

# **Students' Union Trustee Board**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Trustee Board  
Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018 – EE G024 @ 6pm**

**Present:**

Jade Haley (Chair) - JH  
Euan Morrison (VP Education) - EM  
Elaine Spalding (External Trustee) – ES  
Margaret Jolley (External Trustee - MJ)  
Paul Kellard (Student Trustee) – PK  
Ivan Steblyuk (new Student Trustee) - IS

**In attendance:**

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

**1. Attendance and Apologies**

Apologies were noted for Sophie Glenny (VP Student Activities - SG), Abigail Toon (new Student Trustee) – AT and Jill Wilson (External Trustee) – JW

**2. Minutes of the last meeting**

- 2.1 Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.
- 2.2 It was agreed that the following item would be discussed under AOB:
  - (i) an update on the Excellence in Governance session attended by IS.
- 2.3 One item was to be added to the Approval items: changes to Bye Law 7 relating to the change of name of the Minority Ethnic Students Officer.

**3. Matters arising**

- 3.1 Minutes had been amended to record PK's initials correctly
- 3.2 Re: NUS Cost Benefit Analysis. An initial meeting had taken place in which actions were assigned to different departmental leads to gather information relevant to their area. This will be a longer term piece of work.
- 3.3 Re: NUS grant issue. SW reported that no real progress had been made in this area and that is something that will become more relevant when it comes to approving the annual accounts for 2017/18. SW will keep a close eye on developments and there was a sense that more SU's were beginning to raise questions around it.

**Action: SW to raise at next Midland Managers' Meeting**

- 3.4 The Board's suggestions were included in the SU's suggested list of ambitions sent to the University as part of their strategic planning consultation process.

**4. Declarations of conflict of interest**

None

**5. Chief Executive Officer Report**

- 5.1 SW updated the Board on progress on preparing the budget submission for the 2018/19 block grant. Indications from the University are that any increase will be minimal due to concerns around recruitment and may only reflect inflation. SW and RC are meeting with University Finance to discuss an initial draft in early March. This draft will need to be circulated over email as it will be prior to the next Trustee Board meeting.
- 5.2 SW indicated that a priority for the budget next year were to retain the BUCS Administrator on the Sports Co-ordinator's return from maternity leave, as SW was still very operational in Sport. Other priorities (for spend in the second half of this year if possible) were to overhaul the SU's website and a new sound system for The Hangar.
- 5.3 Robert Cox (RC) had attended an SU Finance Managers' Meeting and had raised issues around the SUSS pension scheme, about which NUS are going to prepare a collective response for the AGM, which is positive. RC was also asked to give a quick presentation on what we are doing with the bar as we are bucking a national trend by increasing sales.
- 5.4 SW confirmed that the NUS Extra card sales figures from NUS were correct and that the SU is seeing benefit from the number of cards bought from NUS by the SU last year. This was, essentially, down to an accounting error which can now be rectified going forward.
- 5.5 The SU were currently working on the Best Bar None application, with an audit taking place in March. We are aiming to achieve Silver accreditation.
- 5.6 A meeting is taking place with the Director of Estates in February to continue discussing improvements to the SU, including lighting and air conditioning at a senior level.
- 5.7 Re: GDPR, SW updated that a working group were developing an action plan to look at all areas of the Union's operations and ensure compliance by May 2018. Staff were also conducting an audit of information we hold. The working group are also meeting with the University's Information Assurance Manager in February.
- 5.8 Planning was underway with Varsity and fixtures being agreed.
- 5.9 A meeting has been arranged with Mick Donovan and Ross Renton in the second week of February to start looking at a strategy for sport.
- 5.10 The Advice Centre continues to see a small increase in the number of cases.
- 5.11 Staff are working on developing a strategy for volunteering as this is an area of focus for the second part of the academic year.
- 5.12 Raise and Give (RAG) is going very well and the SU has nearly exceeded the total amount raised last year already.

## **6. WSU Strategic Plan**

SW took to the Board through the summary of progress to date against the organisational goals. All Staff Sessions planned in February will focus on immediate priorities, agreeing longer term objectives, as well as beginning to develop some KPIs for the organisation.

A query was raised about the University's Strategic Plan and JH confirmed that the SU was involved in the process. There was a discussion about City Campus and the

SU's presence there as well as a suitable location for a 'new' SU building, if this was written into the University's future strategy.

