



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Trustee Board**  
**Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December (delayed from Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2016) – EE G020**

**Present:**

Jade Haley (President & **Chair**) - JH  
James Gunther (VP Education) - JG  
Hemaka Pathirana (VP Student Activities) - HP  
Jill Wilson (External Trustee) – JW  
Elaine Spalding (External Trustee) – ES  
Margaret Jolley (External Trustee) - MJ  
Felicity Wolfenden (Student Trustee) - FW  
Paul Kennard (Student Trustee) - PK

**In attendance:**

Sophie Williams (SU Chief Executive) - SW  
Samina Fiaz (SU HR & Admin Coordinator, also Minuting Secretary) - SF

**1. Attendance and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed Trustees and Officers to the meeting. Apologies were noted for Matthew Sargeant (Student Trustee).

**2. Minutes of the last meeting**

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved. PK announced that his name had been spelt incorrectly so this would be rectified asap.

**3. Matters arising**

It was confirmed that the Officer contract would be updated in due course in readiness for the next academic year. The redacted minutes of Trustee Board meetings for the 2015-16 academic year had been published on the WSU website.

**4. Declaration or Conflicts of Interest**

None noted.

**5. Chief Executive Officer Report**

- 5.1 SW informed the Board about a recent visit to Dublin, following a proposal by Aramark to open a Freshii outlet at the SU. SW, JH and members of the Senior Management team at University of Worcester (UW) visited Trinity College in Dublin and a nearby Shopping Centre where Freshii outlets are currently in operation. SW stated that the Freshies outlets were quite impressive, being modern and with an

emphasis on healthy eating. The food was very good but it was summarised that the Freshii at the College was not very busy compared to the Shopping Centre Outlet. It was also agreed that the possibility of a Freshii Outlet at the SU needed a lot more thought and the decision would not be rushed. The pricing would need to be lower and it would be far too soon to open one in January as expected by Aramark. A strategic viewpoint would be needed, taking into consideration the future of the Pear Tree, which was doing well following some recent promotions.

- 5.2 Staff recruitment and current staffing issues were discussed [Commercial in Confidence Item].
- 5.3 SW updated the Board in relation to the SU Bar. Students were coming to the Bar but not spending money, this mirrored a national trend of decreasing Bar Sales across many SU's. There had been a shift in behaviour over the years whereby students were drinking at home then coming to the Bar but not spending as much. A number of steps had already been taken to help increase sales such as the re-branded weekly events programme up to March 2017. More thought will be put into decreasing costs and increasing weekly events and external bookings. Bar Sales will continue to be monitored closely.
- 5.4 NUS card sales promotion had led to an increase in sales resulting in sales being £1200 ahead in commission compared to the same time last year. Sales during graduation week and sales at Main Reception had pushed up sales considerably, staff sales being higher than student sales. The new Marketing and Communications Coordinator has introduced a rolling programme for NUS Extra to help try and meet the £20,000 sales target for 2016/17.
- 5.5 There were still some issues around performance and behaviour in sports clubs. The SU have met with UW to discuss these and have informed UW that without significant investment, performance in league tables will likely continue to decline. Some team performances were discussed, highlighting those that were struggling and those that were doing well. The SU had attended the Sports Development Board at UW this month and items discussed included coaching and investment. It was requested by SU staff that a review of the current Sports Strategy (2013-18) be undertaken and an action plan be developed underneath it laying out clear goals and tasks to achieve those. The request was to be taken to the UW Deputy Pro Vice Chancellor and Head of Institute of Sport and Exercise Science for consideration. SW reported that issues around performance appeared to be affecting behaviour mainly out on sports socials and, whilst individual incidents were not always serious in nature, it was taking a considerable amount of time following them up. Students also generally, seemed to have far less tolerance of the behaviour of their peers that in the past and were more ready to complain. SW had been in discussion with the University to try and agree a way forward in terms of responsibility for dealing with which type of incident under which disciplinary process – the SU's or the University's.
- 5.6 With regards to SU Out and About, campaigns were going well with an increase in the number of students spoken to from 173 at the same point last year compared to 402 this year.
- 5.7 Input had been received from the SU Staff in shaping the Strategic plan, which will be completed very soon and uploaded to the website as well as being shared with UW before the Christmas break.

