Student Activities & Community Council
MINUTES

Date	Friday 2nd October 2026
Time	14:00pm - 16:00pm
Location	Hybrid (Teams/LC 067)
Chair	Nafee Khan (Student Activities President)

No.	Item	Notes
1	Welcome and Introductions	**In Person Attendees:** Nafee Khan (Chair), Boshu Bijan-Mandal, Muhaimin Mubassir Alam, Bogdan Lukyanov, Oisin Hartle Doyle, Simi Kushwaha, Tolulope Aboderin **Online Attendees:** Aanya Nellissery, Anurag Bosu, Georgina Ilaridou-Glynou, Holly Lewis, Emily Haarhoff, Max Roe, Adam Francis
2	Apologies	**Before 48 hours:** None. **After 48 hours:** None. **Absent with no apologies:** Rhea Shah, Sabina Princeshe Hajdinaj, Amal Egal, Ayushi Shah, Mahdi Islam, Sepideh Keikavousi, Natalie Went, Azwad Tahmid
3	Terms of Reference	NK established the council's operating arrangements, including circulation of the terms of reference, private verification-based voting, submission routes for agenda items and motions, and distribution of the presentation materials. **Terms Of Reference:** NK said the terms of reference would be circulated after the meeting and asked members to review them before the next meeting. No previous minutes or outstanding actions existed because this was the council's first meeting. **Voting Requirements:** Members were told to vote privately using their own devices, with their display name, actual student name and student number visible so their identity could be verified. Anyone who felt

		pressured or influenced while voting was directed to contact Sulin Voice at Brunel.ac.uk. **Submissions And Materials:** NK showed QR codes for submitting agenda points, attendance apologies and motions, and confirmed that the presentation slides and related information would be sent to all council members.
4	Approval of the Previous Minutes	N/A for this meeting
5	Previous Meeting Actions	N/A for this meeting
6	Brunel 60th celebration event	**Brunel 60th Diversity Celebration:** NK and RS gathered student input for a planned University and Union event celebrating Brunel's diversity, with feedback requested on activities, timing, location and wider involvement before formal planning begins. **Event Purpose:** RS explained that the University and Union intend to collaborate on an open event celebrating Brunel's cultural differences and diversity. Initial ideas include music, dancing, arts and galleries, with the event intended to take place before the May examinations. **Timing And Location:** No date has been confirmed. RS suggested a period after Easter but before the May examinations, while noting that attendance could be affected if the event is too close to examinations and that the mainly outdoor format makes weather an important consideration. The current plan is to hold it on campus, although alternative suggestions remain welcome. **Student Consultation:** Max asked whether feedback should be sought from the wider clubs and societies community, rather than only the council. Ruth agreed and asked council members, alongside Nafee, to speak with their clubs and societies and feedback ideas. **Working Group Involvement:** RS said the working group currently includes RS and RI, but the organisers want more students and staff involved. Students who are particularly interested in the ongoing planning discussion were invited to express their interest.
7	Union Societies Membership	**Societies Membership Fee Proposal:** NK, FS, Max, Adam, Georgina and other council members examined possible society membership charges intended to address election-related membership spikes and increase funding, but no model was agreed and a more detailed proposal will be developed for further discussion.

		Existing Membership Models: NK explained that sports clubs currently offer Union sport membership at £50 for participation or £100 for competition, whereas society membership is generally free, although some societies can already set their own fees. Possible models discussed included a single flat fee, an individual fee set by each society, or a very small charge such as 50p or £1. **Election Integrity Concerns:** NK described recurring cases in which society memberships rise sharply immediately before elections, sometimes by 100 to 250 members, enabling people with little connection to a society to influence or seek committee positions. A four-week membership threshold is intended to restrict voting eligibility, but Nafee said it has not always been enforced and that spikes still occur on the final eligible day. **Access And Affordability:** Max opposed a universal paywall, particularly for the LGBTQIA+ society, because charging could restrict access to a safe and supportive space and discourage students who are already hesitant to join. Adam also questioned whether students in societies with no activity costs should subsidise societies with higher costs. **Funding Allocation:** NK said the previous year's One Brunel funding pot was approximately £6,000 for 111 societies and suggested that membership income could be returned to societies or used for One Brunel activities, events and celebrations rather than retained by the Union. Francesca said some other unions use small charges for selected societies while keeping particular groups free, and reported that other institutions had seen increased engagement and committee funding after introducing such fees. **Alternative Safeguards:** Members proposed alternatives to a general fee, including suspending memberships during election periods, enforcing the existing eligibility threshold, limiting charges to late-year joiners, using term limits or stronger accountability, and improving enforcement of election rules. Adam argued that the central problem was inconsistent enforcement of existing rules rather than the absence of a membership fee. **Next Steps:** Francesca proposed preparing a more detailed model that incorporates the council's feedback and bringing it to a future meeting or the Societies Guild. Nafee confirmed that no preferred model had yet been agreed, and Adam advised the organisers to develop a clear proposal before seeking agreement in principle.
8	Welfare and inclusion Committee members	**Welfare And Inclusion Support:** Rs consulted the council on introducing welfare and inclusion responsibilities within clubs and societies, while Max, Adam, Georgina and others raised concerns about mandatory roles, student capacity, training, peer boundaries and accessibility; RS agreed to reconsider the approach. **Proposed Role:** RS outlined an idea for each club and society committee to include a welfare and inclusion representative. The role would promote

