



Ustinov College GCR Exec Meeting

Minutes

6:00 pm, 14/12/20

Action Points From Minutes – red is new from today's meeting.

CA to extend last few email accounts

CA to contact someone to fix the vending machine

CA to find out about the updates to green move-in sale, and update details about facilities at SP for handbook

CA to organise an online office hours rota as the new committee comes in

DM to check with university and college about the consequences of purchasing drug testing kits

JB to recontact women's refuge regarding donations

LC to make a post advertising the Culture Commission survey

LC to make a celebratory post on Christmas etc

VV to email Ustinov finance regarding the reimbursements (allotment £8k and transition fund) and about the levy incomes

1. Apologies:

Present: *BD, DM, CA, JB, CV, MZ, VV, FD, SG, LC*

2. Approval of minutes from last meeting.

- a. Approval of minutes from 07/12/2020 – *passed on general aye*

3. Matters arising from previous minutes.

- a. CA to extend last few email accounts *ongoing*
- b. CA to contact someone to fix the vending machine *ongoing*
- c. CA to find out about the updates to green move-in sale, and update details about facilities at SP for handbook *ongoing*
- d. CA to organise an online office hours rota as the new committee comes in *ongoing*
- e. DM to check with university and college about the consequences of purchasing drug testing kits *ongoing*
- f. DM to give the pool table invoices to college/Ian *done*
- g. All to look into online events theatre shows available to stream *done*
- h. FD and JB to follow up on car harassment reports in the Viaduct/Claypath for livers out *done*
- i. JB to recontact women's refuge regarding donations *ongoing – contacted, will sort out when back in Durham*
- j. LC to make a post advertising the Culture Commission survey. *Ongoing – sent one but need one more*
- k. VV to email Ustinov finance regarding the reimbursements (allotment £8k and transition fund) and about the levy incomes *ongoing (waiting for confirmation)*

4. Agenda Items:

a. [DM] Pass £57 to buy 36 Christmas Crackers

For the Xmas event would be good to give away a gift for those who attend as a token of appreciation from the GCR, every year we try to give away crackers. These would be bought in Amazon and are "YöL 12 Luxury Christmas Crackers Snowflake Eco-Friendly Recyclable Plastic-Free Red Natural Nordic", they seem good and each cracker includes a hat, motto, snap and a gift. For those who are not used, can be stored for next year.

This covers the number of students that we can fit in the bar.

Vote: passes with all in favour.

b. [SG] Pass £72.22 for Christmas Catering Events

- Wine and Mince Pies Night

- This is a sit down event in the bar for those staying in college. It will be a bottle of wine/soft drinks per table and a plate of mince pies. The breakdown includes:

- 7 x £6 bottles of wine = £42

- 6 x 87p 6 pack of mince pies = £5.22

- Total = £47.22

- Soft drinks are covered by the sparkling water cans, juice boxes and schloer we have in the GCR Office.

- Movie Marathons every Friday and Sunday

We will be having two themed movie marathons a week for the 4 weeks of the calendar. It would be good to provide some snacks to draw people down to the bar.

£25 to go on cinema snacks (Popcorn, sweets etc)

Wine and cheese initial thought, but cheese doesn't keep well. Better for storage etc. Will be household events, separate tables etc.

Comparing to the events budget; fits in fine.

Round up for price fluctuations to £25+50 = £75

Vote to pass £75 – passes with all in favour.

c. [DM] Covering President on-site calls

- In case of emergency College has asked me to have someone on-site for student support as I won't be here from 20th December to 9th January. I will be available online, but this is for any issue that has to be sorted in person. Normally the VP would cover the President, but we don't have a VP.

Typically not always VP, but just happens to be whoever is in Durham, usually ISO.

Since CV is staying most of the days during the holiday. As long as DM is still accessible online, then CV is happy to be on-call.

JB is back in Durham towards 29th/30th Dec – happy to share.

d. [DM] Welfare contact directory while Xmas break

- Since most of us we won't be here and with students staying in College while we continue with the COVID-19 situation, we should offer a list of contact details if we are available, in order for students to get support. Either online or in person.

Just email; no mobile numbers. But good to have a poster in Neville/Sheraton House, or send via email to inform students.

Emails to be put down – Chair for booking Netflix etc, Welfare for general support/social contact (also in person if needed), ISO available virtually for international issues and student welfare, FD for welfare.

Of course, relevant issues will be passed on if necessary.

e. [DM] Add Tier 3 for next term

- Plans from University include to have open the gyms next term despite on which Tier we will be and grant access to LOs. The system will continue as it is now with a change on the first session on Mondays (see facilities report for more details), with gym and observatory open, we could offer the Tier 3 membership, if we want to do so we will need a system to collect that money.

