



Comhaltas na Mac Léinn,
Ollscoil na Gaillimhe
University of Galway
Students' Union

Miontuairiscí (Minutes)

Comhairle Chomhaltas na Mac Léinn 27/3/2023

18:13 Introduction to Comhairle

Comhairle begins at 18:13.

The following member(s) were absent: *Holly Leech*, **Convener of the Colleges of Business, Public Policy and Law**; *Benjamin George*, **Mature Students' Officer**; *Michaela Margaret Joyce*, **Disability Rights Officer**; *Anne Marie Ward*, **Ethnic Minorities Officer**.

The Matters Arising are as follows:

- *Sai Gujulla*, **Uachtarán** puts forward motion to increase standing orders by 30 minutes.
Motion passes, guillotine extended to 20:43.

18:14 Officers Reports/Questions

Cathal Sherlock, **Chairperson** introduces comhairle & briefly outlines agenda.

- *Sai Gujulla*, **President**

Outlines officer report in full.

- *Barry Ó Siochrú*, **Leas-Uachtarán Don Ghaeilge/Vice President For The Irish Language**

Outlines officer report highlights. Report taken as read.

- Thanks Comhairle, Part-Time Officers and Choiste Gaeilge, Cumann Gaelach, and other societies.
- Invites questions about work done under position.

- *Joe Mee*, **Vice President / Education Officer**

Outlines report highlights.

- Outlines motions proposed to Comhairle.
- Additional 70 study spaces from 1st May.

- Many noisy study spaces for meetings, etc.
- Motion to carry forward credits approved & will be possible provided student has overall 2:2 from September 23/24 academic term
- *Imogen O'Flaherty Falconer*, **Vice-President for Welfare And Equality**
Outlines report in full.
 - Thanks Comhairle for work done this year

Barry Ó Siochrú, **Leas-Uachtarán Don Ghaeilge** asks **Vice President for Welfare And Equality** to explain proposed housing model more.

VP for Welfare And Equality states that the proposed model involves setting aside student accommodation for lower income students.

- *Rain Puiman Yan*, **Convenor of The College of Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences**

Report taken as read

- *Jack Reidy*, **Convenor of The College of Science And Engineering**

Report taken as read

- *Raimey O'Boyle*, **Postgraduate Taught Officer**

Outlines report.

- *Tahsin Kamal*, **Clubs Captain**

Report taken as read

- *Malena Thren*, **Environmental Awareness and Sustainability Officer**

Looking for volunteers for Glassary project. Outlines report.

Barry Ó Siochrú, **Leas-Uachtarán Don Ghaeilge** asks *speaker* what ecobricks are
Speaker explains ecobricks.

- *Julia Egan*, **International Students Officer**

Report taken as read

- *Vickie Popoola*, **Societies Chairperson**

Report taken as read

- *Seánie Ó Gáibhín*, **Oifigeach Na Gaeilge Páirt-Aimseartha**

Report taken as read

Vote to accept reports passes at 18:31.

18:32 USI Hustings

Chairperson explains procedural motions.

Candidates for Postgraduate Affairs

- *Seathrún (Jeffrey) Sardina* [sé/é]
 - Situation where cost of living supports for postgraduates inaccessible
 - System is under poverty line.
 - Founder of PCA, tirelessly campaigned with TDs and set up protests

[Candidate repeats campaign as Gaeilge]

- *Muhammad Sayyam Afzal*
 - Honour to be here.
 - Highlights wage issues for postgraduates

Questions

Fionn Sexton-Connolly, **3rd BA Law w/ Arts** asks how candidates will set up unified front between PWO and the USI

Muhammad Sayyam Afzal is aware of this issue and has felt it himself. Claims USI is not doing enough to make people aware.

Seathrún (Jeffrey) Sardina has been involved with PWO on the national committee. As a USI officer he will be able to stay on that committee and link both.

Unknown speaker questions what candidates planned in terms of financial support in terms of SUSI and high fees

Seathrún (Jeffrey) Sardina [sé/é] notes that SUSI needs to be more accessible and is currently a broken system.

Muhammad Sayyam Afzal wants to be a representative for all, and that's Post-graduate taught students included. Notes that there is not enough representation and [...] is a place that is lacking overall. Notes his is a problem that can be solved.

Candidates for Leas-Uachtarán Don Ghaeilge

POI: *Barry Ó Siochrú*, **Leas-Uachtarán Don Ghaeilge** notes that only listed candidate has dropped out of running, role remains open for nominations.

