



# UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

## Minutes of a meeting of the Committee on Community Activities 22 June 2011

### Present:

Professor Ian White (Pro-Vice-Chancellor/CHAIR)  
Nicola Buckley (Secretary/Community Affairs)  
Gaetan Lee (Minutes/Community Affairs)  
Margaret Greeves (Joint Museums Committee/Fitzwilliam Museum)  
Julia Hawkins (Millennium Maths)  
Karen Pearce (Physical Education)  
Frances Meegan (Careers Service)  
Professor Liba Taub (Whipple Museum)  
Dr Kate Pretty (Colleges Committee)  
Gina Warren (Equality and Diversity)

### Apologies:

Dr David Good (University Council)  
Sigrid Fisher (Equality and Diversity)  
Terry Ndee (Development Office)  
Dr Sue Oosthuisen (Institute for Continuing Education)  
Dr Rob Wallach (Materials Science)  
Sarah Peters-Harrison (CUSU)

### 1. Minutes and matters arising from the meeting held on 25 November 2010

The minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2010 were approved.

### 2. Reports from other University bodies

Minutes were available on request of the Outreach Steering Group, from January and April 2011. NB also updated the Committee about a roundtable held on 14 April 2011 on communications about widening participation and outreach, chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education, and involving the Chair of the Outreach Steering Group, the Director of External Affairs and Communications and a number of Admissions Tutors. Minutes of that meeting are also available on request, and actions for the team within External Affairs and Communications have also fed into the public engagement strategy review.

### 3. Operations of Community Affairs team

#### 3.1 Report on Activities, November 2010 – June 2011 (CCA313)

The Chair and Committee members asked that their thanks be passed on to the team for their work.

### 4. University public engagement strategy

#### 4.1 Public engagement strategy review

An initial report of a working group on public engagement forms paper **CCA314**, focusing on the contribution of public engagement to research and education at the University. NB emphasised that current policy and funding contexts made the role of public engagement more important, and the term community activities now had less funding support as the Active Community Fund grants from HEFCE have ceased. The contribution of public engagement to demonstrating research impact in some cases will be relevant.

The Committee was asked to consider the general recommendations and, to consider whether the working group might make further consultations with other relevant University committees on the basis of these recommendations. The Committee agreed that there is need for further consultation especially considering the importance of the area of public engagement and outreach.

### General comments

- A shorter summary will be required when the review paper is ready for wider dissemination
- The paper was thought to be timely in responding to changes in research funding.
- It was suggested that the understanding of the meaning of public engagement should be tested among various bodies at the University.
- Definitions of 'impact' should be provided in the paper
- Public engagement was suggested to be a term which sounded more active than community affairs
- LT asked whether outreach was another potential name for the team / Committee
- A list of the University bodies who should be consulted needs to be drawn up
- There was support for proposals to be developed for increasing recognition / awards for public engagement, and the development of career paths which included public engagement
- The Committee asked the Secretary to include general reference to the fundraising activity carried out by public engagement staff rather than including figures within the public engagement review paper, and to continue discussions with the Development Office.
- In the context of the new student contribution levels from 2012, FM reported that it is possible that students may feel they can afford less volunteering. The Careers Service Public Interest bursaries will still fund some vacation volunteering expenses.

### Link between public engagement, outreach and widening participation and other related activity

- The Committee endorsed the suggestion that stronger policy frameworks be developed which enhanced reporting, communication, objective-setting and evaluation relating to the linked activities the University carries out in public engagement, outreach and widening participation.
- Public engagement activity was agreed by the Committee to serve a number of different purposes, for example at Museums, in Physical Education, and in relation to Admissions or subject promotion by Departments.
- Departmental, museum and student outreach projects are represented in the Working with Schools group, meeting termly and chaired by Dr Pretty. The Working with Schools group exchanges information with the Outreach Steering group, which oversees outreach work by Cambridge Admissions Office, and involving Colleges. Dr Pretty reminded the Committee that the Working with Schools group needs a reporting line (having previously reported to the Council for Lifelong Learning).
- GW stated that Equality and Diversity would like to be involved in strategy setting and reporting about its public engagement activity. Equality and diversity should be referenced explicitly in public engagement strategy.

### Possible roles for Committee

- Some Committee members thought that public engagement activities might become of increasing relevance to General Board and membership of the Committee may need to be updated in response.
- Dr Pretty suggested that one University body may need to have responsibility for overall data gathering regarding public engagement and outreach activity.
- Can a Committee help oversee a policy framework for public engagement, maintain quality, communicate and oversee evaluation of public engagement?

**Action: The Committee endorsed the suggestion that the Chair and Secretary should continue consultation on the public engagement review paper with the Research Policy Committee and Education Committee.**

#### 4.2 University outreach, widening participation and public engagement survey

The proposal for the implementation of the survey was circulated (**CCA315**). Suggestions on points of detail were made regarding asking further questions about costs of activity, and time spent on outreach, widening participation and public engagement. NB was asked to update the survey questions accordingly prior to distribution in July 2011, with an end point for data collection in October 2011. Data is required for the Higher Education Business and Community Interaction survey (HEBCI) for HESA and the Widening Participation Strategic Assessment.

### **5. Support for public engagement at the University of Cambridge**

#### 5.1 Allocation of grants for student volunteering from the Newton Trust.

The Committee was asked to review the summary of applications, and their grading by the acting Head of Community Affairs and the Community Affairs Officer, and make funding decisions. (**CCA316** and **CCA317**)

The funding recommendations were endorsed.

#### 5.2 Allocation of four Student Volunteering Gold Awards.

The Committee was asked to review the summary of nominations, and their grading by the acting Head of Community Affairs and the Community Affairs Officer. **(CCA318)** There was discussion as to whether to issue four awards or five. The grading used meant that on this occasion the cut-off point was very close between 2 individuals. The decision was made to give four awards on this occasion.

## **6. Financial Report**

The Committee approved the financial report.

## **7. Any other Business**

### Olympic Torch Relay

The University has been approached by Samsung in relation to finding 3 representatives of the University to be torch carriers in Cambridge during July 2012. The Chair and the Secretary met the Samsung representative, and Samsung asked to prioritise students who had excelled in volunteering in the community. There can be a sports element to their volunteering, but the criteria for selecting these students is community benefit rather than sporting achievement. Samsung require a shortlist of students in this category who are willing to commit to the relevant date in Cambridge in July 2012, by 1 October 2011. Given the short timescale, the Chair and Samsung agreed that a way forward would be for the Secretary to contact the Student Volunteering Gold nominees from 2011 (14 in total) and ask whether any would be willing to be considered.

The proposal was discussed and Karen Pearce asked whether further candidates who had achieved excellence in volunteering in sport should be contacted, but it was agreed by the Committee that the short timescale meant that the Student Volunteering Gold nominees should be the ones contacted.

Chair of Committee: The Chair was congratulated on being elected as Master of Jesus College.

## **8. Date of next meeting**

The date and time for the next meeting would be fixed by Committee members being contacted for their availability during November 2011.