- 5.8 Papers had been sent to the Audit Committee ready for a meeting in the New Year. The end of year Accounts had been submitted too and a meeting was due to take place with David Green, Ross Renton, SW and JH prior to Audit Committee to discuss these in more depth.
- 5.9 Staff objective setting was under way with most now complete. SW's mid –year objectives had been sent to Ross Renton.
- 5.10 SW confirmed that UW have new auditors, Ernst and Young, and some outstanding documents they had requested have now been sent to them.
- 5.11 A discussion was had around the SU website. JW requested a footnote on the website informing visitors of the 'last checked and updated' date. SW would request for this to be added. There were some issues around the management of the website as it was currently being run by Media Lab, a team managed by lecturers and employing students at UW. The service provided had been disappointing at times due to staff turnover and a lack of records on the SU so SW would liaise with UW to discuss this. If things did not improve, it may be necessary to look into investing in an external design company, which would prove more costly.

**Action:**

SW to ensure 'last checked and updated' footnotes be added to website.

**6 Monthly Management Accounts- October 2016**

- 6.1 SW updated the Board on the accounts. The accounts show the SU is currently ahead of its budgeted profit profile, with a few key contributors to this:
- The NUS affiliation fee has not yet been included (£19k)
  - The cost of transport to BUCs fixtures has not been included (£5k)
  - Insurance for Elite Sport and Smallcraft was still being negotiated (£7k)
  - Conversion to a CLG, not spent (£2k)
  - Set Up a Subsidiary, not yet spent (£1k) – this is underway and should be set up very soon
  - Website redesign underway but no cost expended yet (£3k)
  - Rebranding, moved to next year (£5k)
  - Audit Fees (£7.5k)
  - Money had been saved on salaries due to the later than hoped for start dates for the Student Engagement Manager and the Marketing Assistant.
- 6.2 Budget holders have been asked to consider ways of reducing cost and increasing revenue, individual budget holder reforecast meetings will take place late November early December with a complete reforecast exercise in January. Work continues on improving NUS sales increase and working closely with the Bar Manager and students to see how we can increase takings whilst improving the customer experience.
- 6.3 Notable points on the balance sheet
- Overdue debt is £50k lower than the same period last year
  - The bank balance is £269k compared to £250k last year
  - Cash at £12k is £53k lower than last year
  - The amount owed to suppliers is £20k less than last year

- All payments to the Inland Revenue and Aegon (pension) are up to date

6.4 Various budget items were discussed and compared to last year. It was also noted that following submission of the Q1 Vat return, it was very likely that money would be refunded from HMO. This was due to the fact that the Finance Manager had had to provide cautious returns when he first started as he was unable to establish how previous returns had been calculated.

6.5 The SU had been in contract with the photocopier company for a few years but after investigation it was established that they appear to owe the SU c.£6k. The SU will be looking at ending the contract asap and to negotiate on the termination fee. Discussions are taking place with UW around joining their photocopying contract. The Board approved the accounts.

## **7 Risk Register**

7.1 A question was raised as to how the block grant was calculated. There was no clear answer as to how it was calculated but it had recently been discovered that the WSU equates to £47/student whereas analysis of the block grant of 85 SU's showed an average block grant of £75/head. It was requested for the Officers to raise this with UW.

7.2 The Board noted that there were fewer high risk items on the Risk Register than at this time last year. SW asked the Board how frequently they would like to review the Risk Register and all agreed that once a year was sufficient. The Risk Register was approved by the Board.

## **8 Matrix of Delegated Responsibility**

Approved by the Board.

## **9 Appointment of Supervising Trustee**

9.1 It was agreed at the last meeting that JW would continue as Supervising Trustee. JH asked the Board if anyone else was interested in the position and MJ stated that whilst it was too early in her appointment as External Trustee, it is something she may consider next year once she is more comfortable in her role as External Trustee. JW raised a point on disciplinarys which would need to be reviewed asap under the Bye-Laws. MJ offered to help and advise during the governance review.

