

## Students' Union Trustee Board

Minutes of the Meeting of the Trustee Board  
Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 – EE G020, 18:00

### Present:

Megan Price (VP Education) – MP  
Harry Lonsdale (Chair and President) – HL  
Michael Harris (VP Student Activities) - MH  
Margaret Jolley (External Trustee) – MJ  
Melanie Brittain (External Trustee) - MB  
Rebekah Williams (External Trustee) – RW  
Deborah Andrews (Student Trustee) – DA  
Ivan Steblyuk (Student Trustee) – IS  
Isobel Lines (Student Trustee) - IL

### In attendance:

Sophie Williams (SU Chief Executive) - SW  
Samina Fiaz (SU HR & Admin Coordinator, also Minute Secretary) – SF  
Stephen Anderson (Knox Cropper) – SA, for item 8  
Christian James (Knox Cropper) – CJ, for item 8

#### 1. Attendance and Apologies

No apologies

#### 2. Appointment of new trustees

The appointments of the three new student trustees and one new external trustee were approved. It was noted that IS is a returning student trustee who has already completed one term as a trustee but, due to taking a placement year, was away for the last academic year and unable to take up a second term consecutively. IS would now be commencing his second term as trustee, as agreed would be allowed in a previous Board meeting.

*Item 9 is now discussed before moving onto the other agenda items, so that the Auditors, SA and CJ, could leave the meeting after this item. See notes below, under item 9. SA and CJ leave the meeting after item 9.*

#### 3. Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

#### 4. Matters arising

- 4.1 In relation to the SU's response to the UW review of sport and the proposed new delivery model, SW had sent a response in writing to UW. The SU's proposals were very well received and formed the basis of further discussion which took place over the summer. Progress was somewhat slow so the new model for delivery of sport had not yet been agreed but the SU's response and ideas

seemed to have been taken on board. A final proposal was expected to be written by Sport for the attention of the Pro Vice Chancellor (Students) for further consultation, which we are keen involves students.

- 4.2 SF had circulated the dates for trustee board meetings for the 2019-20 academic year and no amendments were requested.

#### **5. Declarations or conflicts of interest/ Register of declarations of interest**

None declared.

SF asked board members who had not submitted their annual declarations of interest form to do so ASAP.

#### **6. Chief Executive Officer Report**

SW updated the board on key SU activities as follows:

- 6.1 Welcome Week had gone well with an increase in income compared to last year.
- 6.2 We are reaching the annual renewal date for the SU's insurance and communication is ongoing with Endsleigh. Cyber cover was offered but still currently very expensive so the finance manager was checking the options available to the SU for this via UW. It is highly unlikely that this will be taken out by SU, nor terrorism cover as we are not considered a high risk area geographically.
- 6.3 The SU had been short-staffed at the start of the academic year due to the new Student Voice Assistant commencing in post at the start of Welcome Week and the Student Engagement Coordinator not starting in post until December. The SU had coped well during Welcome Week despite this.
- 6.4 The new student staff had settled in well since commencing their roles a few weeks ago.
- 6.5 The Hangar takings were a little lower over the summer but there had been an increase in private bookings, which had provided a good income. A new Shuffle table has been acquired for the Hangar under a bespoke contract with the company, Shufl, who are keen to enter the student market. Efforts are being made to raise awareness of the game with students and external bookings. The SU is the first one in the country to host a Shuffle table. The pool tables are, also, proving particularly popular this year. Bar staff were now considering introducing Sunday deals for pool and Shufl to encourage use of the Hangar at the weekend and build up interest in the venue as one where multiple games can be played, increasing our efforts to promote a range of activities, as many students are now reporting they are teetotal.
- 6.6 Disco bingo had gone very well being one of the highest income nights on record.
- 6.7 The Academic and Welfare Advisor had been on compassionate leave following a close bereavement which resulted in a drop in student advice cases in September. Being the only advisor employed by the SU, it does leave the SU vulnerable at such times.
- 6.8 Sports and Societies fair had gone well with lots of students joining interest lists to be able to try out sports and societies before purchasing memberships.
- 6.9 There had been an increase in female sports club members with lots of students signing up to interest lists for things like Zumba and Pole fitness.

