

## **Elections Committee Report Guild Council 7<sup>th</sup> June 2007**

Dear Guild Council,

There have been numerous elections held since the last Elections Committee Report. As a candidate in the NUS Delegate and Executive Elections I stepped down as chair of Elections Committee and this place was taken by Ruth Wadsworth Vice President (Student Activities and Development).

### **NUS Delegate Elections 30<sup>th</sup> January 2007**

#### **Introduction**

This year the Guild had a delegation of 17 to NUS conference, at the close of nominations there were 23 candidates running for election. This is an increase of 2 candidates on last year.

#### **Arrangements**

There were four polling stations open for the NUS election;

Guild	09.00 - 17.00
Library	09.00 - 17.00
Medical School	12.00 - 14.00
Shackleton	17.00 - 19.30

The budget for candidates was significantly raised this year to £10 per candidate.

#### **Results**

There was a turnout of 711 votes increase in turnout of over 100 votes on last year. Though it is never possible to determine the exact reasons for higher turnout in election it seems likely that this is related to the increase in candidate budget and increased number of candidates. It is also possible that the NUS Referendum held earlier in the year and Admission Impossible NUS Demonstration had raised the profile of the NUS during this year.

#### **Complaints**

There were no complaints received about this election.

### **Executive Elections 28<sup>th</sup> February -2<sup>nd</sup> March 2007**

#### **Introduction**

This year a lot of resources were aimed at increasing the number of candidates standing in the Executive Elections. A taster campaign with quotes from famous political figures went up two weeks before nominations opened and during the election the main campaign with the words RUN, CAMPAIGN VOTE! publicised the election.

There were 34 candidates in these election and all positions had one person standing for them. This was an increase in the number of candidates on last year despite their being one less position (that of Warden) elected. There was at least one candidate for each position which again has not happened for a number of years.

## **Arrangements**

A number of new innovative arrangements were explored for this election.

### Hustings

For a number of years hustings have largely or exclusively been attended by the campaign teams of the candidates. In order to counter this GTV and BURN supported us in arranging online hustings in which candidates recorded speeches or answers to questions were posted on You Tube. While this could have been used more effectively new media will increasingly become a resources used and this trend should be followed in subsequent elections.

### Sitting of Polling Stations

It was decided to have a polling station on Selly Oak Campus on Wednesday as in last years elections having a polling station open at Selly Oak Campus when no other polling station was open meant that campaigns went to this campus. Polling stations were also situated at the medical school and school of engineering to engage the diverse student population.

### Budgets

Candidate budgets were increased to a £90 from £70 in 2006 and £40 in 2005. Candidates were also given guild e-mail address's and webspace.

### Training

Two training session were arranged for all candidates one on the rules and regulations covering the election and the other on campaigning techniques. Again this is the first time the Guild has offered candidates this much training and while the training could be improved and expanded this is an idea which should be continued.

## **Complaints**

Throughout the election there were numerous complaint the vast majority of which were of a minor nature. Where complaints which raised large issues where received by elections committee advice was sought. While seeking this advice may have slowed the response to complaints I also believe that it improved the quality of that response.

Complaints were also submitted after the declaration of the result to the returning officer. Once having received all the information the Returning Officer ruled that the elections had been free and fair.

## **Conclusions**

Turnout in these elections at 2627 was down by 190 votes on last year despite significant increases in the money spent on marketing and candidate budgets as well as the candidates having been given extra training. A solution to this could be that the Guild play a greater role in promoting the elections and candidates are not relied upon to produce amazing campaigns. It is also clear that campus is no longer busiest on Thursday and Friday but that the beginning of the week is now busier.

While this is deeply disappointing there are other indication from NUS and Guild Council election results that engagement in democracy in the Guild is improving and increasing. While turnout in the Executive elections may have marginally decreased the number of candidates increased as it did in the NUS and Guild Council elections.

## Guild Council Elections 26<sup>th</sup> March 2007

### **Introduction**

Holding this election so close to the Executive Elections did make it difficult to promote these elections.

### **Arrangements**

Initially two days had been set aside for voting as it may have been necessary to have polling stations open at a number of locations. As there were a limited number of schools with contested positions this was not necessary and so the election was held on one day with polling stations in the Library, Guild and the Medical School.

### **Results**

There were three contested elections in the School of Medicine, Historical Studies and Social Sciences. There was a turnout of over 200 a great increase on the 73 votes cast last year and 46 Guild Councillors were elected 8 more than the previous year.

### **Complaints**

No complaints were received at all.

Ruth Wadsworth and Sabrina Francis  
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**Proposed Elections Dates 2007-08****Guild Council and Post-graduate and Mature Students Officer**

Notice - Nominations Open	7 <sup>th</sup> June 2007
Nominations Close	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2007
Voting	22 <sup>nd</sup> and 23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2007

**NUS Delegate Election**

Notice	5 <sup>th</sup> November 2007
Nominations Open	12 <sup>th</sup> November 2007
Nominations Close	26 <sup>th</sup> November 2007
Voting	4 <sup>th</sup> December 2007

**Executive Elections**

Notice	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2008
Nominations Open	21 <sup>st</sup> January 2008
Nominations Close	4 <sup>th</sup> February 2008
Voting	3 <sup>rd</sup> March to 7 <sup>th</sup> March

**Guild Council Elections**

Notice - Nominations Open	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2008
Nominations Close	12 <sup>th</sup> March 2008
Voting	18 <sup>th</sup> and 19 <sup>th</sup> March