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## Flinders University Student Association Student Council Meeting

### Minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Council Room, Registry Building, Flinders University Bedford Park Campus

18:30

**Present:** Josh Rayner (Student President), Sean Henschke (General Secretary), Benika Bhoola (Education Officer), Jesy Murphy (Women's Officer), Nathan Cheetham (Welfare Officer), Molly Turnbull (Indigenous Students Officer), Hoang Min Son Le (International Students Officer), Amy Tschirn (Environment Officer), Kane Abraham (General Councillor), Lana Tikhomirov (General Councillor), James Glynn-Roe (General Councillor), Ben Smith (Acting Manager, Student Engagement), Tristan Newsome (Minutes), David Hopkins (Minutes)

**Observers:** Shani Cox, Ethan Zimmermann

**Meeting Opened: 6.39 PM**

#### 1. Acknowledgement of Country

It was acknowledged that the Student Council meeting was taken place on the land of the Kaurna people.

#### 2. Apologies & Welcome of Guests

Apologies: Aidan Cornelius-Bell (Postgraduate Students Officer), Imogen Deller-Evans (Queer Officer), Anu Francis (Disabilities Officer), Che Cielens (Social Activities Officer), Janelle Chaptini (General Councillor), Victor Ephraims Duruji (General Councillor)

#### 3. Name & Pronoun Round

Those present introduced themselves and their pronouns.

#### 4. Previous Minutes

**Motion:** Student Council accepts the minutes of the July meeting.

**Moved:** Jesy Murphy (Women's Officer)

**Seconded:** Nathan Cheetham (Welfare Officer)

*All in favour.*

**Motion carried.**

#### 5. Executive Decisions

No executive decisions made since the last full council meeting.



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## 6. Reports

**Motion:** Student Council accepts the submitted reports and will defer outstanding reports to the Executive.

James Glynn-Roe presented a verbal report and spoke to the importance of further involving clubs and Associations in decision making processes.

**Moved:** Josh Rayner (Student President)

**Seconded:** Molly Turnbull (Indigenous Students Officer)

*All in favour.*

**Motion carried.**

## 7. Matters for Decision

Student President called for starring of matters.

Starred items: 7.2, 7.3, 7.5, 7.6, 7.8, 7.10, 7.11, 7.12, 7.13.

### 7.0 Starred Matters for Decision

#### 7.2 Affiliation Application from the Flinders University Art & Design Club – Sean Henschke

**Preamble:** The Flinders University Art & Design Club have applied for Financial Affiliation to FUSA. Our Clubs & Events Officer has recommended that Student Council reject this club's affiliation application for the following reasons:

- Does not meet Executive Composition requirements per FUSA Regulations as both the Treasurer and Vice president of the club's executive are not currently enrolled.
- The current bank account has only the President and Treasurer listed as signatories; it does not satisfy 6.1(e) of the regulations (requirement for two currently enrolled Flinders University students as signatories on bank account).

**Motion:** Student Council does not approve the application of the Flinders Art and Design Club for Financial Affiliation.

**Moved:** Sean Henschke (General Secretary)

**Seconded:** Benika Bhoola (Education Officer)

*All in favour.*

**Motion carried.**

#### 7.3 Affiliation Application from The Flinders University Queer Collective – Sean Henschke

**Preamble:** The Flinders University Queer Collective are applying to Affiliate as a FUSA Collective. The club has an appropriate executive composition, meets all FUSA regulation requirements for their constitution, bank account, AGM minutes and membership list.



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**Discussion:** Sean Henschke clarifies that the motion needs to be voted on by Student Council because several members of the club are also members of Student Council, and thus need to abstain.

**Motion:** Student Council approves the Flinders University Queer Collective as a FUSA Collective.

**Moved:** Sean Henschke (General Secretary)

**Seconded:** Amy Tschirn (Education Officer)

*For:* 9

*Against:* 0

*Abstain:* 2

**Motion carried.**

### 7.5 Student Council Annual Election Dates and Nomination of Returning Officer – Ben Smith

**Preamble:** In accordance with the FUSA Constitution, the annual election must take place between August 1 - October 15.

