

Motion Name: Accessible SU Car Rental for Student Events

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Background:

The proposal for a Student Union-operated car rental service is grounded in a well-identified need within the Bristol student community. The university is renowned for its vibrant society culture, offering a breadth of extracurricular activities that are crucial for the holistic development of students. However, this richness of student life faces logistical challenges due to limited access to transportation. Many students, while licensed to drive, do not have vehicles at their disposal, which limits the scope of activities that societies can offer.

This motion is proposed by the Kitesurfing Society who has found that the existing external car rental service endorsed by the SU is not suitable for society events. Its advanced booking requirement and mandatory pre-registration of drivers do not align with the unpredictable attendance of activities, where confirmation often occurs shortly before the event. Furthermore, late returns from activities clash with the service's closing hours, forcing us to rent cars for longer durations than necessary, which significantly increases costs. This extra expense negates the discounts we offer for beginner lessons, hindering our goal of making these activities more accessible and inclusive.

Many societies require transport to their events and the introduction of a dedicated SU-operated car rental service would not only alleviate these issues by providing the needed flexibility and cost-efficiency but would also foster consistent participation in society-led events. This initiative promises to unlock the full potential of student societies, ensuring that transportation logistics cease to be a barrier to student engagement and activity planning.

Purpose:

The intent of this motion is to enhance student engagement at Bristol University by establishing a Student Union-operated car rental service.

Enhance Welfare: Provide equitable access to transportation, ensuring that all students, regardless of personal vehicle ownership, can fully engage in society-led events and activities. This aligns with the SU's commitment to improving student wellbeing by removing logistical barriers and promoting broader participation.

Support Educational Advancement: Offer practical learning opportunities beyond the academic setting. The ability to travel for educational activities like field trips or sports lessons directly complements classroom learning.

Strengthen SU Representation: Act as a testament to the SU's responsiveness to student needs, demonstrating their role as an effective liaison between students' interests and practical solutions.

Flexibility: Societies can plan activities based on optimal conditions rather than the availability of a vehicle or rental service hours. Additionally, by offering a tailored cost structure that minimizes rental periods, this service aims to maintain affordability, keeping student expenses low and ensuring cost-effectiveness.

Promote Personal Development: The car rental service will not only facilitate diverse extracurricular engagement but also offer a platform for students to gain valuable management and operational skills by participating in the initiative's administration.

In essence, this motion will serve as a catalyst for personal growth, inclusivity, and enriched educational experiences, embodying the SU's vision for a supportive and dynamic student environment.

Actions:

1. Conduct a survey to ascertain the demand and potential usage patterns for the SU rental service.
2. Investigate (a) the feasibility of the SU maintaining a small fleet of vehicles (1 or 2 cars) for student society use and (b) the development of a cost model that ensures affordability for students while covering the expenses of the service.
3. Assess insurance, maintenance, and administrative requirements for vehicle management.
4. Explore a streamlined booking system that allows for last-minute reservations in response to unpredictable events such as weather changes.
5. Explore support or partnership opportunities with the external car rental service currently linked on the SU's website or one that can offer last minute bookings.