



University of St Andrews Students' Association Special Meeting of the Student Services Council

MINUTES

Tuesday 30th April 2013 – Committee Room, 7.30pm

Present

Maxwell Baldi	Association Chair
Freddie fforde	Association President (arrived 20:00)
Meg Platt	Director of Student Development and Activities
Jules Findlay	Director of Events and Services
Teddy Woodhouse	Association Director-Elect of Representation
Kelsey Gold	Association Director-Elect of Student Development and Activities
Sadie Hochfield	Association Community Relations Officer
Dominyika Urbonaite	Association Environment and Ethics Officer
Emily Dick	SSC Member for Societies Grants
Oscar Swedrup	SSC Broadcasting Officer
Joseph Tantillo	SSC Charitable Development Convenor
George Parker	SSC Charities Officer
William Lord	SSC Debates Officer
Stephanie Ekanayaka	SSC Design Team Convener
Robert Dixon	SSC Member for Societies Elections
Keith Cordrey	SSC Member without Portfolio
Anna Merryfield	SSC Music Officer
David Patterson	SSC Performing Arts Officer
Courtney Lewis	SSC Societies Officer
Fay Holland	SSC Volunteering Officer

In Attendance

Jess Walker	Athletic Union President-Elect
Scott Schorr	Association Postgraduate President-Elect
Iain Cupples	HR Manager/Student Advocate (Education)
Mark Hamid	
Alex Thornton-Reid	
John Kennedy	

Adoption of the Agenda

Mr Baldi noted that as this was a special meeting, no reports or open forum appeared on the agenda. Matters arising from the previous regular meeting would be deferred to the next regular meeting. He asked that the SSC agree to hear item 4.4 before items 4.2 and 4.3 in order to allow Ms Thornton-Reid to leave for another engagement. No dissent to this was indicated, so with this amendment the agenda was adopted.

2. Apologies for Absence

Daniel Palmer	Association Director-Elect of Events and Services
Amanda Litherland	Association Director of Representation
Fiona Woodhall	SSC Entertainments Convener

The apologies were accepted without dissent. The following members were absent but no apologies had been received:

Dani Berrow	Association Postgraduate President
David Norris	Association LGBT Officer
Chloe Hill	Association President-Elect
Maia Krall-Fry	SSC Film Production Officer

3. Unfinished General Business

None.

4.1 Motion to Introduce Association Projects

Ms Gold explained that this was a new structure she aimed to introduce in order to accommodate certain student activities that were for various reasons not a natural fit as either a society or subcommittee, but which nevertheless should properly have some formal structure under the Laws. These were usually annual activities or events of benefit to the student population: examples included the On The Rocks festival. Power over such projects would rest with the SSC as they were a student activity, but SRC had to approve the necessary changes to the Laws. They had done so at their meeting last week: this special meeting had been scheduled to allow SSC the opportunity to do the same in time for projects to come into force in the next academic year.

Mr Lord asked if projects would take away money from existing student activities. Ms Gold said that this was not necessarily the case, pointing out that some projects already existed and had money spent on them: the proposal before the Council would merely streamline that process and provide a framework. Mr Cupples explained the annual budgeting process for the benefit of members, pointing out that it was for officers to make the case for a particular budget each year. If more spending on student activities was justified in the budget process, more money would be allocated.

Mr Baldi explained that the Student Representative Council had amended the motion to strike the words 'recurring in nature and' from 1.2: this was to allow one-off projects to qualify for funding. He proposed to ask the Council to vote on whether they agreed with this amendment before proceeding to the substantive motion. He opened the floor to discussion on this amendment.

Ms Gold explained that she wanted to keep these words as she felt projects should have a long-term goal and ethos, so should not be single events. Single events could be funded by means of discretionary spend, as at present. Mr Hamid suggested that the project framework provided for better management of potentially complex one-off events.

