

Ustinov College GCR General Meeting Minutes



7:00 p.m. 10/02/2019

1. Apologies:

Present: TP, AS, SL, KL, EJ, JO, MR, AM, VB

2. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting

Minutes from the GM held on 27/11/18: Minutes will be voted on at a future General Meeting in order to give anyone who would like to read them some time.

a. Issues Arising from Last Minutes

i. Results of Elections Following Last Meeting

Following the last General Meeting, the roles listed below were filled:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Election Officer: | Zhongyu (Ingrid) Tong |
| Female Sports Representative: | Kristine Kivle |
| Student Trustee: | Jamie Graham |
| Video Master: | Matthew Roberts |
| Dryburn Representative: | Xiaoxiao Ma |
| Press Secretary: | Xinxin Yan |
| Web Master: | Connor Armstrong |

ii. Q: In the minutes of the previous Treasurer's report there was some confusion over how the money in the account compared to the budget?

A: EJ will look into this.

3. Reports from Officers [to be held during the meeting from]:

a. President [TP]

The college has finally gotten a printing room and a project room, which we're pushing to get advertised soon. We can now print in college, so hopefully the printer will get lots of use. It is located in Room 005 in Neville's House. It is a CIS network printer, and we should be getting two laptops in there soon. In other news, we've been searching for a venue for the Summer BBQ for a while, and we should be getting final information in the coming weeks so that we can begin planning for it properly. We have a range of backup venues, so the event will run regardless! I've also been to JCR and MCR Presidents' meetings, getting information about open day funds, and learning about the situation with porters and mental health provisions at other colleges. We've held a Trustees meeting since the last GM; the clarification of fine details in our constitution and standing orders agreed there can be found online, but feel free to ask us any questions in person. The constitutional issue surrounding College Council is an ongoing problem, but our trustees are confident that this can be sorted out. We've also

been distributing GCR membership cards, so if you haven't already got one then come along to the GCR office during office hours and we'll hand them out. Once they are widely distributed we'll start using them to check your identity when individuals are using GCR facilities, and, potentially, using them to vote with in future GMs! That's pretty much it.

Q: Has whatever is replacing college council met yet? Does it exist?

A: I'm not 100% sure yet, but this is something which I will clarify. We're not the only college struggling with this reshuffle and the University's redistribution of power, so hopefully I'll have more information on this point for the next GM.

Q: How are we preventing GCR membership cards from being shared, or used fraudulently?

A: Your name/student number should be written on the back, so we can cross-reference details and clarify the user's identity if necessary.

Q: Has there been any movement towards extending the bar license?

A: We've pushed for this change earlier in the year, but Ian was of the opinion that adding something to the license every year could aggravate the public. I'm unsure if it would actually pass if we kept pushing for more late openings...

b. Treasurer [E]

Hello everyone! I have a couple of things to report. I have some figures from the last GM: we spent £7378 on the induction formal in December, but the actual expenditure will be lower than this as college will cover some of the cost. We are still planning on how to make GCR cards more useful for everyone, and the cards cost £294. I will discuss this later, but I have also paid CCI Alphatrak for the installation of the BT dish. I made a payment of £531 to Adam the trustee for Sunderland football. University payments of £4704 came in on 13th November, and the same amount again on 1st February, but we have a problem with that as they didn't clarify via email what this payment was, but we believe it to be the composition fee. GCR levies still need to be paid, but they will likely be paid in June. I will clarify this with college. The BT dish should be sorted by this coming Monday, i.e. tomorrow. These are our major recent expenditures. We are waiting for college to get back to us regarding formal payments, so the expenditure for these is not currently known. We will be working on a new budget prior to the next GM. In the current account we have £23426.78, in the saving account we have £48299.54. That's it!

Q: Is there a net figure of income minus expenditure?

A: This number is currently missing given the missing formal payments, but we have a current estimate.

Q: How will you move money if expenditure changes?

