

Tobacco Free Trinity: Sub-Group Meetings

Description

There were four sub-group meetings as outlined below.

Invitees

People were asked to attend internal sub-group meetings (meetings 1-3) if they had expressed an interest in participating, if they contributed to one of the town hall meetings, if they were recommended by a member of the Trinity Community or because they emailed the TFT committee about Trinity becoming tobacco free. All invitees were encouraged to extend the invitation to the sub-groups to anyone in Trinity they thought might like to attend.

Details of invitees to the external sub-group (sub-group 4) are outlined in the section on that meeting.

Sub-Group 1: Chair Dr David McGrath, Director of College Health Centre

Representation at the meetings

College Health Centre, Trinity Hall, Accommodation & Catering, Buildings Office, Global Health, a member of the student body.

Summary of Minutes:

- Where do smokers go?: Many members of the group thought that there should be designated smoking areas as a compromise although one sub-group member stated that there are issues of ambiguity and enforcement associated with having smoking areas. The group discussed phasing them out over time. Though many of the group wanted a compromise solution it was highlighted by one person that there is support for a totally tobacco free campus.
- Where do residents go?: There are 1,000 students in Trinity Hall. Not reasonable to ask people to go onto the footpath. Issues with local residents. All residents of Trinity Hall stated that they were non-smokers in applications though this does not affect their acceptance into Halls. Potential site for smoking area in Trinity Hall discussed.
- Communications: Important the language doesn't alienate people. Word "de-normalise" has negative connotations. One person felt there were issues with the way the initiative has been communicated to date.
- Is this College's role?: Issues of paternalism expressed by one member of group. All others felt this was College's role.

Recommendations

- Consider if a compromise solution of incorporating smoking shelters could be implemented.
- Provision in Trinity Hall for smoking area should be considered
- It's important to use language in communications that doesn't alienate people.

Sub-Group 2: Chair John Coman, Secretary to College

Representation at the meetings

Accommodation & Catering, The Pav, Secretary's Office, College Health Centre, Human Resources, Communications & Marketing, The Student's Union Shop, a member of the student body

Summary of Minutes:

- Effect on Commercial Interests: Commercial interests within College feel Trinity becoming tobacco free would have a detrimental commercial impact on College. It would reduce turnover/retail business in catering, accommodation, banqueting, the Students Union shop and the Pav.

- Quantifying the effect of TFT: Very difficult to quantify. Accommodation gave monthly figures but no prediction as to how they would be affected by a smoking ban. It is estimated that profits in the Students' Union shop from cigarettes sales are approximately €11,781 per annum but this doesn't include loss of profit from incidental items bought when cigarettes are being purchased. Cleaning costs are €20.50 per clean but this doesn't happen very often.
- Other issues raised included: Such a policy would force students/staff to the perimeter of College, people would hide and put themselves at risk, sunny days at the Pav would be impossible to police, people would smoke in their bedrooms, staff at conferences for example only have time for very short ad hoc breaks
- E-cigarettes: Currently on sale in the Students' Union shop but sales are low.
- Smoking areas: Sub-group attendees were keen to have provision for smokers on campus. There was discussion of the need for provision close to the Pav, for conference attendees, for conference staff and clients of accommodation services.
- Cigarettes in the Pav: Profit from the sale of cigarettes in the Pav is low. The Pav would consider removing cigarette machines.

Recommendations

- Consider smoking shelter provisions for residents, the Pav and conferencing and banqueting staff.
- Proposed provision for smoking shelters made by sub-group members should be considered by the TFT committee.
- Further investigation should be undertaken to determine if a tobacco free campus policy would affect the Trinity community's inclination to use College facilities e.g. catering outlets, the Pav.
- Consideration should be given to how staff who would not have time to walk off campus or to a smoking shelter when working could be supported if Trinity was to become tobacco free e.g. could patches or e-cigarettes be made available to catering staff at banquets
- TFT should work with the Pav to investigate if it is feasible to remove its cigarette machines
- Communication about Tobacco Free Trinity should be done via a variety of channels e.g. via social media for students, via unions for staff
- In the future, it may be possible to consult conference organisers on how a tobacco free campus policy would affect conference bookings in Trinity.

