

Union General Meeting Minutes: 27.05.2015

Present: Hope de Rooy-Underhill (Chair), Rhun Davies (FXU Exeter President), Ellie Scouller (FXU Falmouth President), Catherine Thornhill (FXU Community & Welfare President), Roger Auster (FXU President Student Experience)

33 student members (including FXU Presidents)

Quorum = 50: Meeting is not quorate.

Also Present: Clare Deane (Engagement & Research, Minutes), Janice Mitchelson (Student Voice Facilitator), Ken Johnson (Falmouth University Director of Estates), Julie Hore (Marketing - maternity cover).

Chair: Opened meeting, welcomed attendees.

1. Estates Strategy 2015-2020 (Ken Johnson, Falmouth University Director of Estates)

KJ: Estates have undergone rapid change in the last few years, the last strategy is very outdated. Aim to create an overarching framework for Estates

Challenges of the new strategy:

- Supporting Universities strategic plan, core values and objectives
- Space utilisation – availability/booking
- Project 8000 – student numbers to grow 52% by 2020
- Driver for change

Key recommendations:

- 2 campus strategy
- Financial convergence between courses – no cross-subsidy
- Cultural change – space awareness/teaching day
- Review of library and IT – changing student behaviour patterns, new library plan to include a coffee area and more quiet work space
- Campus gateways and identities
- Flexible spaces – variety of purpose

Social Street

- Between fox café and illustration building, where courtyard currently is
- Lightweight roof – same materials as Eden Project domes
- 3000 square ft
- Multifunctional (events, open days, FXU space, gallery)
- Better usage – links buildings
- Extension on refectory – bigger capacity
- 1 new floor on top of current refectory
- Improve illustration building – lighter, more glass windows

Similar projects will be organised with the Stannary – extend out to Tremough House.

Gateways and Identities – over the next 12-18 months

- 1.2metre high polished concrete letters reading 'FALMOUTH' opposite entrance to Wood Lane campus and outside AIR building.
- Triangular black pillars at each Wood Lane entrance – entering University 'zone'
- Wood Lane – widening pavement and traffic calming outside main entrance. Paving raised area over the road.
- Black frame 'portal' on the entrance to each building – branding and identity and place. Pull courses together into department.
- Reception areas – business accreditations and lists of alumni

Minimise new build

Through encouraging better use of space, cultural change, extension of teaching day – will save 2,350 square metres.

By 2020, need 4,154 square meters.

New build

- AIR extension
- Design Centre extension
- Falmouth workshops
- Rosehill link
- Belmont Studios
- Refectory/social space/study

Committed Projects

Heart (completion September 2015) - Current shop area re-landscaped

Sports centre (completion summer 2016)

Joint projects with Exeter

- Heart
- Sports centre – summer 2016
- Power and infrastructure
- Social spaces
- Tremough House
- Campus presentation
- Compass (not working effectively at the moment) & DDM
- Student accommodation
- Staff & student support facilities

Student accommodation – 2048 spaces currently. Project 8000 means an additional 1000, alongside other social spaces, will be added at Penryn (behind the car parks/design centre, next to the bypass). In talks with Town Councils about corresponding growth in the private sector, taken out short term lease agreements on buildings in town for 15/16 and 16/17, discussion with Council over student concerns.

Moves summer 2015

- Fashion – to the design centre
- Interior design – to Fox 1
- Illustration – all three floors of building 2 & 3 currently occupy
- IT – to current Illustration 1 building
- Reprographics – bigger space
- Library
- Animation – more space
- Digital Games – more space

- Journalism – radio and newsroom into DDM
- Foundation printing – to Wellington Terrace
- Tannachie refurbishment
- Terminate leases of Arwenack and Old Brewery Yard

KJ: Any questions?

Student: Will car parking be improved? There are sometimes no available spaces, cars don't park in the lines.

KJ: This is not a part of my remit but yes, car parking improvements will be a part of the overall plan. Eventually will move to decked car parking.

