

**QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST STUDENTS' UNION**

**MINUTES**

Special Meeting of the Students' Union Council  
held on 13 January 2023 at 5.00pm on Microsoft Teams.

**Present:**

Adam Wilson	Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) Undergraduate Faculty Representative
Aidan Moran	Student Officer Campaigns and Engagement
Beatrice Titcombe	Students' Union Council - Postgraduate Representative
Beth Elder	Student Officer Education
Emma Murphy	Union President
Eoin Ussher	Students' Union Council - Queen's Accommodation
Jenny Steele	Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS) Postgraduate Taught Faculty Representative
Jess Hindley	Students' Union Council - Postgraduate Representative
Jessica Crisp	Part-Time - Women Students' Officer
Jomyn Lee	Students' Union Council - International Student Representative (including INTO)
Julien Kolta	Part-Time - International Students' Officer
Kieron Portbury	Student Officer Equality & Diversity
Leo Davies	Part-Time - Student Parents' and Carers' Officer
Molly Quinn	Undergraduate School Representative - School of Law (SLAW)
Monica Amir Saad	Medicine, Health and Life Sciences (MHLS) Undergraduate Faculty Representative
Nadine Curtis	Students' Union Council - MHLS Representative (Undergraduate)
Niamh Bone	Students' Union Council - EPS Representative (Undergraduate)
Olubunmi Favour Olawale	Students' Union Council - Postgraduate Representative
Róisín Costelloe	Students' Union Council - AHSS Representative (Undergraduate)
Ryan Irwin	Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS) Undergraduate Faculty Representative
Sophie McManus	Students' Union Council - AHSS Representative (Undergraduate)
Tiarnan Tracey	Students' Union Council - AHSS Representative (Undergraduate)

**In Attendance:**

DAMIEN CORRIDAN (CLERK OF COUNCIL)  
BARRY CRUICKSHANK (REPRESENTATION SUPPORT OFFICER)  
LOUISE MCGEOUGH (ACADEMIC REPRESENTATION ASSISTANT)  
CIARAN HIGGINS (STUDENTS' UNION DIRECTOR)  
EOIN USHER (UNION SPEAKER)

The Speaker of Council welcomed all attendees to a Special Meeting of the 2022-23 session of the Students' Union Council.

## 1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received for the following Councillors:

Marta Cipriano	Part-Time - Mature and Part-Time Students' Officer
Samantha Emily Koitz	Postgraduate School Rep - School of History, Anthropology, Philosophy and Politics (SHAPP)
Tiffany Gracias	Postgraduate School Rep - Institute of Professional Legal Studies (IPLS)

## 2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

2.1 There were none.

## 3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 There were none.

## 4. COMMUNICATIONS

4.1 Procedure for Conducting Council Business Digitally

(SUC/P/22/72)

The Clerk of Council presented (SUC/P/22/72) on the Procedures for Conducting Council Business Digitally. The salient points included:

- Student Voice Email
- Raise Your Hand
- Live Captions
- Technical Issues
- Location of the Meetings
- Register Your Attendance
- Microphones Off
- Use of the "Chat" Bar
- Speaking
- Propose a Motion
- Procedural Motion
- Point of Information
- Point of Order
- Emergency Motions / Amendments
- Voting on Motions
- Rulings on Meeting Procedures
- Conduct
- Use of Data

5. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS/RULE AMENDMENTS

There were none.

6. BUSINESS FOR CONSIDERATION

There were none.

7. BUSINESS FOR DISCUSSION

There were none.

8. BYE-ELECTIONS

There were none.

9. ELECTIONS

There were none.

10. MOTIONS

*Polling on any of the proposals detailed below shall be scheduled to open on Tuesday 24 January 2023 and close on Thursday 26 January 2023.*

*If any of the proposals below are approved by Council, they do not become policies of the Students' Union until such time as they are approved by referendum.*

10.1 **Referendum Motion: QUB Should Pay Its Fair Share towards Students' Cost of Survival**

*The Students' Union shall conduct a referendum to determine the opinion of the membership of the Union on the following proposal:*

**QUB Should Pay Its Fair Share towards Students' Cost of Survival**

In the current economic situation, the already vulnerable state that students are in has worsened.

Queen's needs to address this economic crisis seriously and give students what they need for basic survival.

