

# Ustinov College GCR Exec Meeting Minutes



## **Action Points from 18/09:**

*ALL to go through the GCR website and see if anything needs updating.*

*AH to book trampolining (after the budget passed on 18/09).*

*AS to order SIM cards (after the budget passed on 18/09).*

*JG to follow up on the requests made by the Director of Nightline.*

*JS to go through the Welfare Officer drawer.*

*MR to update the GCR passwords.*

*MR to update Ustinov Facebook group for 2017/18 with the new rules regarding posting surveys (to be done after 13/09).*

*TAB to sort out the committee board – photos to be taken when the exec stash arrives.*

*TP to organise a meeting with the sports captains (meeting to include funding discussion, bystander training information, etc.).*

*TP to add survey to bottom of gym application form.*

*TP to add yoga to the society mailing list.*

*TP to contact societies that may wish to use the community room at SP telling them about its availability; this includes the Bible Studies Group, the Gaming Society and the LGBT+ Society for the Qstinovian.*

*TP to check the state of the table tennis tables.*

*XM to look into livers out gym access at SP with Brian.*

*XM/AB to confirm who pays for the gym insurance.*

*XM and AB to go through treasurer drawer.*

*XM to look into buying more food for the vending machine.*

*XM to remind the company the stash was ordered from that it must be delivered by next week.*

## **18:00pm, 18/09/17**

- 1. Apologies:** AB, AH, WG, XM  
**Present:** JG, TAB, AS, TP, VU, JS, JO, MR
- 2. Approval of minutes from last meeting.**  
Minutes from 11/09: Approved on the general aye.
- 3. Matters arising from previous minutes.**

ALL to go through the GCR website and see if anything needs updating (in particular, AH to write information for livers out students).

TAB to work through the updates that he has received for the website, in particular from AH.  
JS to send TAB updates relating to welfare for the website.

#### 4. Agenda Items:

##### a. Trampolining Budget [AH][Apologies]

**Motion:** *To increase the allowed budget for trampolining during Induction Week from £250 to £500. This would allow for 100 places to be booked instead of 50, and includes a discount in price from £5.95pp to £5.00pp.*

**Questions:** *AB - What is the probability of filling all 100 spots, compared to a single 50? Otherwise, the funds are available.*

JG originally budgeted £250 for trampolining, which he thought would be a reasonable amount to spend on a non-alcoholic activity. AB would like the event to break even with this amount. He is concerned that if the GCR budgets for 100 tickets and only sells 30, then a large amount of money will be lost.

In order to break even, approximately 60 tickets will have to be sold. JG points out that there could be around 20 sold from the executive committee members and returners, so poses the question - will we be able to sell 40 more? JO says he would be surprised if they do not sell well, which is met with general agreement from the rest of the committee.

If 100 tickets are bought, then the tickets will have to be pushed. One idea is to have them at the GCR stand during the initial couple of days, so people can purchase them during their registration at Fisher House. This would not interfere with formal tickets, as they will not go on sale until Saturday. The decision is unanimous to keep the motion as it is.

*What price will we be selling the tickets for (proposed somewhere between £3 and £5)?*

The tickets will be sold at £4 for GCR members and £6 for non-GCR members.

**Vote:** The vote passes unanimously – AH and AB to book and pay for trampolining respectively.

##### b. SIM Card Budget [AS]

**Motion:** *To add an additional £52 to the Induction Week budget, allowing 200 PAYG SIM cards to be bought and distributed to international students that require a UK SIM card on arrival.*

**Questions:** No questions were asked as this issue was discussed at the Induction Week meeting the previous week.

**Vote:** The vote passes unanimously – AS to buy the SIM cards.

##### c. SP Gym (Controlled Access) [JG]

This issue was brought up last week (11/09) and it was decided it should be discussed again at this meeting.

The gym will not be finished until mid/late October. Currently the room is being used as an office for the developers. Technically they finished today, but College thinks it will take some time for the office to be emptied, the equipment to be delivered and put in. There is currently no storage facility at SP, so College are unsure where to move the things that currently fill the gym.

The GCR pays for the upkeep and improvements to the gym, but JG is unsure whether College pays for the insurance or if the GCR does.

JG raises the question of whether there is a reason that we charge for membership of the gym. He is not sure that we should profit from gym memberships. Ian thinks College pays for the insurance. JG says we need to investigate this – AB and XM to look into the issue.

