

The University of Dublin

Trinity College

Minutes of Student Services Committee Meeting, 13th November 2007

- Present* Dr Amanda Piesse (Chair) Dean of Students (Dr G Whyte) Deputy Treasurer's Representative (Ms A Mulcahy), Senior Tutor (Dr M O'Regan), Prof H Delany, Prof S Matterson, SU Welfare Officer (Ms U Faulkner), GSU President (Mr A Frenda), Dr E MacCarthaigh, Mr T McAuley.
- Apologies* Senior Lecturer (Prof C Kearney), College Secretary (Mr M Gleeson), Ms D Flynn (Secretary).
- In attendance* Ms G Conroy
- (by invitation)* Bursar (Prof Clive Williams)

SECTION A

New members of the Committee, Prof H Delany (Deans' representative) and Prof S Matterson (Head of Schools' representative) were welcomed.

- SS/07-08/29** **Minutes** The Minutes of the meeting held on **16th October 2007** were approved and signed.
- SS/07-08/30** **Matters Arising from the Minutes** Matters arising from the Minutes were discussed and are recorded below, (see Minutes **SS/07-08/31**, **SS/07-08/32**, **SS/07-08/33**, **SS/07-08/34**, **SS/07-08/35**).
- SS/07-08/31** **Mental Health Working Party** The Working Party had met as planned. A budget would be drawn up, the cost of publishing the Mental Health Policy Guidelines would be estimated, and a launch by the Junior Minister in the Department of Health would be organised. A planning meeting for the formation of a Fitness to Practise Working Group would take place on November 28th; the aim would be to prepare a preliminary report on the preparation of a draft Fitness to Practise Policy by the end of the current academic year.
- SS/07-08/32** **College Day Nursery** Line management of the Day Nursery had not yet been finalised, due to a need for clarification in Staff Office concerning the responsibilities of the undertaking. The Dean of Students in tandem with the Senior Tutor would pursue the matter with the utmost vigour. Without a line manager in place planning for the expansion of the Day Nursery could not proceed (see minute **SS/07-08/36** below).
- SS/07-08/33** **Risk Management** Notifiable risks would be communicated by Friday 16 November to the College Secretary, by the Dean of Students.
- SS/07-08/34** **Governance of Irish Universities Document** Dr Piesse would organise a meeting among herself, the Dean of Students and the Students' Unions to assess the usefulness of updating the 1995 Students Charter as a framework for a statement on

best practice concerning students, as the required response to the governance document. She would report back to the Committee.

SS/07-08/35 **Review of Student Services Strategic Plan** The proposed meeting of the Student Services' Heads Forum had been deferred; it would be rearranged very shortly, following which meeting the Dean of Students would report back to the Committee.

SS/07-08/36 **Luce Hall Development** The Bursar outlined to the Committee the work of the Luce Hall Planning Committee over the past two years. During this time student services interested in taking space in the redeveloped Hall had been asked for their requirements. The need to extend the existing building had been identified; the north side had been considered the most suitable site for the required extension, and sketch plans had been made. Site and Facilities Committee had released €250,000 in June 2007 to commission the design of a full set of plans to submit for planning approval.

The Bursar commented on the continuing tenancy in Luce Hall of some facilities of the Botany Department, noting that unless Botany relocated it would not be possible to re-house the Day Nursery in the Hall, due to the planning and HSE requirements that a Nursery would need to be in a ground floor location with specified adjoining outside space (see minute **SS/07-08/37** below). He emphasised that the Students' Unions and other units expecting to be allocated space in the redeveloped Luce Hall must finalise their decisions on dimensions and use of their space, e.g., if there is to be an event space, exactly what its dimensions and requirements would be. Decisions such as these must be taken during the current academic year, following consultation in conjunction with the designs commissioned to enable the process.

Trinity Foundation had recently indicated that it did not anticipate any real difficulty in raising sufficient funding to enable the redevelopment to go ahead. There was unanimous agreement that if a student levy were to be imposed it would be imposed only on the body of students making use of the developed facility; no advance levy would be acceptable as a fund-raising initiative.

The Bursar emphasised the vital role of Student Services Committee in this development, in particular keeping up the momentum, ensuring that decisions on space are made, noting that four Committee members are also members of the planning committee. An outline of the next steps in the fund-raising process would be forthcoming in the near future from Mr Sparrow; a strong front line comprising the Dean of Students, the SU and GSU Presidents, and the Chair of SSC had been agreed.

SS/07-08/37 **College Day Nursery** In the discussions above (minutes **SS/07-08/32** and **SS/07-08/36**) the urgent need for finalising the line management of the Day Nursery was reiterated. Neither relocation (see above minute **SS/07-08/36**) nor expansion of the Day Nursery, nor further exploration of a satellite Day Nursery in Greenane, Dartry, can move forward until a line manager is in place. A delegation from the Day Nursery Committee led by the then Senior Tutor in her capacity as chair of the Day Nursery Committee had visited Greenane in July, and had indicated considerable interest in investigating its conversion to use as a satellite Day Nursery to the Director of Buildings, who in turn had informed the Senior Tutor that he would nominate a member of his staff to manage the project, but nothing further had been heard. The Bursar undertook to pursue the matter, stressing the need for a Day Nursery Development Steering Group.

SS/07-08/38 **Student Counselling Service Annual Report** This item was deferred due to the SCS Director's unavoidable absence.

SS/07-08/39 Risk Registers The Tutorial Service risk register had been prepared. A College Day Nursery risk register had been requested. Clarification as to a requirement for Capitated Bodies to compile a risk register would be sought from the College Secretary. Such a requirement should be communicated to the Senior Dean as Chair of the Capitation Committee, and to the Dean of Students.

SS/07-08/40 Any Other Business

Intermission of Studies for extra-curricular reasons - Report of Working Group A full discussion of the principles involved in this item was deferred until the next Committee meeting. A brief discussion of two requests for intermission of studies for extra-curricular reasons referred by the Senior Lecturer to the Dean of Students as a result of which the Report had come to light. This resulted in a Committee decision that, unless the Dean of Students could discover either a precedent or a let out clause in the Statutes, both applications for an intermission of studies for extra-curricular reasons had been submitted too late in the academic year. Fees and insurance were among the considerations.

Student-2-Student (previously Peer Support Network) Awareness had been raised that funding for this student support service would run out in April 2008, arising from which circumstance a small Working Group had been set up to craft a document that would aptly describe the service and its contribution to the well-being of students. The service costs approximately €40,000 per annum to run. Two preferences had been identified for its continuation, which would require central College funding.

Quality Review of Tutorial Service The site visit had taken place on 8th and 9th November. The Dean of Students reported that very insightful comments had been made by the external reviewers, who had been most impressed by the breadth and quality of its service delivery, calling it the 'Jewel in the Crown' of student services. Their draft report would be submitted for correction of factual statements within three weeks, following which the final report would be submitted to the Service for comment. It would be most important to press for implementation of the reviewers' recommendations, amongst which would be the extension, in some form, of the Tutorial Service to postgraduate students. The final report would be discussed at this Committee.

SS/07-08/41 Date of Next Meeting - 4th December 2007

SECTION B

There were no items in this section

SECTION C

SS/07-08/42 Financial Assistance Committee

The Committee noted and approved the minutes of the meeting of 27th September 2007.

SS/07-08/43 Student Counselling Service Committee

The Committee noted and approved the minutes of the meeting of 30th October 2007

Signed:

Date: