

In Attendance:

*Mikey Brown, Guild President
Adam Dorey, Campaigns Officer
Evie West, Committee Member
Emily Raymond, Committee member
Siyi Wang, Committee member*

Also in attendance:

*Tom Snape, Policy and Campaigns Coordinator and Secretary
Lucy Gill, Voice and Representation Manager
Rozena Nadeem, Democracy Coordinator
Jo Thomas, CEO*

Absent without apologies:

*Rachel Boucher, Ethical and Environment Officer
Harshitha Naidu, Committee member
Vaseem Ali, Committee member*

Trigger Warnings: Lapsing Beliefs and Commitments section will include discussion of a 'pro-choice' stance on abortion.

Item No.	Item Title	Meeting Notes	Actions
Start			
1	Welcome & Introductions	Committee shared short introductions and MB flagged trigger warnings.	

2	<p>Campaigns Masterplan</p>	<p>MB introduced the Campaigns Masterplan, its purpose, and talked through the components.</p> <p>This includes the Change In Mind priority campaign, and the issues that the officers have flagged that they would like to be vocal and visible on.</p> <p>AD asked about how students could be made aware of the various issues.</p> <p>ER suggested this could be partly be achieved via Instagram.</p> <p>MB suggested that AD give this further consideration.</p> <p>The group discussed the plans for the Commonwealth Games, including plans for speakers on Commonwealth day.</p>	
---	--	--	--

<p>3</p>	<p>Campaigns Previously Approved</p>	<p>TS gave a summary of the campaigns that are currently on the books.</p> <p>MB flagged that trade union campaigning is something he is passionate about, but that it needs clarifying.</p> <p>MB stated that he was under the impression that Amnesty International seemed to still be working on the Killer Robot Campaign, and the Guild still has a mandate to support so we need to decide how this will be actioned.</p> <p>On the CEE Bill – MB is awaiting response from RB on where this needs to be taken next.</p> <p>On the Black Voices, MB noted that this now sits with the team of volunteers who lead the campaign.</p> <p>On the Recycling proposal, he notes that some of these discussions are ongoing – but that the student who proposed this may well have left.</p> <p>AD noted that Amnesty voted for their campaign to be ‘Lets talk about yes; - which focuses on consent. AD</p>	
----------	---	---	--

		<p>said he would set up a meeting with Amnesty, ER and Amnesty to discuss the support they may need.</p> <p>MB to liaise with the CEE proposers.</p> <p>EW asked some clarifying questions about how this relates to the Masterplan – and some follow up on the role of the masterplan.</p> <p>ER said that it is important that the committee follow up on the killer robots campaign as well as talk about their new campaign.</p> <p>Committee resolved that as the Trade Union campaign was never formally approved, it will not be picked up this year for the time being – but that MB will chase up the member who proposed it last year.</p> <p>RB and MB will pick up the recycling issue.</p>	<p>AD, ER</p> <p>MB</p> <p>AD, ER</p> <p>MB</p> <p>RB, MB</p>
--	--	---	--

<p>4</p>	<p>Lapsing Beliefs and Commitments</p>	<p>MB summarised what beliefs and commitments are, where they came from, and what options the committee has.</p> <p>The Pro Choice stance was discussed first.</p> <p>MB ran through his analysis of the legal advice the Guild had received around this belief and commitment. He stressed that this did not reflect his personal opinions of what the law in this area should be, but he was reporting based on his understanding of the current legal position, which can be summarised as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Guild is required to use its assets and resources only for its charitable objects and the trustees have a duty to protect the funds of the Guild from potential legal actions. 2. The Guild's charitable objects are: 	
----------	---	--	--

		<p><i>“the furtherance and the enhancement of the educational purposes of the University of Birmingham including but not limited to:</i></p> <p><i>(1) the promotion of social intercourse between Students of the University of Birmingham and the furtherance of the common interests of such Students; and</i></p> <p><i>(2) the support of such societies that shall from time to time be recognised by the Guild”.</i></p> <p>3. The beliefs and commitments of the Guild amount to “corporate conclusions” of the membership of the Guild. It is perfectly permissible through a belief and commitment for the Guild’s membership to express a view on any issue as this forms part of the Guild’s role in facilitating debate and social intercourse.</p> <p>4. However, it does not follow that the passing of a belief and commitment on a particular issue means the Guild is free to campaign</p>	
--	--	--	--

		<p>on that issue, if it falls outside its charitable objects.</p> <p>5. If a belief and commitment therefore calls on the Guild to undertake campaigning, or engage in activity such as providing a particular type of advice that could be considered inadvertent campaigning, a misleading impression is given to the Guild’s membership about what the Guild will do about the belief and commitment. The legal limits of what the Guild can do under Charity Law is therefore not clear to students.</p> <p>6. It is likely that a Court would consider the right to choose an abortion is an issue of general interest and not one that effects students in their capacity as students, meaning campaigning on this issue would fall outside its charitable objects.</p> <p>7. Best practice is that belief and commitments should not</p>	
--	--	---	--

