



## **Disabled Students' Network Committee Meeting**

St Andrews Students' Association

22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020, 5pm-7pm BST

### **In Attendance:**

Anna-Ruth Cockerham (ARC) - *SRC Member for Students with Disabilities*

Molly Paechter (MP) - *Deputy Convenor*

Kristina Kumpf (KK) - *Events Officer*

Maddy Shepherd (MS) - *Publicity Officer*

Emma MacAndrews (EM) - *Physical Disability Representative*

Jensen Lewis (JL) - *Chronic Illness Representative*

Natalya Stone (NS) - *Mental Health Representative*

Kiera Obi (KO) - *Neurodiversity Representative*

### **Apologies:**

Jane Yarnell (JY) - *Secretary (Apologies)*

### **Minutes:**

#### **1. Introductions**

1.1. ARC - Wanted to do an introduction to the committee and give people the opportunity to ask questions. The goal of the committee is to better represent disabled students, improve social opportunities, and provide resources and signposting.

#### **2. Admin - Social Media, Email, etc.**

2.1. ARC - Wanted to address all the admin of setting up a committee. Will create an email address to make it easier for us to do a newsletter and so on. Could somebody design us a logo.

2.2. KO said they would design the logo.

2.3. MS - it should be simple so we can use it on posters.

2.4. KO suggests having some kind of tagline on the logo. ARC wonders if anyone has any interesting ideas for a name for the committee.

2.5. KO suggests Disabled Students' Alliance, MP suggests Inclusion

Matters, JL likes the word network as it implies interconnected support.

2.6. There is consensus for Disabled Students' Network (DSN).

- 2.7. MP suggests we could make the logo simpler by just using the letters DSN. ARC suggests we could have that and a bigger logo for some graphics with the full name.
- 2.8. Image ideas for inspiration are shared. There is consensus to keep it clean and simple and to represent a network and/or breaking out of a box.
- 2.9. KO likes the different ideas and suggests making a few versions to see what people like.

### **3. Suggestions for Invited Positions**

- 3.1. ARC mentions that other subcommittees have invited, non-voting positions representing student groups with similar interests. They suggest the SRC Postgraduate Development Officer, SVS Autism Awareness Project, a representative from Societies Committee, and potentially the Peer Support Coordinator. ARC asks for other ideas and thoughts.
- 3.2. MS suggests somebody from the Accommodation Subcommittee. ARC says they thought of this, but wasn't sure they would be relevant in all meetings or be able to help because it is mainly the wardens remit.
- 3.3. MP suggests the LGBT+ Officer and Member for Racial Equality. ARC suggests they wouldn't be relevant all the time, but that we can invite people when relevant items are on the agenda and work with them on Equal Opportunities Committee.
- 3.4. ARC also suggests the SRC Member for Student Health.
- 3.5. ARC says to contact them if you come up with any more ideas and that they will speak to Flora (DoWell) and Emma (DoWell-elect) about it.
- 3.6. ARC also mentions wanting to try and get a Disability Rep in the team of Class Reps in each school, and doing a forum with them twice a semester. There is consensus for this idea.

### **4. Freshers' Week & Orientation - Events & Materials Ideas**

- 4.1. MP would like to put together a disability training program over the summer. ARC offers to help with this idea and MP suggests that the different representatives could be involved to add ideas relevant to their position. There is consensus for this idea.
- 4.2. JL liked the idea of the Access Hour at the Freshers Fayre. ARC suggests it would be good to offer more guidance to societies about what to do.
- 4.3. MS wants to do a campaign in time for Freshers about the support available. JL suggests having reps in the halls so they can meet us and learn what we do. ARC suggests it could be a big commitment but we could get extra volunteers. There is consensus for this idea.
- 4.4. EM wants to speak to the Ambassador's Program to increase their awareness of access issues on open days.

- 4.5. KO wonders if we can get on the Freshers Week App. ARC says we can upload our events and speak to the Disability Team about including us in their description.
- 4.6. MS would like to get a Freshers Fayre table. There is consensus for this idea.
- 4.7. ARC wonders if we can try and get a page in The Book. There is consensus for trying to get a short blurb in.
- 4.8. KO suggests we could post short blurbs on Facebook about the committee over the summer.

## **5. Goals for the Year**

- 5.1. ARC wants to know if anyone has any big projects they'd like to work on over the year.
- 5.2. ARC mentions trying to do a Disability Pride Week with some events and advertising campaigns. She says someone from the UCU had expressed interest in the idea so they might collaborate.
- 5.3. KO wants to do a series of talks about neurodiversity. ARC wonders if it would need a budget. KO suggests it would be mainly staff and student speakers although it would be nice to have refreshments. KO is hoping to collaborate with Psych and Neuro Soc on this. ARC suggests an accessible venue would be the StAge.
- 5.4. JL wanted to do some kind of Autoimmune Walk, and suggests a similar event could be part of a Disability Pride Week. ARC suggests we could do a slow march like they did for the Gender Equality event, with something at the start if people couldn't do the walk. KO suggests there could be a craft/sign-making event at the start. EM suggests we should be careful of the route so it isn't so hard for this with physical disabilities.
- 5.5. KK suggests a Coffee and Cake event twice a month for disabled students to meet up.
- 5.6. NS would like to see staff talk about academia and disability.
- 5.7. ARC suggests making a big document where we could put ideas for events, so we could come up with some kind of schedule for big events. There is consensus for this.
- 5.8. ARC mentions wanting to make a guide to running accessible events and an Accessibility Pledge for societies to sign. KO wonders if there are access guides for university buildings. ARC says they are on AccessAble. There is consensus for this idea.

## **6. Any Other Business**

- 6.1. KK wonders if we should do something about the impact of COVID-19 on disabled students.
  - 6.1.1. MP suggests the effect on neurodivergent people is quite difficult due to the loss of routine.
  - 6.1.2. KK suggests we could collaborate with Amnesty/health-focussed societies.

- 6.1.3. EM mentions mental health is a big issue, and that lots of people are worried about the impact of lockdown on recovery for eating disorders.
- 6.1.4. ARC says they are hoping to do a survey of disabled students later in the semester where people could raise issues representation-wise.
- 6.1.5. ARC will post in the Disabilities Facebook Group today to see if anyone is having any issues.
- 6.1.6. There is suggestion of running an event. ARC suggests a Crip Camp watch party and KK suggests a twitch stream. MS suggests a virtual quiz. There is consensus for the watch party. EM wants to make sure there is subtitles, and ARC says Netflix provides them. It is decided that the event will take place at 7pm GMT on May 1 and KK will make an event.
- 6.2. MP and KK suggest there is difficulty keeping up with the meeting over text chat and wonders if there are any alternatives.
  - 6.2.1. ARC suggests we would do in-person meetings in St Andrews, and that other disabled student groups keep a live minutes so people can follow along from home.
  - 6.2.2. ARC says they chose the written format for this meeting due to hearing issues and bad internet connections but we could try Teams another time if someone could do live-minutes.
  - 6.2.3. JL suggests using text-to-speech and dictation software for this. MP says we could do that. ARC says they'll speak to the Union about whether this would be feasible.