

Imperial College Union
Union Council / 20th March 2024
Council feedback survey summary

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Decision(s): To consider

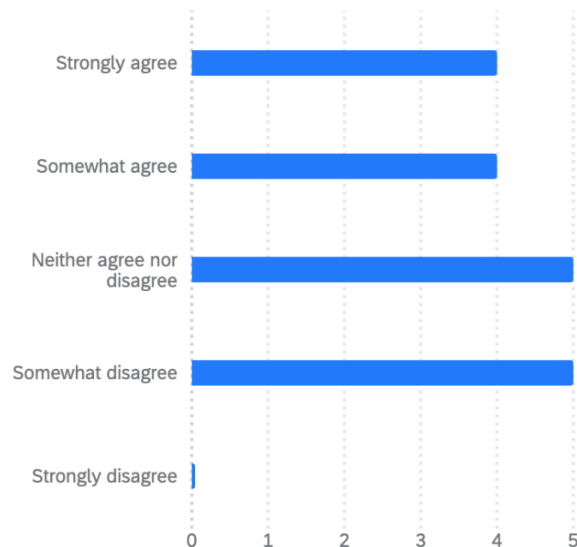
Introduction

A survey was circulated to Council members on the 11th February and left open for responses until the 11th March. The purpose of the survey was to gather feedback on how Council is operating. In total, 18 Council members responded to the survey. This is less than half of all Council members, which must be considered when drawing conclusions from the results. This paper serves to inform Council on the results, propose suggestions for Council going forward, and open the floor to discussion regarding this. Thank you to everyone who responded to the survey, the feedback was very insightful and useful.

Officer Trustee Scrutiny

Responses to the question regarding new format of Officer Trustee scrutiny trialled at the meeting on the 5th December where non-decisive.

The question “Do you feel that the Officer Trustee verbal reports trialled at the meeting on the 5th December 2023 are an effective form of scrutiny for the Officer Trustees?”, had the following responses:

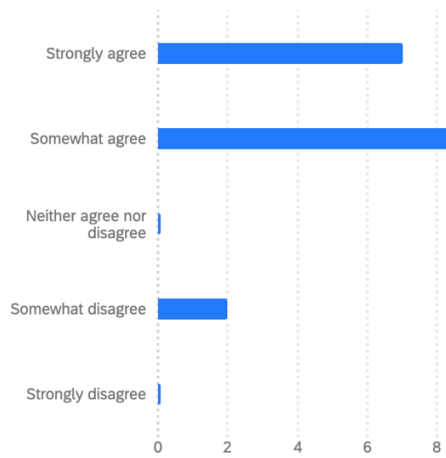


The long form responses relating to this question strongly indicated that written reports, alongside a verbal summary, were preferred over a solely verbal report. This allows Council members to prepare questions and better understand the content of the reports.

It was indicated by some long-form responses that Council does not fully understand what to expect from Officer Trustees. This idea appears to be compounded by the 5 “neither agree nor disagree” responses to the multiple-choice question.

Perceived ability to engage with Council

In response to the question, “How far do you agree with this statement: I feel able to speak in Council when a matter arises during the meeting that I have thoughts and/or questions about”, Council members responded as follows:



This is generally positive, however there is clearly a sizable group of Council members who do not feel fully able to speak-up in Council. This is clearly of a concern and needs to be addressed to enable all Council members to feel that their input is valued.

The three main reasons that respondents identified as inhibiting their ability to speak in Council were:

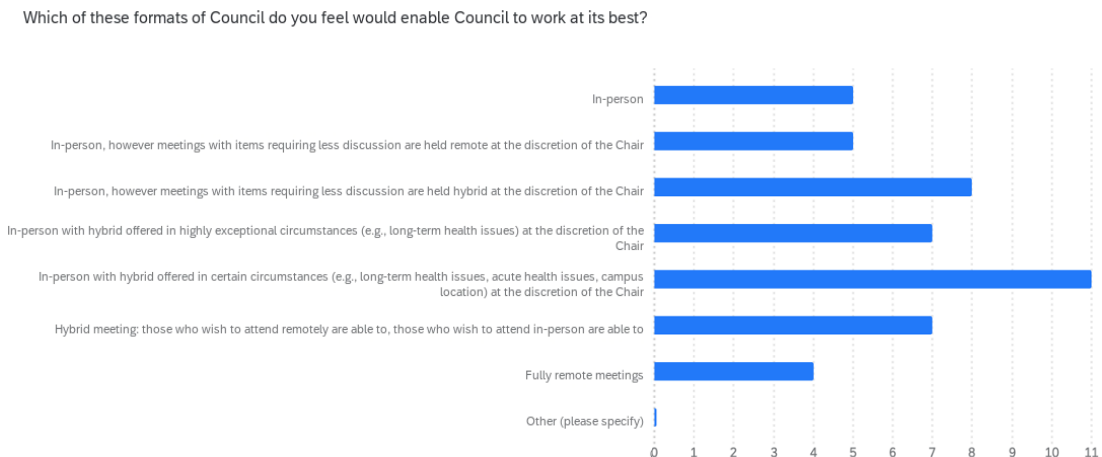
- Flow of discussion
- Feeling your role is not relevant to the topic
- Fear of judgement from peers

Council Mentor Groups

Respondents indicated that Council mentor groups have been either moderately effective, slightly effective, or not effective at all. Many Council members seem to not have met with their groups, either because they did not get in touch with them, or they did not hear back from their groups. Those who have participated have mixed experiences; some value the small group setting, while others feel they are unsure what to discuss.

Hybrid/remote/in-person meetings

Respondents were asked to indicate as many formats of holding Council as they would see as enabling Council to work at its best. The results were as follows:



The primary concerns of respondents surrounding the format of Council meetings were:

- Accessibility & fairness
- Social/person-to-person connection
- Clear communication/meeting flow
- Engagement/concentration

General comments

Positives:

- Engaged Council members

Points to improve:

- Meeting accessibility
- Minimising lengthy discussions when unnecessary/flow of meeting
- Union Dining Hall acoustics

Questions for discussion in Council

I will ask the following questions through a poll during Council to gather Council's feedback. Please take some time to think about your opinion ahead of the meeting.

- Is the verbal summary of Officer Trustee reports during Council useful, or would that time better be spent elsewhere?
- What actions would make it clearer to Council members what is expected of Officer Trustees?
- Does Council prefer the Officer Trustee reports to specifically relate to the Officer Trustee objectives set out at the beginning of the year, or is a more question-based structure preferred?

Actions/recommendations

1. Proposal for written Officer Trustee reports to be implemented instead of verbal reports to be brought to next Council in the form of updated Standing Orders.
2. Incorporate the roles and responsibilities of the Officer Trustees in more detail into Union Council training at the beginning of the year.
3. More team building/social activities.
4. Council members who would like to be assigned a new mentor group should reach out to the Council Chair.
5. Review meeting format for next Council and address through changes, if necessary, to Standing Orders.
6. Further consider how to minimise Council members' fear of judgement by peers when speaking up in Council.