AMM Minutes 25th Feb 2020

1. **Welcome & Introductions**

Abbie Jessop, chair of Student Council, opened the meeting and explained the running of AMM, including motion process.

Meeting opened at 6:20pm.

1. Q&A with a University and College Union (UCU) rep about strikes

Representative from UCU explained why staff are striking, and encouraged students to engage and support.

Benefit to students regarding strikes include less precarious contracts, proper time to mark etc. The representative explained the need to see that students and staff are united, as working conditions are ultimately students’ learning conditions.

The representative thanked the SU, Officers & staff/student network for support during the strikes.

*Q&A*

* Are the SU are organising teach outs and when they’re happening? – HGA advised that the SU have main teach out happening with wellbeing conference There will be a collaboration between Wellbeing & Education network chairs, happening 5th March
* International students pay more than home students, is there a compensation fund than can be applied for? – CB explained that withheld pay will be reinvested into student experience, explained difference between rebates and compensation, likelihood of compensation to student specific is unlikely, so looking into student experience options instead, will take into account international student experience.
* Has UCU & SU considered joining forces with students to try and gain compensation and to get management to take cause more seriously? – UCU and the SU are working closely together, main line is to push university to use money on what students said they wanted from survey over Christmas.
* Regarding compensation, as an international PG student, the money reinvested won’t affect them as they won’t be here, could PG students be considered separately? – Working closely with Julius to represent International students, pushing university to update students with what’s happening ASAP. SU are communicating this to university, want effect for international PG students to be mitigated during year. HGA encouraged students emailing in to explain situations so SU can best represent on these issues.
* Thank you to the SU for inviting rep to talk to students, is it possible for SU to give out an email for students to register their concern to university directly rather than SU? – CB advised that info and contact details updated on FAQs on website. UCU representative advised students could also find out more information while at the rallies.

Chair noted that there would be no breaks within AMM and encouraged floor to take a break when needed. Distress and questioning from some on the floor, AJ advised this was done on consultation with disabled students and was successful at student council, any queries to be directed to helpdesk instead. This was further amended during the meeting to incorporate a 10 minute break.

1. **Officer Updates and Questions**

Niamh Murray - University has plans to expand student numbers which has been opposed by many students. What is the SU doing to oppose this?  - GB – GB has lobbied university so accommodation crisis doesn’t happen again, student growth of 1000 per year won’t happen next year.

Ben Bloch from the Tab: Regarding the statement from ISOC saying that the officers hadn’t helped with islamophobia awareness month – how do they respond to that and what are they going to do? – JP - Statement has been released, Jason publicly apologises he didn’t give enough support to IAM at the time but couldn’t support at the time due to personal reasons, wants to ensure this has further support in the future.

Hussein from ISOC. In relation to IAM. Hussein expressed that they felt no officers had reached out to them during IAM, with only one officer attending an event. They expressed there had been no consultation with them on the open letter – team seems to think they know better than students of colour and Muslim students. No support during Colonel Kemp event and no reaching out after ISOC statement. AJ prompted for a question at the end. Hussein then asked how can Muslim students have faith in the officer team and feel represented? – JP - Organisationally there was support for IAM e.g. marketing support. In regards to the open letter, the officers could have done more consultation with students, but open letter is a tactic to get change taking place. JP expressed they want commitment from university to jointly tackle racism on campus that students can feed into. Regarding the event, there are natural limits to what a union can do, with no control over free speech law so can’t shut down events due to law, regardless of personal views. Regarding Muslim students having faith in officers, JP had attempted to engage e.g. during BME network meeting messaged regarding support, met with BME network chair to discuss, after event asked what changes Muslim students would like for better representation, and advised that further support is always available. Mistakes are sometimes made, but that doesn’t mean there’s a lack of willingness.

Linn Meyer for Julius: Asked at student council if ther was any work eing done on the uni being guarantors for international studnetns. This doesn’t seem to have come through at the accommodation office - has followed up since student council, had 2 meetings since, have promised they’re doing everything they can to support international students, is reaching out for more feedback on progress, will update students when they can

Charlotte, PG officer for Julio. SU prioritise external bookings for use of SU building space. What’s being done about this? Is he aware? - miscommunication, do not categorically prioritise external events over student events, clear criteria to establish if it will be an external event instead, including has to be an event that engages a wider student body. Problem arises when student society with external members want to book anson rooms e.g. it would likely go to external booking to keep funding free services from SU

Sian Amekuedi: When did George speak to Simon Bray about growth in student numbers? - GB - Simon Bray is responsible for student bed spaces, has been working with pro-vice chancellors etc. to talk about growth – at last board uni said they would be growing – GB clarifying SB’s role, so he wasn’t aware of this expansion update at that time of last minute

Ife Grillo: Are the results of ‘Tell Chris’ going to be made open to student groups? As many societies struggle to engage PG students – CB - Internally there is movement on doing results and passing to university, will publish results on SU website. Working closely with PG network chair to improve PG strategy for better engagement, not just through PG network. CB encouraged PG students to engage in other arms of university e.g. sustainability network chair

What does decolonising the curriculum look like? - HGA - Decolonising curriculum means we are removing focus on white centric focus on academia, widening across the world with other identities. Working out what it looks like at Bristol rather than just like other universities are doing.

