students’ Union staff
* Reviews of the accessibility of venues are being conducted, and improvements are being made
* WW spoke on the letting agents forum, and its outcomes, one of which being the involvement of trading standards to deal with Alpha
* An update on the anonymous reporting platform was given – it is in the pipeline, but now relies on the IT department to prioritise
* Three BAME student researchers have been recruited for the TSEP research project, and results from that research will be released in April
* WW is currently working on out of hours parking on campus, Let’s Talk About Sex, and encouraging people to run in the elections

1. Officer Update – Clem Jones

* CJ gave an update on the democracy review. He reported that a draft copy of the review had been completed and that Jim Dickinson had met with the Officers and SMT, and that there would be a student consultation following the elections.

1. Chris Keane, Disabled Students Rep Update

* CK introduced Disability Awareness Week, explaining the events of the week and its purpose. He mentioned the stand that would be erected at the EWD building and the Sports Centre, as well as Disability Sports Day
* He then went on to present about the realities of disabilities, using a definition of “disability”, and stating that whilst one in five people live with a disability, it can often be difficult to see, especially in celebrities
* CK then detailed his own experiences of living with a disability, and gave an in depth account regarding his situation
* He detailed some other events that would be happening and have happened, such as the panel discussion, the staff forum, Medicine Live, the autism lecture, and the sports day
* CK stated that his aim for the week was to help lessen the stigma and promote discussion, however he had found so far that it was somewhat difficult to engage in communication
* He concluded by advising us that to be good allies, we should be willing to listen, and to see the person, not just the disability

1. Sophie Bury, Women’s Rep Update

* SB began by remarking on her own mental health
* She then went on to discuss her achievements, which included 18 FemSoc or Women’s Network events, the FemSoc Christmas dinner, Trans Awareness Week and the GRA consultation event, and the sexual assault blog post
* SB then went on to talk about how she was currently persevering with the lack frequency in halls sanitary bins being emptied, and the Femsoc workshop for LGBT History Month

1. A.O.B

* Given that it was Emma Underwood’s final Equalities council, she was officially thanked by those there and was wished best of luck in her new role
* CJ brought up the upcoming Annual General Meeting
* CK asked whether rep roles would be elected there – CJ replied that it was uncertain, as the rep roles are currently unfixed
* LS asked for an update on the support services complaints –CJ gave an in depth description of various college committees and the difficulty in achieving progress given their lack of accountability. New infrastructures will be put in place to accommodate the improvements, including a PPG
* Final thoughts were given and WW concluded the meeting