

Grey College Association AGM Minutes 55th April 2014 at 4pm, Pennington Room, Grey College

Minute 849 - Welcome

The President welcomed members to the 2014 AGM . Those present - Janet Gyllenspetz, Andy Petch, Piers James, Ivan le Gallais, Neville Griffiths, Mike Robinson, Roger Hall, John Earp, Geoffrey Simpson, Graham Cottam, Ian Devlin, Parik Chandra, Tom Allen, Peter Swift, Tom Cliff, Dave Baldwin, Charles Jewkes, Steve Gregory

Apologies for absence: R J Hilton, D Clark, M Andrew, S Hiscock, M Penfold

Minute 850 - Minutes of 2013 AGM

The minutes of the 2013 AGM were approved (proposed Andy Petch, seconded Parik Chandra) on a 'general aye' and signed.

Matters arising from the minutes: The President reported that the boat club (now with 78 members had successfully used the plastic eight paid for by the Association to win the Pennant in 2012 . The women's crew had also had success at Henley.

Minute 851 - President's Report

The President reported that the University had instituted a Colleges Review , intended to ensure 'value for money in the University's Professional Services Division'. In practice, this would see an increase in centralisation, especially regarding profit & loss and responsibility for College staff. The Master noted that some of the reactions expressed in various media (national as well as local) had exaggerated the likely impact, but also reported that the University had undoubtedly misjudged the perception of these proposals, and underestimated the reaction of students and Alumni alike. Discussions between Heads of House and the University are ongoing.

The President reported that some of the Alumni Associations wish to send a joint letter to the VC expressing the view that this would devalue the Colleges, be wholly detrimental to the student experience and lead to reduced financial support from Alumni. Tom Cliff is unwilling to sign this letter, finding it too extreme. He proposed instead to write to the Chair of College Council expressing deep concern at possible impact of some of the current proposals , whilst accepting that there is a place in large organisations for 'value creative' centralisation the .

In reply to a question from Mike Robinson, the President explained that is not yet clear what % of budget the proposed measures will achieve. . .

Andy Petch accepted the President's proposal, with the proviso that the College/ Association response to the proposals has to be neither confrontational nor reactionary. The President undertook to circulate the text to any member of the Association who wishes to see it.

Members agreed that the Colleges are a significant part of what makes Durham different from other successful UK Universities.

Minute 852 - Treasurer's Report & Accounts 2013/14

In the absence of a Treasurer, the President presented the financial report, and remarked on a healthy situation. Income was up thanks to a few more Freshers than originally expected and no opt-outs. Expenditure on the 2014 Durham reunion was up as we had refunded dinner costs to 9 Alumni who had cancelled at very short notice because of heavy snow.

The Association continues to sponsor 2 Formals annually, although Grant Thornton had contributed half of the sponsorship for one such event in return for the chance to present their company as possible employers. A budget of £4k will continue to be allocated .

There had been an overspend for the Association's continuing (and appreciated!) support of two very successful careers events The November Workshop attracted 70 students, and 24 attended the 'Assessment Centre' day in February.

The Business Reserve a/c has £4.3K, which is planned to remain as is. There is a .current account surplus of £3.3K, and TC proposed (seconded by J G) that £1K. should go to the Reserve, and an extra £1K be donated to the Grey College Trust's Jubilee Development fund. This was approved.

M Robinson suggested that part of the surplus be loaned to individuals for investment; the President replied that this is not possible under University rules.

Geoff Simpson asked about the source of subscriptions, which was clarified as coming totally from undergraduates, who can benefit from careers events, Formals and personal development grants. It was suggested that Alumni could also be asked to make additional contributions via the DARO telephone campaigns or the Grey Trust; both possibilities already exist.

The picture for 2014/15 is expected to show income staying flat and spending down . TC and Peter Swift (Vice Master) will review the possibility of asking the increasing number of new, non- Grey post graduate students to pay Association membership fees, after which a proposal will be put to the 2015 AGM.

The current format of the London reunion is established and successful, and the meeting approved a contingency budget of £20 for room hire for the event in future. The 2014/15 budget will be adjusted.

Nine applicants for financial support from the Associations have received from £140 to £400, totalling £3k (inside the budget).

The Exec proposed that the President should have the power to spend up to £50 on 'thank you' gifts for non-Executive helpers; the meeting accepted the principle, but voted (nem con) to allow up to £100.

Minute 853 - Governance development & election of Officers

The President noted that Foster Neville has stepped down as VP (Grey Matters). The position is not currently needed, and the meeting agreed that it be replaced by a VP (Careers) role, with responsibility for organising the Careers events put on by the Association. Andy Sparrow is willing to take on this position.

Charles Jewkes indicated his willingness to take on the position of Treasurer, and outlined his professional background (director of Schroeders, etc).

Tom Cliff offered to continue as President, which was accepted by the meeting with thanks. Steve Gregory was willing to carry on as Secretary.

All carried on a 'general aye'.

Minute 854 - Reunions 2014/15

Date of the Durham Reunion 2015 to be confirmed, but will still be in the Easter vacation.

The 2014 London Reunion will be held on Friday 19th September 2014, at a venue to be confirmed. It was noted that it is hoped to introduce London networking events in future.

Minute 855 - Any Other Business

Mike Robinson asked if there was any way to ensure that the Association's donations would benefit all students, e.g. replacement of equipment, College fabric etc.?

The President noted that the sponsored Formals were open to all on a 'first come, first served' basis, and that the Careers events are open to all students (JCR and MCR). Donations to the Jubilee Development fund improve the College in a way which benefits all. Equipment such as washing machines is normally provided by the College/ JCR.

The President noted that the cost of the Reunion Dinner has now remained at £35 for ten years, despite increased cost of food/ staff wages and the addition of table flowers and a drinks reception. The Executive Committee proposed an increase to £40 with effect from 2015, and this was agreed on a 'general aye'.

The President drew the meeting to a close at 17.05