

Council Meeting Minutes 25/26

Semester 1, Week 3 – 23rd September 2025

Agenda

- 1. Minutes & Apologies**
 - 2. Matters arising**
 - 2.1. Big & Bold Branding – Deferred**
 - 3. PVA with Linda and Joanne**
 - 4. Branded Wolves gear – Niall Mills**
 - 5. Clubs and Societies Budgets and Finances**
 - 6. Hybrid Council Meetings - Vote**
 - 7. C&S Fair Feedback**
 - 8. AOB**
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Dervla Ryan went through the house rules and advised that the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of minutes.

1. Minutes and Apologies

*1.1. Minutes: **Week 11 Semester 2 AY 24/25***

- Proposed by: Hannah (Photography Society)
- Seconded by: Fionn (Drama Society)

1.2. Apologies:

- Men's Soccer
- Consulting & Entrepreneurship

2. Matters arising

2.1. Big and Bold Branding - Deferred

3. PVA with Linda and Chris

3.1. Chris McInerney spoke about transferable skills – Skills that transfer from one context to another.

3.1.1. Chris - The set of skills that we're focusing on are collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, communication, sustainability, literacy and action, problem solving and digital skills, we're focusing on those skills because they are the skills that we know employers want graduates to have. What we're doing in AHSS, we are going to be offering students the opportunity to develop and apply for up to seven digital badges to testify about your attainment of skills. And then those digital badges will appear on your transcript. Over the next couple of months, we're going to be running clinics. We'll be

regularly outside the library. We'll be available to people if you need help to develop your portfolio. Please see [Appendix 1](#).

3.2. Linda spoke about PVA Hours.

3.2.1. Linda - Present Volunteer Award, you get three different levels. You can get bronze, silver and gold awards, and this will actually be reflected in your transcript every year. You create account, you log your hours, you create account, you get approved, and then you log your hours, and then this will then finally do a portfolio at the end of the year. If you go onto studentvolunteer.ie you can create your page and log your hours. There is an upcoming Volunteer fair on October 23rd. Please see [Appendix 2](#).

3.3. Saoirse (History) – I can't find the C&S opportunity on the website.

3.3.1. Jana will work with Linda to start up the C&S opportunity on the website.

3.4. Brendan (computer) – Can you backdate hours?

3.4.1. Linda - We started the new academic year from the 18th of August for the first seven weeks.

4. **Branded Wolves gear – Niall Mills**

4.1. Niall Mills introduces himself and his role in the UL Wolves retail store.

4.1.1. Niall – What we've been able to do is, over the last couple of months, negotiate with a number of our existing and new clothing and sporting gear equipment suppliers to negotiate stronger price points and stronger deals that we're able to pass on to you guys. If your club or society is looking to purchase any clothing over the course of the year, whether that be hoodies and T shirts or whether it be more specific or specialised sporting equipment, we will most likely have a good relationship with an existing supplier, that we'll be able to get that for you guys at a good, competitive rate. We have specific pricing structure specifically for you guys, which means you're able to get much better value. I have a drop in every second Wednesday on the 2nd floor if you would like to pop in for a chat.

4.2. Marcus (Dance UL) – Is there a PDF for prices?

4.2.1. Niall - I have individual catalogues from the different suppliers that I can send out to you guys. They don't include the pricing. The reason being, the pricing depends on the level of personalisation that you want to go with the product.