JG thinks that access to the gym can be restricted by College. However, the keys have been programmed already to include gym access, meaning all livers in at SP currently have access. This also means that livers out are prevented from using the gym. JG says that it seems only fair to make the gym accessible to all Ustinovians, which the committee agrees with. XM to look into this with Brian before he leaves on Friday.

The question remains, should the gym be locked for now if there is no control access? Whoever pays the insurance has the issue of every person who uses the gym needing to be inducted – it does not seem feasible to induct all livers in (it would be very difficult to enforce that every student attends an induction).

TP asks - if the GCR still charges membership for the HF site, will that payment get the student access to both gyms or just one? He points out that there will be no incentive for a student to pay for HF access if they can get into SP for free.

This is an ongoing issue.

**d. Parking Policy [JG]**

The residents are not happy with the idea that students will be using the roads around the SP accommodation to park. They are worried that if enough students bring their cars then they will no longer have space to park there.

JG points out that realistically there are not many students who bring cars. Most of the students who do are either PGCE students, or students with spouses; together these two groups make up a tiny population of Ustinov. JG says he does not think we should be looking to stop students from parking on a public road.

The residents got a guarantee from Alumno that it would be written into the tenancy agreements of the students at SP that they could not bring a car. The university has not done this, however, as it is not a realistic demand. It would be very difficult for the university to prevent all student cars.

The residents are looking for resident only parking permits. JG says that it would be £40 for the first parking permit, £60 for the second, and one household can have up to two as long as they do not have private parking (for example, a drive or a garage). The number of private parking spaces is subtracted from the total possible number of permits that the household can apply for (meaning, if a household has a garage and a drive then they are eligible for no parking permits). Therefore, JG points out

this would severely affect the residents, as most of them own drives or garages but do not currently use them (some argue that modern cars cannot fit into the size of garages that they have). Furthermore, it does not seem reasonable for residents to prevent students from parking on a street that they have chosen to park on despite having other parking facilities.

One of the residents 'jokingly' threatened to stick permanent stickers to any student car that they saw – JG points out that we would expect more from students, and so certainly would not expect such behaviour from the residents.

As far as JG could see, in a block of flats each MO flat would be given one parking permit. It would make sense if this meant each cluster flat in SP got a permit, which if true would mean SP student accommodation would get around 50 to 60 of them. However, the residents may petition the council to explicitly exclude student residents from parking permits. This may be possible; for example, no student at HF got a notification of the recent planning permission as they are not included as residents here. JS points out this may be due to students not paying council tax. If something similar happens at SP and the residents successfully campaign for parking permits, there will be no parking for students in the area.

TP asks how easy it would be for the street to be turned into a parking permit only road. JG says the road would have to undergo a Council inspection, and fulfil a specific set of requirements (for example, between 8am and 6pm it has to be demonstrated that, at times, 80% of the cars parked on the road must belong to non-residents).

MR points out that the majority of students are international, most of who will not be buying a car during their time in Durham.

Additionally, JG points out that the length of permit is the duration of the tenancy; residents would only have to pay the fee once, whereas students would have to pay £40 per year they accommodate SP.

JG has been deciding the stance that the GCR will take on parking so far, but thinks it would be fair for the executive committee to make the decision as a group.

It is put to a vote with two options:

**A** – The parking should be reviewed if it becomes a problem. In the meantime, wait and see, and do not support a resident only parking permit system.

**B** – As a gesture of goodwill toward the SPRA, the GCR will say they are in favour of a residents only parking permit system.

JS points out that we cannot risk having no spaces, as the PGCE students will need to bring their cars due to the nature of their degree. AS says that he does not think the residents will see this as a gesture of good will.

**Vote:** Six votes for option A, one vote for option B. The vote passes on the majority for option A.

JG says that if executive committee members would like to discuss this further, then raise this as an Agenda Item in a future meeting.

TP asks if it will be known if the residents will try to push for a parking permit system. JG responds saying that he will be at all of the SPRA meetings, and so will know if that is their intention.

**e. Alumni Relations [TAB]**

Currently Ustinov College has no alumni relations. TAB asks the committee if anyone would object to him arranging a meet up in London, for example, for college then to advertise to alumni. TAB points out that other colleges advertise similar events for their students.

