

Present:

Scrutiny Panel Members: Jamie Cox (JC), Shreya Dinesh (SD), Rebecca Hudson (RH), Ellie Rose (ER), Sarah Aray (SA)

Officers: Reeve Isaacs-Smith (RIS, Welfare & Community Officer), Acacia Matthews (AM, Guild President), Aaminah Saleem (AS, Campaigns Officer), Ness Chigariro (NC, Education Officer), Alice Liu (AL, International Officer)

In Attendance:

Core Staff: Rozena Nadeem (RN, Democracy Coordinator, Minute Taker), Scott Dawson (SD, Student Voice & Representation Manager)

Apologies:

Officers: Isobel Lawson (IL, Activities & Employability Officer)

Absence Without Apologies:

Madupavitra Palani (MP, Women’s Officer)

Trigger/Content Warnings: Cost of living crisis, accommodation, drink spiking, safety in Selly Oak, mental health, social media, dietary/food requirements, timetabling

Time	Role	Notes
3:05pm - 3:10pm	Panel Pre-Briefing	The Panel received a short briefing.
3:10pm- 3:35pm	Welfare & Community Officer	RIS entered the meeting. RIS and the Panel greeted each other. RIS provided updates:

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suite kitchen – conversations about this with accommodation staff • No many other updates since submitted report <p>JC: Well done for your work on the EDI Town Hall. Could you tell us more about it? How will you continue with this work?</p> <p>RIS: When drink spiking became a big issue last year, there was a Town Hall that two Officers ran that only one student (the current Guild President) attended, but we took away a lot of learning points and improvements around accessibility for future Town Halls. The Disabled Students’ Officer suggested to us to deliver an online version. I think both online and in-person is a good idea. The next Town Hall will be in the first week of February, after Semester 1, and this will especially look at issues around exam accessibility. Me and the Education Officer have an action plan for this.</p> <p>JC: That sounds great! With the Selly Sports Day, there was a lot of uptake from the Selly community, but mostly from non-students – how will you get students more involved in future?</p> <p>RIS: The Selly Sports Day was after the first returner’s FAB, which is why there probably wasn’t much uptake from students. Advertising to the community was good, but getting it in emails to students was difficult. The Sports Officer was involved with delivering the Day, but in future we think it will be helpful to get the Activities & Employability Officer (AEO) involved too.</p> <p>JC: That’s great! Well done also on your work for the Soup Kitchen.</p> <p>SD: I like the Selly Express idea! How do you plan to distribute the cook book that you’re working on?</p> <p>RIS: My equivalent role in Aston Students’ Union talked about it, and we thought it’s best to have something online. We’d like to circulate via Hall Reps, Officers’ Instagram accounts</p>

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		<p>and the Guild’s central Instagram account. It will be a great way to publicize different types of lifestyles.</p> <p>SD: Have you thought about social media posts and interactive sessions?</p> <p>RIS: That’s a good idea. Me and the Education Officer have discussed this.</p> <p>SD: The Cost of Living group is great; how will you reach students who are affected the most?</p> <p>RIS: I will do this through social media and Brum Bulletin emails (Brum Bulletin emails go to everyone’s emails). With the Cost of Living Group – I’m trying to create a network in the Guild of people who can help e.g. Hall Reps who host events with free food.</p> <p>SD: For the Pass It On Scheme, could you make a list of what students can pass on so it is clearer?</p> <p>RIS: Yes, I can do this. Also, I don’t want to use electric items as you have to PAT test them before passing them on.</p> <p>SD: Have you considered any other organisations besides Umbrella for sanitary products and condoms?</p> <p>RIS: For sanitary products – yes.</p> <p>SD: That’s great. On your report you mentioned safety concerns in Selly Oak – what were these concerns and how will you address them?</p> <p>RIS: It’s about a bad living situation. Some people broke into a student house with weapons, and it was believed to be an organised group. The students posted it on FAB and were very public about it, and I responded to it. I’m part of the Selly Oak Safety Group, which comprises different staff who oversee safety in Selly Oak, and the police. I sent an email to</p>

