

DPCS (James Cox) Council Report 08/11/16

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Outside of project work I have been: responding to clubs' issues, authorising expenditure from the organisation, approving purchase orders, rejecting purchase orders and approving event budgets.

Sports Strategy

- Travelled to Heston for a day to create action plan for objectives of sports strategy.
- There was a consensus in the room that funding needed to increase to clubs.
- It was confirmed that governance meetings would take place at times so students could attend.
- It was confirmed that Sport Imperial are happy to review BUCS and non-BUCS funding, with students heavily involved with the discussion.
- It was discussed that Director of Campus Services wanted to "lift the rug" surrounding Sport Imperial and student opinion, I will be able to send out a survey requesting honest feedback by the end of November (end of November to not clash with union strategy consultation).

CSP Finance Claims

- I researched how many claims MG authorisers have to approve in an attempt to decrease admin so that volunteers can focus instead on club development.
- I suggested at a CSP Finance meeting and at the Board of Trustees Meeting that evening to change the cap before MG approval to higher (currently aiming at £50).
- ICU finance researched the potential exposure to the organisation, with 28% of quantity decrease of admin but only 2.5% of expenditure. ICU finance and ICU finance manager approved the proposed change.
- CSPB discussed accountability and frequency of claims bouncing back because of lack of VAT evidence; consensus was to provide new training on VAT before changing the cap.
- DPFS to continue project to completion to create VAT resource and communicate with ICU Finance.

Varsity Update

- I have continued to lead the varsity committee by speaking directly to Director of Campus Services about options.
- Most student recommendations have been approved, which is very positive.

CSPB College Space Policy Update

- We hosted College Space Policy representatives at a workshop at the CSPB meeting last Tuesday (01/11/16) to comment on the space survey being distributed to clubs.
- CSPB made sound suggestions to improve student engagement.

Management Group Redevelopment

- A focus group has been set up through CSPB to take place on Wednesday 9th November. We aim not to stumble into the pitfalls of previous years of not having a proper plan before budgeting begins.

CSP Funding Report 01/11/16

DPCS

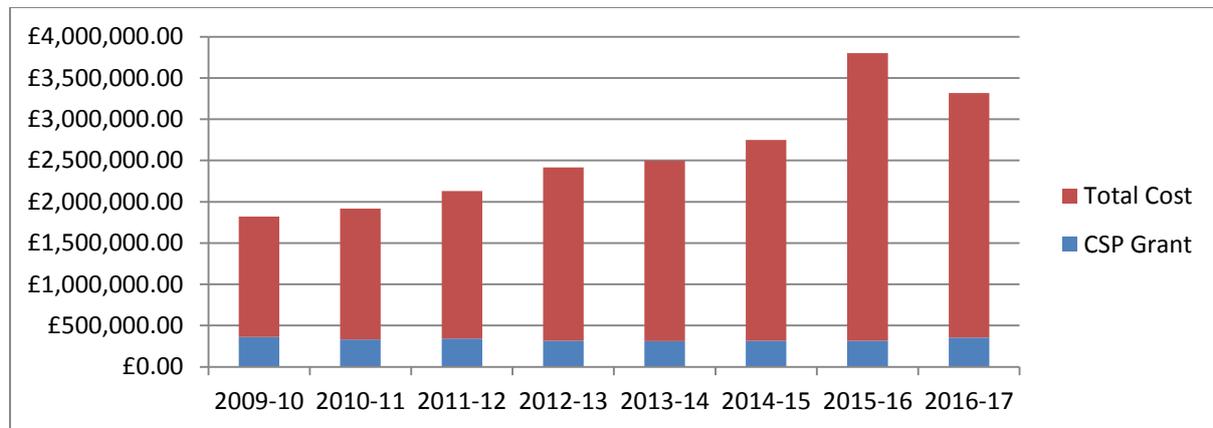


Figure 1: A graph of total cost of CSP activity as inputted into annual budgets vs. absolute annual CSP grant since 2009

At Imperial College Union we boast the largest number of clubs & societies in the UK (currently at 366). However, over the years the increase of student-led activity and its associated cost has not been matched by a proportional increase in **direct** financial support (Figure 1, more on this subtlety later).

Historic Context

In the last strategic plan, the commitment was to build financial reserves and develop other services in the union such as student development and the advice centre. Now, the union is in a much financially stronger position; we have gained respect from College as a result of the last strategic plan. Currently we are in an interesting situation, going forward we are consulting on our new strategy and also have the opportunity to renegotiate block grant with College this year.

