



Falmouth & Exeter Students' Union

Student Voice Conference UGM (Union General Meeting)

21st November 2017

Penryn Campus Peter Lanyon Lecture Theatre 1

4.00pm – 6.00pm

Chair: Jack Hope (FXU Student Voice Chair)

Panel:

FXU CEO

FXU President Student Experience Jamal Clarke

FXU President Community & Welfare Harry Bishop

FXU President Falmouth Chris Slesser

FXU President Exeter Dean Pomeroy

Agenda:

- Welcome & Introductions
 - FXU Student Voice chair thanked panel, guests from FXPlus and attendees.

- FXU Operational Plan
 - FXU CEO Joff Cooke gave this [Presentation](#) about this year's FXU [Operational Plan](#).

Questions: You aim to create a plan for the future. How far forward are you planning for – 5 years?

Joff Cooke: We could not have predicted what is happening now 5 years ago. We are living in a time when change is happening faster than at any time in history. One thing all organisations are balancing is to keep a focus on long term future, so have a direction of travel. Also that you have a plan that gets you through the next time period and has flexibility and options beyond eighteen months.

We will be making sure that the next twelve to eighteen months is properly mapped out. We aim to indicate our expectations to what we aim to achieve in the next three years, but with flexible options. We will have a view on both Exeter and Falmouth universities' aims to 2030 and the direction we expect to go in.

Question: Is the impetus to celebrate success coming from the University?

Joff – no this is for us to manage on behalf of students. A range of independent measures indicate that most students are happy most of the time, but we don't get that feedback. What we need to do is understand what they are happy about. If we don't understand that, when we go representing all of you to the University, there is a risk that the university will change stuff that works really well for students. We have to capture what students like about their experience so we can say to the university "Do more of this", or "in any changes that you do, protect this". At the moment we have no mechanism to collect what is going right, because you do not feedback when things are going well. So we need to create a system that captures that. Then when we deliver what is working well and what is not, the representation is in balance.

➤ Questions for FXU representatives (Presidents/Leadership Team/CEO)

Dean Pomeroy – President Exeter

1. In your manifesto you say you've made progress in working with Exeter uni to improve financial transparency, could you explain your progress so far?

Dean – I listed this as 40% complete as I thought I could make more headway by this stage. I have raised financial transparency at every single level up to and including Vice Chancellor. I have taken it through the majority of Exeter processes and meetings. It is an issue going on around the country, and there is a national question of whether you are getting your money's worth and seeing where the University is spending your money is a big part of that. We've made the strides we are able to make. The University has indicated that they will focus on this. Currently the financial report is not split by campus, which I think is feasible. I wanted a course by course breakdown, but it that not be possible because of the way Universities manage their finances. A lot of Exeter senior management are aware and they have indicated that they too would like clarification. I am continuously lobbying them to get a better breakdown which I aim to have released by the end of my term.

2. You are one of the more visible Presidents and you seem really approachable. But whenever I watch your videos all I hear is you talk about your day-to-day business but you never talk about your actual manifesto, such as improving module options and making field trips accessible, this is what you were elected to do.

Dean – My time in meetings is not completely wasted, and those meetings are structured in a way that addresses my manifesto points. Module options are constantly being reviewed and I speak to associate deans of education about ways to change the modules we currently have. One of the most promising areas for improvement is assessment, where we are looking at innovative ways of being assessed.

Field Trips was my No 1 priority. I want Field Trips to be accessible and affordable to all. We are currently in the first phase where we define accessible and affordable with our student rep system. Then we will focus on Humanities courses to find out what the department thinks.

3. You say 'reps are at the heart of what we do', yet you didn't come to rep training. Why not?

Dean – In October there was a misalignment of calendars. I had Council training and council itself. Council is perhaps the most important meeting I go to where students in Cornwall are represented. I did make the Subject Chair training. By the end of my term, we should get a hierarchy of different meetings that the person in my role needs to be at.

4. Why no drop in sessions? (related to manifesto promise)

Dean I did not realise what I was doing when I wrote that manifesto promise. Although I was friends with the previous president I did not feel I got the opportunity to raise concerns directly, and I felt that drop-ins could be an important way to give the president student opinion. However, if I have 1:1 with students, then it undermines and disempowers student reps, so it is better that we strengthen the feedback loops of our course rep system and education officers rather than bypass them.