University has decided what plans they want for next time – formals with social distancing using households, and LOs to formals. Also gyms will be openable, but bars will be reviewed later (see DM report). Some other colleges may be openable if they can give food but our café is shut this year. If we continue opening the gym, with tier 3, will need to work out a system to implement this.

Based on GM at the start of the year when tier system was created, the gym was a big point of the tier 3. However, people will be restricted in their access with only a few slots per week.

Gym membership and tier 3 are separate; not enough benefit to justify. Also not enough difference between the two. We can readjust prices, but we only have two terms left. LOs will be allowed to enter college site, but bar is still questionable.

With using the gym, we will need to maintain the gym equipment; we would financially need some money for this. We could do tier 3 with different prices? Is it possible to have a membership which has different slots available, i.e. pay more to get more access? Since slots are per household, this seems difficult.

Current idea was if a Tier 2 member wanted to upgrade, it would only be a £20 upgrade. We can adjust this price, but also try and give them value with discounts on the formal etc. Gym membership price is flexibly changed.

Tier 3 may not be justified in SOs. Is this government approved? Probably not if T3. What if we don't have tier 3, but a system for the gym which social distances etc.

I.e. if they're already tier 2, then have a discount etc. Can do it with sessions. If we're charging for the gym, then only people who pay can attend; drop in numbers. Will take more organisation, but possible to allow more people.

How will this work? Say household of 5, but only 1 wants membership.

Only need to check that a) people have paid membership and b) people who are in the gym are from the same household.

What's the latest point that we can open tier 3? If we have to wait for ages, then we probably won't be able to open it.

Good approach – offer a cheap gym membership with discounts to currently existing Tier 2 members.

Vote: to open up tier 3 membership in January. Fails to pass with 0 votes in favour, all against.

We should still open up membership for gym at a price. Need to think about pricing and how it will be sold.

Vote: £5 for T2 members and £10 for non-GCR members. Passes with all in favour.

In person might be common, but not realistic to sell all in person. Might cost more for students, but can buy online with e.g. Fixr or other services etc (gives a list to Victoria). Some small fees on this.

Direct bank transfer is an idea; raised before but never gone through.

If they're in person using the gym, then can focus on in-payment payments. How safe is the cash handling? How often would we open the office to sell payments?

Who is to be in charge of the money handling?

If it was usual office hours, then will be normal office hours time (6-8pm).

Gym opens on the 7th January when term starts on 11th. We should have it sorted so it can be advertised before next exec meeting on the 4th Jan. Can look at selling

things in person – i.e. a booking system to get a timeslot to turn up.

Uni system? Won't be ready in term.

Will need to be thought about over the hols about logistics, advertising and planning, but doesn't need to be defined now. If this changes dramatically, then we can readjust later.

We will need to adjust the budgets since now have less income, but can readjust ticket prices for formals etc.

For LOs, can they enter with people from their flat/house? Will rely on their word – uni won't ask for papers or proof etc. However, they wanted proof during lockdown for booking Maiden castle, but will be checked with CMT.

5. Officer Reports:

a. Bar [-]

- Bar Structure report, at Ustinov we don't have a bar sabbatical, we do have a staff of College who is in charge of doing the rotas and buying the stock. Our bar staff has 2 levels, team leaders and normal bar staff. In normal circumstances we will have at least 1 team leader and 1 normal. However, at the moment, we have just one bar staff either a team leader or normal, to supervise our events. Also, this academic year, our cafe has been closed and the bar opening times change to just Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.

For next term when bar is not open; will common room be open where people can take their own drinks? No. Like as it is now; GCR events allowed to have drinks etc, but not otherwise. This is of course government tier dependent.

b. Clubs & Societies [CV]

- Nothing to report other than gym reopening.

We are going to start a black-list of students, where students have been sent warnings, e.g. moving weights out of black floor area etc.

c. Communications [LC]

- GCR newsletter edition 8 - included LFT advertisement and relevant social events for the coming week

- Social events for the week advertised through WhatsApp and Facebook group

- Post made regarding access to the observatory for Sunday

A few issues with the booking services found, for both access and booking for events. DM will be updating this over the Christmas holidays.

Are we going to send out a newsletter this week? Yes; calendar for events and a sketch of the gym membership etc.

[AP]: LC to make a celebratory post on Christmas etc. Can schedule posts for this.

d. DSU [-] (DM)

- DSU is working to put together a 'who's who' guide across the University for Student Leaders to use to better communicate.

- On the Democracy Review, Ustinov college has 10 submissions so far. The deadline is Monday 14th and I had posted again the information for students.

