

Communities Committee Meeting 10/17.10.21

Present: Serge Chapman (SC) (External Trustee), Ben Thomas (BT) (Vice-Chair), Chiedza Mhondoro (CM) (External Trustee), Keely Brown (KB) (Student Trustee), Neave Taylor (NT) (Student Trustee), Alfie Whillis (AW) (President), Jade Gavigan (JG) (Senior Welfare Officer), Jack Simmonds (JS) (PGM Chair), Julian Ward (JW) (Sports and Socs Chair), Euan Martin (EM) (JCR Chair), Abbie Brindle (AB) (SRO), China Luckman (CL) (Outreach Chair), Jack Reeves (JR) (Head Frep), Poppy Azmi (PA) (EM Rep)

Apologies:

Absent:

Agenda Point	Discussion	Action Point
	MINUTES AFTER HERE ARE FROM 10.10.21 Those on the Zoom call introduce themselves	
Freshers	SC How did freshers' week go, can you give a rundown of any major issues or successes? JR Very successful, fresh are well integrated, they seemed to enjoy themselves. Covid regulations were a bit annoying, but basically didn't affect the actual week itself at all. We put on loads of good events, Freshtival on the last day went well, and there were no major welfare issues other than spiking.	

JS PGM freshers' week was also very successful, we put on loads of great events that went very well attended. Worked a lot with the International Rep who also did a great job.

CM You mentioned spiking, can you explain the intentions of those engaging in spiking?

JR I don't know I would be guessing, but it seems to be quite random.

AW Spiking is obviously a very sensitive issue, not sure whether increasing awareness of the events of freshers would just make people more anxious and do more harm than good. I suspect that it has often been a common occurrence, it just hasn't been spoken about much. I've spoken about this with PresComm and Welfare Committee. Not helped by bad freps from other colleges and poor communication, rumours spread like wildfire.

JG We may look at doing something with this in our welfare campaigns when that committee has been set up.

SC Target the people who are actually doing it, make them aware of the consequences. JG you can always talk to me if you want any help with this. Was this mentioned in the consent workshops ran in freshers' week?

JG People didn't talk about it that much in the consent workshops. Could consider talking about spiking in the consent workshop this year, will talk to next year's welfare about it as we don't explicitly cover it.

JS In previous consent workshops we've never spoken about them, but it comes up in conversations it's more generally about when people are incapacitated regarding consent. It's the most prominent spiking cases have been in my time here, never been discussed as much now. It may have always been this bad, but now is the time to adjust and include it. We are trained by central university for consent workshops, they don't recognise it as something to include in a consent workshop, we could tell them it should be and they may amend it.

AW This is the most discussed it's been most people's time at Durham. A spiking at Feast shocked a lot of people two years ago, it is an issue, but it's not spoken about enough. Speaking to the Aidan's President they have a lot of spiking during freshers week. There isn't the awareness that there needs to be due to a misconception that it doesn't happen here. Raising awareness, in a way in which is sensitive to the topic, needs to be done, this year has underlined that.

SC What has made it a successful freshers' week? Knowing this means we can pass it on for next year.

JR Chance – the severity of the cases some years is higher than others – the worst this year was just people who had drunk too much, it has been much worse in previous years and freps can't do much about it. This year we stressed to the freps when it was time to escalate and in what situations you should be willing to escalate either to college or the emergency services, as freps used to escalate things too quickly internally to the welfare team, when freps could deal with it themselves, but they didn't want to call emergency services either. Did training in prep weeks with scenarios that were interactive, so people were more confident this year on how welfare and college and emergency services fits into freshers' week. Emphasised role on peer support

rather than us as authority figures. We had a good relationship with freshers, we were ordinary peers after the week had ended quite quickly, as we didn't come across as if we had authority over them. Stressed more that WE ARE NOT THE POLICE.

SC Not just chance and luck then, but you did important things to make it work: managing freps well and provided good training so they know how to react.

JR I want to do first aid training for some freps next year too, e.g. welfare officers, team leaders, JCR leadership.

