

 **Imperial College Union Board of Trustees**

**11th December 2019**

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| **AGENDA ITEM NO.** |  |
| **TITLE** | Deputy President (Welfare) Trustee Board Report |
| **AUTHOR** | Deputy President (Welfare) – Shervin Sabeghi |
| **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** | An update on my key goals has been provided, as well as a summary of other important matters. Key points:* Set-up Liberation Reform Working Group and discussing possibility of creating Student Networks/Advocacy Groups
* Negotiating Hall rent prices with College and encouraged Union Council to reject all the options on the table
* Working on reviewing Sexual Harassment and Misconduct policies & procedures in College – work needs to happen such that the Union is aligned with these.
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| **PURPOSE** | To update Board on my goals and work so far.  |
| **DECISION/ACTION REQUIRED** | No action required. |

**Key goals:**

Goal 1: Reform the Liberation and Community work of the Union, and ensure the College's EDI strategy works for students – ***in progress***

**Progress/Updates:**

* Working with Marcomms to generate a Liberation Comms Plan to improve the visibility and reach of Liberation and Community Officers.
* Have set-up a Liberation Reform Working Group of CWB members which has met twice now. We have mapped out Liberation and Community (L&C) at the Union/College and identified gaps/issues. We have discussed the creation of Liberation Student Networks/Advocacy Groups to make it easier for students to build communities, to spread the workload of L&C Officers, and to allow for more consistency in L&C work year-by-year.
* Some discussion of creating a Social Mobility/Class/Equal Opportunities Officer has happened in recognition of this being a currently unaddressed area and considering the College’s new Access and Participation Plan.
* The College have received 21 applications for the EDI Seed Fund, 8 of which are from students following my intervention to make sure they could apply. The panel to decide who is funded (which I’ll be a part of) will take place on January 8th.
* There has been another Self-Assessment Team meeting for the Race Equality Charter. Given the need to submit an application in the first half of the new year, I am quite concerned about the progress on this and little concrete action seems to be taken right now. Other reps and I will work with the College to try and improve student engage in focus groups around these to ensure that student views are considered fully.

Goal 2: Fully review and set a course of action for the Wellbeing Representation Network – *in progress*

Progress/Updates:

* Progress has begun slowly by scoping out the project and determining what data will be necessary for this review. As such, a request was made to include questions in the Student Experience Survey regarding the WBRN to use in the review.

Goal 3: Improve student support services – ***in progress***

**Progress/Updates**

* Have received full data from the Disability Advisory Service around the costs to students for disability assessments. To unburden students of the cost, an extra investment of ~£17,000 will be needed and I will push to have this included in the next planning round.
* We have initiated conversations with representatives from UCL around a collaborative partnership with the NHS to improve pathways to NHS mental health services from universities. This is an OfS funded project which will involved hiring students part-time to engage other students in a consultation around themes that we are deciding on.

Goal 4: (Re-)establish the Felix Welfare Section – ***in progress***

**Progress/Updates:**

* After nearly a term of radio silence from welfare, I have arranged for a 4-page section on Liberation for the 70th Anniversary edition of the term. Going forward, I’ll need to explore how to make welfare contributions to Felix more consistent.

**Hall Rent Negotiation:**

* We were asked by the College to choose the breakdown of rents across first-year guarantee halls under a ‘break-even’ budget that gives a £190 average price of rent across all bed spaces. This would represent a 12% average increase across all bed spaces in one year.
* On 3rd December, Union Council decided to reject the premise of the model (36 to 1) and return to the College and lobby for the prices to not raise as much. Following a meeting with Campus Services, we will take this forward with the CFO but would appreciate guidance/steer from the board with this.

**Operational/Other Matters:**

* I have been involved in workshops with College as part of the review process of sexual harassment and misconduct policies. This has uncovered that there are likely gaps in the involvement of the Union in many instances. For example, about if someone has a complaint upheld against them and measures taken against them, but the Union never finds out so could keep them in a position of responsibility. We will need to look at how our procedures/policies align with the College’s on this.
* Had a meeting of a working group with Halls Wardens to review Social Fund Policies. The response was not as desired and there was a fair amount of resistance to the fundamental principles around why the Union administer the social fund for halls. The Union will need to consider whether or not our involvement in this is of genuine benefit to students, or if we’re simply providing a free service to College.
* Finished off rep training having trained 78/81 Wellbeing Reps solo. The representation training model likely needs reviewing since I do not believe the approach currently taken is a) most beneficial for reps or b) resource efficient.
* Been having 121s with Wellbeing Rep teams and Liberation and Community Officers to catch up on what they are up to/finding their roles but also, importantly, trying to get a perspective on what they think of the Union and what our priorities should be to complement work also being done with key volunteers in the activities area.