Candidates for Vice-President of Border Midlands West

POI: *Barry Ó Siochrú*, **Leas-Uachtarán Don Ghaeilge** notes that only listed candidate has dropped out of running, role remains open for nominations to all students – if interested please contact CMLOG full-time executive.

Candidates for Vice-President for Equality and Citizenship

Deputy president of TWSU

Pink training facilitator

Wants to help set up advisory groups to help communities do well

Pink training is important for students

Questions

Fionn Sexton Connolly, **3rd BA Law w/ Arts** states students do not know what USI does, what will candidates do about this?

Should be main focus. Gonna work abt high costs. Ask incoming regional officers to talk abt what uni students can do

Barry Ó Siochrú, **Leas-Uachtarán Don Ghaeilge** notes his vocality of dissatisfaction aboutt Gaeilge in USI. Claims lack of intersectionality in USI regarding roles. Questions how candidate would include Gaeilge in role.

- Will discuss with incomning team

Candidates for Vice-President for Campaigns

- *Zaid Albarghouthi*
 - Claims role focuses on direct action. Makes sure campaign policies work split into 2 sections.
- *Kieron Portbury QSU*
 - Personal development , codefining student representation
 - USI representatives 50000
 - Encourage and support campaigns
- Christine ddcu

Won campaign of the year

Empower students/ ; most students dontt know what it is

Increase ordinary student representation

Improve communications – only open to sabbatical training

Activist traing

Trans healthcare campaign

Vp for gaeilge

Colleges

Look at manbufesto online

Questions

Mary Tynan, **MA Cleachtas Geairmiuíl sna Meáin/Irish Language Media**

questions whether candidates are open to campaigns on disability access

Kieron Portbury notes USI representative busy so not as successful as it could be. Would require clear outlines of policy in advance as opposed to right before. As much accessibility as required should be provided.

Christine was the DARE [Disability Access Route to Education] senator for DCU. Unions should be working with disability officers for students.

Zaid Albarghouthi offers structure for making campaigns. Will know what to campaign and what to ask for

Barry Ó Siochrú, Leas-Uachtarán Don Ghaeilge notes how USI structures Campaigns Strategy Committee which strategises for campaigns; criticises that the committee only met for the first time in November 2022. Notes that Campaigns Workgroup meets monthly.

Christine xyz, DCU has actively been a part of USI protests. When she was a first year 10,000 ppl attended, now you barely get 200 people. Wants to highlight ordinary student voices & not just officers. Notes Campaigns Workgroup was meant to do occupation which didn't happen; disappointing since since entire point of occupation is to get attention and disrupt.

Zaid Albarghouthi outlines voting in terms of preference.

Kieron Portbury would teach people how to campaign and disseminate this information among SU officers.

Candidates for Vice-President for Equality and Citizenship

- *Collete Murphy, DCU*
 - Condemns cost of living + accommodation prices
 - Would increase lobbying
 - Would provide college survival guides
 - Another National Mental Health Survey needed

- Last one done pre-covid, none done after.
- STI Competition
 - STI rates rising
 - Bring back Shag Packs

Imogen O'Flaherty Falconer, Vice-President for Welfare And Equality questions how to tackle drugs, alcohol & their misuse.

Colette Murphy, DCU notes this is a big issue with students which can be fun but can be harmful. Highlights Citizens Assembly working on decriminalisation; would disseminate info regarding addiction to students

Niamh McGrath, Final Children Studies questions how candidate will work with students on the ground regarding disability awareness across Ireland

Colette Murphy, DCU states VP for Equality and Citizenship can't do much but notes not enough communication between DSS & Counselling

Candidates for Vice-President for Education

- *Bryan XYZ, Waterford Vice-President for Education*
 - Would implement Campaign Strategy & Constitutional Review Committee
 - Workshops for Education Officers to make sure they are supported and know how to talk to SUSI and education services.
 - Accessibility reform, exams are outdated draconian. Closed book exams too hard and don't apply to current working world.
 - SUSI reform, SUSI is inaccessible to students.

Joe Mee, VP for Education questions candidates main goal working with USI?

Bryan XYZ, Waterford VP for Education states that assessment reform needs to be updated & reformed

Mary Tynan, MA Cleachtas Geairmiúil sna Meáin/Irish Language Media notes that a Masters course is 3 semesters long while SUSI only pays for 2. Questions whether this is an issue the candidates will address?

