

Trust Student Council meeting notes – 6th October at 4.30 p.m. via Teams

Summary of main points and actions

Actions	By who?
Councillors to think of questions they would like to ask all students across the Trust.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillors to discuss with their Student Councils and Student Leadership Co-ordinators.• Submit any questions to Mrs Yelland by 3rd November.
Councillors to discuss ideas for hosting one of the Student Conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillors to discuss with their Student Councils and Student Leadership Co-ordinators.• Complete and submit bidding form to Mrs Yelland by Friday, 10th December.• Voting to take place on 11th January 2022 during the Teams meeting.

Present:

Mr Buckley, CEO
Mrs Yelland, PA to the CEO
Mrs Ball, Headteacher at Landulph
Mrs Pipe, Headteacher at Dobwalls
Mrs Gallie, Teacher at Saltash
Mr Saberton, Teacher at Looe

Alexia (Liskeard), Lolo (Trewidland), Lowena (Trewidland), Fleur (Landulph), Jayden (Saltash), Jacob (Saltash), Charlie (Saltash), Caitlin (Looe), Toby (Dobwalls), Brooke (Looe), Lowenna (Dobwalls), Bluebell (Saltash), Mylee (Landulph).

Apologies:

Mrs Stoneham, Joint Head of Drama at Liskeard
Anastasia (Saltash), Noah (Saltash), Isobella (Dobwalls)

Meeting started at 16.30.

Outline of meeting

Mr Buckley welcomed everybody to the meeting and thanked the councillors for attending. He explained that the Trust is made up of six schools who all work together within South East Cornwall. This platform is used to gain student's opinions on important topics as well as providing the representatives with valuable leadership opportunities.

Mr Buckley noted that each Managing Director of the top 100 companies in the UK all were involved in student leadership opportunities like this one during their time at school so we are aware that we have some of the very best of our future leaders on this call.

Notes from previous meetings

Mr Buckley explained that all notes from these meetings are published on the SMART Trust website and if anyone thought that the notes were incorrect, to contact Mrs Yelland with the suggested amendment to update them.

Rules of these meetings

Mr Buckley stated the rules as follows:

- If you wish to speak, click on the 'raise hand' icon and wait for the Chair of the meeting to invite you to speak.
- Always keep your microphone on mute and camera turned off unless the Chair of the meeting invites you to speak.
- When you have been invited to speak, unmute your microphone and if you wish to (we would advise you to if you can) turn your camera on. When you have finished speaking turn your camera and microphone off again.
- If you don't have a microphone that works, you can type your answers into the 'Chat'. If you don't have chat either you can send an email to Rachel.Yelland@smart-trust.net or your co-ordinator.

Meeting Chair

Mr Buckley explained that in this meeting, he is the Chair and is the person who reads out the questions and invites people to speak. He explained that normally the meeting is chaired by students.

He asked that if any students wished to Chair the next meeting, to stay on at the end of the call to discuss this. Mr Buckley advised he is happy to provide training before the next meeting, if required.

What is a public meeting?

Mr Buckley explained that these meetings always focus on positive comments, positive suggestions, and positive solutions. If a councillor wishes to share a problem or something that is concerning them, this must be taken straight to their teacher. Names cannot be shared as this is a public meeting. If there is something that a student would like to ask, please do so and it can be answered during the meeting or added to the agenda of an upcoming meeting.

What advice would you give to someone next year who wanted to go through elections and become a Councillor like you have?

Charlie – Ensure you focus on positive aspects during the manifesto period during the elections.

Caitlin – Listen to what other students say to you during the elections to get their views and pass them on which also gain their Trust.

Lexi – Take notes during meetings (such as these) to put in extra details so you are well informed.

Which of the pieces of advice you just heard was the best in your view? Can you remember who said it first?

Mr Buckley gave the group an opportunity to practice 'voting' on the answers above and provide an example of why it received their vote.