History of CSP Funding

CSP's remain our number one engagement with our members (59.8% of the whole student body is in a club, society or project), with 27,801 memberships last year from a student body of ~17,000 students (15,844 of these were paid memberships). CSP Grant had

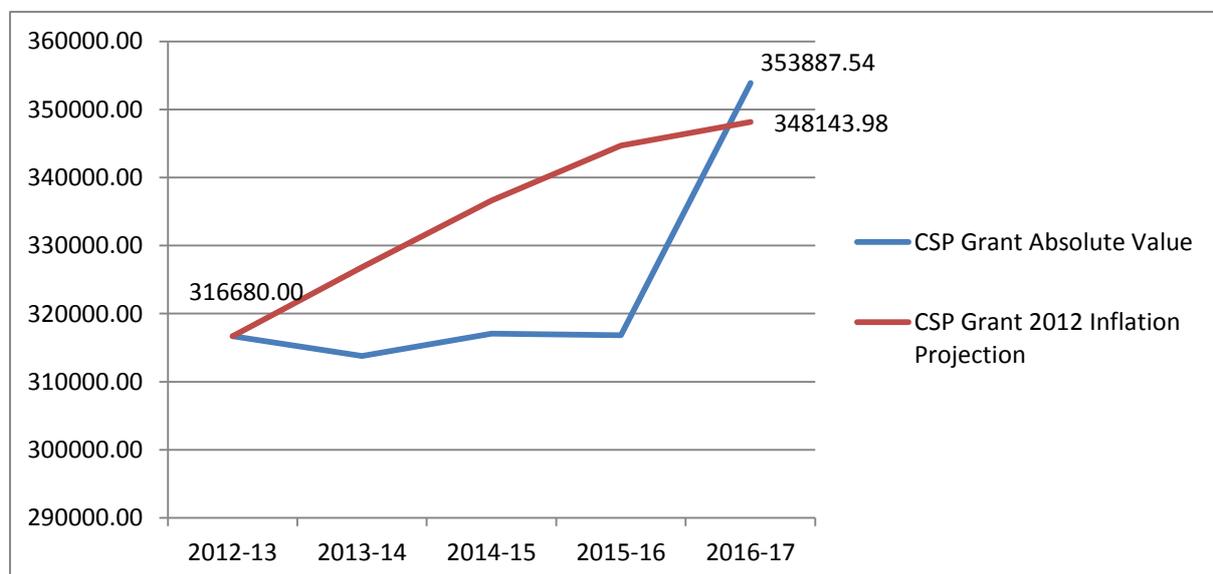


Figure 2: A graph of CSP Grant value vs. an inflation projection of CSP grant, beginning in 2012.

been maintained in approximate absolute value from 2012, not accounting for inflation (Figure 2). It is important to note that over this time, the budget freeze allowed for successful completion of the last strategic plan.

In the absence of sponsorship, clubs must increase membership cost to avoid falling into debt in their accounts. As costs have increased without increased financial support from the union, significant costs are being pushed onto membership income and other profit-making activities (Figure 3). This could be argued that an increase in activity could warrant an increase in membership cost as the member is getting more from the society, but there is no way to blanket that suggestion across 366 CSPs.