## **7. Monthly Management Accounts – December 2017 (not January 2018 as listed on agenda)**

- 7.1 SW took the Board through the key points from the December accounts, which showed the SU as performing well. Mid-year reviews had taken place with all budget holders to look at any areas of over or underspend and there investment may be needed before the end of the financial year. The key identified included marketing and communications and developing the website.
- 7.2 The Board approved the accounts.
- 7.3 The Finance Sub-Committee had not yet met this year but received an update from Robert Cox on 9<sup>th</sup> January of the December accounts.

## **8. Additional Bank Accounts**

- 8.1 SW updated the Board on discussions at the last full Board meeting as not all external trustees were able to attend. For the Trading Subsidiary it now seems sensible to open an additional account within the Co-op for this. For the Reserves, HSBC have been the most helpful but a new account may require comprehensive background checks for Directors who would be external trustees (due to their longer term in post). The external trustees present felt that, if this was necessary, it needed to be done. It was decided to delay the decision until all external trustees were present.
- 8.2 There were some concerns about the lack of a secondary authoriser on transactions on the HSBC account for transactions but this appears to be standard to most banks. The SU was still awaiting advice from Knox Cropper on this.

**Action:** Robert Cox to follow this up with Knox Cropper

### **8.1 Additional Item – BAME Officer**

The Board approved the change to Bye Law 7 (Student Council) after Student Council voted to amend the name of the Minority Ethnic Students Officer to BAME (Black and Minority Ethnic) Students Officer.

## **9. Board Sub-committees**

- 9.1 The HR subcommittee had met before the full board meeting and had discussed:
  - the implementation of a more formal annual appraisal process to include staff professional development, as well as how increments might fit in with this;
  - staffing update, including staff progression through probationary periods;
  - an update from Staff Consultative Forum;
  - reviewed and approved the Terms of Reference for the group.
- 9.2 The Finance Sub-Committee had not yet met this year but received an update from Robert Cox on 9<sup>th</sup> January of the December accounts.

## **10. Officers' Report**

- 10.1 EM updated the Board on the range of activities that were due to take place in Refreshers including:
  - Housing Fair on 2 days across St Johns and City Campus;
  - Refreshers Fair (including Sports and Societies);
  - All Student Meeting, with Amatey Doku, Vice President HE from NUS attending;
  - Pee in the Pot day;
  - Give it a Go Week;
  - Comedy Night, Club Night and Welcome Back Party;
  - Refreshers Wristbands to enable discounted entry to all SU evening events.
- 10.2 The Officers gave out fruit and water during assessment week.
- 10.3 Planning was underway for University Mental Health Day on 1<sup>st</sup> March.
- 10.4 The Governance review is moving to the next stage, with a postcard campaign to ask students simple questions about how they would like to be able to communicate with the SU and put ideas forward.
- 10.5 The first Course Rep Conference was planned for the following week with around 100 Reps registering their interest. The day will involve different workshops and sessions around skill development, as well as a panel debate with Ross Renton and Sarah Greer about the University's Strategic Plan.
- 10.6 Celebration Week planning was underway.
- 10.7 SG was working on her report for KWAF (Keep Wednesday Afternoons Free).
- 10.8 The SU were also doing a range of events to support LGBT History Month.

## **11. Executive Committee Minutes**

- 11.1 Executive Committee had not met since the last meeting and JH reported that she had experienced real problems convening the group. A date had been set for the following week. It was anticipated that the Committee would still meet its requirement of meeting 3 times per Semester.

## **12. Student Council Summary**

- 12.1 Student Council has not met since the last Board meeting, with the next Council taking place next week.

## **13. Board of Governors Summary**

- 13.1 The Board of Governors had not met since the last Board meeting with the next meeting taking place in March.
- 13.2 JH updated the group that the Officers were presenting at a meeting in February of the Board of Governors and Academic Board which was focussing on how to improve communication to students.

## **14. Any Other Business**

- 14.1 IS gave an update on the Excellence in Governance session for Trustees that he had attended in Birmingham in January. Topics discussed included the unique role of Students' Union Trustees, the NUS Governance Code, and key challenges facing charities.

**Action:** JH to arrange a meeting with IS and appropriate staff members to look at the NUS Governance Code v3

Meeting ended.

**Summary of Actions:**

Action	For	To be completed by
Raise NUS grant questions at next Midlands Managers' Meeting	SW	March 2018
Follow up authorisation concerns for HSBC bank account with Knox Cropper	SW/RC	Next Board Meeting
Arrange a meeting with IS and appropriate staff members to look at the NUS Governance Code v3	JH	Asap

**Date of next meeting: Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> March at 6pm.**

APPROVED