

## VAN MILDERT COLLEGE: SENIOR COMMON ROOM

### Annual General Meeting

Thursday 6 December 2018, 6pm

Turner Room, Van Mildert College

### MINUTES

(Copies of papers are filed with the Minutes)

**Present:** Howard Armstrong (Chair), Kathryn Armstrong, Martin Brader, Christine Brennan, Kate Deeming (Minutes), Angela Galloway, Michael Galloway, David Harper, Charlotte Imlach, Pam Luard, Maureen McCorry, Sarah Pearce, Graham Rawlinson, Liz Ryder and Brian Whitton.

#### 1. Welcome

The President welcomed all members attending the meeting.

#### 2. Apologies

**Noted:** from the President that a number of apologies had been received:

Caroline Boardman, Victoria Brown, Silvia Colombo, Michele Fumagalli, Alison Gowman, Val Miller, Jacqui Oxley, Roy Roberts, John Robinson, Rick Smith, Alan Smith, Brian Tanner, Ruth Tanner, Charles Thewlis and Gavin Wort.

#### 3. Minutes of the last meeting (Document 1)

**Approved:** the minutes of the last AGM held on 5 December 2017.

#### 4. Matters arising

**Noted:** actions had been taken in relation to the points raised at the last AGM as referred to in the relevant Officer reports.

#### 5. Principal's Report

**Reported** from the Principal:

- a) the College's student population was now 1750 and the College was the largest undergraduate college in the University. Staff numbers were unchanged;
- b) excellent induction had been carried out in October for 471 new first year undergraduates and 369 new postgraduates;
- c) the Dimensions programme initiated by the Deputy Principal, which was open to members of all common rooms and comprised lectures and workshops around specific themes, had proved successful and would in due course form part of the Durham Award;
- d) there was very high participation in College activities. Engagement bursaries were available to help those students who needed support in order to participate;
- e) the 'Mildert Means' campaign on student behaviour and the introduction of a 'college concern' which could be flagged on a student's record. This was proving effective. The College was reviewing its disciplinary procedures to ensure that they were applicable to groups and societies as well as individual students;
- f) Gavin Wort had been appointed as the University's coordinating chaplain and chaplain for 4 Colleges including Van Mildert;
- g) there was strong support for a digital student record support system and the College was piloting, on behalf of the Colleges, a system currently used in the Careers Service;
- h) outreach remained at very high levels (6500 hours pa) and there was a need to increase capacity to meet demand;
- i) one-third of the College student body were now international with the majority being Chinese. Communications were ongoing to better understand the experience which these students sought from their college membership;

- j) the College estate had been improved with new windows and roof being fitted over the summer. The JCR and Bar had been renovated with bar profits. The next priority was the kitchens;
- k) a number of significant environmental initiatives were in progress with the current focus on excluding single-use plastics in College.

## 6. President's Report (Document 3)

**Reported** from the President:

- a) the year had been one of considerable change: Stuart Wilson, Mel Kilner, and Silvia Colombo (President, Treasurer and Secretary respectively) had retired as SCR officers and Martin Brader had taken up the role of acting Treasurer. The Development Officer (Ellie Brown and now Liz Ryder) provided excellent membership secretary support to the SCR;
- b) it was with sadness that the SCR had learned of the death of Dr John Cotes, a longstanding member;
- c) a membership survey had been conducted in the New Year which highlighted that members were generally happy with the work of the SCR but there were a few areas needing improvement including: improvements to the Prowse Room, and more and a wider diversity of cultural events. The majority of responders were happy for a small rise in subscription fees to help fund these and also provide higher value scholarships for students;
- d) the SCR had delivered a full programme of lectures and talks on a wide range of subjects;
- e) thanks to the hard work of the Events Coordinator, the SCR social programme had been successful throughout the year;
- f) two prestigious projects had been initiated: the Word Sharing project and Tübingen Anniversary project. The President provided an update to members on the latter;
- g) plans for 2019 included: a review of the role and responsibilities of each SCR Officer to ensure clarity and manageable portfolios; improvements to the Prowse Room; and further consideration of the balance between social, cultural and scholarly events;
- h) he wished to thank the members of the Executive for their hard work and support during his first year as President, the College Principal and his office for their support, and the Van Mildert Trust for its funding for the above projects.

