

Royal College of Science Union

**Minutes of the 1st meeting of the General Committee**

Held at 18:00 on 21st June 2016 in Union Meeting Room 4

**Chair:** Lloyd James – President

**Clerk:** Michael Edwards – Honorary Secretary

**Attendees:**

Polina Yankova – Honorary Junior Treasurer

Kate Chandler – Welfare Officer

Rani Mehta – Science Challenge Chair

Ben Sharpless – Broadsheet Editor

George Brooks – Sports Officer

Abhijay Sood – Departmental Representative (Physics)

Emma McCracken – Departmental Representative (Maths)

**Apologies received from:**

Sam Robinson – Vice-President (Activities)

Sinziana Giju – Academic Affairs Officer

Ben Collier – Publicity Officer

Max Moser – Departmental Representative (Chemistry)

**Absent:**

Isabella Withnell – RAG Champion

Raven Connelly – Departmental Representative (Biology)

Zack Xiang – Web Communications Officer

**MEETING AGENDA:**

A. Chair's Welcome

*(Lloyd)*

LJ welcomed the officers to the meeting and outlined the role of General Committee to the running of the Union.

**MATTERS FOR REPORT:**

B. Report from the Executive Committee

*(Lloyd)*

## Agenda

### What Committee (What Meeting)

The minutes of the meeting of 17/06/2016 were reported on. LJ outlined the budget and promised to circulate minutes for disclosure.

- So far – two sponsors have been confirmed. GSK have promised to provide some funding alongside Schroeders. Final confirmation will be circulated in time.

**ACTION – LJ to continue working on sponsorship – delegate the role as necessary.**

### C. Report from the Entertainments Board

*(Lloyd)*

The minutes of the meeting of 17/06/2016 were reported on. Planned events were outlined by LJ and changes to the traditional events were noted.

- Another 'Big Ball' on the magnitude of the Rooftop Ball is in the plans – however, the Kensington Roof Gardens are a 'no-go' due to licensing issues.
  - A future venue mooted was the Fenchurch St Sky Gardens – due to the crippling cost this event would certainly need significant subsidy and collaboration with CGCU or DoCSoc.
- CH outlined the ideas behind some of the events, following on from the past year's events.
  - Personalised t-shirts will be a part of the event due to their utility this year.
  - 'Fun and friendly' volunteers from the DepSocs could be selected to help run the event. Fun games (involving drinking – policy conflict) could be worked into the event.
  - The "Mingle" (working title – need a nicer title) will be a casual starter event on the second week of the new term.
- Comments were sought from the officers.
  - KC stated that Metric is an 'underrated venue', with a good central location and cheap drinks in a useful space.
  - CH made clear that the event was meant to cater to all types, and to build community.
- CH will start looking for Autumn Ball venues along the lines of the minutes, making clear that a higher price may not necessarily deter people, as seen in the case of the Rooftop Ball.
  - LJ to meet with DoCSoc to discuss terms of collaboration and engagement in the coming year.

**ACTIONS – LJ to get in touch with DoCSoc re: 2016-17 collaboration.**

**CH to research potential venues for Autumn Ball and 'Big Ball'**

**Ents to meet again to finalise events for Autumn term (August)**

## Agenda

### What Committee (What Meeting)

#### D. Report from the Operations Board

(Lloyd)

The minutes of the meeting of 17/06/2016 were reported on.

- RM reported on the Science Challenge developments as in the minutes, and threw out a call for suggestions of venue or question ideas?
  - LJ suggested the introduction of an open-ended 'Design' question in place of either the Video or Podcast section. This was well received.
- Website development – ZX was not present, and so the discussions can be found in the minutes.

### **ACTION – RM to work on Science Challenge as per Operations Minutes**

#### E. Report from the Academic Affairs Committee

(Lloyd)

SG was not present – the discussions of the meeting of 13/06/2016 can be found in the minutes.

#### F. Report from the Clubs and Activities Committee

(Lloyd)

No minutes were available for this – LJ outlined the role of C&A and apologized to PY, the HJT, who was not invited.

- The C&A Committee contains the RCSU DepSocs and the newly formed SynBIC committee.

### **MATTERS FOR DECISION:**

#### G. Freshers Handbook and Broadsheet

(Ben)

- ME stated that the budget set for the Broadsheet was £1500 – three times the spending for three publications.
- LJ noted that one of the main challenges was getting writers together.
  - BS stated that he was a Comment Editor for Felix this year, and so finding contributors shouldn't be an issue.
- Templates can be found on DropBox – access will be given to all relevant people.
  - The Fresher's Handbook is usually done by the Broadsheet Editor – BS is happy to do this, but will only be in London temporarily over the summer – a key needs to be provided for BS to have office access as and when.