A: We should be getting a significant amount of money back from coaches, transition fund etc., so we'll see.

Q: I don't see why we're paying half and half, as the BT dish benefits the bar. We had it at Howlands, so technically this should be a transition fund expense. This seems unreasonable!

A: I'll be investigating that, and will consult college on this matter.

Q: Would it be possible to have summary financial figures in the agenda at future GMs?

A: Yes, of course!

Q: A number of students have asked about having an online payment system, so is it possible for us to set this up?

A: We can't set this up because of the type of bank account we have. Apologies!

c. Vice President [JO]

Hi guys. We've been working on 4 main things since the last GM. We've fixed instruments in the Observatory, and we're tailoring the vending machine stock according to what sells best. A stash order and portal have been set up, and we have more karaokes and Ustinov Lives coming up! The pool tables are also going to be redone, as indicated in the upcoming agenda item.

Q: Why can't we get Internet on the machines in the gym?

A: [VB] College have stated that they have chased this up repeatedly but we haven't made any progress. It could be raised with other authorities within the university given the effective waste of money on machines with internet capabilities.

d. Bar Steward [AMH]

Hello, we had a bar meeting two weeks ago. We now have prosecco on the bar!

Q: When will the bar be getting a bell?

A: Trudie and Ian have said they're looking for one, so we'll update you on any progress they make!

Q: Is it possible to push hospitality to do more advertising and make opening hours more clear? I'm not sure when the bar is open or closed, given that the end of trialling early opening hours was not promoted.

A: We're trying, but we cannot force them beyond the progress they have currently made.

Q: Any updates on the mocktails and cocktails list which we are meant to have on the bar?

A: This is being made on the bar and will be published soon!

e. Clubs and Societies Officer [VB]

Unfortunately, we are back at the bottom of the college points table, but volleyball is doing well, having won every match so far! We also had a match against the only other undefeated team in the league this morning and we won! Most teams will have matches up until the Easter break. There is going to be an inter-collegiate running competition, so it would be nice to have a running club within college prior to this. Any interested parties should contact me! After the Easter break we will have our awards formal, with prizes for teams and societies; this is going to be in the business school in May. On Sunday 9th June we have the festival of sports, which will happen at Maiden Castle, with entertainment, food stands and beer tents. Things have been going well with the gym so far, we've had a few complaints regarding usage, but these are being

addressed. I'm keeping the sports blog going and hope to boost the number of people reading it!

Q: For the awards formal, could we get clarification of the rules surrounding the process of awarding awards?

A: Definitely, we will be communicating this more clearly.

Q: Do we have any updates on the swimming pool?

A: We do have an update! Quentin has gotten back to me, having reached an agreement with DGS, but we can't use their pool until the new academic year. However, money has been put aside for us to use Freeman's Quay, so students can swim there and then claim the money back from Quentin. This hasn't been communicated until recently, so we're going to suggest improvements to the suggested system, e.g. leaving receipts with the GCR rather than having to take them to Maiden Castle individually. It isn't ideal, but it's better than nothing!

f. Communications Officer [KL]

We have been updating various social media accounts and doing our best to get all Ustinovians involved. Our Instagram is particularly active, so we will be placing particular emphasis on this in the future. We've had some complaints about the times at which the newsletter has been emailed, so we apologise for this and it won't happen again.

Q: Could we have a list of dates of upcoming events online?