JS The key thing this year was communication and working with other people. I did lots of events with the International Rep, PGM and international events were really good when we worked together, a lot more ambitious - especially with other MCR presidents, e.g. quiz night at Ustinov was very well attended. It set the precedent for their Cuth's experience. Said to them from day one that we're an integrated JCR, and are as welcome as much as anyone else – they can go to the relaxed events as well, but some might want to get involved. I think it's about working with Head Frep, President, Social Sec, to make sure everyone knows what going on and feels included, making active efforts to bring everyone together. With the International Rep we had PhD students doing quizzes with first year undergrad internationals, but it worked very well, bought together people who wouldn't know each other otherwise.

SC That all sounds very positive. Not settling for a separate bubble that all internationals and PGs are in but creating opportunities where they can meet others as well - also clear in their place within the JCR and actively reaching out to others too.

MINUTES AFTER HERE ARE FROM 17.10.21

<p>Discrimination and Diversity</p>	<p>Everybody reintroduces themselves on the Zoom call</p> <p>SC did you want to talk about unconscious bias or diversity training CM? Discussions have been had about diversity training for exec and trustees as part of your term of office. KB did research as to what would be appropriate. What are your students' thoughts on what KB has researched and which of the options would be most appropriate?</p> <p>KB Unconscious bias and diversity training have been researched, a lot of waffle online but there are options in-person but also online versions as well. There are two main options, quite mainstream providers, Equality and Diversity UK, and Diversity Trust. Both equality diversity and inclusion training. First is face-to-face or video, but only up to 15 participants and it's a half-day so quite a long time. This is £495. The latter is online, and 2-3 hours facilitated webinar, 15 active participants but 100 if they're not interactive. This one is £750. Questions about how it would be implemented and who would want to come. Would like your ideas on what you think would be good.</p> <p>CM Other than group size, is there one option that seems better to you?</p> <p>KB I looked at reviews for how it would work for education as many of them were more corporate-inclined. The Diversity Trust is more up to date in terms of looking at multiple angles, e.g., in-person, online. More of an ongoing thing as well, they have materials for further down the line as well in the future, about making sure people implement it and change their behaviours, long-term progress.</p> <p>AW Will they offer a charity discount or is it set?</p>	
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SC They're probably the set prices, that's what we should assume. There is also a third option – I run an unconscious bias training at work, about 3 hours, would require some tweaking but would work. Goes through biases, discrimination. It doesn't have much intersectionality, discussion of language, cultural competencies etc. so it does have drawbacks. Would be free, but maybe not good.

AW Another year, this should be done before people take up the role, in June before the prep interviews happen. The cost is not extreme, but it is high, we need to have a conversation about who the best person to do it is, maximising our benefit from it given the cost.

KB When considering who is best to have this training, remember the second one has more that aren't interactive. If we're looking at more than 15 then that's the best one. SC's option isn't a good option for longevity as he won't be here forever.

JS Would it be per-head or just set regardless of how many come?

SC It's a flat rate.

JS Could we offer it to sports and socs execs as well, as that is a target area, could widen the training beyond JCR-specific roles?

AW We're running those at the end of this month. We're discussing this with Communities Committee next week about how we're going to run it. It would be a good idea, but it would become quite difficult pragmatically as you need to time it right and sports and socs often aren't elected until shortly before or after prep interviews. But we could filter down ideas if they provide materials and incorporate them into our training.

PA Communities run sports and socs training, if that could be done by an external body that would be better – it's not great to have that responsibility of training with elected student representatives who might just be in second years or have the experience of training to deliver a workshop that is quite important.

SC Some concern over cost, but we want more people involved and an external body to run this, the question of who and timing has been raised that needs to be thought about. Trustees have agreed to promote it this year, the problem is cost but there's no reason why it couldn't happen still.

AW With the cost, it's not that we couldn't afford to do it – it's a broader concern that the cost of training like this is shouldered by common rooms, when our SU should be there to run trainings like this but it doesn't. The university does nothing to do this training, but costs are still shouldered by colleges and common rooms. I don't feel like long-term this is something we should be paying for, it should be coming from someone else. This is using student funds to fix the university's problem, they should be addressing this. PVC of colleges wants a module of various training on different points and they're working towards that, e.g. consent and anti-racism - but they don't do anything towards that, the JCR runs that entirely.

CM Who has had unconscious bias training? 4 of you. Is there a possibility of doing SC training as a small group and then another external training for a larger group?

SC I would be happy to adapt it from my work and run that.

JG I like that idea.

