



# **FXU (Falmouth & Exeter Student's Union)**

**AGM (Annual General Meeting) 19th February 2016,**

**Lecture Theatre 1, Falmouth 4.30pm – 6pm**

- Chair:** Dean Pomeroy (Chair of Student Council) [DP]
- Panel:** Amanda Chetwynd-Cowieson (FXU President Student Experience) [ACC]  
Alexa Webster (FXU President Community & Welfare) [AW]  
Fred Mallin (FXU President Falmouth) [FM]  
Grace Fisher (FXU President Exeter) [GF]
- Speakers:** Peter Cox, Falmouth University  
Ruth Grimmer, University of Exeter  
Oliver Lane, FXPlus
- Attendees:** 73 FXU members attended, 6 guests attended: Quorate passed.

## **Welcome & Introductions**

Dean Pomeroy, FXU Student Voice Chair, opened the meeting and the existing presidents introduced themselves. Dean advised the attendees that the meeting was being recorded, that a report of the meeting would be available on the FXU website, and that there was a live twitter feed [#FXUagm](#)

## **Agenda**

- Welcome & Introductions
- Accommodation Debate
- Motion
- FXU Trustees and Financial Report
- FXU Presidents Top Ten Report
- Additional wins
- Discussion & questions
- Announcement of FXU Presidential Election candidates
- Any Other Business

## **Accommodation Debate**

ACC gave context for debate; it's a hot topic for students anyway because students want to know where they are going to live. There have been recent announcements about further headleases in town and post graduates, study abroad students looking for somewhere to live. It came through student council that all students wanted the opportunity to discuss accommodation with both universities and with us. A lot of you have got in touch with me about accommodation and hopefully having the representatives of the universities here they will be able to answer some of the questions you have been sending through so don't be afraid to ask questions. Introduced Peter Cox to speak

### **Peter Cox**

Thanks for invitation, sorry for rejigging your agenda but we need to get away. Niamh is on holiday and I am driving up to London but we will answer as many questions as we can. The reason to take five minutes to speak first is to get to issue of Falmouth and Falmouth student growth, which is the driver for some of this. We know that accommodation is an issue and I and the people here are working hard on it. We understand that accommodation is an important aspect of the whole university experience, and we are trying to make sure that all of the support that can be there is there in the accommodation office to help people find accommodation.

Growth is fundamental to Falmouth's future financial sustainability. Without growth the alternative is the opposite; reducing services, reducing money to invest, reducing experience for students.

Because student fees are capped and we can't grow the prices, because there is so much competition for students, because the demographic downturn means there are less eighteen year olds around and therefore there is an increasingly competitive environment, because costs are going up every year quite significantly, particularly staff related costs. The only way we can maintain the surpluses, let alone grow them which is what we need to try and do, is to drive growth; is to have more students.

Without that we have a major long term financial viability issue. Without that long term financial viability we do not maintain Falmouth University as the No 1 arts university in the UK, which is why we have so many applicants and which is why you are all here. Those surpluses are crucial, and those surpluses pay for additional facilities, the additional kit and the additional cameras, that pay for enhancements.

The government is withdrawing funding; we've lost millions of pounds in the last few years from reduced government funding and our surpluses replaced that funding. That's the financial driver for the long term financial viability of the institution for the benefit and obviously future students.

Alternative to growth is far worse; many of our competitors are facing reducing numbers and because of our position we are able to take potential students from our competitors and that's fantastic. If you are facing reducing numbers that goes straight to your ability, academic and teaching resources and technical resources, the hours that the library is open and all sorts of things. That is the nightmare scenario, and we want to be the opposite place and allow to grow those things and improve those facilities.

The strategic plan has two main objectives. One is to help graduates get great jobs. Two is to help

grow Cornwall. Everything we do is about that and the virtuous circle that comes from being the No 1 arts university; that makes more people come, that allows us to maintain that position; that virtuous circle.

We are not blind to the fact that experience of existing students is really important to that as well, because if existing students don't have a good experience that will absolutely impact on future recruitment. So we have to find that balance between all those competing things.

The first year guarantee we have debated and concluded it is really important for first year students. First year students in all universities are in a different position; it's their first time away from home; they haven't got a friendship group when they get here; they don't know the area, so that first year guarantee we think is really important. We think that is fundamental to attract and retain first years.

At the moment we are doing all we can to meet that guarantee. We have an investment programme going into more study bedded rooms in Glasney. We are headleasing rooms at Treiske in Truro for the first time, where we will put first years this September, all sorts of things to take the pressure off which of course has led us to headleasing just over a 100 rooms additionally now for September for our first years that were previously taken by second and third years. The addition rooms we are renting in town at Maritime and a couple of other places, and of course we have to work hard to try to replace those.

There are good signs of students finding accommodation for next year already. The accommodation office do a survey of first years every week and we extrapolate that for second and third year students. We think 90% of students who are going to be here next year have found somewhere, 10% haven't and we hope to get the remaining students rooms.

We have a beefed up appeals process – if you don't know how that works then talk to accommodation office. Students who particularly need supported accommodation speak to the appeals process.