Daniel – President of LGBT+ : What exactly is happening for pride in sport? - AB - Pride in Sport is a visibility campaign, sports teams and staff have rainbow laces for playing/training, posting on social media, pushing themselves and highlighting themselves to be an inclusive club. No taster sessions yet, want to bring these in for future years.

Pascal van Liempt on LGBT+ society committee - Is any work being done on trans students being safe / getting involved with sports – AB - No work currently on this but would like to get involved in this and make a priority, AB encouraging ideas on how to make this happen.

Khadija Meghrawi: Regarding perspective of Muslim students, student advised they had met with the SU and gave them action points after every Islamophobic event or article. E.g. funding for Islamophobia Awareness Months, making a prayer room, previous motion about IPPG definition. AJ pushed for a question - how many more students are going to have to burn out and push for these things themselves before the SU pays attention and works for Muslim students? – JP - nothing more should have to happen for SU to fight for students. Officers can’t take credit for what’s happened previously, and apologises it hasn’t been carried on. Jason advised he has reached out and expressed willingness to collaborate, reiterates he is open to recommendations and how to move forward. If there is a specific method on how this takes place and working relationship, will take this on board for rest of term and will escalate issues higher.

JMO - update on racism letter – Julius brought this issue to SU team, has sat in various meetings where this has been discussed, wants to reassure BME students that open letter was a collective effort from the entire team. Acknowledge & agree that didn’t work to adequate consultation, will be working with BME network closely in future consultations. Committed to assuring racism doesn’t take place in organisation.

Omar Chowdhury BME network chair - Felt he should comment that there was no consultation, and expressed his opinion that trustees legally cannot criticise the organisation so are incapable of admitting fault, so he was pressured to not say anything. He believes the open letter is racist because it was not done in consultation with BME network or any other relevant groups. OC believes this shows that the SU is incapable to represent the interest of Muslims or all BME students and asked for a proper apology - JM - categorically apologises for APBB policy acknowledged earlier. Have decided to work closely with Muslim student representation & BME network to ensure doesn’t happen again. Regarding the open letter, JM apologised for lack of adequate discussion and consultation with BME network, but doesn’t want to apologise for calling out racism in university, in future would involve all relevant parties to have a stronger voice. Has apologised previously in a meeting for not involving these groups.

Have to move on due to time restraints, but AJ strongly encouraging students to discuss this with officers.

1. **Motions 1 – 4**
2. [Support Student Rent Strikes](https://www.bristolsu.org.uk/resources/amm-motion_-rent-strikes/download_attachment)

Speaker: Ruth Day

Motion overview:

Rent in Bristol is an average £161 per week, which is £31 more than national average

Last year students went on strike with support of SU, which was invaluable in meetings, providing materials etc.

Policy has now run out, looking to get it renewed

Want all students to have power, support and resources to run rent strike if it’s needed

Amendments: N/A

Amendments passed: N/A

Opposition: N/A

Questions: N/A

Motion outcome: Passed

1. [Trial Dairy-Free Campus Cafés in 2020/21](https://www.bristolsu.org.uk/resources/amm-motion_-dairy-free-cafes/download_attachment)

Speaker: Cordelia Hughes

Motion overview:

Beef & lamb will be phased out next year, but cow’s milk comes from same place

Helps to reduce carbon emissions, but also more accessible

If starting with dairy-free will create a ripple in other climate issues and changes

Amendments: Amendment from speaker - provide dairy-free alternatives to all existing products, but include a small range of dairy containing foods

Amendments outcome: Amendment passed and included

Opposition: Motion doesn’t include disabled people, dietary requirements affect disabled students, as it limits food people can eat. Speaker expressed that the last thing people recovering need is hearing their diet is ‘wrong’. Speaker believes that disabled people are forgotten about, vegan options shouldn’t be against disabled students and wants a motion put forward in collaboration and consultation with disabled students

Questions:

(To proposer) Most societies used Domino’s to get people along, how can we make sure all societies can support vegan options? – Motion is specifically about cafes and Balloon Bar, but urges societies to use vegan options. If motion passes it would be a lobbying process, so could then become a consultation with various groups including disabled students