5. What did you achieve in council sessions to make them worth missing work here?

Dean I have been involved in the development of Penryn campus' 2020 plan specifically, and with a lot of confidential plans and financial contingent plans. There has been talk of free education, and so the council have put in place plans in case income should drop. There are plans in place in case income drops 10%, 20% and even 50%. Even if income were to drop by 50% Penryn would still expand for Exeter. I have been the voice of Cornwall students at these meetings.

Dean and Chris Slesser – President Falmouth

I know this point has been raised again and again but has there been any discussion into improving the Penryn library? As deadlines are approaching it is getting busier and busier.

Dean – I have spoken to Library who are trying to find crunch points. The University provides study space trackers which is worth checking for what space is available outside of the Library. I would also like to use other parts of campus as study spaces; for instance, we should try to get more powerplugs available in the Lower Stannary and make it more inviting outside of mealtimes. The Library itself also has plans for expansion in the longer term.

Chris – Both Universities, shared services and FXU are running a joint “Love your Library” campaign in January. This timed with deadline periods for Falmouth students and revision period for Exeter students. Part of the campaign will highlight available space across libraries in Penryn and Falmouth. As Dean said, the space tracker tool will be monitored more frequently. Part of the campaign will launch some research to gather evidence of needs and requirements of students both in a creative industries University, and a research intensive one. This will inform the mid to long term library strategy.

Chris Slesser – President Falmouth

How achievable are your manifesto points on reducing material cost and increasing financial support for students' projects?

Chris – Yes; I have been working for the past year to ensure that feedback from course reps is getting where it needs to go.

A major mechanism for this exchange of feedback has been the department forum where the course reps from within every department meet each other and discuss trends and key issues within their department. So 28 students on one course become several hundred in the department informing the department rep. Then by meeting department reps, my role on academic board then represents the views of thousands of students across all departments and can obtain changes that are more substantial.

Through doing that there are trends that can be identified, for example within the school of communication design; Adobe creative cloud was seen as an integral piece of software for the course and students called for support, which was taken to department board. Then printing costs are coming up in specific courses and departments; for instance, they feature more in the school of Architecture and Design than with students in AMATA. We can try to get the burden of printing costs addressed at a more granular level. This system is working more effectively now. There is a partnership with the Hall for Cornwall in order to get ticket discounts for Falmouth and Exeter students, but particularly supporting the research of students in AMATA.

I am working with employability for institutional discounts for things like business card printing. If we are saying that enterprise activities are at the heart of what we are doing at Falmouth, then we need to support that activity, for example with business cards and branding your practise.

Therefore, we are obtaining pockets of changes relevant to their departments.

FXU are keen to increase, incubate and support course based societies, and support fundraising – the work of Fashion Photography has been fantastic in fundraising for their end of year projects. Strengthening these course-based societies will help with end of year projects and shows, and form that bridge between social and academic activities.

Jamal Clarke - Student Experience

Student Experience

In your manifesto you pledge to provide more support to sustainability and green living projects, but you're quite vague about it. What plans do you have to make this happen?

Jack offered Jamal's apologies and opened the question to the rest of the team. We will ask Jamal to address the question in minute circulation

Chris – FXU applies for NUS Green Impact Award and this includes our course reps which to date has been tokenistic at best. Some reps are interested on implementing sustainable initiatives, and in the future I will be working with our executive officer to embed good practise in each department.

Joff – Previously no staff member had sustainability as their direct responsibility, we are about to recruit a new position called “Community Partnerships Manager” who will have sustainability as one of their functions to manage and support.

Jamal's response: I sit on the panel for the Green Fund applications, Exeter Annual Fund allocations and SLEPF (Student Led Event Project Funding). I am also involved in the working group for the Garden Fete on 5th May 2018 and I do my best to work with Abbie Banner, the Executive Officer, when possible. I encourage FXPlus to make small changes to their operations and supplies, such as Plastic Cutlery and Straws. I am always happy to support students with any big ideas and demonstrate how FXU can help.

Abbie Banner - Environment & Ethics Officer

Manifesto points such as the veggie options and recycling points rely on key campus stakeholders cooperating. How likely are these to have a successful outcome/what progress has been made so far?