- The DSU will be closed from 18th December to 11th January. During this time Staff and Officers will be furloughed and therefore will be unable to answer any emails or messages (including on social media accounts). This also extends to their advice service and night cab.

e. Facilities [-] (DM)

- The observatory got ready on Wednesday and Connor put back the instruments

on Saturday and we started promoting the use of both rooms. On Sunday I went to decorate the Fisher room and to make a video on how to enable and disable the alarm, these videos will be shared with the students who get the booking approved.

- For next term, we are going to be able to continue using the gym, same guidelines as we have right now, but the session 1 on Monday's will have to close as the College has to do a deep clean. This is with the current guidelines, if something changes during the Christmas break, we will need to revise again.

f. Finance [VV]

- Current account balance: £ 33,605.90.

- As mentioned before payment has been scheduled for the buses and 8k by university, under Transition Fund.

g. International Officer [MZ]

- I have posted on our social media regarding the Hanukkah celebration. The post redirect them to the Jewish Society which they had virtual social events for three straight days.

h. Livers Out Rep [FD]

- Over the past week, I have been working on the upcoming events (Secret Santa and the Decoration made out of recycling competition). I have also attended a the Student Leader forum on behalf of Diana.

i. Social [SG]

- Christmas calendar has been approved

- Secret Santa ended up getting around 25 sign ups, was popular

- Making a rota for committee members to run Xmas events, if anyone here would be keen to get involved let me know

- Over the holidays I'll put together a potential schedule for the incoming students

We will have the calendar in the newsletter this week, even if we don't have definitive bar staff yet.

j. Steering [CA]

- Nothing to report.

k. Welfare [JB]

- Circulated information for students staying over Christmas regarding catering and support available. All self-catered students will keep access to their pantry and kitchen but additionally St Mary's are providing a hot meal everyday for students from 13th Dec until 9th Jan for £3. There was a workshop on the 10th for International students. We repromoted the welfare hours with our faces - attendance does occur but the sessions are generally quiet so we might tinker with the hours/days in the new year. Contacted Changing Lives refuge people regarding donations.

Female welfare supplies have been used up; replaced in female bathrooms.

l. College Matters [DM]

University matters

- On the Town Hall with the Vice-Chancellor, it was mentioned that in St Mary's College dining hall will be offering a freshly prepared hot meal service daily from

Sunday 13 December until 2020 Saturday 9 January at the cost of £3 per lunch. Both livers in and livers out from all Colleges can book to dine at St Mary's over the festive period. They can book individual meals via the Durham Resources Booking App, 48 hours in advance and preferably with their Christmas vacation households.

- University sent an email to all Independent Common Rooms with a new charge that was going to be deducted from the composition fee payments, the reason was that for some years the Independent Common Rooms have been provided with services from the University's Finance Department at a nominal charge, therefore the University wanted to charge £1300 in total, from where;

- College Finance Officers / Assistants – 1 Week per annum £700
- Central Finance Operations – 1 Day per annum £300
- Central Finance Manager – 1 Day per annum £300

- After emailing back to University and making the point that not all the Independent Common Rooms use the same services, and that University was in material breach of the Memorandum of Agreement with the common rooms, as payments of the first instalment of the composition fee grant should be paid no later than the 1st November - which is now 44 days late and counting. With this response, University acknowledges that the charge will not happen this year, but will be revised for next academic year

- International students who return to Durham will have to follow government guidelines and self-isolate for 10 days, if they want to reduce the period, they will have to book an NHS test, and if they got a negative result the period will be reduce to 5 days. The LFT won't count for University.

- Plans for next term include have formals on a social distancing format by households and with LOs despite on which Tier we will be. Access to gyms will continue, however the bars will have to be reviewed later

- University is buying body cameras for porters to use them and will be trained.

- From the email sent by University, for those students on the second cohort that return until the date that University has stated won't get charge for their accommodation fees.

College matters

- On the CMT meeting it was discussed the Social calendar, and since it was during the Christmas break when the bar closes normally, the College ask the GCR to contribute with 25% of the bar staff payroll in order to have the Common Room as a COVID-19 secure space, however, College was able to access central funding for the bar staff to cover the activities across the winter break so there was no need to use the bar budget and or the GCR to contribute

- College is preparing a festive email wishing everyone a good winter break and will be co-signed with the GCR

- At the CAB meeting it was agreed the new version of the Vision, Mission and Values. These have a more community sense, without making mention of any of the student groups.

- For those students who stay in College and they find themselves in the position that they are alone in their household they will be able to contact College and ask to have permission to mix with another household, however, it will be handle per case.

Exec matters

- I sent a new welcome message from the GCR for the students arriving in January. This message is going to be sent as part of the communications from College.
- The SPRA meeting mentioned the behaviour of the Ustinovians and that the local residents are very grateful for their good behaviour and support towards the community.

6. AOB
a.

Brad Din
GCR Secretary
14/12/2020