**The National Council of the Union of Students in Ireland**

**Minutes**

**National Council USI, NC 59.6**

**Institute of Technology, Dundalk**

**14 December 2018**

**Chairperson: Cathy Pembroke**

**Deputy Chairperson: Chris Newell**

**NAMES APPEARING ON THE ATTENDANCE LIST:**

(No liability and/or reproach accepted for difficulties deciphering manuscript notations)

**QUBSU**

Connor Veighey Sinéad Henry Rachel Powell

Robert Murtagh J??G Gault

**LITSU**

Philip Desmond Gavin Farrell Aisling McRory

**TCDSU**

Shane De Rís

**STACSSU**

Marie Lyons Étaín Ryan

**NUIGSU**

Megan Reilly Calre Austick Eibhlín Seoighthe

**MSU**

Leon Diop

**GMITSU**

Aaron Burke Victor O’Loughlin

**AITSU**

Catherine Power Áine Daly

**ITSSU**

Tara Ní Roghallaigh

**WITSU**

Marie Sheedy John Fortune Darren Malone

**DCUSU**

Callaghan Commons Vito Moloney Burke Aisling Fagan

Craig McHugh

**DKITSU**

Maria Maguire Aaron Gegan Aaron Byrne

**UCCSU**

Kelly Wyle Niamh Connery David Cronin

**ITTDSU**

Amy Keating Lee Bennett Megan O’Neill

**DITSU**

Pierre Yimbog Daniel Sogaolu Jess Morris

Rebecca Gorman Róisín O’Donovan

**ITBSU**

Luke Daly Kris Sulkowski Martyna Czerwinska

Seán Byrne

**LYITSU**

William Daly Siobhán Howe

**IADTSU**

Chloe Power

**LITSU**

Ashling McRory

**ITTSU**

Jessica Murphy Petrina Comerford Jospeh Kavanagh

**UUSU**

Andrew McAnallen Meghan Downey Conor Keenan

Kevin McStravock Collette Cassidy

**Bord na nOifigeach, AMLÉ**

Síona Cahill, President

Oisín Hassan, Deputy President / Vice President for Academic Affairs

Michelle Byrne, Vice President Campaigns

Damien McClean, Vice President for Welfare

Barry Clohessy, Vice President for the Border, Midlands and Western Region

Colm O’Halloran, Vice President for the Dublin Region

Lorna Fitzpatrick, Vice President for the Southern Region

Aoife Ní Dhéisigh, Vice President for the Irish Language/Leas Uachtarán don Ghaeilge

Aisling Cusack, VP for Equality and Citizenship

Andrew Forde, Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs

**NAMES FOR WHOM APOLOGIES WERE OFFERED TO THE MEETING:**

Ross Kelly, NCADSU; Issey Gould, NCADSU; Emma Bonner, UUSU; Owen McCloskey, UUSU; Emma-Louise Duffy, GMITSU; Gary Tobin, GMITSU; Katie Deegan MSU; Paul Kenny MSU; Lim Lockyer MSU; Jade Foynes LITSU; Paul Lynch LYITSU; Karl McGovern DCUSU; Vanessa Molloy ITSSU; Laura Muldoon ITSSU’ Grace Latham IADTSU; Miamh Grennan IADTSU;

**1. Minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting (16ú Samhain 2018, IT Tralee) were proposed by Ulster University Students’ Union, seconded by GMITSU and **passed without objection.**

**2. Matters Arising**

 There were no matters arising.

**5. Finance Report**

 The USI General Manager, Ben Archibald, presented the Finance Report. He noted that USI’s financial year is not aligned with most of the expenditure taking place in the first half of the year, and affiliation fees income taking place later. He reminded MO’s that they could avail of payments plans to reduce their affiliation fees balance.

**3. Officer Reports**

***The Vice President for the Northern Region*** had nothing to add to her report.

There were no questions.

***An Leas Uachtarán don Ghaeilge / The Vice President for the Irish Language*** had nothing to add to her report.

There were no questions.

DCUSU and MSU thanked the officer for her work on Gael Fees.

***The Vice President for the Dublin Region*** had nothing to add to his report.

Kris Sulkowski, ITBSU thanked the VP for the Dublin Area or attending a recent protest in Blanchardstown.

***The Vice President for the Southern Region*** had nothing to add to her report.

Jessica Murphy, IT Tralee SU thanked the VP for the Southern Area for her support on the recent action against the closure of the Women’s Centre in Tralee.

***The Vice President for the BMW Region*** had nothing to add to his report.

There were no questions.

***The Vice President for Campaigns*** had nothing to add to her report.

 Pierre Yimbog, DITSU sought an update on the survey on union development.

The VP for Campaigns noted that the report is currently being compiled.

Victor O’Loughlin, GMITSU noted his disatisfaction with the recent event on Climate Change.

It was noted that the event was not a USI event and took place at a difficult time of the year when offiicers were committed to other events.

Marie Lyons, STACSSU sought an update on the Nursing Campaign.

The VP for Campaigns noted the campaign is ongoing. She added that she is working with the INMO on plans for the second semester.

Robert Murtagh, QUBSU commended the VP Campaigns for her address at the housing protest.

***The Vice President for Welfare*** had nothing to add to his report.

Aaron Burke, GMITSU asked why there had been no campaign for Movember and why Men’s Mental Health Day had been ignored.

The VP for Welfare replied that he had not been asked to address the issues and had no mandate.

Kevin McStravock, UUSU asked if there were plans for Recharge to be rolled out in Northern Ireland.