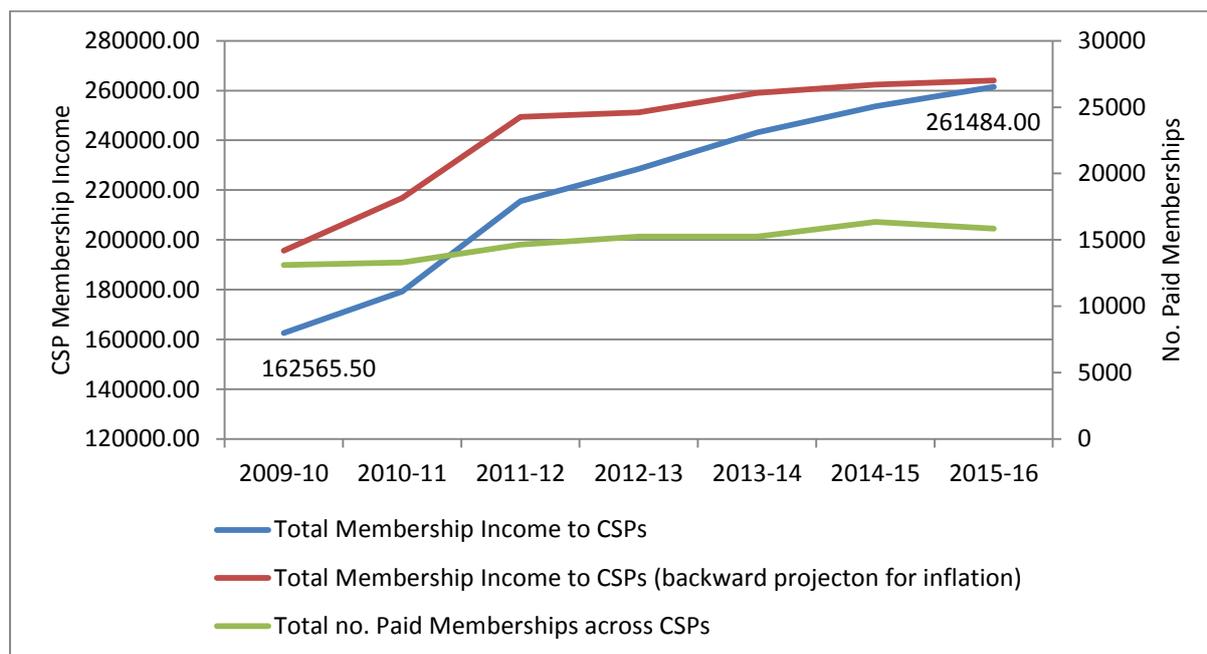


Figure 3: A graph of total paid memberships across all CSPs vs. total income to CSPs as a result of paid membership (over time)

Currently, various methods are leading to the CSP grant being distributed ever more thinly (Figure 4, Figure 5); some of these are by no means an issue:

- Any new student group that is eligible can be made into a society and create a budget at the end of the year. Providing that the core aims & objectives of the society are met in the budget they are eligible for funding from the CSP Grant.
- The Activities Development Fund is created to assist clubs in developing their activities. The fund implicitly suggests clubs should look to expand their aims & objectives and offer new activities to their members. The fund will part-fund this activity for one year to then expect the club to put the new activity into the annual budgeting process to be supported by CSP grant. This year the ADF has received **29** applications for extra funding in the first round.
- Clubs are creating improved budgets each year, which are costed well and aren't rejected at CSPB
 - o There are many issues with budget submissions as they occur at a time where students cannot devote their full attention due to exams/coursework. Indeed, club representatives may not understand the vital importance of submitting budgets

- Only 290 budgets were submitted last year for 366 clubs. Whilst some may be dormant the fact remains that there are hidden costs which are eligible for CSP grant funding which aren't appearing in these stats. Indeed, should CSPB decide that clubs without membership fees could be eligible, the pot will be stretched further.

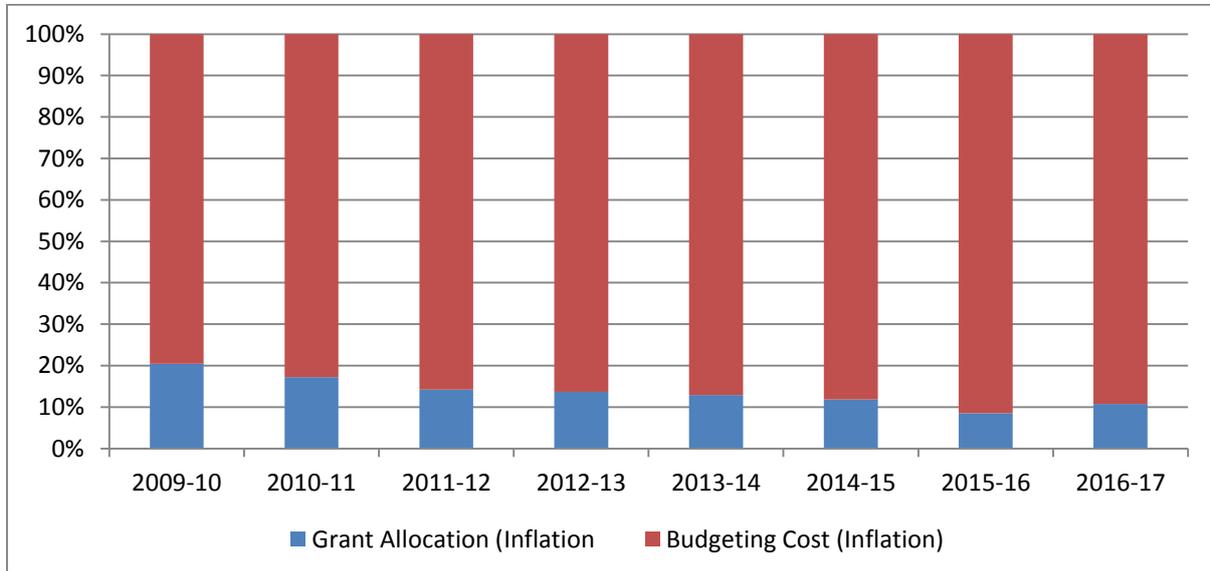


Figure 4: A proportional graph of CSP grant vs. cost as inputted into budgets. This is backward projected for inflation from now (Nov 2016)

