

# Ustinov College GCR Exec Meeting

## Minutes



### **Action Points from 04/12:**

*[AB to look into insuring our assets before the next trustees meeting.]*

*AB to organise buying the equipment for sports and societies after the passing of the budgets on 20/11.*

*AB to sort out online payments.*

*CW to send MR information on the sanitary product collection so that it can be advertised.*

*JG to give the dates of all parties and formals that have been booked in already to NQ, who will then look into booking buses for them.*

*JG to ask PresComm for names of places that other colleges have held formals.*

*JG to find out an estimate (even an order of magnitude) of how much funding the GCR will have to spend on formals next year.*

*JG, VU and MR to create the list regarding the bar/café etc.*

*JO to chase up payment of the Dryburn tickets.*

*JO to find a date for his next trip and create a budget for it to be presented next week.*

*JO to organise a budget/plan for the proposed Hanukkah event.*

*MR to sort out the new external hard drive.*

*[MR to set out a budget for a new office computer.]*

*MR to look into getting a cabinet for the SP bar to be placed near the sound inputs.*

*NQ to send MR information on the end of term party so it can be advertised.*

*TAB to sort out the committee board.*

*[TAB and AB to look into the best way to deal with finances for next year (i.e. whether a change to the SOs is needed).]*

*TP to prepare a budget for equipment and supplies missing in the SP gym, and pass the information on to College so they can pay for half of it.*

*TP to update the SP gym induction form.*

*XM to follow up on the issue with the photocopier.*

*XM to finalise ordering the TV and sorting its installation.*

*XM to order stash for the CW, NQ and the Welfare Committee.*

*XM to purchase Christmas decorations etc. for the Children's Christmas Party.*

*XM and JS to organise a poll to find out why people are not using the SP café.*

**18:30pm, 04/12/17**

### **1. Apologies:**

**Present:** TAB, JG, XM, AS, AB, TP, AH, MR, JS, JO, CW, NQ, VU

**2. Approval of minutes from last meeting.**

Minutes from 27/11: passed on the general aye.

**3. Matters arising from previous minutes.**

Nothing to discuss.

**4. Agenda Items:**

**a. Budget for Children's Christmas Party [XM]**

**Motion:** *To pass a budget of up to £150 to be used on food, decorations and presents for the Children's Christmas Party. The Budget will cover the following:*

<i>Santa Suit</i>	<i>£7.31</i>
<i>Helium</i>	<i>£27.45</i>
<i>Presents for Kids</i>	<i>£20</i>
<i>Face Painting</i>	<i>£15</i>
<i>Drawing Stuff</i>	<i>£10</i>
<i>Santa Candy Bag</i>	<i>£2</i>
<i>Food</i>	<i>£30</i>
<i>Candies</i>	<i>£12</i>
<i>Soft Drink</i>	<i>£15</i>
<i>Mince Pies</i>	<i>£4.50</i>

*There may also be a small delivery charge.*

**Questions:**

NQ already bought a lot of decorations for the Christmas formal and after party so some of them will be used. XM points out that she wants things delivered on the Sunday morning for the party, which is why there may be a small delivery fee.

*The Santa suit seems quite cheap. Could we spend a little more money to get a better one?*

XM says they had one at around £22, but was not sure how much she should spend on it. AH points out that the suit could be used in future years if a good quality one is bought. JG suggests going for a better one. The decision is to increase the budget to 'up to £200' in order to get a better Santa suit.

*Do you have enough mince pies?*

XM thinks that College will also order some.

**Vote:** 12 for, one abstention. The vote passes; XM to organise the Children's Christmas Party.

**b. Bamburgh Castle/Lindisfarne [JO]**

*JO to set out a budget for the next trip he is planning.*

JO says that the coach will be £250 for the day plus petrol. Originally JO was planning on having the trip on 27<sup>th</sup> January, however it is pointed out that this is the day after the Burn's Night formal. JO will provide a date and a budget next week.

