

Ustinov College GCR

General Meeting

Agenda



7:00 p.m. 12/07/2018

- 1. Apologies:** AM, CW,
Present: TP, VU, JO, MR, VB, NQ, EJ, FO, KL
- 2. Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting**
Minutes from the AGM held on 31/05 will be passed at the AGM next year.

- a. Issues Arising from Last Minutes**

- i. Results of Elections following Last Meeting**

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

President: Tom Pitts

Vice President: James O'Neill

Treasurer: Eduardo Joel López Torres

Bar Steward: Ariam Mora

Clubs & Societies Officer: Vera Bieber

Communications Officer: Kimberley Liu

International Student Officer: Matthew Roberts

- 3. Reports from Officers**

- a. President [TP]**

Hello, officially I am now the president since the BBQ [thank you Jamie]. I have been working since then on the next big event coming up, which is the induction week. This has involved the planning of the induction week, which is now pretty much done, and then on to booking things in. Secondly, I have been working on moving things over from Howlands to Sheraton, which is going ahead. I have also been to the Sheraton Park Residence Association where the matter of the bar license came up and this will be augmented for next year with later openings Thursday-Saturday. And just trying to make sure next year works as well as possible

Q. Any update with the observatory? And Durham School?

Spoken to Ian about that and trying to push for access by the end of August. Just waiting for them to clean it out, make repairs and decorate. There will be the music room moved over and some sofas will be brought over as well. No update yet about Durham School.

Q. Any update with Stephenson college temporarily closing the bar over the summer?

We asked to keep construction to a minimum. It will be minor works and hopefully will not disrupt people and we should maintain WIFI. There will also be a stone plinth appearing outside Oak for the Stephenson Train axel being placed there. Some things will be popping up around the Howlands site, but hopefully work will be kept to a minimum.

Q. What happened to the nutcracker?

It's behind the desk in Ian's space.

-Can it be brought to a public space?
I'll look into it.

b. Treasurer [EJ]

The handover is complete! Thanks to Alexander Blair for his help during the last days to sort out the BBQ and the handover at the same time.

- Debit Card Fraud Attempt: June 26th, we had a fraud attempt using our GCR debit card. It was an attempt to pay in various books and stationary shops. However, AB was able to demonstrate that we didn't do those payments and got a cancellation and reimbursement for them. The card was safe during the whole time and no other payments were made that way. After that, the debit card was cancelled but the online banking account remain active. Thanks to that we were able to do the last payments for the BBQ and keep track of the account easily.

- Opt-in system, livers out and livers in: One of the main incomes of the GCR is the payment of memberships (GCR and Gym). For the next academic year, an opt-in system is going to be implemented. This means, at the beginning of the year students will have to choose if they want to pay the GCR levy or not. Is important for everybody to know that with the money obtained by those payments we can keep doing the activities for all the Ustinov College Community. Moreover, the amount of people who is going to live in the college will be less than past years (due to the Howlands moving). For this reason, it is really important to remember to the students who are going to stay for another year (Livers out and livers in) to remember to pay the GCR membership. In the next GM we are going to give more details about this.

[point of information] our income from the levy this year was around £30,000 which is unusually high. Based on previous years with the opt in system the forecast is between 8-12k. This is a large loss of income. This is why it's so important and concerning.

Q. Would you consider increasing the amount of memberships to make back losses?

This has not been considered yet. We will see how things go and keep things as they are. Then next year we will be informed about the loss of income and make change only then.

[point of information] We do have savings of around £60,000 for times like this. It's not ideal to use savings but they could absorb the loss before making changes next year.

c. Vice President [JO]

Currently organising to move over the GCR equipment, belongings, vending machines and furniture from the GCR storage, common room, sports shed and music room to Sheraton and the observatory. Shall be purchasing office supplies soon for Sheraton GCR office. Shall be organising the placement of the matriculation photos with Colin and Ian later in July.