A: [TP] We do have a list of dates, I'm waiting for confirmation on a few events, and then I'll make a list in the same fashion as last year's and upload it.

g. DSU Liaison Officer [TP]

[TP] I've been covering this role. Alex Hampton attended the last assembly on our behalf and we are grateful for this. We're trying to get PGR postgraduate printing for free, but gaining the same status for PGT postgraduates may prove more difficult. We need anecdotal stories about printing difficulties to support our case, so if you have had any issues with printing please let me know. There should be a survey going out at some point in the future, so you can also respond to this. We've also been pushing for better pay for any postgraduates who undertake teaching responsibilities.

h. International Officer [MR]

I organised a walk over the Christmas break with a blue badge tour guide, as we've used them in the past for Newcastle walking tours. The turnout was 18 people, which was good, and we had overwhelmingly positive feedback and people asking if this would be a recurring event at different points throughout the year. I've collated these results and can pass them onto my successor as International Officer next year. It's important to keep gauging which events people enjoy and which events people would like to see again in the future. Our next trip will be to Beamish, on this upcoming Saturday, costing £2 for GCR members and £6 for non-GCR members. I hope to run a second Beamish trip nearer to the summer break to coincide with a special art exhibition. It's a great way to engage with and experience the history of the North East. There are about 10 tickets left so get one as soon as possible if you want to attend! Unlike the previous trip, we probably

won't be able to add on a second coach, unfortunately. The next major trip will probably be to Lindisfarne and Bamburgh Castle, but prior to that I'll be sending out a survey to gauge interest and estimate coach provisions. Hopefully this will be at the beginning of the Easter vacation, prior to the Castle formal.

i. Livers Out Representative []

[TP] Due to not having a dedicated Livers Out Representative, we've been focusing a lot on college affairs, and we apologise for this. However we've organised a visit to Infinite Air trampolining at the end of February (on the 23rd) and will also hopefully be running Livers Out drinks soon. We hope once this position is filled the provision of events will improve. MRs walking tour was 50/50 livers in and out, and I know that livers out really enjoyed having an event which was accessible from the middle of town.

j. Social Secretary [TP/TZ]

KL and TZ have been invaluable in helping with CNY provisions and preparations, as has AS for Burns night. We currently have only two upcoming formals, which are the Awards formal and the Castle formal. We'll start advertising the latter over the coming weeks. We have a fairly busy social calendar, including a karaoke towards the end of the term. The BBQ/Summer Ball will be on 6th June, and we're currently working on preparations/venues for this, as previously mentioned. The list of upcoming events will be published soon, so that people can prepare for them and add them to their calendars.

k. Welfare Officer [AM]

We've got a couple of events in the pipeline, mostly towards the end of February/the beginning of March. Organising a dog day probably isn't realistic, but getting a petting zoo should be possible. We're also going to repeat the welfare lunch to coincide with this. We're making a series of posters with easily digestible information, e.g. where to get certain contraceptives, and these will be placed in the bathrooms and on the GCR office door. There are some ongoing issues with the welfare email at the moment, so please contact me on Facebook for the time being. We're still looking for a Male Welfare Representative, so if you're interested in running for this role then please get in touch with me!

Q: [For AS] I've recently tried to look for Exec minutes online and not been able to find them. When can I see them?

A: They'll be up on the website soon!

4. Agenda Items

a. Pool Table Budget

Motion to pass a budget of up to £516 for pool table re-cloth and cushion replacement (£155 for each table cloth, £120 for the new cushions for the match table, +V.A.T). **Typically re-clothed twice a year, and based on advice we're also replacing the cushions for the match table. This is being voted on because it will cost in excess of £500 and must therefore be passed at a GM. The pool tables themselves should cover much of the cost of this.**

Proposer: Tom Pitts

Seconded: Eduardo Joel Lopez Torres

Q: I believed that re-clothing tended to happen once a year?

A: The previous year they have been re-clothed twice, and this will be the last one of this academic year.

Motion to pass a budget of up to £516 for the purpose stated above – 32 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The motion is therefore passed.

Q: It would be good to have a financial model for the pool tables, to look at how much the tables take on average and how much the tables would cost in the long term. You could ask the pool team to contribute some money, rather than seeing this as an exclusively Facilities matter?

A: The pool tables are used by more than just the pool team, but with regard to the financial models this is certainly possible and we will look into this.

b. Alumni Trustee

i. Proposal

The GCR shall appoint Thom Addinall-Biddulph as Alumni Trustee.

