

# guildofstudents

Minutes of Guild Council – 6pm Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2008

**Will Stevens**

The Committee of Independent Chairpersons  
[indchairs@guild.bham.ac.uk](mailto:indchairs@guild.bham.ac.uk)

## List of Attendees of meeting of Guild Council on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2008

Olujunmilayo Olutoye (African & Caribbean Soc)	Lis Krazner (Amnesty)	N Budhwani (Amnesty)	Elizabeth Jarvis (Astrosoc)
F. Begum Miah (BEMA)	M Wedderburn (BEMA)	Stephanie Roberts (Carnival)	Rachel Hudd (Carnival)
N Rodgers (Cathsoc)	Sharlene Greene (Circus soc)	Sarah Abraham (COGS)	I Mallowan (Comp and Vid Soc)
Julia Haslett (Conservation Volunteers)	Matthew Dunn (Darts)	Matt Szeto (Debating Society)	Sammy Neville (Debating Society)
James Long ( Econ Soc)	R.B Ricketts (Engineers without Borders)	Elizaveta Samoviz (European Society)	Joel Faulkner (German)
Bina Modi (Hindu Soc)	Sharan Heer (Hindu Soc) <b>Not Voting</b>	Stuart Russell (KIDS Adventure)	Emma O'Dwyer (LGBTQ)
Stuart Brown (LGBTQ)	Elaine Bagshaw (Lib Dems)	Steve Tedds (Life Saving)	Toni Bryant (Marrow)
Hannah MacDonald (Medsin)	Elizabeth Marsh (Niteline)	Liz Seabrook (People and Planet)	Byron Melly (Paintball)
James Ogden (Redbrick)	Steve Streatfield (Redbrick)	Alex Smith (Role-play)	Caroline Harding (Scout and Guide)
Greg de Quidt (SMPS)	Frances Norris (Student Advice)	Jessica Blaynee (Social Sciences)	
Leah Waipaul (Student Advice)	Rebecca Farnale (Wayfarers)	Rachel Tribbick (Tennis Courts)	Kirstie Jones (Tennis Courts)
Timothy Stillwell (Tennis Courts) <b>Not Voting</b>	James Williams (Tennis Courts) <b>Not Voting</b>	Rachel Jones (Tennis Courts) <b>Not Voting</b>	Sam Harrow (Tennis Courts) <b>Not Voting</b>
Laura Jane Morgans (Victoria Halls)	Christopher Hughes (Douper Hall)	Sophie Bailey (Elgar Court)	Rumbie Mushangi (Elgar Halls)
David Hooper (FOCSOC)	Kathryn Bonham (Jarratt)	David Burge (Jarratt)	Emma Papworth (Jarratt) <b>Not Voting</b>
Cair'lin Passmore (Jarratt) <b>Not Voting</b>	Claire Lister (Opal One)	Michael Smith (Opal One)	Chris Farthing (Opal One) <b>Not Voting</b>
Frank Wilcox (Pritchatts Park)	Peter John Cook (Pritchatts Park)	Rob Rosenberg (Business 1 <sup>st</sup> )	Thomas Brown (Business ord)
Simon Menashy (Business postgrad)	Hayden Cohen (Education ord)	David Remington (Engineering 1 <sup>st</sup> )	Phillippa Calver (GEES 1 <sup>st</sup> )
Chris Nash (GEES 1 <sup>st</sup> )	Rob Hunter	Suzy Raily (Historical)	Tom Marley (Historical)

	(Historical Stud 1 <sup>st</sup> )	Stud 1 <sup>st</sup> )	Stud ord)
Ed Sparks (Historical Stud ord)	Camilla Onwordi (Humanities 1 <sup>st</sup> )	Alexander Warents (Law 1 <sup>st</sup> )	Charmian Werren (Law ord)
Naomi Tomlinson (Medicine 1 <sup>st</sup> )	Adam Sher (Medicine 1 <sup>st</sup> )	Jo Maclver (Medicine ord)	Brigid Jones (Physics ord)
Steven Johnson (Physics ord)	Bryn WS Gough (Psychology 1 <sup>st</sup> )	Richard Charlton (Psychology ord)	Gary Hughes (Public Policy postgrad)
Anna M Lawton (Social Science 1 <sup>st</sup> )	Peter Mason (Social Science ord)	Tom Guise (Social Science ord)	

## Apologies

Robert Tomback (Law 1<sup>st</sup>), Paul McMaster (Historical Stud 1<sup>st</sup>), Local Government Soc, Roc Soc, Georgina Barrows (Medicine ord), George McKay, Muay Thai Boxing, Labour Students, Mountaineering Club, GTV, IQ5, VPS, Women's Network, Ballroom, Latin American Society, Tom Whittaker (Historical Stud ord), Richard Charlton (Psychology ord), War-games, Batsoc, Watch This, ARAFO

## Welcome from Will Stevens:

- Vice President Student Activities & Development will act as Steering due to no other Independent Chairs being available for the meeting.
- Staff Protocol was read out to Guild Council
- Role of Guild Council explained.
- Commendation for Vice President (Welfare) awarded.
- Censure for Community Action Officer received
- Voting pads explained and tested.
- Count of quorum – 72 voting Guild Councillors in the room – Meeting opened.