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		<p>put pressure on departments for increased safety according to the local community's needs.</p> <p>RH: I agree with a lot of the other Panel members' feedback – your work is great. How far through the process are you for the consent course?</p> <p>RIS: Myself, the President and Director of Student Affairs met with a company who already do a consent course, and we like the company, content, and that the content can be personalised. The consent course will definitely be in for January. Everyone agrees on the price. Meetings are taking place with tech people to look at how the course will be incorporated.</p> <p>RH: Great! Are sanitary products and condoms still fully available?</p> <p>RIS: Not yet – this work is still in progress.</p> <p>RH: It's good that you're being public about safe sex initiatives etc.</p> <p>RIS: I'm looking at school content too e.g. safe sex, safe practices.</p> <p>ER: Are students you are using the Community Pantry getting signposted too? It has advice on money management etc too. How is the pantry organised?</p> <p>RIS: At the moment, you have to sign-up to it. It's open for 2 days and students have to sign up to it, a week in advance. The pantry is upstairs in the Guild, there is lift access though.</p> <p>ER: There's no sanitary products in the disabled toilets – can some be provided here?</p> <p>RIS: Yes, we can consider this. It hasn't been done yet as it's not yet rolled out properly.</p>

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		<p>ER: What are doing about the updated definition of Islamaphobia?</p> <p>RIS: This will be going to the 1st meeting for the Welfare & Liberation Committee. It lapsed at the last All Student Vote as it didn't reach quorum, but the ISoc have submitted it again.</p> <p>RIS and the Panel thanked each other and RIS left the meeting.</p>
3:35pm-4:00pm	Guild President	<p>AM entered the meeting.</p> <p>AM and the Panel greeted each other.</p> <p>AM had no further updates to provide.</p> <p>JC: How did Appointments Panel go yesterday?</p> <p>AM: It went really well – the Guild is a competitive place to be, people want to work here and be part of the Guild. For representing Student Voice, I was able to update the new Trustee on issues affecting students e.g. Cost of Living crisis, mental health crisis. She also came to our Trustee Board on Monday, and we're confident with our appointment.</p> <p>JC: I have some positive feedback – your weekly updates are great, and I think that you do it the best out of all of the Officers. You also do it more regularly – please could you encourage the other Officers to do this too? Also, do you have a plan to make sustainability and divestment work more vocal?</p> <p>AM: I have regular 121s with the VC, which is more regular than previously, so this is good. We're going to look into aligning a campaign with the Guild's Go Green Week campaign, and put together an investment portfolio. The VC liked the idea. I got replies from the VC today. I'm also reaching out to the Climate Justice Movement at UoB Society to involve them. I will be meeting with a staff member from the University Finance Team who is responsible for the</p>

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		<p>investment portfolio about this. I will promote this via University comms too.</p> <p>JC: Well done for pushing the consent course further too!</p> <p>SD: The SPRC meeting was very commendable. Have you considered raising awareness around student night out events?</p> <p>AM: I am reaching out to various students, and also disengaged students (although they are the hardest to reach). I also will be reaching out to Sports Groups as they tend to attend Sports Night. I'm happy to discuss any other ideas with you too.</p> <p>SD: Have you considered any other projects related to student safety e.g. self-defence workshops, protective equipment?</p> <p>AM: We have a self-defence society already, and I don't want to overdo what we've already done. We've given out personal safety alarms. Myself, the Welfare & Community Officer, the other Officers and the Welcome Team have been good at handing out personal safety alarms and promoting safety on campus.</p> <p>BH: I really enjoyed reading your report, and you seem to be sticking very closely to your action plan, which is great. When the consent course happens, could it be extended to committee training?</p> <p>AM: That's a great idea. We would like to get the base right with the course. I would rather do it properly, I don't want to rush it. There still needs to be work on promoting to students where they can go if they have a disclosure e.g. Guild Advice, UB heard. There will be support for those who need it in the time being.</p> <p>RH: I like the idea of Prime Minister Question Time in your Action Plan. It's a really great idea to increase transparency.</p>

