

Present

Scrutiny Panel Members: Jamie Cox (JC), Shreya Dinesh (SD), Ellie Rose (ER), Rebecca Hudson (RH)

Officers: Acacia Matthews (AM, Guild President), Alice Liu (AL, International Officer), Izzy Lawson (IL, Activities & Employability Officer), Florie Craddock (FC, Sports Officer)

In Attendance

Guild Staff: Rozena Nadeem (RN, Democracy Coordinator, Minute Taker), Scott Dawson (ScD, Student Voice & Representation Manager)

Apologies

Scrutiny Panel Members: Sarah Aray (SA)

Absence Without Apologies:

Officers: Robin Hayward (Trans & Non-Binary Students Officer)

Trigger Warnings: Consent, LGBTQ+ rights

Discussions on: Cost of Living Crisis, UCU Strike Action, Exams, Student Safety, Social Media

Item No.	Role
3:05pm - 3:10pm Panel Pre-Briefing	The Panel were briefed before the meeting.
3:10pm-3:30pm Guild President	AM joined the meeting. The Panel asked AM she had any further updates since submitting her report.

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	<p>AM had no further updates.</p> <p>JC: Question: After the All Student Vote results, how is the Guild addressing the issue of external memberships?</p> <p>AM: AM noted that any decision that is voted on regarding policy is discussed at the Trustee Board. AM also noted that the next Trustee Board meeting is in two weeks' time, and the Plant-Based UoB motion will also go to the next Trustee Board meeting. AM and other Officers have met with the relevant students about these ideas, and AM personally used about 20-30 hours to have meetings with students.</p> <p>JC: Question: What are your plans for supporting the transition to the next President?</p> <p>AM: AM commented that they are working on a handover document which is very long, but this will hopefully be helpful for the new President. The document includes what the role entails, who the key stakeholders are, who are great people to work with in the University, my contact details, and ongoing projects (e.g. consent course, community pantry). AM further commented that they have reviewed the incoming Presidents' manifesto too and noted who they should contact to help with their manifesto implementation. AM will have 121s with them when they have finished their degree.</p> <p>JC: Question: What initiatives would you use to help to increase voter turnout in elections? In particular as a lot of students do not like incentives being used for this.</p> <p>AM: AM noted that incentives help to drive turnout, and that the Guild cannot have an Officer Team that is elected on, for example, 1000 votes. AM further noted that Student Unions across the country use incentives, and that the Officer Team definitely want there to be more push during Welcome Week for Student Voice. AM commented that the Guild is not doing many incentives for the By-Election, and that the Guild will not get rid of incentives altogether.</p>

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	<p>RH: Well done on your report, it's incredibly detailed.</p> <p>RH: Question: For the next Chair of the Trustee Board, what reach and engagement is being undertaken?</p> <p>AM: AM noted that the Guild is using an organisation called Diversify to help with applicants from a diverse range of backgrounds. The role has been shared on LinkedIn too. The Guild has talked about the diversity of Birmingham in relevant promotions, and how as a Students Union we should be at the forefront of that.</p> <p>RH: Question: Do you want to expand on the handling of the marking boycott?</p> <p>AM: AM met with the VC on the same morning that the boycott was announced, and asked the VC if it was ethical to take pay from staff who are striking, particularly during a cost of living crisis where staff need money.</p> <p>RH: Question: Are we in line with other Russell Group Universities for cost of living support?</p> <p>AM: I am happy that we haven't done lump sums of money, which some other Universities have done, as some students do need more than £100 per month, and some students do not need £100 more at all. We are putting the money into the community pantry, support funds, and hardship funds. We have worked on a priority campaign which has involved devising lots of different types of support for students.</p> <p>RH: I would like to praise you on your handling of the external memberships idea at the All Student Meeting.</p> <p>ER: Question: What did you learn from attending Sports Night as security?</p> <p>AM: AM noted that it was good and very professional. Some people were not let in as they were too drunk, and some were not let in as</p>