- 6.10 The interest of students generally in volunteering has dropped so trying to address this will be one of the key objectives of the new Student Engagement Coordinator when he starts in December.
- 6.11 Engagement with social media had increased with more than 800 new students now following the SU on Facebook.
- 6.12 There had been a fair amount of press activity at the start of term, for safety initiatives implemented by the University, SU, and community, in which HL had been involved, including being on local television for one piece.

## **7. Terms of reference for the Board**

- 7.1 The Board approved the terms of reference. MP's appointment date was incorrect, to be updated.  
**Action:** SF to update terms of reference with correct appointment date for MP.

## **8. Bank account for reserves**

- 8.1 The SU were undergoing a review of the bank account for reserves. SW explained the history in relation to this and the three different options currently available. After some discussion, the Board felt they were still not in a position to make a decision and asked for the finance manager to attend the next board meeting to answer further questions.  
**Action:** SF to invite finance manager to next board meeting.

## **9. Draft Year End Accounts 2018-19 and Auditors' Management Letter**

- 9.1 SA updated the Board on key points from the year end accounts and provided further information in relation to the restricted and unrestricted funds.  
[COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE]
- 9.2 The recent audit had run smoothly with the Auditors reporting sound accounting policies and a clean audit, with nothing of concern coming to their attention.
- 9.3 The accounts were approved by the board. An amendment to a date was required on the Trustees' report so once this had been updated the accounts, as well as the auditor's management letter, would be signed off by the SU President and presented to the University Audit Committee at the end of November.

*SA and CJ are thanked for attending and updating the Board and then leave the meeting.*

## **10. Strategic Plan**

- 10.1 The board approved the publication of the new strategic plan. Both the old and new strategic plans would be published on the SU website in due course.

## **11. Appointment of Deputy Returning Officer and Returning Officer (elections)**

SW stated that the Trustee Board was responsible for approving a Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) and Returning Officer (RO) annually, to oversee the SU's Elections. SW explained the role of each and confirmed that Val Yates (Director of Inclusivity at the

University) had agreed to continue as DRO again this year. The RO is NUS. The Board approved these appointments.

## 12. Appointment of Supervising Trustee for 2018/19

SW explained the role of Supervising Trustee and both RW and MB volunteered for the role. With MB's existing commitment on the finance subcommittee, it was agreed that RW would take on this role. The board approved the appointment.

## 13. Board Sub-committees

13.1 MP updated the board on key discussions from the HR subcommittee which included:

- probationary progress for staff and recruitment of a new Student Engagement Coordinator and Student Voice Assistant.
- Upcoming updates to the staff handbook.
- Actions resulting from the organisational culture questionnaire.
- A proposed external training cost agreement.
- SW's appraisal and objectives.

13.2 Updates from the Finance subcommittee included:

- Meeting with Gloucester Uni in relation to finances for Varsity.
- Totum sales and the potential for Aramark (University caterers) to be included on Totum.
- Meeting with Worcester Bid. RW mentioned that she had been involved with Worcester Bid and so advised getting in touch with the CEO of the BIS to discuss potential benefits for students.  
**Action:** SW to report back on to the Board following a meeting with Worcester Bid
- Cash back at the Campus Shop and new card machines in the Hangar to compensate for the removal of both cash machines on campus.

## 14. Officers' report

14.1 MH, MP and HL updated the board on various recent SU activities, as follows:

- MP and HL attended SU 19 which was a good opportunity for networking with Officers from other SU's and to discuss ideas and plans for WSU.
- Other conferences attended by the Officers over the summer were BUCS and Lead and Change.
- The SU was shortlisted, once again, in the National Student Fundraising Awards for most improved fundraising group. Unfortunately, for a second year in a row, we did not win on the night but it is still something to be proud of.
- The student staff induction and committee training had gone well with revised and shortened committee training following feedback from last year's training. This was well received as a result of having a fun/interactive element to better engage committee members. Training on the role of committee members was particularly well received.
- The SU Crew (student volunteers) had been very enthusiastic and involved in events at the start of the academic year.