5. Clubs and Societies Budgets and Finances

- 5.1. Paul Lee speech on the current financial constraints and funding issues within UL Wolves Clubs and Societies. Please see [Appendix 3](#).
- 5.2. Craig (Rugby) - I'm just wondering that 400,000 figure in terms of general spending in student life, what's the ratio of that 400,000 to the overall spending?
- 5.3. Paul - I'm not sure with the new 126 in terms of what our total budget is. As I said, that's going on with a subcommittee of the board. I actually don't know what that total figure is. In the past, it was probably about 1.41 point 5 million. The University have to come back and tell us how many are full time. That one to six applies to how many are part time. I'll get the other figure for you. UL do the computation to tell us how many full time and part time. Then we end up with a figure, and that should, according to the Constitution, be split 5050.
- 5.4. Craig - From the rugby side of things, I don't think we're getting a fair look at and I'm sure most of those in the room feel the same. And obviously, when we're growing all the time, it's not really fair on that front. And I know you're looking for more funding, but the main point is, where does the other spend go to?
- 5.5. Paul - Student life have AGMs every year where their finance is on show that will be a place in point where you will go and raise those questions about the overall finances. So as a head of department, my responsibility is clubs and societies and events and engagement, not the rest of the organisation.
- 5.6. Eva - 400,000 is going towards us directly, but like, money has to go towards paying staff, towards the vehicles, towards insurance, and at the end of the day, the 5050, we get from UL student life can't just be given complete committees, because we have to actually fund what we do every day and fund those who work and help us keep working. Obviously, in ideal world, we'd love to do more money to give to actually to clubs and societies and to committees directly, but we have to also fund everything else that comes with clubs and societies.
- 5.7. Jason (GAA) – Is there a date from the board to make a decision?
- 5.8. Paul - The financial year starts on the first of October, so that work is going on right now. That has to come in later this month.
- 5.9. Jason – Who are the reps for C&S in the board?
- 5.10. Paul - The clubs officers and societies officers are not on the board of directors, but Derval and the student president, Orla and Jared are. You also have a faculties officer there as well, which is Kai, who is also

involved with clubs and societies. And the way that board is set up, there's four externals on it as well, which I think are non-voting. And all the voting really sits with the students.

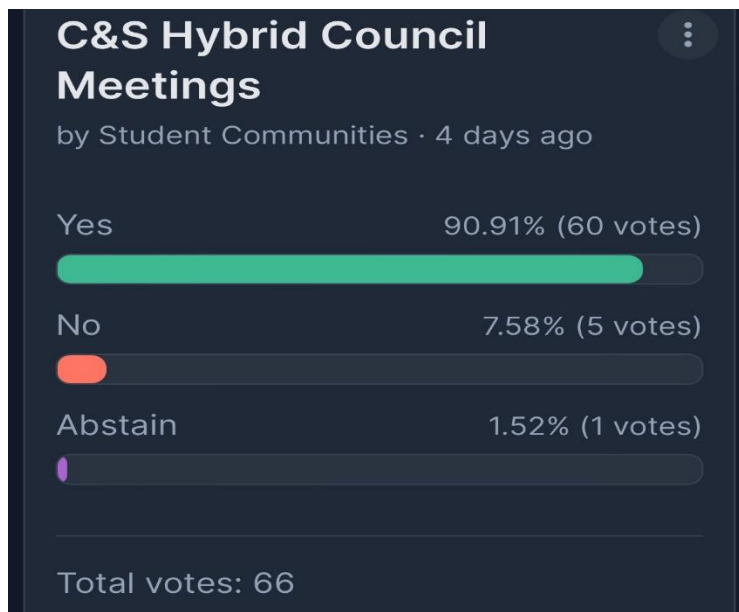
- 5.11. Dervla – The next board meeting will take place on the 16th of October, but the student president is involved in the sub finance committee working on all of this.
- 5.12. Jason (GAA) – Is there an update on the C&S letter from Shane?
- 5.13. Paul - I think the conversation that's going on with Shane is actually with student life, not clubs and societies. But there was a request and that request for the 126, was about why student life as a whole needed more money. They had to make a pitch to him as to why the organisation, beyond clubs and societies, needed money. What I was doing was making sure he understood why we needed to be part of that conversation when they were deciding to come up with the 126.
- 5.14. Jason (GAA) - In the event that C&S do not use up all their capitation, where does that money go?
- 5.15. Paul - Anybody who doesn't spend money that should automatically be going into special apps, where our concern would be, is on the other side, where we have what we call a central budget, which covers the insurance, all the other stuff that's going the vehicles, repairs, maintenance, wages, all that sort of stuff. But on the central side, non-budget, pension, employer, PRSI, typically, we have come in under budget by about 20,000 euros, and we haven't yet always seen that money coming back in, so we need to make sure that money comes back in if it's unspent, because ultimately, it's still about the development of clubs and societies. But myself and Aisling have been pressing the rest of the organization on answers to that as well, but we simply haven't got that at the moment.
- 5.16. Dervla - I didn't get any response for the letter that the executive sent. But if the council would like, I can send them an email my on behalf of myself and Siofra and ask for follow up.
- 5.17. Aster (History) – You said there will be a more depth meeting about this. When will that be?
- 5.18. Paul – I will chat when Aisling is back and I will speak to the C&S team. It can be the same as a training session where people can sign up. It is important to give the information to those who want it.
- 5.19. Noreen (student sport) – On the point of 50/50 split, is that on the 126?

