

# The University of Dublin

## Trinity College

### Minutes of Student Services Committee Meeting, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2008

*Present* Dr Amanda Piesse (Chair), Ms D. Flynn (Secretary), Senior Lecturer (Prof C. Kearney), Dean of Students (Dr G. Whyte) College Secretary (Mr M. Gleeson), Deputy Treasurer's Representative (Ms A. Mulcahy), Senior Tutor (Dr M. O'Regan), SU Welfare Officer (Ms U. Faulkner), GSU President (Mr A. Frenda), Director of Sports and Recreation (Mr T. McAuley).

*Apologies* Dr E. MacCarthaigh.

*In attendance* Ms M. Garvey, Director of College Health (Dr. D. McGrath)

#### SECTION A

**SS/07-08/76 Minutes** The Minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2008 were approved, following a correction to **SS/07-08/65** in which 'assign' should have read 'assigned', and signed.

**SS/07-08/77 Matters Arising from the Minutes** Matters arising from the Minutes were discussed and are recorded below, (see Minutes **SS/07-08/78**, **SS/07-08/79**).

**SS/07-08/78 Estimates** Confirmation is expected by the end of the month when the estimates go before board.

**SS/07-08/79 Trinity Experience Forum** The Dean of Students confirmed that the meeting to discuss the establishment and functions of the Forum will take place on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> of February.

**SS/07-08/80 Sports and Recreation Terms of Reference** First read of the proposed update to the terms of reference. A question was raised over whether the Dean of Students ought to chair this committee in an effort to streamline the committees of Student Services. Committee satisfied to pass this draft back to Sports and Recreation for discussion.

**SS/07-08/81 Accommodation needs of the Student Counselling Service** The Student Counselling Committee meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> February 2008 discussed the long-term accommodation needs of the service. This has also been discussed in meetings with the Bursar, Director of Buildings and Assistant Director. Currently the Student Counselling Service accommodation, which is inadequate, is impacting the level of service offered to students. The Director of Accommodations has offered accommodation in Luce Hall. The service has concerns about staff undertaking one to one work with students outside of a contained counselling unit. This issue was raised previously by an external assessor of the service. There are currently two rooms in the existing Student Counselling Service building used by other services (Community Health and Security) that could be used by the service if alternative provisions could be made to accommodate the other services elsewhere (possible Luce Hall or the chemistry extension). The committee agreed to request that the Director of Buildings move on this issue to solve both short and longer term accommodation problems. This issue has been raised at the Site and Facilities committee meeting. It was agreed that Board will only be used to find a solution if negotiations fail. The Chair will request draft minutes from the Site and Facilities committee and forward them to D. Flynn and the Secretary today.

**Annual Report - College Health Centre 06-07** Director of College Health (Dr. McGrath) presented the report. The main concerns of the year included the replacement of the service psychiatrist, accommodation and the maintenance of the GMS list.

**Appointment of Psychiatrist:** Dr. O'Brien, the service's psychiatrist retired during the year. Increased funding was necessary in order to find a replacement. In November Dr. N Farrelly was appointed and will take up the position later this year.

**Accommodation:** The current building was designed for a student body of under 10,000 students. The lack of space is now impeding service resulting in students being turned away. The service has discussed plans for a new purpose-built centre with the director of buildings. A further concern is the move by the relevant professional bodies to increase appointment times to 15 minutes from the current 10 minutes. This would be impractical now without an increase in service resources.

**GMS List:** Dr. D. Thomas, former Director, held the GMS list. Negotiations regarding the changeover to Dr. McGrath are continuing.

**Objectives:** Dr. McGrath identified various objectives of the health service for the coming year. These include the continuation of service to students, the alignment of service objectives to Student Services objectives as a whole, the development of Fitness to Practice procedures, and the development of the service website. He would also like to expand the clinical side of the service (e.g. there is a need for an Eating Disorder Service) but resources are a problem. The service would also like to extend their range of specialist clinics. Currently they run a psoriasis clinic, eczema clinic and travel vaccination clinic. In the future they would like to add an allergy clinic to this. Finally, the service is looking at updating its appointments and check-in system so that all can be completed electronically.

