



01Board of the Trustees
24/8/16

Action**1 ATTENDANCE****1.1 Present**

Grace Anderson (Officer trustee) James Barlow (External trustee), Melanie Digney (External trustee), Paul McHugh (External trustee), Janice Maclean (External trustee), Precious Nwanze (Officer trustee), Leigh Rooney (Officer trustee), Jamie Smith (Officer trustee), Kathryn Younger (Officer trustee)

In Attendance

Linda Collett (Minute taker), Matthew Ensor (Chief Executive)

1.2 Apologies

Kathleen Vanderpuye (Student trustee)

1.3 Absent

Cathy McGuire (Student trustee)

1.4 Declaration of Interest

None

The trustees noted that quorum required at least one student trustee to be present. As this was not the case for this meeting, no decisions could be taken. In accordance with the Articles the Trustees agreed to discuss and note the agenda items and agreed that, where necessary, decisions shall be taken outside a meeting or brought for approval to the next meeting.

2 ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**2.1 Accuracy**

69 – CEO report – CEO job description – correct to “bring more in line with sector good practice”

71 – Budget 2016-17 – amend to “it was confirmed that the University had indicated that the block grant would remain unchanged from the commitment made earlier in the year.”

73 – Officers' reports – KY – amend to “To set up a safer taxi fare scheme for students”.

Minutes of reserved business – Add apologies for JB.

The previous Minutes were accepted as a true record.

2.2 Matters Arising

None.

3 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

SUSS - The University had indicated that it did not consider the SUSS deficit payment to be part of the block grant and so any increase would continue to be met outside of the grant.

Tindal development proposal –It was agreed that it would be necessary to ascertain the viability of the catering provision before taking any decision for the Union to provide this

service. It was acknowledged that the Board would need to see justification if a decision was taken to reverse that taken five years ago to close the SU catering provision. It was noted that the amount of footfall would need to be established, along with any restrictions on opening times and staffing etc.

It was noted that the offer from the University had been made as an interim measure to address the lack of student space until the Student Hub was built. However, the redevelopment of Peter Taylor House (PTH) and Tindal was now considered one project, so a decision on Tindal was needed in order for the work on PTH to commence. The Board agreed that the priority would be to establish what students want and that the Union should not be pressured into making a decision before establishing that any proposal was in the interests of current and future students' needs and that any commercial activity was viable. It was confirmed that a budget would be identified to fund some research around the proposal.

4 FINANCIAL REPORT

It was noted that the surplus for 2015-16 was likely to be higher than the forecast of £62,800, partially due to the successful insurance claim which had not been factored into the forecast. The Board noted that some concerns around the accuracy of the cashflow forecast have been raised with our finance providers. The cash balance at year end was higher than predicted within the cashflow forecast.

It was noted that the small surplus that the Board had set as a target had been achieved. The Board noted the improvements to the monthly forecasting process and extended their thanks to Alexis Mannion for her efforts over the past financial year.

It was also noted that there were plans to delegate small scale capital expenditure to managers – this would be set out in the scheme of delegated authority to be reviewed at a future meeting.

5 STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Staff were working through the project definition forms to create plans to deliver the strategic plan. Senior managers had discussed the major projects and found that several were interlinked, so work was now being done to identify where KPIs could be merged.

It was confirmed that the departments had set targets based on current performance. The Board requested that a benchmark figure of the current position be included in the project definition forms.

6 OFFICERS' REPORTS

The officers' activities to date were summarised, which included the following:

- Residential with campaign reps.
- NUS SU2016 where the Green Impact Gold award was presented.
- Lead and Change training specific to each role – this received a mixed reaction. Officers had met with their NUS contact and had given feedback on these sessions.
- The first Exec awayday was planned for 5 September where officers would be leading training for the campaign reps.

- Officers had been allocated mentees and coaches.
- Activities Officers were currently attending the Rag conference and JS was running for the NSFA position to raise the profile of ARU SU. There had been a very positive reaction to the rebrand from other SUs.
- The mental health campaign was moving forward and officers had had a very useful meeting with the mental health adviser from student support services.
- LR to attend Governors' away day at the end of September and had received advice concerning the corporate plan from members of Union and University staff.
- The Board was asked for feedback about the type of officer report they would like brought to Board meetings.

7 STUDENT TRUSTEE FEEDBACK

There were no student trustees present.

8 BOARD DISCUSSION – IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE BOARD EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

Recommendation 1 - agreed

Concern was expressed over the issues that may arise, particularly for working trustees, from holding the Board meetings in one location. Further concerns were expressed that this may have an impact of future recruitment of trustees. It was agreed that future recruitment would set out clearly expectations required from potential trustees.

The reduction in number of full Board meetings from six to four was welcomed with additional business being conducted at sub committees.

Recommendation 2 - agreed

Recommendation 3 – partially

Discussion indicated that a majority considered a three hour meeting to be a maximum effective length of time to allow the Board to conduct its business. It was noted that additional items would be added to agendas, so with the reduction in number of meetings, this may not give sufficient time to consider all the necessary business and this would need to be reviewed. Further discussions indicated that the preferred timing for meetings was late afternoon: a flexible start of 3.00 pm (in the event of there being a presentation or workshop as part of the business) and a finish of 7.00 pm was agreed. It was also agreed that some meetings could be held at a mid-point between campuses.

Recommendation 4 - agreed

The idea of trustees taking part in officer training in July was supported but it was agreed that socials should be optional.

Recommendation 5 - agreed

Recommendation 6 - agreed



Recommendation 7 - agreed

Structure of oversight process to be created.

Recommendation 8 - agreed

It was agreed that it would be useful to have these documents available in one place.

Recommendation 9 - agreed

It was agreed that one review per year which outlined highlights and key recommendations would be sufficient. Regular line management meetings will be held, currently agreed as every 6 weeks.

Recommendation 10 – agreed, subject to approval of the terms of reference for committees at a future meeting

It was agreed to create three sub committees of the Board; being Finance and Risk, Appointments and Governance and HR & Employee Engagement.

The recruitment of suitable external trustees and student trustees should be made the priority to ensure continuity and improve trustee succession.

It was also felt that the sub committees should reflect the needs of ARU Students' Union. The terms of reference as detailed in the report were suited to a larger, more commercial SU. Prior to the October meeting of Trustees, careful consideration must be given to membership of committees, with particular focus on ensuring the right mix of skills and expertise are available to each committee. The Trustees recognised the balance of roles needed to ensure the voluntary roles could be filled. It was agreed that it would be desirable for students to have a place on every committee.

Recommendation 11 - agreed

Recommendation 12 – agreed as a phased approach

Biennial board reviews were supported. It was agreed that there was a need for the Board to self-appraise and that there should be some form of feedback process.

It was agreed to conduct biennial board reviews and that trustee appraisals would be introduced as a phased approach.

Recommendation 13 - agreed

It was agreed that a balance of expertise and skills was needed.

Recommendation 14 - agreed

9 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Board were requested to call an AGM on 25 October in order for the revised Articles to be agreed by the necessary bodies prior to submission to the University Board of Governors in November. As the meeting was not quorate, this would need to be agreed unanimously by email. ME to write to Trustees asking for a decision outside a meeting.



DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING
To be advised.

