

## Constitution Implementation Plan

*A note by Union President – Paul Beaumont*

### Background

1. On 23 November 2012 the College Council – after being first approved by the Union Council and Trustee Board – approved the new Constitution and Bye-Laws of the Union
2. The changes proposed alterations to the structure of the Union that have knock-on effects for roles and some students in the Union
3. This creates a problem of ‘what do we do with incumbents’ and ‘how do we move to filling the newly created positions’

This paper seeks to identify the changes in both structure, function and positions and how these could transition from the old constitution and regulations to the new constitution and bye-laws

### Areas affected

4. The structures affected are relatively ‘high-level’ positions, with very few roles genuinely affected by the changes
  - a. Court & The Governance Committee
  - b. Appointed Student Trustees
  - c. External Trustees
  - d. The Executive Committee
  - e. RWB, ERB & CWB
  - f. Sabbatical Elections
  - g. Financial Procedures

### A. Court & The Governance Committee

5. Under the new constitution, much of the Court’s function splits between the Governance Committee, Trustee Board and an appointed Returning Officer
6. The ex-officio Trustee Board position of Court Chair is removed from the Board and the Alumni Trustee role is added.
7. The role of the Returning Officer does not ‘kick in’ until February and there has already been some interest in fulfilling the role
8. The transition from Court to Governance Committee may be made immediately, as there are no outstanding cases from Union Court, and 5 out of 6 members of the Governance Committee are already *in situ*.
9. **RECOMMENDATIONS:**
  - a. That the position of Alumni Trustee is advertised to the College Alumni base, with the help of the Alumni & Development Office, and an Appointments & Remunerations Committee is formed to approve the ‘job description’, interview and appointment process

- b. Given that the current Court Chair is an Alumni, the Court Chair remains to be invited to the Trustee Board meetings despite the removal of their ex-officio position, to participate and add their historical knowledge for the benefit of the board (in keeping with the purpose of the Alumni Trustee) pending the recruitment by the Appointments & Remunerations Committee of an Alumni Trustee to the Council and Board. For the purposes of Charity Registration – and the signing of the declaration of being a Trustee – given their position no longer exists, the incumbent Court Chair does not register with the Charity Commission
- c. That Nathaniel Bottrell – as a Trustee with a wide operational knowledge of how different parts of the Union relating to Members and Associate Members work - is appointed the Chair of the Governance Committee for the remainder of this academic year
- d. It is hoped that the recruitment process for the Alumni Trustee could be completed (due to the internal nature/use of the Alumni network) by March 2013.

## **B. Appointed Student Trustees**

10. The changes split the current roles of four elected Student Trustees into two elected and two appointed Student Trustees
11. Students have elected the current incumbents for a period of a year, and there is no clear way we could 'deselect' two out of the four current student trustees. It would be seemingly unnecessary to alter the composition of this part of the Board for this year
12. **RECOMMENDATIONS:**
  - a. That the four Student Trustees are retained for the remainder of the year
  - b. That two new Student Trustees for the next academic year are elected during the Sabbatical Elections
  - c. That the positions of appointed Student Trustees are advertised to all Students by the President and an Appointments & Remunerations Committee is formed to approve the 'job description', interview and appointment process

## **C. External Trustees**

13. The Constitution changes rename Lay Members to External Trustees
14. All four of the current Lay members of the Board are nearing the end of their three year terms (31<sup>st</sup> July 2013, as under the old constitution terms of office run from 1<sup>st</sup> August to 31<sup>st</sup> July)
15. External Trustees who remain interested in continuing for another 3 years must inform the Appointments & Remunerations Committee, who, with the help of the College Central Secretariat – who interact with the membership of the College Court - will then present the names of External Trustees proposed to the whole Board, and to be ratified by a two-thirds majority of the Council

- a. 'Conflicts of Interest' when voting on matters relating to the appointment of Trustees should be adhered to
- b. Returning Trustees have no greater rights – in the old or current Constitution – to remain as Trustees than newly interested Trustees who put themselves forward to the Appointments & Remunerations Committee
- c. It is hoped that the recruitment process for the External Trustees could be completed by May 2013.

#### **D. The Executive Committee**

16. The proposed structure and function of the Executive Committee is as has been in operation for nearly a year and a half now
17. The limits of authority changes do not affect any processes or papers currently going through the Executive Committee – just the *potential* to go through
18. **RECOMMENDATION:**
  - a. The Executive Committee takes up its new Standing Orders and operations immediately, working within the limits of authority dictated by the new Financial Procedures and reporting to Council

#### **E. RWB, ERB & CWB**

19. Informal meetings of the Education & Representation Board and Communities & Welfare Board have been meeting already this year
20. **RECOMMENDATION:**
  - a. This continues, and dates for further meetings are placed in the Union's Year Card

#### **F. Sabbatical Elections**

21. The Sabbatical Elections process begins with the appointment of a Returning Officer
  - a. That the position of Returning Officer is advertised to the College Alumni base and General Managers/staff members of Student Unions locally, and the Governance Committee (formed under a recommendation in point A) meets to interview and recommend the appointment to the Board of a suitable person
  - b. Elections then run in accordance with the new Major Bye-laws

## G. Financial Procedures

22. The only changes in the Financial Procedures are:
  - a. A split between authorisation procedure between CSPs and budget holders
  - b. The lowering of the level of authority of the Executive Committee
  - c. The raising of the level of authority of budget holders, if in accordance with their budget
  - d. The removal of the Executive Committee to change the budget approved by the Trustee Board
  - e. The ability for the DPFS to authorise the disposal of assets up to £10,000 without the permission of the President
23. On a practical day-to-day level, all of these changes can be implemented immediately by the Head of Finance on the authorisation of the Board
24. The bank mandate must also be updated and eActivities (the Union's finance system) slightly reprogrammed to change the authorisation processes
25. **RECOMMENDATION:**
  - a. The Board authorise changes in 24 with immediate effect and action the Head of Finance and DPFS to ensure all are aware of the consequences of the changes
  - b. The Central Services Manager is actioned to make the small changes required to the eActivities authorisation process (deleting two records from a database)