(To proposer) How are you going to make sure students can get food they need without feeling they have to disclose why e.g. disability, eating disorder? – Proposer agreed that there needs to be enough dairy-including food for students who need it – (Follow up question) So what’s changing from current situation? – Proposer believes we don’t have enough vegan options on campus, milk should be available for students who need it, but more focus on plant-based products when it’s not necessarily what’s best for the planet or what people want

(To proposer) Lots of vegan options are expensive, including milk, would this motion include making vegan options more inclusive money wise? – Yes, motion wants to make plant based options more accessible, as vegan options aren’t usually cheapest options, wants to lobby university on this

(For opposer) – Bearing in mind proposal is for majority of products to be dairy free, not entirely dairy free, with a focus on plant-based projects, would you now support it? – Opposer believes disabled students are an afterthought, would like motion to go away and consult disabled students before it passes. Opposer expressed that they support vegan options but wants it to be more inclusive

Motion outcome:

Needed to go to a vote count. Results as follows:

For – 71

Against – 74

Abstained – 14

Motion – not passed

1. [Establishment of an academic writing centre](https://www.bristolsu.org.uk/resources/amm-motion_academic-writing-centre/download_attachment)

Speaker: Julius Muga Ogayo

Motion overview:

Students who don’t have English as a first language have long been asking for further writing support from the university. Students are paying high fee for professional proofreaders. Motion wants to lobby the university for a centre providing peer review, support from academics and other volunteers.

Academic writing centres have been long established in north America, and now appearing in some UK unis.

Amendments: George. Supports motion, but doesn’t think there is precedent for buildings to be named after officers, and rather believes it should be a process that students can vote on

No one spoke against the amendment

Amendments outcome: Amendment passed and included

Opposition: N/A

Questions: N/A

Motion outcome: Motion passed

1. [One-Split wonder: Rag, Volunteer and Sustainability Network](https://www.bristolsu.org.uk/resources/amm-motion_-split-rag-sustainability-and-volunteering-network/download_attachment)

Speaker: George Bemrose

Motion overview:

Wants to split network into 2, as sustainability network, and volunteering and RAG network. This lets the chair focus on specific areas rather than having to focus on one, as It’s unlikely that a student will be equally passionate about all three areas, and the terminology is confusing particularly to new students. The previous chair stepped down due to workload.

Amendments: N/A

Amendments passed: N/A

Opposition: N/A

Questions: N/A

Motion outcome: Motion passed

1. **NUS Referendum Campaign Leader Election**

AJ explained that we need to elect candidates for and against NUS Referendum campaign which will be voted on.

Candidate for remain – Hillary Gyebi Ababio – has regular interactions and experience with NUS, would like to campaign to remain

Candidate for against – Fergus Ustianowski – NUS isn’t representative, NUS is in debt, money could be put into student services, wants to lead leave campaign due to previous experience and knowledge on similar campaigns

Vote for Hillary for remain lead – passed

Vote for Fergus for leave lead – passed

Hillary and Fergus confirmed as leads for NUS Referendum

1. **Motions 5 –7**
2. [Temporary and Short-term recruitment Services for students by Students Union](https://www.bristolsu.org.uk/resources/amm-motion_-tss/download_attachment)

Speaker: Julius Ogayo

Motion overview:

The initial objective of TSS Is to recruit students and other staff on temporary contracts. TSS no longer has students as a main focus. Therefore providing these opportunities for students should be undertaken by an org that has student interests at heart – the SU. This will provide opportunities for internships and jobs, with tailored support for international students.

Amendments: N/A

Amendments outcome: N/A

Opposition: N/A

Question:

Theano - There was a lot of disruption in DSS before due to changes in way they work, is there a guarantee that if DSS becomes SU responsibility there won’t be disruption against and transition will be smooth and for students’ benefit? – JO - SU has capacity to manage this, working to develop jobshop currently, SU are prepared and supportive.

Could this be integrated with careers service and other provisions within university? – JO - This seeks to explore ways SU in partnership can provide these services, consultations happening

Ben White – will it effect pay for TSS? Different departments pay students differently, will it be standardized? – JO - Motion is to dedicate this service to SU, these issues would be discussed and tackled in the future

Motion outcome: motion passed

1. [Support Student Societies with Security Costs](https://www.bristolsu.org.uk/resources/amm-motion_security-costs/download_attachment)

Speaker: Fintan Munnery

Motion overview:

Speaker wants support for societies to bring high profile speakers onto campus. This has been controversial in the past, and had no cap on costs. Motion wants to cap total amount of security costs to £500, with total amount societies can apply for of £100. This means groups have access to funding for security which they may not be able to afford otherwise.

The speaker also advised that they want to work with network chairs on this, to ensure students feel safe on campus. Speaker noted that this motion doesn’t change external speaker process which does need reform, but does set out process and ask for clear criteria for events which would qualify for this funding.

