



## Communities Committee Meeting - 01-12-2021

Attendance: DB (Communities Chair), CH (LGBTQ+ Rep), JN (Local Students' Rep), EMe (International Rep), AW (President), KM (VP), LJ (Trans and NB Rep), MA (Assistant LGBTQ+ Rep), ME (Assistant SwD Rep)

Apologies: PA (EM Rep), DM (Assistant WCS Rep)

Absent: ES (Assistant Int. Rep), JR (Assistant EM Rep)

Location: Conference Room

Agenda:

Updates

EDI Fund

SU Associations

\*Minutes Pass\*



## Updates

EMe: Have a christmas event on thursday at Hatfield, should be good. We have a band and a pub quiz with drinks and waffles

JN: I made a post saying happy christmas, no emails

CH: We did intro posts, going to do a christmas social next week - probably joint. Have a plan for a holiday campaign collaborating with cuth's welfare focused on supporting lgbtq+ students going home. Think I will have 2 hours of drop ins next week

MA: I just help CH

LJ: Been talking with CH about that campaign, been trying to get in contact with the trans association to see if they know what is being done at a wider uni level to support trans students. Want more signposting for the gender expression fund

AW: Have you got anywhere with them?

LJ: No so I am trying again

AW: I don't think the trans association have a president

CH: Trans association is a part of LGBT+ association but also separate

AW: There is a conversation to be had about what colleges want from associations - besides from International Students Association, they are a bit shit. I don't think they have good representation at a uni level - the uni often equate common rooms with associations but they get poor engagement - will get to this later

ME: Been talking and brainstorming about what we could do, I want to start putting other students with disabilities in contact with each other, just some group chats. I've also thought about a work buddies scheme for students with ADHD as it can be really difficult to focus on your own

DB: Went to the working group, planning to do a Christmas social next week. Been emailing SwD association but they aren't doing anything. I want a fund to help with assessment costs for SEND - there is some support at uni level but they can't disclose how much they can give, do have a meeting with them next week

## EDI Fund

DB: It can be events or projects for training - we can get up to 5k. Any thoughts?

AW: We are thinking about getting this training - it was about £700 and is a lot to pay every year but you can get 100 people to do it, 15 do it interactively and others can watch. The trustees wanted to get it and do it with the exec. It is basically EDI training and we looked into various options at the trustee meeting. We are doing it anyway but it is not a sexy project for this proposal

CH: I have some vague ideas: if we could host workshops from external providers of things like sexual violence against minorities, it could be done with welfare. Workshops about those



issues are normally based on cis het people but if there was a provider who focused on it against minorities I think it would be beneficial. Secondly a cuth's EDI fund - not sure if it's too similar to participation fund or any of the others. Then wider training for the JCR

DB: We could put on as a project a series of workshops where you get a speaker in your kind of remit of communities committee but something you can't speak on as the rep

AW: Running a speaker event or workshop would be cool - would more likely get funding if you demonstrated that was part of something like a campaign week

CH: We were going to do a documentary week weren't we? Like hosting a communities committee joint social week with documentaries on different branches of communities committee - we could do this linked with workshops and speakers

LJ: Having individual minority groups research and assess the individual speakers as they will know what is the best for that would work well

DB: If we have an overarching theme or cohesive idea for the week and when

AW: You don't just want minority week

CH: February is LGBTQ+ history month - if we did last couple days of January and first days of February then it works

DB: Is it worth having a joint thing or should it be individual?

AW: You can do something joint but don't just do it for the fund. The documentary idea is cool but does not require money

CH: It is the workshops and speakers that do

AW: That works well in the context of February

CH: Nothing urgent needs to be done in cuths

AW: Can be something physical instead of a project: like a ramp

CH: Are we doing this fund for college or for the JCR

AW: This is for the JCR, access to buildings affects JCR members. College are keen to pay for things like this though if we ask

CH: What about getting a ramp for the laundry step at parsons?