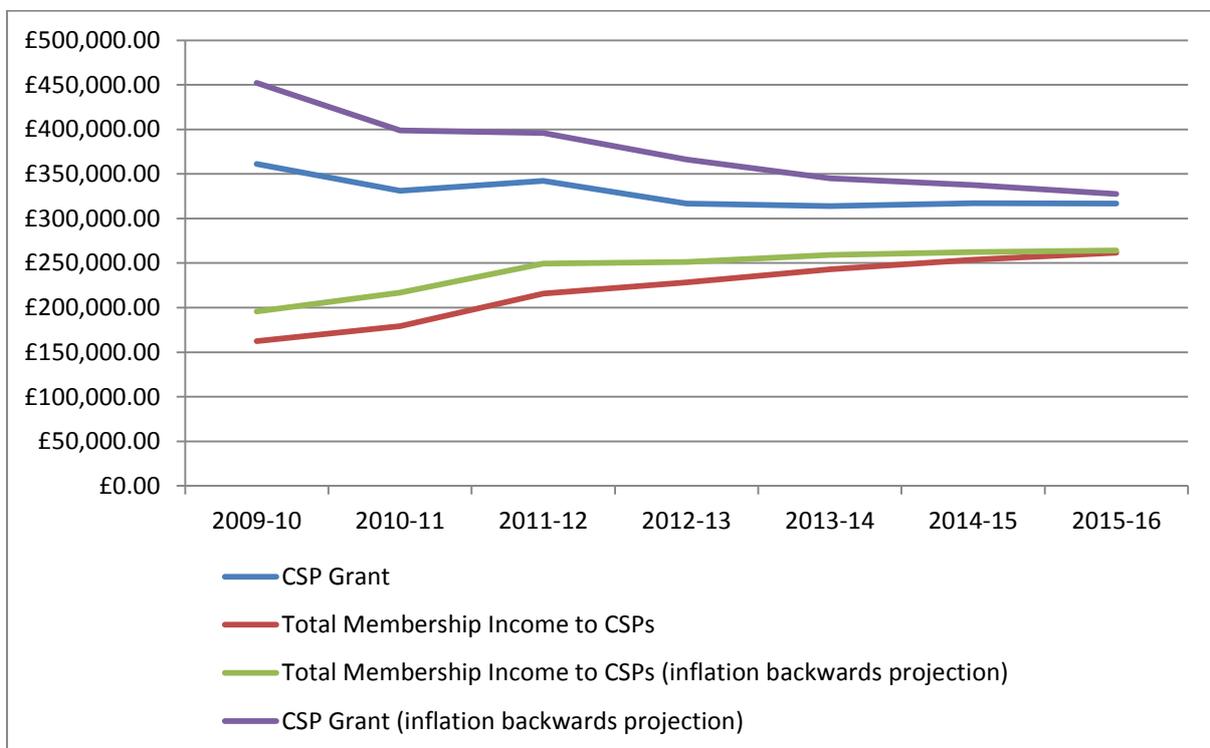


Figure 5: Indicates the decreasing value of CSP grant since 2009 compared the rising costs of paid memberships as income to CSPs.

My mandate clearly stated my priority to increase funding to CSPs. If students believe increasing CSP funding should be a priority for the next strategic plan, I expect this

information to come out of the strategy consultation. Should this information arise, it would provide evidence to realign the union's priorities regarding the new strategy. Indeed, our fairly informal consultation at Freshers' Fair indicated this (Figure 6).

