

Ustinov College GCR

General Meeting

Minutes



7:00 p.m., 01/06/2016

1. Apologies:
2. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting
 - a. Approved by general aye.
 - b. Issues Arising from Last Minutes
 - i. Fossil Fuel Divestment [JS] (Mariah on his behalf)
 1. See Appendix I for proposal.
 2. Divesting would be statistically irrelevant to financial prospects and research interests.
 3. Passed by general aye.
3. Reports from Officers
 - a. Acting President [KR]
 - i. Opposing fee on returning students in Ustinov College accommodation (the extra two-week charge). University imposing charge (not college). Have sent a letter. Any feedback would be appreciated.
 - b. Treasurer [XM]
 - i. Have only recently got access to accounts. Approx. £35000 in £33000 out. £1600 surplus – in good standing. Largest income from social events and university payments. Largest expenses are for social events – decorates/catering/entertainment. TV is the next biggest payment (BT Sports for Fisher House, Netflix for Dryburn). Also induction week, vending machine and insurance. Updates on equipment for Clubs and Societies. Will be in good standing if budget(s) are approved.
 - c. Welfare Officer [CC]
 - i. Since the last General Meeting, we have held an alcohol awareness week. CC is organising First Aid course.
 - d. Social Secretary [SF]
 - i. Organising summer ball – fire-breathers, stilt-walker, fortune-teller, DJ etc. Announcing theme of summer ball tomorrow.
 - ii. Also got the summer BBQ coming up.
 - e. Clubs and Societies Officer [JC]
 - i. Chasing up details for clubs & societies. Festival of Sports on 7th June, feel free to come down and support. Clubs & Societies formal earlier in the month was very successful.
 - f. Internation Officer [PM]
 - i. Went to Whitby. Also helped to set up the Kurdish and Mexican parties. Working on National Trust membership. Starting a World Cinema series this term with TAB.
 - g. DSU Representative [TAB]
 - i. DSU elections – more than doubled turnout. NUS referendum next week. GCR is not taking a side on the referendum, but please do vote. It will have an effect on student life at Ustinov. Anything you want campaigned on at university level, please contact.
 - h. Communications [CW]

- i. Working on handover documents. Work phone/Whatsapp, free drink promotion, new website, mascot competition. We would also like to hear any feedback you've got.

4. Agenda Items

a. Motion to approve the GCP Liaison Officer [CW]

- i. See Appendix II for proposal.
- ii. Q: How would you make sure that people know who was responsible for each?
CW: We will make the poster very clear – bubbles, colours, etc. Should make it more clear, not less.
Q: What is college's opinion? CW: Have spoken with both college and the GCP, have received a very positive response.
Would the GCP liaison officer have to be a member of GCP? CW: No.
Q: If printed posters have same design each week, will people skate over them? CW: We could simply change the background – different colours.
Q: Three people running for ~30 positions on GCR. Should you cut down positions elsewhere if you're adding a new one? CW: I am positive that we might have interest. We are aware it is difficult to get engagement levels. We want to provide this opportunity and hope someone will fill it.
Vote: For 22 Against 5 Abstain 4. Motion passed.

b. Motion to approve budget for [SF]

- i. The Summer Ball (estimated cost £4700)
 - 1. Now £5100. £1100 for coaches, £400 for seat covers, Entertainment £220/per act.
 - 2. **Approve** 29 Oppose 1 Abstain 1.
- ii. The Summer BBQ (estimated cost £7270)
 - 1. All day. BBQ entry is free. Includes food, entertainments, stage rental – All around £2000. Professional DJ £200. Decorations etc.
 - 2. Q: Does cost include petting zoo? Yes.
 - 3. **Approve** 31 Oppose 0 Abstain 1.
- iii. Gym Equipment Servicing and Repairs (estimated cost £1200)
 - 1. Air con and repair/servicing.
 - 2. Q: How does that compare to the takings? We have taken more than that.
 - 3. Q: What is being repaired? Running machine, bike etc.
 - 4. **Approve** 27 Oppose 0 Abstain 1.

5. Hustings

a. President

- i. Kirstyn Raitz: Acting GCR President since Marc left in April. Being president is important, not lots of assigned duties, represent GCR in college affairs, Ustinov in uni affairs. Will run around and make sure everyone's on same page in GCR and between committee and members. Enjoy it. Want to take it further, improve job eg. invested in bar management.
- ii. Q: Being on bar, exec, 2nd year, have you thought about impact?: Yes. Putting on conference, speaking. Familiar with having too many things to do. Taking step back from departmental duties next year, make it easier.
- iii. Q: Been to lots of events, many Asian students not represented, focus on alcohol at events. How can we embrace diversity and be more inclusive?
KR: We've been thinking about this. Pre-sessional students – laid groundwork – pre-sessional BBQ to engage with students. Want to continue/go further with this. Room to brainstorm events – brunches etc. GCR survey – more questions about integration etc.