		<p>purport to require the Guild to take action it is prohibited from taking under charity law. They should also be drafted so as to be attributable to the membership of the Guild rather than the Guild as an institution or its trustees. Alternatively, the belief and commitment could be caveated by reference to the limits of the Guild's legal duties.</p> <p>8. Furthermore, with reference to the manner in and process by which the belief and commitment should be renewed, the trustees of the Guild are required to ensure this is aligned with the charitable objects of the Guild and does not diminish the freedom of speech of students as there is a statutory duty to uphold this.</p> <p>9. This means that debate of belief and commitments pertaining to controversial issues, such as abortion, should be conducted in a balanced and non-partisan way so the educational value of the debate</p>	
--	--	---	--

		<p>is maintained. This requires the Guild to ensure there is a fair opportunity for different viewpoints to be expressed. This means there is a requirement for a fair debate procedure, with speakers both for and against, and the opportunity to pose questions. This, in the context of the Guild's democratic structures, is likely only to be achieved at an All Student Meeting not by discussion at the Campaigns or any other decision making committee.</p> <p>MB recommended the following to the committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The committee approves MB to amend the belief and commitment document in line with the above analysis of the legal advice received to ensure the spirit of it is preserved but the amended belief and commitment accurately reflects the limits of the Guild's ability to take actions under Charity Law. 2. That MB considers input from Welfare and Liberation Committee 	
--	--	--	--

		<p>on the content of the amended belief and commitment.</p> <p>3. MB would return to Campaigns Committee during the next ASM cycle for their approval of the amendments to the belief and commitment.</p> <p>4. Once amendments are approved by Campaigns Committee, the amended belief and commitment would be taken to a future ASM for discussion by the membership to ensure a debate of the issue which aligns with the Guild's charitable objects.</p> <p>ER asked for clarity on whether committee members can campaign on this issue. MB clarified that they were able to in their personal student capacity</p> <p>ER asked if campaign funding can be allocated for a Pro Choice Group.</p>	
--	--	---	--

		<p>LG clarified that this is permitted, but if a group who campaign against abortion asked for funding it would need to be considered in a consistent manner. Meaning that it could not be rejected on the basis of the issue they're supporting. This also applies to all 'controversial' issues – so during the Brexit referendum, the Guild had to fund and support both a Leave and Remain campaign.</p> <p>MB's proposal is approved.</p> <p><i>At this point EW left the meeting.</i></p> <p>On the Living Wage issue, MB asked for additional time to take legal advice on the issue. This was approved.</p> <p>MB introduced the Climate Change Belief and Commitment. ER asked that the wording could be amended to reflect where responsibility for change lies – in particular with</p>	<p>MB</p> <p>MB</p>
--	--	--	-----------------------------------

		<p>corporations and those with financial resources and power. MB agreed with this. ER is actioned to consider some alternative wording to reflect this.</p> <p>MB introduced the funding policy. AD noted that the cuts to grant section is outdated and proposed an alternative wording. TS to amend this in line with the discussion, and circulate for approval via email.</p> <p>MB introduced the helium balloons item. ER stated she believed the statement was good, but asked whether this is being carried out in practice. MB committed that if it was approved he would ensure that Student Groups were made aware of this. . This is approved.</p>	<p>ER</p> <p>TS</p> <p>MB</p>

5	Presidents' and Campaigns' Officers Manifestos	MB noted that previous items on the agenda had significantly overrun, and opted to suspend this item until the next meeting. Approved.	MB/TS
---	---	---	--------------

<p>6</p>	<p>Committee Moving Forward</p>	<p>AD suggested that the campaign masterplan is held as an item that the committee uses as a framework – and that the committee meets monthly.</p> <p>ER agreed with this.</p> <p>MB agreed with this.</p> <p>RN raised that the formal committee meetings that lead into all student meeting may need to be online to allow for students to attend. This was agreed.</p> <p>It was resolved that The Committee would meet in person in early December.</p> <p>AD noted that the committee could bring their own proposals for campaigns.</p> <p>ER asked if the idea submission link can be shared with relevant student groups.</p> <p>ER asked if information about The Guild’s legal advice or stance can</p>	<p>TS</p>
----------	--	---	------------------

		<p>be shared. TS noted that the minutes could include an accessible summary. MB noted that this could be done in a way that did not breach legal confidence.</p> <p>ER asked about how this information could be shared with relevant groups. It was agreed that MB, JT, MG, TS would consider how this could occur in a way that ensures it is accurate, and that those involved are supported.</p>	MB, JT, MG, TS
7	Any other business	Meeting closed at 11:32	

Date & Time of next meeting: