

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 November 2006

Present: Lady Catto (Convener), Professor G Burgess, Mr S Cannon, Mr D Elliott, Mr J Fairwood, Mr L Forsyth, Mr J Hardey, Dr WF Long, Ms C Macaslan, Ms L Macdonald, Mr C MacKenzie, Mr R Miller, Mr RW Murray, Mr M Seed and Dr T Webb, with Ms YS Gordon (Clerk)

Apologies for absence were received from Mr A Devlin, Professor C Gane, Mr J Leiper and Mrs R Ramanan

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 May 2006 were approved subject to the following changes:

- 21.1.1 Amend Christopher MacKenzie's title to VP (Societies & Student Activities);
- 21.1.2 In the second paragraph amend "during refurbishment work" to "prior to refurbishment work"

2. MATTERS ARISING

2.1 ATM FACILITIES (*minute 17.2 refers*)

The Director of Campus Services confirmed that an agreement had now been signed with the Alliance & Leicester to provide a free cash machine at Hillhead. The ATM facilities at The Hub would be operational in the near future.

2.2 CHARGES FOR AUDIO-VISUAL SERVICES (*minute 17.5 refers*)

The Students' Association Manager agreed to meet with the Head of the Audio-Visual Unit to discuss the issue of AV equipment hire.

Action: MS

3. REMIT AND COMPOSITION

3.1 The Committee considered the remit and composition of the Committee (SAC06:01, *copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*).

3.2 It was noted that this Committee was a statutory Committee with dates of meetings published well in advance. Dates of meetings should therefore go into diaries as soon as meeting dates were published as it was important that key staff attended. It was also noted that the Court Effectiveness Review was still ongoing.

3.3 It was agreed:

- (i) That the Vice-Principal (Learning & Teaching) and the President of the Students' Association meet to discuss the remit of the Committee, whether it reflected a student in the 21st century and other bigger issues concerning student life, and report back to the Committee in due course with recommendations for any changes.

Action: CM/RM

(ii) That an additional meeting, possibly on Monday 10 September, be pencilled into diaries now.

4. STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

4.1 The Committee received reports from the President and Vice-Presidents of the Students' Association, together with an update of the Students' Association 2005-2008 Strategic Plan (SAC06:02 and SAC06:03, *copies filed with the principal copy of the minutes*).

4.2 The principal points to note arising from the reports were:

- that the reports were all very positive, with the SA optimistic on what it would be able to achieve this year, including the move towards on-line voting;
- that 80 class representatives had been trained and 40 more were undergoing training;
- that the Information & Advice Centre now had an on-line database to help students find accommodation, the report highlighting that this was an area of great concern as several students appeared to be considering leaving University as they could not find any suitable accommodation;
- that due to a change in charities law the Charities Committee had already agreed where the charities money should be directed, with the two main beneficiaries being INSPIRE and Archway, each receiving 10%. It was hoped to raise £100,000. A third of the money raised in the Bookends shop in The Hub, which had seen a huge increase in sales since the move, would also go towards the charities campaign;
- that storage space for societies' equipment was still a very pressing issue, with equipment currently dispersed in several locations, including Allied-Pickfords (at great expense to AUSA);
- that the issues of lockable noticeboards, advertising on plasma screens, and signage would be discussed at the forthcoming Hub User Group. It was further noted that plasma screens around the University could be used as an important marketing tool.

4.3 It was agreed:

(i) That the issue of the location of a radio station studio would be discussed at a separate meeting with the Director of Campus Services and the President of the Students' Association.

Action: LF/RM

(ii) That for the Spring meeting of the Committee the Students' Association should consider any issues it would like to submit for inclusion into the update of the University's Strategic Plan.

Action: RM

5. CAMPUS SERVICES

5.1 The Committee considered a report from the Director of Campus Services (SAC06:04, *copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*).

5.2 The following points were noted:

- that The Hub had been operational for three weeks and had seen 8,500 customers per week at the food court and 25,000 had purchased goods at the café bar;
- that from 400 residents at Crombie-Johnston Halls, which had relocated its catered service to The Hub, 12 negative written comments had been received;
- that the University had entered into a lease arrangement with NHS Grampian to take over space in The Hub when it was ready, to be used for a dental practice;

- that when asked about family accommodation for students, which the Postgraduate Strategy Advisory Group had raised as a recruitment issue due to the lack of postgraduate family accommodation in the University, the Director of Campus Services reported that he was currently compiling a survey of accommodation for families provided by other institutions, and thereafter proposals and recommendations for this University would be submitted to the Project Board.

6. STUDENT AND ACADEMIC SERVICES

- 6.1 The Committee received and noted a report from the Director of Student and Academic Services (SAC06:05, *copy filed with the principal copy of the minutes*).

7. NATIONAL STUDENTS' SURVEY

- 7.1 The Committee noted that the University would participate in the National Student Survey, to be carried out in early 2007 (SAC05:16 refers). The Survey, for final year students only, had been compulsory in England for two years now. The University had opted-in this year. This academic year there would also be a further pilot of additional NSS questions in which the University's Management Group had agreed we should participate. The Registry would contact relevant students in the near future.

8. 2006/07 MEETING DATE DETAILS

- 8.1 The Committee noted the meeting dates for 2006/07, to be held at 2 p.m. in the Court Room, University Office:

Monday 19 February 2007
Monday 28 May 2007
Monday 10 September 2007