Abbie – very likely. The shop has now introduced more vegan and veg options in the last week or so. Myself and Jamal are part of the catering liaison group, although we are yet to have our first meeting, but that is where I will raise my manifesto points. I am hoping to plan a survey next week with Jamal for the FXU newsletter that will ask people what they want, so that we have statistics. I surveyed campus-recycling points, and fed that back to Jamal and FXPlus with my suggestions.

Hannah Davies – FXU Sports Officer

Beach Day!!!!

Hannah, how's it going with the beach day? Is there a date set yet?

Jack offered apologies for Hannah. There is a provisional booking for the end of march.

Sarah Redman – FXU Societies Officer

You put forward adopt a charity at the committee conference, what societies have signed up and what's happened?

Sarah – I am working in collaboration with RAD members on this initiative. We have formed two official new partnerships– Don't Disability with Carrick Mind. The other is Special Effects with Video Game Society; this is a charity to increase game playing among disabled students in the country. There are also a lot of societies who are already fundraising; for example Rugby for Movember and Geogsoc for Shelterbox. A lot of our sports clubs already fall under this banner informally, but we just need to formalise the relationships.

Harry Bishop – Community & Welfare

1. Out of your manifesto points, the fifth pledge has seen very little progress. How are you going to develop this in the future?

Harry – 5th pledge was training. We picked three areas, the first being mental health and suicide awareness for academic staff. The second was for Glasney lodge staff to have sensitivity training, and the third was for FXU staff to have more training generally.

Progress has been slow because this involves many partners and many conversations. I believe Glasney Lodge staff have had suicide awareness training, and there has been feedback about how their work is more sensitivity driven.

Academic staff are very busy and so we are looking at digital toolkits for them. That will be a big project and a lot of work.

For FXU staff training, we are working with CRASAC, the Willow Centre, to provide Mental Health, First Aid, and suicide awareness training. Some staff have been on some of those but we are looking at all staff going on them so

that when students come in, they know that they are coming into a safe space. Yes it is slow, but I think we are making headway.

2. **Harry Bishop & Tom Crane** – Faith Committee Chair

Its clear that you have different opinions on the faith committee and the possibility of it being disbanded. What are your views and why?

Harry – I hate the term disbanding, because this is not about disbanding, it is about reforming. To give you context, the first meeting had three attendees, the second had zero. FXU are putting a lot of time and resource into this committee and we are not getting attendance. FXU has many committees and a committee needs targets and goals. I do not really see the Faith Committee's goals. It does include representation, but representation by itself is not enough to justify a committee. By having elections, you are competing with other people of your religion to be there; that is not representation – that is exclusion. I think we can look at other forms, such as a forum and working with the chaplaincy to see what suggestions Becky Nesbitt has. Therefore, it is not about disbanding, but about changing and adapting.

Tom – We have had conversations on this and where we agree is that the committee is not currently working. Where we disagree is the idea of a forum, and the one representative system. How do we change the system without making one faith more prominent than the others. If you have a forum system then it is more likely that the two faith societies will represent those faiths over and above other faiths, which the faith committee was designed not to do. We are currently trying to work out how we can change this system without giving dominance to one or two faiths.

3. **Callie Edwards**, RAD President

RAD looks really cool this year but how are you including Falmouth students? Especially those in AMATA and at the Falmouth campus?

Callie – we ensure our promotion covers Falmouth campus and AMATA. We have focussed on making sure our existing events are we delivered as best as possible. We do have plans for lots of exciting events so if we can get teams together then we will deliver them on Falmouth campus and in AMATA as well.

4. **Lydia Allegretto**, Volunteering Officer

The FXU V Team profile is really not user friendly, it took so long the first time that I haven't even bothered to log my hours since. How can FXU change this?

Lydia – We are aware of website issues. I am working with Harry to update it. Firstly we are bringing together what change we want and then discussing with FXU about what change we can get on the website. The web development team is aiming to make the updates we want/can get at beginning of next term.

5. **Harri McLady** – Community Chair

What is the community committee actually doing to do to improve our relationship with locals?

Harri – We have selected our students for the committee.

