



Union Council Officer Report **Monday, 30th April, 6pm.** **Students' Union Main Room**

Bruce Wight, Union Development Officer

Since the last council meeting as a students' union we have been through our busiest period of the year. Elections! This is by far the most important time of the year as it will dictate who you want to lead you for the upcoming academic year. I am pleased to report that this year as a Student body we have broken our record and I would like to say now a huge congratulations to the team working around the clock all of the week to get a record breaking 35% of us voting in this year's elections. I would also like to congratulate everyone who stood in the election as we also broke the record for the amount of students running in the election. This is a more general overview of what we do as a Students' Union as we are the main student voice of Aberystwyth and I can say I'm honestly so proud of the progression we have made due to the highest amount of us ever voting in this year's election.

Due to the timing of the council, I have tried to include as much information around my work as possible.

To start with I have been progressing the **Wi-Fi Policy** by with meeting with the Head of Information Services and other relevant members of staff. Progress unfortunately has been slowed due to the nature of the University finances and the budgets being unavailable at this moment in time, I'm currently putting together a business case with IS and trying to include members of the local community to get on board with this initiative. I will hopefully be able to keep making steady head way with this project and be able feedback more when I get research done in to the matter.

Porters around Campus. I have been in many meetings with Campus Services and the Accommodation office around the staffing levels of Porters on campus and the Site Security team. The query was originally raised by a student whom had an issue with their being a lack of staffing available to them when an issued had occurred in a building after Porter-ing hours. After some enjoyable and informative meetings about the current provision being provided by the University, I have been reassured that we have a 24/7 Site Security team that will be always be on the end of their phone (**01970 622900**) which allows any other issues to be quickly dealt with by the University.

The future of Old College. One of the many project boards I sit on is the Old College Project board, the current outline of the project is to see the Old College have refurbishment beginning with in the next year with funding becoming available due to hard work from DARO and their team to achieve Heritage lottery funding. I am pleased to announce they have appointed a new project manager in Jim O'Rourke, who has been incredibly keen to include student feedback on the redevelopment of the building. Tying into that is the OSA which is our Old Students' Association, which currently uses the Old College for its meetings and is growing in numbers over the years. I am glad to say that their hard work with a former President of ours and their now Vice-President has seen engagement increase across the country with more and more Alumni getting engaged with their association.

Toilets seats. The SU current toilet seat situation has been raised countless times from the Student Body, all the way back in September and even before that I have been in talks with Commercial Services, Campus Services and Estates on the getting a basic refurbishment done or a full refurbishment. The current situation I was left with the other side of Easter, is their wasn't the budget within the Commercial department to invest in them for the mean time due to the restructures going on within that department. I have raised this issue many times already this year and I am in the progress in raising this issue again within the coming weeks. Due to the nature of the SIP and the



way that has been progressing many refurbishment projects and plans have become more difficult to get an achievable end goal within my time as Development Officer.

Current SIP progression. The university is current undergoing a major restructure where there is a reduction in staffing across all departments across the university. Primarily, the reduction of this is due to the decline in student numbers over the last 4 years and HEFCW requiring we make a saving of 11.4m over the time period 2017-2019, initially 6m in 2017-18 academic year and 5.4m in 2018-19 academic year. The major point of this part of the restructure is being the reduction of the Pro Vice Chancellor roles from 4 down to 2, with many of the roles merging to remove mid-level management roles. The greatest effect to students will be the reforming of Institutes; these are being reduced from 6 Institutes down to a potential 4 or 3 after a University Senate meeting.

I am personally in favour of the proposals but I do have concerns around certain movements and merges with regards to student support and careers, which I am raising with the top level executive of the University.

If this issue is something you would like more information on personally, I will be hosting a focus groups in the committee room on Tuesday 1st May at 4pm and 6pm for short meetings where you can come and raise and concerns you have.

In other news, I have taken periods of leave for 14 days in total since March, but this is mainly due to going for re-election during the elections period, having a short holiday and then the building being closed over Easter.

It has been an absolute pleasure being your Union Development Officer for the 2017-18 Academic year and I'm fortunate to say that I've been re-elected as your President for the 2018-19 Academic year. I look forward to continually working hard for the Student Body and using the well-established relationship I have built during this year to getting what we want as Students for the years to come.

As always please email into me on prdstaff@aber.ac.uk / sudevelopment@aber.ac.uk or feel free to come see me in person as I am always happy to hear your view and progress it as best as I can.

Molly-Jean Longden, Wellbeing Officer

Molly has been working closely with our representation and support team to create the Love, Hate, Rate survey aimed at receiving your feedback on your houses and flats. This is a major move in order to let students know the best properties, letting agents and landlords. She has also been working hard to research into terminations in Wales and has submitted a motion to this council for your consideration. Alongside this, Molly has been working with student support (Doug Keer and John Harrington) to put on our first ever Mentoring Conference as recognition of the amazing things our students do for our mentoring schemes. They are now looking at how to improve the scheme itself with help from the feedback provided in this session. Elections came and went and now we have our next officer team for the year so training will begin for the new year very soon. From that, Molly is working on planning her campaigns for the next year and building up a major women's campaign! Finally, exam stress week. There's a few hiccups but never fear, the puppies will be back on the 12th of May, and we will be asking for a £1 donation so we can name a pup!! Enjoy your week, 7's if you're competing and don't stress too much round exams, we're always here for a chat if you need us.



Jessica Williams, Opportunities Officer

Jess has been running our most successful event Superteams, with this years' men's weekend first weekend to ever be postponed due to the Beast from East – Storm Emma. Unfortunately this did drag out Superteams to a month instead of 2 weeks but we again managed to run the event to a great success. She has spent a majority of time being down a staff member in the Opportunities office as Lucie if you may or may not know has been on Maternity leave and has brought the beautiful baby Libby in to the Ops team at the SU. Congratulations to her and Gav. Due to this Jess has spent a lot of time on operational work, due to being a staff member down, she has worked hard to make sure that Varsity, Superteams and the Awards ceremonies the week just gone have been a major success. Jess would like to pass on her thanks to the staff in the SU for all the help they have given her over the last few months and is looking forward to the upcoming Rugby 7s tournament!

Gwion Williams, UMCA President and Welsh Culture Officer

- UMCA held RAG Week to raise money for Bronglais Hospital Intensive Care Unit. They raised £3,000 with events such as Bingo Night, a Mystery Trip (to Llanidloes) and Sŵn Ffiadd.
- Policy was passed at UMCA's General Meeting to reform UMCA's committee and structure. The committee will be cut from 17 members to 8 with the creation of the UMCA Senate.
- UMCA's Second Language Society is currently being established for next year with the intention of giving an option for students who are learning the language and those who are not confident speaking it, to socialise in Welsh.

Emma Beenham, Academic Affairs Officer

- Co-hosted a Wales-wide rep conference with Wise Wales
- Started our Ring a Rep project, which is another step in our enhancement of our academic re system alongside writing up a new Rep policy
- She has had to deal with the bulk of our student's complaints and queries around the recent UCU strike, which took a majority of her time during February and March. As a Union we had passed a motion of support of the strikes. As an officer team we joined the public rally that happened here in Aberystwyth, as well offering striking staff members tea and coffee daily to show our support
- She attended NUS Wales Conference
- She has managed to lobby the university to agree to publish its incomings and out comings of where its money is being spent. It will be useful for students to see where the expenditure lies particularly around the redundancies with the SIP