### 1. Starring of the Agenda and approval of the Executive's Recommendations and all unstarred business from Sub-Quorum

Agenda Items Starred – 1,2 a, b, c

Vote to approve all unstarred items on agenda including all ratifications and Motions.

**Vote Passed (85%).**

(For – 85%, Against – 8%, Abstain – 7%)

### 2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of Guild Council held on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2008

Amendments to the previous minutes were raised;

The question regarding the Nightbus asked to the VPW was asked by Tom Brown and not the SSO.

Frances Norris asked the question relating to the attendance of the DSO and not Shaz Greene .

Approval of minutes from last Guild Council: **Approved (82%)**

(For: 82%, Against - 8%, Abstain - 10%)

### 3. Ratifications

Ratifications where passed during the vote on all un-starred items

#### a) Ratifications of bye law changes

##### For Ratification

- i. Women's Association
- ii. Niteline

##### Guild Council Decision

- Approval
- Approval

### 4. Reports, questions, communications, and suggestions

#### Reports, Questions, Communications and Suggestions

##### a). Reports: Executive Officers

##### Questions

Phillippa Calver (GEE's) to the President - it mentioned in President report about increasing awareness, that the Guild has reached 4000 students but what are the plans to follow this up to reach more students?

President - the Guild can learn from the Refrendum . Guild can work more closely with the University on increasing awareness. Debriefs would be taking place to work out what aspects worked well.

Thomas Brown (Business) to the VPW - Council tax issues are listed in the report but want to know what other welfare issues had been worked on?

VPW - thought it was self explanatory but she had also been working with Post Graduates on similar Finance issues.

Thomas Brown (Business) to the LGBTQ – Is it fair to collect money for charity at a nightclub when people have been drinking?

LGBTQO - collecting was done outside the Night Club before people went inside and started drinking so do not feel that there was anything wrong with it.

Thomas Brown (Business) to the VPDR – What was the response from students from the door knocking about the referendum?

VPDR - the response was warm and a lot of people asked questions. He stated that he was actually in one student home for 40 minutes.

Stuart Brown (LGBTQA) to VPW - report mentions harassment. What have you been doing about it?

VPW - meeting with the LGBTQ Association regarding this.

Ed Sparks (Historical Studies) to VPW – Will the campaign for NUS election affect work for the Guild?

VPW - taken some time off after the Referendum to recoup and prepare for her campaign. It would not affect her work. She also mentioned that if it was felt that her work was being affected then the President oversee this.

Brigid Jones (Physics) to VPSAD - Labour Students who had issues regarding room bookings and what she was doing about this?

The VPSAD stepped down from Steering to answer this question.

VPSAD – A Room bookings Working Group had been set up to deal with the issue. Mini Forum results were presented to the working group and were currently being fed through the management structure. Students will also be asked for their feedback over the next few weeks. VPSAD also mentioned that she can not make promises regarding time lines as this is quite a big issue and is complicated – it will take a while before it is perfect but she stated that she still wanted to be told about any further issues.

Thomas Brown (Business) to President and the VPEA - both talk about Satellite Sites and how had they communicated this work with the SSO?

President - stated that it is part of a campaign to increase the profile and feedback from Satellite Sites so work on the issue was part of her remit. Communication takes place via Exec meetings and via email.

VPEA - received a petition about Café Rendezvous through Student reps and supported them through this under her responsibility. A second issue regarding the Community Play and Youth programme which has significant academic issues. She said that she has also helped at the mini Guild and worked with Dentistry doing some outreach activity.

Thomas Brown (Business) to VPDR - What has come from the Carbon Academy being in the building and the mini audit done around the Guild?

VPDR - work has been done after the assessment and they found a lot of equipment around the building that waste energy such as tungsten bulbs and things that are still turned on even when it is not busy. He also stated that the Guild are again auditing the building and re-assessing the situation.