We are seeking to build new accommodation on campus, we have spent today looking at bids from different partners and we are in procurement process to select preferred bidders. We will have 500 new rooms on campus in 2018, and a further 500 in 2019/2020. So we are trying to put a thousand more rooms on campus. That is what we think we need to accommodate our first years through to 2020.

We are also working really hard to encourage the private sector to come in and build purpose built student accommodation in certain selected areas in and around Falmouth and Penryn. We are working with the town council; there is a neighbourhood plan process going on that's going to identify areas that may be appropriate for that sort of accommodation to try and take the pressure off the HMO sector. We are working to try and encourage that wherever we can with the council, with developers to try and facilitate that process. We are aware of about 300 rooms that should be coming through for next year in that sort of context and people are talking about getting planning applications together on sites that look like they're appropriate with a lot more to follow.

These rooms that we are headleasing and then renting to our first years. We are not doing so for a profit; we are subsidising those, we are making a loss on those, to bring those down to a rent that we think is supportable and equates to the market level.

To wrap up, yes, it's a difficult balancing act and some of the choices we have had to make are the "least bad option" in the circumstances, but we are in a great position, going from strength to strength; the no 1 arts university, its made by our students and its why you are here I'm sure. We are trying to balance the short term and the long term. We want to do just as good a job in 10 and 50 years time, I'll stop at that point thank you very much and between us we will field any questions.

ACC before we go to questions, I know David did want to say something, so I would like to introduce David Saunby of Cornwall and Falmouth town council and he would like to talk to you about his view on student growth and accommodation.

### **David Saunby**

I would like to start by saying I was only notified today about this meeting so I hastily put something together to read out to you. I've been living in Falmouth since 1953. I came here from Perranporth as a three year old and I love this town very much. I went to school here and as the years have gone by, since the university has arrived, I've noticed the changes in this town. So I would like to read out exactly what I have written here so you can take on board exactly what I am saying and I believe the people of Falmouth are saying this as well:

I am not anti-student, nor am I anti-university and I welcome the university to the town of Falmouth. What I am anti about is the university's rate of growth which is putting a huge burden on the town regarding student accommodation at the expense of local families young and old who are born and bred in Falmouth yet cannot, or are struggling to find homes rented or to buy within the town when the university is expanding at such a rate that they require more sites within the town which is forcing the people out to find homes elsewhere in Cornwall or further afield in other parts of the country. This is why I am saying enough is enough, which I am confident that I have the vast majority of Falmouthians agreeing with me. Many of the people I have spoken to on this issue following the article in the Falmouth Packet totally agree with me that something needs to be done to curb this ever increasing demand for student accommodation in Falmouth when our local families are suffering. Only just recently two pre- applications have been submitted to Falmouth Town Council for student accommodation. One for the Rosslyn hotel, which was originally granted planning permission for 33 apartments for elderly people. The other is the old Falmouth coachworks site in Penwerris Lane which in my opinion would have been perfect for low cost housing for local people who are absolutely desperate for housing. There are plans afoot to build student accommodation on the quarry car park, which is owned by Cornwall Council and in Penryn residential homes that were built for Penryn are now going to be student accommodation. Is it any wonder why myself and the people of Falmouth are crying out enough is enough? Local families are being pushed back all the time, in favour of the requirements of the ever expanding university which is giving no consideration whatsoever regarding the local concerns on the housing issue, or those who struggle to find a home.

I believe it is about time the university shoulder more of its responsibilities and build more accommodation on campus. Not just for the 1<sup>st</sup> year students, for the duration of their courses which would in turn take immense pressure off the town. Something sooner or later has to give; Falmouth is already creaking at the seams, and that there's an old saying "You can't put a quart into a pint pot". Falmouth has since become a pint pot, since the arrival of the university. I as a local councilor cannot stand by and watch this beautiful town is slowly and surely being taken over by the university at the expense of the local population.

I would like to repeat; its not you the students fault. I believe this situation is those at the top of the university tree who can only see financial gain; more students equals more money, and the ever increasing students needs to be stopped now until the time this accommodation issue has been sorted out once and for all.

To finish up on this I have seen a comment made by Josh B on the [Falmouth Packet website](#) regarding this issue, one of you guys: "It is my conclusion a lot of us students feel the same way. The university is taking up far more students than they can provide for. The university should have the good grace to acknowledge the location they are residing in, and be respectful of it. As students we are suffering as a result of the university's greed. We are seeing negative impacts upon ourselves. Large numbers of second and third year students being kicked out of private accommodation which univeristy is buying up for first years, without any consideration of where these students can expect to live. I am sure the local community would have a lot of support from sympathetic students who are equally angry by the university's actions and lack of consideration for the community if they were to take action."

Thank you for your time and hopefully understanding the points made and our deep concerns for Falmouth becoming a fully blown student town and we are not going to lose the identity of this historic seaside town. We welcome everyone that come here to live, study, and to enjoy, but not to try to take over what Falmouth is. Thank you very much.

DP: We are ready to open up for questions. I'd like to introduce Peter Cox of Falmouth University, Oliver Lane from FXPlus, Ruth Grimmer from University of Exeter, David Saunby from Cornwall and Falmouth town Council, and Niamh Lamond, FXPLus CEO.