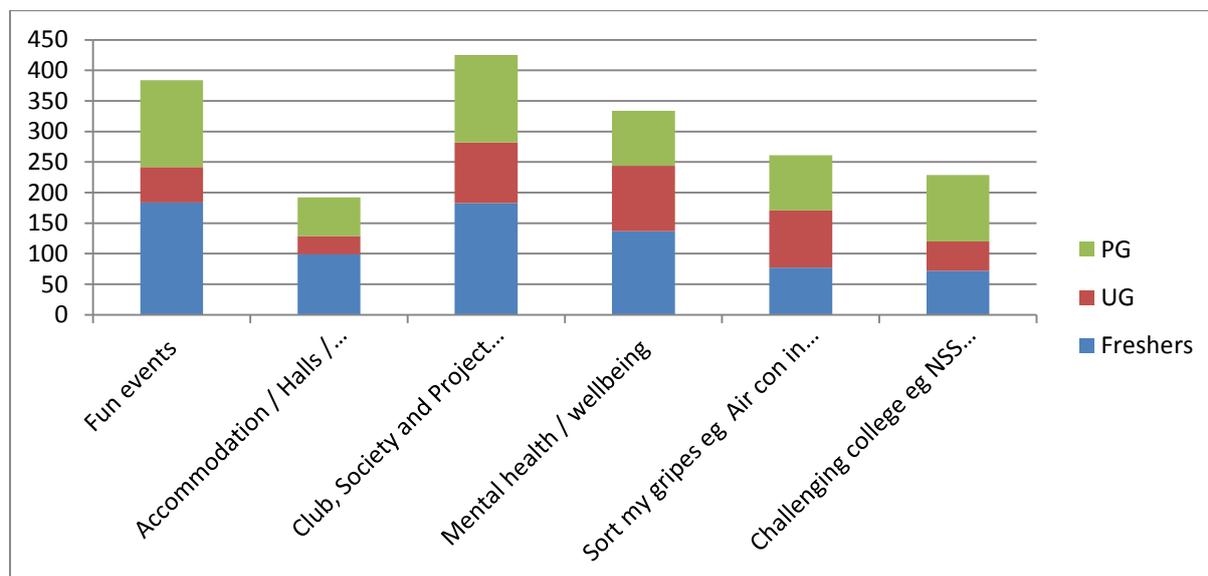


Figure 6: The results of the consultation at Freshers' Fair. Students were given 3 counters and asked "Out of these 6 issues, which 3 matter to you most. You can put more than one counter in any pot if you wish". The data was gathered in such a way to split PG, UG and freshers.

It is important to note that there is not an unlimited supply of income to the union to distribute towards CSP funding, which is why evidence from consultation is important to suggest students would prioritise this over other services. However, here are some potential avenues to increase revenue to the union which could be ring-fenced towards CSPs if necessary:

- Await block grant renegotiation from College and reason that engagement CSPs are vital to the academic mission and student career prospects.
- Re-align current life membership to create a more attractive offer and allow purchaser to send costs directly to a particular club or society.
- Increase external organisation presence at freshers' fair, using space created by improved efficiency from this year's event (up to £16,000).

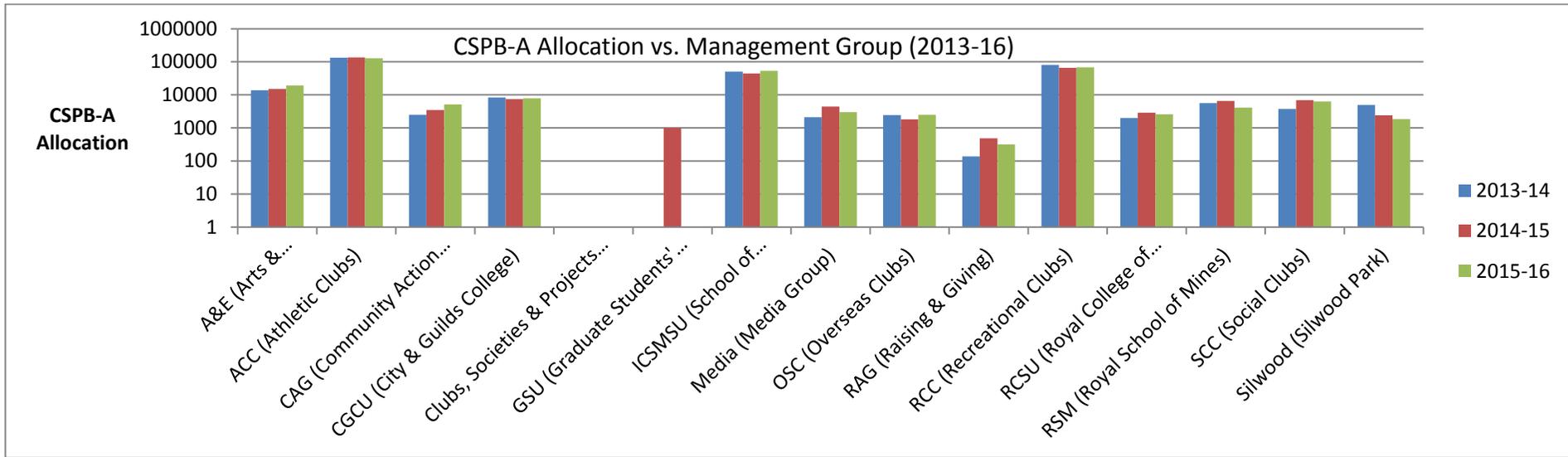
Finally, it is very important to note that whilst the CSP grant has not been rising proportionally with cost, the support to CSPs has not become stagnant. The union has been able to employ a new systems manager to assist with the Eactivities II project, as well as a new student activities administrator to tackle student gripes and allow both administrators to develop project plans for improving the minibus and room booking services.