- 5.20. Paul - That should be on all the money that comes in from a capitation from students. The part time pays an amount, and the 126. The postgraduate student's union outside of the undergraduate capitation, The 126, for full time, and the figure I can't remember, for part time, that entire funding envelope should be 5050. Where we get additional money is from the post grad students union. A couple of years ago, we used to have about 200,000 euros coming from the postgraduate student's union. Now that's only 120. That's partly because Amy and her team have developed and they've brought in more full-time student officers as well. Post grads as a result of that if, even if you go on to ul student life, at the moment, there are some budgets up there online, you will see that a point in time, we had a reserve of about 272,000 euros for clubs and societies. That has pretty much been eaten away in terms of that 200,000 euro drop, and the 110,000 euro drop in terms of trying to find that 400,000 and the amount of money that's required, so that 5050, is excludes the money coming in from the PSU as well.
- 5.21. Noreen - is the Strategic Fund, 400,000 is that all part of the reviews been done by the Finance Committee to see where it went and when it's going to be repaid back and how?
- 5.22. Paul - Yes, because myself and Ashling sat down with the financial controller, Luke, and we had identified about 180,000 euros that had been backed as a club or society expense. It just looks like whatever was going on with the processes wasn't robust enough. So that was as far as we got. And there's work going on to try to figure out, is it 300 or 400,000 euros? And I haven't seen that, but I understand that work is ongoing with this HR and finance subcommittee, but that specific Strategic Fund is part of that conversation about making restoration.

6. Hybrid Council Meetings - Vote

- 6.1. Dervla - This was a conversation that happened at the admin seminars. There was kind of a general consensus that some people wanted to have hybrid meetings. What that means is there'll be an in person meeting and also an online version. The proposal was basically that one core committee member attends in person, the other committee member, core or non core can go online, but there must be a core member here in person. If your camera is off, your attendance will not count and you can have one meeting per semester where you can have both attendees online.
- 6.2. Christina (OPC) – Is there a possibility we can go back to 6 to 7?

- 6.3. Dervla - If you can come to a general consensus and you genuinely feel that this is something you want to change, then bring it up in AOB or submit it as an agenda item to Jana as well.
- 6.4. Paul - Some of these decisions were students who are on the north campus are in classes, generally, until six, and they couldn't make it physically to come here. Ad also, I think there's pressure within the university, the classes would run till six. So that puts a lot of pressure, depending on where you are in the university, to get here for six.
- 6.5. Emma (Law) – Would it be possible to change it so core can also go online instead of just in person?
- 6.6. Dervla - Where the core came from was that we found that, you'd have two people coming to council, and then they wouldn't relay that information back to the rest of the committee. We need to have one person who's on the core committee to come there and engage. We'll take a vote for hybrid meeting. We'll remove the idea of, say, the first two points and in week five, we'll discuss it, but we can decide now whether hybrid meetings are going to be a thing as a flat statement, and then we'll decide on what that's going to look like structurally.



Council voted for Yes for Hybrid Council Meetings.