## **10. Governance Review/Review of Constitution**

10.1 SW suggested that whilst a review of the Constitution of the Union was overdue, as had been noted in previous minutes, it would be sensible for this to be done in line with a larger scale review of the governance processes of the Union. This was felt necessary in light of recent poor turnout at elections, the old and unwieldy Bye Laws, and the current disciplinary process. The Board agreed with this approach. Tim Hewes-Belton, Student Engagement Manager would be invited to either the January or March TB meeting to discuss governance review and his general process– all in agreement.

**Action – SW to arrange for THB to attend January or March meeting, dependant on agenda.**

## **11. Board Sub-committees**

- 11.1 No Finance Subcommittee had met this month due to lack of quoracy. However, Robert Cox had sent an update by email to the committee (as per Point 6 above). The HR subcommittee had met and discussed staffing matters in Marketing & Communications and Student Engagement.

## **12. Officers' Reports**

- 12.1 JG updated the Board on recent activities, notably:
- The PAT campaign had yielded over 500 responses so far, this will continue until the end of the week, with a target of 750 responses.
  - Housing campaign
  - Increase in use of social media to keep students updated.
  - Refreshers week will be taking place at the end of January. Fairs and events will be held throughout the week, including events at the Bar.
  - Student Council had agreed a motion that all clubs and societies should have a Welfare and Inclusivity Officer as of the 2017-18 academic year
  - All 485 StARS had now been trained. The StARS forum held last week was well attended, discussions had mainly focussed on timetabling issues. All 18 Institute Rep positions had been filled this year, compared to 16 last year.
  - HP was producing a student magazine and had been chasing up articles for this. The first magazine is due to be released at the next Student AGM where it will be distributed. The name, size and printing of the magazine were discussed. To date 13 articles (mainly sporting) had been received. It was suggested that the magazine could be shown/given to prospective students during open days.

## **13. Elections Report**

- 13.1 JG reported on the recent Part-Time Officer elections. It was noted that it was difficult getting students engaged in part time Officer elections and that if there were no ballot stations turnout for voting would have been very poor. A process of co-option on to Student Council positions had proved far more effective after the elections and this has raised even more questions for the governance review. There are still two vacant positions but these may be Co-opted in, an application has been received for one of the vacant positions.

## **14. Executive Committee Minutes**

- 14.1 Executive Committee have met three times since the last TB meeting. JH explained to the Board members the composition Executive Committee their role. Academic calendar changes have been proposed by UW, although nothing has been confirmed yet, a proposal has been submitted for implementation in the 2018-19 academic year. UW have not justified the reasoning for this yet. The SU have provided a report in response to an initial consultation with Student Council and have requested wider student consultation on this. A discussion about aspects of the new calendar followed by the Board.

## **15 Student Council Summary**

- 15.1 JG confirmed that three new societies had been approved and there had been a lot of interest in these already.
- 15.2 Four motions had been discussed but not all passed as it was considered more appropriate to include their contents in the governance review.

## **16. Board of Governors Summary**

- 16.1.1 JH reported that one of the points of discussion was the Capital developments of UW. There had been issues with development of Phase 1 which would cause delays to the project.
- 16.1.2 JH was pleased to announce that the SU were now the second agenda item at the Board of Governors meeting, instead of the final item.

## **17. Trustee Training**

SW asked the Board if any member was interested in training from the Charity Commission on the role of Trustee. Board members stated that they would be.

**Action- SF/SW to look into training for the Board.**

Meeting ended.

## **Summary of Actions:**

<b>Action</b>	<b>For</b>	<b>To be completed by</b>
Ensure 'last checked and updated' footnotes be added to website	SW	asap
Invite THB, Student Engagement Manager to present at Jan or March meeting of the Board	SW	Jan
Arrange training for Board via Charity Commission	SF/SW	asap

**Date of next meeting: Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January, 18:15 start**