

## OFFICER REPORTS – STUDENT COUNCIL

[Vice-President Welfare Officer] Report

[November 2019] Student Council

[Katy Baker]

### Summary

In the last few weeks, I have been seeing where I can implement wellbeing in to other bits of University life e.g sport and societies. I have also looked at mental health in different settings such as supporting wellbeing in staff, being able to promote the wellbeing events and campaigns we put on and looking at engaging staff and students in to more activities.

### Key Talking Points:

- Sport and society pledge cards

I have introduced wellbeing pledge cards within sports and societies. Pledge cards are there for clubs to have 3 aims to do with wellbeing throughout the year. Some of the sports clubs have already sent me their ideas about what they want to achieve over the year e.g. sober socials, charity events and regular AGMs. Societies will be introduced to this after they have had the next Socs committee.

- Mental health steering group

I am part of the mental health steering group, we have met earlier this month to discuss implementing a wellbeing programme and approach for both staff and students. This steering group gathers thoughts from different members of staff and their perspectives, to come together and see how members of the University can be more involved in wellbeing activities. We are also working together as a team to create a programme on how to make the campus' more 'wellbeing friendly.' This approach will hopefully reduce stress amongst staff and students and for more members to engage in sports clubs, wellness walks and being open about mental health.

- Children In Need planning

I have planned a charity event for Children In Need, to both raise money and spread the word about the charity. I have liaised with the sports science staff who are loaning us two gym bikes for the day. Myself and the other Sabbs are going to see how much can cycle. We are asking for donations for old books and toys as well, myself and Ryan are going up to the Children's wards to give these out.

- Togetherness Tuesday

Togetherness Tuesdays have still be happening each week. Since my last report we have had pamper sessions and a petting zoo which have both been popular. I have now planned November's sessions

and am looking at getting more students engaged. I have also been working with the counselling and mental health team in getting more students to come, we are working out a scheme where I can go and meet some students beforehand to reduce any anxiety around coming. I have also been getting more groups involved, on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November the Dance Club and Craft Society did a Crafternoon in aid of MIND and I have also got someone coming in to do a self-defence class on 19<sup>th</sup> November in light of International Men's Day.

- Project awesome

I have joined up with some members of the University to support a student-led project about making the campus hedgehog friendly. We have undertaken meetings and walks around the campus to see how we can improve wellbeing around campus. The project is still growing and I have been involved in getting some societies involved, there will also be more projects in the future on how we can be more environmentally friendly but most of all, how we can promote this to other students.

## Report

### Manifesto Pledges

**Hold mental health panels led by lecturers & charities and to train the residential life team in mental health first aid.** Emma Dillon from the faculty of health, education and society works hard to train members of staff in mental health first aid and I am always communicating with her to see where there can be more opportunities for this.

**Provide healthy recipes which are easy & cheap to make; create a food bank for students to swap perishable foods with other students.** For a few weeks, I have been into the Mob Kitchen website and shared some recipes which can support student welfare. As well as healthy and on-budget recipes, it can reduce isolation and loneliness amongst students. I am currently in conversation with Tim Curtis about having cooking demonstrations and having a community fridge.

**Support international students with adapting to the Uni and the town. Help them engage with the Students' Union & hold events for them.** Gemma, Ryan and Tre organised and held a 'welcome to Britain' party however I am looking at holding a Christmas party for the students.

**Meet regularly with the UoN Police team to make sure all students feel safe across all campus'** I have met with the police team a few times to discuss the most pressing issues on campus. I have also run an anti-spiking campaign with them to raise awareness of the dangers of spiking but also making sure students know the safe route home. I am often in contact with them to see how we can work together more. I am currently in talks about holding an amnesty day and going out with them on shift to get an insight on what happens around campus.

**Have weekly drop-in sessions so students can come to me with any concerns e.g. housing, budgeting, mental health or welfare in sport.** I am running the drop-in sessions twice a week, once in the Engine Shed and once in the Learning Hub to increase presence across campus. This is being

used as a signposting tool so students are directed to the right services if they are concerned about any welfare matters.

### **Setting students up for the next step e.g. guidance on housing and mental health early**

**intervention.** I am focusing on private-sector housing and health promotion as part of my role this year because I have heard from both students and landlords how important it is to feel safe and happy in your accommodation but also how this can affect your welfare. I sit on the Northampton Borough Council board where there are also some local landlords to discuss the issues that both landlords and tenants face. I am currently creating a site where students can 'rate their landlord' and 'rate their property'. In terms of setting students up for the next stages in terms of mental health, I am hoping that students reaching out and attending the mental health fair can help students.

### **Making sure every student is heard across all campus' and all demographics engage in the**

**Students Union.** I have created a new wellbeing day called Togetherness Tuesday which has introduced a variety of activities to cater for students. October is being used as a trial month so from November there will be a proper timetable but if students have any ideas, I am more than welcome to try them.

I have also tried to reach out to different demographics during freshers by hosting a mocktail night with Gemma. This was held during one of the nights of freshers so there was a choice for students.

## **Other Activities**

Since the last Student Council, I have attended different meetings, all to voice student concerns and to look at ways to prevent some of the most pressing welfare issues on campus. These include: SEC, ISEG, Landlord Network at Northampton Borough Council, meetings with members of the NHS about sexual health screenings and how we can work together on future campaigns.

I have been in regular contact with staff from the Counselling and Mental Health team to see how we can implement preventative measures and to get more students engaged in the Togetherness Tuesday activities. Having activities like these as well as support from student services will hopefully reduce the amount of referrals to the Mental Health advisors.

Sports teams

## **Mandates**

N/A

## **Declarations**

N/A

[END]