The VP for Welfare noted that the campaign was funded by the HSE, but that he is working on it.

Rebecca Gorman, DITSU asked if there had been difficulties with the Recharge Campaign.

The VP for Welfare noted that is has been a learning curve.

Maria Maguire, DKITSU congratulated the VP for Welfare on the Recharge Campaign.

***The Vice President for Academic Affairs / Deputy President*** presented his report. He added that work is ongoing on the Pharmacy Students Campaign, particularly on issues regarding placement.

Callaghan Commons, DCUSU sought an update on NSTEP.

The VP for Academic Affairs noted that a strategic plan was being prepared for by all stakeholders which would include clarification on staff positions and job descriptions.

Megan Reilly, NUI Galway SU asked about the European Student Card.

The VP for Academic Affairs replied outlined difficulties encountered regarding mobility and data protection.

Pierre Yimbog, DITSU noted his disappointment at the level of support from USI for the TU merger.

The VP for Academic Affairs noted that formal advice on the merger is difficulty due to the vast nature of the project. He suggested a meeting between all three unions would be helpful and pledged to facilitate work between all parties.

***The President*** presented her report as read.

She addressed questions on other officers’ reports regarding the Climate Change Event; HSE funding for Recharge; and Men’s Health Day.

She also committed to supporting the work of the VP for Academic Affairs on the TU merger.

Clare Austick, NUIGSU sought an update on the President’s meeting regarding Consent Workshops.

The President noted that she had met with Minister Mitchel O’-Connor who is concerned about recent events on various campuses. An internal working group has been established to seek proposals on consent education.

Shane De Rís, TCDSU noted that nine action points had been agreed at the Emergency National Council following the Budget and only one action points had been completed. He added that as a result, the President did not have the confidence of TCDSU.

The President contested the remarks of TCDSU and highlighted her ongoing work on the action points. She noted that she raised the issue of higher education funding at every opportunity, but that it was difficult to secure support. She added that accommodation and SUSI were much more popular issues with current politicians.

The President gave a brief report on progress made on each of the nine action points.

Pierre Yimbog, DITSU asked if USI could exert any pressure on the HEA and questioned the value of USI’s seat.

The President replied that the HEA is effective and that USI’s seat is extremely important.

Maria Maguire, DKITSU noted DKITSU’s satisfaction with the progress of USI’s work and suggested USI’s workload is often reactive and requires officers to prioritise some items over others.

Rebecca Gorman, DITSU queries why officers’ expenses were absent from reports.

The President noted that the USI administrator has been on leave and that some officer had yet to submit expenses due to the particularly busy time of year.

Leon Diop, MSU highlighted the importance of healthy dialogue, balance and constructive criticism when holding Officerboard to account. He added that USI Officerboard had the full confidence of MSU.

Shane De Rís, TCDSU noted that it was the responsibility of National Council to hold Officerboard to account. He further noted that it was futile for National Council to agree action points on behalf of the membership of USI, if members of National Council were not willing to hold Officerboard to account.

He suggested that it was difficult to have faith in the organisation when the accountable body is being ignored.

The President noted that she fully respects National Council and welcomed constructive criticism on her work and the work of Officerboard.

The President committed to contacting MO presidents individually for their thoughts on higher education funding.

Pierre Yimbog, DITSU highlighted the importance of constructive criticism and observed that the criticism being discussed was of roles and the associated responsibilities, not individuals.

***Due to time constraints it was agreed to postpone item 4on the agenda and proceed to item 6. The Media Report will be discussed at the next National Council.***

**6. Items for Agreement**

**6(a) Partnership with SUAS**

The President presented the proposal as circulated to MOs.

The President proposed the motion which was seconded by MSU and **was passed without objection.**

**6(b) Membership of ‘Stop Climate Chaos’ Coalition**

The President presented the proposal as circulated to MOs.

The President proposed the motion which was seconded by NUIGSU and **was passed without objection.**

**6(c) ICCL Electoral Act Reform**

The President presented the proposal as circulated to MOs.

The President proposed the motion which was seconded by IADTSU and **was passed without objection.**

**6(d) Women’s Day Walkout**

The Vice President for Welfare presented the proposal as circulated to MOs.

The Vice President for Welfare proposed the motion which was seconded by MSU and **was passed without objection.**

**8. Items for Information**

**7(a) Housing Survey**

The Housing Survey has been circulated. MOs were encouraged to complete it.

**7(b) Motion Collaboration**

Thursday 21st February has been set for a Motion Collaboration session.

**7(c) Postgraduate Stipend Campaign**

The Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs outlined the elements of the campaign and urged MOs to support it.

**7(d) Postgraduate Survey**

The Vice President for Postgraduate Affairs urges MOs to circulate the survey.

**7(e) HEA Higher Education Summit**

 MO Presidents will be invited to the event on 10th January. The President will follow up next week.

**7(f) National Mature Student Gathering**

The Vice President for the Dublin Region and the Vice President for the BMW Region are taking the lead on the event. More information to follow.

**7(g) Women Lead 2019**

Takes place on 25th / 26th January 2019. Registration is now open.

**7(h) USI Elections**

Formal notice of opening of nominations will issue as usual in January.

**7(i) Student Achievement Awards Ireland (SAAI) 2019**

Planning is underway. Likely to take place in April 2019. More information to follow.

The President thanked Dundalk IT Students’ Union for hosting National Council.

The Chairperson congratulated National Council for completing the first half of their year and wished everybody a Happy Christmas.