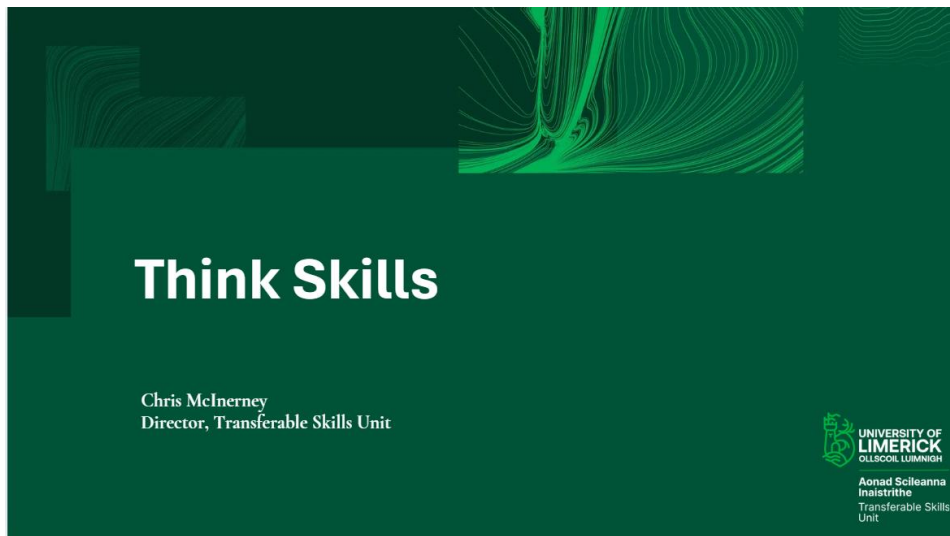
7. C&S Fair Feedback

- 7.1. Dervla - if you would like to give your CNS fair feedback, you can add it to the Discussions tab which was published today. anything good, anything bad, anything neutral, anything you would suggest, please put that down.

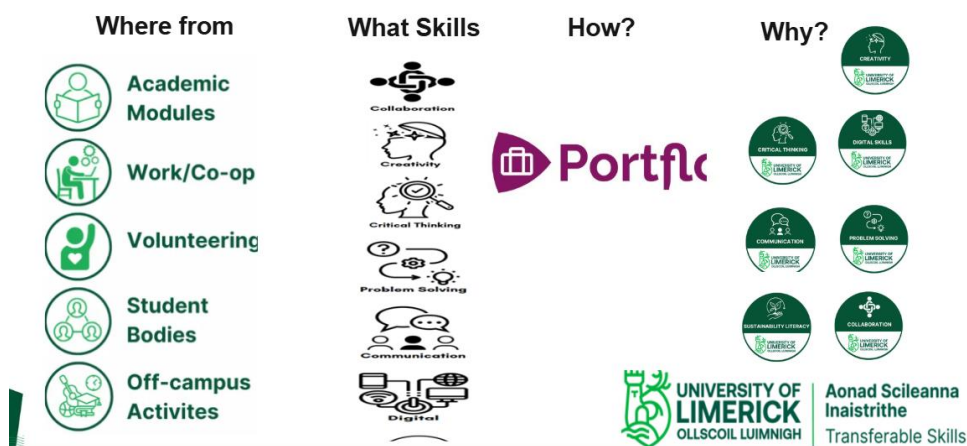
8. AOB

- 8.1. Dervla - the executive has a vacancy, that is the society's representative. If you'd like to know more about that or have any questions, or if you want to put yourself forward, you can do so by emailing clubs and societies info email.
- 8.2. Dervla - Drop ins are taking place. Monday, 11 to 1pm, Tuesday, two to 4pm and Wednesday, 10 to 12pm so if you have any questions on anything, please call in.
- 8.3. Brendan - Instead of using the WhatsApp this year, we use the discord because the discord is not a GDPR violation like WhatsApp is. Dervla has a channel that she wouldn't be doing announcements there. [Appendix 4](#).
- 8.4. Dervla - I do encourage you to join, if you haven't joined already, because that would be the way I communicate with you in something like urgent where, like, a workshop cancelled, or Lisa or Jana want to pass on something really quickly.
- 8.5. Cathal (OPC) – We need more proficiency tests. There is a demand there and we need more drivers for our upcoming trips etc.
- 8.6. Jack (Fencing) - First off, pest building. There has been a leak there since first year. It has not been sorted in 3 years. I just want that on the record, this is a major issue, we have been on and off again about complaining about it, but now I'm starting to really want to chase it down. The second point, we only have two training slots a week and council clashes with one of them, so just a suggestion, maybe change the day or time sometimes to accommodate with this.

Appendix 1 - Chris McInerney presented about transferable skills be and offering students the opportunity to develop and apply for up to seven digital badges.



We want you to Recognise, Record and Reward your skills



Appendix 2 – Linda presented about the Present Volunteer Award



1. Create your StudentVolunteer.ie profile – scan QR code.
2. Browse and apply for volunteer opportunities.
3. Log your volunteer hours through your StudentVolunteer.ie profile.
4. Your volunteer supervisor will approve your volunteer hours.
5. Final step: to apply for your PVA – complete your reflective portfolio – **on or before 25th April 2026**

Contact us at: studentvolunteering@ul.ie

Volunteer Fair & PVA Ceremony 23rd October, University Concert Hall



Appendix 3 - Paul Lee speech on the current financial constraints and funding issues within UL Wolves Clubs and Societies

