



SU Committee Meeting - 26/11/2024

Attendance: LB, ED, RC, CP, CJ, FBH, ST, CR, DM, HT, MM

Apologies: KT

Absent:

Location: Bailey JCR

Introductions and SU Comm Breakdown

LB: SU Comm gets to vote on how I vote in Assembly. The main focus of Assembly is what policy the SU should run, mostly trying to impact University policy. It can vary a lot- sometimes it's interesting, sometimes it's not. Anyone can submit their own motion and if you are interested you should. The SU is a good place with a lot of power but it's not always utilised. It doesn't matter whether or not you love the SU, it's about how their power is used. There's a lot of spaces on Assembly if you're interested.

DM: As a JCR we are always pushing for LB to have the loudest voice he can and there will be a lot of stuff coming up in this year with staff-student relationships.

LB: Last year there was a lot of Durham Union members and the makeup of Assembly is very interesting: The Sabbatical Officers, Academic Affairs Committee Representative (x1), SU Education Committee Representative (x1), SU Community Committee Representative (x1), Undergraduate Place (x2) and Postgraduate Place (x2) from each of Durham University's faculties, Associations Representatives (x1 from each recognised Association), College Place (x1 from each of Durham University's Colleges), JCR Presidents' Committee Representative (x1), MCR Presidents' Committee Representative (x1), Open Place (x7), Student Groups Place (x8), Student Group Committee Representative (x1), DUCK (Durham University Charities Kommittee) Committee Representative (x1). They've changed this from previous years and added more part-time SU roles. The SU has 3 officers- Dan as President, Katherine as Education and Moi as Community. The JCR and MCR Presidents' Representatives are both DM.

DM: It mirrors a lot of structure that we have here at Cuth's as a charity with trustees. We are at a time now where relations between JCRs and the SU are the best they've been in a long time. Partly because of the role I have as JCR Presidents' Committee Representative.

LB: We will be electing a Chair at this meeting. Often it's quite good to have someone you disagree with to have the position of Chair as they have to be neutral and don't have a vote in Assembly. Assembly can be quite quick.

Agenda for 5 Dec 2024

LB: They've made the agenda much more readable this year. We don't need to look at the opening or the routine business items and focus on the items for discussion. Sometimes I



message on the day of Assembly if there are changes to the motion on the day. I will make the final decision but I will try to give you the opportunity to let you have a vote. Essentially they are changing the Standing Orders because they're outdated. Some things are more opinion based- they've decided not to operate without the Officer Scrutiny Committee and the Assembly Procedures Committee. We can send amendments before tomorrow so if any one has any we can send them in. 8.7.7 is interesting, it's getting rid of questions about reports. All the policy processes are still there but have been moved to 12. They've changed when the Chair is elected.

DM: I don't think we can support that because they won't have anyone to elect from except our JCR SU Rep, SU part-time officers and the SU full-time officers. We are the only JCR whose officer has a MOU when they are elected.

LB: Maybe not even anyone but our JCR SU Rep because they wouldn't be technically an Assembly member. They've also got rid of voting records.

DM: They may have it so the Chair is not a member of Assembly but just open to election. I think we should recommend that-

LB: If we pause the chair discussion until we see what DL (SU President) says.

DM: What do we think about the removal of questions?

LB: Essentially officers have to report on what they've done and they've changed it so people can't ask what they've done. From 'Assembly believes' 3. we could gather that they're removing it from the Standing Orders to allow for it to be a matter of discretion. They haven't been posting their minutes online so I can't see the voting records. I can imagine the reason they've stopped it is so they don't have to do the work. Their reasoning is 'Students are more time poor than previously, and do not have the same amount of time to commit to democratic activities. Assembly must adapt to not place an unnecessary burden on its members.'

CR: I think they should have a record as those people are elected representatives.

DM: Should we recommend an amendment?

Passed on a general 'aye'

LB: If you have any disagreements please speak up. In terms of the amendment we won't worry about the questions but we want them to keep voting records.

RC: That was eye opening.

Meeting adjourned.