➤ Hot Topics – Catering on campus, let's make it great together! 40mins

- [Presentation](#) given by:
 - **Fiona Foster** – Director of Campus Experience
 - **Niki Court** – Head of Marketing – FX Plus
 - **Chris Aldridge** – Head of Catering – FX Plus
- Additional guests:
 - Tony Sanders** – Managing Director – FX Plus (attending later on)
 - Andrew Gammage** – Interim Service Excellence Manager

Questions: Is this focussed only Penryn campus?

Fiona: No – both!

Positive Comments

1. I really enjoy the new deli sandwich area - the lime and chilli chicken is particularly good and I highly recommend
2. Catering on campus is good! Thank you 😊

Alternative and additional Provision

Padlet Question: More hot and cold vegan meals and snacks - linked with other question, 'No vegan hot sandwich options and just one vegetarian option'.

Chris – we have got some options down there. The evening offer in Koofi going forward will address some of this. We can take action really quickly.

Fiona – will log these. We have picked up on improving the different types of food we offer. We picked up the demand for vegetarian and halal food as well, however we want to do it correctly and don't want to introduce things at half measures. We can look at specialist suppliers to make some changes relatively quickly, but we want to talk to Islamic Society and include it in our January offer. We are looking at making longer changes that would make onsite halal production.

Question: Real Wrap Co don't do hot vegan wrap?

Fiona: We are not tied to Real Wrap Co and if there is food that they can't provide, we have the option of producing it ourselves or we can use other suppliers to get other supplies - we can possibly get this in two weeks.

Question: What are you doing to promote these changes to all students?

Fiona: We have not had a dedicated marketing specialist in this department before, but now we have got Niki to work on this.

Niki: We have got several channels of communication, and we hope to include FXU. We aim to improve communication at the point of sale, our outlets, but also AV in library, sports centre, social media feed, so we are getting our message around campus.

We are looking at:

- Menus on our website
- Promotions on social media

Discussion established that students expect this information by formal routes such as email newsletter, but also posters at outlets for instant feedback.

Question: What is the plan for Falmouth campus?

Fiona: As we are a new team and we focussed initially on where we saw the priority, and the challenges at the Penryn campus were highlighted in the National Student Survey. We had more positive feedback about Falmouth campus catering. The big thing that came from Falmouth feedback was queuing, so now we are introducing faster tills and we are looking at the split counters at Falmouth. We had feedback asking us to keep some of the unique things there, such as home baked cakes. We will try to add what proves most popular in Penryn. We can't do full pop ups, but we include some items to the Falmouth menu, depending on our kitchen capacity. We do need to start getting engagement with students based on that campus and we would love to start running some tastings there.

Chris – I find in Falmouth that we have really good engagement between our catering team and customers, but we are not sure what is happening with people who don't use campus catering and using our facilities.

Fiona – We do recognise that Falmouth has a unique identity and we don't just want to make homogenous offer everywhere. We don't want to just introduce things without talking to you first. We want to preserve that atmosphere.

Question: What channels are you using at moment?

Niki – Website and social media, and we are engaging with the two Universities to make use of University newsletters. We do have some FXPlus channels, but they are not particularly student facing, and students don't need to know what FXPlus are doing, but that they are having a great University experience. So we are looking to develop existing University channels, including FXU, screens and focus groups. The liaison group will be crucial to get two-way communication going.

Fiona: We currently use very little and it is one thing we need to address; for instance, menus are only within the facility which will not tell you which outlet to select on any particular day.

Chris – We do use our [website](#), though we recognise it is not necessarily the best way to communicate.

Joff: We have a key difference in that we have systems of representation and students who represent groups and people forget that this is a two-way process. Empowering reps to be the people we train to know that it is their job to find out this information and tell the students that they are representing face-to-face.

Fiona: Jamal has been our contact and has been the representative of the student body at our meetings. A lot of what we have planned has been fed back to Jamal. If that is not, then getting back to the student body then that is something else that we need to address.

Joff: This mechanism is something we need to talk about.

Question: Having tiers of different coffee works less well in practise as a key time to get coffee is the gap between lectures which limits the time available, which limits the outlets you can get to, so you may not have the time to reach the outlet which has value coffee. Can you roll out tiering system at other areas of campus.

Fiona: It is possible, so long as we take the majority view into account. We have to be careful that we pick the right areas where we make changes without damaging what we have now. We do have value coffee available in Glasney Lodge, with premium Starbucks next door in Koofi. We do have to balance making change with meeting the majority of needs. I would be lynched if I took Starbucks out of Koofi as it is our number one seller!