**c. Formals [JG]**

**i. Online Booking System**

The discussion is to decide whether the online booking system should be used again in the future.

MR thinks that it was a good idea, but thinks that the tickets should be split so that half are sold online, and half are sold in the same way they used to be. CW would like to point out that a number of livers out said to her that they appreciated the efforts of the GCR to make ticket purchasing fairer for them.

AB would be opposed to splitting the tickets, saying that 200 at once is fairer for everyone, not just livers out. Also, he says people might get confused about what they have to do to buy a ticket. He points out that this is the first formal that he knows of in the last year that people have not had to be chased up to pay for their ticket.

JS says that if we do them all online, then maybe we could do two releases. Someone had said to him that they had a supervisor meeting so were not able to access their laptop at 18:00. AS points out that this would have been a problem regardless of the method used to purchase tickets, online or not.

JG points out that due to the amount of people who do not pay for their ticket by the deadline, there almost is a second release. For example, there were around 30 tickets that went on sale in the second round for the Christmas formal due to people not paying for their tickets in time.

AB says that the time could be changed to a later time next time. JG and VU point out that no matter when the tickets go on sale, there will still be someone who is not able to make it then.

The decision is to do the online system again. AS points out that emailing the form out in advance and making the link active for everyone at a certain time would solve the problem of people getting the emails at different times.

AB says that there could still be an issue with some of a group getting tickets and the others not. He asks if we should allow group bookings. JG says a problem could arise with people trying to book 10/15 tickets. There is general agreement that it is not practical to allow group bookings.

XM says that some people were complaining they typed in all of their details then when they hit submit they were told that the formal had sold out. This is how the system works, so this cannot really be changed.

## ii. **Bus Booking for the Rest of the Year**

JG says we know quite a few important dates for next year, for example when the formals will be held and when the big parties will be. He suggests that it may be worth booking buses for those events in advance. JG to give the dates to NQ, who will then look into booking the minibuses.

AB points out that the last company that we used seemed to be really good, and the driver's interaction with the students was excellent. NQ says that he was the most personable driver that we have had so far. He will be trying to book that company for the other nights. NQ to give AB an estimate of how much the minibus will cost for all of these events after he has contacted the company about booking them.

The committee agrees that having the bus running between 21:00-22:00 was very good because, as CW and NQ point out, some people came for the meal then left directly afterwards.

### iii. Next Year's Formals

Next year, the GCR will no longer be able to use the Howlands building to hold formals, and we have been told by the university that we cannot use other colleges. The discussion is on where they will be held instead.

TAB says the standing suggestions are the Marriott or the Radisson. The Marriott may be too small, but the Radisson should be able to take around 200. The Town Hall was suggested, but it could not take enough people. The Business School also seems to only be able to sit around 120/150, despite being told it could accommodate 200. Beamish and Ramside were also mentioned, but they will probably be too expensive. VU points out that the bar in particular will be expensive.

JG asks if there is a pub that is big enough to take around 200 people. AB suggests The Kings Lodge Inn. JG is concerned that not being able to have the formals on site will kill the bar next year. He also points out that we will probably have to organise buses for the attendees depending on the locations that are chosen. TAB does point out that if it is somewhere in town we should not have to; there are regularly people who walk into town for formals so this should not be such an issue. There will be an issue, however, if somewhere further away is booked.

AB asks if there is any way we could trial having a formal away from Howlands this year, so that it has at least been tested before next year. JG says he could put the Chinese New Year formal in town. This would kill the joint event with the GCP, and there is a concern that everywhere will be fully booked.

JG to ask JCR PressComm where they have been for formals. He points out that people might enjoy going around different colleges for formals, so perhaps they could be asked. He points out there is a big hall in Ushaw College which should be big enough to hold around 200 people. TAB says we would absolutely have to bus people there if that location is picked; JG thinks this is feasible.