#### Returning Officer Appointment

The Manager, Student Engagement suggests Mary Heath, Former Dean (Education) in the College of Business, Government & Law at Flinders University be appointed as Returning Officer for the 2020 FUSA Annual Election. Mary has the required legal qualification for this position and has previous experience as a Returning Officer in FUSA elections (including the recent Education Officer By-election). Mary would take on this role as an independent contractor.

#### Election Tribunal

Membership of the FUSA Election Tribunal is ongoing:

- Professor Christopher Kee (Dean (Education) College of Business, Government & Law)\*
- Dr Luis da Vinha (Lecturer in International Relations in College of BGL)
- Ms Jody St Clair (Coordinator, Yunggoorendi Student Engagement)

\*Chris has legal qualifications required by at least one member of the Election Tribunal

**Discussion:** Ben Smith stated that he is delighted to receive Student Council's backing for the nomination of Mary Heath as Returning Officer, and spoke to Mary's effective work. Josh Rayner clarified the process of nominating a Returning Officer. He stated that as it is currently less than 10 weeks prior to the election, Student Council executive may pass the motion, however, due to the importance of the democratic process, he believes the motion should be brought to Student Council for a vote. Ben Smith stated that he will forward the Returning Officer's By-Election report to members of Student Council. Josh Rayner further stated that he recently met with the FUSA Student Representation and Development Officer to discuss potential changes to FUSA's Election Regulations, however, due to the advice provided, he believes Student Council is not ready to make regulation changes immediately. Benika Bhoola spoke to the effective work of Mary Heath during the recent FUSA By-Election and believes she is a good choice as Returning Officer for the Annual Election.

**Motion:** Student Council endorse that:

- Nominations for FUSA Annual Elections (Student Council, NUS & Empire Times) open on Monday September 7 and close on Monday September 21.



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- The FUSA Annual Elections be held over three days on October 6, 7, 8, 2020.

Student Council accepts the recommendation to appoint Mary Heath as Returning Officer for the 2020 FUSA Annual Elections.

**Moved:** Josh Rayner (Student President)

**Seconded:** Molly Turnbull (Indigenous Students Officer)

*All in favour.*

**Motion carried.**

#### 7.6 More fun for The International Student Collective Facebook Page – Son Le

**Preamble:** International Student Collective Facebook is built as a channel to communicate with international students and promote their life and experiences. It was inactive for a while but has become livelier since the International Student Officer has actively taken over and managed it in June this year. To keep this spirit as well as to promote the page to our international students, it needs more interactive activities. The weekly Friday post called the International student of the week had run two times, which features one international student and their personal story or talent each week. employment and affordable options for students on campus.

**Platform:** FUSA recognises the importance of building and maintaining the International Student Collective Facebook page as a meaningful way to communicate and engage with international students.

FUSA acknowledges the contribution of every International student has made or will make in order to support the promotion of the ISC Facebook page.

**Discussion:** Son Le spoke to the motion. Jesy Murphy and Josh Rayner spoke to the great work undertaken utilising the International Student Collective Facebook Page. Benika Bhoola stated that it is interesting to get to know other communities through the Facebook page, and that it is an effective tool.

**Motion:** FUSA Student Council approves the expenditure of \$400 from the International Student Officer's initiatives budget towards this activity.

**Moved:** Son Le (International Student Officer)

**Seconded:** Jesy Murphy (Women's Officer)

*All in favour.*

**Motion carried.**

#### 7.8 The worst is yet to come for International Students – Son Le

**Preamble:** International Students both on-campus and online have been coming together with the International Students Collective to start a campaign calling Flinders University to provide more support amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

FUSA has recorded significant experiences from International students struggling with financial issues that result in hunger, accommodation instability, study interruption, and mental health distress. Reports during the first lockdown indicate that nearly 70% of students contacting Student Assist were International Students and that financial issues were their main concern.



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It is clear that COVID-19 has impacted more than just International students who are from the Global South. Family financial hardship in our home countries, as well as the current challenges to get employed for International students in South Australia, are obstacles for us to continue studying at our best performance.

While we appreciate the support from the University and SA Government in terms of the Emergency payment and Matthew Flinders scholarship, International Students need more in this unstable circumstance.

We would like to acknowledge the university's cooperation around our demands so far.

**Platform:** FUSA recognises the need to act immediately to support our International Students' experiences.

FUSA calls on Flinders University to continue taking further actions to ensure the ongoing study condition for International Students.