**Question:** 2<sup>nd</sup> yr student. This is to everybody, it was interesting listening to both sides of the story there. You are talking about securing accommodation for 1<sup>st</sup> years which is important, but you are saying that the student experience for current students is also important to you, but by taking up accommodation such as Maritime Studios and Montezuma in town, you are taking away rooms that could be offered to 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years , and you are saying that you are developing ideas for more accommodation for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years because we obviously we need to live somewhere too after our first year. I want to know what is your plan to secure accommodation for the rest of us, not just first years?

OL- We are in a period of growth at this stage, and the market does have limited purpose built student accommodation. This is how you would pitch Maritime Appartments because there is that extra level of support there. We are focussing our efforts growing that type of accommodation in Falmouth, not wanting to have further effect on family homes and residential areas. Working very closely with both Cornwall and Falmouth councils in identifying appropriate sites for development of that type of accommodation. It is not our decision where the appropriate sites for that type of development are, that is the council's decision. There is a neighbourhood plan that's being worked on at the moment and in that plan will be a small number of sites they will identify as suitable for what is called high density accommodation. It is sites that lend themselves more to high density, to transient populations as opposed to family homes which would have a different need potentially, sitewise. There is lot of interest in the market for funding and the developing of that type of

accommodation, we've got a number of sites that are going through planning as David said earlier hoping to open for September 2017. There will be more sites in 2018 and 2019 when some of the bigger sites will potentially come online. I appreciate that none of those sites will be available for this September coming, and also that it may be more difficult for some students who were relying on purpose built student accommodation for September '16, because the university has made the decision to prioritise the 1<sup>st</sup> years in that type of accommodation because we believe, generically speaking for the majority of those students their need is greater for the supported accommodation environment, but do bear in mind that we also recognize that some students have specific needs and if anyone has a specific need to move back into purpose built accommodation, university owned or managed accommodation we have a very strong appeals process by which any student can register their need and come to us prior to returning next year.

**Further question:** If you are putting a plan in for accommodation to improve for 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> years for 2017, what are you going to do about the offset between the students that are now coming for 2016? There are still people looking for housing that have been left short by the late telling about Maritime and that kind of thing. There are a lot of students looking for housing who were reliant on that and now are struggling very much to find a house. If you have the power over 2017 surely you should be supporting students being affected immediately by the decision that's been made by the university?

OL: I appreciate that and it's a very good point. Just want to draw on two things. One with Maritime halls in particular which I think you are referring to primarily, the communication that could be made was complicated by a change of ownership in December which was only completed mid- January this year and actually until that change of ownership had completed the agreement and the contractual relationship that we have in leasing those rooms could not be completed either, and the owners did not want us sending out any public communications until the documentation was signed, because they did not want the property removing from the market in case they had to then promote it later. I agree there was no communication, we would have preferred earlier communication on that. It is a difficult situation for us to manage and influence whilst it was in the hands of a 3<sup>rd</sup> party.

With regards to students looking for accommodation in September, we estimate that around 90% have secured accommodation already. We know that around 81 – 82% of First Years currently living in university owned or managed accommodation have secured accommodation for next year. That's off a weekly survey, and we survey between 200-250 students a week so it's a good base to survey from, and then the 2<sup>nd</sup> year students for the majority the option to remain in their current accommodation puts them in a stronger position and the majority stay where they are, appreciate that's not the case at Maritime.

Based on 90% we are still looking for accommodation for 450 students. There are several ways we envisage that happening. The student housing market is very different here. Properties come on as available in dribs and drabs. Last year 390 properties were secured through Studentpad. This year 290 have been taken through Studentpad. Traditionally another 100 props will come online between now and the summer and we will assume that will happen. We also work with landlords and we know of 20 to 25 properties waiting to go to agencies so we know that accommodation is coming online and will be available moving forward. There is a period of time between now and when the purpose built accommodation will be ready where we need to bridge a gap. It may become a reality

for a small number of students that they have to consider options outside the traditional options in Falmouth. This could be in various forms; we are looking at Truro and other areas as well, potentially the HMO market in Truro but also we are headleasing a number of units up at Treliske. We are also looking at less typical types of accommodation in the Falmouth area; in the last two years we've had about 64 lodgings registered with us which generated around 120 bed spaces as well. We agree this is not the first choice for the majority of students but again is another option that we want to pull into the portfolio of choices you will have for your accommodation. I agree at this stage a lot of the accommodation has gone but we do expect more to come online.

**Question:** DS - You said earlier you have a thousand more beds coming on campus for 1<sup>st</sup> years. The question I am continually being asked is why aren't you building on campus for returning students (2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year) to take pressure off the local community?

PC – We are seeking to build 1000 on campus, which we think will predominantly be for 1<sup>st</sup> year. We are looking to work with private sector to provide purpose build accommodation in certain parts of Falmouth and Penryn, partly that is where the students would prefer to live and because it would take the pressure off existing HMO sector.

DS – I'm sorry I do not agree with you, because when you say you are looking for these sites within Falmouth, so are local people looking for these homes to be built in Falmouth and what is happening is that they are being squeezed out by the University. How many students have you got altogether now on campus and what is your grand total at the end of it all? Do you have any limit, or will you just grow and grow and grow?