Thomas Brown (Business) to President - Increasing turn out at events and increasing engagement where not on her priorities last month, but given the Referendum took place should they have been?

President - thanked Tom for sending his questions in advance. Not referring to elections as such but more about the attendance at events and making members feel like members.

Tom Marley (History) stated that to President - What are mini Guilds?

President - Exec officers go around campus and set up at a small section for a few hours to talk to students and publicise the Guild and what it does. So far the Mini Guilds have been very positive and there are a lot of different attitudes towards the Guild.

Frances Norris (Students Advice) to President – Is there potential to open a mini ARC at Satellite sites?

President - not sure but would look into it. **ACTION: President**

Steve Streatfield (Redbrick) to VPSAD - reviewing how media groups are funded and also how important media groups are to the Guild, was the notice given about the change of direction adequate to the groups themselves?

The VPSAD stepped down from steering to answer this question

VPSAD - think media groups are really important and the funding is not just about buying new equipment for the groups. She said that a renewal strategy is needed and that a

steering group was being formed with officers and staff to ensure adequate staff support for the groups was available. She also mentioned that she did not know much technically but that she had been going backwards and forwards between student groups and steering groups to make sure that the best outcome occurred. She also apologised that groups felt that they did not have enough notice about the change of direction but she was trying her best to ensure that the groups have the best.

*Vote to approve all reports, **Passed 92%. Therefore the Reports were accepted**  
(For: 92%, Abstain: 4%, Against: 4%).*

**a). Reports: Elections Committee**

VPDR presented the Elections Committee report and apologised for not including the FOCSOC in RA election results. He stated that these will be included in the next report.

**ACTION: VPDR**

**Questions**

Siobhan Dunne (Home Students association) to VPDR – Commented that the FOCSOC results had been left of and needed to be ratified at the next meeting  
VPDR - stated that the results were for information and the committee will still be elected.

Peter Mason (Social Science) to VPDR – Asked about the wording in the report that stated campaigning around any computer cluster is banned. Does this mean all clusters?  
VPDR - clarified that it meant all computer clusters.

Frances Norris (Student Advice) to VPDR – Asked whether it meant that the whole of the Computer Science building was off limits?  
VPDR - stated that he was not familiar with the building but would assume that there would be some rooms in there that do not have computers.

Ed Sparks (Historical Studies) to VPDR – Asked whether it meant that he could walk into Maple Bank, Knock on a door and ask someone to vote and they can?  
VPDR - responded that basically yes he could.

Tom Marley (History) to VPDR – Elections get heated and people do things in the heat of the moment, do we need to have quite clear red and green zones?  
VPDR - said that this would complicate things, and every room in every building would need to be stated. This is not the role of the Elections committee, as they are there to solve queries.

Shaz Greene (Purple Mermaid) to VPDR - Asked whether people could campaign outside the doors to computer clusters?  
VPDR - yes, it is just the computer clusters that you can not campaign in. He also stated that the elections committee will rule on most of these queries.

Peter Mason (Social Science) to VPDR - in terms of getting permission to campaign in different buildings it would be difficult as different people control the buildings. Would it be possible to where they can get permission from?  
VPDR - stated that this will be considered before campaigning starts.

Claire Lister (Opal One) to VPDR – Stated that the average turnout for RA elections is 39% but believed it may be too high.

VPDR - said that this could be because of the FOCSOC not being included in the report but he would go back and check the figures.

#### **ACTION: VPDR**

Sam Harris to VPDR – Asked whether you could vote on different Exec positions at different times

VPDR - said that they were individual ballots so people can vote on different ballots at different times.

Vote to approve report, **Passed 86%. The report was therefore accepted.**

(For: 86%, No: 10%, Abstain: 4%)

#### **a). Reports: Report Referendum**

The President presented the report to Guild Council.

##### **Questions**

The SSO to President – Asked for an explanation of the system crash and why it happened.?

President - the crash related to the number of clicks on the website. The servers store the information and it had not been cleaned for 6 months. As soon as this problem was realised, the information was deleted and sorted the problem.

Gary Hughes (Public Policy) to E&EO – Disappointed to see that E&EO did not follow collective responsibility in regards to the referendum, he asked if there was a conflict and what the E&EO would do to regain trust?

E&EO - he did not actively campaign for a NO vote or a boycott of the referendum. He also stated that if anyone wants to know what he got up to that week then they should ask him. He also did not feel that he had done anything wrong or needed to gain back any trust.

Thomas Brown (Business) to VPDR – Asked whether it was appropriate to offer free gifts during the referendum?

VPDR - answered that it was a nice thing to offer and it gave someone something to do.