Proposer: Tom Pitts

Seconder: Matthew Roberts

ii. Supporting Information

During his time as part of Ustinov College, Thom has contributed a huge amount to the strengthening of the College 'community'. He has held positions on the GCR for seven years, including Chairperson last year meaning he has already sat on the Trustees Committee. Due to the immense contributions Thom made during this many years at Ustinov, he was given an Honorary Lifetime Membership of Ustinov GCR at the AGM in June (and shares this honour with both of our other Alumni Trustees). He is a fountain of knowledge regarding the GCR and its constitution, and therefore his experience will make him a very worthwhile member of the Trustees. Furthermore, whilst he lives in London currently, his job still brings him up to the North East relatively often, so he would be somewhat 'present' around Durham/Ustinov College.

The Trustees voted unanimously to approve him for the role of Alumni Trustee, and now it must be voted on at this General Meeting.

iii. Questions

N/A

iv. Vote

Motion to appoint Thom Addinall-Biddulph as Alumni Trustee – 27 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions. The motion is therefore passed.

5. Hustings

a. Election Officer

Candidate: Song Yao

Manifesto: *This is Song Yao. I am a postgraduate student living in Ustinov College and studying in business school. I am looking forward to joining the GCR Committee because first, I'm interested in planning and holding various events. Second, this term I have lots of spare time to work for other students. Third, I would like to have different experiences in my spare time. I would be conscientious and diligent to take the responsibility of mine if I was elected.*

Hust: Hello everyone, I'm a postgraduate student at Ustinov, studying management. I'd like to join the Committee because I have a friend currently working on the Committee, and seeing her working on GCR events has shown me how interesting work on the GCR can be. I want to help other students get involved, and elections are very important in this process. I'm a conscientious and easy-going person, and I'd love to join the Committee!

Questions:

Q: Would you consider implementing a two-tier voting process, whereby knowledgeable persons on an issue would vote first, and the vote would be opened up afterwards?

A: **[AS]** Each member of the GCR has an equal vote, so according to the Constitution each member has parity of esteem in voting. This question will be addressed later, as it is not directly relevant to the hustings for this role.

Addressed below due to lack of relevance to hustings – see AOB.

Q: As a member of the GCR Committee you would be expected to do office hours, assist AS in running elections, and generally help out. Would you be willing to do this?

A: Yes!

Q: We once had a situation where the online voting system went down, and lots of paper ballots had to be counted by hand. If this situation happened again, would you be willing to help out?

A: Yes, absolutely.

b. Livers Out Representative

Candidate: Yasmine Kumordzi

Manifesto: *Hello. I am Yasmine a Biochemistry PhD student and running for Livers out representative. I am running for this position as I have a good understanding of people living outside the college/ city centre. I would like to be able to propose ideas to include more livers out and be able to represent them within the GCR.*

As a newbie, I have only been a part of Ustinov college for a few months however choosing to live in the depths of Gilesgate Moor and having a busy schedule has made me feel slightly outside of the Ustinov community. Having lived outside of my college in my former postgraduate year in Lancaster and having been part of the GCR there, I hope I can bring together ideas to help include more livers out into college events as well as bringing their views/problems to the GCR.

Hust: N/A

Questions: N/A

c. Social Secretary

Candidate: Laurentiu Nita

Manifesto: *I'm here for another 3 years doing PhD in Quantum Physics. Before that I was Business Leader for IBM Europe, owning some projects related to automation :)*

I'm really good (I'm organic and 100% satisfaction guaranteed) with organizing things and solving problems, even got some awards for that.

I'm all about improving social life for Ustinovians!

Hust: Hi guys, I'd like to introduce myself a bit. I've been in corporate work for several years and have achieved tremendous success in this area. It's important to provide opportunities for everyone in college to have fun, so I want to join the GCR after reviewing how things work, and see how I can make things like formals more entertaining. If you vote for me I'm going to try and change some things and help Ustinovians have fun!

