COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The second ordinary meeting of the Communications Committee for the 2018/19 session, to be held on Tuesday 6th November 2018 in Meeting Room 3, Beit Quad at 3pm

Unconfirmed minutes

Present:	Jill Finney (JF)	Lay Trustee/Communications Chair
	Alejandro Luy (AL)	Deputy President (Education)
	James Medler (JM)	Deputy President (Clubs and Societies)
	Rebecca Neil (RN)	Deputy President (Welfare)
	Madina Wane (MW)	Student Trustee
	Hafiza Irshad (HI)	Student Trustee
In attendance:	Jomana Al Ahmad (JA) (Clerk)	Admin Support Officer
	Jarlath O'Hara (JOH)	Managing Director
	Andrew Djaba (AD)	Felix Editor
	Keriann Lee (KL)	Head of Student Voice and Communications
Apologies:	None	

Item 1 Welcome and Chairs Business 1. The Chair welcome the Committee members to the second Communications Committee meeting of the AY 18/19. **Item 2 Conflicts of interest declaration** 1. No conflicts of interest declared. **Item 03 - Item Apologies** 1. None	**Actions**

Item 04 – To consider the Minutes from 12th Sept 2018 1. The Minutes were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting held on 12th Sept 2018.	
Item 05 - Action tracker 1. KL updated the Committee that the Crisis communication guideline has been updated 2. KL will liaise with CC and JOH to formulate an approach towards the publication of an infographic. JF suggested looking at Royal Holloway as they succeeded with this type of communication in the past.	**KL, JOH and CC to discuss the approach for infographic publication**
Forward agenda 1. JF suggested adding the review of the annual report to the forward agenda	**JA to update the forward Agenda**
Item 06 – Union Communications Internal Comms 1. KL gave an update on internal Comms by mentioning two all-staff meetings which were held on 1st Nov, approx 30 people attended and feedback was received from 16 people as shown in the appendix. Overall, there is positive feedback about the initiative to organise these meetings, however the concerns were regarding the approach to formulating the agenda and the need to share operational information across teams 2. KL is now keen to proceed in organising another staff meeting and make changes based on the feedback received, in addition to introducing a newsletter which is published regularly to allow for teams to showcase their work 3. JF enquired about whether the approach to internal comms is trialing different ideas and using staff feedback to assess the success/ make changes, KL confirmed that this is the current approach to internal comms 4. JF asked about OT involvement and feedback, AL responded that he and BN attended these meetings. AL enquired about the approach to the newsletter publication, KL responded that it would be curated by teams and JOH pointed out that consistency in newsletter publication may be a concern 5. JM pointed out that given the size of the organisation, a newsletter may not be necessary and that the number of responses is quite low to base actions solely on the survey feedback. JM added that the general theme in terms of staff dissatisfaction is the response/actions towards staff wellbeing, BN added that it is possible that staff want to know about how they work together in a	

better way rather than simply know about what other people do 6. KL pointed out that many staff reiterated that they would like to know what other teams are working on, staff wellbeing has also been voiced in feedback however this is a separate issue 7. KL added that the way the newsletter is structured will be amended depending on feedback and it will be rolled out as a trial, Communications will be clear to staff that it is a trial 8. JOH pointed out that OTs receive different types of feedback than SMG, BN agreed and mentioned that difficult conversations have taken place between OTs and staff with a general feeling of dissatisfaction 9. HI pointed out that there are many approaches and the newsletter could be successful depending on the content and if a clear purpose is communicated to all staff 10. JF enquired about the aim of the newsletter, KL responded that the meetings were held to tackle comms between SMG and staff and the newsletter is to address the second gap which is to inform teams about the work of other staff in the Union 11. KL asked the Committee of there are other channels to fill these two gaps 12. JF mentioned that she is concerned about whether a staff meeting is the correct forum for the issues and feedback on staff contentment, KL responded that the meeting is only a solution to tackle communications 13. JF summarised the discussion by asking KL to consider the challenges from the committee, and take this further to determine what the best course of actions is 14. JF added that the issue may be staff engagement as opposed to staff comms, and that may be another issue for management to tackle **<u>Membership data</u>** 15. KL summarised the work done on this project by the previous HoSVC and the involvement of the data science society last year 16. KL added that recently the data society contacted the Union and mentioned that they may be able to take this project as a data challenge to students who are attending the *AI Hack* event 17. BN enquired about the purpose of the project, KL responded that it aims to model voter turnout by looking at previous elections data, to predict who is likely to vote and target students who are not engaged with the Union 18. MW enquired about the continuity of this project and whether the society will be willing to do it every year. JOH	**KL to proceed in liaising with the data science society for the membership data project**

responded that the outcome is currently unknown and it is at an exploratory stage 19. JF mentioned that this will be a useful exercise as the Union holds a lot of data that is not utilised effectively and asked KL to proceed with the project **Item 07 – Welcome week evaluation** 1. KL highlighted the positive points mentioned in her report and pointed out the resource constraints in the marketing team and the lost opportunities as a result 2. KL mentioned the recommendations as addressing the Union website as a priority, and starting the conversations regarding welcome week at an earlier time, and take on responsibility for planning PG welcome week activities from College 3. AL pointed out that feedback is mostly positive and there are huge successes and wanted the committee to consider two major points: what do we need to do to get a welcome booklet to every PG student and what do we need to do to fix our website? Additionally, the name change should also be picked up this year 4. JF mentioned that this paper is an honest paper reflecting on the positives and negatives and JF asked about how the Union can make sure the team is resourced adequately next year 5. KL said the team was largely under resourced and most staff were new, additionally there is no plan from College on PG engagement, as a result the issues weren't recongnised early enough and the Union was not able to react quickly enough 6. KL asked about suggestions on how to tackle PG welcome week engagement, AL commented that the Union must have tangible aims, KL pointed out that the difficulty arises due to the lack of avenues to reach all PG's. AL responded that PG's have intro events within their departments, however the issue is that there is inconsistency across departments in terms of organising these events 7. MW mentioned that a tote bag is given to all post graduates during induction, and the booklet can be potentially added to the bundle in the bag 8. JOH enquired about the average percentage of the welcome booklet reach amongst PGs, KL responded that this is higher than 50% 9. KL pointed out that the Student activities and marketing teams will start meeting in term 2 to discuss this issue and JF suggested updating the Committee on the forward plan in March	**JA to update the forward Agenda**