Acknowledgements

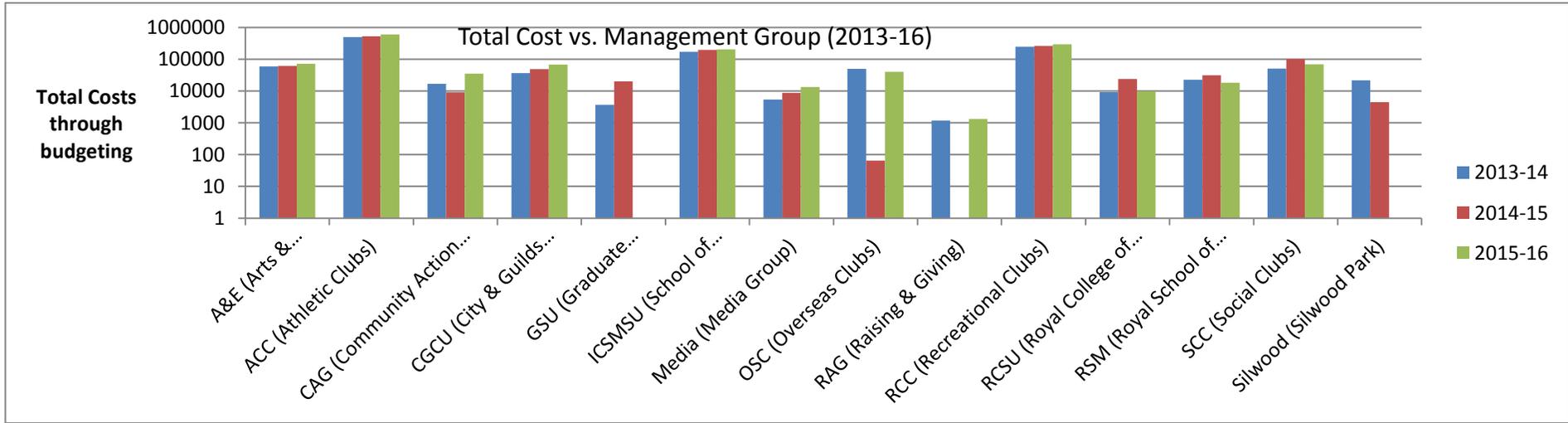
Without the coding finesse of Phil Stewart this data analysis could not be possible, I am extremely grateful as a result

