

Minutes of the Imperial College Union Governance Committee
22nd November 2017
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 committee and new alumni trustee, Paul Beaumont, to the second meeting of the new academic year.

2. Conflict of interest

None.

3. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of 6th September 2017 were discussed and signed off as an accurate record of the meeting.

4. Apologies to be noted

None.

Matters to Report

5. Leadership Elections 2018 Proposal

- Preparations for the next major elections cycle will soon be underway. AK approached his preferred candidate, Ian Dancy, Chief Executive of Students' Union UCL to fill the post of Returning Officer. He declined the position. Once a suitable candidate has been found, details will be circulated via email

to the Governance Committee for appointment and then to the Board of Trustees for ratification.

- Formally the election timetable is set by the Returning Officer once they are appointed. However it is standard practice to propose a timetable ahead of their appointment.

RESOLVED:

Governance Committee endorsed the proposed timetable.

Governance Committee endorsed the proposed position list.

Governance Committee endorsed the approach to recruiting a Returning Officer.

Discussion points:

Campaigning & Voting

ACC- Should we cut down on campaigning and voting during the elections. Currently there is a two week period campaigning period for students. Is this too long?

DG - There is a level of fatigue over the elections. How do we keep the participation rate up?

DG - Trial cutting two weeks to one week for campaigning this year.

Pre-elections - Felix promotion. Need to think about how we get the message out. It is the biggest driver and could result in more candidates running.

Candidates could be revealed in Friday edition of Felix. Big media blast on screen on Queens Lawn publicising this.

Voting starts on Friday, straight after candidates revealed. Campaigning continues for one week.

AK - We need to think about the manifesto deadline and could have a streamed live debate mid-week to keep the interest going. Could offer candidates training Monday – Friday before big reveal too.

DG – Trial this process for one year. It will then be reviewed as soon as it is over to see if it works.

ACTION:

AK to make the necessary revisions and circulate timetable to all the Committee.

'Elections team'

Working group – Agreed that they should begin their work one week earlier in a more formal manner, with timely minutes and action trackers.

ACTION:

AK to implement for the remaining cycle of elections for the year.

Voting system management

Currently voting system is 'homemade' with heavy reliance on individual staff members. DG expressed concerns that this is a high risk area and should be a priority for the Union to sort out.

ACTION:

JOH to check whether this is on the Operational Risk Register.

JOH to come back to Committee with timescale for addressing it as it is a high risk area.

6. Verbal Update: Governance Review

ACC – Steering Group meeting was held on the 13th November. There is now a planned timeline in place. More defined two phase approach. Will be discussed at Board as it is on the Board Action Tracker.

ACTION: ACC to circulate timeline.

JOH - Brought to Committee's attention that this is a strain on resource as it is an intensive piece of work required every five years. However there is no particular resource in place to pick this work up. Early discussion as to whether the organisation needs this resource now. We need to be mindful of this and be prepared to put this in place.

ACC - Cannot have a rolling review as the Education Act says this has to be completed every five years.

DG - Are there ways to spread this out and still meet the requirements?

AK - The agenda is driven by what is important to students that year.

JOH – This work can be undertaken by a staff member not necessarily an Officer Trustee. We can get temporary help.

DG – It is important to leave the constitution in good order for the successors next year.

ACTION:

JOH to get additional resource in place to support governance if required.

7. Governance Committee Terms of Reference.

The Governance Committee has delegated responsibility, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, for ensuring the effective governance of Imperial College Union.

RESOLVED:

Committee agreed to accept the draft Terms of Reference.

The Committee reviewed the Annual Work Plan.

ACC – All our policies have lapsed and some need updating. Most of the lapsed policies must be reviewed this year.

ACTION:

ACC – bring lapsed policies to the January 2018 meeting and agree on an ongoing cycle of which policies should be reviewed.

DG – Review list of lapsed policies and agree who should review them.

8. Student Appeal

AK left the room.

Committee discussed student appeal. It was not upheld. The committee agreed the Union needed additional processes to manage such issues.

ACTION:

ADS - To communicate timely response of the outcome of appeal to the student.

ACC – Draft new processes and bring back to committee in March 2018.

9. AOB

None

Meeting closed: 5:40pm.