Student: Students were not consulted on the campus name change, and this caused a lot of confusion among students!

KJ: Surprised that students weren't consulted although not a part of remit.

Student: Can we guarantee students will be consulted about major changes like this in the future?

KJ: Under the impression that Falmouth are normally quite good at consulting with students – but yes of course.

Student: Lots of talk of using space efficiently, but some subjects such as Fine Art need a lot of studio space – can you guarantee that they will keep that?

KJ: It might not remain the same, this is financially unviable for the University in the long run. We must get rid of the wastage but we will find a creative solution with the Fine Art team.

Student: Can we guarantee students will be consulted about this?

KJ: Yes.

Student: Will the disabled access through Film & Television department still be there - plans for the heart project don't show this?

KJ: Yes, access remains the same.

Student: Photography need more studios.

KJ: There will be more studios made in Studio 9 (Penryn Industrial Estate).

Student: Unsuitable for disabled access due to the long walk from campus.

KJ: Long-term, we do plan to have more studios made on campus.

Student: In the new plans, students have real concerns for the dark room and for the amount of space in the finishing room.

KJ: We've just changed the configuration of the building to include extra space; the display wall will be moveable.

Student: The visual diagram provided to Photography students was not very clear and not really understood.

KJ: We can pass more information through; perhaps arrange a separate session to explain.

2. Student Rep Wins

ES: Newsletter to recognise their achievements that will go out to everyone's inbox. Hopefully this will help build the reputation of the Reps year on year. We wanted to make sure the Reps had some appreciation as the job they do is a hard, and sometimes thankless, task!

3. Sports Centre

RA: Sports Centre will be located where the overflow car park is currently situated.

There will be a nursery and play area incorporated into the Centre.

Ground floor will contain: Reception, changing, nursery (which, out of hours, will provide a bookable space for societies, yoga clubs, etc), and courts.

First floor: 90 station gym and studio spaces.

Sports pitches are not a part of this build but are still being raised as an ongoing request. They will be incorporated into the Campus 2020 Master Plan; 2 spaces have been identified, the MUGA and the fields on the other side of the road.

Budget is 4.5 million (from an initial estimate of 2 million!) of which Exeter has paid for – the nursery however has been a jointly financed area.

The Sports Centre will be available to all students from each institution at the same price.

The vacated space in the gym is being given to Exeter.

Student: Will 90 stations in the gym be enough with the predicted rise in student numbers?

RA: It will be enough for now.

RD: The building is designed so that more space can be built later if needed – the beginnings of a sports park!

4. FXU Liberation

CT: Unions are moving to better liberation representation across the country. The one Exec Officer we currently have dedicated to this role does not have enough time to be able to cover all of the requirements; through no fault of their own. We therefore propose the following changes:

Equal Opportunities Exec → Liberation Chair

To head the Liberation Committee with the following elected officers (who are not Execs)

BME Officer

Women's Officer

LGBTQ+ Officer

Disabled Student's Officer

Open Position

The Committee will be able to pass policy suggested by students that relates to Liberation issues. Once passed by the Committee, it will then pass to Student Council just to be doubly ratified.

Request to floor to read job descriptions and feedback any comments.

5. Garden Party & Grad Ball

Garden Party

RA: We want your feedback as to how we can make the events themselves, or at least ticket allocation, better. Firstly, Garden Party! We can't simply provide more tickets due to the health and safety regulations of capacity in the Stannary.

Student: Separate Garden and After-Party?

Student: Disabled students would also favour this.

Student: Could there be two separate Garden Parties?

ES: Not really, there are restraints financially and also on providers and suppliers that come to the Garden Party. What about ticket allocation? We are thinking of doing a Glastonbury-style allocation, where students register interest then are picked out of a hat.

Student: Ballot style seems the fairest way.

CT: Could arrange it that if you've already been, you are at a slight disadvantage – we could weight it based on years.

