

Ustinov College GCR

General Meeting

Minutes



7:00 p.m., 21/10/2015

1. Apologies: Mike Appels; Miranda Hines
2. Approval of Minutes from last Meeting
 - a. Issues Arising from Last Minutes [MB]
 - i. Since all the executive positions were not filled last meeting, we appointed Jasmine Cross as interim Clubs & Societies Officer and Miranda Hines as interim Social Secretary.
 - ii. General Aye: The GCR approves the interim appointments.
 - iii. With the elections beginning today their interim period has ended.
3. Reports from Officers
 - a. President [MOJ]
 - i. The GCR is currently undergoing the process of becoming a recognised charitable body.
 - ii. Lack of study space has been an ongoing issue at Ustinov. Over the next few weeks two architectural drawings will be posted in Fisher House as part of a student consultation on what type of new space the college will provide.
 - iii. Molly (the cat that has adopted Ustinov) is currently being removed from the site by college, but will be given a good home.
 - b. Vice President [KR]
 - i. Michaelmas stash order will go live during the beginning of next week. It will be advertised on posters and social media.
 - c. Treasurer [SS]
 - i. GCR finances are in good shape and Induction Week was very successful.
 - ii. We still need more Livers-Out to sign up, so please encourage your friends.
 - d. Welfare Officer [AK]
 - i. AK is stepping down as Welfare Officer.
 - ii. During her time as Welfare Officer, AK organised the Fruit Fairy events, held office hours for students and maintained availability of contraceptives.
 - e. Interim Social Secretary [MOJ] on behalf of MH
 - i. The Bonfire Formal will be happening on 6/11/15.
 - ii. GCR members will soon be receiving emails inviting them to Inter-MCR formals. These are postgraduate formals at other colleges. As they have fewer postgraduate members, they traditionally offer 10 tickets to postgraduates from other colleges.
 - f. Interim Clubs and Societies Officer [JC]
 - i. Those involved in Ustinov's sports teams are aware of the current issues concerning the £30 Maiden Castle levy. JC is working to resolve this issue.
 - g. Internation Officer [PM]
 - i. More volunteers needed for Family Halloween Party.

- ii. Any input on Halloween party (e.g. traditions from home countries) are welcome and should be submitted to PM.
- iii. The Michaelmas day trip will be to York for its Christmas markets and will be advertised soon.

4. Agenda Items

- a. Motion to add a second Ecology Rep [MR]
 - i. Many other colleges have a Green committee or at least two reps. Ustinov has large Livers-In community. Lots of people have approached MR in her role as Ecology rep to ask for it to be two positions and say they would consider standing if the job was shared. Environmental commitments are an important part of Ustinov's constitution.
 - ii. The position has a lot of impact, as can be seen by the changes made in the last year: e.g. campaigned for Ustinov's new bike shelters; restarted Green Move Out Sale; and lobbied for facilities and events.
 - iii. General Aye: Motion Passed

5. Hustings

- a. Communications Officer
 - i. Corrine Wist: I really admire efforts of GCR to bring people together. I want to make efforts recognised and help broadcast events and programmes with enough notice that everyone knows what is going on. This will get people excited and enthusiastic and aware. I'm also interested in what GCR members think. I want to hold an anonymous survey on notices that are being received.
 - ii. *Q: Will be helping with events as member of Exec committee. Are you happy to do so?* CW: I'm happy to do so. I've done many jobs with "other duties as assigned" in the fine print. I'm happy to help.
 - iii. *Q: Lots of GCR events need posters, emails, etc. Do you know how to use Adobe, Photoshop, etc.? Are you happy to work on the GCR Handbook with other executive members?* CW: I have five years of admin experience and 3 years planning and implementing events with lots of responsibility for ideas and promotion.
- b. Social Secretary
 - i. Justin Marinelli: I like this college. I want to contribute to social fabric, make college feel social and open. I live out, but come down here anyway. I want to improve Livers Out representation and hold events aimed at them. Don't want to fix what isn't broken. I want more events and more inclusivity.
 - ii. Sam Foley: I want to represent your events. I am good at working with people, will organise things for this. I was Social Secretary for undergrad society (BIO) for around 350 people. I have experience organising balls etc. and am easy going.
 - iii. *Q: Summer Ball and BBQ are under your control. Do you have experience that would be helpful?*
 - 1. JW: I was Vice President of Middle Eastern society, acted as interim president and spearheaded dinner for 300 people, play etc. in 3 months. I am happy to take on big projects with little notice.
 - 2. SF: I have already organised a ball whilst doing dissertation. I can work with people.
 - iv. *Q: Would you run for other social committee positions if you did not get elected to Social Secretary?*
 - 1. SF: Yes. I like working with other people.
 - 2. JM: Yes. I want to give back.