Candidate: Tianniu Zhang

Manifesto: *I have recently been in charge as deputy social secretary, and helping in decorating planning various activities such like Christmas and CNY. Although I am still acting like a fresher in the team, with kinds of experiences and studying from GCR members, I think I will work well in the future.*

Hust: Hi guys, I'm currently the interim social secretary, so I am experienced in passing opinions from students onto the GCR. I've been involved in organising events for CNY, so I have experience. I hope to be able to contribute more to the role of social secretary in the future, thank you!

Questions:

Q: Are you willing to come to the weekly meetings every Tuesday, particularly topics on your position?

Tianniu: Yes, I've already begun doing this and enjoy attending the meetings. I also have my office hours, so I look forward to working with Ustinovians in this role.

Laurentiu: I have plenty of time to attend these meetings, so no problem!

Q: Being Social Secretary means chairing the Social Committee, which contains a lot of committee members in a variety of roles, so you need to coordinate a range of events with them. Would you be able to do that?

Laurentiu: Yes, I hope we can work as a team and achieve something together which will last in the future.

Tianniu: I've already attended Social Committee meetings and know members quite well, so yes, of course!

Q: You have a high degree of freedom to carry out your own social events and construct your own social calendar. If you had £5000 to create a brand-new event, what would you create?

Tianniu: I would talk with companies to see what events they would be able to help with, and I would also consult the Executive Committee.

Laurentiu: I would pay off fees on the bar and have a blind dating festival!

Q: How would you tailor events to Ustinov's large demographic of international students?

Laurentiu: It's important to engage with all nationalities in Ustinov in order to get a real feel for the community and the best ways in which to represent them and cater to them via social events. It's important to know exact numbers!

Tianniu: I'm already advertising some activities through WeChat and have started advertising some events through Facebook. I'm currently working on Twitter, so I hope to use social media to engage with the full remit of students.

d. Male Welfare Officer

Candidate: Eduardo Joel López Torres

Hust: I know a lot of the processes in which the Committee are involved from being on the Executive Committee, and I am aware of a lot of the problems facing men from a variety of backgrounds. It's important to have someone who can relate to and represent problems from this varied range of backgrounds, and I also have some Nightline training too. Furthermore, I promise to keep the condoms in the toilets stocked up!

Q: Do you think there is anything in particular which is lacking in our GCR Welfare provision?

A: We need to advertise our services better, and promote GUM services as not many people are aware of the sexual health services currently available in Durham.

Q: Male mental health awareness is not talked about enough in day-to-day life, so how would you make sure that you were approachable and visible within Ustinov?

A: It's crucial to communicate on issues like this, so I'd be happy to meet with individuals in a group or one-on-one where people can discuss their issues and create a sense of community in the fight against male mental health difficulties.

By some point this evening the elections will be up online, so that votes can be cast for the candidates for all of these positions. The successful candidates will be declared on Thursday evening.

6. AOB

Suggestion of a two-tier voting system, whereby the Executive Committee will vote first, and everyone else votes afterwards. It is noted that this is directly against our Constitution ('Every member shall have one vote') so would not be practicable, and wouldn't make a difference as the total number of votes would have to be taken. Which votes/elections would this apply to? In GM exec members have the opportunity to express their opinions on decisions, and ideally votes should be made based on opinion, rather than being guided by the votes of others. It is agreed that this is something which can be discussed in Exec meetings, as it cannot be decided immediately within this meeting. It is noted that this needs to be checked, carefully, with the Constitution, so this could be brought forward as a formal suggestion at the next GM, as it is not suitable to be settled within the remit of AOB.

Jamie notes that he would be happy to bear the brunt of the work for setting up a Ustinov Running Team, so invites anyone interested to speak with him on this matter.

Sam Littlewood

GCR Secretary

10/2/2019