

Board of Trustees
MINUTES
3.00pm 27th June 2017
Room 1, The Union Building

Present:

James Belmonte (JB - Chair), Bethany Moody (BM), Alexandra Paschali (AP), Oludolapo Bolaji (OB), Ben Conway (BC), Rhian Johns (RJ), Ian Watson (IW), David Ayton (DA), Jason Oakley (JO)

In Attendance:

Anna Clodfelter (AC), Tom Worman (TW), Brendan McCarthy (BMc - Present for 10.1 and 7.5 only), James Thompson (JT – Observer), Marcus Campopiano (MC – Observer), Anita Butler (AB – Observer), Amber Mathurin (AM – Observer), Laurie Jones – Minutes

1. Apologies for Absence and Introductions

Nicholas Williams (NW), Fern Lewis (FL), Ryan Edge (RE), Kaleke Kolawole (KK)
Introductions of new Sabbatical Officers and new Student Trustee

2. Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interests.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes from 4th April 2017 agreed.

4. Matters Arising and Action Points From Those Minutes

4.1 Point 3.22 of the bye-law amendments will be reviewed - **JB/RB Reviewed and change delayed until governance report completed**

4.2 Speak to Charity Commission about the ultra vires surrounding the SUSS pension deficit matter – **AC - Charity Commission still no detailed response other than acknowledgement. AC chased 10th May 2017**

4.3 Bring update to the next Board of Trustees of an indication of what the risk of increase will be for the SUSS pension deficit - **AC Ongoing - Awaiting minutes from SUSS AGM (23/02/17)**

4.4 Explore drafting a document that explains UPSU's process with the SUSS Pension deficit matter - **AC Ongoing Chris Brightwell of London Caledonian briefed on 10th may for report to hopefully come to BoT on 27th June**

AC: Briefed Chris Brightwell and she sent a draft document this morning – to update at next Board of Trustees

4.5 Use University's KPI figures to confirm the identity of the future market for the Union - **LS/JO - Complete**

4.6 Amend date of Operational Objectives to show 17/18 on every page - **AC Complete**

4.7 Ensure that new Sabbatical Officers receive a full handover from the current Sabbatical Officers - **JB Complete**

4.8 Provide update for Pure FM's next committee - **AP Verbal Update**

JB: There is a new committee in place

4.9 Have a conversation with Media Groups regarding bringing all systems in-house - **AP/FL Verbal Update**

AP: A month ago Pure FM were able to broadcast again due to support from alumni. Alumni are preparing handover documents to avoid same situation. Have had some conversations around how appropriate the online servers are

RJ: The risk we identified was the inability to turn off the Broadcast if needed

AP: Looking over the summer to put procedures in place so staff have the control

AC: The media groups really positively accepted that this was a risk and are happy to work with us on this

4.10 Reach out to other avenues to advertise for the Student Trustee position, e.g. employability and ADS - **LJ Complete**

4.11 Look at dates for the he next F&R meeting and send out to Trustees for availability – **LJ Complete**

5. Finance Matters

5.1 Management Accounts Q3 – (for note – full discussions at Finance & Risk Committee for UPSU and Board of Directors for PSUT) – AC

IW: When are we moving to the new template coming?

AC: With our new financial consultant on 1st August

IW: I feel like the forecasting isn't quite right and the cadence of the meetings are out of sink

AC: The forecasting change with the new budget that has removed the historic pots of money that will not spend

BOARD OF TRUSTEES NOTED MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

5.2 Budget for Adoption – CC/AC

AC:

- This was taken to Finance and Risk Sub-Committee meeting
- Agreed at Finance and Risk amendment of new that the advertising model in PSUT to an external delivery from BAM - the change has made a minimal difference
- Levels of budget are similar – will change next year when P25 comes in

To note:

- Block grant increase of 2%
- 5% in increase on last year's PSUT budget
- 20% increase of Pension Deficit
- Extended Project Operations Manager by 6 months
- Student staff living wage increase by 6%
- Invested in research function
- Reallocation of historic underspends - £35k we've given back to sport, awards events subsidy into pots of money doing things for students and incentive costs for elections have been reallocated

IW: Concerned not pushing PSUT high enough –in context of P25 will be an increase in student numbers and diversity

AC: Looked realistically at the budget and the trends in model we have, we need to work 10x harder to get 10% less money. When we're still developing PSUT, 5% is realistic

IW:

- Central costs are up 35% - why? There are some significant increase of costs that might be useful to understand
- Need to spend some time understanding how the reserves policy works
- Bigger concern is revenue –block grant is weak, and our income has gone down year on year.
- Want to make sure we really understand how the costs work – students are going up 3.5% every year and ¼ will be overseas/off campus/distance learner
- Need to think about how we can make the most impact for each student

- Happy to work with Peter Greaney to put together 6/7 pages to try and tell a story to get more of an engagement around the table

JB: I understand as I struggled at the start of term, but the Sabbatical Officers were involved line by line in the budgeting process so did have that oversight and in-depth scrutiny

IW: We are forecasting commercial income to be 10% less – this is not the direction of travel I expect to move in

TW: That is to do with not doing tourist commercial income/other resources we collectively decided not to do

IW: Want to make sure we're having a debate about these numbers

JO: As a trustee I agree with Ian – I'd like to feel much more comfortable– maybe the new model will help, and some kind of commentary would be very useful

AC: Would this be helpful to have this template ready with Peter Greaney there on the 22nd August?

