**City University London Students’ Union**

**Annual General Meeting**

5.30pm, Thursday 17th November 2016

The Great Hall

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting.

**In attendance:**

**Chair** Gul-Reza Khan Tareen (Deputy Chair of Union Executive Committee) (GT)

**Officers** Yusuf Ahmad (SU President) (YA)

Zain Ismail (SU Vice President Education) (ZI)

Sheikh Hassan (SU Vice President Activities and Development) (SH)

**Apologies:**

No apologies were received.

**1. Introduction**

The Chair welcomed those in attendance, highlighted the Union’s policies on ‘safe space’ and conduct, stated the agenda for the meeting and explained the methods of participating.

182 attendees were present.

**2. Trustees Report**

YA delivered an update of the Trustees’ activities since the last Annual General Meeting, including information on the work carried out for the new strategic plan, rebranding, segmentation project and updates on how proposals passed at the last meeting had progressed.

**3. Financial Update**

YA provided the draft Union financial accounts for 2015-16, and noted that these were subject to being signed off by the auditors before being taken as final.

**4. Appointment of the Auditors**

KPMG were appointed as the Students’ Union’s auditors.

**5. Affiliations**

The Students’ Union affiliations for NUS (National Union of Students) UK, NCVO (National Council Voluntary Organisations) and Advice UK were approved.

The list of Society affiliations for Agape Studentlife UK, AIESEC UK, Amnesty UK, Federation of Islamic Student Societies, London International Model United Nations, Muslim Students Council, National Hindu Students Forum, Standing Voice (Jamie Walling), Student Affairs, Ahmadiyya Youth Association, UK Shorinji Kempo Federation, University of London Debating Society, Erasmus Students Network and LawWorks (Grays Inn Legal Clinic) were approved.

**6. Officer Reports**

**President’s Report:**

YA updated the meeting on his activities since election, which included work on a food campaign, the Graduate School library and Postgraduate study space.

**Vice President Education’s Report:**

ZI updated the meeting on his activities since election, which included work on Programme Reps, a leadership project and work with the Library to re-open Level 3 post-9pm and weekends.

**Vice President Activities & Development’s Report:**

SH updated the meeting on his activities since election, which included work on societies, putting together a Varsity for the University against Kingston, scholarships for refugees with the University and preparing for the November 19th NUS National Demonstration.

**7. Questions to Officers:**

The Chair opened the floor for questions to Officers, but no questions were asked.

**8. Student Proposals**

**1st Policy: Shop Opening Hours**

The proposal focused around extending the opening hours of the Students’ Union shop.

A question from the floor was asked about how this would be funded. The seconder responded that this would be funded by the Students’ Union and not affect students directly. There were no speeches against. The proposal was moved to a vote.

The proposal was clearly passed.

**2nd Policy: Embed Employability In The Curriculum On All Courses**

The proposal focused around embedding employability opportunities across the curriculum. Questions from the floor asked whether this would cover all courses, which the proposer assured it would. Another question asked on the impact on modules, would these mean extra modules to take, which the proposer assured these would be opportunities and extra options to attend that could be worked out with the School. A question was asked about whether it would be possible to do a placement on a Law Course, the proposer responded that such initiatives could be asked for if the proposal passes. A question was asked about the courses that already offer this. The seconder stated that this would be targeted to increase City’s national rankings and employment opportunities for students. There were no speeches against. The proposal was moved to a vote.

The proposal was clearly passed.

**3rd Policy: Opposing Fascism & Social Divisiveness In The Media**

The proposers outlined that this proposal was to target the rhetoric and scapegoating of targeted groups in newspapers and they had been in contact with the Stop Funding Hate campaign. Questions from the floor asked if the newspapers were being sold on campus, of which the proposer was unsure. Another question asked whether this would be to ban or ban the possessing of the newspapers mentioned, the proposer clarified that it would be to ban the sale of and not the possession of. Another question asked about how to enable students to be more critical about media, the proposer responded that they would love to talk to the media and Union. The proposer clarified that they were not seeking to stop free speech, but instead to promote positivity in news stories instead of papers focusing on minorities.

A speech against the proposal argued that they were against the ban of newspapers. Newspapers may indeed inspire sexism and fascism, but the arguer believed that there is need for an open dialogue at University and that diversity should be embraced and talk about why newspapers publish stories as they do.

Another round of speeches for and against were heard, and the Chair moved the proposal to a vote.

The vote was too close to call, and a count was undertaken.

The final result was **69** for the proposal and **54** against with a number of abstentions.

The proposal passed.

**4th Policy: Programme Representatives – Training, Support and Rewards**

The proposal outlined increasing support, training and rewards for Programme Representatives. There were no questions or speeches against. The proposal was moved to a vote.

The proposal was clearly passed.

**5th Policy: Prayer Facilities For Evenings and Weekends**

The proposal outlined that there is a difficulty finding rooms in the summer period post 9pm when prayer times have changed, particularly during the exam period. There were no questions or speeches against. The proposal was moved to a vote.

The proposal was clearly passed.

**6th Policy: Welfare Provisions and Mental Health**

The proposal outlined results of recent surveys that mental health and wellbeing are important concerns for students and the need to do more campaigning around this. There were no questions or speeches against. The proposal was moved to a vote.

The proposal was clearly passed.

**7th Policy: Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS)**

The proposal outlined that it is a movement that works to end international support for Israelis oppression of Palestinians and that there should be an open dialogue amongst students and staff surrounding these issues, where people feel safe to express their views without being targeted.

A question was asked as to why movements like China in Tibet has not been used in this proposal, the proposer referenced back to South Africa as an example of where tactics similar to BDS had worked.