Q. Will the Keepers Cottage gaming society things be brought over?

- This still needs to be looked into as a space for the gaming society is not yet set in stone.

d. Bar Steward [AM]

We made nearly 5k from the BBQ and the handover was smooth and successful. Nothing else to report.

e. Clubs and Societies Officer [VB]

Took over the position of Clubs & Socs Officer about two weeks ago and have not done anything spectacular yet, but many things are in the planning:

- If you looked to your right just before entering the café, you might have noticed some advertisement for our clubs and societies on the notice board there. And this is just the beginning – hopefully we will eventually have an actual clubs & societies notice board!
- The Clubs & Societies Fair of next year’s Induction Week will happen on the 30th September. Plans for it are starting to form, including:
 - o A “wild card station” where people can enter any interests they have for which no society exists so far. If multiple people enter the same interest, I will then put them in contact with each other so that they can form a new society.
 - o Taster sessions on the space between Sheraton House and Neville House, where people can give different sports a try.
- Currently working on changing the system for applying for a gym membership, so that it will be easier for both the students trying to get a membership and the committee members managing the requests. The system will be tested and polished over the summer, so that it will be ready when the new students arrive in September

Q. Slight suggestion, Lindsay, Vice Principle, will start sending out emails to students before we usually get them. Would it be worth asking in this email if there are any sports or societies that fresh student would be interested in, so we could get them set up before they arrive.

How early would that be?

Everyone should have their offers so from now so they can be contacted from now theoretically.

Q. How would using the pool work.

This still needs to be fully looked into.

f. Communications Officer [KL]

As a new officer I am honoured to take my place on the GCR Exec. I have just created a group for second hand selling on we-chat. Trying to make an environmentally friendly way of selling, and looking into that. If there is anything you want to discuss message or we-chat me, if I’m awake is hall respond.

g. (Acting) DSU Liaison Officer [TP]

There’s not much on at the moment as everything has wound down. There were protests against the ‘Ripped off’ campaign for student fees and the real costs of living in Durham. Two people were escorted off-site from university. But it was relatively successful. 5-600 flyers were sent out. Now university has apologised for kicking protesters off campus. Also, there will be a new president of the DSU at the end of July [24th ish]. And hopefully we will elect a DSU liaison officer who will get involved in these things. Also, Megan brought up in council misogyny within the university staff. And returner numbers dropping and trying to make university aware of it.

h. International Officer [MR]

As Kim said we have more or less handed over the communications roll. The handover was over the BBQ which was the largest event that we’ve had. Sadly, the Lake district trip will not be going ahead this summer, but hopefully in the next academic year. Aside from

bigger trips I shall be looking into doing more local walks and trips within county Durham. I shall be thinking about a Bollywood night, or something similar, like was put on last year, this summer, instead of a trip. Aside from that it is just the case of getting use to my roll. And that's about it.

i. Livers Out Representative [TP]

Tomorrow there shall be a cathedral tour being organised which you can go along to. It's a tour of the cathedral, seeing the current museum exhibition looking at the minor's history of Durham, linking in with the minor's gala. Also, the west tower shall be opened for the first time which is a highly unique experience. It will be a great opportunity to do so. There's a google sign-up sheet. So just wanted to emphasise that. It will be £10 for the tour of the cathedral and an additional £5 for the west tower. But things are winding down over the summer now. Also, this weekend is the minor's gala which happens once a year and a unique experience of Durham, so maybe check that out and enjoy yourself. We are starting to look mainly at Livers Out events for induction week and plan more next year as the majority of Ustinov Students shall be Livers Out next year. We shall advertise future events as and when they are advertised.

j. Social Secretary [NQ]

Hello everybody, I hope you enjoyed the BBQ. I shall be stepping down in September. Before then there shall be a party in August on the first Friday. I am up to having the Bollywood party again. Finally, on September 7th there shall be the leavers party, which shall be nostalgic, and do make it to those.

[Point of information]. College have suggested that there shall be reductions on alcohol behind the bar

I am fully supportive of this.