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	<p>they did not have ID. AM was provided with instructions on what to do with a body camera.</p> <p>AM and the Panel thanked each other and AM left the meeting.</p>
<p>3:30pm- 3:45pm</p> <p>International Officer</p>	<p>AL joined the meeting.</p> <p>SD: You have done a really great job!</p> <p>SD: Question: How have you been promoting safety on campus?</p> <p>AL: AL noted that they have been having regular meetings and have been talking with the Security Team. Incidents have happened near the canal, not just on campus. AL has talked to a student and their friend who were affected, and have also been working with the Community Welfare Team, who have got the Selly Express extended to Selly Court. Students have been concerned about accommodation near to the canal.</p> <p>SD: Question: How are the Language Cafes going?</p> <p>AL: AL noted that the cafes are going well and are usually every month, there have been six this academic year so far for roughly 400 people in total. We ensure that students can sit at the event instead of standing. At the last one we had about 50 people, but this might be due to exams and assignments currently happening. Budget-wise, we spent around £30 per Language Café this Semester. I would like to do a Language Café and Picnic event at the Green Heart, in a few weeks. This event will require ticket registration but it will be free.</p> <p>SD: Question: How is your work with the International Student Team going?</p> <p>AL: AL noted that International students still need to check in after exams. AL is going to challenge colleges i.e. have they planned any meaningful sessions for International students such as development sessions. AL will also continue checking in for the University announcement.</p>

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	<p>ER: You have done really good work again, especially with keeping Dubai students included.</p> <p>ER: Question: How are you promoting safety and careers content?</p> <p>AL: AL flagged that attendance for the safety lecture was not good, it had less than 50 students. I sent an initial message, and the students who attended the safety lecture have relevant information e.g. Selly Express, West Midlands Police etc. I was unable to do the communication during Officer Elections. I am going to send out emails this week. For careers, I've been working closely with the Careers Network and specifically their Postgraduate Team. We've been working on promoting mentoring and career opportunities for Postgraduate students.</p> <p>ER: Question: Do you want to continue with the Language Café next year as it has been successful?</p> <p>AL: AL confirmed that she would like to continue with the Language Café events.</p> <p>RH: You have done a lot of fantastic work, you are doing a great job and are very contactable.</p> <p>RH: Question: Could you elaborate more on the scam guide? Have you considered doing a poster or leaflet?</p> <p>AL: AL noted that this is a very good idea. For avoiding scams, AL has posted some content on her Instagram stories. AL has had some meetings with students who have been scammed in to losing significant amounts of money. AL would like the guide to be more detailed and maybe record some accessible videos. AL would also like to mention to them to be very careful when coming across suspicious calls, emails and letters, especially when related to their visa.</p> <p>BH: Question: I would like to ask about the student experience in Dubai – do you have any ideas for bringing them closer to us?</p>

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	<p>AL: AL noted that the Officers cannot do anything at the moment, as their politics and laws are quite different to the UK. For example, they are not allowed to have manifestos in the same way that we are due to the laws of the land in Dubai. There are also different laws around LGBTQ+ rights and marriage laws in Dubai. AL noted that Officers are focusing on more support for their student leaders, societies, and also looking at exchange opportunities.</p> <p>JC: Question: How is progress on the Commonwealth Scholarship?</p> <p>AL: AL noted that this was not originally raised by us or our students. It was raised by others, and they asked for the scholarship amount to increase due to the cost of living crisis. The Pro-Vice Chancellor of Education is the Chair of the Commonwealth Scholarship. AL noted that she is waiting to hear from him.</p> <p>JC: Well done on your work!</p> <p>AL and the Panel thanked each other and AL left the meeting.</p>
<p>3:45pm- 3:58pm</p> <p>Sports Officer</p>	<p>FC joined the meeting.</p> <p>The Panel asked FC if she had any updates since submitting her report.</p> <p>FC noted that she had one update about the Sports Night takeover – this was that another takeover was going to take place this week.</p> <p>JC: Question: What are your plans for the Commonwealth event?</p> <p>FC: FC commented that the event is happening on 24th June The event will involve UoB Sport and UoB alumni. FC would really like to make it a spectator event. There will be a social element, food trucks, and stands. The event clashes with an Open Day, so there will be training slots in the morning for prospective students. There will also be a squash event happening with it being a Commonwealth.</p>