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		<p>Also great job on pushing free NHS resources, I'm seeing the positive impact of this!</p> <p>BH: I'd like to ask about the democracy review and its progress?</p> <p>AM: We have decided that we won't change the whole system, but there will be some changes e.g. PTO roles being changed, All Student Meeting, committees (which aren't always quorate), and reviewing engagement. We might need to have a Referendum, if we need to go to students.</p> <p>AM left the meeting due to needing to finish work at 4pm.</p> <p>It was agreed that the remaining questions would be sent to AM via email for AM to answer via email. AM's answers would then be circulated back to the Panel, and included as a separate document to the minutes on the Guild website.</p> <p>AM and the Panel thanked each other and AM left the meeting.</p>
4:06pm-4:25pm	Campaigns Officer	<p>AS entered the meeting.</p> <p>AS and the Panel greeted each other.</p> <p>SA: How will you continue to actively engage associations and political societies who will need your advice on campaigning?</p> <p>AS: I will be meeting with them and reaching out to them every so often.</p> <p>SA: What comms will you be putting out for the Change in Mind campaign?</p> <p>AS: I'd like to create different types of comms e.g. graphics, videos etc. I will be using data, a report and recommendations, and also other Universities who have done similar work. I'll also be emphasising benefits of the Mental</p>

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		<p>Health Charter, and acknowledging that work has been done. I've been talking to people on wellbeing teams too about comms.</p> <p>SA: That all sounds great!</p> <p>ER: Well done on helping people to be campaigners and helping them to achieve their goals. What are your plans to show your work for the Not On Campaign?</p> <p>AS: There will be a new Coordinator starting soon for the Not On Campaign, and I will talk to them about it. I would like to increase exposure through Guild comms and also the AEO. I will also talk to societies e.g. Mantality. I will also be looking at training in University Departments e.g. microaggressions training in the Politics Department.</p> <p>ER: Have you spoken directly to the university about mental health?</p> <p>AS: I would like to use the Change in Mind data as much as I can, as this data and the conversations that took place were very valuable.</p> <p>ER: Do you have a rough timeline for this yet?</p> <p>AS: I would like to start the work this Semester.</p> <p>BH: I think you're doing amazing work so far! How can you promote Autumn Elections more and link this to employability? Have you talked to the AEO?</p> <p>AS: I was advertising via social media. I think the employability aspect is good. I will take this on board.</p> <p>SD: I think you're making great progress and have lots of visibility. In terms of improving plant-based options on campus, is there anything you will do short-term?</p>

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		<p>AS: I'm working with Plant Based UoB. I will be pushing for this at the All Student Meeting too by writing and submitting a policy idea, and pushing societies and students to do this.</p> <p>SD: Have you spoken to any other students about their thoughts on the Mental Health Charter? What do they think?</p> <p>AS: I know people from different colleges etc, so will be gathering student's views on mental health and accessibility. I will also be using the statistics from Change in Mind.</p> <p>JC: You were on the Appointments Panel for the Trustee selection, what did you think as a PTO representing students in that process?</p> <p>AS: I took it really seriously, I took lots of notes, I noted key points, and I think I represented students here as I took it seriously. When selecting the candidate, I thought about what kind of person I would want as a student e.g. are they invested in EDI. We had good consensus on who the final candidate should be.</p> <p>AS and the Panel thanked each other and AS left the meeting.</p>
4:15pm-4:25pm	Education Officer	<p>VC entered the meeting.</p> <p>VC and the Panel greeted each other.</p> <p>SA: I commend that you put EDI at the heart of all of your work. How did you promote the EDI Town Hall?</p> <p>VC: It was really good. I posted it on social media. Only started advertising the week before because of other issues. We'll be promoting in advance next time, and think about how I can work with the university to promote it.</p> <p>SA: What steps are you taking to represent students through the Teaching Excellence Framework?</p>