**Discussion:**

**Fitness to Practice:** The Dean of Students confirmed that the second meeting of the Fitness to Practice Working group is to take place on Wednesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>. Dr. McGrath stated that as part of Fitness to Practice, College will need to create stronger links with relevant professional bodies. The Senior Lecturer inquired whether the service was in communication with other universities regarding Fitness to Practice. The Dean of Students stated he would put this on the agenda for the Irish Universities Networks next month while the Committee secretary suggested a possible future interuniversity SIF project on this issue. The senior lecturer stated that collaboration across the Dublin region should be considered.

**Resources:** The Director of Sports and Recreation suggested that students make a nominal charge for appointments in order to allow extension of service hours past 9-5. Dr. McGrath and the SU Welfare Officer did not support fees. Dr. McGrath also stated that whilst out of hours service could be a short-term solution it was not a satisfactory long-term solution. The service is currently looking at strategies for reducing its unattended appointments figures from 10% in order to increase efficiency. Suggested strategies include text reminders and booking fees that will be refunded upon attendance for the appointment. Dr. McGrath also noted the possibility of moving specialist clinics to another site. However, this could only happen if it did not affect the service computer network.

Dr. McGrath concluded by stating that the Health Service attracts international students. These students, and all non-traditional students, use

the services to a greater extent than traditional students, thus increasing service demand.

It was suggested that when the Student Services annual report goes before Board, the focus of the College Health Centre should be on accommodation, funding, and the fact that currently much of the non-pay budget is being used for salaries.

**SS/07-08/83**

**Provost's Report to Council on the Review of the Tutorial Service** The Senior Lecturer introduced the review. It is a non-academic quality review. It will be presented to Council on 14<sup>th</sup> February by the vice-provost and will be presented to Board by the provost. The Senior Tutor stated that the Service would like to see it on the College website. Approval will be sought from the Quality Office for this.

There were twenty-two recommendations in the report. The Senior Tutor drew attention to recommendation 4.8, which stated that the service be extended to graduate and part-time students. Nine recommendations that can be implemented within the current resource structure were cited by the Provost. The Senior Tutor stated her interest in developing the service with additional support and moved bringing this to Board. The Senior Lecturer stated that additional support cannot happen until the appointment of an Operational Officer for administrative reform. This appointment is due to take place by June 08. The Chair drew attention to the recommendation that the Dean of Students sit on Council.

**Director of Student Services:** Recommendation 4.16 advocated the creation of a post for Director of Student Services. The Senior Lecturer advised that he was in favour of this. The Committee Secretary welcomed the additional resources suggested, particularly the appointment of a project officer. The fact that it is recommended that funding for the new appointments should not be taken from the existing budget was welcomed. However, careful reflection is needed on whether the appointment represents good value for money. Another concern is that it is envisaged that the Director of Student Services would be an administrator. The Dean of Students is an academic and ensures the close connection between Student Services and the academic section of College. It was moved that the appointment of a Director of Student Services would be discussed at the Student Services Heads forum and the results will be fed back to the Committee. The appointment of a Director of Student Services will be added to the agenda of the next Student Services Committee meeting.

**SS/07-08/84**

**Luce Hall Development** The Chair met the Director of Buildings re: Luce Hall. The Dean of Students will represent Student Services at a meeting with Pat McDonnell on 21<sup>st</sup> February. Forward any comments to the Dean before that date. The SU Welfare Officer will ask the Student's Union for their views on the Student Counselling Service moving to Luce Hall at a meeting tonight. She will forward any comments to the Director of the Student Counselling Service.

**SS/07-08/85**

**College Day Nursery** The Chair met the Director of Buildings re: the College Day Nursery. Greenan House is a possibility for a satellite nursery. Once estimates have been received the Chair will revert to the Director of Buildings. Bioscience is also a possibility. An application for funding was submitted to Estimates in order to undertake long-term planning. The response to this is awaited. The question of where the main College nursery should be needs to be answered. With regards a line manager, no appointment has been made. Ken O'Doherty is acting line manager at present, advising on staff issues. The manager is due back in April/May. The Senior Lecturer will write to PAC re: emergency funding.

**SS/07-08/86 Any Other Business** There was no other urgent business.

**SS/07-08/87 Date of Next Meeting** - April 1<sup>st</sup> 2008.

**SECTION B**

*There were no items in this section*

**SECTION C**

**SS/07-08/88 Student Counselling Committee**

The Committee noted and approved the minutes of the meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

Signed:.....

Date:.....