

Ustinov College GCR Exec Meeting Minutes



18:00pm, 26/2/19

1. Apologies: AS, MR, AMH, LN
Present: TP, AM, JO, SL, KL, VB, EJ

2. Approval of minutes from last meeting. .

Minutes from 6/2 need approval; minutes from 12/2 need approval; minutes from 19/2 need approval. ***Will be passed at a future meeting – SL to post in Google Drive.***

3. Matters arising from previous minutes.

[AP] JO to sort out drum skins. ***See Facilities report – waiting until payday to purchase skins. This should be on Thursday morning.***

[AP] AM to sort out Welfare email. ***AM going to CIS tomorrow.***

[AP] EJ and Giuseppe to look at Annual Budget and present to the Exec. ***EJ is working on the annual budget but has not yet met with Giuseppe.***

[AP] EJ to contact Finance team about the figures and possible dates for future payments (e.g. GCR levies). ***In progress.***

4. Agenda Items:

- [JO] Discussion on purchasing 8 standing lamps for the bar. College will grant us £200 to purchase lamps. IKEA standing lamps on Amazon cost £9.95 each; depending on where we want them, I suggest purchasing 8. On agreement of the lamp and number college will purchase them. ***Could probably do with some more sturdy ones so that they don't get damaged easily. Thinking of having one by the door and the rest going around the wall in the café, as this is more appealing lighting than the ceiling strip lights, which can be quite harsh on an evening. JO will meet with his Committee to get some input and see what style/price people would be satisfied with. Could also get colour-changing bulbs. Need to be robust and aesthetically appealing – JO could post a couple of different options in the Exec group to discuss.***
AP- JO to meet with Facilities Committee to discuss lamps for the bar.

- [EJ] Video Games Night: Connor is requesting around £10.50 for a Wii-HDMI adapter and chocolate prize for the Video Games Night. He already send a

suggestion (I will upload it to the group, as the Impro budget). Also, he asks if do you have any other idea of another possible prize for this competition. If so, we should add this to the budget as well. ***EJ will take care of this – he will speak to Connor soon.***

- [EJ] Impro/Panel Night: Motion to pass up to £75.49 for the Impro/Panel Night. This budget includes red noses that would be sold to the attendees, chocolate as a prize for the panel and 40 whistles (we don't need that many, but the pack price sounds reasonable. The most expensive things are the noses, they come from Comic Relief (a charity that donates the money they get from the noses) and they cost £66.99. They suggest to sell the noses for £1.25 each, making a total of £50.00 recovery (and reducing the amount spent to around £25). We can also get red paint in case we don't have any more. Any thoughts? ***The people in charge of this can make a final decision on price closer to the time. AP – TP to check with AS about our capacity/ability to spend money when it will go directly to charity. Motion to pass a budget of up to £80 for this purpose – passed unanimously.***

- [VB] A student has requested a Pilates ball for the gym (around £10-15), thoughts? ***Suggestion of at least a 65cm diameter ball – would require the space of at least a gym mat. No objections raised, and there is sufficient space in the gym – given the go-ahead.***

- [VB] I had a suggestion whether we could run swimming reimbursements by having people send us (well, me...) scans of their receipts instead of bringing them in person to make it easier for Livers Out. Any thoughts? ***VB is sending scans of the receipts to Maiden Castle anyway, so this wouldn't pose any problems on that front. Worth checking with Maiden Castle in case we need to keep the receipts, if we don't then there shouldn't be any issues with scans. No objections raised, and given the go-ahead.***

5. Officer Reports:

i. Bar Steward [AMH]

Nothing to report. ***Pizza and cocktails are selling particularly well, as are the potatoes. New food is selling well overall! EJ will arrange a time with JO to do the blackboards – possibly before the Pub Quiz on Thursday? How viable are themed cocktails, as this came up quite frequently during the Social Committee meeting? JO believes that it shouldn't be too difficult. BCM will be happening tomorrow.***

ii. Clubs & Societies [VB]

- Swimming reimbursement is becoming more and more popular: 3 people last week, this week already 2.
- Ustinov is still on the second to last place of the College Points Table and only 6 points behind Stevo who are third to last!
- Table tennis table survived last week's move well (thanks to the porter

Jonathan Brown and various members of the TT team for their help!) and I have stored the net, racket, and balls in the cupboard under the sink, following a suggestion from the porter. The community room is out of use for the art exhibition this week but from next week everybody will be able to go and play! Advertisement has been written and sent to Kimberley.

- On Sunday was the Durham vs York varsity where 29 college teams from each university competed against each other! For Ustinov, our volleyball team was set as Durham's A team. They beat York and added five important points to the total – in the end, Durham won 65:46!