[Discussion requesting an answer to the question]

PC – Current plans for 5 years have growth to 6500 Falmouth students across two campuses. We have 5000 students at present. That's why we need additional accommodation on and off campus.

Point: I think the majority of current students will live anywhere if it keeps Falmouth the way it is, because that's why we chose Falmouth. We didn't just choose the university, we chose the place and if coming here destroys that place, its not what we would want. Even if it means living slightly out of town, even if it means you are investing in your own property, and not using up what would be used for the current residents.

**Question:** Sorry, you did not answer the [original] question, why are you not building accommodation on campus; have you got room up there for the full duration of courses?

PC – At the moment we are building to our current planning consent, because we know that returning 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years would rather stay in town. At the moment we are pursuing the option of whether there can be purpose built accommodation, driven obviously by the town council and the planning process who will obviously balance the needs of the local and student population, which is why those sites are designated high density housing, with the affordable housing and other housing and not just student housing, but that's obviously not in our control so there does need to be a balance but that will be decided through the planning process and the local neighbourhood plan process.

DS – When you talk about a balance, we believe that the balance is tipping in favour of the

university. I don't know if you guys want to see this lovely town turn into terrible university towns like Plymouth?

**Question :** Would you say that the university has broken its promises? Back in 2002 they promised that they would just stay on the site, the current where FXU is based and all that, but currently from what I heard 1500 homes are to be built down by the B & Q area. That's an areas the university said they wouldn't build on. Also I have heard there are plans to build over the Jehovah's Witnesses' church as well. What do you say to that?

PC – I don't understand the question .

Repeat: Has the university broken its promises because it said it wouldn't build off that area which its on now where the exchange is?

PC – we have a master plan and an outline planning consent for that existing site which includes a thousand new residences. That's what we are seeking to do.

**Question:** When you said you are putting up a thousand new rooms on campus you then very quickly after it mentioned that would sustain us to 2020, so its only going to last for two years after you build it so what are you going to do after those two years? You've got the whole problem again.

PC – No we haven't because those are our numbers that we think will sustain us beyond that.

Response: do you actually know the definition of sustainable growth though? Because you keep talking about growth and you keep talking about sustainability, but sustainable growth is completely different and at the moment we are not hitting that at all.

PC – in what context?

Response: We are outgrowing Falmouth and that is not sustainable in any way. It can only grow sustainably if you have all the facilities around you to fulfill your needs and we haven't got that at all.

PC – Yeah, we haven't at the moment hence...

Response: So why are they still growing? They need to slow down, make ourselves sustainable and then grow.

Point: you are saying about having more housing. Falmouth doesn't have the infrastructure like GPs and other things which are competing with the systems of the locals of Falmouth and its just we're not going to be supported. Its not sustainable you might have more housing and all of that and put us all in there but we need all of those other infrastructure.

Point: We are a really appalling sustainable campus because we're not sustainable in any way are we.

**Question:** You are right, we are the No 1 arts uni in the country, we're doing really well at that, I've got some gripes for cutting courses but that's not what we are not talking about. Our infrastructure within the university itself is very pushed as well at the moment; within the library, deadline times; we are outgrowing ourselves there so I want to see something with that, but surely by adding more houses and more need, we are raising the prices – I've seen it happen over this last year. Bursaries

and funding is being cut for students, so we are pricing out students, pricing out locals. Surely as an academic institution you should be raising the bar.

PC – we are trying to build the supply of houses.

Response: But right now you are taking them away but you've got about 500 students out of housing. Now that demand has gone up. In Penryn for instance I've watched the prices go up from mid £300s to £460 pushing £500 in some areas. Personally I can't afford that, and I know a lot of students who are going to struggle with those sorts of prices now. So what are you going to do about that? That for me is pricing out locals, its pricing out some of us who are here now, yes bring in students but keep us in the loop make it affordable for us, how are you going to do that?

NC - The best way to ensure that rents don't keep rising is to create greater supply and that is exactly what we are trying to do. The work that we're doing with developers and site owners and the council and everything we do is being done in really close dialogue with the town planners in Cornwall Council. Even the rate of growth henceforth will be done in dialogue with the council and it will tie in to the delivery of new beds. Every week we are talking to developers and its about developing sites that haven't been doing an awful lot, have been sitting relatively idle. Perhaps they could be used for alternative investments for social housing and of course we would want that, but they haven't been done. They're being built out for student housing because we know there is a demand for them. Thats the best way to ensure that rents don't continue to rise.

**Question:** What I resent with as a current student is that the university seems to think that students can live in Truro the university and that is a feasible possibility. I think what you need to recognise is that the vast majority of current students don't want to live in Truro, they don't want a one hour commute to get to university every day, and without massive incentives on your part, its not going to be something that's going to satisfy current students. Prospective students might sign up to it, but as soon as they arrive they are going to realise that actually where they want to be is in the centre of student life, and unless there is massive investments in Truro from, again, probably you guys, that is not what Truro is.