Candidates for President

POI: *Barry Ó Siochrú, Leas-Uachtarán Don Ghaeilge* – Patrick Dermott has dropped out of the running

Sai Gujulla, University of Galway

- *Sai Gujulla, University of Galway President*
 - 18th Comhairle attended
 - As students mentioned, nobody knows what USI is therefore cannot engage with it
 - Would make USI more accessible to students

Fionn Sexton-Connolly, 3rd BA Law w/ Arts

[**Speaker** reprimanded for incorrectly phrased question by **Chairperson** twice]

Speaker questions how candidates will use previous experience in the role

Sai Gujulla, CMLOG only involved by direct action; lockout for all students involved. Highlights National Working Group & Higher Education Institutions involved. Would get issues and suggestions from all student officers

Niamh McGrath, Final Children Studies questions how from previous experience on Unions do the candidates plan to involve all officers in campaigns on the ground

Sai Gujulla, CMLOG plans to let them know they can attend National Council

Comfort Break/Voting

Student Union

Chris Newell, General Manager CMLOG outlines plans for Student pantry next year and for the Student's union to manage the pantry next year

Fionn Sexton-Connolly, 3rd BA Law w/ Arts questions how businesses managed by the Student's Union Commercial Services do this year with the struggles of the cost of living issues

Speaker states businesses have been healthy but drop in footfall.

POI: *Barry Ó Siochrú, Leas-Uachtarán Don Ghaeilge* notes that CMLOG pays living wage in businesses

May McGrath notes the pantry is currently run by SocsBox and the Well Crew - will those students still be employed and will they be paid a living wage?

Speaker notes CMLOG will be doing recruiting process and will be in a position to pay in line with living wage based on finances. Notes CMLOG has no control over Well Crew.

Proposed changes to Schedule 1 – Elections

Joe Mee, Vice-President for Education outlines multiple changes to schedule 1, including financing for elections. Outlines changes to Postgraduate Research Class Representatives - elected because they don't have classes.

POI *Chris Stewart, unknown faculty* - postgraduate students do have classes.

Malena Thren, Environmental Officer ————— IN FAVOUR OF MOTION

- Thinks it is important to have this to clean up issues that were there
- Puts more importance on part time students.

Joe Mee, VP for Education

PROPOSER

Summates

- Misspoke earlier, Postgraduate Researchers do have classes, just not course instances

Motion passes

Motion to approve Environmental Strategy for the Student's Union

*Malena Thren, **Environmental Officer*** outlines strategy and asks Comhairle to vote in favour.

*Barry Ó Siochrú, **Leas-Uachtarán Don Ghaeilge*** proposes Procedural Motion 9A [that the question now be put].

9A passes.

Malena Thren, Environmental Officer

PROPOSER

Summates

- Asks Comhairle to vote in favour

Motion Passes

Motion on Officer Engagement in the Sibín

Motion on Officer Engagement in the Sibín proposed by *Tom Forde, **Convener of the College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies***. Proposal would mandate full-time officers to be in the Sibín at least 1 hour per week and encourages part-timer officers to go in there.

*Barry Ó Siochrú, **Leas-Uachtarán Don Ghaeilge*** proposes Procedural Motion 9A [that the question now be put].

9A passes.

Motion passes.

Motion on Part-Time Officer Crossover Training

Motion on Part Time Officer Crossover Training proposed by *Tom Forde, **Convener of the College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies***. Proposer notes part-time office training happens already, and wants to mandate this for part-time officers to make sure it happens.

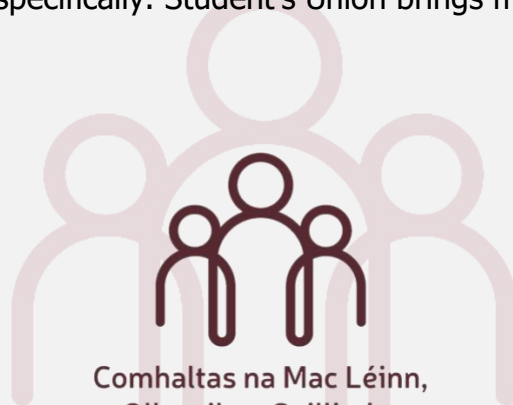
Fionn Sexton-Connolly, 3rd BA Law w/ Arts proposes Procedural Motion 9A [that the question now be put].

9A passes.

Motion passes.

A.O.B

Adam Mullins, Well Crew notes they set up Student Pantry and wanted to answer question put to panty. As far as aware, people from Societies Office are not getting paid for Student Pantry specifically. Student's Union brings more capital and will bring more jobs.



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