**Discussion:** Son Le spoke to the motion. Josh Rayner congratulated Son Le for what he has accomplished and the professionalism with which he has approached the campaign. Sean Henschke spoke to the motion, emphasising the importance of the campaign and stating that the current harsh conditions that international students are facing are not normal.

Son Le made an amendment to the text of the motion to remove "Expand and adjust the policy regarding payment extensions and instalment to ensure they are more accessible and feasible for International students." The amendment also removed "payment due date for international students and". Furthermore, text was added to the end of the preamble to acknowledge that the university has begun to take steps.

**Motion:** FUSA continues calling Flinders University to;

- Expand the financial support in the form of bursary at least 35% of the tuition fee in the coming semester for all International Students.
- Extend the general census dates back at least one month.
- Identify and provide any students who unable to pay the fee on time with essential supports

FUSA requests that a meeting of senior University management, the Student President, the International Students Officer, and the group of International Students who facilitated this campaign be arranged immediately.

Student Council directs the Acting Manager, Student Engagement, the Student President, and the International Student Officer to continue working closely with International Students to provide advice and support regarding the campaign.

**Moved:** Son Le (International Student Officer)

**Seconded:** Benika Bhoola (Education Officer)



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*All in favour.*

**Motion carried.**

#### 7.10 Raise the Rate – Nathan Cheetham

**Preamble:** Raise the Rate (now Raise the Rate For Good) is a national campaign run by ACOSS (Australian Council of Social Service) with the aim of lobbying the government to raise Newstart payments to a liveable rate. With the recent addition of a \$500 COVID-19 supplement to most Centrelink payments, the campaign has shifted focus to keeping the rate at its new higher amount.

The poverty rate for Australia is currently \$457 per week. This is calculated based on the mean income of Australian households. Newstart recipients receive \$612 per fortnight and Youth Allowance recipients receive, with maximum rent assistance, \$462.50 per fortnight. These payments leave vulnerable people living below the poverty line.

The additional COVID supplement payments have raised these payments to liveable levels.

As many students rely on Centrelink payments as their partial or whole income, FUSA and the university should be doing all they can to ensure that students are receiving a liveable income.

**Platform:** FUSA believes that all students should be paid fairly and receive a liveable income from the federal government.

FUSA believes that no one should be living under the poverty line and reaffirms its position in support of ending student poverty.

**Discussion:** Nathan Cheetham spoke to the motion, as did Molly Turnbull and Benika Bhoola. Benika Bhoola stated that the current situation is unsustainable, and the fact that students have to apply for grants to acquire basic amenities emphasises the seriousness of the situation.

**Motion:** Student Council directs the Welfare Officer to work with FUSA's communications and media team to create and run a student-oriented version of the Raise the Rate For Good campaign.

**Moved:** Nathan Cheetham (Welfare Officer)

**Seconded:** Molly Turnbull (Indigenous Students Officer)

*All in favour.*

**Motion carried.**

#### 7.11 Assessment Structure Changes Must Continue! – Benika Bhoola

**Preamble:** Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, universities across the country were forced to move teaching online to accommodate for social distancing. Following the success of our '6 Ways FUSA is Calling on Flinders University to Provide Greater Support and Certainty for Students', Flinders University was forced to adopt our proposal of an opt-in non-graded pass assessment structure.

As a result of our lobby and public pressure campaign, Flinders University also introduced changes to supplementary assessment items. This change gave any student, irrespective of their final grade, the opportunity to complete a supplementary assessment item to show cause of a passing grade. This didn't need to be a traditional supplementary exam, and combined with the opt-in non-graded pass,



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allowed all students to complete a single assessment item that could leave a non-graded pass on their academic transcripts during the most difficult semester in living memory.

These changes to assessment structure was incredibly popular among the student body and provided students with a much needed sense of security during this unprecedented time. Unfortunately there is yet to be any word on whether Flinders will continue this change in Semester 2. Although many students have returned to campus in a smaller capacity, the majority of learning at Flinders is still being completed online. Youth unemployment is still increasing, government support is decreasing, our university must continue to do more to support us as students.