OL – It is new for us to look at accommodation outside of Falmouth and Penryn. It is about understanding what each individual student wants. I'm trying to take in all thoughts and ideas, I think someone on this side of the room said earlier that students would live anywhere if it didn't mean having an impact on Falmouth and the local residents. Therefore that is one persons view, another view is that outside of Falmouth wouldn't work. What we are trying to do is to introduce and offer as much choice as possible. There may be a small number of students looking at a small percentage who would prefer to live in Truro for whatever reason. It is a longer commute we know that the U1 or U3 from Penryn to Truro is 26 minutes, compared with the 19 minutes I think it takes to get from the Moor to Penryn. So there is difference, and yes I absolutely agree that particularly for 1<sup>st</sup> years the heart of their university life tends to be around the Penryn campus or the Falmouth campus depending on where they are based, but this is not unusual for universities to have accommodation within a 26 minute commutable distance to the halls. It is unusual for here and I understand your point and we need to manage that very carefully.

Response: The main point is that its not unusual in the greater university sense, like in a city where students are contained within the same city. The fact that Truro is an entirely different location to

Falmouth University, that I think is the difference. Having a 26 minute commute across London is fine but here the situation is different.

OL – I do and it's a valid point and its an important one and its one we are taking into consideration in knowing that we are going to have to consider accommodation options outside of Falmouth and how do we ensure the full support of those students and how do we try to our ability to protect their student experience so it is a really good point but there are a lot of universities elsewhere that have to either commute out to satellite locations or accommodation locations. I agree its easier in London but its not necessarily location you can have Exeter and Exmouth and you've got some London based universities that go out of town for their lectures, but I agree it is something we have got on our radar and its something we need to keep an eye on when we accommodate students outside of town.

**Question:** You said there would be 1500 new students to 2020, do you know how many Exeter students?

RG – We've got about 2000 Exeter students at the moment. We've got far more modest growth plans and are looking at changing the student profile as we've got mostly undergraduate students at the moment, running around 87% whereas across the university as a whole we are looking at 66% so most of our growth is to try and focus on postgraduate students coming in. We are looking at 200 - 300 more next year over this year, but its that sort of scale rather than anything larger and focussed on research growth.

Response: Why is there not more transparency regarding this plan, including the student voice in making these decisions? Because I for one have heard that the plan for 2020 is 8000 students. This may not be true but its what I've heard.

PC – There is a Falmouth 8000 number in a plan but that is 6500 here in Cornwall, 1500 students studying mostly online or elsewhere in other parts of the world. So there is a figure of 8000 but it's a slightly different figure.

**Question:** I would like to contest the fact that you say that the only option is growth, but if it is the only option surely more effort is easily made to make that sustainable. I'm not sure where you pull this 6500 because students need facilities services infrastructure. I don't see how that is a positive aspect and how thats sustainable for the University. To back that up with excuses when you compare yourselves to other universities when you claim to be the no 1 university , when you shouldn't really be looking at what other universities are doing because clearly the aspect that's selling Falmouth to prospective students is its smaller communities and classes and what that gives to them connections with tutors. That is the difference with Plymouth for instance where degrees have 150 students and no connection with tutors. I would like to say that is what is appealing about Falmouth. I would like that to be open to more students, more people should get a right to an education but I don't see where you got 6500 student number from, I would like more information about the research for that?

PC – Its driven from the business planning process, driven by portfolio demand, for graduates, driven by those two big objectives; helping graduates get great jobs and helping grow Cornwall, absolutely driven by that. 6500 is still a very small university. Its not about size per se, its protect that

quality, protect the learning outcomes, protect the students getting great jobs. That in itself is not going to be broken whether its 5000 or 6500 students. With no growth at all the financial consequences are such that we won't be where we are now.

Response: Unnecessary spending seems to have been a topic recently on this campus, theres a really interesting looking new [sign](#). If you claim funding is the problem then I suggest you rearrange where that funding is going.

**Point:** My name is Trish Minson, I'm one of the local councillors. Its interesting what that lady just said and we actually want to hear your voice. We don't know enough and I'm sure David would agree that is something we would like to hear. We will have planning meetings and we will have other meetings and Falmouth uni will be on that agenda and so will the planning so if you really feel strongly about whats going on then please tell your local councilors; tell us as we really want to hear. We are really interested to hear what you have to say, I know I am and I know my fellow councillors are too so please get in touch!

[[Falmouth Town Council](#), [Penryn Town Council](#), [Mabe Parish Council](#) – if you are not sure who your local councillor is then you can pop your postcode into [write to them](#) website to contact them]

**Question:** Agree with what David said at the start; its why I came to Falmouth and its why I've had such a good time here and I think its quite telling that Peter's opening gambit didn't address the community aspect of it at all. I'm not talking about accommodation, numbers, and lack of it, but actually the impact on people and how we're going to integrate the university so I'd like to question both Exeter and Falmouth, what are you doing to work with people like David to mitigate that impact? I'm not talking about planning applications, I'm not talking about beds, I'm talking about how you are mitigating that impact?