Appendix

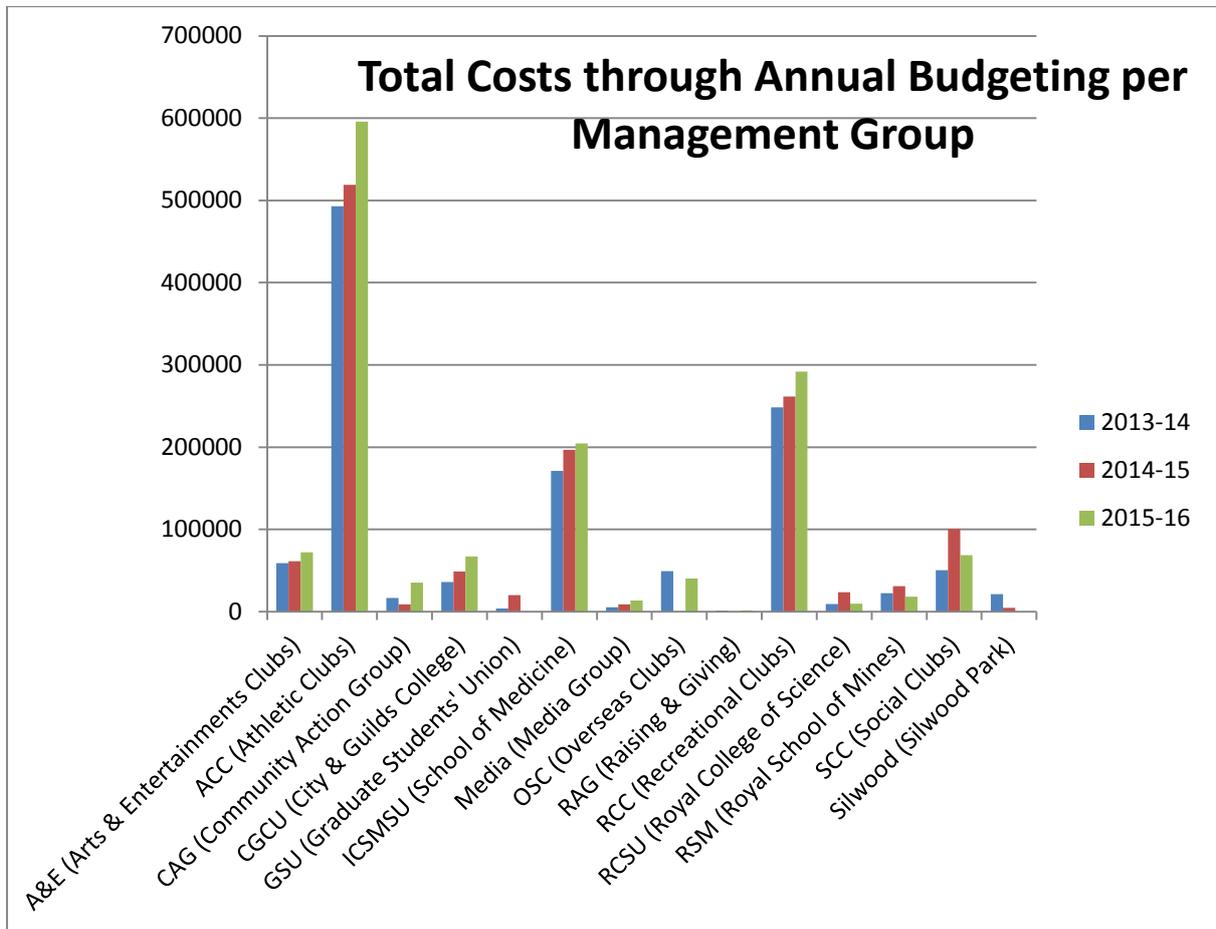
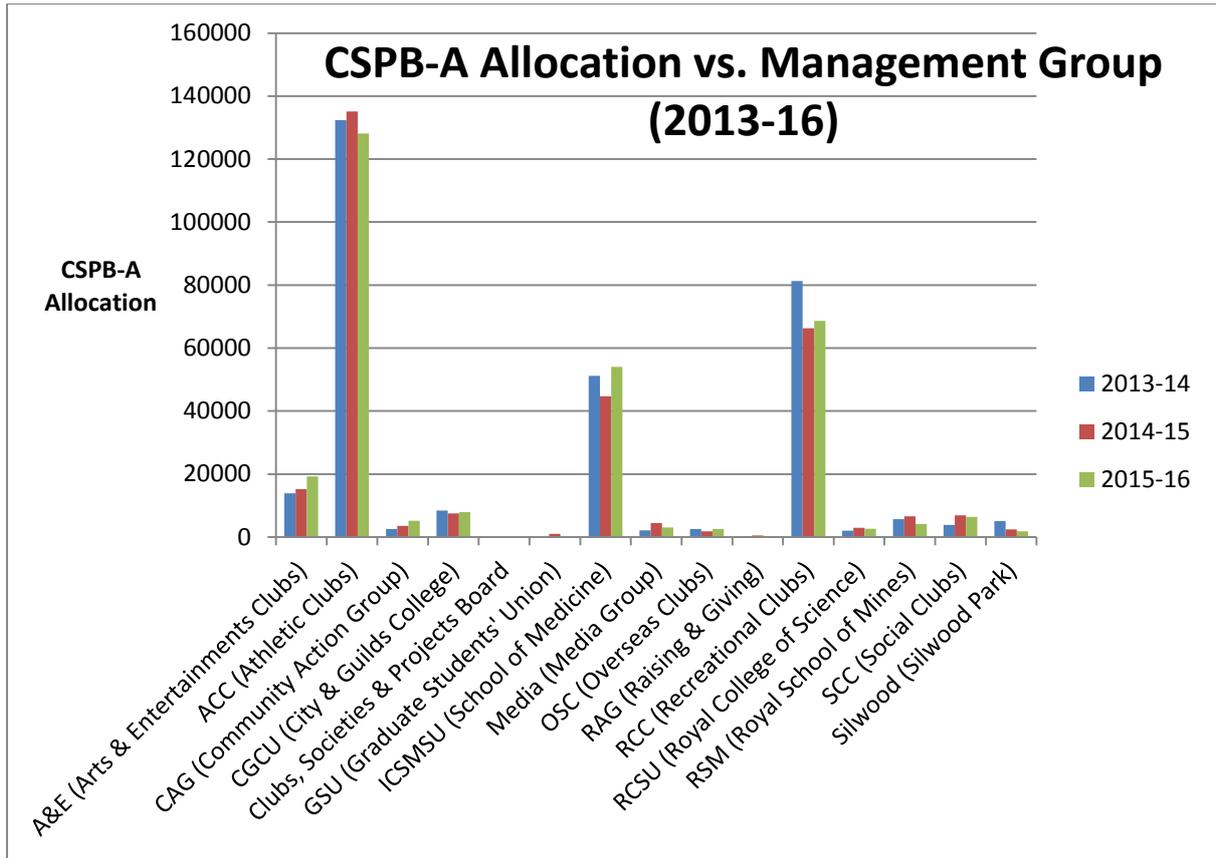
Initially, I was worried that CSP grant decreasing was decreasing the diversity of activities supported through annual budgeting. However, whilst it is clear that some Management Groups have an upward trend of block grant; this is matched by an upward trend of budgeted cost. Please see graphs to follow to visualise comparison between grant and cost, and also the graphs of absolute value for reference purposes.