Schools in Durham are also suggested, but CW thinks that a number of them are probably too small to hold a formal. She says that Durham Johnston School may be an option.

JG suggests that a small committee be set up in order to start looking into this issue.

JG says there has been a budget set down by University Council specifically to be used by Ustinov to hold formals next year. AB would like to know a ball park figure, at least an order of magnitude, so that we can plan accordingly. JG to find this out.

## 5. Officer Reports:

### a. Bar Steward [VU]

*VU to look into fixing the Sky+ box.*

The sky+ box started working on its own. VU is going to double check that it is still working today, and if it is will advertise that the TV can be booked to watch, for example, Champions League games.

Both bars still exist! The Christmas formal was a success, though due to staff shortage the bar was once again understaffed. There will be a bar staff meeting during the final week of term.

JG says that he was told Sarah was complaining as many staff had said they were unavailable. VU says they knew this in plenty time, and could have asked for external staff but they did not. They closed SP bar in order to have four working at HF.

JG suggests Hospitality should be asked to advertise when they are shutting down the café/bar. VU says they have a lot of posters ready, but they never put them up. He has been advertising on the bar page when the bars have been randomly shut as they have not bothered to.

A third person has been hired to work in Hospitality as the current staff claim they are over-worked. The new person seems to be in charge of the Howlands café.

The committee notes that over that last couple of months there have been quite significant problems regarding Hospitality. Lack of advertisement of the bar and café in SP, not paying staff that should have been paid, not setting up catering for GCP events that requested it, and not scheduling staff to work during all of the opening hours of the bars/café thus having to close them early are but a few of the problems that have arisen. The committee are mostly agreed that we are growing increasingly tired of the lack of competence that is being shown from the Hospitality staff.

### b. Clubs & Societies [TP]

*TP to prepare a budget for equipment and supplies missing in the SP gym, and talk to College about whether they will pay for any of it.*

To be done. College have agreed to pay for half of this.

*TP to update the SP gym induction form.*

To be done.

AB followed up on the discussion regarding the choir not being a ratified society. It turns out they have never been ratified, so AB will not be giving them the money they requested for now. Sam will be talking to TP to sort out ratification. They did not know that they were not a ratified society.

JG asks if college sponsoring the head of the choir would go against their constitution, as the President of a society must be democratically elected. AB points out that they are sponsoring an instructor, and they need not be the President of the society. For example, there are other societies who have hired instructors who

have not been on the committee of that society; there is precedent. JG points out that if there is an issue with a Choir Master being hired by college then a SO amendment would be needed, so this would have to go through a GM. TP will look into this as part of the ratification process.

IT seems WG has found space for the Gaming Society, so they will be allowed to use the extra £100 that was passed on the condition that storage space in SP was agreed upon.

**c. Communications [MR]**

*MR to sort out the new external hard drive.*

Ongoing.

*MR to advertise the Christmas formal and RippedOff demonstration.*

These were advertised.

NQ to send information about the end of term party, and CW to send information on the sanitary product collection for MR to advertise.

**d. DSU [AH]**

The Ripped Off Demonstration happened. Ustinov students did not have an awful representation, but it was pretty much all PhD students, and none of the new students who are complaining on Facebook. Ustinov got 2/5 of the cards read out; that especially resonated with Megan. Big thanks to Clare for that!

AH sent a message to College today to find out what events the DSU is hosting this week - the highlight seems to be a free roller disco at the DSU. These events will be advertised on Facebook and by email.

The NUS delegates created a post on Facebook. It seems that four of the candidates have combined their allowed budgets, and are campaigning together for election. AH points out there does not seem to be any reason why this would not be allowed.

**e. Facilities [XM]**

*XM to order stash for the CW, NQ and the Welfare Committee.*

Sam has said the stash should be ready by the end of term. JS is waiting for the Welfare Reps to get back to him regarding their stash.

