



SOCIAL POLICY COMMISSION 16/17

Meeting #11
University of Malta, TAKEOFF
29th March 2017, 17:30

MINUTES

17:15 Registration

1. Approval of Agenda
Alex Clayman to be added as a speaker about Patients Not Profits (PNP) to be added as item six on agenda.
Agenda as approved nem con.
2. Approval of Minutes
Minutes approved nem con.
3. Gender Equality Campaign Followup
Report will be forwarded to all organisations with regards to Gender Equality Campaign.
4. Manoel Island Development
Luca Arrigo (IAESTE): We should discuss collectively and monitor developments. Many students would like to see the area turned into the central park in Malta.

Jacob Portelli (GhSL): The Prime Minister has stated that he wants the least development possible already.

Paul Portanier (DESA): We are all interested in seeing a public park but would like to see effort in the restoration of the fort and hospital.

Luca Arrigo (IAESTE): If they are going to simply build inside the fort in the form of a shopping mall, it cannot contrast the exterior and the fort itself.

Matthew (MIRSA): We need to analyse the ecological and the effects on the building itself like what footprint will be left.

Dario Cacopardo (UoM Rowing): This could be questionable as the fort is not privately owned.

Jacob Portelli (GhSL): For restoration and renovation of the area you must have some type of development.

Fleur Abela (Pulse): I propose that Heritage Malta is consulted prior.



Dario Cacopardo (UoM Rowing): Is it worth in social terms to further develop Manoel island? Will this become another concrete jungle like Sliema, St. Julians, and the vicinities. Can our infrastructure cope with this activity and what about the psychological effect? Should we consider a park and shy away from casinos. In addition, should we restore the island as a historical site or develop it? Personally, I am in favour of the creation of a historical park.

Sean Ellul (KNZ): Infrastructure is a fair point especially with respect to traffic which is already bad as it is.

Valeriya Bonkova (Betapsi): I propose the implementation of a consultation box for students to voice their concern. Highlights anxiety and psychological effect.

After a discussion, the idea of conducting an online consultation is put forward with the following questions.

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Do you agree with the proposed plans?

What kind of transport would you like to see?

Car

Bicycles

Public Transport

Pedestrian

Ferry

What type of development would you like to see?

Restoration and historical preservation

Residential zone

National park

Entertainment area

Other

What effects do you think that any type of development could have on society? Feel free to add any comments.

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Luca Arrigo (IAESTE): Suggests the use of likert scales and a bicycle zone as a pilot project.

Jacob Portelli (GhSL): We do not know what type of development is going to take place.

Fleur Abela (Pulse): However, the initial blueprints have been published.

Proposal of online consultation put forward.

Vote passed nem con.

5. MMSA: Privatisation of National Health Entities



Three representatives of the MMSA: Victoria Camilleri (President), Samuel Attard (Vice-President for External Affairs) and Jordy Borg (Vice-President for Internal Affairs) addressed the KPS session to update them about an issue that they have been tackling for the past few years - that of Barts Medical School.

They explained how in the previous years they issued press releases, held press conferences and several meetings with stakeholders including the Health Minister, the Opposition, Barts Medical School and the Medical Association of Malta to discuss the concerns of medical students about the opening of the school. Such concerns included:

- The impact on clinical attachments at Mater Dei Hospital
- If Barts and UoM students are going to be treated equally when it comes to applications for jobs (considering that Barts students pay a tuition fee)
- If the opening a new school would result in a 'brain-drain' of educators from the Maltese Medical School
- If the Maltese Healthcare system has enough resources to sustain both medical schools sufficiently

From these discussions, the MMSA has received reassurances that medical students would not be affected negatively. The MMSA recorded these reassurances and will hold them accountable.

Furthermore, the past year also included developments regarding the new company that is managing St. Luke's, Karin Grech and Gozo General Hospital: Vitals Global Healthcare. The MMSA held a meeting with them a few months ago and discussed how this change would affect medical students, in particular, the clinical attachments at the abovementioned institutions. The MMSA has kept in dialogue with VGH and have recently received reassurance that the attachments will be safeguarded.

In the recent weeks, medical students were becoming increasingly concerned that the standard of healthcare will worsen under VGH, and that patients will no longer remain a priority, but profit will be the main motivation instead. Furthermore, students have questioned the government's decision to not publish the contracts in full, and questioned VGH's lack of experience in such ventures, having just been established as a private company. Therefore, a few days before the KPS meeting, the MMSA held a meeting with Minister Fearne and officials from VGH in order to put forward these concerns, and received reassurances black on white that VGH will keep up the standard of healthcare, and that medical students will be safeguarded. This has been signed by Hon. Fearne, VGH and the MMSA.

The MMSA has decided to update the KPS about this in order to update all university students about the recent developments, in case the MMSA needs the support of KPS in the future should it need to apply further pressure to the government.

Alex Clayman: Has the agreement between University and the Government been published?



Jordy Borg (MMSA): MMSA has been pressuring and only the section relevant to students has been published so far.

Lee Farrugia (MADS): There are also concerns amongst health students and others apart from medical students.

Alex Clayman: There already are plans from the London dentistry school to take over the dental department.

Nehemie Nefertiti (HYBRID): What is being privatized and what is remaining as a public entity?

Jordy Borg (MMSA): Karen Grech, St. Luke's and the Gozo General Hospital will be privatized and owned by VGH.

Sean Ellul (KNZ): If the ministry has given certain reassurances, why haven't the relevant contracts been published?

Jordy Borg (MMSA): We are striving for full transparency - black on white reassurances.

Mahbuba: Are they following an NHS model at this rate? My biggest concern is that healthcare won't be free. There is also the questionable health tourism concept that was mentioned.

6. Patient Not Profits (PNP)

Alex Clayman: Introduces himself as a faculty representative for Medicine and Surgery. PNP was set up as a reaction to the Barts and VGH privatization process. Invites KPS to endorse the following three principles:

1. Patient-centred health system: not profit-driven
2. Evidence-based public health policy
3. Greater transparency for healthcare deals: patients and workers must be safeguarded

Samuel Attard (MMSA): MMSA endorsed these three principles yesterday during MMSA's AGM.

Jacob Portelli (GhSL): Is the invitation to endorse these principles and not the demonstration?

It was made clear that the invitation is to endorse solely the aforementioned principles.

Abstentions: ASCS, Insite
Votes passes. The Social Policy Commission has agreed to the aforementioned principles.



7. The KSU Challenge

KSU is proud to present its first ever Social Entrepreneurship Startup Competition. This is your chance to put your problem-solving skills into practice. A real-life challenge will be presented and your task will be to present a solution which helps society, and at the same time, improves the environment.

KSU will be providing the tools and materials for you to be able to tackle the problem, along with a group of mentors who will be available all throughout the session. These field experts will help teams build a business model, equip teams and prepare them to pitch their ideas in front of a panel of judges. The winning team will be awarded a cash prize of 500 euro.

Link: <https://www.facebook.com/events/114133715805992/>

8. Other Matters

Media and Defamation Act: An agreement was reached that since anyone can be sued at the moment, support should only be put forward for the separation of academia from a media-related bill. Concerns were raised in terms of who the mentioned peer-review process will be conducted by. Endorsement will be done via email because of the short time frame, as per previous cases.