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		<p>VC: I will be working with students of different demographics, and ensure that we have different student groups represented.</p> <p>SA: Well done for working on assessment and feedback. What are the plans for this, university-wise.</p> <p>VC: I'm hearing positive feedback, the Pro Vice Chancellors are looking at how we can implement it better. Myself and the Postgraduate Officer are representing students and forwarding student feedback when we meet with the Pro Vice Chancellors.</p> <p>SA: Thank-you for this.</p> <p>ER: Well done on getting the University to fund society vouchers. What is the timeline for these changes?</p> <p>VC: There is a short period of time, and it needs to be piloted then relayed back to the university. I'm looking at feedback from this year. Most colleges and modules submission windows and assessments are all bunched together in Week 7.</p> <p>ER: How are you ensuring that students are having a voice through Student Reps?</p> <p>VC: There are two issues – one is that students don't know who Reps are, and the other is that some Reps are not active or confident enough. I'm working with the Student Voice Team on these issues though. The Rep roles are actually very good for making change.</p> <p>ER: Great answer, thank-you!</p> <p>RH: A lot of what you're doing is fantastic!</p> <p>VC: Thank-you!</p>

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		<p>SD: I really enjoyed reading your report, and especially reading about your work on EDI. My question is more general – has the University considered providing individual feedback for students on their exams?</p> <p>VC: Yes – but it depends on the module.</p> <p>SD: How is the society voucher work delivered?</p> <p>VC: We tried to deliver them in-person. We brought the Birmingham International Academy (BIA) students to the Guild, and put them on relevant society’s lists manually. It also included both Undergraduate and Postgraduate students.</p> <p>JC: There were lots of actions on your report, which is good. I’d like to ask about timetabling – what is being discussed on the timetabling committee e.g. I didn’t have a timetable in my first week and this affected my work shifts.</p> <p>VC: Timetables aren’t great, it’s very concerning especially for parent students. The University are trying to contact the timetabling company, and we’re doing focus groups to discuss how we can improve it for students, and how it could be changed for next academic year.</p> <p>VC and the Panel thanked each other and VC left the meeting.</p>
4:10pm-4:25pm	International Officer	<p>AL entered the meeting.</p> <p>AL and the Panel greeted each other.</p> <p>SA: You’ve done great work on the Language Café, and also the scam related course – it’s great that you’re focusing on a relevant issue for international issues. I’d like to ask about your work on food on campus?</p> <p>AL: I’m doing work on food diversity</p>

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		<p>SA: How will you tackle xenophobia (hate against immigrants etc)?</p> <p>AL: I've not heard too much about that on campus – it is really bad though. That's partly why I'm working on language exchange groups etc, so students have the chance to learn about other cultures.</p> <p>SA: Keep up with all of your work, it's great!</p> <p>ER: I can tell your work will have a great impact. The International Mixer was a great event, but I saw that people tended to stay in their pre-established groups, and not mixing – how will you encourage mixing?</p> <p>AL: Sticking in pre-established groups is common among international students, especially at the beginning of the year. I won't force students out of their comfort zones at the start of the year, but I can look at how to encourage mixing.</p> <p>ER: How will you ensure that the next Officer can continue with the Welcome sessions that you hosted?</p> <p>AL: I will write recommendations for the next Officer. We'll have another round of Welcome in January too, so we'll repeat some of the events then.</p> <p>ER: How will you be advertising the anti-scam guides?</p> <p>AL: My main platform to promote is email, I send an email regularly to international students too. I also tell random students that I catch on campus about my events, and invite them to the events.</p> <p>RH: What is your progress on supporting student visa issues like?</p> <p>AL: If international students fail exams, their visa will not be registered. They have to re-register their visa. Technology</p>

Time	Role	Notes
		<p>involved is in progress. Have to scan cards manually. There will be digital forms for BRP cards in 2024.</p> <p>RH: What are you doing about safety on campus? AL: I have been in conversations with the accommodation team about this.</p> <p>SD: Increasing food diversity around campus is good, are you also considering the cost of food?</p> <p>AL: I'm talking to the University about this.</p> <p>SD: How do you invite people to your social events e.g. on social media?</p> <p>TA: Social media work good, but it's not enough. Fortnightly emails to international students. New friends made, invite them and ask them to bring their friends. Do outreach around campus, invite random students to event.</p> <p>JC: How will you deliver culture and language exchange events in January after the Christmas break?</p> <p>TA: I will start with another Language Cafe. Separate tables for different languages. Culture Festival – we have a form for societies to sign out. Event with clothes. Collaboration with student groups.</p> <p>TA and the Panel thanked each other and TA left the meeting.</p>
4:55pm-5:00pm	Panel De-brief	The Panel were debriefed and the meeting closed.