Amendments: N/A

Amendments outcome: N/A

Opposition: Omar Chowdhury, BME network chair – Speaker speaking as joint

statement from BME, trans, women's, disabled students and LGBT plus network chairs, believes passing of this motion will increase hatred speech on campus, if motion passes speaker events will happen more frequently, potentially meaning students don’t feel safe. These speakers attract audiences which is an issue. Network chairs already speak up on this but aren’t listened to, should put forward as educational lectures instead if that’s how it will help students

AJ called for response from proposer.

FM – Proposer wouldn’t want this to lead to prejudice actions on campus, and advised they could amend criteria to funding applications e.g. it’s educational, promoting debate across campus, includes as many people as possible. Proposer would be happy to work with people on creating this.

AJ called for response from opposer.

OC - If security risk is high, then you can get police to come in instead. The money to fund this has to come from somewhere e.g. the SU budget which means less money for student groups/campaigns elsewhere. OC acknowledged that external speakers policy needs improvement, but believes that until it changes this motion will mean increase in hateful speakers on campus, so when external speaker policy has changed then bring motion back then.

AJ called for other speakers for and against motion.

For – Patrick – Speaker believes that diversity needs to include ideological diversity, as not every student agrees on typical views of the student body. Speaker believes you therefore can’t put financial barriers on speakers from various points of view, and is exclusionary on a free speech point of view. Large numbers attending these events means more opportunity for students to go and challenge these speakers, financial barriers shouldn’t be put in their way.

Against – Sian – Speaker stated it is difficult to turn up to speak against these speakers if you are part of a marginalized group, and believes it is a travesty if these people come on campus. OC then provided quotes from speakers who have come on campus.

For – Speaker believes that debates around prejudice are irrelevant here, as the costs don’t affect speakers coming or not, as they come onto campus anyway. Believes this motion allows students to benefit from speakers more with more discussions and debates, as this motion wants to help societies have better access to speakers and events, and debate around prejudice are a red herring to this issue.

Against – Speaker thinks that this is missing the point and those with ‘hateful’ views are more likely to incur security costs, so speakers who are controversial provide security anyway. Believes that free speech shouldn’t’ come at expense of marginalized communities. Free speech against human rights from these speakers shouldn’t be allowed on campus and this motion ultimately supports this. Urged attendees to vote against for safety of students and freedom of expression to students

Questions:

Max – To speakers for, when you subsidise cost it seems like SU are endorsing speaker ideologies – external speaker process happens via SU to keep people safe rather than condoning.

Jack – To speakers against, issue still goes through same external process regardless of them being controversial, this would happen if they speak in a Richmond lecture instead, it’s just funded in a different way. So how do we take meaningful action for this on the future as motion doesn’t affect this? – Believe that external policy needs to change, as it doesn’t keep hate speakers off campus, and SU doesn’t achieve this either. If you can’t afford a certain speaker it shouldn’t affect other societies, as it will all come from same SU pot of funding. Believes that societies are ‘punching above their weight’ as it’s not a whole student body problem. Encouraging these speakers to go through Richmond lectures as educational purposes.

Jack – To speakers for, this money would take away from other SU activities e.g. team buses for clubs, why should speaker costs take priority? – Has allocated ringfence pot, and motion represents 1% of that. This is in line with other funding priorities but needs its own focus. Also disagrees with the logic behind the ‘punching above their weight’ – we would all disagree that you wouldn't say this if someone couldn’t afford to attend university.

Jack – To speakers for, why not withdraw motion and resubmit it as a different fund with clear criteria that societies can apply for to avoid discrimination? – As the meeting isn’t quorate, if the motion passes can amend motion once worked with student community to then look to pass as amended with clear set of criteria at student council.

Motion outcome: Motion not passed

1. [Network Terms of Reference Alignment](https://www.bristolsu.org.uk/resources/amm-motion_network-alignment/download_attachment)

Speaker: Jason Palmer

Motion overview:

To ensure governance docs are aligned with each other to make sure conditions (see slide) are met. E.g. ELA officer being invited or not into spaces.

Amendments: N/A

Amendments outcome: N/A

Opposition: N/A

Questions: N/A

Motion outcome: Motion passed

1. **Bristol SU Strategy Consultation**

Chris Brasnett - The item is about how the SU is, as a 100 year old organisation, is stopping on reflecting on what we’re doing, and laying out the plan for the next 3, 5, 10 years’ time. How do we get there, what are our goals. CB encouraged students to take part in short survey about SU strategy moving forwards

AJ thanked everyone for attending and taking part, and encouraged students to put themselves forward for nomination in SU elections.

Next student council date – 9th June.