

Council
13th June 2011

Deputy President (Welfare) Report

A note by Charlotte Ivison

The Law and Order Committee

Highlights from the meeting on the 7th June:

The latest theft in Hyde Park being committed by someone who fled the scene headlong into armed guards at the Bulgarian Embassy, who were understandably a bit confused

The cycle lane by the barracks being blocked for hours at a time by limousines waiting for princesses who take their kids to play in the playground there

A gang water fight in Hyde Park featuring 300 partially armoured gang members with water pistols, which apparently takes place every year and is a serious violent matter. Even gangsters take holidays, apparently.

Projects

We had a New Projects Committee on the 27th May where we approved a project providing medical aid to villagers in Cambodia.

Ongoing feedback with College

We have ongoing feedback 'project's with College in two areas – Halls and Rent and Cycling provision. I'll be creating googledocs for these to issue track as the volume of issues has gotten out of hand and I fully intend to make decent progress on them before the end of June.

RWB

We had an RWB scheduled for the 2nd June but we deemed that there were insufficient items to justify holding it. I'd like to note my disappointment at the continued lack of welfare reports from Sahil, Deena, Jehan and Carla.

Flat Dating

The flat dating will be happening on the 9th June in the Southside social space. I'm helping Commercial Services design and run the event. We have 87 attendees signed up – it's by far the most popular welfare event we've held this year and I will be strongly recommending we repeat this next year, perhaps at a couple of different times during the year.

Focus Groups

Both the disability and food focus groups took place on the 2nd. The disability group produced good feedback which was on new and different issues which was great. The food group was not good – few people came and they came for the free food and gave unproductive feedback. We're thinking having it more centrally advertised and run by College next year will boost uptake and make it more effective.

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Bees

The bees moved in on the 31st May and are by all accounts very happy. If you'd like to get involved managing them, contact ESoc. You can follow the bee's progress on ESoc's blog:

<http://www.union.ic.ac.uk/scc/esoc/>

Equality and Diversity Annual Report Meeting

On the 7th June we looked over the Equality and Diversity Committee's Annual Report which is to be submitted to the Management Board. My role with that is to make sure student needs are addressed strategically and letting College know about all the great E&D work our student groups and welfare officers have done this year.

CV2012

I with Heather have been involved with most of the CV2012 assessment process, where we've been helping the team establish who out of those who have done the award qualify to receive it.

The Welfare Survey

I've finished going analysing the Welfare Survey data – I've compiled a report which is to be presented at this meeting. I also gave a presentation on the survey results at the Welfare Seminar, a large, cross-College one day conference on welfare issues. Thanks to Nic Massie, Jenny Wilson and John Sandall for all of their hard work in creating and implementing the survey.

eLearning

I've spent not insignificant chunks of this month lending my dulcet tones to the now numerous eLearning modules – enjoy. We wanted to add sound effects to the safety bits, but the grown ups wouldn't let us – blame them if you fall asleep.

Awards

I've been on the panel for the Rector's Awards for Pastoral Care and Improving the Student Experience and the Union awards.

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How my year compares to my manifesto

I want to be your Deputy President for Welfare because I want to improve your student experience. Whether it is making things more user-friendly, more efficient or more responsive to individual problems, you deserve a welfare system that provides for your needs.

I want Welfare to be more
Accessible

- Regular Advice Centre stand in the JCR/SCR to improve awareness of available support

What happened? The welfare stand failed. People weren't interested and didn't know what it was for. I'm advising next year's DPW to create a really attractive stand regularly manned with welfare officers, with welfare officers well trained to be helpful and engaging whilst there.

- Support all student Welfare officers with training and advice

What happened? I did create some training this year, but it was quite late in the term. I want to expand it for next year with advice from Counselling on how to deal with students sensitively as well as more formal E&D training.

- Review the Buddy Scheme

What happened? I tried to make the scheme more centrally run this year, but the deptsocs wanted to do it different ways so I left it alone. Hopefully the academic for a will highlight best and worst buddy practice in preparation for next year.

Engaging

- Online debates and discussion of contentious issues

What happened? This ended up being not important enough to focus on – a nice idea but not a priority.

- Encourage more club involvement in campaigns like Green Week and One World Week

What happened? This did happen – we had a lot of great events run by a lot of different clubs – VegSoc and KnitSock to name a couple.

- Greater emphasis on student volunteering

What happened? Heather and I worked really hard and got the Projects system properly up and running. Individual, non-Project based opportunities have been supported by CV2012 which I've been an active part of.

Open

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- Advertise the student's right to attend Union meetings and create a monthly mailing list (briefly!) summarising meeting agendas

What happened? We've made a consistent effort throughout the year to publicise Union meetings in Felix and the newsletter which can be built upon for next year. The mailing list was a good idea that didn't really happen although Jenny's done something similar with the Council summary.

- Actively gather and incorporate student's opinions into major policy change discussions

What happened? I've spent a lot of time coordinating surveys and focus groups throughout the year, so I hope I've done this.

- Better publication of critical policy changes

What happened? We've made an effort to publicise changes to policy such as the changes to the Environmental policy – however, this could definitely have been done more.

Postgrad Friendly

- Annual postgrad welfare surveys, with problems brought to the attention of supervisors

What happened? I incorporated postgrad issues into the new welfare survey I helped create – we had a good PG response with useful data collected.

- Better support for and integration of all postgrads within and between departments

What happened? I've helped solve individual PG welfare issues, but it's been the GSA that have done really run with this year.

- In particular, focussed welfare provision for female and international postgrads

What happened? Realistically, I think this is going to take a number of years to come to fruition, as support for any postgrads is still so new.