



Ustinov College GCR Exec Meeting

Minutes

6:00 pm, 18/01/21

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

DM to test the Fisher Room TV functionality without internet

JB to recontact women's refuge regarding donations

VV to email Ustinov finance regarding the reimbursements ongoing – have emailed with uni confirmation but just waiting for bank confirmation

1. Apologies: *LC*

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

2. Approval of minutes from last meeting.

- a. Approval of minutes from 11/01/2021 – *passed on a 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 JB to recontact women's refuge regarding donations *ongoing*
- f. VV to email Ustinov finance regarding the reimbursements ongoing – have emailed with uni confirmation but just waiting for bank confirmation *ongoing*
- g. SG to plan out the induction week activities/icebreakers *done*
- h. FD to reshare the PG housing guide *done*
- i. DM to check if college will allow livers out to access the gym *done*

4. Agenda Items:

a. **[JB] Supplying livers out with welfare-related products**

- Discussed with other common room welfare officers, who prior to Christmas had a similar system to us. Under the assumption that take-up will not be incredibly demanding, I (Jake) can deliver bags of items on my daily walks. Provided we keep the online "order form" roughly the same (which is already not very used and likely needs more advertisement on my part) we can do one of the following for livers out in Durham:
 - Non-anonymous drop-offs, whereby people include their email address and can arrange for a meeting time and location decided between the parties;
 - "Anonymous" posting, whereby people can include their postal address within a certain perimeter and I can post a bag through people's letterboxes;

- Or other, open to suggestions!

Clarification; put it through letter boxes in purple bags; should fit through any standard door. Only information shared is just their address, which is probably a good idea for anonymity.

If it's a good use of time and resources, then happy to advertise this, as long as can be done safely. There can be terms and conditions for booking times to allow flexibility in delivery, but of course would be promptly.

FD happy to help with deliveries to split the workload etc, depending on interest. Start with fixed times and dates, e.g. they can select delivery on Monday or Friday, then can adapt around this if there is a lot of demand.

Depends on JB and FD schedules.

b. [DM] Spend £100 for a TV to be used on the Fisher Room

Specs for the TV: Toshiba de 49" 4k and smart, 4 HDMI and 1 VGA.

Being sold by a student who doesn't have time to sell it properly; happy to sell reduced to the GCR. In good condition etc.

We've been looking for a TV for the observatory for a while now anyway.

Is it going to be possible to get a wall-mounting for it; most efficient in the Fisher room? Should be possible.

Is it possible to test it out without Wifi, since some smart TV cannot function without. DM had used it, can work with HDMI. Will check this properly.

50 inches is perfect for the space on the wall.

[AP] DM to test the Fisher Room TV functionality without internet.

Vote to purchase the TV: passes with all in favour.

5. Officer Reports:

a. Bar [-]

- Bar staff would be able to help us to maintain a COVID-19 secure space while we are hosting events in the case of using the 3 spaces (Common Room, Seminar Room and Community Room). University is also hiring them to perform the LFT in the central venues.

- In case of financial need they should apply for the hard fund that was shared by University.

- There is some work in progress about furloughing casual staff.

No ideas yet for events with one household; no pressure to get these sorted. Pool and table tennis already exist. Movie nights didn't really work last term.

b. Clubs & Societies [CV]

- Gym is opening today. Since Thursday when college sent the email to livers-in there have quite a few bookings. Also I'm monitoring the bookings for the common room and seminar room (pool and table tennis). I also contacted PlayerLayer and soon we will have our site online and we can start advertising. Finally Team Durham is opening elections for their sabbatical positions. I'll share this with the captains in case there's interest to apply.

Any bookings for the pool table? Two on Monday, another on Thursday; nothing with Table tennis yet. Still needs to be moved; delayed because of snow!

c. Communications [LC] (apologies)

- The first newsletter of the epiphany term sent out (some items couldn't be included so will be added to next week's such as Disney+ subscription)

- Various posts regarding social events for the week (bingo, two pub quizzes, games night)
- Posts to go out for Christmas baking winners and for the 'Crovision' contest
- Will introduce a weekly post (Monday) to go on the socials with all the event details for the week

Still not sure how many new people are seeing emails; only 30 new students have been added to uv-info, explaining some poor attendance at events. Very few new joiners to the Facebook group etc. No fix for this; maybe need to wait for them to get their IT accounts sorted out.

Add newsletter about the campaign from DSU PG academic officer – see DSU report.

d. DSU [-] (DM)

- Last meeting was cancelled and has been rescheduled for this week.
- On Friday Sarah (PG Academic officer) hosted a session for students who have questions/suggestions about their work on getting the University to introduce a new 'safety net' policy.
- It was shared on Tuesday an open letter to support PGRs who are parents and carers who have been heavily impacted by the pandemic. (Open Letter to UKRI, Government and Universities Regarding UKRI Phase 2 Covid Support Policy from the Pandemic PGR Parent/Carer Community and Supporters)

e. Facilities [-] (DM)

- From Monday 18th these facilities will be open to livers-in:
- GYM, with the same system we had on the Trial, same times, considering that the first session on Monday will be used for deep clean.
- Pool tables in the Common Room can be used everyday, but we will need to have a booking system and can be used from 8 pm onwards for just 1 household per night. Students will need to wear face masks while playing.
- Table Tennis, same system as pool table and it will be in the Seminar Room, only thing we have to consider is to have students arriving at different times for Table tennis and Pool tables.
- Observatory (Fisher room and music room), with the same system we had during December.

