

Minutes of the Capitation Committee

12 May 2020

At 2.00pm via Microsoft Teams

Present: Chair – Prof John Parnell, Secretary – Aidan Marsh, FSD – Elaine Sharkey, Student Life – Prof Kevin O’Kelly, GSU – Shaz Oye, GSU – Geetika Banga, CSC – Eada Hogan, CSC – Lee Campbell, SU – Aisling Leen, CSC – Ben McConkey, DUCAC – Jamil Saidi, SU – Niamh McKay, SU – Lauren Boland,

Apologies:

In Attendance: CSC – Joseph O’Gorman, DUCAC – Aidan Kavanagh, GSU – Dr Geoff Bradley, SU – Simon Evans, CSC – Lucy O’Connell

Professor John Parnell as chair of the Capitation Committee opened the meeting.

Item 1: Minutes of the last meeting of 27 February 2020 (previously circulated).

No corrections had been raised with the Secretary. Approved by general consensus.

Item 2: Matters arising.

Regarding the Capitation Allocation information, Elaine Sharkey (FSD) stated that there was no further information brought to her on the make-up of the Capitation Allocation.

Regarding seeking a joint change in fiscal auditors, due to the rise of COVID-19 it has not been possible for the Capitated Bodies to look into seeking a single auditor for all capitated bodies.

Action: Capitated Bodies to looking into the possibility of acquiring a single auditor over the course of the Summer.

Regarding the CSC’s survey concerning the effect of semesterisation on societies, the Capitation Secretary should receive information for circulation by end of May.

Regarding documentation on Trinity Ball Committee meetings with MCD, Simon Evans (SU) will send documents to Capitation Secretary.

Item 3: Capitated Bodies GDPR Compliance

Student Life asks that the Capitated Bodies prepare a brief report on their Compliance with GDPR through engagement with the College Data Protection Officer.

Importance of Data protection compliance was highlighted to members of the Capitation Committee.

Action: Brief Summary of Data Protection Actions to be prepared by each Capitated Body and sent to the Committee Secretary for circulation to Student Life by opening of business 22 May.

Item 4: Trinity Ball

The Senior Dean opened the discussion of the Trinity Ball highlighting the importance of keeping confidentiality regarding the business documents circulated to the Committee.

The Commercial Revenue Unit (CRU) Review was discussed by the Capitated Bodies. Joseph O’Gorman, Secretary of the Ball Committee, circulated a roadmap document taking input from the CRU’s review to lay out what the Capitation Committee is seeking from the renegotiation of the Ball Contract.

With regards to the CRU recommendations on sponsorship/etc. It was agreed that the CRU suggestions could provide a good basis for what might be sought in the contract negotiations. SU Ents – commented that sponsorship negotiation should be done by students and that any involvement of the CRU should be in an advisory capacity only. The Dean of Students reiterated that it was desirable that students should be front and centre at every step. Joseph O’Gorman will incorporate the points raised into the roadmap.

The document suggested there was an underlying weakness in the existing licence with regards to Grounds Protection. It was agreed that a liability clause protecting the grounds should be implemented. The exact nature of the clause should be negotiated between MCD and representatives of the Ball Committee. Simon Evans noted that Contractors acting on site are already required by College insurance to meet existing College liability standards.

With regards to Finance, the Trinity Ball Committee will, as part of its remit, engage with costs and income of the ball early in the year. Concerns were raised that negotiating financials may push MCD away. Elaine Sharkey commented that there was nothing wrong with ensuring cost transparency and value for money, that exploring possibilities to increase profit would benefit both TCD (students) and MCD. It was ultimately agreed that consultation with MCD and a deeper understanding of the financial costings would be a positive step while providing an opportunity for some students to get involved in the commercial experience of arranging such a large event.

It was agreed by general consensus that the Trinity Ball Committee are to move forward with the contract negotiations with MCD

The Senior Dean closed discussion on the Ball Contract by noting that the Committee need to seriously consider the possibility that the Ball may not run in 2021 due to ongoing impacts of COVID 19. Lee Campbell (CSC) added that the possibility that the Trinity Ball may not occur in 2021 highlights that the Ball should not be considered as a reliable source of income for the Capitated Bodies.

Regarding the Cancellation of the Ball 2020. As of 7 May most ticket purchases have been refunded with only 19 remaining to be processed. Charges from Paypal were also refunded. The cost of Credit Card repayments were approximately €550. The Capitation Committee congratulated all those involved in ensuring a smooth refund process.

Item 5: Effects of COVID 19 on Capitated Bodies

It is still difficult to assess impact of Covid19, however reports to the Finance Committee suggest that there will be a significant impact on income from student numbers. It is necessary that the Capitated Bodies consider this impact and consider how the Capitated Bodies might work together to reduce the impact of Covid 19 on student life and Capitated Finances.

It was suggested that the Capitated Bodies meet outside of Capitation Committee to formulate plans on how to reduce the impact from the coming year. Laura Beston (SU) noted that she was the student representative on the phased resumption of activities working group considering what accommodations will need to be made for the upcoming year, and suggested the Capitated Bodies could refer concerns or suggestions to her so they could be relayed.

The Dean of Students closed the topic by noting that current estimates suggest that there may be an increase in domestic student numbers due to (1) offset the decrease in international numbers and (2) as a way to deal with the Leaving Certificate.

Elaine Sharkey asked that all Capitated Bodies consider cost-cutting measures as this is likely to be required in the coming year.

Item 6: Any Other Business

No other business was raised at this time.

Meeting ended 3.30pm

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "John McParrell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.