Sub-Group 3: Chair David Grouse, Department of Physics & Chair of the Group of Unions

Representation at the meetings

Department of Physics, Facilities, Library, Health Centre, Human Resources, Registrar

Summary of Minutes:

- Designated smoking areas: It was agreed by most of the sub-group members that smoking areas should be considered though some felt only as a means of transition to becoming totally tobacco free.
- Enforce current policy: The group agreed the current policy isn't enforced. It was suggested that blue lines should be pilot tested to demark smoking areas. The current policy should be re-sent to all. Better signage required.
- Enforcement of TFT: The group considered if TFT could be included in current disciplinary procedures. Many felt that allowing line managers to discipline people in breach of TFT was not acceptable. Some felt whistle-blower policy would allow some smokers to be targeted anonymously for discipline. If this is to go ahead, need a new policy on procedures with the unions that would be negotiated with College. Legislation would make this easier.
- Nature of people's work: All types of work should be considered.

- Communications: The language used must be unbiased. No mention of SU referendum on website. Potential to marginalise a minority. This should be presented as an expansion of the workplace ban.
- Is this College's role?: Issues of paternalism and alienating smokers raised
- Support for stopping: College should continue to support smokers. Time off for smoking courses and reduced rates in the Sports Centre suggested.
- Resources required: Tobacco Free Trinity will require adequate resources.

Recommendations

- Smoking areas should be considered for a transition period
- The current policy should be enforced. Blue lines to delimit smoking areas and signs suggested
- If becoming tobacco free, College must work with unions to determine how staff could be disciplined for breach of the TFT policy. Many felt this would be difficult to enforce.
- All roles within College would have to be considered before TFT could be implemented
- If TFT is to go ahead, consider how legislation for tobacco free universities could be progressed.
- The group could not agree if this was College's role or not.
- College should continue to support smokers
- Resources are required if TFT is to go ahead.

Sub-Group 4 – External Stakeholders: Chair John Coman, Secretary to College

Invitees

In total, over 40 organisations/individuals were invited who: are neighbours of College; are amongst the top 30 suppliers to College; may be affected negatively by people congregating at entrances e.g. Dublin City Council Waste Management, City Bus Tours; regularly use College e.g. Tour companies to the Book of Kells, conference management companies who use Trinity as a conference venue; manage College buildings or manage tenants of College buildings

Representation at the meeting

Colliers Property Management (manage TBSI), TBSI Premises Manager, TTEC Property Executive, College Health Centre, Secretary to College

Summary of Minutes:

- Where would smokers go?: TBSI students and staff currently go to the front of the building. The fourth floor has a roof garden to which access is confined to the tenant of that floor. All other floors have nowhere to go but the footpath; there are no spaces to the rear. The 4m rule is not enforceable in TBSI as it would include the entire public footpath. There are tables outside a café in the TBSI concourse where people smoke and it would be difficult to move these. These outdoor tables may not be covered by insurance. In TTEC smokers have a smoking area but tend to smoke outside their door. Would be difficult to encourage them to move.
- Cafes & Pubs: This policy would be particularly difficult for Subway, Starbucks, KC Peaches and Lincoln Inn because of the association between cigarettes and coffee/alcohol and the competition issues involved for those businesses.
- Enforcement: Security can't be expected to enforce this. The majority will comply but some will not. Legislation would make it easier.
- Changes to Leases: May be possible to change the terms of people's leases when issuing a new one but some people have long leases (>20 years).

Recommendations

- Most of those invited did not come. Continue to work with those who did.
- Work with TBSI staff to address issues of smoking in the concourse

- Further consultation required directly with third party lease holders in Trinity buildings to determine how a tobacco free policy could be implemented. This must be done over time. Security could not be responsible in particular in TTEC
- Future leases should include a stipulation that tenants must adhere to the tobacco policy
- Special consideration should be given to cafes and pubs with whom a particular relationship between their primary retail product and smoking exists