IW: This doesn't help me ask any questions, and historically it doesn't make a debate – would like a different way of laying this out to really focus on what is driving us from the top to bottom line

AC: That can happen. The budget will still kick on the 1st August so we still need to adopt these numbers - can we do this subject to our discussions on the 22nd August?

BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVED THE BUDGET – SUBJECT TO DISCUSSIONS ON THE 22ND AUGUST AWAY DAY

AC: We had some surplus money on things that were impactful for students. At the time there was about £20k, and there isn't very many impactful things:

- £10k is for spaces, e.g. meeting rooms
- £1.5k student staff over the summer in the Finance Department
- Max £1.5k on training for staff to become effective trainers for students

There is a plan in place with our financial consultant – he attended the budget refinement and Finance and Risk – we have his oversight and we can trust him.

6. HR Matters

None

7. Strategic Matters

7.1 P25 Summary of the Year – LS/JB

Report taken as read.

IW: Do we need this to come to Board?

AC: The transition is being set up so it's important to have that organisational history

IW: Think we should put together a document for the Board Away Day that explains where we are for P25 – key markers/data/bring us all up to speed

RJ: We need to get to the point with less operational detail but only strategic discussions and allowing the management team to do the operational things

AC: I need to know what you want as a Board – we are always changing the way we report and we are only a small organisation and we are trying to run the change management project, run the organisation and report to Board and there is a huge amount of time that goes into these papers. What we're reporting isn't what you want, so I need a list so I can give you what you want, and give more of my time to students.

JO: Perhaps we need to reevaluate what comes to what committee

AC: Future Union and P25 is moving at a pace – the structures have been agreed, we're strategically and financially planning. Want to be clear that the model that was presented last time is happening.

IW: Still concerned that none of that reflects the data – concerned we don't have a clear enough narrative of where we are and how we got there – need to know the market environment, the challenges and our options to respond – are we all clear that 25% of students will be international or that 1/3 will be distance learners?

JB: If there is 25% of international students, the Union will be agile enough to react to that – to cater for the demand of every type of student

IW: What do you mean by agile?

AC: Reactive – if 25% of international students want to do ‘x’ we will do this, whereas 80% of what we currently do is ‘we do this, come and join in if you like it’. Our research function will find out what students want, regardless of how they’re made up – the model will work because it’s about listening and acting on what they are telling us

TW: The model that was presented has analysis and listening functions in it – we’re not at the ‘how’ stage yet – we’re at the ‘what we’re doing stage’

IW: We need some boxes of things we’re going to do

AC: We have them – they are on the model. It’s a shift of focus – we don’t know what the student community will look like but we know it will be different and bigger and we have to be agile and reactive to deliver what the students need – to listen to more students and do more of what students want.

IW: Financially, I think there will be a significant difference in terms of revenue, costs of servicing the student demographic – we need to be clear about how we will measure this. I’m struggling with how we’re making key decisions about what we’re going to do without clarity about what this will look like

TW: We’ve got wide ranging assumptions/key stats and figures but not sure we will have exact clarity as our student demographic changes all the time

IW: We do have clarity going forward - the University will target specific types of people – if they are targeting for distance learners that’s what we’ll get. This will force us to have a plan to ask these questions – planning is essential and we need some assumptions in place

BC: What you’re asking for is in the model – we have a data analysis section that can get hold of that data and the overall model is flexible enough to adapt to that year on year to react to that data

AC: We’re moving forward with P25, the model and establishing the next steps – need to be transparent that we’re moving on regardless of the concerns

JO: Element missing – how is P25 going to incorporate this data as it moves forward? We can see how the university is hitting/missing the targets, and we need to review P25 every year to see how it’s going to change its shape. The challenge is that the data is a year behind – doesn’t mean we shouldn’t have that plan in place to develop as we go forward. Planning is going to be important, but important to realise these figures are an aspiration to the University – having a plan to change is essential. Planning element that would reassure us

AC: Not that it’s missing, it’s not developed yet – plan hasn’t been created yet

RJ: Have we fallen into the area of strategy vs operational – if we get this right it will fundamentally change the impact on students at University. In terms of the strategy – I’m really comfortable we’ve signed that off. Now we have a year for it to be operationalised by UPSU staff and present us with a plan that will work for the strategy we’ve signed off – we’re at that point, which means we don’t need some of the operational reporting any more.