RG – The obvious thing is to do with volunteering and trying to engage with the community. So for Exeter this year we are sponsoring Falmouth Spring Festival in the middle of March. We know our students/staff have some of the highest engagement of volunteering in the country so we're very keen to continue to get our staff and students..all of our staff have a volunteering day where they get a day paid and they get out in the community; beach clean we did last year, as well as living and breathing as part of of that community.

NC – We've been working very closely with the Mayor of Penryn, this is Falmouth but Penryn is another important town for us. Heavily involved in working with them around the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Penryn. I think there are lots of ways in which we are working very closely with the community, in terms of accessing sports facilities on campus and trying to invite the community to the campus as often as we can.

Response: Can I point that question at David, do you feel the universities are doing enough?

DS – I personally don't think they are, I'm here today really to talk about the accommodation issue, the lady next to me just now quoted that there were sites that have not been used, tell me those sites or not? Are you talking about the Rosslyn Hotel, or are you talking about the Falmouth Coachman?

NC - I was actually referring to the Quarry car park which is probably the one which has the greatest

potential for us in terms of numbers.

DS - You understand the council own that.

NC – Anything we do with any of these sites will only happen if its got the support of the council. Town council and planning authority.

DS – It just seems like you're grabbing everything! In Falmouth you got to have that, got to have that and my local people are saying where are we going to live? We welcome you, yes, but there has to be balance, and the balance has gone too far.

OL – David has made a passionate argument on his behalf and the people he speaks on behalf of. The only thing I can say is the work we are doing with county council and town council there is a huge amount of enthusiasm and support for the university and its growth, and recognition of the significant benefits that the university does bring to the town. I appreciate this growth has to be managed in a sensitive manner but there are clearly documented benefits financially and otherwise as well for the university's presence in this town. If you go through the communities, the jobs the knock on effects, the services, and thinking what wouldn't be available in the town, the difference if the university wasn't here would be quite significant. I believe recent studies suggested over the first ten years of the university's presence there is now £500million brought into the area because of the presence of the university and that's obviously made significant impact on people's lives.

**Question:** If all this goes through and this happens and its all dandy, what are we doing with the campus facilities, because they are pushed at the moment as well, where are we investing and how are we getting them better?

PC – we're at half past five and it's a whole new conversation. We're investing on both campuses.

DS – Yes, uni does give benefits to town, but at what cost to local community? That is what I am saying. A huge cost on the local people who are struggling to find homes and services.

Discussion ended at 5.30pm, we can return to this subject at the end of the meeting.

## **Motion**

Students Tom Murray Richards and Robbie Bartlett presented the [motion](#) on behalf of FXU Student Council.

**Question:** Would you include town councils?

TMR / RB: Yes, we will now include Town councils and FXPlus.

**Question:** What you are proposing is idealistic; what are the practical aims?

TMR: The main aim is to make this official because while ACC is already lobbying the universities, not all students are aware of FXU's efforts on their behalf.

ACC: I spend a lot of my time at the moment saying to the universities; if you are going to bring a

load more students here there has to be infrastructure for them to sleep and study, there has to be seats in the café, etc, and if this is agreed it gives me a lot of weight when talking to universities. When I go into meetings about accommodation I anonymise and print out all of the emails about accommodation that I get and happily walk into meetings with 160 pages of paper and say “these people disagree with you”. If I can now walk in with a statement that says students would rather you invested into your infrastructure and then brought more students here, it gives all of the arguments I make a lot of weight.

**Question:** Do you think buses to Truro should be improved?

TMR: If they go ahead with accommodation in Truro then they will have to increase subsidies. I as a student certainly would not want to live in Truro.

ACC: I can take that forward as a separate issue. This is with First Bus and the Council and the universities help me on that one, because they want the transport links improved as well, but its a separate point to the suggestion made here which is about the infrastructure in the universities and student growth and there is then a second one which came up in the questions which is about the community. Cornwall as a place and Cornwall’s infrastructure.

JC: Wants to increase the frequency of trains to tie in with student needs.

**Question:** Does the university have a duty of care towards its students? Surely they are flouting duty of care if students are out of the way and out of a bed, can we get that in motion?

TMR / RB happy to add.

DP – any disagreement? None

**Question:** I want course leaders included in these decisions on student numbers; with no changes to facilities they are adding more students to illustration and we haven’t got the infrastructure for them.

**Question:** Add technicians as well as they have lot to do with running the systems.

AW: We think these are really valid points being made, but the motion is specifically about housing. What I would suggest is writing further motions concerning things such as transport, such as course tutors, this one is specifically around housing and if we make it too muddled then potentially some things could fall through the cracks, so I would suggest if you feel passionately about something put in a [further motion](#) for the future. We also have the [make a change](#) tab where you can submit things online on the FXU website – these go to student council when they reach a number of votes.

DP: So just to be clear, we are voting to only include town councils in the parties for this motion, but not course leaders and technicians who you can submit a seperate motion to discuss.

GF: I know people think this is too big a thing to stop, but Bath university had this issue last year and there was a lack of accommodation with students sleeping on the sofas. They have successfully lobbied the university this year to stop student growth.

## Voting:

Against: 0

Amendments: 0

In favour: 72

## Motion Passed

## FXU Trustees and Financial Report

Grace Fisher & Fred Mallin presented the [trustees report](#).