**Platform:** FUSA acknowledges the personal, financial and academic stresses students have faced this year due to this unprecedented global health pandemic

FUSA acknowledges that this stress will not cease in the short term as we see a reduction of Covid-19 cases as the economic ramifications of this pandemic will be long lasting

**Discussion:** Benika Bhoola spoke to the motion. Son Le spoke to the motion, stating that NGP grading is a fantastic achievement and that many international students having approached him to speak about how NGP grading assisted them, and their desire for this grading system to continue in Semester 2. Ben Smith stated that FUSA's student advocates would agree with the importance of the motion, and he stated that many classes are still held online. Benika Bhoola agreed, although she stated that even though labs are held in person, workshops and tutorials are still up to teacher discretion. Josh Rayner spoke to the motion.

**Motion:** FUSA calls on Flinders University to extend the opt-in non-graded pass assessment structure changes to at least Semester 2, 2020

FUSA calls on Flinders University to extend the changes to supplementary assessment items that gave all students access to supplementary assessment to at least Semester 2, 2020

**Moved:** Benika Bhoola (Education Officer)

**Seconded:** Son Le (International Students Officer)

*All in favour.*

**Motion carried.**

### 7.12 East your greens – Amy Tschirn

**Preamble:** Grow, Eat, Learn is a collaborative environment and student welfare initiative between Student Council, Clubs and Associations, and the College of Science and Engineering, inspired by the free food movement that aims to provide students with access to free healthy fresh food, reduce the carbon footprint by reducing food miles, support the health and wellbeing of the Flinders community by providing natural environments to work and study in, and offer enhanced habitat for biodiversity on Flinders campus.

A new planting season coincides with Keep Australia Beautiful Week 2020 - it is a good opportunity to host a large scale planting day to revitalise the garden as students return to campus for semester 2. The productivity of this garden is of particular importance this semester as many students are facing financial hardship and increased food insecurity due to coronavirus restrictions.



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**Discussion:** Amy Tschirn spoke to the motion. Nathan Cheetham also spoke to the motion, stating that student demand for FUSA food parcels have tripled, and therefore the community garden is a useful supplementary initiative.

**Motion:** Student Council approves the expenditure of \$800 from the Environment Officer's initiatives budget for materials for a planting day in the Grow Eat Learn Garden for Keep Australia Beautiful Week.

**Moved:** Amy Tschirn (Environment Officer)

**Seconded:** Nathan Cheetham (Welfare Officer)

*All in favour.*

**Motion carried.**

### 7.13 Training needs for Student Council – Ben Smith

**Preamble:** MSE and Student President have discussed advice to MSE around training needs that would assist in creating a safer working environment for Student Councillors. Historically, many Student Councillors over many cycles of Council have responded to disclosures or expressions of distress around mental health concerns and also responded to disclosures of harassment, assault and/or abuse. In order to fully support other students, each other, and ourselves as individuals, it is proposed that compulsory training for all Student Council members include **Mental Health First Aid, Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Harassment or Assault and cultural awareness training**. This training could occur adjacent to Annual planning days in late February. In the past, mental health and wellbeing training has occurred inconsistently in Induction Sessions, and Responding to Disclosures training has often occurred later in the year when Student Councillors calendars are full. Induction is more appropriately reserved for the key roles and tasks required of Student Council.

**Discussion:** Ben Smith spoke to the motion. Josh Rayner and James Glynn-Roe also spoke to the motion. James Glynn-Roe stated that Student Council members are visible members of the university community who should have some training, and that they should also have more awareness of Indigenous cultures. Benika Bhoola spoke to the motion. Amy Tschirn stated that Student Council members should know where to direct students and should be intimately knowledgeable about the services on campus. Molly Turnbull spoke to the motion.

Josh Rayner amended the text of the preamble and motion to include cultural awareness training.

**Motion:** Student Council directs Manager, Student Engagement to source and book Mental Health First Aid, Responder Training and cultural awareness training for early in 2021 for all Student Council

**Moved:** Josh Rayner (Student President)

**Seconded:** James Glynn-Roe (General Councillor)

*All in favour.*

**Motion carried.**

### Motion from the Floor – Josh Rayner

**Discussion:** Josh Rayner extended his congratulations to Benika Bhoola as the new Education Officer and thanked her for her work as General Council Member.





