

Minutes of the Capitation Committee

19 November 2020

At 2.00pm via Zoom

Present: Chair – Prof John Parnell, Secretary – Aidan Marsh, FSD – Shumane Cleary, Student Life – Catherine McCabe, SU President - Eoin Hand, SU Education Officer– Megan O’Connor , SU Welfare- Leah Keogh, DUCAC Chair - Jemil Saidi, DUCAC Treasurer- John Bolton, Publications Chair - Meg-Elizabeth Lynch, Publications Treasurer – Jack Kennedy, CSC Chair – Ryan Grunwell, CSC Treasurer - Nathan O’Regan, CSC Amenities - James Spillane, GSU President - Gisèle Scanlon

Apologies: DUCAC (In Attendance) – Aidan Kavanagh,

In Attendance: CSC – Joseph O’Gorman, GSU – Martin McAndrew, SU – Simon Evans, FSD - Elaine Sharkey, CSC – Lucy O’Connell, CSC – Ronan Hodson, TCD Quality Officer - Roisín Smith

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

Item 1: Minutes of the last meeting of 28 May 2020 (previously circulated).

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

Item 2: Matters arising.

No matters arising

Item 3: Institutional Quality Review

The Quality Officer summarised the upcoming Institutional Review taking place in October 2021, documents relating to which had been previously circulated to the Committee.

The Chair asked if the individual Capitated Bodies were being consulted and was informed that only the SU and GSU had been contacted.

It was noted that any submissions should be sent to institutionalreview2020@tcd.ie, and that the Dean of Students should be copied in on all submissions. The Committee was informed that the SU President was the student representative for the Institutional Review, and that the GSU president had the responsibility of collating information from students,

The Quality Officer was asked if the Capitated Bodies would have an opportunity to suggest to other parts of College how they might “Self-Criticise”, and if there would be a pathway for the Capitated Bodies to provide input on how they might improve dealings with other parts of College. The GSU President suggested, given the range of activities of Capitated Bodies, that each organisation individually works with the Dean of Students to collate information before being passed on to the Quality Officer.

The possibility of video footage of relevant locations and activities in College being used in the Institutional Review was discussed

Item 4: Presentation of Accounts

Elaine Sharkey introduced Shumane Cleary as the new FSD representative on the Capitation Committee.

CSC

Money granted to societies in the latter half of 2019-20 college year was significantly down. It is believed that this was due to money not being claimed for events run.

The CSC have been working with societies, and have put facilities in place to assist with the running of online events.

€25,000 has been set aside for the Student Centre to fit out society rooms once students have access to the centre. The CSC are hoping to provide for a similar amount in the 2020-21 year and the following year.

The Chair queried a difference in the Players society expenditure to previous years, and was informed that it is not unusual for the expenditure of that body to change.

Student Centre Levy money is currently recorded in the CSC's accounts and concern was raised by Ronan Hodson about issues this may cause for that body.

DUCAC

John Bolton apologised for DUCAC being unable to submit accounts in time for the meeting as they could not access the building where the accounts were held in order to send them to the accountants due to the current lockdown. He noted that it was expected that the accounts would be retrieved in either the first or second week of December.

Action: DUCAC to send final copy of accounts to Shumane Cleary ASAP.

GSU

The GSU had difficulty with the signing over of accounts and didn't have access until late in the Summer.

It was noted that there were additional expenses for online resources and election expenses due to the Pandemic but that otherwise expenses were in line and the GSU were in a healthy position for the coming year.

External sponsorship helped keep the accounts healthy but the GSU are not relying on this for the coming year.

The Chair suggested looking at the size of the reserve in relation to the total budget, noting that while a reserve is healthy, too large a reserve is not. The GSU President noted that the accounts of the GSU don't reflect certain payments that will now be made in 2020-21 as

payment of a number of debts could not be made in 2019-2020 due to inability to access bank accounts.

SU

Simon Evans noted that there were significant losses due to the closure of shops on campus, but that the reserves of the SU were still good. Income was generally down across the board.

Publications

Publications apologised for only being able to submit a draft copy of account as delays had been encountered with their accountants due to COVID-19.

Costs were down due to the pandemic. The Alumni dinner was cancelled. There was no Ball Guide, there were fewer social events, and printing expenses were reduced.

There was insufficient information on a Bad Debt which had been on the balance sheets for several years, so the decision was made to write the debt off. Elaine Sharkey noted that the bad debt was in relation to advertising not paid.

Action: Publications to send final copy of accounts to Shumane Cleary ASAP.

Other

The Secretary raised that the Capitated Committee had previously mandated that the Capitated Bodies look into the possibility of consolidating their auditors, both for fiscal reasons, and for reasons of good practice. This had not been done due to the onset of COVID-19 but it was recommended that the treasurers of the Capitated Bodies look into the possibility.

Action: The Capitated Bodies shall work with Shumane Cleary to look into the possibility of consolidating auditors.

Item 5: Annual Reports

CSC

The CSC Chair summarised their Annual Report, noting the incredible work of the CSC Executive in 2019-20 and the additional work they had put in over the duration of the COVID-19 emergency.

DUCAC

The DUCAC Chair summarised their Annual Report.

It was noted that facility usage had been greatly improved to help students continue physical activity in the face of lockdown and that several townhall meetings had been held to try and improve student engagement with DUCAC.

GSU

The GSU President summarised their Annual Report.

The pandemic caused difficulties, but the GSU had a lot of “little wins”, such as the previously mentioned sponsorship arrangement. They have invested heavily in systems and processes that were not present previously but which should prove useful in the future

SU

The SU President summarised the SU’s Annual Report for the Committee.

Ronan Hodson urged the SU to include the CSC in talks regarding the Student Centre noting that it is important that all Capitated Bodies are on the same page with regards to the project. The SU President acknowledged the need for greater information sharing.

The Chair recommended raising the Student Centre with the Estates Policy Committee to continue co-ordination efforts with College and make sure that things don’t drop off the radar.

Publications

Applications noted that they were having a good year until March hit. As a result of reduced expenses there are plans to use the surplus for much-needed equipment, software, hardware, and for improving the Publications Office.

The Chair raised the distribution of Publications’ work, and the difficulty of getting papers physically to the east end of College. Publications responded that there are plans to provide a new newspaper stand for the Hamilton Building. The Chair also suggested the Biosciences building as a possible stand location.

Item 6: Trinity Ball

The newly formed Ball Committee has met, Terms of Reference are being drafted, and discussions are being held with regards to the Contract.

It is hoped that there will be a Ball in 2021, but confirmation cannot be made at present.

The Chair noted that no firm decision had been made in relation to the Ball, and that nothing more can be said.

Item 7: AoB

Elaine Sharkey had circulated the draft allocations for 2020-21, and noted that figures were based on a pessimistic estimate.

The Chair noted that the Capitation Committee had previously discussed the possibility of an uplift to the Capitated Bodies budgets, and that while it was unlikely any progress would be made over the course of the next year, it was important that it be kept in the Committee’s consciousness.

The Committee thanked Elaine for her contributions to the Capitation Committee over the years.