## FXU Presidents [Top Ten](#) Report

[Fred Mallin](#), President Falmouth

- Priority No 3's first point was "fit for purpose" space I've been working with Phill More who is the Director of Research and Innovation for Falmouth and also with Exeter on the possibility of shared post-graduate space.
- To "Improve support for all study abroad programmes", we now have a Widening Participation intern, who supports under represented groups. An issue raised from an event we had earlier this year was that there is not enough support for students leaving and going to study abroad. We have worked with Lynda Selby and the Erasmus programme and Falmouth now have a mentor scheme for students studying abroad. There is an audit being put together of all the partners Falmouth have with study abroad. FXU are also looking to create links with other students' unions outside the UK. FXPlus are looking into room swaps between outgoing and incoming study abroad students.
- No 4 – Publicly define contact time, assessment feedback, etc, I'm working with Alan Murray and Geoff Smith from the "Make Curriculum Clearer" campaign on academic training for staff which is all about sharing best practise.
- No 5– I've spoken all year about collaboration and am putting a survey together. Alan Murray and Geoff Smith are also looking at how to implement the information generated by this survey at curriculum level and also creating some interesting ideas about collaboration themed modules. The information will also be shared with the careers department, with the hope of tailoring creative skills exchange events to target where the real interest lies.
- No 7 - Financial transparency document for 2015/16 is done. I've been working with Rob Holmes to produce a student friendly handbook in a Top 10 style so you can all know where your £9,000 goes. Additional course cost information, the costs you may incur in your time at university are now available on their website.
- No 9 - FXU is now involved at earlier stage on any changes and working with Falmouth to better communicate these changes to students and staff.
- No 10 – As mentioned, increase collaboration options. Working closely with John Christie

who is head of careers. There is a review of careers department underway which we hope will create more employability opportunities for students. There is an FXU leadership training programme in development. There are more paid opportunities for students in FXU

- Outside of priorities, we are improving the student rep system. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> years will be voting at easter to select their 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year reps who will be trained before the start of the next academic year. We are also talking to all departments at the moment to get their input into role descriptions.
- Repographics are working online submissions and payment portal and possibly delivery to Woodlane. Reps have asked Falmouth to pass assessment deadlines to reprographics which has been done today for the first time.
- We have been running #PreachtoaPresident at Penryn and we are looking to bring that down to woodlane, hopefully starting next week.
- I will be at woodlane 2 days a week from next week and will be holding more discussions with reps down here.

#### [Grace Fisher](#), President Exeter

- The University of Exeter is looking into a [lecture capture](#) policy. They are looking to bring that in for September 2016, just waiting for the policy to go to senate, which is the university's top academic board. Hoping that will pass as it is a great way for students to access lectures for revision.
- We are also running a Module Fair on the 2<sup>nd</sup> march for Exeter students, so you can find out more about modules running next year both within but also outside your departments to encourage more collaboration. We are putting case studies together of Exeter and Falmouth students collaborating to take to both universities alongside collaboration surveys to explain why collaboration enhances your learning experience, why its important, and why we should do more of it.
- Received 1<sup>st</sup> draft of Exeter's financial transparency but it does not detail where the course fees goes, and because falmouth have done it, then the University of Exeter should be doing it too. You can view additional course costs [here](#).
- We have booked out exchange rooms at the start of term for additional study space because we recognition after your feedback that there is not enough space to study in. We are looking to book out more rooms at end of term for exam students.
- Waiting for an update from the university about earlier and later lecture slots. Apparently the University of Exeter's policy is that lectures should start at 8.30am and finish at 6.30pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursday. Because of capacity we don't have to use that at Penryn at the moment, but we may need to use these slots next year. We will let you know as soon as we know!

#### [Alexa Webster](#), President Community & Welfare

- We had [mental health week](#), and it was great to see so many of you involved. An FXU [mental health booklet](#) advice is now available on the website, and will be sent out on social media next week.

- We've had [don't disability week](#), answering the question "Can disabled people have sex?" FYI the only correct answer is "its none of your business" and lots of events.
- Feedback we've had showed a need for stannary events getting people home safe and knowing who to contact if the worst does happen. St Johns do a great job, but with Out of Hours support withdrawn then people don't really know who to contact. So we have produced some business cards to be available at every single stannary event to hand out to everyone. Security will have them, St Johns will have them, and they will be behind the bar so you can keep them on you with all the [contact details](#) you need:

<p style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;"><b>TONIGHT</b></p> <p><b>Glasney Lodge</b> ☎ 01326 253503</p> <p><b>NHS Non-Emergency</b> ☎ 111</p> <p><b>Samaritans</b> ☎ 08457 90 90 90</p> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;">   </div>	<p style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;"><b>TOMORROW*</b></p> <p><b>Student Services</b> ☎ 01326 370460 ✉ <a href="mailto:thecompass@fxplus.ac.uk">thecompass@fxplus.ac.uk</a></p> <p><b>Alexa Webster</b> <b>FXU President Community &amp; Welfare</b> ☎ 01326 253628 ✉ <a href="mailto:Alexa.Webster@fxu.org.uk">Alexa.Webster@fxu.org.uk</a></p> <p><b>Mat Trevaskis</b> <b>Bar Manager</b> ☎ 01326 253686 ✉ <a href="mailto:matf.trevaskis@fxplus.ac.uk">matf.trevaskis@fxplus.ac.uk</a></p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">*Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm</p> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;">   </div>
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- Working with both universities on cuts to Disabled Students Allowance, as well as with the NUS to try and get a national perspective on this. We've made leaps and bounds and there is talk of so much going on, but what we need right now is student feedback so we are going to be coming up with a quiz and survey soon, asking what support you get that is most important to you and ensure that remains.
- We launched the [Be stress free](#) this term, it is the only app of its kind designed for students and we are the first students' union to have it. It is entirely free to download for your iphone, Android, and/or PC.

[Amanda Chetwynd-Cowieson](#), President Student Experience

- I am happy to announce that the £1 bus fare has now been extended for the whole year, which has taken years to achieve.
- Today both universities committed to financially investing in more study space. Potentially this could be more lecture rooms, more study rooms.
- Managed to secure a free caravan for the Green Living Project ([GLP](#)) to sell farmfoods out of.
- One thing I wanted to do was to get more recognition of sports and societies. I went on a national working group at the start of the year to set up a new awards association and ceremony so now there is going to be a national societies recognition awards ceremony.

Societies can nominate themselves and win cash rewards as well as national recognition.

- Today I got a free piano for Woodlane, and of course a free cashpoint for Fox café is coming soon!

## **Announcement of FXU Presidential Election candidates**

Ben Rowswell announced that we have a record number of candidates. Its no mean feat to stand in [FXU elections](#) and voting opened at 6.30pm. The candidates were:

President, Student Experience

- Amanda Chetwynd-Cowieson
- Susanna Phillips
- Louis Allen
- Robbie Bartlett

President, Community & Welfare

- Alexa Webster

President, Exeter

- Charlotte Ettlign
- Alice Lord
- Fern Kenyon-Hamp
- Heather Harrison
- Tom Murray-Richards

President, Falmouth

- Chris Slessor
- Luke Webster
- Anthony Kenny
- Louis Winyard-Sears
- Tomas Kilroy

## **Any Other Business**

**Point:** There was a stress on 1<sup>st</sup> years in the housing issue, however they are not the only people that need housing. What was not discussed tonight is that you have 1<sup>st</sup> years going into halls, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years finding accommodation in February. Post Graduates get places in the summer or even late September and then they cannot find anywhere to live. Speaking to post-graduates they do not feel adequately supported by the universities.

**Question:** I felt PC was very condescending; he did not answer any questions.

ACC : I have a monthly 1:1 with PC and I will pass that back to him as an official complaint.

**Question:** The other day we were told that our dissertations will have to be handed in 2 months earlier, and they said this was because of feedback from students that we wanted more feedback early. So what happens is that the time we work on it has been cut, not the time they take marking it. We are losing out on learning and teaching.

FM: Thank you for raising this point. We have been working for a long time on assessment feedback, Met with Woodlane reps yesterday but did not have coherent plan, so lets arrange meeting.

**Question:** I was talking to MA repstoday and they were not aware of this event, so can you promote it more?

ACC – As a general question how do people want to hear about it, because it goes out in the FXU newsletter to all students, posters, tell people face to face, it goes through the reps and social media so how else can we tell you about events like this?

Response: Tutors in class, the universities' social media sites as well.

**Question:** The board have different agendas to what we want, so could I suggest a new FXU position of a Student Town Councilor, who would be useful to attend planning meetings.

AW: We currently meet twice a term in a group called “ Town and gown” which is myself, the University authorities and the town councils. We talk about everything going on, so I am in discussion with them as much as possible, and I go to civic services.

Response: Having a student on the town council would be useful. I used to be a youth worker and sat on councils and that is their opportunity to ask us questions to understand what we think. It seems there are a lot of middle men and we just get Chinese whispers. Having one person that deals with town councils that they and we can talk to would be a good thing, as you have lots on your plate. If that was possible then have some of us go to their meetings and have some of us be voted onto their council.

AW: Not sure how that would work, maybe sit down with you, me, JC & DP to see how we can make it happen.

**Question:** It is as powerful or more powerful if we as a collective go to planning meetings rather than sending one representative.

[discussion about relative merits of one person they can develop a relationship with versus going as a group]

AW: You are member of this community and you have just as much right to go as a member of community, and they want you to get involved and break down these barriers and get conversations going. If students work with the community and your voices are the same then that sends such a powerful message forwards.

Response: Important that we as students express that we feel the same way as the local community.

Feels that we are sometimes a target for this tension in the community. We need to have a voice that expresses we are with them.

Response: Mentioned neighbourhood planning, and there is a committee that would be good to get a familiar face on it. When that process ends with a referendum at the end which can be voted down, so there are times in that process for familiar faces and times for numbers.

**Question:** Is there any way to get more “powers that be” here, those responsible for decision making, e.g. Anne Carlyle to answer questions?

AW / ACC: We can try.

DP closed meeting at 18:26.