Student: But we want a mix of years to attend.

Student: Split the tickets so that you can buy a Garden Party ticket or Garden Party + Stannary?

RD: Great, but price of ticket might go up.

ES: Our event is significantly cheaper than other Unis – but if we put it up buy £10/15 we could make it better.

Student: That would be ok, as long as you can demonstrate what they are getting for their money.

RD: We are also restricted by demand; there is one supplier in the South West who is able to cater events of this scale.

Student: Could you get the event sponsored?

RD: Good idea, would give us more money for little cost. We are normally unwilling to have it run by an external company as they are focussed on making profit; we focus on the student experience and aren't allowed to make money from that!

Student: Could you give Garden Party tickets out in person?

ES: This used to happen when the event was less popular but people complained it was unfair for those who were not on campus on that day.

RD: This is an immediate consultation but successors will take this on.

Grad Ball

CT: The main issue with Grad Ball is the marquee; we have to get a certain type that does not use stakes to hold it in place as the castle is a heritage site. However this restricts us for numbers and makes the overall cost really expensive! So do you want a different venue?

Student: Happy with the venue but is there any way of adding capacity?

RA: The marquee is the restricting part; if it's bad weather, there is only so many you can fit in the marquee.

ES: Grad Ball didn't sell out last year but we have to sell out or we make a big loss. Last year was the first official FXU Grad Ball so the event will grow naturally over the coming years.

Student: Students could buy tickets but sometimes these were given to non-students?

ES: Really tricky – want to get as many of our students to go as possible, but can't rule this out in case someone has few friends here but wants to bring a partner from elsewhere.

Student: Waiting list needs to be promoted more, so many tickets were returned.

CT: Agree, but we didn't want to promote it originally as there were 50 names on the list and we didn't ever imagine that many tickets would be returned. Didn't want to give people false hope!

Student: But a waiting list isn't the same as confirmation so shouldn't matter.

Student: Could we hold it on the beach?

Student: Owned by the Council but privately managed; a possibility if you use Gylly as the bar.

Student: Would need a marquee; but would have to be at low tide.

Student: Garden Party tickets were resold this year at £40 or more as wristbands weren't put on. This is despite FXU promising this wouldn't happen! This needs to be stopped.

ES: Difficult as some students come in and say their friend is on a train, unable to collect, etc – but will look into this for next year.

Student: Need better help for students that lose their ticket/wristband.

ES: Should be able to get direct help from FXU.

Student: Didn't get a response on email, phone or in person.

CT: Put him in touch with me as that should be impossible!

Student: What are FXU doing about the fake Freshers pages that have appeared?

ES: Working on it – reported to Action Fraud, working with the local police.

RA: Our Fresher's page is already up, so there is no confusion over events being illegitimate.

Student: How do we get things advertised in the Fresher's Handbook?

ES: Email Kara Vallens

6. Top 10 Update

Impact Report: Top Ten

RA: This time last year we published our annual Student Experience Survey to gather feedback from students on what they wanted to see developed or changed on our campuses. We produced a list of ten priorities that developed into the 'Top Ten', to work on during our time in office, and we hope that you are pleased with what we have managed to achieve!

1. Better Academic Practice

- ES: The Falmouth University Academic Pledge was published in June using student feedback. It will be embedded into the University Teaching and Learning Strategy
- RD: For Exeter University, in partnership with the Students' Guild a 'Guild and FXU Vision for Education' document was drafted individually for each College tackling some of the key educational priorities that reflect the needs of the student body.

2. Financial Transparency

- ES: A document of Falmouth's finance figures from 2013-14 was published for students in order to increase the transparency of the University's financial information. The document was noted in a HEFCE paper as good practice, whilst being graphically accessible.
- RD: A financial transparency document for Exeter students was also produced.
- RA: The financial breakdown for FX Plus was included within the documents produced by Falmouth and Exeter.
- ES: Falmouth University Course Cost checker will be available by the new term in September.
- RD: The FXU Exeter Course Cost Checker will become available on the FXU website by September 2015. These costs will be reviewed every year by the University and FXU.