IW: Can we write the strategy down on half a dozen sides

JO: I’d welcome a single side of A4 that revisits the start, where we are now, the aims and the market context – very brief

IW: I don’t understand what the shared view of the future higher education market is – I know there is no clarity. I will go back and look at the paper and come up with some questions to help

Action: AC and JO to create one page of A4 that revisits the start of P25, where we are now and includes the aims, market context, shared view of the future of higher education

BOARD OF TRUSTEES NOTED P25 SUMMARY OF THE YEAR

7.2 Future Union Update - AC

Report taken as read.

Agenda point 7.1 for discussion

BOARD OF TRUSTEES NOTED THE FUTURE UNION UPDATE

7.3 Strategic Planning Process Update – AC

AC: This is how we think we're going to plan it, need to check everyone in in agreement. The next step – the implementation of P25 is the next three years of strategy. This is the same process, but this is delivering our next three years aims. This will give us where we want to be in 2025

BOARD OF TRUSTEES AGREED THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS UPDATE

7.4 Operational Plan and KPI Update – AC

AC: This is what we've achieved this year, what we haven't and why

JO: No engagement from Victorious Festival – University have managed to get some engagement and the Student Union could be involved

TW: Victorious Festival is more concerned in sponsorship than student involvement

JO: We are now delivering an event in the under 17/18 area and we're trying to get students involved and struggling to get involvement

IW: Do you need to report this and do we need to see this? I don't need to see it as a Trustee

AC: This is also in the Chief Executive Report. It's interesting to see if it's valuable for other people? Our overall reports highlight our exceptions

BM: Is there a historic reason why it's reported here?

AC: It came from Board not understanding the strategy, so this is to help understand

RJ: Does this highlight a review of all papers that go to Board? What is it we want to see – can we get some examples from other charities that are a bit different to see what is important from a collective view

Action: LJ to add review of Board papers to Away Day agenda

BOARD OF TRUSTEES AGREED FOR THE KPI PAPER TO BE SHORTENED – ALL TRUSTEES TO BRING FEEDBACK TO THE AWAY DAY OF WHAT THEY WANT FROM A KPI PAPER

7.5 Research Framework Update – BMC

JO: Need to get the University and UPSU to work together and not double survey students – I'd encourage you to liaise with the Student Survey Sub-Group – we're working on a year plan of surveys

Action: JO to liaise with Brendan McCarthy regarding the Student Survey Sub-Group

JO: Concerned about the term 'research' – feels more like service evaluation – in context of University research is something that requires ethics approval, research governance etc. Alongside Research Coordinator, who did you meet with at the University?

BMc: Stuart has contacted various departments to find out what data they are capturing as well as student experience. Don't want to do just surveys, but asking one quick question to get a quick answer etc.

JO: I think we should take the GDPR – something we should be taking to the Student Experience Committee to ensure the relationship between the UPSU and the University are really clear as the fines you can incur very large – important we get this right

TW: It's being worked on currently as it's a risk – working with Adrian Parry

RJ: Is this person a data analyst/trainer/researcher – feels like there is too much – should year 1 be looking at models of research and seeing what works for us in terms of listening to people?

BMc: The main thing for us is to keep it simple for students – to get feedback and the research function will become the hub in the union for all departments as an internal application process to capture information – to streamline/structure what we currently do

RJ: That's only 1 type of research – needs to be really long detailed and thought out research to understand students and change to suit them – needs to be about listening and not just analysing

BMc: We have taken Sector Best Practice from Bournemouth – they have a team of students who go out and get feedback on student issues to inform their research function and other processes – like helping know what to prioritise. Getting regular feedback we'll know what is important and what we need to prioritise

AC: Capacity wise, I have concerns. I also think there is something that needs to go alongside this, because if we're still not getting to the people we need to get to

Action: AC to discuss with BMC regarding capacity of research function and accessing the disengaged students

IW: Is there more we can do with data to build in/think about to understand our members better. How are we getting an algorithm to get an impact for all students?

BMc: We have insight into our engaged members, but in terms of next steps, we're not great at doing this

AC: And we need University involvement for this

JO: The CRM system – will the Student's Union be able to use this at all? The purpose of this is to capture all interactions including UPSU

TW: Depends on the GDPR – we are involved in the Directors Group

JO: For a small organisation to procure something that large is probably prohibited but to attach onto the University's makes sense

RJ: Need to be careful about what information students want shared between the Union and University – potential risk as an organisation.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES NOTED THE RESEARCH FRAMEWORK UPDATE

8. General Reporting

8.1 Chief Executive Report to include Prevent update - for note, questions only

Report taken as read.