- I had some issues with the Durham School because they didn't tell us that their sports hall would be out of use for a week due to exams (meaning that the hall is filled with desks and chairs), but that's sorted now and they promised to clear the hall on Friday- afternoon. Unlike the DHSG hall, the DS hall also remains useable during the Easter break. ***TP is due to go and speak to college about getting a trophy cabinet; he will be seeing them tomorrow.***

iii. Communications [KL]

Nothing to report. ***As always, anything which needs including in the newsletter can be sent to Xinxin. TP needs to make posters etc. for the Castle formal and the end of term party, so these will need promoting on Ustinov's social media in the near future.***

iv. DSU [TP]

- Voting has closed in the elections and the results were revealed last Thursday.
- We unfortunately will not be being visited by alpacas...

v. Facilities [JO]

-No updates regarding Exec and Committee stash order. ***College stash has already arrived, however. Discussion around potentially changing provider again, given the protracted length of time this order has taken. Planning to repeat college stash order a couple more times before the end of the academic year. Custom Planet have not been great and misspelt 'Ustinov' on previous stash orders, though...***

-Piano tuning update from this morning: it will cost £4k to replace the dampeners, the tuning pegs, strings and sort out the playing "action." He said tuning it would not keep it in tune for long, and we are better off getting rid of it, and putting the money we would spend on it into a decent second hand piano. He took an hour to examine it and still needs to be paid for the hour, the invoice will be sent to Joel, he said it will be under £50. ***EJ has received an invoice and it is indeed under £50.***

-Waiting until payday to buy the drum stuff.

-Have been late in emailing college about the lighting in the bar, contacted them this morning and awaiting a response.

vi. Finance [EJ]

- TreasComm happened! Low attendance from the other colleges. It seems that their treasurer job is really different to ours... The following topics were raised during the meeting:

- Nobody understands how the calculation of the composition fee works.
- All of them complained that the university doesn't make a difference between the payments done (talking about the concepts). But it seems that they receive invoices... sometimes. ***This makes it difficult to track precisely what has been paid for, and when.***
- It was addressed that all the DSO will receive a card machine to take card payments. They (the university people) want to make everything paid by card instead of cash. I asked if we are going to have one as well but not clear answer about it, possibly a no because we are not part of the system they manage.
- Colleges Finance teams are not aware of how much they spend in stuff (i.e. maintenance of the installations) and treasurers requested that to create a proper #RippedOff campaign.
- It is not clear for everybody how the Common Rooms get the money (and how much) from the bars. Also, it was raised that the University is considering taking full control of the bars.
- All the colleges/treasurers received their CR fees in different percents/dates. It's hard for them to create a budget without really knowing how many members paid or not. They don't have access to the system that says who "opted-in" or not.
- THEY RECEIVE TRAINING FROM THE UNIVERSITY FOR THEIR POSITION!!! However, they don't have a handover document and it seems that they are struggling with this. They want a centralised one that includes information from the financial side and the roll activities, but for us only the financial information is useful as we work differently to them.
- They don't have a job description. I offered to share ours.
- Nobody wants the opt-in system and seems that it's going to be the same next year. However, there is a small chance that we can request not to be part of that system and keep it as an opt-out one (because the DSU did that and it is a DSO and a registered charity). I need to contact somebody from the legal department to know more about it. Even with that, it is more than a reality that next year we won't be able to avoid the opt-in.
- Only presidents are consulted about the DSO Finance issues, and they suggest that the treasurers should be part of that as well. Laura will follow this up with the people in charge of that management.

- Everybody hates Barclays as the bank system. Other colleges with HSBC go to NCL to sort out their banking issues.
- It seems that the university wants to make a unified system where all the money from the different colleges would be together with “divisions” for each college. Nobody is happy with it as it means more bureaucracy to get funding for events/sports/etc. Also, right now they have to pass their annual budgets to the principal of their colleges.
- Some colleges have been thinking of becoming a charity to gain independence...

- Started to sort out the budget for the next meeting. Sent my comments to Alastair.

- Paid the Burns Night Formal invoice. Again, it was more than 6k but we will receive some money back from the college.

- The university paid around 10k in the past few days... without a clear concept. Possibly GCR Levies (the money is around 90% of the total we are supposed to receive). Still need to contact finance about this because we didn't receive any invoice related to that payment.

- HSBC online system will change soon. I have to keep an eye on the changes but that doesn't affect anything at all for us, as far as I am aware.

JO reminds EJ that Yan needs reimbursing – EJ will speak with him tomorrow evening and give him a reimbursement form to fill in.