Q. How many more parties shall there be?

Just two coming up in August and September.

Q. What's your favourite colour?

Green

Q. Why?

I loved Peter Pan growing up.

k. (Acting) Welfare Representative [TP]

For welfare I have booked in a drug and alcohol awareness week in the next academic year. We don't have a welfare officer currently but hoping to get one in the near future. There's no welfare plans at the moment but we shall start looking into it soon. Also, regarding the condoms we keep putting out, they keep disappearing almost immediately. We are now going through condoms at an alarming rate. So, make sure to use them only when you have ran out and not as a replacement for your own.

Q. So other colleges have paid condom dispensers. Is there a possibility of getting those installed?

This could be one of the better solutions.

Q. Puppies?

The company that runs the puppy event, last I heard, assumed that all of colleges were one entity and have already held the event at the DSU. So, we shall try and organise puppies again as soon as we can for Ustinov College.

Q. Last year we put out healthy snacks so people doing their dissertations had access to healthy food. Is this a possibility again?

We shall look into this.

4. Agenda Items

a. Summer BBQ 2018 Feedback [JG]

Hey guys, you would have seen when the email went out for this meeting the BBQ feedback report was attached. The BBQ was put on for fun for an adult and children atmosphere in mind and with making this event as diverse as possible so that it suited all Ustinovian's and their families. This was with some issues during the day, and that is why this documents is as long as it is as it lists everything that could be improved or went wrong. The main complaints were: the placement of the BBQ being far from the event itself and the length of queue for food. This is for staff reasons and practicality. This year is a bigger college and we had twice as much food but should have considered twice as many queues to make the line go more quickly. Regarding the acts, 6 people responded that they wanted more Ustinovian acts, 7 wanted more acts in general, and 20-ish were happy with the balance we booked. There were a few issues with the bar. This issue, however, is more college based, but involves things such as not having water or soft drinks in the outside bar. The bar did better in profits than the previous year, not as well as other years but still made very good sales. We managed to run the event, it was free as usual and under budget. We also subsidised loads of t-shirts for people to buy on the day. For logistical issues please refer to the document. We are not privy to colleges own reports, but college have said, compared to previous events of this kind, it was usual and nothing was out of the ordinary. For finances, there were three areas that were overspent. One was the staging, which was bigger and required being built and with more manpower involved. In future, it would be better to pick a better date to avoid not having choices for staging; secondly, in terms of stash, we overspent, but this doesn't take into account the money we made from selling the subsidised t-shirts, which could take us only to £100 over budget on the t-shirts; however, talent and audio tech and food was underbudget, beside advertisement. In the end we ended up £10,000 under budget. And I hope everyone had a good time!

Q. Next year's BBQ?

Ask Tom!

- Next year, there's a few problems as the space at Sheraton is public space which needs to be looked into this summer to plan for next year.

Q. Is it possible to use the place near the observatory for the BBQ?

- People in observatory house would not be happy with that. It's also not flat and with poor access, and would need to power it all from generators. So, it could be more expensive, but not impossible. It may also require permission from the council.

Q. What about Maiden Castle?

- It is free over the summer but it's a long way away.

5. Hustings

a. Chairperson

Candidate: Vinay Utham

Manifesto:

Hust: Hi guys, I'm Vinay and going into fourth year in finance and was the bar steward last year. I have chaired conferences in department and have chaired all of last year's bar steward meetings. I have loved my time here and would like to give back to Ustinov College. That is all!

Questions:

A lot of work for the chair is behind the scenes work with the rota and looking a lot at the Standing Orders and Constitution. How do you feel about that?

- I have looked at the standing orders, as for the rota I am familiar with doing this already and will make it a first and foremost priority.

Q. How do you think you will do with the responsibilities as Chair?

I have always done the best job that I can and shall continue this same work ethic as char.

Q. As Chair you're also a trustee. Do you think you can be objective enough despite already being on the committee for a year?

