



Minutes of the Imperial College Union
Fourth Governance Committee meeting of 2014/15
3 June 2015
Meeting Room 6, 16.30

PRESENT:

Alumni Trustee	Andy Heeps – Chair (AH)
Officer Trustee	Abigail de Bruin (ADB)
Officer Trustee	Thomas Wheeler (TW)
Council Chair	Paul Beaumont (PB)
<u>Permanent Observers</u>	
Managing Director	Joe Cooper (JC)
Head of Student Voice and Communication	Alex McKee (AMK)
Governance & Administration Manager – Clerk	Rebecca Coxhead (RC)

Apologies: Student Trustees Chris Chukwunta and Hiba Danish Saleem

1. CHAIRS BUSINESS

NOTED:

- a) Thanks were given to the members of the Governance Committee for their contributions throughout the year.

2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS – none

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING – 21 January 2015

NOTED:

- a) The minutes were passed at the last meeting of Board of Trustees.

4. MATTERS ARISING

NOTED:

- a) In regards to the Democracy Review, AMK and TW have meet to discuss moving the project forward, however this has currently stalled
 - i. An report as to where the project currently is will be taken to the next meeting of Council
- b) In regards to ADB reporting back on the discussion had at Clubs, Societies & Project Board in regards to the different types of membership that exists within CSP's, this is still in progress.
- c) In regards to the review of Disciplinary Procedures TW and AH are still to draft a 'Principles of Discipline' document. Also, TW is to start discussions with the Provost with the aim of drafting a Memorandum of understanding in regards to what the Union and College's roles are in the Disciplinary process.

- i. It was stated that the Union needs to encourage College to review their processes before the Union starts reviewing theirs.
- ii. It was highlighted that the Union needs to be able to be autonomous when enacting disciplinary procedures.
- iii. TW stated he will continue to follow this up.

ACTION:

- 1. TW and AH to draft a 'Principles of Discipline' document.**
- 2. TW is to start discussions with the Provost with the aim of drafting a Memorandum of understanding in regards to what the Union and College's roles are in the Disciplinary process.**

5. ELECTIONS REVIEW

RECEIVED: The review was presented by AMK

NOTED:

- a) Your Officer elections are currently taking place and the results of this will come to the next Governance committee as part of the elections action plan.
- b) In regards to Your Rep and Council Elections 2015, the following discussion took place:
 - i. The process of communicating what a Rep is and the importance of the role need to be improved. 'Great Reps' should be used to highlight the impact that the Reps have.
 - ii. The Union should be equipping the candidates with skills in regards to being a candidate but it was recognised that these elections take place at a very busy time of the year.
- c) There is no evidence to support the theory that closed nominations put off members for standing as candidates.
 - i. Anecdotally it is thought by some members that not knowing who they are standing is a barrier to them standing.
 - ii. There is an element of 'filling the position the best way how' in smaller clubs.
 - iii. The Student Survey asks the question 'why didn't you run for a position in an election'. AMK stated that he include the response in the Action Plan.

ACTION:

- 1. AMK to include the response from the Student Survey for the question 'why didn't you run for a position in an election' in the Action Plan.**
- d) Ultimately there needs to be the widest possible opportunity for people members to participate in elections.
 - e) It was suggested that it be investigated as to how nominations occur in the sector.

ACTION:

- 2. RC to investigate how nominations take place in the sector.**

- f) In regards to the Big Elections 2015, the following discussion took place:
 - i. Timings for Information and Training sessions are perhaps not the best. Monthly information and Training sessions through the year may be an option.
 - ii. The information session are trying to target members who are not active participators in the Union and to break the myth that you need to be heavily involved in the Union to be a successful candidate.
 - iii. It was requested the following data be included in the Action Plan:
 - How many visitors to the Training and Information page.
 - Who stood as candidates in comparison to the groups that were targeted to be encouraged to stand i.e. international and postgraduate students.

ACTION:

3. AMK to include the following data in the Action Plan:

- **How many visitors to the Training and Information page.**
 - **Who stood as candidates in comparison to the groups that were targeted to be encouraged to stand i.e. international and postgraduate students.**
- iv. The Clubs, Societies and Projects that were hesitant to engage with the process of being included in the Big Elections fell in to 3 categories:
- Various levels of membership participation, i.e. facilitators of activity and those who engage in activity (such as Cinema)
 - Wanted to engage but had already planned their elections around a large event
 - Those who were not adhering to the election regulations. The majority of these clubs did not know they were breaking election regulations or if they did, felt that they had dispensation to do so because they were 'unique'
- v. The Governance Committee expressed strongly that they do not want to make it difficult for CSP's to engage in elections or lose their identity but the Big Elections 2015 have highlighted undemocratic practices that are being undertaken by some groups. Equal and Equitable are the democratic principles and legal requirement that the Union Officers must adhere to when undertaking elections.
- vi. It was agreed that the President and Deputy President Clubs & Societies worked well in regards to making the decision of excluding Clubs, Societies and Projects with membership over 150 and reporting these to the Committee. This gives the Clubs, Societies and Projects the opportunity of challenging their decision to the Governance Committee.
- vii. AMK stated that he will work with the Membership Services team to work out an approach to solve the democratic issues that exist within some CSPs. This may take the approach of training and or issuing a set of principles.

ACTION:

4. AMK to work with the Membership Services team to work out an approach to solve the democratic issues that exist within some CSPs.

- viii. Potentially members may have been put off standing as Officer Trustees due to the challenges that TW has experienced this year.
- ix. It was suggested that putting posters on Departmental doors in PG work rooms may encourage Postgraduates.
- x. JC stated that UAE asked him to compile a Returning Officer report. It was requested that JC circulate the UAE Returning Officer report template.

ACTION:

5. JC to JC circulate the UAE Returning Officer report template.

- g) It was agreed that elections and the idea of democracy needs to be spoken about all year round to embed the idea.
- h) Postgraduate engagement, although positive this year, is still an area that needs to be improved.
- i) It was suggested to use external trustees and influential people in college to promote the positives of democracy and being involved in elections.
- j) Candidate Welfare is something to consider and AMK stated he will include this in the Action Plan.

ACTION:

6. AMK to include a section on Candidate Welfare in the Action Plan.

RESOLVED:

- 1) To accept the presented report.

7. APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AND ALUMNI TRUSTEES, AND A PROPOSED SYSTEM FOR APPOINTING A CHAIR OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD

RECEIVED: The paper was presented by AH

NOTED:

- a) The Appointments and Remuneration Committee will be considering this same proposal.
- b) There needs to be a seamless transition of trustees to ensure the continuing of skills and knowledge stays within the membership of board.
- c) It was discussed at the last meeting of the Chairs Committee that there is a risk with losing 2 Lay and 1 Alumni trustees at the same time; all their terms end in January 2016.
- d) AH stated that is he does stand for further term, he will not put himself forward for the position of Chair.
- e) It was highlighted that there needs to be a process decided in advance in regards to retaining the continuity of skills and knowledge flow through the Board.
- f) The Committee endorsed the presented proposal.

RESOLVED:

- 1) **To endorse the presented proposal.**

Meeting Closed 17.45