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Josh Rayner thanked Clara Santilli for her work as Mature Age Officer, and as a General Council Member the previous year

**Moved:** Josh Rayner (Student President)

**Seconded:** Amy Tschirn (General Councillor)

*For:* 10

*Against:* 0

*Abstain:* 1

**Motion carried.**

## 7.0 Matters left un-starred to be moved en bloc:

### 7.1 Be a Better Human Action Group – Sean Henschke

**Preamble:** The Be a Better Human Campaign has expanded across Australia and the world since we offered our resources at no cost to other universities. We have seen the campaign adapted to various university communities and formats. The Flinders Be a Better Human Action Group is looking to tap into the new be a better human community across Australia. This will be done by creating a national action group to share and combined resources to allow the campaign to evolve with time.

**Motion:** Student Council endorses the Flinders Action group to establish a National Be a Better Human Action Group

### 7.4 Affiliation Application from The Flinders University Physiotherapy Student Association – Sean Henschke

**Preamble:** The Flinders University Physiotherapy Student Association are applying to Financially Affiliate FUSA. The club has an appropriate executive composition, meets all FUSA regulation requirements for their constitution, bank account, AGM minutes and membership list.

**Motion:** Student Council approves the Flinders University Physiotherapy Student Association for Financial Affiliation.

### 7.7 More prizes for International Students in the Photo event? – Son Le

**Preamble:** After the previous Student council meeting, the Beauty of our Home countries was launched in order to create a cultural and connecting event among international students during the break. Result turned out very good. 40 submissions are received with 78 photos from 18 countries. While the number of prizes is proposed only to cover half of those excellent submissions, there is more to show and appreciate international students' photos and stories from their countries. This motion asks to increase the amount of prizes to give out to International students who attended the event from 20 to 28 (8 more).

**Motion:** FUSA Student Council approves the expenditure of \$160 (which is equivalent to 8 international students will be receiving the prizes) from the International Student Officer's initiatives budget towards this event.



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### 7.9 Student Homelessness Plan – Nathan Cheetham

**Preamble:** As of the 2016 Census, over 10000 students were considered homeless nationally, which means that students made up 10% of Australia’s homeless population. Experts have expected that this number has only grown with the increase in the cost of living.

More locally, at Flinders University, in the recent round of COVID-19 assistance administered through FUSA, seven students mentioned experiencing homeless. There have also been reports of students sleeping in their cars on campus overnight.

To have a truly student-centred ethos, the university must take steps to address widespread student poverty.

In the past, Flinders Living have been able to provide short-term emergency housing on a case-by-case basis, however, an established procedure needs to be put in place in order to effectively meet the needs of students.

Additionally, Rent Assistance from the federal government administered through Centrelink for a single person in shared accommodation is capped at \$93.07, which contributes very little to actually covering rent when the national average rent is \$450/week and \$375/week in Adelaide.

**Platform:** FUSA Student Council believes that safe, affordable and accessible housing is a human right and that all students should have access to housing, regardless of their financial situation.

FUSA Student Council recognises that Rent Assistance, which largely hasn’t seen any change in over decade, is inadequate in helping meet the cost of housing.

**Motion:** FUSA Student Council directs the Welfare Officer to work with relevant staff within FUSA and across the university to develop a plan that addresses student homelessness and provides emergency accommodation for students

### 7.14 Postgraduate Omnibus – Aiden Cornelius-Bell

**Preamble:** The Flinders University Postgraduate Student Association has been a largely dormant postgraduate student association. At other institutions, this body represents a relative powerhouse of representation, support and infrastructure specifically designed for postgraduate and research students. In order to lay the ground for future developments in this space the Postgraduate Officer has (re)developed a range of necessary resources to establish a long term, democratically organised and strategic postgraduate student association that will, with support, represent the postgraduate body in a more effective way. This, omnibus motion proposes five main structures that will support the ‘kicking off’ of the new FUPSA. These are discussed in the Platform.

**Platform:** First, FUSA’s ratification of the revised Constitution: a radically restructured document that supports a more robust and democratic leadership model for the postgraduate student association, and includes important hallmarks such as quotas, representative diversity, and responsibility models.

Second, noting of the draft Strategic Plan: a forecast document which sees the Postgraduate Student Association move towards a more robust representational model with its own structures and processes to support postgraduate students.



