



SOCIAL POLICY COMMISSION 17/18

Meeting #8

University of Malta, the KSU Common Room
13th February 2018, 17.30

MINUTES

1. Approval of Agenda
Approved Nem Con

2. Approval of Minutes
Approved Nem Con

Ice-breaker

3. Calendar of events

Gabriella Sutton (Commissioner): We have a lot of upcoming events this semester. A clean-up will be held on the 24th of March in collaboration with 89.7 Bay, as part of the campaign Making Malta Green and Clean. I'm sure you've all heard of it and it would be great if we could all give our contribution. On the 8th of March, the second blood drive will be held at IT Services. We'll be issuing a call via email for organisations to participate by helping out with logistics on the day and encouraging students to donate.

Robert Napier (KSU President): This year's KSU Careers and Research Expo will be held on the 13th, 14th and 15th of March. We are focusing on both possible career paths for students as well as the research aspect. We'll be involving both companies as well as faculties. We would also like to involve student organisations as much as possible. You know your members better than we know them. If you have any suggestions let us know, so through you, we can spread the word. We want this to actually be beneficial for students. Some companies will also be offering internships. We want it to be as useful and relatable as possible. We will also be giving a commission to all organisations willing to help out in selling adverts. If you would like to be a part of it contact the social policy office or the education office.

Gabriella Sutton: Yesterday I sent an email about this. If you wish to organise an activity, let us know as soon as possible. Throughout this semester, we'll also be working on mental health awareness, healthy eating and combating obesity. If you have any ideas that make students more willing to collab and participate, let us know.

4. Vote16

Gabriella Sutton: Vote16 is something that we've been discussing for quite a while. In October, we brought it up here and there were a lot of questions. A document was compiled with all the questions and queries that arose during the meeting and as further



discussed in the subcommittee meeting. The subsequent step was that of contacting Hon Julia Farrugia Portelli to hash out certain concerns which students had in terms of Vote16. One of the main issues was civic education. She gave us an opportunity to propose an educational framework and that is what we'll be focusing on today. It's important to note that the discussion between vote16 and contestation will be separated.

We'll work by getting in groups of 5 or 6. Each group is tasked with outlining the needs of citizens in order to be well-educated and what the tangible aspects of the educational framework are in order to promote accepting different opinions. You have 15 minutes.

HoASA left

Alright, so just to have a feel of what has been discussed, I'd like one person to share what was discussed to have a better idea as to what the framework should include.

Karl Baldacchino (SDM): We feel that the best way forward would be to introduce social studies or political science to engage students in critical thinking. This subject should be introduced in secondary level. Some schools do have similar compulsory studies but it needs to be more inclusive to give tools on how to vote, how politics work and things like that. It should be an open forum to discuss current issues that may or may not be compulsory. There should be a board of experts established which will give training to students. In that way, they can be better equipped to form their opinion.

Daniel Cassar (JEF): Education should focus on the structure of Maltese institutions and political process. . Bringing policy makers to youths and encouraging discussion on current affairs is very important. Units on this should be made compulsory.. Voting is the beginning not the end of the democratic process.

Michael Piccinino (KNZ): Schools should not be there to prepare you for exams only, it should also prepare you for life. Rather than looking at it as a separate subject, it should be integrated within all the curriculum. English should teach you to be a critical thinker. There could also be informal means. There could be partnerships with NGOs and youth organisations that can give feedback to students and inform them on how they can become active and use these skills in real life. In here, we're all best examples of active youths. If we push forward for education ourselves, others will be more inclined to participate.

Daniele Maniscalco (MHSA): Education needs to be unbiased. We should inform everyone what they're actually voting for, including educators; both parents and teachers.

Stefan Galea (ESO): We need to encourage people to think for themselves. Voters need to know what the candidates stand for and we need to deal with apathy by shedding light on the importance of every single vote and the consequences that the outcome may have. We need to push for a mentality that a vote is for the general public and not for



our own interest.. We should also encourage free discussion. Safe spaces should be created.

GhST left

Lara Brockdorff (ICTSA): Education on political philosophies is important. It's crucial to discuss how current events affect youth. As educational implementations, we mentioned how debating from a young age would help and knowing about the political system helps as well.

Carly Zarb (TDM): Tangible skills such as reading of articles, manifestos and analysing what is being said should be the focus of education. This needs to be done by outside, independent speakers. We need to give new voters the skills on how to vote properly, at least, they'd learn how to make their own decisions.

Lara Attard (GhSL): What can also be done is that of seeing what was lacking in local council elections when 16 year olds were entitled to vote. We can gather what they would have like to know and focus on giving them that knowledge.

Gabriella Sutton: You have all raised very important points, focusing on both formal and informal education. The next step is that of drafting a framework for this. If anyone else wishes to be part of this let us know so you can be included. It will be sent via email and we will then forward it to the ministry.

5. Arising matters

Robert Napier: Carla should have sent you an email or will send soon on next week's admin forum. Feel free to participate.

William Farrugia (SDM): I'm not sure if you're aware but we're organising a social event this Thursday to launch our year. Every organisation has 2 free tickets.

Cindy Vargas (Aiesec): I just arrived from Colombia and on Saturday we have an event on Business Connect at Skyparks the tickets are five euros. Look up the event if you'd like to attend.

Meeting adjourned 18.50