A speech against the proposal stated that Jewish students will feel unsafe and that BDS is anti-Semitic and targets Jewish people and not government.

A speech for stated that the movement emphasises that it is the state of Israel that is targeted and not Judaism and the want to show solidarity with Palestinians at University that all can take part in.

A speech against the proposal felt that the proposal would divide us further, following Brexit and Donald Trump.

A speech for stated that it wants to focus on the issue and there is solidarity in the programme and the wish to spread peace.

A speech against the proposal talked about a former BDS campaign on the Israeli company SodaStream, with a loss of jobs for Palestinians as a result.

A speech for the proposal stated that a wide variety of people were involved in the movement and it is non-violent and a modern resistance against the establishment.

A speech against the proposal talked about the University’s Olive Tree Project, bringing students from both sides together and mutual recognition and the need for every University to have such a program and that there should be dialogue, not disengagement and boycott.

The proposer summarised that the BDS movement is a Global Movement used as a tactic to anti-apartheid in South Africa and a symbol of resistance against oppression.

The Chair moved the proposal to a vote. The vote was too close to call, and a count was undertaken.

The final result was **82** for the proposal and **45** against with a number of abstentions.

The proposal passed.

**8th Policy: A Response To Brexit**

The proposal outlined the support the Union could lobby to and work to provide for EU students in light of the recent ‘Brexit’ referendum (the UK leaving the European Union).

A question was asked to clarify what the proposal means, the proposer responded that it is to plan a response to the referendum and how to support students. There were no speeches against. The proposal was move to a vote.

The proposal was clearly passed.

**9th Policy: Islamophobia**

The proposal outlined that it focused on a need to have Islamophobia training for staff with Prevent duties.

A question was asked as to when Islamophobia Awareness Month (#IAM) is, to which the proposer clarified it is November. There was no speeches against. The proposal was moved to a vote.

The proposal was clearly passed.

**10th Policy: Hidden Course Costs**

The proposal outlined that the policy would be to address any extra costs students were facing at University, that were not initially advertised as part of their course costs.

A question was asked as to whether there could be a review of where the University is spending money, the proposer said that could be looked in to. There were no speeches against. The proposal was moved to a vote.

The proposal was clearly passed.

**11th Policy: Why Is My Curriculum White?**

The proposal outlined that the Why Is My Curriculum White campaign was founded at UCL as a response to the lack of diversity on reading lists and course content.

Questions from the floor were asked as to what curriculum this would apply to, the proposer said it would start with the School of Arts and Social Sciences and that it would then work across all of the Schools as they felt it was a problem across the entire board. A question was asked as to how this would be enforced, by quotas, engagement etc., the proposer responded that there would be meetings with Social Sciences to look at course content and representation and an option of the free post-colonial lectures. A question was asked as to whether this would extend to gender issues, such as lack of women in the curriculum, the proposer answered that intersectionality is important in the campaign, particularly the lack of women of colour. A question was asked about how lecturers are hired in City, the proposer said that the proposal would hope to discuss these kinds of issues as there are currently 87 black professors in the UK. There were no speeches against. The proposal was moved to a vote.

The Chair moved the proposal to a vote. The vote was too close to call, and a count was undertaken.

The final result was **68** for the proposal and **23** against with a number of abstentions.

**12th Policy: Societies’ Resources**

The proposal outlined that the policy would be to address issues with the growing number of societies, particularly in the areas of booking rooms and external speakers.

A question was asked as to who would pay for the extra resource, the proposer commented that this would be up to the Students’ Union. Another questions was asked as to how do societies book rooms and what is the cost, the proposer noted that there is no cost and the Students’ Union books rooms on behalf of societies. There were no speeches against. The proposal was moved to a vote.

The proposal was clearly passed.

**13th Policy: Longer Opening Hours and More Resources For The Library**

The proposal outlined that it focused on extending the opening hours of Library study spaces and to lobby for more resources for the Library.

No questions were asked. There were no speeches against. The proposal was moved to a vote.

The proposal was clearly passed.

**14th Policy: Lecture Capture For All Courses**

The proposal outlined that it would lobby for lecture capture to be implemented and utilised across all courses in the University, since there is a variation on how it is taken up by different courses.

No questions were asked. There were no speeches against. The proposal was moved to a vote.

The proposal was clearly passed.

**15th Policy: Computer Labs**

The proposal outlined that there is a lack of computer facilities within the University and asked the Students’ Union to lobby for more facilities.

A question was asked as to whether this proposal included the Bloomberg Terminals in the Library, the seconder responded that this could be. A question was asked as to whether it would be PCs or Macs, the second responded that it could be either and would be looked at should the policy pass. A question was asked if the University could look into computer labs that currently exist which sometimes have no servers available, the seconder said this could be looked at. A further question asked if there could be something done about those who sit in front of computers with their laptops, the seconder said this could be looked at. A further comment was made from the floor that keyboards and mice would also need to be provided as these repeatedly go missing. There were no speeches against. The proposal was moved to a vote.

The proposal was clearly passed.

**4. Notices:**

The Learning Enhancement Awards nominations are now open, so students are encouraged to submit nominations to recognise the staff and Programme Representatives that support them at City.

SH made an announcement about the National Demonstration taking place on November 19th and encouraged all students to attend.

**5. Conclusion of the Meeting**

The Chair confirmed the end of business and thanked everyone for attending. The meeting was closed at 7.15pm.

**6. Date and Time of the Next Meeting**

The next General Meeting will take place on Thursday 9th February, 5.30pm.