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Third, approval of an announcement of an Annual General Meeting to kick off a new cycle of representative elections under the new constitution and strategic plan which will see an interim executive elected to begin oversight of the newly designed organisation.

Fourth, noting of expenditure on sponsorship of the DocFest programme, a previously supported initiative run in collaboration with the Office of Graduate Research which will see a substantial engagement with the emergent postgraduate student association - multiple opportunities are provided to promote FUPSA and encourage membership (via FUSA) to represent and have a say on issues relating to postgraduate education.

Finally, until such times as FUPSA grows a substantive membership base, that FUSA continue to affiliate with the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA) to increase the visibility and representation of postgraduate students at a state and national level. The Student President is currently the nominee/delegate for CAPA negotiations, CAPA are open to fee remissions and negotiation considering the Postgraduate Officers' work for the Board.

**Motion:**

- FUSA supports the ratification, in the extent possible under its constitution and the constitution of the Postgraduate Student Association, of the revised constitution attached (ATT: 1- Constitution)
- FUSA supports the strategic direction, as far as its role in student representation allows, set forth in the strategic plan of the Postgraduate Student Association (ATT: 2-Strategic Plan)
- FUSA supports the announcement of the Annual General Meeting of the Postgraduate Student Association at a date/time to be decided in concert with the Association
- FUSA notes the expenditure of postgraduate funds on the DocFest postgraduate conference run by the Office of Graduate Research as a notional initiator of postgraduate association activities moving forward (ATT: 3 - OGR Budget)
- Student Council discharges its responsibility for negotiating with the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations on affiliation fees to the Student President in hopes that an arrangement can be made allowing a partial fee payment to CAPA and the continuation of affiliation (ATT: 4 - CAPA Invoice - JR to source)

**7.15 Gimme some of the cake – Jesy Murphy**

**Preamble:** Bluestocking Week is named for the first generations of university women of the 19th century who grabbed the term and, even as it was used by their opponents as a derogatory dismissal of their achievements proudly wore it as a badge of serious scholarship. The term originates from the latter part of the 18th century as women started organising literary societies in their homes and began campaigning for women's access to university and more generally for women's rights to equality in work, under the law and access into the parliaments. Many of the English middle- and upper-class leaders of the suffragist and suffragette movements started out in or were influenced by these literary societies, as were some of the male supporters of women's rights. Indeed, the term 'blue stocking' is often attributed to a male member of the circle who arrived at meetings in his everyday worsted wool



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blue stockings rather than white silk ones usually work by men when meeting with men. This was taken up as distinguishing the women's initiative Flinders University has taken part in the Blue Stocking events before and they have always been well received. This year with the current issues the event will not be as large, but one should still be run. In the past blue cupcakes have been given out to students. This will be the same this year with more precautions taken.

**Motion:** Student Council approves the expenditure of \$500 from the Women's Officers Initiative Budget to purchase 200 cupcakes for the blue Stocking Week event.

**Motion:** Matters left un-starred be moved en bloc.

**Moved:** Josh Rayner (Student President)

**Seconded:** Nathan Cheetham (Welfare Officer)

*All in favour.*

**Motion carried.**

## 8. Matters for Noting

### 8.1 Next Student Council Meeting – Josh Rayner

The next meeting of Student Council shall take place on Monday August 24th at 6:30pm. Location TBC pending social distancing requirements.

Please submit all agenda items for consideration in writing to the General Secretary no later than 5pm Friday August 21st. Agenda items presented after this deadline may not be considered at the next meeting.

### 8.2 MSE report to Student Council for July

See Appendix 3

### 8.3 AGM

In accordance with the FUSA Constitution, an AGM must be held every year of FUSA members. At the meeting, Student President, and General Secretary present reports, including FUSA finances for the last financial year (2019). The quorum for this meeting is 50 members. Usually this meeting occurs in September prior to nominations. Given a meeting of 50 members is difficult to achieve with current social distancing requirements, the Student President and General Secretary will be working with the Manager, Student Engagement and the Student Representation and Development Officer to explore a solution.



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#### 8.4 Adopt a Plot – Amy Tschirn

Amy Tschirn spoke to a sustainable food initiative on campus called Adopt a Plot. She stated that it would be great for Student Council to have a plot and invited members of Student Council to get involved.

**Meeting Closed: 7.44 PM**