Brigid Jones (Physics) to VPDR – Asked how much of the NO campaign budget was spent.?

VPDR - none of the budget had been spent as no one took on the campaign. He also mentioned that not much of the YES budget had been spent.

Tom Marley (History) to VPDR – Asked if the flyers saying “approve the changes” were for the YES campaign?

VPDR - answered that a lot of the material was designed to be neutral.

How much was spent on the referenda?

President - answered that she was unsure of the exact amount as they were still calculating the figures.

Thomas Brown (Business) to President – Asked if Guild Council would see the figures  
President - Yes, if Guild Council would like to see the figures they would be able too.

**ACTION: President**

Vote to approve report, **Passed 82%. The report was therefore accepted.**

(For: 82%, No: 17%, Abstain: 1%)

**b). Communications:**

**Guild Building Redevelopment presentation**

The VPDR presented a presentation on the Guild Building development, due to take place 2008-2009.

Shaz Greene (Purple Mermaid) to VPDR – Asked that's as the unisex toilets would be close to the society lockers, what would happen to the locker room and would students be consulted on this?

VPDR - answered that he was not sure what would be happening but there should be other places to store things.

Simon Menashy (Business) showed Guild Council a picture of Guild Council from 1952. He proposed that a photograph be taken after the last Guild Council of the year.

VPEA – informed Guild Council that photo's had previously been taken every year until the 1960's when there were riots. The pictures where apparently stopped so that the University could not identify who the student activists were.

LGBTQO gave final update for the “Homophobia is Gay” campaign as having raised over £400

VPSAD stated that nominations for the Guild Awards would close next Friday. There is an award for Student representation so anyone can nominate themselves or others.

E&EO stated that People and Planet are organising a “Go Green” march. Also that Fair-trade fortnight is almost here and listed a number of activities related to this.

VPW talked about the Nightbus and said that she would appreciate if people did not call her late at night, she will be putting up the drivers number for students to use.

Frances Norris (Student Advice) said that Student Advice have launched a “No means No” campaign. The Women's Network went to a demonstration in Coventry. There is a march for Reclaim the Night and urged people to attend.

Shaz Greene (Purple Mermaid) said that an event would be held on Saturday that cost £3 for the day or show, or it would be £6 for both.

Debating Society will be holding a debate on whether the Guild should have a No Platform Policy.

Brigid Jones (Physics) said that the Physics department will be holding a day of action tomorrow so please look out for it.

### **c). Opportunity for Questions, and Suggestions**

Thomas Brown (Business) to VPSAD – As the Business Society is not under the Guild umbrella, and do not have as strict rules, what was her view on Independent Societies? VPSAD (stepped down from steering to answer this question) - replied that there are lots of advantages for a group as a part of the Guild, these included protection of the insurance of the Guild as well as the expertise of Guild staff.

Gary Hughes (Public Policy) to VPDR – This is the first year in a long time that the Guild is having uncontested Exec Elections. He was disgusted at this and felt something had gone wrong and wanted to know the views of the VPDR?

VPDR - shared his views and said that the weakness is not how we promote it. There are 3 candidates for VPS and also a contested Presidential Election, he also felt that all was done that could be done.

VPEA stated that the Guild had worked really hard to build an activist base in Students Reps. More Student Reps have been trained but activist bases do not build over night. She felt that next year the results of this year may start to be seen over a number of years.

Suzy Raily (Historical Studies) to VPW and VPHC – Given that a number of students are in private accommodation and are not under the Mentor Scheme, was this a failing of the System?

VPHC - said that these problems also happened last year with the number of private halls we have had. Those in nominated bed spaces pay more which is why the mentor scheme only works for them. She also stated that if a student went to the mentors with issues, they would help. This will be looked at when more is known about what is happening to private halls.

Shaz Greene (Purple Mermaid) made a suggestion regarding the minutes. She liked the way that people who attended were set out but thought that people who turn up and are not voting should not be included.

Shaz Greene (Purple Mermaid) to VPSAD – She had already brought it up at the first Guild Council of the year, and the situation had improved but the locker space is still a mess. VPSAD (stepped down from steering to answer this question) - said that at the beginning of term a request was put in to maintenance to clear out the locker space. Everything was bagged up and then left for people to pick up their things. The bags will now be removed. She also said that everyone should appeal to others to keep the space tidy as it is their area.

Peter Mason (Social Science) commented that Redbrick covered a story on the 1<sup>st</sup> February regarding a non-platformed organisation. He would ask that in future that the Guilds no platform policy is enforced.

Frances Norris (Student Advice) to VPSAD – Asked how where Birmingham represented at the NUS Disabled Students Conference?

