

Minutes of the Imperial College Union Governance Committee
25th January 2018
Meeting Room 6, 4:00pm

Present:

Governance Chair	Dorothy Griffiths (DG)
Union President (2017-18)	Alex Chippy Compton (ACC)
Union Council Chair	Owen Heaney
Alumni Trustee	Paul Beaumont
Deputy President (Clubs & Societies)	Tom Bacarese-Hamilton (TBH)
Deputy President (Welfare)	Fintan O'Connor (FOC)
Deputy President (Education)	Nick Burstow
Administration Support Manager (Clerk)	Angela D'Souza (ADS)

Permanent Observers:

Managing Director	Jarlath O'Hara (JOH)
Head of Student Voice & Communications	Andrew Keenan (AK)

1. Welcome and Chair's Business

Dot Griffiths, Governance Chair, welcomed the Committee to the third meeting of the new academic year.

2. Conflict of interest

None.

3. Apologies to be noted

None.

4. Minutes of previous meeting: 22nd November 2017

DG requested the deletion of the action point relating to Item 7 of the minutes "*DG to review list of lapsed policies and agree who should review them*" This is because the Committee will review policy renewals annually.

The minutes of 22nd November 2017 were further discussed and signed off as an accurate record of the meeting subject to the correction requested.

Matters arising from the minutes

Voting system management

The voting system has a heavy reliance on individual staff members. This still remains a high risk concern.

Action:

JOH to consider options to mitigate this risk and provide a plan of approach for DG and PB as the process is captured.

Matters to Report

5. Board of Trustees Lapsed Policies

Currently Imperial College Union policies lapse after three years. Many policies have not been renewed and there is an uncertainty around which policies are still valid. We have reviewed the policies and have a list of those that are lapsed for Board, Council and subcommittees.

Action:

ACC – To provide an update on the lapsed policies for the 19th March meeting and have a discussion around how often these policies should be reviewed moving forward.

OH – Will review the Council policies in preparation for the March meeting.

6. Governance Review Update

The Governance Review is now entering its second stage.

It planned to look at Postgraduate and Business School representation, disciplinary process, Union Council reform and elections feedback. It is more realistic, given the rest of the Union activity, to formalise the current structures of Business School representation within the Faculty itself rather than try and achieve more this year.

Discussion points:

Board vs Council

The description of Council on the website is somewhat ambiguous and therefore open to misinterpretation. It needs to be re-written.

There is a need for Board to clarify and communicate to students the work of Board.

Action:

AK to amend both statements on the Union website as soon as possible.

Motion of No Confidence/ Censure

After a motion of No Confidence was brought to Council against an ordinary member last term many members of Council believe that motion is a very extreme action. The only other way to remove a volunteer from their role is to lodge a formal complaint with the Union President and have them investigated. Council have expressed a desire for a middle ground, particularly when addressing this issue within clubs and societies.

AK – More important to consider how we support students who are not performing in their volunteer roles. What else can we do?

DG- How can we encourage Presidents to have conversations with their Officers before a dismissal occurs.

DG- Perhaps a Volunteer Agreement could help? Have a Statement of Expectation for all volunteering roles and allow further support for them. If issues still occur these could go to the relevant subcommittee of Council. CSPB is a valid middle ground.

Action:

TBH to review Volunteer Policy to include a Volunteer Agreement.

7. Leadership Elections 2018 Update

The November 2017 Governance Committee set out a new schedule for our Leadership Elections cycle, which has been adopted by the Elections working group.

Ben MacPhee from Canterbury Christ church SU has agreed to be the new Returning Officer.

Action:

AK will email Board for a stamp of approval before the end of the week.

ACC - Council expressed some concern with opening voting and campaigning at the same time.

DG - Noted concern. Committee discussed further options but agreed to try the newly designed cycle and then capture feedback for next year's elections.

Action:

AK to lead on surveying candidates after the Elections to obtain their views on the changes.

DG - suggested trying a couple of drop in lunches with the Officer Trustees to see if more students engage in running for the five Officer Trustee positions or Constituent College Unions.

Action:

ACC to liaise with all Officer Trustees to arrange drop in lunches.

8. Union Council discussions and decisions

AK – provided a brief overview of what Council are discussing. Developing our Constituent Unions is a priority for 2017/18 and this year has seen a rapid increase in the direct contact and support offered to Constituent Union Presidents by ICU staff. Most of this support has been focussed on the CU Presidents moving beyond the day-to-day operations of their CU and concentrating on more long term priorities.

Discussion followed around the role of the Constituent Unions and whether mapping the CUs to Faculties in the College would be more effective.

DG –asked what the role of the CUs are and what support can we offer to develop their strategy and their plan? We have to be aware of being exclusionary in this.

Action:

ADS – Include Constituent Unions as standing item on Governance Committee agenda.

DG also pointed out the importance of providing some events not funded by alcohol sales and asked whether the College might be sympathetic to supporting more of such events as they are important for inclusion.

Action:

JOH – To pick up the potential funding aspect for Constituent Unions.

9. AOB

ACC requested a change of date to the next Governance Committee meeting. New date proposed Monday 19th March at 5pm.

Action:

ADS to re-arrange meeting and circulate new calendar invitation.

Meeting closed: 5:40pm.