*XM to look into the issue with the photocopier.*

Steven forwarded the question to IT Service. XM followed it up and got a number to phone. She will continue to try to contact the person.

*XM to let AB know when the new TV for Dryburn can be purchased (after the next CMT meeting).*

XM has asked AB to purchase the TV. This order will be finalised this week, and XM will think about how it will be installed. XM will ask her colleague's husband who is good at working with tech if he would be willing to install it.

*XM to get a quote for updating the mechanism in the vending machine.*

This is to be followed up.

*MR to look into getting a cabinet for the SP bar to be placed near the sound inputs.*

MR took a look at the one in the community room, and thinks something like that would be suitable. It seems someone has stolen the aux cable from the bar and has replaced it with a rubbish one.

XM has sent out an email calling for volunteers for the Children's Christmas party, and has received around 40 responses. She will meet with Sarah (another Eco Rep) this Tuesday. NQ asks if volunteers could be called for to help set up formals. XM says this is definitely an option; an email just needs to be sent out asking for help.

**f. Finance [AB]**

Figures from the treasurer:

*Week of 20/11 start: £4,551.22*

<i>BT</i>	<i>-£356.75</i>
<i>Children in Need donation</i>	<i>-£132.00</i>
<i>IKEA (SP Office)</i>	<i>-£358.00</i>
<i>Adobe Creative</i>	<i>-£25.28</i>
<i>Cash Drop (formal + trip)</i>	<i>+£5,069.00</i>
<i>A Murray Travel</i>	<i>-£100.00</i>

*Carried forward: £8,648.19*

*[AB to look into insuring our assets before the next trustees meeting.]*

*JG to talk to Brenda about refunding GCR levies.*

JG messaged Brenda asking if she would be ok doing this. She said that she is happy to do this, but warns that this may open the flood gates for lots of people asking for refunds through her. AH said that the agreement was only if they had a legitimate financial concern should they get a refund through Brenda. JG points out that she cannot look through the student's accounts to find out whether they are telling the truth, and in fact argues that a lot of students are indeed in financial trouble. AB believes it is still the fairest system to have in place.

*AB to order the equipment for the clubs and societies after the budgets passed on 20/11.*

AB has not sent out the emails to captains yet. Once confirmation has been received from each of them he will order the equipment.

*MR to set out a budget for the new office computer.*

Ongoing. From TABs research so far, there seems to be no provision in the SOs that allows the GCR Executive Committee to pass things over £500 as things currently stand, no matter how vital they are. Technically even the insurance should have been passed through a GM. In that case, AB suggests that an amendment to the SO be made that allows costs that must be paid or else the GCR shuts down to be passed

through the Executive Committee. AB and TAB (and respective committees) to look into the best way to deal with finances.

XM and Ellen deposited money into the bank on Friday, and AB extends a thanks to them.

Accounts for college council have been completed and sent off to Sheila. College council is next Monday. JG did not send them to the trustees. AB is now working through the accounts to get them ready for the next trustees meeting.

AB to sort out online payments.

**g. International Officer [JO]**

*JO to chase up payment of the Dryburn tickets.*

JO to chase this up.

**h. Livers Out [CW]**

The tenants' union information/training session has been postponed to be the same time as an event CW has on relating to work, so she may have to miss it. JG can't, got a different meeting he is going to. CW asks if anyone can go in her stead, but it seems no one can make it. CW has been put into a Livers Out Reps group so will send a message to them.

The livers out Christmas night out is happening this Saturday. NQ asks if it has been advertised yet, to which CW responds she requested it be put in the Newsletter. The plan is to meet at Missoula at 21:00. AH suggests perhaps meeting for a drink slightly earlier, say The Library at 18:30, as Missoula is more of a club kind of place especially on Saturday evenings.

**i. Social Secretary [NQ]**

*TAB to talk to Alex P about movie nights (how to advertise them, and what will happen at Sheraton Park).*

TAB talked to Alex P about this.