- Last year I have always allowed others to speak and considered their conversations and am used to treating the committee objectively and feel comfortable being objective and independent in this regard and so don't think I shall have difficulty in maintaining this objectivity.

Q. How will you face the problem of the levy change in our constitution?

- If I am elected I shall go through the thorough handover process with Thom and learn from this to carry what I have learnt forward. I shall fully take any input and help to do the best I can.

b. DSU Liaison Officer

Candidate: Pedro Martinez Castro

Manifesto:

Hust: Hello, I am Pedro, I am first year PhD student, and this will be the best time I have to contribute to Ustinov and the GCR. I have seen the great things you have done as a community and wish to be part of that as DSU Liaison officer. I have similar experience in my department, liaising between students and staff, which I consider a transferable skill set. As DSU Liaison Officer I wish to look into a poll to see what our concerns are as a college and to pass this on to the DSU to make Ustinov's voice heard.

Questions:

Q. People think Ustinov is a small college. How confident are you in making our presence better know?

- I was not aware of this but will always relay the concerns and feelings of Ustinov back to the DSU.

Q. Do you believe that you can represent the needs and requirements of Ustinov, which are unique to the postgraduate community?

- Thank you for the question. As a postgrad I can appreciate the needs and unique requirements of a diverse postgraduate community. And in order to do that I shall be making a poll to understand the main concerns and to keep pushing them forward.

Q. So, seems like there's a lot of meetings with this position?

- Actually, only one meeting strictly per term apart from voluntary meetings and events.

Q. Would you get involve in these things?

- Yes, as much as my capacity allows me to do it.

Q. This is more about Ustinov. Traditionally this college is one of the bottom three colleges who get involved in the DSU. How would you get Ustinovian's to care about the DSU?

- That's a good question. I think with the new GCR members that we shall have in the first term, I would like to collaborate with the induction officer so that new students get a good understanding about how the DSU works, its relationship with us, and how student can get involved. Secondly, it will be my job to keep you engaged, with updates and keen involvement!

c. Welfare Representative

Candidate: Annie Moore

Manifesto:

Hust: Hello everyone, I'm a first year PhD student in the engineering department. I am running for this position as know how rubbish college life can be if things don't go right. I know how hard it is moving in somewhere when things don't work properly, so I will be committed to making things work, working for student welfare, and with commitment to office hours. I was the welfare student rep in undergrad so am familiar with this before. I studied in China for a few months and can appreciate how difficult studying abroad can be and will work toward making welfare an open door for international students.

Questions:

Q. Will you give us puppies?

- This will be one of the first things I will look into.

Q. Lots of student groups around university run tons of campaigns around the year. How will you pick the campaigns that you will focus on?

- It shall be a case of looking at those most suited to postgrads and looking at what is available.

Q. What is your previous experience?

- So, I studied abroad and felt how difficult it is settling into a new foreign home. So I can appreciate this difficulty and will be working to help anyone going through a difficult time in this or any respect.

Q. One of my biggest disappointments coming and studying here is the lack of meditation classes.

- I know that this is popular, and this is something that we could look into for sure.

Q. As you said, welfare needs to be visible and you need to put yourself out there. Are you happy to put yourself out there?

- I am keen to making a stable and reliable place to go each week and am happy to put myself out there and make that known.

Q. Would you be willing to talk to students now from other countries to get an idea of what people require or need in order to prepare for next year's student body?

- Yes definitely, I am more than happy to look into this.

Q. Jamie has been working on consent matters workshops. Are you willing to get involved in that?

- I am yes. I need to familiarise myself with everything but will get some workshops organised in the coming year.

d. Student Trustee

Candidate: Marcos Cruz

Manifesto:

Hust: [not present]

Questions:

6. Any Other Business

Many thanks to Jamie Graham for all his hard and endless work this academic year as president and for the BBQ!

Voting will open at 10PM tonight until Sunday at 11PM!

James O'Neill

GCR Secretary

12/07/2018