VPSAD (stepped down from steering to answer this question) - said that she desperately wanted to go but unfortunately the conference fell during Referenda week.

Frances Norris (Student Advice) to VPW – Asked that the DSO said he was in contact with members of the association.

VPW - replied that we can not say how he asked them to attend, ODDSOC members where also asked to attend but felt uncomfortable in doing so.

Steve Streatfield (Redbrick) to VPDR - Asked how effective he felt the hustings and question time events where at raising awareness to students?

VPDR - said the GTV and BURN FM hustings are effective due to the fact that they are online. These will be advertised and more emphasis shall be put on them.

Steve Streatfield (Redbrick) to VPSAD – Asked whether the Student Activities Exec had met this year?

VPSAD (stepped down from steering to answer this question) - No they had not met but this was partly because there was not much to discuss and also partly because it takes such a long time to arrange.

Shaz Greene (Purple Mermaid) said that the referendum was not an excuse for not blogging, and that 4 people have not blogged at all and 4 people have only blogged once.

The President replied stating that her Blog had not been working for the past month and that it would also be useful to have a steer from Guild Council on how often they wanted Blogs. Shaz Greene (Purple Mermaid) stated that it would have been useful if she was thinking of running in the Exec Elections.

*Elaine Bagshaw (Lib Dems) called for a commendation for Libby HSO for her work on the referendum.*

Speech for (Elaine Bagshaw) - All the Sabbs worked really hard, but that is their full time job. Libby is still doing her degree and was still there at 9am every morning helping out.

Speech against (Thomas Brown) believed the whole team should be commended or censured together. There are a number of people in the room who also campaigned and are also doing degrees not just those on the Exec.

**Vote in favour of commendation - passed 66%**  
**(For: 66% Against: 34%)**  
**HSO Commended**

*VPW called for a commendation for the VPDR for his work in the referendum.*

Speech for (VPW) The VPDR put his heart and soul into the referendum and the 4000 votes are his doing. He deserves a commendation for this.

Speech against (Thomas Brown) Same arguments as before. All the Sabbs worked extremely hard on the referendum. All should be commended.

**Vote in favour of commendation - passed 78%**  
**(For: 78% Against: 22%)**  
**VPDR Commended**

#### 4. Motions

	<u>Motion Name</u>	<u>Exec Recommendation</u>	<u>Vote needed</u>
<b>a) Motion:</b>	<b>Support Physics Funding!</b>	<b>Approval</b>	<b>Simple Majority</b>

Guild Council Mandates:

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1. The Guild Executive Committee to sign the petition referenced in Notes 5.
2. The Guild of Students to support the campaign by providing a link to the petition with an explanatory blurb on the front page of the website, (at least on the day of the protest but for longer if possible) to help raise awareness.
3. The VPEA to write to the Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC) to express the Guild's opposition to funding cuts.

<b>b) Motion:</b>	<b>NUS and appendix</b>	<b>Approval</b>	<b>Simple Majority</b>
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Guild Council Resolves:

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1. to submit the following text as an amendment to NUS Annual Conference in the 'Strong and Active Unions' policy zone
2. to accredit the proposer as a delegate to the NUS drafting commission, where motions are presented in a sensible order, to defend our text and make sure it comes to Conference floor.

<b>c) Motion:</b>	<b>The Great Bursary Embarrassment Approval</b>	<b>Simple Majority</b>
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Guild Council Mandates:

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4. The President and VPEA to lobby the University on their appalling bursary record, and to get their support for plans for a national bursary system.

<b>d) Motion:</b>	<b>BEMA Name Change</b>	<b>Approval</b>	<b>Absolute Majority</b>
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Guild Council Mandates:

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1. For all guild literature concerning the association be changed to reflect the name change; folders, leaflets etc.
2. For the name to be changed in the constitution.

<b>e) Motion:</b>	<b>Reading Packs</b>	<b>Approval</b>	<b>Simple Majority</b>
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Guild Council Mandates:

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1. The Vice President for Education and Access to write to the Head of the Department of Sociology, and inform him of this motion.
2. The VPEA to make enquiries as to the possibility of making reading packs available online for students, to cut down costs for both students and the department.
3. The VPEA to report back on the progress of this motion at the next Guild Council.

**f) Motion:**      **Autonomous Liberation**      **Approval**      **Simple Majority**

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Guild Council Mandates:

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5. That the relevant sabbatical officers, along with the liberation officers and associations make a report to GC before the end of the academic year with a report including a proposal for how liberation officer elections are to be run in the future.

**Meeting closed 19.50**