*[NQ to organise the Christmas formal and after party (taxi, DJ, decorations).*

*JG to sort the name tags for the formal.]*

These were both done. The Christmas formal happened, and seemed to be a success! CW saved the day by sorting out the minibus. There was someone who's name was on the spreadsheet, but did not receive a name tag. It ended up working out in the end, and the person did get food.

*NQ to give MR information on the Middle Eastern night so that it can be advertised.*

Amr has requested that the Middle Eastern night be postponed until next term. He thinks people are going to be too busy.

JO says that Hanukkah starts on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December and ends on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December. There was talk of an event being run for it at some point during that time. JO will find out more about the event, and present a budget next week.

CW says that the table numbers have gone missing for the formals.

**j. Steering [TAB]**

Both offices are still there. The committee Christmas social is being planned.

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

JCR PresComm want to look into how the university strategy affects students so JG is volunteering to do some research with them to eventually put the strategy into terms that students can understand in a pros/cons kind of way. Pick out the things that truly affect students.

The Ripped Off demonstration did not have the biggest showing from Ustinov, but we did pretty well!

Ian told JG that someone vomited over the baby chair in the disabled toilet. It was so bad that it cannot be cleaned; it will have to be replaced. College had to pay housekeeping extra to clear up the sick too.

There will be a trustees meeting, at which Welfare Rep, Vice President, Treasurer and Chairperson of the GCR will be present (as well as the President).

JG is trying to get access to the business case that went to University Council about Sheraton park. He wants to look at it to find out what was promised, and compare that to what we have actually received. Despite being an author of it, Glen is not allowed to see it. He said to JG he could show him it privately, but JG would like to be able to make it public to the University, for example at his lunch with Owen Adams on Thursday. He has spoken to the University Secretary about it.

MCR PressComm was not useful as attendance was very low.

AB asks if it would be worthwhile making a survey to find out why people are not using the SP café. MR says it would be a good idea to find out why people are not using the space, and points out that part of the reason is that it just does not look right. JG says that Glen may say it needs more art to make it a more comfortable atmosphere. He suggests an unofficial survey could be done to find out what students would want on the walls in the café. XM and JS to look into this.

There will be an SPRA Executive Committee meeting tomorrow at 19:00, which JO and JG will attend.

JG emailed Neville's Cross councillors asking about lighting on the dark paths leading to SP.

AH points out that it seems Lothbury owe College sixteen sofas, as they have not been put in the rooms that they were supposed to. He also points out there is basically not couples accommodation for next year. They are studio rooms, but not designed for couples to live in. They are talking about taking unused rooms and having turning them into study spaces for single/couple rooms.

**I. Welfare [JS]**

Alcohol awareness event has been rearranged for February time, though JS has not heard back from them with any details on why they cancelled.

JS posted on World AIDS day, and had Adrian and Maryham write an article and factsheet for the Ustinovian, which were published. Doughnuts are being sold to raise money for the National AIDS Trust.

JS has started planning a Coppafeel brunch for next semester, and got some free promotional cards from the Coppafeel campaign (a breast cancer awareness campaign).

JS has noticed a lot of people are coming down with colds/the flu, so he posted encouraging people to get in touch if they are concerned or have any questions.

CW will be bringing a box for sanitary product donations to Howlands, and is looking for a box for each of the other two sites. She has got a flyer to print, and will ask for information on it to be put in the newsletter. The campaign is from 4<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> December, and they have asked if the GCR can send a couple of photos of people donating stuff so they can create a nice post. This is organised by Durham University Labour/Feminists and the sanitary products collected will go to homeless people.

**6. AOB**

**a. Committee Board [TAB]**

*TAB to sort out the committee board (photos and new committee members).*  
Ongoing.

**b. Committee Social [TAB]**

Going to be on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December.

Alastair Stewart

GCR Secretary

04/12/2017