3. Welfare

CT:

- Mental Health First Aid Training has been approved and will be provided for all personal tutors at both universities.
- The Student Support Services Team has been strengthened as a result of a number of appointments.
- After lobbying Falmouth University increased the number of support rooms at the Falmouth Campus.
- There has been a review of the Out of Hours service and a more robust and fair system will be in place from September.
- Two Wellbeing Days were run as was a very successful mental health campaign called #MindYourHead, which physically engaged 8% of the student population and was seen by over 4,000 people online.

- A Nightline service will be set up to offer students an opportunity working in the welfare sector, and to support students in need throughout the night. This will strengthen the Out of Hours offer for students on and off campus.
- FXU Student Council voted for five new liberation officer roles and a liberation executive officer which will help in the representation of under-represented minorities in the new academic year.
- Exeter Education Executive Officers, Grace Fisher and Alice Nicholls, have set up a buddy scheme system for Study Abroad students so that no one feels isolated while away or on their return.

4. Facilities, Space & Resources

RA:

- We have been in consultation for the 2020 Campus Master Plan of which a student-accessible version will be available for September to outline how facilities will grow to accommodate student growth. This will include teaching space, social space and the accommodation strategy.
- As part of the new accommodation strategy, a range of different styles of new on-campus accommodation with different pricing options will be built.

5. My Vote Matters

RA:

- The campaign has seen a 559% increase in voter registration in Glasney Village, with over 85% of the students eligible to vote registering to vote either here or at their home address.
- We registered approximately 300 students living off-campus during the FXU Voter Registration Day alone.
- Four popular MP Grills were hosted by FXU covering both constituencies in which the campuses reside, and we partnered with the BBC and Royal Cornwall Museum for a further two.
- A polling station was secured for The Compass on Polling Day, with minibus shuttles running to other polling stations to make voting as easy as possible!

6. Widening Participation

RA:

- A Mature Student Network was set up at the beginning of the year, which quickly resulted in the founding of the Mature Student Society.
- Post-Graduate student flats are now included in the Accommodation Strategy.
- All Exeter Postgraduate courses will have their own College based SSLC from September 2015
- FXU will have Executive Officers to represent both International and Post-Graduate students from September.
- University of Exeter has confirmed a fixed-fee guarantee for all international students.
- For the first time ever the universities have agreed to join up their international student welcome and will be collecting students from Heathrow together, followed by a more integrated Fresher's period.
- A document entitled 'International Cornwall' has been produced and will be circulated to all new international students pre-arrival. It includes further details and support tailored to students from outside of the UK.
- £10,000 has been secured from both universities for a line-up of international-themed events throughout the year.

- From September 2015, international students will also be eligible to apply for the access to learning fund in Falmouth University.
- A pop-up International Cornwall Stand will be present throughout Fresher's as a go-to support point.
- There is now a new option to select for 'alcohol-free' accommodation.
- International food options embedded within the lunch catering.
- Cultural awareness training provided for first time to sport/society committee members and to be developed further for future years. Looking as though it will also be provided to university staff.
- £20,000 has been ring-fenced to support students struggling to pay for university-owned accommodation from September 2015 onwards.
- Gender neutral toilet facilities came into effect on the Falmouth campus, and are in discussion for the Penryn campus.
- 100 pairs of Stonewall's rainbow shoelaces were given to clubs/societies in under 24 hours to take photos of them being worn at events to demonstrate that we do not tolerate homophobia in our activities.