- The Staff Open day had a lower number of staff visiting compared to last year and it was suggested that perhaps this event now needed to take place every two years and not annually.
- Welcome Week had been a successful week with many promotions and relevant events being held. The more interactive events had been particularly enjoyed by students. The cohort of international students seemed to be very well engaged with SU activities and events during Welcome week. Whilst the format of events was similar to last year, the Officers, this year, visited new students in Halls of residence to introduce themselves and help them to settle in, which had been greatly appreciated.
- Nominations for the part time officer roles for the Autumn elections had been received. SW suggested that the Sustainability officer role may need to be re-instated within the governance review due to a renewed interest and enthusiasm for this.
- Democracy day had gone very well with a range of speakers in attendance. Following this, the University would be researching the viability of having a polling station on campus during local and national elections.
- The Colour Run had taken place on the Friday of Welcome Week and had been enjoyed by participants, although less had taken part than last year, which was felt was due to timing.
- TeamWorc TV was expanding to include additional content. It was likely that this would be produced on a bi-weekly basis and not weekly going forwards and will also include live streams.
- The recreational sports offer was growing with activities such as Boxercise and, a six week women's weight training programme and ladies only gym times.
- National Fitness Day had gone very well with activities such as wheelchair basketball, a wellbeing walk, Zumba and Dance on offer. Dance and Zumba were particularly well attended.
- A TeamWorc accreditation system had been introduced to award points to clubs and societies based on activities outside of their sport e.g. fundraising, helping at Open Days
- Other activities that had taken place since the start of the academic year included Mental Health Week, Applicant to Active Community (analysing how active students are during their university journey). Black History month had just commenced and it is hoped that this would become a bigger event in the coming years. A Diwali event was also being organised to take place in the Hangar towards the end of the month; the first time this has happened, which supports one of our strategic aims of increasing the number of cultural events in the SU.
- 280 students had attended the recent Employability fair where they had the opportunity to apply for jobs at various employer stalls. Feedback was now being sought from stallholders but many reported on the day that they were delighted to have had scores of applications filled in.
- HL had produced 'Harry's Hotlist' of places to visit in Worcester, including things to do, as well as Harry's 6 top tips (in relation to settling in, staying healthy etc.)

- The Night Bus was introduced to provide transport for students travelling between St John's campus and the city centre during popular nights out. It had been very successful, operating three times per week. The service will be reviewed in December. The new CallMy App for students was also being promoted to help increase student safety on nights out and field trips etc.
- SU Out and About was in the process of being rebranded to Campus Chat.
- MP has worked closely with UW academic staff and AROG (Academic Representation Oversight Group) around increasing the consistency and awareness of academic representation within Schools.
- The Officers had been liaising with UW to improve the look of the outside of the SU, with an idea of large prints on the windows at the rear of the Hangar.
- Change Week planning was under way, with the feedback from last year helping to shape plans for this year.

#### **15. Executive Committee summary**

The Autumn Elections were under way so when the new Part time Officers had been elected, Executive Committee would convene on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

#### **16. Student Council Summary**

Student Council will form and convene after the Autumn Elections.

#### **17. Board of Governors summary**

An update was given on discussions at the last Board of Governors meeting. [Commercial in confidence]. The SU report and presentation had been well received by governors.

It was confirmed that UW has been nominated for various awards in the Times Higher Education Awards taking place later in the year and has been shortlisted in 6 categories. It was also noted that UW was ranked 15<sup>th</sup> out of 132 HE institutions nationally in the annual NSS survey.

#### **18. Any Other Business**

- HL explained aspects of the governance review to the board. Further consultation with students on a revised democratic structure will take place this Semester. It had been decided by the Governance Review Group over the summer to retain the positions of President and 2 Vice Presidents as this was in line with student feedback during the consultations; most were in favour of the status quo rather than moving to a co-presidential model. Proposals and revised bye laws would then go to Student Council and the Trustee Board in January 2020. These would then be submitted to UW in February 2020 followed by any further changes being made and once legal advice had been sought. It is hoped that the governance review would be finally agreed by Student Council and the Trustee Board in May 2020 and at the Board of Governors in June 2020 before being implemented in the next academic year.

**Date of next meeting: 26<sup>th</sup> November 2019.**

**Summary of Actions:**

Action	For	To be completed by
SF to update terms of reference with correct appointment date for MP.	SF	Asap
SF to invite finance manager to next board meeting.	SF	Asap
SW to report back on potential discounts for students after liaising with Worcester Bid	SW	Next meeting

DRAFT