AW: Not really part of the fund, we can just get college to do it. If there is some sort of tech we can buy and run a loan scheme?

EMe: International students struggle with guarantors, can there be a scheme similar to what the university used to do with being international student guarantors

AW: That was previously a scheme but it is frozen and about to be started up again

CH: Can welfare training be covered by this? Minds Out and Stonewall have LGBTQ+ specific welfare as not sure of the scope of knowledge of the SU and the uni

AW: We need to demonstrate we are providing a lasting benefit



CH: If I go to the training I can make resources from it and then deliver it

AW: We could have it as more than one space and doing training is a good idea

CH: Could expand it to college staff

DB: Are we allowed to get college staff trained

AW: Say it politely and potentially

CH: There is one about trans awareness which would be good for college staff in terms of even the admin side, it is 3 hours long

AW: If there was a workshop that can get JCR officers and college on it that would be good as Cuth's has a lot of trans and non binary students applying due to the nature of the accommodation. I can take that to college as they want something to put forward

JN: There was a transport fund at one point but I can't find anything about it and IC doesn't know about it

DB: Has a broad reach as students live out from college for a number of reasons

AW: Don't think the fund would cover it as a rolling cost but potentially college

DB: Could people do more research by Friday and come up with some more concrete ideas. Would be useful if PA was here

AW: One idea might be a bit ambitious. In Jan I am running tours in Cuth's for first generation students where there is a separate open day. They were keen for Cuth's specifically due to our history with local students and first generation students. Some scheme like that for underrepresented groups would be good with events - don't know what form it would take

JN: Can get in touch with my old school as it is something my school did and most people are first generation uni students

LJ: DM would have some good ideas about this

AW: One of the good things about common room is that community aspect and level of representation - a longer term project not one for this cycle

DB: Could do it around the open days

AW: Open days are to dispel people's worries about Durham - that experience of being in the college made them want to go and make people realise they could go there. The university wants to get rid of them but it would harm their representation even more. You can do events at the post offer holder visit days

LJ: It would help seeing a potential community in Durham for sure

AW: Deadline for this terms fund allocation is in 10 days

CH: I am going to try get the trans awareness training in

AW: Will send an email to college as TW wants to know who is doing what. Is the idea we would get and pay for the training with the relevant college and JCR officers?



CH: Training is online and it is signing up for a session they are running

AW: If you could find someone that we can get in that would be better

CH: They do bespoke training

AW: If they could tailor it to look at the admin side that would be really beneficial

## SU Associations

DB: Why does ISA work?

EMe: I think we have a bunch of people who care

DB: Has anyone been in contact with their association

CH: Have not been explicitly in touch. We have a wider college group chat for reps but the association doesn't do much

EMe: Certain colleges do their own international things - sometimes the events aren't big enough to accommodate everyone

AW: Association should do more - they should facilitate the group chats instead of leaving it to the college reps. I was contacted by the Women's association who were doing something with all the femsocs

CH: I think one of the officers made it but they don't organise meetings or anything

LJ: It was really strange that there was the stall for trans association at the SU freshers' fair and they haven't posted anything for trans awareness week or literally anything for months

CH: They need to implement buddy systems, we do events with Trevs as they get good engagement. It would be good if we pressured them to do a buddy system so other college get better reach for events. They should make it easier so people don't feel they have to jump through hoops just to be included

AW: I am surprised there hasn't been a meeting with all the reps together, it would help colleges which is what they should be trying to do and enable them to actually represent them. I always wonder what contact they have with students in that role they are trying to represent and so how can they represent them?

CH: They spoke about a social but they never followed through. I would never trust the association to do anything for me. They keep themselves to themselves but they need to know they aren't doing enough

AW: Associations have a lot of oversight from SU officers - the roles don't work as their role does not put them in touch with students. Even with someone good in the role they achieve little as the role is not set up to work well. Writing to the Opportunities Officer would be useful but you have to be careful not to piss people off