The vote was called and was as follows:

OFFICE	NAME	AYE	NO	ABS.
Association Community Relations Officer	Sadie Hochfield	X		
Association Director of Events & Services	Julian Findlay	X		
Association Director of Representation	Amanda Litherland	Pxy		
Association Director of Student Development & Activities	Meg Platt		X	
Association Environment & Ethics Officer	Dominyka Urbonaite		X	
Association LGBT Officer	David Norris			
Association Postgraduate President	Dani Berrow			
Association President	Freddie fforde			
SSC Broadcasting Officer	Oscar Swedrup	X		
SSC Charities Officer	George Parker		X	
SSC Debates Officer	William Lord			X
SSC Film Production Officer	Maia Fry			
SSC Member for Societies Elections	Robert Dixon	X		
SSC Member for Societies Grants	Emily Dick		X	
SSC Member without Portfolio	Keith Cordrey	X		
SSC Music Officer	Anna Merryfield	X		
SSC Performing Arts Officer	David Patterson		X	
SSC Societies Officer	Courtney Lewis		X	
SSC Volunteering Officer	Fay Holland		X	

The result was therefore a tie at 7 for and 7 against with one abstention. The Chair used the casting vote to reject the amendment, stated that he wished to allow for further debate in the Executive Committee.

The vote on the substantive motion was then called: the motion was passed without dissent.

4.2 Motion to propose On The Rocks as an Association Project

Ms Platt explained that OTR was a successful ongoing festival that had run for some years now and would fit very well under the Association Projects framework. She asked for questions on the proposed motion or the associated constitution for OTR.

Mr Findlay asked about point 4.1 in the proposed constitution, and whether it raised any questions of liability: by requiring two members of the OTR committee to sign contracts on behalf of OTR, it created the possibility of two students who held no other position in the Association effectively signing contracts on behalf of the Association. He asked if it were not wiser to require a sabbatical to be one of the signatories? Ms Platt replied that the arrangements in 4.1 reflected the present situation, and that the financial cascade covered contracts signed by OTR in the normal way.

The vote was called and the motion passed without dissent.

4.3 Motion to propose the Scott Lang Dinner as an Association Project

Mr fforde explained the history and purposes of this event. Ms Lewis asked who currently owned and ran the event: Mr fforde explained that it was a voluntary committee made up of

2 members of University staff, 2 willing students and 2 invited sabbatical officers of the Association.

Ms Urbonaite asked about section 2.2.2.1 of the proposed constitution, which allowed for two meetings of the full committee per academic year: she felt this might not be enough. Mr fforde explained that in practise, this was a minimum and the group often met informally, but that the availability of the staff members of the committee meant that more frequent formal meetings were likely to be difficult to arrange.

Ms Holland asked if this even were perhaps not suitable as a project because it was to some extent exclusive, in that there were a limited amount of students who would benefit- only those who attended the dinner. Mr fforde pointed out that attendance at OTR shows was similarly limited, while accepting that overall the festival reached more students, and that there was no barrier to any student attending if they wanted to. Practicality prevented the dinner from being larger, but as yet no dinner had been oversubscribed.

The vote was called and the motion passed without dissent.

4.4 Motion to propose the Class Gift as an Association Project

Ms Alex Thornton-Reid, who currently chaired the Class Gift committee, explained the purposes and operation of Class Gift and its current relationship with the University's Development Office. Class Gift targeted graduating students to raise funds for a purpose decided by the Class Gift committee, aimed at creating a legacy of those students' time at St Andrews. This year, that had been a contribution to the Association Bursary Fund. The Committee was overseen by the Development Office but selected their own chair, with input from the Association President. They had polled students in the past to select the Gift.

Ms Thornton-Reid explained that the current Committee, the current President and the Development Office all agreed that the image of Class Gift suffered from its current location within the Development Office: it was a student-led project but was perceived as University-led. This confused the message that the Committee wanted to get across.

Mr Hamid asked what the role of the Development Office would be if Class Gift were to become an Association Project. Ms Thornton-Reid replied that Development staff would retain an advisory role. It was possible that Development could 'take back' Class Gift in future if its role as an Association Project was felt not to work well. This would be similar to a society choosing to disaffiliate.

Ms Thornton-Reid then left.

Ms Platt noted that points 4.1, 5.3 and 5.4 in the proposed Class Gift constitution conflicted with the text of the Motion to Introduce Association Projects. Mr Baldi ruled that on a point of order, the text of these points of the Class Gift constitution should therefore be struck. Members were free to suggest replacement text if they chose.

Ms Platt suggested that the text of 4.1 should be replaced with 'the Chair of the Committee shall be selected by annual appointment from amongst the membership of the Students' Association, by the SSC Convener Selection Committee'. Mr Woodhouse seconded this amendment. It was passed without dissent.

Ms Platt then proposed that a section 4.1.1 should be added, reading 'The Committee shall be selected by application and interview. The Association Director of Student Development and Activities will oversee this process'. This amendment was seconded by Ms Dick. There was brief discussion over whether this role would be better filled by the Association President, but the Council felt that the Director of Student Development and Activities held a more appropriate remit. The amendment was thus passed in its present form, without dissent.