10. BN mentioned that College are currently recruiting staff who will focus on reorganising the planning for welcome week 11. AL mentioned that it is important to plan welcome week 2019 with a documented project management approach to re-use the planning resource for future years	
Item 08 - AE 18 evaluation 1. KL pointed out the positive results by mentioning the higher engagement with PG students, the success in moving positions online and the higher number of students interested in positions 2. KL pointed out that challenges remain in terms of filling up UG network and wellbeing positions 3. KL added that work this year will focus on moving all PG positions online 4. BN mentioned that there is a need to improve efficiency by automating processes around elections, this will also reduce the number of errors 5. AL added that he will be reviewing the rep network this year with a vision to move all PGT roles online, he added that PGR roles are more difficult due to timelines and suggested discussing this timeline at more detail in the governance Committee 6. JF mentioned that the results are very positive automation seems to be the current challenge 7. MW pointed out that generally it is unclear in her experience when reps are changing and who they are, the process for selection is also not monitored, HI added that this is the same for the UG reps 8. JF suggested ensuring that work is done with reps to ensure that they are engaging with students in a better way, AL mentioned that in his review, he is working on making training compulsory and online, in addition he would like reps to establish relationships with Union staff	**AL to discuss PGR role timelines at Governance Committee**
Item 09 - PG engagement 1. JOH gave updates on the progress of the GSU working group, he mentioned that 3 meetings have been held so far, and the focus for the year will be around running a series of events similar to the successful events run last year and embedding PG strands into campaigns 2. JOH mentioned that another focus is about representation as the GSU president currently receives a stipend which is not from the Union, finally a key focus is to continuously challenge ourselves at Board regarding our initiatives towards PG Students 3. AD added that he is currently liaising with the GSU president to start a PG column in Felix at the start of next term	

4. KL added that Union council is also holding discussions about the link between the GSU and Union 5. BN mentioned a point about engagement with Silwood as they have recently attended council and are now engaging with the Union which is very positive, KL added that there is also outreach work happening in White city **Item 10 – OT Communications** 1. AJF enquired about how OTs are currently communicating their work and AL mentioned that OTs are using different platforms/approaches and are prioritising Comms according to their workloads 2. KL enquired about whether the approach to stagger comms is working, OTs mentioned that it would be best if they each shared their issues individually with KL 3. MW suggested having an evaluation system and targets to set a standard for future OTs 4. JOH noted that comms will be different for each individual OT depending on role and responsibilities etc **Item 11 - LE19** 1. KL highlighted the changes being made this year to LE19, and how JDs will be reviewed and highlighted during nominations 2. KL asked for feedback regarding the introduction of incentives for voting among CUs to help drive more votes 3. BN responded that she is against the idea as it may be interpreted as a bribe, JM added that voting should be based on what candidates can offer not on an incentive to vote 4. JF requested the presentation of a more advanced plan for LE19 in Jan 2019 **Item 12 - Student experience survey** 1. JOH thanked AL for the paper, JM mentioned that the aim of the project is to receive a large response in order to use the results from the survey to shape direction of Union and College year on year 2. Work is currently being done to polish the questions, redo the marketing campaigns and create tools for data analysis, the survey releases on 3rd Dec 2018 and finishes on the end of Feb 2019. It is currently being trialed in a project management approach 3. JF mentioned that this is a very positive step in the right direction 4. AL opened the discussion about the student consultation regarding the Union vision statement, which is to be included in the strategy, however, the strategy itself will not be changing	**RT to outline the annual work plan for the working group in the next Committee meeting** **JOH/AL to bring the discussion regarding the student consultation to Board**

5. AL added that the questions for the consultation have not yet been finalised 6. JOH pointed out that a consultation at this stage is not ideal, however, if there's value in doing it at this stage then it should be done 7. JF suggested passing this discussion point to Board so that a decision can be made on whether a consultation should take place, as doing this halfway through the strategy may be inappropriate 8. KL suggested de-linking the visions from the strategy in the communications if this consultation is to go ahead, this is to avoid confusion as to why it is being done 9. JM fed back that he is unsure whether the Union should set the vision or if a consultation is needed because this organisation is a student Union, HI believes that the vision is an important statement and that student must be consulted 10. AD pointed out that this vision could be used for the future strategy of 20/23. This gives purpose to the consultation and it resolves the comms issues around it 11. JF concluded that this discussion should be taken to Board and therefore it should not be included in the student survey in December. **Item 13 - Terms of reference** 1. A change in the wording needs to be made in Point 7: To receive results and analysis from surveys detailing information on the Union 2. Add the annual report and review of the impact report to forward agenda 3. JM requested adding the student experience survey to the March Agenda **Item 14 - AOB** 1. JF asked AD about how the first few editions of Felix went, AD responded that he had positive feedback overall and he is happy with the team. JF recommended looking at other Union papers and to potentially sign up to awards and competitions for university newspapers 2. AD pointed out that he had some technical issues with West Basement computers and KL mentioned that she will follow up with AD on their catch up	**JA to update the ToR and forward agenda**