See the TV agenda item.

Observatory; still open 2 days a week like in December? Yes; Wednesday and Saturday still. DM still needs to do booking form – needs some thought about how it should be promoted since it's only just for the GCR members. Perhaps just sent from President account to the GCR members, also detailing GCR membership perks etc. Will send it tomorrow to hopefully get bookings.

f. Finance [VV]

- Current Account balance: £ 33,605.90
- We have not received the bank statements yet.
- This week I paid the National Trust invoice out of my personal account to ensure the membership doesn't get cancelled as I was starting to get worried about this.

DM received letter for bank with savings account statement. No eta on when accounts will be transferred over yet.

g. International Officer [MZ]

- Nothing to report.

Next holiday would be lunar new year; something like a post similar to Diwali. Also

entered a newsletter post relating to holocaust.

h. Livers Out Rep [FD]

- Over the past week, I have had a meeting with the Social Committee where we decided that the formal is going to be open to livers out too and I'm going to be in charge of delivering the food. I am also in the process of creating a poll (to be included in the next newsletter and posted on the Ustinov Livers Out Facebook page) to figure out how many people would be potentially interested in taking part in events during the next weeks.

Formal is same day as Ustinov live, but since not hot food, would be easy to do deliveries earlier in the day.

i. Social [SG]

-After social committee meeting, we have discussed launching a Burns Night Online formal: to be mashed with Ustinov Live. The plan is to deliver starter packages for cocktails & mocktails along with decorations. Need to think about ticketing. Speeches and poems to be read out on the live stream, Bryony is looking for volunteers to take part.

- Calendar to be released with newsletter

- Baking comp winners are getting £10 Amazon vouchers, looking to launch another one this term with same prizes

- Induction events went well - thanks everyone for your help!!

- Decorations competition to be launched for Lunar new year

3 or 4 recipes alongside decorations and ingredients will be handed out.

No food delivery since student kitchens closed this time. Only fruit like oranges/lemons/limes etc. Could even make food suggestions etc.

Maybe the people who participate in Ustinov live might also want to enter the crovision; should be worth promoting.

j. Steering [CA]

- Nothing to report.

No reply from Glenn or other CMT members yet; can be pushed back a week to latest 7th Feb, but no later. Can adjust the time of this if needed. When we have information, will sent out information regarding GM.

k. Welfare [JB]

- First meeting of the new Sexual Misconduct & Violence Operations Group subgroup, which will get together monthly from this point on. Discussed the various reasons for low reporting of related issues among postgraduates at Durham. Waiting for further discussion but will possibly create a survey to share with students soon. This will be a later agenda point to get everyone's input on the right way to go about this.

- Welfare Officer meeting with Ewan Swift and other common room officers to talk about general things for this term and the third lockdown. Sourced suggestions on how to distribute welfare products to livers out (see agenda point).

l. University/College Matters [DM]

University matters

- University has provided security staff on every College from 8 pm to 4 am, as support to porters who are checking that students follow COVID-19 regulations.

College matters

- College is looking into using the Community room for livers-out as an optional study place. In the meantime, all College facilities remain for livers-in.
- College is working to get the numbers of students who are staying in, there are not a lot of empty rooms on flats. Even if the student doesn't return on this term their belongings will remain in the room, therefore College cannot use it in case of a student moving. If there is a student alone in their flat, the student should contact College and they will review the case. In the meantime, everyone will remain in the same room they are.
- Due to low engagement on the LFT on-site last term, and with the lack of staff and space to run the LFT on-site, College has decided not to have it this term. The new University model to run LFT involves having a dedicated space with staff running the LFT, as in the central venues.
- Security staff will be helping porters but they won't be entering rooms. They will also be supporting the events we will be running. Apart from that from Monday 18th, they will be monitoring the access to the Common Room (pool tables) and the Seminar Room (table tennis).

Exec matters

- We will be able to host events using the Common Room, Seminar Room and Community Room, but we are able to just have 1 household per space per night. College will look into dividing the Common Room space into 2 and have 2 households, we need to wait from University.
- Matriculation photo might happen in May/June, College will talk about this later in the term
- College has asked us to support the line "Do not travel, stay at home" when we are promoting the access to facilities and events.

6. AOB

- Phishing attempt using DM name – taken the names from the website. Already reported to CIS.*
- When is the next social/committee meeting? After the GM probably better, but we might have some new committee members, so can introduce them.*
- If a student is alone in their flat, then due to mental health/welfare concerns, they can ask college to be moved to a more populated flat.*

Brad Din

GCR Secretary

18/01/2021