

**Draft Laws Working Group**

**Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2026**

**Soc Room A & Teams delivery**

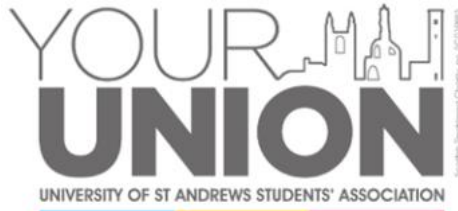
**15:30 –16:30**

**Minutes**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Owner</b>
1. Welcome & Introductions	<b>ALL</b>
2. Review of Actions	<b>ALL</b>
3. Review Draft Laws for final group approval	<b>ALL</b>
4. All-Student Forum	<b>ALL</b>
5. AOCB	<b>ALL</b>

**Actions from previous meeting:**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible parties</b>	<b>Status</b>
Include a section on appointed officers/conveners in (5)	JC	
Think about the mechanism for having a decision within the democratic spaces.	ALL	



Present in person: Elise Bateman (EB), Ava Byrne (AB), Trinity Gortschacher (TG), Jacob Carey (JC), Holly McDonald (HMc, Secretary)

Present online: Cam Brown (CB)

Apologies: Aidan Cronin, Jack McNealy, Justin Goldberg, Cecilia Kircher.

*Meeting begins: 15:31*

## **1. Review of actions**

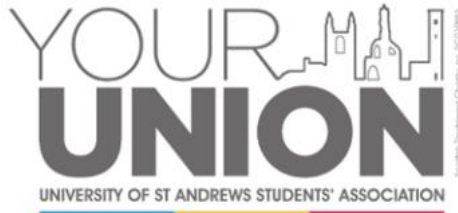
JC updated that they had met with EH (SVS), staff, and Exec Officers and that they felt it was not needed or desired to have a defined section for appointees (EH provided an email to JC to outline the thinking). They felt the role would be better documented in another place such as a role description. EB felt that if we did want appointed officers to be included in Laws going forward, that can absolutely happen.

Mechanism for decision-making within democratic spaces. EB had no written submissions prior to the meeting. JC had included something within the Standing Orders, using “positive consensus,” (yes, we approve it) “negative consensus,” (not at this time, but worth archiving) and “no consensus” (back to the other body for review and further amendment). JC will add this wording to the draft Laws.

TG was unsure about moving away from motions. EB responded that this derived from the DemRev. We searched for this and could not find this, and discussion suggested that this was in another document/place.

EB said that we have to put the Laws to students at ASF on Tuesday, and asked what alternatives there may be to motions as they used to exist. TG referenced previous guidance about guidance (HMc mentioned that there was some guidance in previous Laws about numbers of signatures etc).

AB felt that writing motions was challenging, and JC felt that motions were inaccessible. TG referenced previous motions such as those about current affairs, and EB suggested that this would still need to be a motion given it has a statement element (whereas other topics would simply be discussion with a staff member, and didn't require a democratic decision). TG felt that clear guidance on a motion would deal with this. EB said that clarity on getting items on the agenda for students was necessary, and making it accessible. EB suggested that another option could be that something comes to ASF and by consensus the next step is to make it a motion, and then bring it back as a motion. TG suggested a flowchart to clarify process. EB suggested motion as last step, with an idea being the first level.



AB questioned where this decision-making process question would sit within the Draft Laws.

TG asked about action for policies sitting with UE. JC asked about the purpose of having motions within some policies. CB responded that on issues that present a stand/statement, it allows for a record, whereby motions are appropriate and it “allows students to take control of their Union.” JC felt that detailing intentions for a discussion item should be included within a submission to ASF.

AB agrees with the point about transparency linked to motions, but feels that another documentary process (possibly dealt with by staff) would achieve this and be more accessible than motions (therefore having a record of consensus provided post-meeting by staff). JC felt it was preferable to move away from students submitting formal documents.

TG again made reference to distinguishing that motions were a final point of call for more serious issues, and referred to past experience where motions have been collaborative between different student groups. TG felt that motions were better suited for these topics. EB felt that surveys or petitions could have the same outcome.

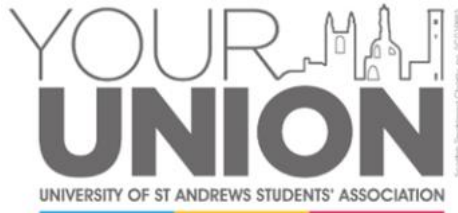
CB questioned the additional documentation in this instance, and how this might not reduce the effort. JC felt that documentation would be dealt with by staff. CB said that noting a response in the minutes doesn't give the same power as motions. EB disagreed for smaller issues, using consensus and reducing steps to get the discussion had, but that motions would still be utilised for bigger social issues/current affairs.

CB agreed we don't need motions for smaller issues, and agreed for consensus first, and motions afterwards as a 'two-layer' model.