### **ACTIONS – LJ to provide BS with RCSU Office Key**

Agenda

What Committee (What Meeting)

**Dropbox Access to be provided to all relevant people**

H. Welfare Week and Other Welfare Activities

(Kate)

LJ outlined his expectations for Welfare in the coming year – with more than the ‘Welfare Week’ and more of a presence the year round.

- KC outlined her plans:
  - More focus upon the three strands of student welfare – Mental, Physical, and Sexual.
  - There is a lot available for students – they just need to know where to find help.
    - Ideas for this include a quiz with answers leading to the most helpful source of advice.
  - There is a lot more College interest in dealing with the issues following Mentality.
  - RCSU has been found by the Felix Sex Survey to be fairly ‘sex-positive’ and the issues surrounding positive sexual relationships need to be pushed – including issues with consent and STIs.
- The committee was in favour of KC’s ideas, and LJ stated that the funding would be available for her to carry out her plans.
  - The funds for Welfare in previous years was agreed not to have been spent effectively, with aspects such as the Bouncy Castle not having a meaningful impact.
    - As an alternative, we could hold a ‘Puppy Room’ event in similar style to CGCU’s Welfare event (details can be found in the Executive Meeting of 17/06/2016).
    - LJ is still actioned to seek out the ‘Puppy Room’ provider for next ‘Welfare Week’ from CGCU.
- Plans for Welfare Week so far are an event every week.
  - The previous Welfare Officer was in post for two years – with some ‘new blood’ we should see a new and innovative approach to the RCSU’s welfare role.
- Finally, KC asked if there were any issues with inviting external charities to speak at Welfare-related events.
  - ME noted that constitutionally, as long as the organization is acting lawfully and their aims conform to the Union (RCSU and ICU), then there is no issue.
  - LJ asked that any proposed invitees were run past the Executive prior to invitation to ensure everything works out.

## Agenda

### What Committee (What Meeting)

#### **ACTION – KC to develop and report on her Welfare Plan for next Operations Board and General Committee**

##### I. Sports Events

(George)

- GB noted that RSMU could also be invited along to participate in the Fresher's Sports day event.
  - On this topic the following additions were also suggested.
    - Mixed events – to be inclusive
    - Hockey and 'Tag Rugby'
  - The venue for the event was asked – Heston is most likely due to the facilities available.
  - The 22<sup>nd</sup> was stated to be a better – earlier on and could avoid the change in season?
- LJ noted that, in a meeting with the current CGCU Executive, there is significant interest in taking part in this event.
- LJ raised the prospect of RCSU Sports teams.
  - GB accepted the feasibility of RCSU Sports, and suggested that they could be casual as opposed to fully competitive.
  - CH noted that there are many London casual leagues that you can sign up to.
    - The opportunity to provide *Physical Welfare* provision was noted.
  - LJ is more than happy to fully delegate Sports responsibility to GB, and will expect reporting on progress.

#### **ACTION – GB to co-ordinate with SR on Sports Day organization**

#### **GB to develop RCSU Sports Plan and report at next relevant committee (Ops and Ents?)**

##### J. Unfilled Committee Positions

(Lloyd)

The following committee positions are vacant: Biochemistry Departmental Representative, and Vice President (Operations)

- In terms of BDR, the new DepSoc committee and IW should be contacted to promote and find a suitably motivated candidate, although the role has been uncontested for the last two elections.
  - The vacancy will be filled in the Rep Elections in October.

## Agenda

### What Committee (What Meeting)

- The VPO role has been taken on by LJ in the interim, and will be put up for re-election in October.
  - In the meantime, the role will be delegated among the Executive and willing members of the General Committee.
  - An alternative could be to appoint an interim VPO who could run in October on the grounds of having done the role over the summer voluntarily.
    - Delegation seems to be the preferred option among the Committee.

**ACTION – Re-Open Nominations for VPO and Biochemistry Departmental Representative LJ to delegate role among the Executive  
Contact BioChemSoc regarding promoting the role due to perceived problem.**

### K. Any Other Business

#### **CGCU MASCOT RANSOM DEMAND**

At the last Bar Night, we took possession of the CGCU Mascots, Bolt and Spanner.

- Suggestions for non-destructive alterations include magnetization through heating.
  - Suggestions were sought from the Committee but none were forthcoming.
- The current Ransom Demand from the current Executive includes an email of submission and a donation to ICU RAG. The demand is due on 23/06/2016.

#### **OCTOBER ABSENCES**

KC and Life Sciences officers will likely be absent in October due to a departmental academic trip. We will need to work around this.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** To be decided