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**Meeting:** COUNCIL/SENATE/STUDENTS' UNION COMMITTEE

**Date and Time:** Thursday 6 December 2018 at 2.15pm

**Venue:** 4 West Boardroom

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**Present:** Professor P Lambert (Interim Chair) Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Learning & Teaching)

Miss E Alcock	President, Students' Union (SU)
Mr B Baines	Student Representative
Mr J Kitchen	Education Officer, SU
Mr J Mifsud	Student Representative
Professor C Mitchell	Elected by Senate
Mr B Palmer	Student Representative
Ms K Robinson	Elected by Council
Dr J Troyer	Elected by Senate

<b>In Attendance:</b> Dr C Harris	Secretary
Dr J Harris	Director of Academic Registry
Professor A Heath	Academic Director, CLT
Mr M Humphriss	University Secretary (for minute nos. 1168-9(1))
Dr N Kemp	Director of Policy & Planning (for minute nos.1168-9(3))
Mr A McLaughlin	Chief Executive, SU
Mr A Payne	Director of Student Services
Miss Alisha Lobo	Community Officer, SU (for minute nos. 1168—9(3))

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### ACTION

#### 1168. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and at his invitation the Committee agreed to vary the order of the agenda.

#### 1169. STUDENTS' UNION BUSINESS

##### (1) PREVENT Strategy

The SU Community Officer introduced Paper CSSU18/19-008, explaining that the SU wanted its concerns formally noted. It had previously expressed concern in 2015 about the effect of the PREVENT legislation and wanted more transparency. The SU was requesting information on what information and data had been provided to the OfS, what training has been implemented and the effect on wider policies such as academic freedom.

The University Secretary responded that he had welcomed the helpful discussion he had held with the SU Community Officer prior to the meeting, and made the following points:

## ACTION

- The University has to be compliant with the legislation but was careful not to be over zealous; he had held discussions with the UCU and the SU;
- Moving from HEFCE to OfS as regulator had changed the situation though not the underlying principles; the OfS held reviews with high risk universities and also took random samples;
- PREVENT referrals for far right extremism were rising;
- He did not believe that the PREVENT duty was in contradiction to the combating religious hate crime project;
- The statement on the OfS FAQs that there can be 'evidence by proxy' was unhelpful; the Home Office needed reassurance from the OfS that universities were taking PREVENT seriously and universities active in the welfare space may spot if someone was being radicalised;
- He was happy to share training materials, risk assessments and the published data return (which was on the website) with the SU to give reassurance.

The SU Community Officer confirmed that she was content with the data provided and the transparency.

During discussion the following points were made:

- The project combating religious hate crime was being led by the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Team and would build on the #NeverOK work; it may involve additional provision for groups on campus not affiliated to the Chaplaincy, visible celebration of religious festivals and talks on the conflict between science and religion;
- In the south west the far right was a concern to the Police and PREVENT; the PREVENT mechanism was uncomfortable but was useful to deal with students radicalised by neo-Nazis;
- The University had a robust Freedom of Expression Policy which directed organisers of speakers from political parties or controversial speakers to the University Secretary for approval; no event had been cancelled but some did have conditions to ensure they could go ahead with less risk of disruption;
- National organisations have made representation to the OfS about the 'proxy welfare' statement as many are unhappy with it; it may change;
- More people were being trained on PREVENT and a group was looking at the policy; the SU Community Officer had been invited to join the group.

### (2) Library

The SU Education Officer explained the issues with the Library, detailed in Paper CSSU18/19-011, in particular the lack of library study space, lack of water fountains and inadequate toilets.

The University Librarian explained that the University was well aware of the value of developing and investing in the library; in part to improve NSS scores. Inventive ideas were being discussed to improve the

## **ACTION**

space, such as more books on compactor shelves, the size of the stairwells and doors, and updating the shelving, which dated from 1971.

The Director of Policy & Planning outlined capital programme planning, a 10 year programme against cash flow, planned to meet the expectation of a 3% surplus year on year. The Estates Strategy balanced new spend with refurbishment of the original buildings, many of which have reached the end of their functional life. The capital projects planned over the next 5 years were the School of Management building, refurbishment of 3 West and 5 West and then 5 West North new build for specialist laboratories for 5 West. After 5 years there would be financial capacity and decant opportunities for major work on the Library. The drivers included the student experience and health and safety issues on end of building life issues. The University of Bath Campus Masterplan attempted to create more opportunities for development and the BaNES Core Strategy balanced residential and non-residential use to respond to concerns of local residents.

The issues were complex but all options would be looked at to create more space, working with BaNES and within financial constraints.

It was suggested that the Director of Policy & Planning presents on the Campus Masterplan to the next meeting.

**SEC**

During questions the following points were made:

- Since 2014/15 nearly 1000 extra study spaces had been created and the number in the Library had doubled since 1996;
- The possibility of temporary buildings on the space at the back of the Library would be investigated;
- The SU Officers had been told that the study spaces in the new School of Management (SoM) building were only for SoM PG students; this would be checked;
- It was queried whether funds could be raised to improve the library but suggested that this was unlikely.