JR Not much overlap with sports and socs training and unconscious bias training. You need both of them, an informal one where you can ask questions would be a good idea.

PA The SU do run equality and diversity training, more geared towards exec members of their own societies, could ask them to help run it? They may have a workshop they can provide to us.

KB I looked into university training, they do it through Oracle. It seems to be a self-paced online training like the one on consent that you have to do before you arrive here. I reached out to them and they didn't want to offer it to colleges, only SU societies.

SC We have discussed this quite a bit now, the SU clearly could do more, but what would you guys like to happen.

CL I wonder if there is any way of training up the incoming members of communities committee to facilitate the training? If we want to have two different forms of them.

SC I would like to propose that I run a training session on a weekend for a smaller group, and we also purchase from the Diversity Trust that 100 people could come to. Is that what we're thinking as a group?

AW will talk to the exec, and to someone in the SU. Your point about delivering it ourselves China is interesting, as the university trains people to run them, could we train students to deliver it to other students as its more cost effective.

JG Consent workshop is like training the trainers as well.

	<p>PA Training students to train other students is good, I ran anti-racism workshops and that would have been helpful. Communities would be up for that. SC what sort of context would your training be in?</p> <p>SC The context of my training is that it's designed around taking equality and diversity further than mandatory work we have to do which is through e-learning. Recapping stuff in the Equality Act and how they can be discriminated against through their protected characteristics, what it looks like, and then exploring why diversity is important, the benefits it brings with a view to then looking at the barriers to that in society, examining bias, accepting that we all have it and discuss how to combat it. Currently in a workplace setting, but I could run it and then hand it over to participants who want to run it and make it better for educational settings.</p> <p>PA Sounds good, but how good is it just to have one person running it, could anyone else help it?</p> <p>SC Would you be willing to help me with that?</p> <p>PA Sure, but it could be anybody from Communities Committee that would help, I'll ask them.</p> <p>JS The SU do train people for active bystander workshops, I don't know if there's currently provision for it, but could do more EDI-based stuff with the Welfare and Liberation Officer at the SU. Good to have it paid an embedded in that culture so that they act on them outside the meeting. Echo what PA said that people elected to roles in Communities Committee shouldn't be responsible for delivering that stuff in future years and that they're adequately trained to deliver that as well, their own experiences</p>	<p>PA Discuss with Communities Committee who will help SC with the training</p>
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	<p>aren't always universally applicable. Working with the SU is a better mechanism, rather than just expected minority reps to do the work without a framework to prepare them for that</p> <p>SC So it's better from an appropriate person from within Cuth's and peers rather than external people who will no longer be around.</p> <p>KB If we're talking about using an external provider and SC's training, we can get free recourses from there as well that could be incorporated into SC's one. Could yours go into a train-the-trainer sort of one that would remain 15-20 and then the external larger one could be for a wider group of people?</p> <p>SC Get external materials first definitely. There is also an element of timing, the earlier on has the greater impact, should do development work with Communities Committee, an external provider would be quicker and could be done first before a smaller, ideally in-person workshop if delivered by a member of Communities Committee.</p> <p>General agreement to get the £750 Diversity Trust 100-person capacity training for a wider group of people, and then a smaller workshop by SC and members of Communities Committee later in the year that can then be delivered by students again in future years.</p>	
<p>Inclusion and Accessibility</p>	<p>AW Sports and Societies Equality Charter is under the Code of Behaviour Policy. Was going to look it at next week but wondered if people had any thoughts now?</p> <p>CM I'm happy to help.</p> <p>SC Anyone else?</p>	

JG, BT, CL all volunteer

AW Relevant to the trustees mostly but everyone is welcome. I think the Code of Behaviour is very lacking in some areas though as well, not sure who's looking at that in the trustee policy review?

SC I suspect it may be me. Do you have thoughts on it?

JG I'm happy to help or look over it as well.

SC Any wider thought on the Code of Behaviour, please email me and we can have a conversation. Is there anything specific that you think needs a change AW?

AW It seems to focus more on the idea of respect in a sporting context, but it doesn't have enough on respect in a more general way, e.g. respecting opinions, identities, views, lifestyle choices etc. Doesn't deal with offensive behaviour, or making sure social activities remain inclusive.

SC Glad you've brought it up, needs talking about. What about training for sports and socs execs, are you looking into that as well?