Ms Gold proposed an amendment to section 2.1.7 of the proposed constitution, adding the words 'or nominee' after 'Association President'. Mr fforde seconded this amendment and it was passed without dissent.

Debate then moved to the substantive motion. Mr fforde reiterated that the Association was in his view the natural home for Class Gift, as it was a student-led activity. Ms Gold asked about the selection of the Gift. If the committee decided to support a project, was that project compelled to accept the support? Ms Platt explained that in her understanding, under normal circumstances it wasn't possible for charities to refuse donations. Mr Hamid asked if the Association had the staff and other resources to support Class Gift: Mr Cupples replied that this had been considered and the Association management were comfortable that these resources were available if required. Ms Gold asked if Class Gift, were it to be accepted as an Association Project, should not support the Association Bursary Fund every year? Mr fforde said that he hoped that they would, but that it was important that the committee feel ownership of the project and so they had to be free to choose.

Ms Gold suggested that the important principle was that the graduating class themselves should decide the nature of the Gift, which Ms Thornton-Reid had said earlier was the aim. She therefore proposed that the section 2.2.2 in the proposed Constitution could be modified to replace 'it' (referring to the Class Gift committee) with 'the graduating class'. Ms Platt seconded this amendment.

Mr Woodhouse said that in his view, although such an amendment might be laudable, it was not strictly necessary for the Class Gift to qualify as an Association Project, and that he felt amendments by the SSC should be limited to those necessary to ensure the Gift qualified. He felt it was 'micromanagement' to go further.

The vote on the amendment was called:

OFFICE	NAME	AYE	NO	ABS.
Association Community Relations Officer	Sadie Hochfield	X		
Association Director of Events & Services	Julian Findlay	X		
Association Director of Representation	Amanda Litherland	Pxy		
Association Director of Student Development & Activities	Meg Platt	X		
Association Environment & Ethics Officer	Dominyka Urbonaite			
Association LGBT Officer	David Norris			
Association Postgraduate President	Dani Berrow			
Association President	Freddie fforde		X	
SSC Broadcasting Officer	Oscar Swedrup			X
SSC Charities Officer	George Parker	X		
SSC Debates Officer	William Lord		X	
SSC Film Production Officer	Maia Fry			
SSC Member for Societies Elections	Robert Dixon	X		
SSC Member for Societies Grants	Emily Dick		X	
SSC Member without Portfolio	Keith Cordrey		X	
SSC Music Officer	Anna Merryfield		X	
SSC Performing Arts Officer	David Patterson			X
SSC Societies Officer	Courtney Lewis			X
SSC Volunteering Officer	Fay Holland	X		

With 7 in favour and 5 against, the amendment was therefore passed.

The vote on the substantive motion was then called: it was passed without dissent.

4.6 Consultation on Working Paper on Gifts Recognition

Ms Platt explained that the University, having committed the funds for redevelopment, were seeking to defray that cost by raising up to £2m by fundraising through the Development Office. It was important to note that firstly, the funds for redevelopment were not contingent on this fundraising: and secondly, the donations would be made not to the Association but the University.

Such donations were often associated with forms of recognition such as naming of rooms, etc. Development did not want to make any offer of recognition with which the Association would be uncomfortable, so had asked the Association Board for guidance. In turn, the Board were seeking opinions from SSC and SRC on the matter. Ms Platt had prepared a suggested policy, but sought all views and comments.

Mr Lord wondered whether donations from local small businesses were or should be regarded as 'corporate' gifts? Ms Platt said that they could be, but perhaps these cases might be treated differently. Mr Schorr asked if it were possible to define 'reputational harm', and Mr Hamid asked about the issue of policy differences. Ms Platt said that these cases could include, for example, gifts from individuals or companies who contravened the Association's stance on equal opportunities, but that ultimately it was not possible to provide a comprehensive definition of either case. Judgement calls would have to be made. Ms Ekanayaka said that she personally would be against the naming of rooms for donations

from any corporations, trusts or foundations. Ms Platt promised to communicate these views to the Board.

10. Any other competent business

Mr Baldi informed members that SSC/SRC branded clothing would be ordered in time for Fresher's Week. Some subsidy would be available for members. The intention was to make members visible during Freshers and the rest of the week.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 21:00.