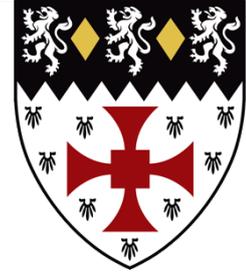


# Ustinov College GCR Exec Meeting

## MINUTES



18:30 pm, 18/03/20, meeting using Microsoft Teams

1. **Apologies: AL, ML, SK**
2. **Approval of minutes from last meeting.**
  - a. Approval of minutes from the 11/03/20 – *passed on a general aye*
3. **Matters arising from previous minutes.**
  - a. CA to look at a list of local places to visit on the website. *Ongoing*  
CA to look into getting an air hockey table. *Ongoing*  
CA/DM to follow up on catering for the BBQ. *Ongoing*  
CA to advertise the board game amnesty. *Ongoing*
  - b. ML to share the PS4 in the newsletter. *Ongoing*
  - c. AH to find out the previous college cocktail's ingredients. *Ongoing*
  - d. RR to get the games society to have a games night in the bar. *Ongoing*  
RR to look into getting tokens for swimming at Freemans Quay. *Ongoing*
  - e. SH/BR to arrange a welfare drop-in session for worried students. *Done – we had two over the weekend and nobody came but it is a good idea to still have them.*

*All delayed for the foreseeable future due to Covid-19.*
4. **Agenda Items:**
  - a. **Covid-19 [AH]**

What are we going to do now other than hunker down and try and weather out the storm? Specifically in regards to the BBQ.

*For the time being we think it is a good idea to keep the physical bar space open. If we emphasise to students to keep their distance from each other then we can keep the space open. We should keep it open while we can as it may be out of our hands by Friday. People are still going to meet until there is a lockdown and it is better to meet in the bar, that can be cleaned, than in rooms.*
  - b. **GM on Sunday [AH]**

We will be doing the GM on Microsoft teams. Any logistical issues we need to consider? *The settings can be changed to make the team public. There is currently no option to add a mass group of people by email. Alex will also email Sarah to see if she can still do the question and answer session.*

AP: CA/AH to talk to CIS about how this will work.

**c. Summer Ball planning [CA] – AB (Ball Secretary) also present**

Further to our discussion last week, it looks as though even if the event in June is fine to go ahead, ticket sales will likely occur whilst virus fears and social distancing are still in full swing. With this in mind, perhaps we should think about alternatives?

1. When are the relevant deadlines from Ramside?
2. What can we afford to do given different numbers of ticket sales?
3. Could we use the event booking to do something a little different if the event goes ahead but it is being plugged whilst there is all this uncertainty?

As an aside, I feel if we're continuing to go ahead with the event then Amy's planning will need some major adjustments to try and keep financial exposure as low as possible.

*Most things we would like to book probably aren't taking bookings now anyway.*

*[AB] I was in contact with Already Sorted for the decorations but haven't heard back yet. James has put together a sheet about Ents pricing - £1525. I can ring them and ask about the Covid-19 situation.*

*[VB] We pay the venue for the night and the DJ.*

*[DM] There will be a lot of people leaving college and not returning so we may not sell tickets.*

*[AB] Would it be worth trying to engage through social media to ask if they would be interested in the Ball?*

*Probably not right now with the current situation. The general consensus is that cancelling the Ball is premature. We could invite postgrads from other colleges too as most of their balls will possibly be cancelled. However, last year we still didn't sell out the Ball despite advertising to other colleges.*

*Amy can call Ramside and Dusk Til Dawn to see what the possibilities are, as they will probably be receiving a lot of cancellations in the coming weeks. We could potentially still have an event at Ramside, but not necessarily with the sit-down meal, e.g. a garden party. The ticket cost will depend entirely on what we spend for the event. The University has said we can't book or pay for anything at the moment. It is quite possible that a lot of this will be out of our hands and decided by the University. We will probably have to wait until we hear more from the University/government.*

**d. BBQ Budget [CA]**

I am going to assume for now that we will be able to put on some kind of Summer BBQ. We have until next Thursday to confirm if we want the quoted tech services. There is more uncertainty here than 1 week ago. This service is very important to us being able to run anything remotely like past BBQs (unless the scale is dramatically reduced, we cannot do this ourselves).

With this in mind I have prepared a budget for the exec to review before it is posted for the GM. More details TBC... I'm also aiming to show it to Vera before exec.

*What are we trying to pass at the GM if we are optimistic in going ahead with the planning of the BBQ? We have already passed a budget of £8000.*

*Connor will ask Alastair to investigate what we would have to pay if the event is cancelled and if we would get a refund. The figure we would have to pay by the 26<sup>th</sup> is the £1500 for the tech services. We can vote next week at exec before we have to say yes or no to the company, as long as we have something to update people at the GM. This £1500 could technically come out of the budget already passed so we wouldn't necessarily have to put it to a GM. We should generally wait as long as*

*possible before paying for anything. It may be possible to push back the deadline for paying for the tech services and we could have a GM closer to the time. The budget may also depend on the Ball if we make a loss, or also if the Ball doesn't go ahead then we would have more flexibility with the BBQ. We will vote on this when we have more information from the University.*

**e. Social activities despite social distancing [CA]**

Since it now looks like we're going to be in this for a little while, I think it's worth thinking about what sort of things we can run for people whilst taking appropriate precautions. I play online computer games and interact with distant friends... this has got me thinking about ways to try and engage people whilst remaining physically separated. I see a few options here:

- Run usual events but using Teams/ Discord etc: If people were interested then this would perhaps work well for the pub quiz (we're already hoping it'll work for a GM). Prizes are a little harder... but if the aim is engagement and breaking up the tedium of staying mostly home then I feel it's worth a try. *Alex Blair is looking into this. This will probably be better once Zoom is in place and we can look at making questions that are harder to Google. Connor can set up Discord to trial this.*

**AP: CA to set up Discord.**

- Set up a Ustinov chat server: No idea if this is likely to pick up much traction but for people that regularly hang out in the bar, a voice chat (eg discord) that they can sit in whilst idly doing other stuff might be of interest. This is something that could 'die' soon after we introduce it but again it might be worth a try.