- v. *Q: What events would you do, especially concerning livers out?*
 - 1. JM: I would look for feedback as to what people want. Target specifically at livers out.
 - 2. SF: I would get some ideas out there. Be as creative as possible. Be as silly or sophisticated as possible.
 - vi. *Q: Events are subject to H&S regulations. Can you work with them?*
 - 1. SF: Done that before, experienced.
 - 2. JM: Nothing more fun than a good challenge.
 - vii. *Q: If you get in, you must put on Halloween party very quickly. Have you thought about this?*
 - 1. JM: Yes.
 - 2. SF: No, but I will be quick to act.
 - viii. *Q: Will you put more energy in big events or small events?*
 - 1. SF: There will be a range. I would want to discuss with GCR team about what would be appropriate financially.
 - 2. JM: Couple of big events. Lots of smaller events. More variety.
- c. **Clubs & Societies Officer**
- i. Jasmine Cross: I have been interim officer for six weeks. I organised the Clubs and Societies fair. I want to keep people joining clubs throughout the year. I have been part of Ustinov for 13 months, remember being here for first time. Sport brings people together from different backgrounds and gets lots of people involved.
 - ii. *Q: Will you create alternative activities for people who want to get involved, but can't commit to a team?* JC: They can book Howlands and MUGA pitch out. I have been organising other time for people to do it casually as well. I will promote the space out here and get 'Sports for People Who Don't Sport' going again next term.
 - iii. *Q: Will you start up the Facebook presence on the 'Activities' page again soon?* JC: That page is not mine, it belongs to welfare. But yes, increased Facebook presence soon.
- d. **Welfare Officer**
- i. Chao Cai: I don't have loads of experience, but will be working for residents. Any concerns or worries, come to us for help. Residence is diverse; many people from different culture, religions, backgrounds, who are all here for postgraduate study. Many are new to UK, not have background knowledge. I want to opportunity to get more information for students and am the best listener.
 - ii. *Q: If someone came to you over housemate conflict, what would you do?* CC: I would mediate between people. Have a cup of tea. Hear each person out and find out where the conflict comes from.
 - iii. *Q: You would be on the Exec committee. Would you be able to help out with other events?* CC: I am willing to go beyond the job description in the future.
 - iv. *Q: We can't overstate our jurisdiction. If someone came with a serious problem, what would you say?* CC: I would hear about the issue. Depending on situation, I might talk to chairperson. Talking is key.
- e. **DSU Rep**
- i. Thom Addinall-Biddulph: I have been at Ustinov six years and Durham for nine. In that time, I have been heavily involved in DSU and know how the Student Union works. I was president of the LGBT association last year. Student Union often forgets about postgrads, want to make sure we have a voice in the DSU. Conversely, societies are some of the best part of the university, so I want to make sure Ustinovians know about them as well.

- ii. *Q: Last year, no cashpoint at Ustinov or Science Site. Last year DSU rep tried very hard to push this. Was being taken to university council meeting last we heard. Is that something you'd be interested in pushing for us?* TAB: I am aware of this issue. Definitely one that would need to be taken forward. I am good at sending emails and pursuing such issues in person. A petition might be good.
 - iii. *Q: Undergraduates are currently better represented in sub-committees. How can we have more presence?* TAB: I have been on one before. I know the people involved and can talk to them. Most committees are currently being elected, so we should be promoting them to Ustinovians now.
- f. Assistant Treasurer
 - i. Pragnan Jena: I am studying MSC finance and investment, so am appropriate for role. I am good at positions of responsibilities. I was part of a student council and have been head of societies. I am a people person and am good at teamwork. I was very impressed by GCR during Induction Week and want to contribute.
 - ii. *Q: Your course is difficult and time consuming. Do you think you can handle the job too?* PJ: This is a voluntary decision and I am good at handling both academic and extra-curricular responsibilities.
 - iii. *Q: What about more mundane tasks, such as stocking the vending machines?* PJ: Ustinov is a community, we need to come together with other people to make Ustinov a more happening place.
- g. Deputy Social Secretary
 - i. Marique Enguerrand: I will be an extra hand in team. I will organise and help everyone. I will run in every direction and will enjoy. I have been organising events since in council. I am good at managing and ready to get involved. I have really felt welcome at Ustinov and want to contribute.
 - ii. *Q: You will have to help clean up late, and quite possibly drunk, after parties. How do you feel about that?* ME: I used to be a student rep and organised 10 events over 3 years. As I had drivers license, I stayed out to make sure everything went smoothly. Clean up can often be social.
- h. Ecology Rep
 - i. James Strowman: I love ecological and green things. I think this is a really important role. The university has a target of reducing carbon emissions by 43%. I want to help the university achieve its aim. I want to promote local food produce and cut costs on utilities. These are really important issues.
 - ii. *Q: Lots of Ustinovians want more hot water and heating. How are you going to make people use less?* JS: Difficult, but it's about minimising time. Could introduce shower timers like Josephine Butler college.
 - iii. *Q: What about the allotment?* JS: We have an association with JB, which will have its first get-together on Sunday. There is lots of work to be done, but it's a worthwhile project.
 - iv. *Q: Would you be active in promoting this?* JS: Yes. Communication is the most important thing.
 - v. *Q: What policy do you have concerning what we eat and food waste?* JS: I will promote awareness to make people efficient. I will make sure they are aware of local produce, that it can be delivered and how it minimises packaging.
 - vi. *Q: If you could implement one facilities improvement what would it be?* JC: I would have a monitoring system to regulate usage of

