

The University of Warwick

Campus Life Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 6 November 2003.

PRESENT: Professor R Dyson (Chair), Rev M Bratton, Dr P Byrd, Mr J Cunnington, Professor R Freedman, Mr P Greatrix, Mr S Lamb, Ms F Miles, Mr T Monnington, Ms L Whithorn.

APOLOGIES: Mr B Plant, Professor M McCrae.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr C Dove-Dixon, Ms C Graham (for item 3/03-04), Ms N Nixon, Mr M Scott.

1/03-04 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9 June 2003 be approved.

2/03-04 Membership and Terms of Reference

REPORTED (by Professor Freedman):

That membership of the Committee did not fully represent the cultural activities on the campus.

CONSIDERED:

The Membership and Terms of Reference of the Committee (CLC.1/03-04)

RESOLVED:

That it was important to ensure that issues relating to cultural activities on the campus were properly reflected in the Committee's business with key individuals being invited to attend for specific items rather than via formal representation on the Committee.

3/03-04 The University Disability Officer

RECEIVED:

A report from the University Disability Officer on her role and activities.

RESOLVED:

That the work of the University Disability Officer be welcomed.

4/03-04 Heronbank

REPORTED:

- (a) That delays in the construction of East Court meant that only 100 of the 331 rooms had been available for occupation at the start of the autumn term.
- (b) That, in anticipation of the delays in construction, the University had reserved accommodation in five good quality hotels in Coventry for the 233 postgraduates who would not be able immediately to take up their rooms in Heronbank.
- (c) That, as far as possible, students had been allocated to hotels in their flat groups along with the Resident Tutors of Heronbank who had been the main point of contact for the displaced students.
- (d) That a welcome marquee (including storage space) was employed to receive students arriving at the University during the week prior to the start of term and for the duration of Week 1.
- (e) That minibuses had been provided to transport students to and from the campus.
- (f) That hotel-based students had been provided with a phone card and a dining card to allow them to purchase food in the various catering outlets on campus.
- (g) That the first group of 39 moved from hotels into their rooms during the first week of term; the second group of 147 moved in during the weekend of 18/19 October; and the final seven students took up residence during the weekend of 24/25 October.

5/03-04 Allocation of Residential Accommodation 2003/04 and 2004/05

REPORTED:

- (a) That by the end Week 3 there were 79 vacancies in the residences reserved for postgraduates, 41 vacancies in the residences reserved for undergraduates and 120 vacancies in off-campus accommodation managed by Warwick Accommodation.
- (b) That the high vacancy rate could be a result of inaccurate forecasting of student numbers, and particularly overseas fee paying postgraduates, and/or an exceptionally high level of new overseas fee paying postgraduates living off-campus in the private sector.
- (c) That, before detailed plans for the allocation of accommodation for the 2004/2005 academic year could be finalised, a clearer understanding of the factors that had affected population forecasts was required.
- (d) That, for the first time, all new students had been able to apply for accommodation online and only a handful had chosen not to do so.
- (e) That there had been an increase in the number of postgraduates who, having booked accommodation, failed to take up their room at the beginning of the Autumn Term. The figures indicate a 'no show' rate of just over 5% compared to the predicted 2%.

- (f) That the number of vacancies currently available on and off-campus had resulted in a significant number of transfer requests; the current £15 transfer fee did not cover the true administration cost of a room transfer.
- (g) In an attempt to fill vacancies, Warwick Accommodation continued to advertise vacancies both to new students and to staff. For the first time this included short-term lets arranged in such a way as to avoid negative impact on long-term residents. Warwick Accommodation had also successfully provided off-campus accommodation to a number of students attending Coventry University.
- (h) That a significant number of students had applied to transfer from Westwood citing the dining scheme and resulting financial hardship as the main reason for requesting a move.
- (i) That the University had declined to co-operate with PrimeLiving in their marketing campaign for the current year. It was understood that PrimeLiving had filled only one third of the rooms in Liberty Park and it was believed that they may engage in a more aggressive marketing campaign for the 2004/2005 academic year.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposals for the allocation of accommodation for 2004/5 be approved, noting that some changes may be made to precise allocations following more thorough investigation of the reasons behind the higher than expected 'no-show' rate.
- (b) That the Committee's view that the continuing unpopularity of the Westwood Dining Scheme, the high vacancy rate at Westwood and the high number of transfer requests and hardship cases all pointed to the need for the discontinuation of the scheme to be addressed in the context of the Strategic Review of Catering.
- (c) That the overseas postgraduate accommodation deposit be increased from £200 to £250 in line with competitor institutions and that the cancellation notice period be extended from 10 days to one month prior to the start of term.
- (d) That the transfer fee be increased from £15 to a level which more closely matched the actual administrative cost of arranging a transfer.

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Accommodation Manager on the allocation of residential accommodation for 2003/04 and 2004/05 (CLC.2/03-04/CLC.3/03-04).

6/03-04

Developing Accommodation Strategy

REPORTED:

- (a) That further discussions on developing the University's strategy for residential accommodation would be taking place at a forthcoming Council and Strategy Committee away day.
- (b) That a revised version of the paper would be considered by the Steering Committee in due course.

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Director of Student and Ancillary Services on developing the University's strategy for residential accommodation (paper CLC.4/03-04).

RESOLVED:

That the paper be approved in principle noting that further input would be requested from Departments, the International Office and others.

7/03-04 Facilities for Graduate Students

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Director of Student and Ancillary Services on the provision of facilities for Graduate Students (paper CLC.5/03-04).

RESOLVED:

That the paper be approved and the recommendations it contained be pursued subject to further input from the Board of Graduate Studies.

8/03-04 Sport

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Director of Physical Education and Sport.

RESOLVED:

That a further discussion on sport take place at the next meeting.

9/03-04 Welfare and Support Services

REPORTED:

(a) That the Working Group on Student Support and Guidance, established by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, was undertaking a survey of departmental views of the Personal Tutor System, the results of which would be reported to the next meeting of the Committee.

(b) The Covenant of Ecumenical Partnership within the Chaplaincy had been renewed at a recent signing ceremony in the Chaplaincy.

(c) That there had been a significant increase in enquiries to Students' Union Advice and Welfare Services relating to immigration and that additional clerical support had been made available by the International Office to help with the increase in work load.

(d) That delays in the return of passports to overseas students seeking visa extensions may result in a higher number of students applying for campus accommodation during the Christmas vacation.

- (e) That the arrangement made to ensure students arriving at the University at the start of the autumn term had a positive experience had proved most successful.
- (f) That there had been an increase in the Student Orientation, Activities and Support budget made available to Wardens in order to allow resident staff to support further enhancement the student residential experience.

RECEIVED:

A report from the Senior Chaplain (paper CLC.8/03-04).

10/03-04 Child Protection Policy

CONSIDERED:

A proposed Child Protection Policy for the University (paper CLC.6/03-04).

RECOMMENDED:

That the proposed Child Protection Policy for the University be adopted.

11/03-04 Academic Satisfaction Review

REPORTED:

- (a) That this survey had been undertaken by the Students' Union earlier in 2002/03 in order to inform the Union's submission to the Quality Assurance Agency for the 2004 Institutional Audit.
- (b) That Departments had been invited to respond to the relevant sections of the survey and submit their comments for consideration by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee and the Steering Committee.
- (c) That issues relating to Campus Life which arose from the report and Departments' responses would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

12/03-04 Warwick Volunteers

RECEIVED:

The Warwick Volunteers' Handbook 03-04 (CLC.7/03-04).