JG says that either Sarah or Rebecca should be talked to about an event like this, and does not think that the GCR should be doing alumni relations. TAB states this would be him as an individual suggesting this, not necessarily on behalf of the GCR. Ustinov College had an Alumni Development Officer for one year, but their contract was not renewed. A member of staff in college will have alumni relations as part of their job, so JG suggests that TAB should not offer to do this voluntarily as someone is getting paid to organise this (even though they are not doing it).

The committee agrees, though, that this would be a really nice thing to happen if it came to fruition. A suggestion is put forward that this could be done as an alumni GCR event, and donations could be taken toward the GCR.

**f. Committee Diversity [TAB]**

TAB points out that there is a clear issue regarding committee diversity, and so puts forward the question – how do we change this?

It is agreed that advertisement is key in getting other people to run. MR points out that it is important to convey more information on what the GCR is and why someone might want to join the committee. JG suggests that the GCR have a stand at the Clubs and Societies Fair.

The General Meeting will be on Sunday 08/10, during which students in attendance will be able to apply for non-executive committee roles. XM says the committee should advertise the importance of being part of a community, and point out the value of being part of a committee. WeChat advertisement will also be important, since a large population of Ustinov use it.

There is a suggestion of creating flyers and posters in multiple languages, for example Chinese, Arabic, etc.. However, JG questions how big the language barrier is. The committee points out that perhaps one of the reasons why certain nationalities of students tend to group together more is because they got to know each other during pre-sessional events in the months before term begins.

Historically, there is a sense that the GCR is cliquy. The committee agrees that the best way to combat this is to just chat to people, and be as open and friendly as possible.

**5. Officer Reports:**

**a. Bar Steward [VU]**

The bar still exists. The first bar staff meeting of the year will be held on Wednesday 20/09. This will allow all the new staff to meet each other, Trudie and all of the current staff. There will be a number of questions asked relating to SP, so VU may find out more about the new bar. The meeting will be on Wednesday at 5pm.

**b. Clubs & Societies [TP]**

*TP to add survey to bottom of gym application form – for next week.*

To be done by next week.

*TP to tell sports captains about bystander training.*

The bystander training will be at the end of October – TP will tell the captains about this at the captains meeting next Monday (25/09).

*TP to organise a meeting with the sports captains (meeting to include funding discussion).*

To be done. TP will be asking the captains if they need anything bought before term begins, so thought it would be useful to have AB at the meeting (JG says he gets back on Sunday). JG says the captains should fill in the form that AB is currently writing up, giving what they want and why it is needed. The finance committee will then meet and decide on how to distribute the funding – TP may be added to this meeting. JG says TP should tell the captains to be optimistic and rank in order of most important to least - the GCR will do as much as possible.

*TP to add yoga to the society mailing list.*

Ongoing. From the Ustinov 2017-2018 Facebook page, it looks like a table tennis team may be starting up. TP says that if the society can be sorted during Induction Week, then they can be entered in the college league. There are concerns about the condition of the table tennis tables as they were left outside through the summer months. JO says when he last saw them (in June) one had a warped corner but the other was fine. TP to investigate.

*TP to contact societies that may wish to use the community room at SP telling them about its availability; this includes the Bible Studies Group, the Gaming Society and the Qstinovian.*

TAB notes that the Qstinovian is not a standalone society, but they come under the LGBT+ society. JG suggests they may want to use the community room, though. TAB will add the community room facility to the GCR website.

There was an issue with the Howlands hall bookings. TP has sorted this through Sheila, and the bookings will be re-done today. The person dealing with the hall booking at JB was not happy about being told he could only book JB societies on certain days, after he had already made all of the bookings. He was not aware of how the hall time was split between JB and Ustinov. TP will keep an eye on the booking form over the next week to check that more of Ustinov's time in the hall is not taken over by JB.

TP has been asked if SCA volunteering can have a stand at the Ustinov Clubs and Societies Fair during Induction Week. JG says we generally allow it, and they may have been at a previous fair. The decision is to allow them to have a stand.

AB got an email from the College Sports Manager asking about how we deal with subs and invoices. It looks like this was a mass email sent to all JCRs (and the GCR). AB will reply and update the committee with the result.

**c. Communications [MR]**

*MR to update the GCR passwords.*

MR will put together a new password sheet similar to the one in the Communications Officer handbook, and if there are no problems he will start to change the GCR passwords this week.

*MR to update Ustinov Facebook group for 2017/18 with the new rules regarding posting surveys (to be done after 13/09).*

Ongoing. MR is going to put a small description stating that all posts on the Ustinov College group should be related to college life and Ustinov. If a student would like, for example, a survey to be put on the page then it should be sent to the GCR for approval first. This is the same way the GCR bulletin boards are treated.

Sarah wanted to talk to JG about code of conduct regarding social media, in order to protect the college. JG pointed out that the page in question (Ustinov 2017-18) is not a college page, but a GCR page. She recommended stating on the page that 'we reserve the right to remove anything that does not fit with the core vision of the Ustinov GCR'. She also recommended stating that 'if we do not see (a post) as being good towards college relations then we reserve the right to remove it'. JG says the complaints procedure should be put on the page; who to contact if a student has a complaint about a GCR committee member.

*MR to post little bits of information on the Ustinov 2017/18 Facebook page relating to Durham/UK culture (including, for example, Lumiere).*

Ongoing until Induction Week. A post was created by MR showing new students how to begin the enrolment process. MR says he will post, for example, photos of the college and local area, and may start doing some daily posts.

MR will update the account login information sheet this week. He is going to change the Peter Platypus password too. It was pointed out by MR that Dan Brunsdon has been keeping the Peter page active on Facebook, and perhaps he should be given the new password to allow him to keep posting. The committee agrees with this, but JG points out Dan should be warned that if we get a new enthusiastic student who would like to do communications, then Peter the Platypus may have to be taken away from him and given to this new student.

MR will assess whether the Twitter and Instagram accounts should be utilised more. It is pointed out that these have been advertised in the handbook.

Regarding posters, JG says that AB was going to be doing them, but he is away for a week. MR and JO will look into this, and update the posters to be put up for Induction Week.

AS asks if we have the email accounts of all the new students, and suggests that an email is sent out with a timetable for induction week. Sam has been very helpful in passing out GCR information to incoming students. AS to draft this email, and forward it to JG.

It is decided that individual Facebook events should be made for the main Induction Week activities.

**d. DSU [AH][Apologies]**

Nothing to report.

**e. Facilities [XM]**

*XM and AB to go through treasurer drawer.*

Ongoing.

MR filled up the vending machine with crisps a day or two ago, but it is now empty. More food needs to be ordered for the vending machines – XM to look into this.

From October 15<sup>th</sup>, the old £1 coins will no longer be in circulation, and currently the vending machines do not accept the new coins. A new vending machine may have to be bought for Howlands Farm (and possibly Sheraton Park if there is not one there). This will be looked into at a later date.

**f. Finance [AB][Apologies]**

Internet banking has now been set up for the GCR. AB will work through all the requested reimbursements in his inbox. The forms are in the GCR office – AB requests that committee members looking for reimbursement fill one in and send it to him by email.

**g. Induction Officer [WG][Apologies]**

The coaches for the GMOS are almost booked; WG has forwarded the emails regarding this to JG and XM.

*[WG to write a small paragraph describing what volunteers for Induction Week will be doing.]*

This is done.

*AH to contact trampolining to discuss costing and to see if it is possible to save spaces for the time slot after the slot that we will book for IW.*

Complete - see the above budget.

**h. International Officer [JO]**

*JO to look into the music requesting situation regarding parties at Ustinov.*

The decision is that requests should be taken a day or two before a party, and passed on to the DJ to give them some notice.

Currently there will be a trip at the end of the first term, and one the end of the second term, but JO asks if there should be another during first term. It is decided that it is not necessary, but no one is opposed to there being an additional trip.

**i. Livers Out [AH][Apologies]**

AH has booked Whisky River for the livers out event during IW.

**j. Social Secretary [JG]**

A 'free pizza' event is being held tonight in Fisher House for the new PGCE students that have arrived.

**k. Steering [TAB]**

Nothing to report.

**l. University/College [JG]**

About 30 people have filled in the GCR survey so far.

MR says he has started his role as GCP Coordinator. He says that if any events should be moved to not conflict with GCR events then to let him know. MR will keep an eye on the calendar to make sure that there are as few clashes as possible. TAB says that if members of the GCP would like to do a pub quiz then they should tell him first.

JG checked with the SPRA that the buses are ok for picking students up during Induction Week. JG has emailed five different bus companies for quotes, and only one has responded so far. He will start to chase them up – worst case scenario he will book Lee's, but he would prefer that mini buses were booked, not coaches.