AB wrote a motion in September and felt that this process was very difficult and didn't in their situation provide greater democratic power, over what could have been had with consensus.

The group seemed to agree with a two-layer approach of consensus as a baseline, with motions as a second option for significant issues (e.g. social issues, current affairs) as an escalation.

JC felt that at present, Opps Forum would not utilise motions. EB said that Forums could decide they could write motions, that would then go to ASF. AB felt that motions should not be used within remit Forums, just at ASF. JC can edit the Law accordingly. AB felt that some issues would be better anyway at ASF for a motion, and EB felt that a

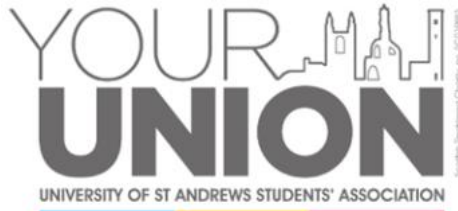


motion could go to a remit Forum initially, before to ASF. The agreement was that remit Forums could use motions, and then these motions should go to ASF.

JC mentioned that motions could support with Exec Officers. CB questioned about the situation when an Executive Officer may disagree with a motion presented. EB said that this does happen, but if students voted for this then they have to action this regardless of agreement or lack thereof.

### **Other comments/amendments:**

- EB referred to previous meeting describing UA Forum as 'as needed' whereas the current document suggests it would be more regular. JC said that the Union Executive agreed to this as presented.
- AB under 9.13.1 queried 'GNS.' JC will amend the glossary for this. EB suggested just saying 'The Trustee Board' to cover the Board and its subcommittees as a whole. Amendment can be made later as needed at ASF/Board.
- TG mentioned a point of typing clarity within the Forums section of the Draft Laws.
- JC asked to review the 'Recall' section. JC used Jonathan's document. TG flagged the distinction between political recall vs a misconduct/disciplinary issue. EB noted this had been clarified and read from the relevant section. JC changed some wording around percentages for those voting for recall, given the eligibility of voting on this. AB asked how this can be vetted, and JC said that eligible voters are those who could reasonably have voted (e.g. cross campus ballot for voluntary representation officers, vs Faculty specific voting for Faculty Presidents).
- JC will send this to D&M for formatting.
- CB mentioned 'association representative officers' within one of the pages, and referred to the previous meeting where we had moved away from that language in favour of Union. JC will make amendments.
- EB will remove 'member discipline' 'code of conduct' and 'rules of the Union' from the Laws, and put them into policies as these need to be distinct and not under students' democratic purview. TG asked if appeals would sit with staff, EB said that yes within member discipline. TG asked about student reps on the appeals panels. EB said that this would be an appropriate rep and depend on the conflict of interest (almost certainly it would be an Exec Officer), as a student representative, not to decide on an outcome. TG asked if Execs can be involved as trustees, EB responded that they'd be wearing their representative hat at that point (as they are at



other times). TG asked if they'd have to recuse themselves if anything had an impact linked to being a trustee. EB felt this was very unlikely within trustee responsibilities, but a conflict may arise if they oversaw that officer or otherwise knew them. TG asked if the appeal was about a failing of a Union process, would that have an impact. EB said that this was member to member discipline, but if it was about a Union failing or where there may be legal ramifications, this would go to the Board of Trustees.

- CB asked about 5.1 to say that the ASF Chair would have a “deliberate and casting vote” where there is ambiguity on the Laws. EB responded that the PresAffs/equivalent could be that person at other unions. CB thinks that this would best be the ASF Chair as they are not involved in chairing other Forums or policy. The group seemed to agree. JC said they will take this back to UE. AB was unsure about difference between ambiguity and casting vote, EB responded that when someone is unsure about an interpretation of part of the Laws then the ASF Chair would provide that as it is easier for one person to have the responsibility (following consultation with Union Executive and SMT). JC asked for clarity if this would still apply in remit Forums, EB said yes. AB felt that it was unusual for one person to be a single voice on this. CB responded that ASF Chair is there for good governance and independence rather than additionally having a political role.
- CB asked if we could add something about how the Laws can be amended. JC will add accordingly that the ASF will do this.

The Draft Laws Working Group was formally dissolved.

*Meeting adjourned: 16:27*

*Following the close of the meeting, CB requested in writing in the DLWG Teams channel that the following addendum be made:*

### **Addendum**

*While the Rector's Assessor was a member of this group and supports the progression of these laws to the All Student Forum for consensus and ratification, it is important to note that their involvement should not be interpreted as endorsement of the omission of the Rector's Committee or the Rector's Assessor from the draft laws.*



*It was further requested in writing in the DLWG Teams channel following the meeting by TG that a further addition be added: “that the omission [of the Rector’s Committee or Rector’s Assessor from the Draft Laws] wasn’t unanimously supported by the students in the working group.”*