		welcoming and accessible activities, identify concerns early, support inclusion and signpost students to the Advice Service, Student Support or relevant Union staff; it would not involve counselling. **Need For Early Support:** RS said issues within clubs and societies are often escalated only after they have developed significantly. They suggested that a trained person close to the group could identify concerns earlier, promote inclusive practice and help members reach appropriate professional support. **Mandatory Role Concerns:** Max and Georgina said many societies and sports clubs already struggle to fill committee positions, so adding another mandatory role could make recruitment more difficult and potentially threaten the viability of some groups. Max suggested merging the responsibility with an existing role or using regular Union oversight instead. **Peer Boundaries And Training:** Georgina explained that committee members are peers and may lack the authority or independence to resolve conflicts involving fellow members. They also warned that a welfare representative could become responsible for fixing other people's problems and face an emotional burden. Adam said that any such role would require substantial professional-quality training, rather than a brief induction, while Ruth acknowledged that clearer training and earlier signposting may be needed. **Accessibility Barriers:** Georgina noted that some clubs cannot provide full inclusion because suitable University facilities are not available. RS asked members to report specific barriers so Union staff and leadership can identify what can be changed to improve accessibility. **Alternative Structures:** Georgina proposed a central welfare and inclusion committee or voluntary group supporting multiple clubs and societies, potentially alongside additional part-time officers, so that interested students could receive appropriate training without requiring every group to appoint someone. Max also proposed a shared space where committees could exchange approaches, resources and solutions to common issues. **Outcome:** RS confirmed that the proposal was exploratory and that no decision had been made. They agreed to return to the drawing board and consider merged roles, central support, improved Union oversight, training and shared committee resources rather than immediately imposing a mandatory position.
9	Any other Business	**Meeting Arrangements And Student Life App:** NK sought views on improving attendance arrangements, while FS explained that the Student Life app is intended to connect students with clubs, societies, events and committee contacts, particularly students who miss Freshers' Fair or do not regularly read Union emails.

		Meeting Scheduling: NK said in-person participation would help the council's effectiveness but acknowledged that a hybrid format may not work for everyone. Max explained that their Friday lecture from 2pm to 5pm prevents attendance at that time unless the lecture is cancelled. RS noted that a poll had already been conducted in another council, and NK agreed to circulate an availability form to identify a more suitable day and time. **App Purpose:** Francesca explained that the Student Life app was introduced in response to student feedback about loneliness and the need for more opportunities to make friends and build connections. It provides a central digital route to discover clubs, societies and networks. **App Functionality:** Students can use the app to join group chats, contact committees, view events and meet-and-greets, and find ways to engage without attending Freshers' Fair. Francesca highlighted its potential value for commuter students and students who may not feel confident contacting societies through social media. **Implementation Status:** FS said the app is still being improved. Some clubs and societies are using it effectively, while others have encountered adoption issues that developers are working to resolve over the coming months.

ACTIONS

Follow-up tasks:

- **Terms Of Reference:** Circulate the council's terms of reference and ask members to review them before the next meeting. (NK)
- **Celebration Event Feedback:** Gather feedback from clubs and societies on the preferred timing, format and diversity-related content for Brunel's 60th celebration event, then pass it to Nafee. (All)
- **Celebration Event Planning:** Invite interested council members to join the ongoing working-group discussions for Brunel's 60th celebration event. (Ruth)
- **Society Membership Proposal:** Develop a detailed society-membership proposal that reflects the council's feedback, including fee levels, exemptions, funding arrangements and election-integrity safeguards, and bring it to the next meeting or Societies Guild for further discussion. (FS)
- **Welfare And Inclusion Support:** Reconsider the proposed mandatory welfare and inclusion role by exploring alternatives such as merging it with an existing role, creating a trained cross-society group or providing broader union oversight, then return with a revised approach. (RS)

- **Meeting Scheduling:** Circulate an availability poll to identify meeting days and times that enable the greatest number of council members to attend, including members with Friday teaching commitments. (NK)
- **Accessibility Barriers:** Report accessibility gaps in club and society facilities or activities to the Union so that they can be assessed and addressed. (All)
- **Meeting Materials:** Send the presentation slides and meeting information, including the processes for submitting agenda points, apologies and motions, to all council members. (NK)