There have been lots of complaints from nearby residents that their houses are being overlooked by the kitchens at SP. From their point of view, they can see a lot of kitchens overlooking them, but JG says the students cannot actually see well into their houses. The University is taking the point of view that the residents did not complain about this when the initial planning permission went through, so nothing can be done.

The SPRA are running into an issue at the moment. The current president (Mark) has moved away from the estate – he is keeping his position for now, but has made it clear that he is looking to leave the SPRA. Unfortunately, no one seems to want to take over. The other person who is happy to get involved in the SPRA is only interested in the landscaping side of things. Furthermore, nobody seems willing to be Chairperson. JG pointed out that they may want to have their AGM before the new students arrive, as they will technically be eligible to vote. He pointed this out

to try and encourage the SPRA to change their constitution so students from SP cannot vote on issues. If they try and do anything slightly controversial in the future, students may want to attend the vote – the SPRA will not be happy if they are then outvoted by incoming students. It seems, however, they are letting this become an issue.

JG says that the social space at SP looks bigger than he had feared it would be. There is an area that can be blocked off, similar to the café in Fisher House but a smaller proportion of the room. The length of the bar is approximately the same, and there is room to attach a hired second bar to the end during, for example, a party. This was requested by JG and JF at a meeting a while ago.

There is supposed to be a free cycle rental scheme (Brompton Cycles) available on the Sheraton Park site, but a system has not been worked out for giving keys out. College wants to lock them up and not use them as they are worried about insurance, but JG points out this is a bit inappropriate as they are a requirement of the planning permission. JG points out that having them ‘technically there’ but not using them is not the spirit of the planning permission. JG will be attending the interviews for the new Assistant Operations Manager, and will be asking them directly if they will be willing to sort out the cycle scheme. If anyone would like anything else asked in the interviews then they should let JG know.

JO asks if there is any place for students to store their own bike if they bring one. JG is not sure about this at the moment.

JG will be attending the SP Working Group meeting on Wednesday, and will be talking to Nick Benbow about various issues (including not everything being delivered that was promised).

JG would like the Ecology Representative committee role advertised - Green Space have been uneasy.

**m. Welfare [JS]**

*JS to discuss code of conduct in relation to social media with Sarah Prescott.*

JG has discussed this with Sarah – see discussion above under c (Communications).

*JS to promote the phone number for the new welfare phone.*

Welfare phone is a no go – Sarah Prescott has said that it is not appropriate. JS was told that it would be fine for him to give his own personal number for people to contact in order to arrange a meeting – he will decide whether or not to do this.

JG met with Brenda to discuss welfare issues. An alcohol awareness road show will attend Ustinov. A budgeting team is going to come in and sit on the couches in Fisher House, allowing new students to come and talk through any concerns they may have. This has now been organised. JS to get the dates that this will be happening and make sure it is advertised to SP students.

JS says it should be possible to get multiple puppy events this coming year. At the moment, he thinks there could be one at the end of each term plus another toward dissertation deadlines.

*JS to order lots of condoms before Induction Week during the sale that he was emailed about.*

Condoms and lube have been ordered. There are still a lot of female sanitary products in the GCR office. JS to go through the Welfare Officer drawer to check what is in there.

JG has not heard back from Nightline. JG to follow up on the requests from the director of Nightline Durham.

## **6. AOB**

### **a. Committee Board [TAB]**

*[TAB to sort out the committee board – photos to be taken when the exec stash arrives.]*

To be done when the executive committee stash arrives. XM to remind the company that the stash must be delivered by next week.

### **b. Projector/DVD Player [AS/TP]**

The projector seems to flash when the DVD player is being used, but not when a laptop is being used. JG says that JF has looked into this previously, and the problem does not seem to be the cables. TP suggests that it could be the DVD player, but this will have to be checked.

### **c. Ustinov App [AB][Apologies]**

One of the Direct Debits that was stopped was for a Ustinov app. AB asks whether it is worth paying for this again. The decision from the committee is to not renew the payment.

### **d. Meeting Place at SP [TAB]**

TAB asks if there will be an appropriate room for the committee to meet in SP. JG says there probably will be – TAB will be able to look into this when we get access to SP.

### **e. Committee Sweet Treats [AS]**

Cake was brought. MR to bring next week.

Alastair Stewart

GCR Secretary

18/09/2017