Appendix 1: CSPB-A Allocation vs. Management Group. The costs are plotted on a log scale for better visualisation and comparison to other MGs and the cost graph below.



Appendix 2: Total Cost (through annual budgeting) vs. Management Group. The costs are plotted on a logarithmic axis for better visualisation and comparison between groups.

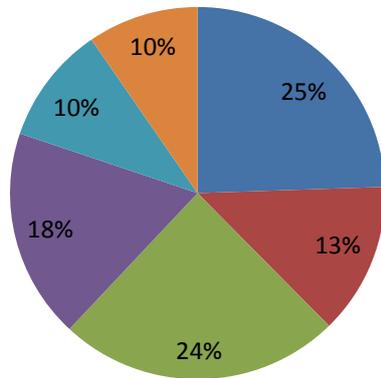


Freshers' Fair Consultation Summary

An informal consultation took place at ICU's stall in the main entrance at freshers' fair. Students were given 3 counters and asked to place any multiple of counters into the 6 containers, i.e. they could place all 3 counters in one container, or 2 in one container and one in another. The question to lead to the decision was "What matters to you most?", "What do you believe the union should be focusing on" .

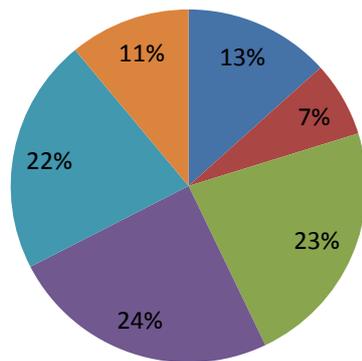
| | Freshers | Undergraduate | Postgraduate |
|---|------------|---------------|--------------|
| Fun events | 184 | 58 | 142 |
| Accommodation / Halls / landlord issues | 99 | 30 | 63 |
| Club, Society and Project funding | 183 | 99 | 143 |
| Mental health / wellbeing | 137 | 107 | 90 |
| Sort my gripes eg Air con in library | 77 | 94 | 90 |
| Challenging college eg NSS response – teaching and feedback | 72 | 48 | 109 |
| Total | 752 | 436 | 637 |

Freshers



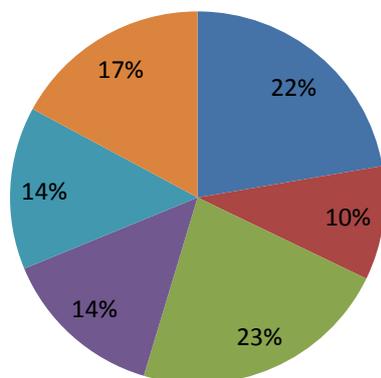
- Fun events
- Accommodation / Halls / landlord issues
- Club, Society and Project funding
- Mental health / wellbeing
- Sort my gripes eg Air con in library
- Challenging college eg NSS response – teaching and feedback

UG



- Fun events
- Accommodation / Halls / landlord issues
- Club, Society and Project funding
- Mental health / wellbeing
- Sort my gripes eg Air con in library
- Challenging college eg NSS response – teaching and feedback

PG



- Fun events
- Accommodation / Halls / landlord issues
- Club, Society and Project funding
- Mental health / wellbeing
- Sort my gripes eg Air con in library
- Challenging college eg NSS response – teaching and feedback