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	<p>JC: Question: How is the planning for the Sports Ball going? Will there be fair pricing?</p> <p>FC: FC noted that her and others managed to freeze the pricing from last year. Traditionally Sports Ball has been open to new committee members and students who will be leaving, we have managed to get 200 more spaces for students. FC noted that they also got a sponsor for the event too.</p> <p>RH: You have been doing lots of great work!</p> <p>RH: Question: What will the Hardship Fund look like? Will it be sports-specific, and will there be a particular amount?</p> <p>FC: The process is more complicated than I thought. I have made some good progress on it. I have worked with Student Services and UoB Sport on it. Student Services have received funding from the government for hardship funds. I would like to pass the work to the next Sports Officer as it might not be finished by the time I have finished my role.</p> <p>RH: Question: Has there been any important feedback from Sport Exec Groups?</p> <p>FC: There has not been any major feedback.</p> <p>ER: I love the idea of the Commonwealth Legacy event!</p> <p>ER: Question: How is progress for the Fossil Free Careers campaign?</p> <p>FC: FC noted that there is no timeline at the moment. We need to get the Guild on board. I can also input on high committees that I am on.</p> <p>SD: Question: Were any changes implemented as a result of the Sustainability Forum?</p> <p>FC: FC noted that she I got a number of ideas from groups who attended. FC made a survey to sent out to the groups to circulate to</p>

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	<p>their students, asking how they want us to prioritize the issues that they brought to the meeting. FC would like to take this feedback to the new Head of Sustainability at the University.</p> <p>FC and the Panel thanked each other and FC left the meeting.</p>
<p>3:59pm- 4:23pm</p> <p>Activities & Employability Officer</p>	<p>IL joined the meeting.</p> <p>The Panel asked IL if she had any updates since submitting her report.</p> <p>IL noted that she did not have any updates.</p> <p>SD: You have done a great job on meeting your aims and have done a lot of great work!</p> <p>SD: Question: Could you tell us more about the Drag DJ event?</p> <p>IL: IL noted that they are keeping FAB as engagement with FAB has been low (and changing it completely is therefore not financially viable), so we are just changing one element. There will be a Drag DJ hosted that night for the event.</p> <p>SD: Question: Could you tell us more about the formal wear clothes swap?</p> <p>IL: IL commented that this is still in planning stages. IL publicised the last one on social media. IL would like to expand the demographics of students who attend the clothes swaps as well. IL would like this particular clothes swap to mainly be suits and dresses.</p> <p>ER: The paperless club entry is a great idea. The current system is very difficult for bar staff.</p> <p>ER: Question: How will the paperless entry work e.g. app, QR code?</p>

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	<p>IL: It will be a single-use QR code which students will get to their account. Students will not have to come and collect their tickets. There will be a specific website that we will have to use.</p> <p>ER: This idea is a great and students think it's great too.</p> <p>ER: Question: Has there been any progress on the reduction of single-use plastic for club nights?</p> <p>IL: IL commented that this was not the case, but that she would like to hand this project to the new Activities and Employability Officer. IL is currently working with the Facilities Manager and Venues Manager on this, as it is not really financially viable at the moment. IL noted that one concern is that they have to keep buying and replacing cups, and the Guild would also need dishwashers and space for the dishwashers for the cups.</p> <p>RH: You have done a great job. You are also good at breaking your work down.</p> <p>RH: Questions: Could I ask about digitalising handovers for committee members?</p> <p>IL: IL noted Training for committee members was intense when they did it. They would like to make training more straightforward, clearer, and easier. They would also like to ensure that there are more specific/clearer responsibilities for committee roles. We have a new Systems Development role in the groups team which will involve moving a lot of processes to digital e.g. we are trialling online Finance Systems.</p> <p>RH: There have been lots of changes with COVID-19 too, and you have put in lots of support for committees especially with handovers.</p> <p>JC: You have been working on lots of events, and your TikTok videos are great!</p> <p>JC: Question: Could I ask about the development in terms of pricing for Grad Ball?</p>

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	<p>IL: There was one Grad Ball ticket that was £10 cheaper and one that was £5 cheaper. These tickets went very quickly. There will be a variety of food options, and vendors have agreed with the Guild to sell food for certain prices (e.g. around £5).</p> <p>IL and the Panel thanked each other and IL left the meeting.</p>
4:23pm-4:36pm	As RH did not attend their slot, the meeting closed early.