The problem that we have is the funding we get is finite. It was €368,000 before, but we've managed to get it to 400,000 however, for those who are not new and were here last year, I would have done a presentation where I would have showed you that with the cost of living and the consumer price index, 400,000 euros is actually worth about 360,000 euros now because of the increased cost across the board. The problem that we have repeated over and over again, and it's on the Discussions tab, is that depending on how many people get in budget in a particular year, so if 30 were in last year, you probably did quite well. If 40 were in the budget this year, then those 30 get less. What the council did, and the executive did, is they wrote a letter petitioning the university to try and provide additional funding. I know our previous general manager as well was also lobbying the university, because there was a point in time where we were only getting 100 euros per student from the capitation source, but now they changed that to 126 for each full-time student. There's also a number of part time students. I just haven't got that figure to hand but that's also increased. There's a budget gone to a HR and finance subcommittee, so they have to go and review that budget at present. When that process is done, we might have better clarity as what the budget looks like for 2526. If you go on and you look at the constitution for UL Student Life, 50% of the funding is supposed to come to clubs and societies, 50% to the non C&S side of the house. We would typically have come in here showed you

the 400,000 you already know. Then there's about 36 to 40,000 going into special apps, and then there's another 200 to 300,000 in terms of the running costs, insurance, wages, etc. We would normally have come in here and present this to you. We haven't done that in the last couple of years, and I know Ashling is a big champion about trying to get back into that situation. And I've raised this with the board, with this HR Finance subcommittee, and I've raised it as well with the previous General Manager and the interim General Manager. The reason that I'm saying all this to you as well is that we made a presentation to the president of the university in the summer. We presented it to him trying to leverage as to why we should be getting more money, and the funding that we're getting is inadequate to meet the needs of what's going on at the moment. One of the other things that was outstanding from last year is that post covid, there was two years where clubs and societies just did not spend money, and that money accrued in unspent money. So that money hit a figure of somewhere close to 800,000 euros. In 2022, I think I emailed about 700 people on committees to say we would use this Strategic Fund to rebuild clubs and societies post covid, knowing that it was a once off source of funding that would run out. It got to a point about 18 months to two years back, where Ashling and myself had approved over 300,000 euros of the first tranche of that money, but we couldn't get any clarity on our finances, and just being prudent, we decided not to spend any more until we got clarity from the finances. We were struggling to get feedback internally as to what was happening with the money, and what has emerged since is that the balance has been spent across UL student life due to poor financial practices. Some of that came about because all the banking that we did originally was in Ulster Bank. We had several different accounts. When Ulster Bank left the Irish market, we had to merge everything into a Bank of Ireland account. And it looks like in that process, it all got merged in together. As a result, whatever happened with the processes, money that was earmarked and flagged for club societies has been spent across US Student Life. The outgoing general manager and the outgoing student president had committed that the money would be repaid. The interim General Manager, currently and with this HR Finance subcommittee, are reviewing all this in terms of this new budget. When this new budget is done, there is an acknowledgement that the money that has been incorrectly spent has to be repatriated back into clubs and societies. I don't know what that figure is yet, and when we get that money back, we will then, of course, come to the executive and we will decide what we do with that. The other aspect that we were going to do, in light of what's happened, was look at what we used to have before from Bank of Ireland, which was an enablement fund, where we would put in 40 or 50,000 euros each year,

and people would make applications, and then we would try to support you. Another possibility would be, again, for the executive to decide whether or not, when this money is finally clarified, we could put an amount of money into each budget for the coming years to top up the growing costs of what's going on at the moment. But the only thing you need to acknowledge is that that is a once off source of funding, but it just buys us a little bit of time. Right now, all we can commit is 400,000 euros worth of money, and I know it isn't enough for all the reasons I've mentioned. We're doing our best behind the scenes.


Appendix 4 – QR code to access the Discord Chat.

Committee Discord Server

- For all Clubs/Societies Committees to join.
- All Committee, not *just* Chairperson/President.
- Verifies that you are on at least one committee.
- Each Club/Society has their own Channel & mentionable Role.

Join Server

<https://committee.discord.skynet.ie>



Link Discord & Wolves (short ver)

Ensure you are actually listed as a committee member on Wolves.

Use `/wolves link` with the email you use for Wolves.
An email will be sent to you, paste in the response back to the bot.
`/wolves verify code: aaaaaaaaaa`

You should get roles for whatever committees you are a part of.
This will grant you full access to the server.

If you have any issues Computer Society is on hand to help.