

To: RAISE Members
From: Sam Elkington
Date: 7th September 2016

RAISE Annual General Meeting 2016

Location: **the Wye Room at Burleigh Court**, Loughborough University main campus (Epinal Way, Loughborough LE11 3TU), 5.30pm – 6.55pm on Wednesday 7th September.

Attending: Colin Bryson (Chair), Claire Hampshire (Vice-Chair), Sam Elkington (Secretary), Tom Lowe (Communications), Amarpreet Kaur (SiG Coordinator), Deena Ingham (2016 conference coordinator), Phil Mooney (acting Treasurer), Hannah Erdem (Student Member), Dan Derricott, Linford Butler (Student Member), Beni Ngwamah, Gary Bishop, Wendy Garner, Anna-Claudia Morgavi, Chidimma Okoye, Jane Bartholemew, Jack Hancock.

Agenda

1 **Apologies for absence**

Kevin Campbell; James Cantwell, Dan Derricott

2 **Notes and matters arising from previous AGM September 2015 Nottingham**

None

3 **Introductions – new student members on the executive committee**

The chair introduced the addition of three student members to the executive demonstrating an increase in student-centredness at the core of the organisation. We welcomed Linford Butler, Hannah Erdem, and Kevin Campbell. The chair also noted that Amarpreet Kaur has taken on the role of Special Interest Group coordinator after a period as a student member of the executive.

4 **Review of RAISE activities for 2015-16: Committee Report**

- *Membership*

Colin Bryson (CB) reported that there has been a year on year rise in membership in 2015-16 (from 700 to 1065) demonstrating healthy growth and interest in the network.

- *Finance*

Phil Mooney (PM) delivered the Treasurer's report on the network's financial situation in 2015-16 (appended), as well as plans for 2016-17 and

beyond. PM reported a modest surplus in 2015-16 but noted that with projected plans to professionalise operations building from the launch of the new website and associated services, a second income stream was necessary so as not to necessitate RAISE drawing down significantly on reserves. Members at the AGM were in agreement that this was a necessary step to ensure the continued (financial and professional) viability of RAISE.

- *RAISE 2016 Annual Conference*

Deena Ingham (DI) in her role as conference coordinator addressed the AGM reporting on the situation with the 2016 annual conference at Loughborough. DI reported that there had been a healthy growth in proposals for presentations which had posed a challenge both space and timing wise when planning the event. It was noted that next year's conference would be extended to three days to accommodate the growing interest in and reputation of RAISE internationally.

- *Other events 2015-16*

CB noted that the majority of events outside of the annual conference had been hosted and ran by the SiGs. CB also reported on the activities he had been involved in as representative of RAISE such as the Student Voice Collective in the USA and the Students Partners Network in Australia.

- *Communications and networking*

Tom Lowe (TL) reported on the variety of communications activity he has undertaken as newly elected Communications Co-ordinator. TL noted that social media communications had been streamlined and focused through Twitter initially to ensure a structured and coherent communication strategy. A new professional communication strategy is imperative for achieving future plans. TL also encouraged membership input to the new website's functionality and content moving forwards.

Claire Hampshire (CH) reported on the construction and design of the new RAISE website. CH noted that the launch of the website would coincide with the launch of the RAISE journal (Student Engagement in Higher Education Journal) on September 8th.

- *SIGS*

Amarpreet Kaur (AK) reported on the activities and subsequent growth of each of the network's established and active special interest groups. AK also reported on the decision and process to add a further three new SiGs: Enhancing Graduate Outcomes, Digital, and Postgraduate and Professional.

- *Collaborations*

CB noted that members of the executive would be attending ISSOTL in October and reiterated the importance of actively attending international events so as to grow aware of the network. CB also noted that such activity is crucial to ensuring the accuracy of the student engagement agenda being advanced in global HE. It is crucial the network explores opportunities for cross-educational groups. CB noted that TSEP and

SparQs are important bodies for the network.

- *Administrative support*
CB reported on the growing demands of running the network/organisation and increasing need for more administration support. Designated administration support is imperative for sustainability of RAISE and warranted the necessary investment – something which members of the AGM agreed.

5 **Looking to the future of RAISE** – capacity building plans, and proposed projects and activities

- a) CB opened out the discussion of new ideas and initiatives to consolidate and grow the reputation, scope and impact of RAISE. Linford Butler (LB) suggested student-centric initiatives as a potential approach, though noted concerns around the need for different modes of operating demanded by running purely student-focused events. That said, CB noted that with 60 students attending and/or presenting at RAISE 2016, the need for more focused student engagement initiatives is certainly warranted.
- b) The AGM considered suggestions that RAISE might look to providing education and staff development services for which it is uniquely placed to deliver. However, it was noted that there is significant competition across the sector already in the domain of academic development, and so the organisation needs to think differently about how such initiatives and services could be rolled out. One suggestion was to approach universities, faculties and departments with the invitation to facilitate and/or support teaching and learning events.
- c) The AGM considered the suggestion of a coordinated ‘Roadshow’ style initiative designed to share evidence of RAISE’s work across the sector. It was agreed that the network much think differently about how it promotes itself and there is certain merit in a coordinated and coherent promotional initiative such as this. The cost of implementing such an initiative was noted.
- d) DI added that developing resources to support the sector in development of niche and/or contemporary priorities in student engagement in HE – for example, training and resources for student-led practice (i.e., assessment). The discussion was extended to other aspects of student engagement with CB noting that there was certainly scope to explore the range and types of resources the organisation was in a position to offer.
- e) Changes to membership and the need for subscription. The AGM considered the growing need to re-think the processes and conditions of membership in light of the projected plans for growth and sustainability of RAISE. The AGM considered the feasibility of a small annual charge of approx. £30-40 per member (and the option of this subsequently reducing conference and other event fees commensurately for members). It was noted that any revised membership involving subscription might include

access to the new RAISE journal (currently open access).

- f) A subscription fee was positively received by the AGM, with many recognising that many of the plans outlined for 2016-17 are likely to be resource intensive carrying a financial outlay.
- g) Jane Bartholomew (JB, NTU) noted that other sector organisations charged for institutional membership. CB proposed that this is something that would be considered in detail at the next Committee meeting. He suggested that members would be consulted before implementation.
- h) Gary Bishop (GB, Teeside) proposed one-off events as a channel to increasing membership in the future. Again, this was noted as a consideration moving forwards.

6 **RAISE Conference 2017** – CB opened up discussion of the conference theme/sub-themes for the 2017 conference. Some of the ideas muted were internationalisation and student engagement, student engagement across boundaries, and getting back to the basics (conceptual and theoretical ideas) of the student engagement agenda. Sub-themes included: professional and academic development for student engagement.

7 Any other business

None.

8 Date of next general meeting – September 2017

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Committee membership 2015-16

Colin Bryson (Chair)	Colin.bryson@newcastle.ac.uk
Claire Hamshire (Vice Chair)	c.hamshire@mmu.ac.uk
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Kevin Campbell	Kevin.Campbell2@gcu.ac.uk
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Amarpreet Kaur (SIG Convenor)	amarpreet.kaur@stu.mmu.ac.uk
Dan Derricott (Policy Officer)	ddd4@leicester.ac.uk

Budget breakdown available on request.