The group voted on the first piece of advice – the majority voted it was a good suggestion.

Mr Buckley then asked why they thought that was a good idea?

Jacob explained that if candidates are negative throughout their manifesto, peers will think they are only bringing problems to the table, rather than solutions.

Fleur believed it will bring positivity to the group and shows respect.

Mr Buckley thanked Jacob and Fleur for providing excellent reasons and explained that even though many voted for this, they will have different reasons for doing so. One purpose of these meetings is to capture and understand everyone's different views.

What does it mean to be a representative?

Mr Buckley explained that before each of the future meetings, a set of questions will be circulated to the councillors, around 2 weeks before the meeting. These will be from various people such as, Governors, Headteachers and the councillors themselves. The councillors will then need to put these questions to their peers (as many as possible) and gather their feedback to report to this group at the meeting. When the Chair asks for the answers to the question, the councillor must first say what most of the group thought and then say what they thought.

Mr Buckley also explained that the answers to these questions are taken very seriously and are shared with the Headteachers of all the schools and the Governors.

Mr Buckley asked the group to what they think it means to be a representative?

Lexi answered it means to be a leader and essentially represent.

Bluebell believed it means to stand up for other people's views.

Mr Buckley then gave the councillors a practice question to show how to use this skill:

Can someone who thinks they understand what 'representative' means answer this question for me. How do you think most people in your class get to school and how do you get to school?

Various councillors put their hands up and explained firstly, how most of their classmates get to school and then how they got to school themselves e.g. walk, bus or a lift with a parent.

Bidding for a student conference.

Mr Buckley explained that before COVID, the Trust Student Council would meet every half term in person (one visit at each of the six schools). However, not as much progress was made in relation to giving the councillors an opportunity to practice skills such as being a representative, whereas, the Teams meetings did.

He reported that this year, we are doing a mixture of online and face to face meetings; the first three of the year online and the last three face to face as a 'conference'.

Mr Buckley asked the councillors to think about why their school should bid to host one of the conferences, what their conference theme would be and how they would deliver it. Once all bids have been submitted the group will vote on the best three at the final online meeting on Tuesday, 11th January and the first conference will take place on Tuesday, 22nd March. There will be at least one secondary and one primary.

Student Leadership Co-ordinators have a copy of the bidding form.

Can you suggest anything you would like to spend a day discussing with pupils from all six schools?

Charlie suggested moving towards carbon zero in the Trust and or schools' behaviour policies.

Lexi suggested setting a positive ethos for a school and peer support.

Jayden suggested trying to identify positive steps that could be taken on issues that are important to students.

What kinds of questions would you find interesting to ask students across the Trust?

Lexi said she would find it interesting to know how schools approached the topic of bullying.

Mr Buckley shared that in surveys done in schools last year and by the student council, between 80 and 100% of students report that they feel safe at school. As a public meeting we explore the positive reasons so should we explore this more and find out what is it that makes them feel this way so we can understand what works well? This would enable the councillors to discuss bullying in a positive way.

Charlie suggested – What teaching methods (pre and post pandemic) should be kept for the future?

Jacob suggested – What we could do to include all students in activities (such as sports) during break and lunchtimes, so they are not on their own?

Mr Buckley thought this was an excellent idea and advised that Dobwalls students had previously run activities during lunchtimes prior to COVID and this had been voted as an excellent project by the pupils at the time.

Mr Buckley thanks all those who had managed to give opinions in this meeting. If councillors hadn't spoken at the meeting today he reassured them that we know it can be hard at first but by the end of the year it is for us to help each other master this. In the meantime send any opinions by email to either Mrs Yelland or their Student Leadership Co-Ordinator so that all opinions can be captured in the meeting notes. Mr Buckley gave the example that previously, a school sent their opinions to Mrs Yelland by email to read out on their behalf if they didn't feel able to.

Mr Buckley thanked all the councillors for representing their schools and caring about representative democracy.

Meeting finished at 17.15.