## 7. Treasurer's Report (Document 4)

**Reported:** from the Acting Treasurer:

- a) there had been much activity over the year in relation to the SCR finances;
- b) the SCR had set up a Finance Sub-Group to review the financial position and make recommendations for future financial planning. To inform this review he had reviewed 7 years of SCR expenditure;
- c) the key points from the review included: subscription income had averaged £1821 over the period 2014/15 to 2017/18; over the past 3 years membership income had decreased by £100pa (equivalent to 5 single memberships); expenditure had been reactionary; the proportion of expenditure relating to individual budget areas had been variable;
- d) a number of changes were therefore agreed: that a guiding budget be set against which expenditure on core strategic objectives could be tracked; that allocations should be 40% each on events and scholarships; 15% on student activity and 5% on administration; that the value of the SCR Music scholarships be increased to 2x £500 awards and broadened to become SCR Arts scholarships; that the membership fee structure be changed to £25 for single members/£35 for Joint/£15 for associate membership; amendment to the membership documentation in the light of GDPR; the addition of three signatories to the SCR account with two required to validate a cheque from the SCR; the allocation for spend within the current year or assignment to aligned projects of funds to support two activities (Careers Networking and Fine Arts Committee); the SCR to provide more detailed overviews of members' expenditure and pay for the event expenses for all attendees and then seek payment from members;
- e) Document 4 set out the core areas of income and expenditure against the academic year 2017/18, including accrued expenditure and outstanding income;
- f) the available SCR funds at 30 November 2018 were £5603.61. Further spend would therefore be desirable;
- g) the SCR had around 90 paying members. Reminders would be circulated to members with outstanding event payments once the payment deadlines had passed;

h) the SCR accounts had been subject to independent scrutiny;

The accounts for 2017/18 were accepted.

## 8. Reports of Other Committee Members

**Reported** from the Events Coordinator the following events for next term:

- SCR Lecture Series: Alan O'Cain on 7 February and Mauna McKeon on 7 March
- Other events planned were a walk, an art visit, a visit to the Oriental Museum

**Noted:**

- a) the following suggestions for events: a visit to the Mining Gallery in Bishop Auckland and a visit to a theatre production
- b) the visit to Ushaw College had been a great success and thanks were due to Michael Galloway for this event.

## 9. SCR Executive Committee Elections/Appointments (Document 5)

**Noted:**

- a) Ben Hodgkiss had indicated that he did not wish to stand for election for a second term as Student Liaison Coordinator. The duties were now being handled in a different manner through open invitation of the JCR President to attend Executive Committee meetings.
- b) the following recommendations of the Executive Committee:

Treasurer: Dr Martin Brader (Proposer: Sarah Pearce; Seconder Maureen McCorry)

Secretary: Jacqui Oxley (Proposer: Kathryn Armstrong; Seconder Pam Luard)

Co-option of Phil Simpson as Deputy Treasurer in light of the expansion of the role of Treasurer. Phil was formerly the Finance Assistant in College.

**Agreed:**

- c) the appointment of Dr Martin Brader as Treasurer for a period of 3 years;
- d) the appointment of Jacqui Oxley as Secretary for a period of 3 years;
- e) the co-option of Phil Simpson as Deputy Treasurer for a period of 1 year in the first instance.

## 10. Any Other Business

**Noted:** the Principal's thanks for the considerable work of the SCR over the course of the year.

*The meeting ended at 18.30pm.*

## SCR Executive Committee for 2018/19

President: Howard Armstrong

Vice-President: Kate Deeming

Secretary: Jacqui Oxley

Treasurer: Martin Brader

Deputy Treasurer: Phil Simpson

Events Coordinator: Charlotte Imlach

Principal: David Harper

Deputy Principal: Victoria Brown

Development Officer: Liz Ryder

MCR President: Seamus Matlack