utilites. [*Q: We have one*]. My second one would be introducing a bike renting system like JB.

- vii. *Q: We don't have a way to eliminate food waste. Would you set up a way to compost waste?* JC: Yes, great idea. *Q: College is resistant. would you be willing to follow this up?* JC: Yes.

i. **Formals Secretary**

- i. Anna Devi Bandi: I am an MBA student. I worked in international commerce, project manager in many formal business events, which has given me good experience. I love Ustinov and hope I can do something nice that is more interesting than the last formal. This is not just about me, it is about the team. I want ideas from everyone.
- ii. *Q: The MBA is an intensive course. The Formal Secretary often starts setting up at 1:30/2pm on the day of a formal. Have you got time and are you confident to delegate?* ADB: I have had two jobs and still went to events; I don't care about long days. I have no problem with time management, but sometimes you need to delegate. I want everyone to be involved.
- iii. *Q: You say you will do something "more interesting". Like what?* ADB: I would start from the little things: better lighting; have people move around rather than just sit with the same people as I want to provide the opportunity to meet new people; have music. Basic things.
- iv. *Q: That's all very well, but how will you finance it?* ADB: I will talk to the treasurer. We will find a way.

j. **Press Secretary**

- i. Jennifer Cowser: I am doing an MA course. I surveyed people to find out what was going on. I can do emails, designing posters, etc. There is a lot of overlap with Communications Officer's role. I want to be involved in Ustinov and want to give something back.
- ii. *Q: How do you feel about putting an inspirational quote in newsletter, as there was some years ago?* JC: I would canvass opinion.

k. **Web Master**

- i. Aashay Sood: I am an MBA student. I have working in IT for eight years and now have my own start-up. I want to learn more about all the sectors and how to integrate IT. I will work with all GCR members to enhance the website and include more languages. I love tech and am open to ideas.
- ii. *Q: What is Java?* AS: Java is a programming language.
- iii. *Q: Have you got any suggestions for the GCR website?* AS: I have lots of suggestions. I want the website to be more user friendly, more dynamic and creative and more integrated.

l. **Welfare LGBT Rep**

- i. Nicky Burbach: There wasn't an LGBT rep last year. Main issue is that there is no visible community at Ustinov, which can be alienating. We need to be aware that Ustinovians come from a wide variety of backgrounds. I would try to establish discreet informal LGBT network in Ustinov. Ustinov College is often inadvertently excluded, because it's so far away and people are often only there for one year. I would introduce Ustinovians to what's going on in the wider community; have awareness campaigns about sexual health/relationship issues; participate in Durham pride through thematic pub quiz/film night etc. I am good for this role, as I have held lots of organisational positions, this is my 5th year in Durham

and I have experience within pastoral care. I can work with team and within hierarchy. I also have personal experience.

- ii. *Q: How much space for additions to the LGBT acronym?* NB: It's important to recognise the communities within other communities. The acronym that I'm standing for is restricted. I would maybe change that by adding an 'A' or a '+' or something.
- iii. *Q: Would you be interested in setting up a mentor system? Or a network of representatives?* NB: Yes, fantastic idea.
- iv. *Q: There has been a university association for a long time, but we have lots of problems with getting college reps involved. Would you be willing to work with them too?* NB: I definitely would. Their postgraduate social clashes with Ustinov's pub quiz though, so we would need to change that.

6. Any Other Business

Melissa Gardner

GCR Secretary

21/10/2015