Padelt Question: This campus has almost 200 Muslim students and so far, nothing has been done to cater for our needs. I have been here for over two years there is still no option of purchasing halal hot/cold goods in the Stannary or Koofi. For the past two years, I have had to travel all the way to Plymouth to purchase Halal goods since it is not available in Cornwall at all. I am more than happy to help out if needed but would be great if this is considered seriously and not ignored since this campus is becoming more diverse.

See Fiona's response above.

Stannary pair (as one question)

1. £4.20 for a jacket potato with beans and cheese is ridiculous
2. £1 for a slice of cheese?? (on the burgers)

Fiona: Jacket potatoes is one area we did not increase the price. We don't make a profit on them – we don't make a profit in catering at all and subsidise campus catering from other areas. Where we start making big losses, we do have to increase the price if we continue to sell it, but we held jacket potatoes to their current price. We did introduce 3 tiered pricing on fillings, and if both toppings are premium then perhaps it does become more expensive, but you are given the choice. If there are things that are really sensitive on price, then we do understand.

Padlet Question: Compared to other campus coffee prices, Koofi is really expensive

Fiona – You may not be aware that there are four price bands for coffee on campus. You can get a coffee for £1 or pay up to the top price, which is Starbucks coffee at 2/3 Starbucks price. This premium coffee is available in Koofi and the Deli. More feedback on this is important to us, as we need to make sure that we offer the right choice in the right outlet.

Evening Food

1. When can we have hot food in the Stannary past 3pm?
2. I would like to ask when we can get food between 5pm and 8pm in the Stannary please? Shouldn't be too much to ask!

3. I often have a lot of coursework and end up on campus until late. We have literally nothing to eat late at night apart from pasties and I cannot eat a pasty everyday. Is FXPLUS looking into providing dinner as well

These questions were summarised together.

Fiona: We find there are little pockets of demand for later food, but not enough. We trialled opening Koofi in the evening to 10pm, but there was very little take up. We don't know if it was the wrong place or the wrong offer – you could help us understand that.

We have pushed back the Deli to 4.30pm in the new Deli, which is popular but from 3pm onwards it is not particularly busy. We are trying to maintain the services that we can without making too much of a loss on them. If we increase staff hours to cover those services with little usage it becomes incredibly expensive to maintain things like value-for-money tariffs. We need to avoid adding in services there is not particularly big demand for that start to cost a lot of money, because that is when it becomes difficult to maintain current prices. However, we intend to trial some theme nights in the Stannary, e.g. curry night, and if they do prove popular then we would increase them.

We would love to do food every night, and we are hoping catered halls will go live by next September, which would mean we know in advance how many people have pre-paid for catering and that would allow for us to provide a permanent evening food offer. We are looking at what sort of offers we could provide.

Feedback: We would be keen to have block purchase packages available to 2nd / 3rd years as well.

Dean: Jamal has mentioned this impacts subsections of the student body like mature students, international students, etc.

Question: Value meals under £3 are a really good idea, but we can't pay with our card because there is a minimum card limit.

Fiona: We are looking at introducing a cashless-campus system with no limit on spend. No guarantee on where this will go, but we are looking at all the options next week.

Discussion about the single cash machine on each campus being notorious for malfunctioning, and that unspent money on cards being lost – citing laundry payment system as an example.

Question: Could you make cashless system Opt in system, as not everyone would be able to afford unchecked spending that such a system may encourage.

Question: Can streetfood coming onto campus be included in such a system?

Fiona: They are independent businesses. We kept them because the feedback we got was not to get rid of them. We can make one criteria for successful tenders to be that they include card payment. We have looked at alternative spaces, e.g. Glasney lodge, but at the moment we are limited to where the utilities are located.

Chris: One significant difference from previous years is that we have asked external businesses to make decisions as a group – to co-ordinate among themselves when they are here, the times and a consistent approach to ensure that there is a street food offer every day.

➤ Any Other Business

None.

➤ Jack thanked everyone for coming. Meeting closed 18.00

○ Next meeting will be the AGM on 16th feb, the next leadership team meeting Dec 6th – which should be livestreamed on fxu facebook.