AC – Summary and update – achievements of Sabbatical Officer Team and us as a team has been massive – been a big year for challenging and change management point of view. Staff and Sabbs involvement and engagement has been great

JO: Really pleasing to see the Union and University working on a catalyst fund – University has been quite successful this year and it's great to see a collaboration

AC: We have won an NUS Award for our work on alcohol culture in sport – this is really important to us and we've made some great strides

PAPER NOTED BY THE BOARD

8.2 Sabbatical Officer Year End Summary Presentations (for note, questions only) – Sabbs

SABBATICAL OFFICER REPORTS NOTED BY THE BOARD

8.3 Sabbatical Officer Elect Manifestos (for note, questions only) – JB

Report taken as read

No discussion

8.4 Operations Sub-Committee Minutes 04/05/17 (for note, questions only)

Report taken as read.

OPERATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES NOTED BY THE BOARD

8.5 Student Focus & Governance Sub-Committee Minutes 02/05/17 (for note, questions only)

Report taken as read.

SF&G SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES NOTED BY THE BOARD

8.6 Finance & Risk Sub-Committee Minutes 17/05/17 (for note, questions only)

Report taken as read.

F&R SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES NOTED BY THE BOARD

9. Trustee Matters Arising From Democratic Committees

None.

10. Any Other Business

10.1 Have Your Say Changes 17/18 (for approval) – BMc Presentation attached, questions below:

JT: 15 signatures to get past the petition stage – what was the difference between 15 and 50 in the survey? It's not difficult to set up a petition and ask 15 friends which will make it pass, despite not being a popular idea among student body

BMc: Number of people submitting the idea – petition will stay up for 28 days total. If a petition gets a significant buy in (100s of signatures), then it can be prioritised.

BC: 15 votes is to back up the petition, 100 votes in total and 50% +1 yes votes needed to pass it

JO: Observations about the idea: in the University sometimes ethics are that they choose which pathway, so could get students to choose whether it's an idea to lobby/policy/something simpler. Important (and not identified in risks) is to manage expectations for students – need to reflect that you might be passing some really important policies that have less than half of the student population's votes

BMc: Transparency is a really important point – making sure there is responsibility planned. With our software, at every stage this will be communicated to person who submitted the idea and the backers so we can get out and spend time on the ground telling people about the ideas

DA: How many ideas have reached 100 votes/quorum online?

BMc: Failed ideas haven't ever been passed – this is because they are failed and partly because of a lack of promotion. There will be less ideas, but they will be more focussed. By taking out allowing a second chance to vote we have more resource to promote current ideas to get student buy-in

DA: How good is attendance this year for UAB?

JB: We have always met quorum near enough every UAB. The idea is that every other fortnight will be an informal update UAB and the other fortnight will be a formal UAB

RJ: Would like to be confident that if an idea is submitted that is outside of our remit or illegal it won't get passed – or even if there is a risk that needs to be discussed at Board – how can we as Trustees can guarantee that risks are being identified and handled correctly

OB: Part of UAB training will be looking at legal aspects and how it might affect the Union

BMc: UAB will have training around risk and reputation to look into when passing ideas

AC: The Good Governance Officer (GGO) will sit here, and BM is our new GGO who has a strong trustee understanding. Ideas that are high risk/financial impact etc. will be reported to Student Focus and Governance Sub-Committee

DA: Current model was voted on as referendum – we are now making this decision without a referendum and changing what students asked for

BMc: The referendum in 2015 got 1000 votes, 867 of which voted for that model. Over the last two years, we have consulted more students – and although a difference to current model, it's also an adaptation. We've had lots of positive feedback and comments

AC: The principles that were voted on and adopted remain, but the process has changed.

BM will email questions to BMc and the answers will be shared with Trustees

BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVED THE HAVE YOUR SAY CHANGES (2017/18)

10.2 Draft Agenda for Board Away Day Discussion – JB

No discussion

11. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 3rd October 2017 at 3.00pm

Room 1, The Union Building

Thank you to the Chair, the Sabbatical Officers and the Student Trustees who have put all of their hard work sitting on the Board, and welcome and good luck to the new Sabbatical Officer and new Student Trustees

ACTIONS

Action	Who	Update	Status
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7.1 Create a one page of A4 that revisits the start of P25, where we are now and includes the aims, market context, shared view of the future of higher education	AC/JO		Complete
7.4 Add review of papers to Away Day agenda	LJ		Complete
7.5 Liaise with Brendan McCarthy regarding the Student Survey Sub-Group	JO		Complete
7.5 Discuss with BMc regarding capacity of research function and accessing the disengaged students	AC		Complete

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

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Minutes Approved: _____

Date: _____