Balance Brought Forward £23230.88 (19/02/2019)

Dusk Til Dawn (Karaoke) -£200.00 (21/02/2019)

Dusk Til Dawn (End of Term Party) -£300.00 (21/02/2019)

Pure Food Systems (Vending Machine Keys) -£36.00 (21/02/2019)

Durham University (Possibly Levies) £10,044 (22/02/2019)

BT Sports -£373.99 (22/02/2019)

Clossgate Radisson (Burns Night Formal) -£6093.05 (22/02/2019)

Davison Taylor (CNY Photography) -£188.50 (22/02/2019)

Tianniu Zhang (H&L Equipment) -£49.29 (24/02/2019)

Matthew Roberts (Film Night Films) -£17.00 (24/02/2019)

Matthew Roberts (New Year Celebration) -£48.50 (24/02/2019)

Balance Carried Forward £25968.55 (26/02/2019)

vii. International Student Officer [MR]

Have passed along the Castle MCR Bamburgh Trip information. ***People who are not a part of the College or the GCR can attend this trip, as it is Inter-MCR. JO notes that it may be worth checking tide times in order to ensure access, as this has been an issue in the past. AP – MR to look at tide times. Could be worth pushing this event, or possibly repeating in the past? MR happy to send out a poll to gauge interest in this and in other potential ideas for future trips, leaving the option for people to add their own suggestions for events.***

viii. Livers Out [EJ]

- Trampolining happened! We had a total of 6 people in attendance (+1 that paid by herself at the place). Got some pictures and video and will try to get the rest from the attendees. I think the system of just paying for who actually pays first is good (but my debit card doesn't think the same) because we save the issue of paying more of what we get. ***All payments were received through the office, so may be worth rethinking the sale of tickets around the town centre in future.***

- Thinking in doing a trip to Escape Rooms as the next event. Any other ideas? ***This will be limited to 6 people at a time, but based on recent turnout it is judged to be a suitable event. Worth creating a Google form to gauge interest, and if there are sufficient numbers then EJ can book 2/3/however many sessions are necessary. Could be held in the week following the end of term as the town centre might be a bit quieter? Costs roughly £10pp, so the price will be comparable to Infinite Air.***

- Possible dates for the Spoons Brunch: 16th March or 23rd March. Any thoughts? ***Could be done on the 23rd as a 'Survivor's Brunch'?***

ix. Social Secretary [TP/LN]

- Social Committee meeting happened and the action plan from that meeting can be found on the Google Drive. ***Karaoke falls on IWD (International Women's Day), so Sumien has been in touch with AM regarding this. Themed cocktails and possibly a women's 'Power Hour' with songs from female artists!***

- Laur to be given access the Social Secretary email account.

x. Steering [AS]

The final office hours inductions have been done and the new committee have been added to the rota. I have once again put in an enquiry form to the charities commission about the 'qualified' accounts but they have not gotten back to me -

if they do not by next week I will phone them. Reminder to everyone on the committee, in particular the officer trustees, that the next Trustees meeting will be in the next 2-3 weeks so make sure anything that had to be done before then is done if at all possible. ***TP notes that Committee photos will be going up soon, so if anyone would like to update their photo from those currently on the GCR website they need to send a replacement to Connor soon. AP – KL to update the photo board.***

xi. University/College [TP]

CMT

- Still no news about the BBQ, though I will be pushing for a venue as soon as possible.
- I am to speak to Emma about issues in the bar to do with power cable management.

Presidents' Forum

- Meeting was mainly focused on changes to DSOs (we are not one of them).
- It was highlighted that while the DSOs may have a conflict that does not allow them to have opt out for levies as an independent charity we should not have these issues and may be able to be opt out next year.

VC meeting

- The current chair of colleges who will be temporarily the PVC for colleges said he would like to see Common rooms take the lead on citizenship and critical thinking skills, not really an issue for us as we try and promote thought about issues and have the GCP covering the citizenship side of things.
- Accommodation costs were raised again. ***TP will be meeting Owen Adams et al. on Friday to discuss further finance issues.***
- Returner rates were raised as an issue affecting all colleges and the DSU president is to work on a paper to submit to the University exec to highlight the issues.

TP has heard back from CIS – he has received a quote for £970 to get an engineer to sort out the BT cable issue. TP will speak to college about this tomorrow, but does not believe this can be justified given the price.

xii. Welfare [AM]

I will give an update on plans for Women's Day in the meeting. The Welfare Committee are meeting on Thursday. I haven't had any luck with the Welfare email yet but will be seeing CIS tomorrow. ***As mentioned above, AM is talking to Sumien about things to do at karaoke to celebrate IWD. Happy Hour on the bar wouldn't be possible, but other options are, e.g. running a slideshow on the screens in the café throughout the day, and also fancy dress! TP requests that AM send him a link to buy latex-free condoms and any other welfare supplies which we need. Welfare lunch will probably be happening on 24th March – AM will update on this/confirm in future meetings closer to the time.***

6. AOB

N/A

Sam Littlewood

GCR Secretary

26/2/2019