**DIR P&P**

Recommendations:

- 1 – AGREED that an information sharing working group would be useful for the SU to express quality concerns;
- 2 – This was part of the cashflow affordability and it was too soon to do a feasibility study but the Library was on the estates list for the future.

The emergent Master Plan was consulted on to gain input into prioritisation. It was requested that this was made available to students; link to be sent.

**SEC**

### (3) **Student Parents and Carers**

The SU Community Officer introduced Paper CSSU18/19-009 on Student Parents and Carers, which detailed the provision for parents across campus. She had visited the nursery and found it to be tight on space but that it had won numerous awards. This topic linked with the PG strategy and attracting a breadth of students to the University, hence it was one of the SU Top Ten issues. She explained that a survey for

student parents run with Student Services would provide more information.

The Director of Policy & Planning responded to Recommendation 4 explaining that the University regularly looked at nursery provision and that between 2010/11 and 2012/13 it was not utilised fully with usage below the breakeven requirement of 78%, hence it had required a subsidy. In 2013/14 when the salary sacrifice scheme was introduced the usage was 83%. She stated that the business case was complex, with students receiving 15 free hours and staff 30 free hours. She stated that there was no development zone around the nursery so it was challenging to expand it. The Director of Human Resources had invited suggestion for improvement and there was a Supporting On-Campus Childcare Group.

During the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

- If more flexible hours and school holiday provision were offered it could generate income from staff returning to work and the type of students who applied;
- It was queried whether building upwards was a possibility; to be checked;
- The nursery was unable to adapt to the demand following the Government reform which gave free hours to parents;
- It would be unpopular to give priority to student parents and expect staff to find provision near their home;
- It would be helpful to understand the category of learners (part-time or distance learners would infrequently use the nursery) and the age of the children;
- The preliminary results from the survey indicated that 0.4% of UG students were parents with half of them engaged with Student Services and 12/13% of PGR students were parents with only a small proportion engaged with Student Services;
- There was only one small comment about the nursery in the prospectus; nursery availability was needed to appeal to prospective students and staff;
- For both Government support and the University Hardship Fund the criteria were complex and students were mean tested; if Student Services were unable to provide financial support they could signpost;
- The lack of people trained in nursery care was across the sector and childminding had been investigated, perhaps with a drop off zone for children;
- Being a carer for was a significant issue for some students from widening participation backgrounds and flexibility was needed to support them;
- Removing financial barriers to students succeeding was important but students needed to be clear upfront about their provision for university life.

**CHAIR**

Recommendations:

- 1 – This was already beginning;
- 2 – This work would also include the Student Parents' Group and the Supporting On-Campus Childcare Group;

**ACTION**

3 – This could be investigated through the Student Money Advice service and the SU should encourage students to apply to the Hardship Fund. It was suggested that the Department of Development and Alumni Relations be approached to look for funding for student parents;  
4 – Discussed above.

**CHAIR**

The SU Community Officer and SU were thanked for raising the issue.

(4) **Brexit**

The SU President talked of the effects of Brexit on the University community, as detailed in Paper CSSU18/19-010. The various recommendations were discussed.

Recommendation 5 – The SU President stated that publicly support a People's vote on the final Brexit deal would voice the University's support for the EU community on campus. She read a note from an EU student who was considering Postgraduate study elsewhere and it was noted that staff were leaving as the climate had become more insular and xenophobic. It was suggested that students could write to their MPs. It was noted that caution was needed as not all members of the senior management team were against Brexit and it could cause an unwelcome backlash if the University spoke out.

Recommendation 1 – This had already happened and would continue. UUK supported universities and was lobbying ministers.

Recommendation 2 – It was noted that it was impossible to put in contingency for all the different paths of students abroad at that stage with the level of uncertainty, but that the University's duty of care was guaranteed. Before the 2000 placements each year are undertaken the Placements Officers run briefings and this information would be included as soon as it was known. The EU and UK had confirmed that students would not be deported. Putting money into a fund to support students 'trapped' in Europe would increase their already existent fears, which would not be helpful. Recommendation to be followed up.

**CHAIR/SU  
PRES**

Recommendation 3 – There were already supply issues with building projects. As soon as the impacts were clearer contingency planning would be done. If there was no deal and it was very disastrous then the majority of universities and business would be affected therefore it was impossible to prepare a contingency. The CBI had said that no-one was looking at where consumables came from as it was very resource intensive work. This recommendation was pending until there was more clarity.

Recommendation 4 – Two messages would go out over the Christmas period. Recommendation to be followed up.

**CHAIR/SU  
PRES**

**1170. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2018 (Paper CSSU18/19-007) were APPROVED as a correct record of the proceedings.

**1171. MATTERS ARISING**

Minute 1166(3) The Edge Restructure

The Chair reported that channels of communication had improved between the SU and The Edge with meetings held between the SU President, SU Chief Executive, the Director of Arts and himself.

**1172. DATES OF MEETINGS**

The remainder of the programme of meetings for 2018/19 was noted as being as follows:

- Thursday 28 February 2019 at 10.15am
- Tuesday 9 April 2019 at 2.15pm

The meeting concluded at 3.55pm