Students **demand** that:

- QUB works with Translink to subsidise the cost of transport for students.
- QUB works with local eateries to subsidise the cost of food for students.
- QUB works with placement institutions to provide bursaries for placement students and cover placement travel costs.
- QUB to extend its staff Cost of Living payment to all student workers.
- QUB to work with energy distributors to provide a discount for students.

If these demands are not met, the Students' Union may use radical political action to challenge senior University management, which may include demonstrations, acts of civil disobedience and accommodation rent strikes, until these demands are met.

Proposer: Aidan Moran (Student Officer Campaigns and Engagement)  
 Seconder: Beatrice Titcombe (Student Councillor)

[The motion was debated.]

Following a ballot of those present and voting the result was:

20 For  
 0 Against  
 1 Abstention

The proposal was carried

## 10.2 **Referendum Motion: Oppose Increases in Student Tuition and Accommodation Fees**

*The Students' Union shall conduct a referendum to determine the opinion of the membership of the Union on the following proposal:*

### **Oppose Increases in Student Tuition and Accommodation Fees**

The University has recently approved increases to international, postgraduate and GB tuition fees – to take effect in the next academic year.

The University has also approved increases to QUB Accommodation Fees from next year.

Students **demand** that:

- Increases to Student Tuition and QUB Accommodation Fees be reversed now, especially as students struggle to survive financially during a cost-of-living crisis.

If these demands are not met, the Students' Union may use radical political action to challenge senior University management, which may include demonstrations, acts of civil disobedience and accommodation rent strikes, until these demands are met.

Proposer: Aidan Moran (Student Officer Campaigns and Engagement)  
 Seconder: Beatrice Titcombe (Student Councillor)

[The motion was debated.]

Following a ballot of those present and voting the result was:

21 For

0 Against  
0 Abstention

The proposal was carried.

### 10.3 Referendum Motion: QUB Should Invest its Substantial Financial Assets in Student-Owned Co-Operatives

*The Students' Union shall conduct a referendum to determine the opinion of the membership of the Union on the following proposal:*

#### **QUB Should Invest its Substantial Financial Assets in Student-Owned Co-Operatives**

Students are suffering in this cost-of-living crisis, exposed and vulnerable to exploitation from those profiting from the difficulties of others. Landlords can increase rent, energy companies can raise prices, food suppliers can charge more for basics necessities. Their profits increase while students suffer.

Energy, food, and housing resources are not controlled institutions that prioritise student welfare.

Students **demand:**

- That QUB use its substantial financial assets, investments, and estate (property) to help build resilience to student vulnerability by establishing assets that help provide energy, food, and housing to students.
- These assets should be democratically organised and run by students to ensure student welfare is prioritised.

QUB should prioritise the following actions:

- The University and partner with co-operative investors to buy properties off landlords in Belfast that have had their HMO licenses revoked and create student co-operatives from them.
- Use the land held by QUB to host democratically owned food production (greenhouses, gardens, etc.) for use by students.
- Use the buildings owned by QUB to host democratically owned food storage and distribution (food banks) run by students.
- Use its access to resources and institutional wealth to create democratically owned energy production facilities that can subsidise energy costs for students.
- The Students' Union to administrate and coordinate the democratic decision-making and administration of these co-operative resources.

If these demands are not met, the Students' Union may use radical political action to challenge senior University management, which may include demonstrations, acts of civil disobedience and accommodation rent strikes, until these demands are met.

Proposer: Aidan Moran (Student Officer Campaigns and Engagement)  
Seconder: Beatrice Titcombe (Student Councillor)

[The motion was debated.]

Following a ballot of those present and voting the result was:

19 For  
0 Against  
2 Abstention

The proposal was carried.

11. REPORT OF THE MANAGEMENT BOARD AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There were none.

12. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There were none.

13. REPORTS FROM OTHER UNION COMMITTEES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There were none.

14. REPORTS FROM UNIVERSITY COMMITTEES

There were none.

15. CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS

There were none.

16. QUESTIONS (TO ELECTED STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES)

There were none.

17. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

There were none.

18. DATE OF NEXT STATUTORY MEETING OF THE STUDENTS' UNION COUNCIL

The fourth Meeting of the Students' Union Council 2022-23 will take place Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2023 at 5.00p.m. in Blue Sky Room, Level 1, Queen's Students' Union.