AW Date has been confirmed but it hasn't been communicated yet.

SC What's involved?

AW Done as one session, JW (Vice-Principal) and TW (Principal) do a meet and greet to create a rapport with presidents/captains and social secs so that they communicate with discipline issues, visible presence of authority. The training last year talked about

language, theming, respectful of people's identity really. A lot about misconceptions or little-known things, things people overlook, e.g. different financial backgrounds. Not outing people about a part of their identity, not making assumptions, not to create uncomfortable situations. Will try and find it from last year.

SC Does anybody have any statistics on the characteristic makeup of Cuth's?

AW College refuse to give us this information under our current SLA, but with the new one we can request self-declared information about people. Pretty in-line with the university averages that can be found online, so you can extrapolate from that.

SC Are there specific minority groups that need a special focus to not experience discrimination during their time at Cuth's?

CL Discussions about disability in the university are often very much more focused on physical disability, could do with more awareness of neurodivergent issues as well. If people were more aware of that they may be more inclined to be less harsh more generally.

JS All groups are as important, none stand out loads in comparison to others, but with Covid contextually, there is a specific focus on Sinophobia as well, has been a big problem and should be a current top of the agenda item as well. A lot of transphobia during the pandemic as well, not sure if that's seeping into university culture as well, but it's become a lot worse recently, may be moving from online into our social spaces as well.

KB Need to look at the implication of Covid, making sure local students are included as well.

	<p>CL Islamophobia has always been a huge issue by antisemitism often doesn't even get a mention as it's more culturally ingrained, should be recognised as important.</p> <p>SC Can talk about this in the next meeting, but this is an opportunity to think of ways to tackle some of these problems.</p> <p>AW On financial accessibility, myself and IC (FCO) had a long discussion about budget and how sports and socs funding is huge, yet we only give out around £2,000 to the Participation Fund. The way we do sub-matching should change and maybe with the Participation Fund as well.</p>	
<p>External Outreach Projects</p>	<p>CL Lots of things ready to happen but it's early in term. The main focus has been getting FRAMDA up and running again, has been a bit tricky but we're going to meet on Monday and start after Monday half-term. All by energy this term will go to 12 Days of Outreach, a lot of stuff to approach but wants to let the committee do what they are passionate about. The other thing to be set up after Christmas is a regular volunteering slot with a food bank or soup kitchen in the local area so it's not just sporadic bursts of volunteering.</p>	
<p>Internal Charitable Projects</p>	<p>SC Anything going on here?</p> <p>CL Not as yet. A 24-hour musical is in the works but with 12 South Theatre. Also thinking about doing an internal fundraising thing at the end of term but on the backburner.</p> <p>AW Movember will be good as well, JG has things planned, will work with CL on it.</p>	

	<p>JG Will talk to CL about the fundraising side of it, have a speaker for it who will come in and talk about men's mental health and his own experiences. Talking about doing a big pub quiz, a Cuth's Live, and also a charity football/rugby match for fundraising and the Movember campaign too online and with posters etc.</p>	
<p>Democracy and Participation</p>	<p>AW First meeting attendance wasn't quite what we wanted, Facebook outage didn't help the night of the meeting, next one should be big, committees will have to come and sports and socs reps should be coming as well. An amazing meeting for elections, many roles were filled, GovComm had loads of keen people, lots of keen freshers which was nice to see. Committee applications have been mixed. SocialComm was three to one applicants to positions, but broadly fine for the others.</p> <p>CL I've got Outreach filled, less than last year but to be expected.</p> <p>SC Any thoughts on other issues?</p> <p>JR Is the facilities rework still going through, everyone has written a rewrite it turns out.</p> <p>AW IC's is the rewrite to end all rewrite, his one will fix all the problems.</p> <p>SC What else do we want to see more people coming into it?</p> <p>CL DUCK Rep hasn't been filled this year.</p> <p>AW It's never filled I don't know why it exists.</p>	

AW Assistant Minority Reps elected on Tuesday will be interested to see how that works. No Working Class Students' Rep which is a problem, nobody to help with participation fund stuff IC is doing that role at the moment which is fine, but would be good to be filled.

KB I was confused about this – Working Class Association has high Cuth's participation, people do want to do stuff there so maybe they will come through and take that position.