- New events that don't require physical attendance: The obvious one here is to have some kind of LAN party (although that might just be me). What we'd play is unclear to me - something easy to learn, low system requirements and free. This idea could also be extended to some board games or variants - there are board games that either have online versions or you can have a person acting as a game master. Actual DnD would also work here although these are less easy to scale. I've no idea how viable these ideas are but faced with weeks/ months of relative isolation, people might be grateful for something different.

*We could have a movie night using Netflix Party for everyone to watch together.*

**f. Dusk Til Dawn payment**

I received an email about paying Dusk til Dawn £500 for the end of term party that has been cancelled. They did seem quite desperate for the payment to be made, presumably as there is a risk of their business going under. However, if we do pay the money then we cannot guarantee we will get a refund. *Pay £500, knowing that the event will be cancelled – this was put to a vote and the motion failed [7 against].*

**5. Officer Reports:**

**a. Bar [AL]**

*The bar is now shut.*

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

There is not much to report. Team Durham has officially put all college sports on hold for the week. They are also de facto cancelled for the foreseeable future as Maiden Castle, and both Schools have now closed their sports facilities — although, technically, outdoors training is not currently banned, we do not encourage it for obvious reasons. Everything else is put on hold until this is resolved.

**c. Communications [ML]**

*We have kept students informed and it is even more important in the coming days to keep up with newsletters. We are going to send out bite size chunks of a wellbeing website to help with mental health during self isolation. Diana has been checking social media, Whatsapp conversation etc. to try and stop people panicking as much as possible.*

**d. DSU [AH]**

Still no election results. I've written a 5-page document on this whole election mess, which will be sent round college. As for next steps, we're in quite a difficult situation. I don't think that we should devolve from the DSU at the moment. Several colleges have debated this, with some (such as Collingwood) deciding not to. That said I'm not exactly sure how we support the DSU moving forwards at this point. *The mediation meeting on Friday has been cancelled. We need to make sure that people do not forget about this in the future due to the current situation, and hopefully a new DSU rep can take on this responsibility.*

**e. Facilities [CA]**

I made a sign for the media cabinet but it seems all of this kind of stuff just got far less important. I've been taking care to keep the GCR office clear of clutter that can go into other storage. That said, I think we should limit use of the storage in people's flats. Whilst the risk of transmission is rather low, it seems a sensible thing to avoid. Planting has begun on the allotment. Otherwise my time recently has been spent looking over BBQ prep (see agenda point).

The other thing that has so far been overlooked is the Observatory. I haven't received any recent booking requests but we need to decide if we should continue allowing use of the space. If we're not closing the physical bar space then I feel allowing people to use the music and fisher rooms is still fine.... opinions?  
*Setting up an online server for Ustinov will take priority. The Observatory is now closed. The wipes for the gym cannot be ordered currently, but no one is allowed in the gym anyway. The bar physical space is currently open, but this may change.*

**f. Finance [VB]**

*No payments have been made. The refunds for the Castle formal in person have been done, but FIXR are yet to make the online refunds but will be done soon.*

**g. International Officer [SH]**

Nothing to report.

**h. Livers Out Rep [SK]**

Nothing to report.

**i. Social [JI]**

Nothing to report.

**j. Steering [AH]**

I'm mostly focusing on the GM for Sunday, and how it will work online-only. I'll email more information to students, especially asking for questions, after we have seen how Wednesday's Exec works. *Alex will email information to students tomorrow about how to vote in the meeting and how everything will work.*

**k. Welfare [BR]**

We held drop-ins for students on Friday and Sunday so that they could get any questions they have about the current situation answered or at least get signposted to the correct place. Nobody came! I will advertise my office hours on Thursday (if we are still doing them) as a welfare drop in. I will also be writing emails/Facebook posts about self care while isolating every couple of days to help keep spirits up and ensure everyone knows where they can get the mental health help they need. Thanks to Rayan for his excellent webpage with similar resources. Jess is still looking into dropping donations off at the shelter. We have had an increase in people donating kitchen wear and other things as they are leaving early to go home and I know these will be greatly appreciated by the shelter.

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

**College matters:**

During the week, after several meetings with College, we have decided to cancel all our events, including our weekly events. The gym has been also been closed following advice from the University.

**Exec matters:**

At the meeting with Quentin to discuss the updated version of the MoA, we came to the conclusion that the version presented to us has to change completely since it mostly goes against our Constitution. Quentin has agreed to take a look and try to come back with a new version that would be suited for our situation, as we are a postgrad-only College.

6. AOB

Rebecca Salthouse

GCR Secretary

18/03/2020