- iv. Q: Specific goals? KR: Pressure on university to get rid of 2 week charge. Reassess debate about management of bar.
- v. Q: GCR constitution updated Nov 2011. Stipulation that it will be reviewed every 5 years. Do you have any amendments or changes to make? KR: Clarification about being a student and what that means about running for elected office as a postgraduate – would want to clarify. Other than that, not specific ones, but we would bring it to a committee, AGM.
- vi. Q: What ideas do you have about filling committee positions? KR: Talking to people and persuading to run, it's the only real way that works.
- vii. Q: Engaging Livers Out? Dropped ball a bit. Very promising at the start of the year, but need to do more consistent work/events.

b. Treasurer

- i. XM: Running for treasurer again. Going into 2nd year PhD – economics. Ustinovian since 2013. Want to help people get involved as people helped me. Took a long time for treasury responsibilities to be transferred. Going well, enjoy being a member of Executive committee, like counting money. Consider self as helper, want to get as many international students involved as possible.
- ii. Q: Any new changes you want to make? XM: Treasurer has a complete system that works. Some things, such as inter-MCR formal that need to be improved. Learning process.
- iii. Q: Have you looked at the new operating standards for charity? Are there any changes we need to make? XM: Have not researched that yet. Need to submit the balance sheet to professional accountant company because of charity status. Preparing this at the moment. Will be more strict.

c. Chairperson

- i. JG (Skype): PhD student in Astrophysics. Extensive experience in keeping on track. Aware of how to deal with elections online etc. Volunteer/run events for GCR already – summer BBQ, pub quiz. Become quite apparent how much of my enjoyment at Ustinov comes from the GCR and want to help out.
- ii. Q: Have you read the standing orders? Would you make any changes? JG: Read the constitution. No particular changes immediately. Maybe clarify some things. If something comes apparent, I would deal with it.
- iii. Q: What are you doing in Delaware? NASA conference.

6. Any Other Business

- a. Voting procedure: Our three candidates are running, can vote RON if you want. Email with live link going out tonight. Use CIS username to log in. Voting runs until Monday 6th at 6pm. Link will also be on Facebook group. When the poll closes, will send out results.
- b. There will be a debate session next Tuesday on the NUS referendum.

Appendix I: Fossil Fuel Divestment Proposal

The GCR Notes:

1. A Freedom of Information request made last year and reported in the Palatinate on 24th March 2015 revealed that in the last quarter of 2014, Durham University had over £500,000 invested in companies directly involved in the production of fossil fuels.
2. One third of Durham University accommodation fees go towards 'capital and borrowing'.
3. In recent years Ustinov College has not performed well in the Inter-Collegiate Energy Competition run by Greenspace.
4. In their 2010-2020 strategic plan, Durham University state they wish to be 'widely regarded as a university at the forefront of environment sustainability'.
5. The world's 200 largest fossil fuel companies, by proven carbon reserves, are well in excess of the amount of carbon that can be safely burned to have a chance of staying below 2°C of global warming.

The GCR Believes:

1. That Durham University should be a role model in society, acting responsibly and helping create a safe future that is better for everyone.
2. That Durham University, in using money from student accommodation fees to invest in companies directly involved in production of fossil fuels, is acting against the student body's best interests.
3. That we are running out of time to keep global warming below 2°C above pre-industrial levels - the limit for ensuring a safe and stable future for the economy, the planet and all people on it - as outlined in the IPCC's 5th Assessment Report.
4. That the fossil fuel industry, by extracting, processing, and selling fossil fuels, as well as through its major influence on government policy, is complicit in causing climate change and its catastrophic impacts.
5. That we must do everything in our power to rapidly reduce the global use of fossil fuels and expand clean energy alternatives.
6. That Ustinov College GCR, as an environmentally conscious student body, can lead the way in pressing the University to divest from fossil fuels.

The GCR Resolves:

1. To oppose any further investment in fossil fuels by Durham University.
2. To use the limited power we have to lobby Durham University to divest fully from fossil fuels.

Appendix II: Global Citizenship Programme (GCP) Liaison Officer Proposal

- a) Represents the GCR in communications with the GCP.
- b) Liaises with the GCP Communications Team Leader(s) and the GCP Media and Web Coordinator at Ustinov and is responsible for keeping the GCR Committee members up to date with their events and activities.
- c) Is responsible for creating the Weekly Events Poster, updating the notice board in Fisher House, and distributing copies in Ustinov accommodation blocks.
- d) Is responsible for merging GCP events onto the GCR calendar and updating information accurately as necessary.
- e) Is responsible for advertising GCP and collaborative GCR/GCP events on all digital media belonging to the GCR in an effective and timely manner.
- f) Assists in planning collaborative GCR/GCP events.
- g) Sits on the following committees: GCR Committee, Communications Committee

Further Updates Required: 11.3.1.9 Communications Officer

- j) Coordinates the actions of the Webmaster, Press Secretary, **GCP Liaison Officer**, and Tech Officer, as well as members of Social Committee as may be necessary.