7. Falmouth & Truro

- ES: 'Woodlane Walkabouts' took place every Monday, in which we walked around the studios of Woodlane Campus, and sometimes Westover Terrace, to find out what students studying in Falmouth would like from FXU. This led to improving storage, increased turnout in FXU elections and better awareness of FXU activities at those campuses.
- RA: Every campaign the team has run this year has been represented at both the Penryn and Woodlane campuses, from FXU Loves You at the beginning of the year to #MindYourHead and our FXU Voter Registration Day.
- RD: Early discussions have been held regarding FXU representation in Truro. This is in a transitional phase as the closing Peninsula College of Medicine & Dentistry is still being taught out. However we have begun to build relations and review how we can provide a quality of service in the future. In the meantime, FXU events and activities have been opened to Exeter Medical School students in Truro.

8. FXUnity

- RA: The FXU and the Universities celebrated the partnership in its tenth year through collaborative celebrations. This included a hugely successful student celebration and a celebration with the institutions in which all past FXU presidents were invited back.
- RD: On 26 May, a Research & Performance Exchange was held by FXU across both campuses, in which students and staff from both institutions showcased their work for all to see in order to celebrate the broad range of talent that our Universities have to offer.

9. Sports & Recreation

RA:

- A sports centre has been confirmed for the Penryn Campus! The centre, due to open in the summer of 2016, will comprise of a sports hall, 75-90 station gym and exercise studio.
- Potential locations have been identified for the development of a 3G pitch, and it is now embedded within the 2020 Campus Master Plan.
- A music subsidy scheme was introduced this year to complement musical activity.
- A music bursary scheme will be introduced in September 2015.

10. Employability

- ES: The Falmouth Careers Hub will offer more diverse career options to help boost student confidence where they have great skills but realise they do not wish to follow their exact degree path.
- ES: The Falmouth University Creative Skills Exchange was set up for students to share their skills with each other. We are hoping to have it on the Learning Spaces for every student from next year to make it more accessible.
- RD: All Exeter SSLCs now have an Employability Rep who can voice the concerns and needs of their peers on discipline-based employability initiatives and further embed employability within their taught curriculum.

This update will also be available via the FXU website.

7. Motion: To support the Anti-Austerity March in London on 20th June 2015, in particular by organising travel from Cornwall to London

Chair: The Meeting today is not quorate, therefore it can't be voted on today. Student Council will vote on this motion on Monday as over half needed to make quorum attended this meeting today. Debate will continue as planned; proposer will speak first, then anyone wishing to oppose the motion.

CT (proposer): I see this motion as an extension of the My Vote Matters campaign. The campaign got students really excited about politics and engaged with the election, however many said they did not feel their voices were heard in the election. Not surprising considering on 24% of the country voted Conservative!

Through peaceful protest and other avenues, we still have the opportunity to affect change within the Conservative policy, and perhaps soften the blow.

For the full motion, please see Appendix 1.

Chair: No one to oppose – opened to the floor for questions.

Student: What is the likelihood of this march blowing up like the last one?

CT: Unlike last time, this is not just a student protest. This is not just angry people, they are angry but also calm and organised – Assembly Against Austerity etc. With more people, there will be safety in numbers! If we go as a group, we can back each other up and stick together. We will also provide safety sheets so that if anything does go wrong, you know your rights, can contact a lawyer if needs be, etc.

Student: Where will we be marching?

CT: 12 noon, we meet in blocks, then march to Parliament, then the Bank of England.

RA: It will also help students to go as a part of FXU; if anything goes wrong, they will be protected by having to abide by University and Union codes of conduct.

Student: Videoing police is important; can we borrow FXU's GoPros to do this?

RD: Yes!

Student: Will the event be wheelchair accessible?

CT: Officially yes, but in reality we wouldn't like to say. The hashtag #wecantmarch can put you in touch with other students who can't march but are doing other things to help.

Student: With all the disabled cuts, it would be really helpful to have wheelchairs on the ground!

RA: Leave it up to personal discretion.

Chair: Opinion poll –

32 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstain

Please contact your Student Council Reps with an indication of how you would like them to vote/any concerns or points you may have.

8. Close of Meeting

Chair: Thank you and close - next meeting will be Autumn Term 2016.