

04Board of the Trustees
6.6.18 – Chelmsford Mar 101

Action

18 ATTENDANCE

18.1 Present

James Barlow (Lay trustee), Tanya Curry (Lay trustee), Laura Douds (Officer trustee), Richard Halderthay (Lay trustee), Kirran Khan (Officer trustee), Johanna Korhonen (Officer trustee), Janice Maclean (Lay trustee), Lusungu Muwowo (Student trustee), Jamie Smith (Officer trustee), Eliza Torres (Officer trustee)

In Attendance

Linda Collett (Minute taker), Matthew Ensor (Chief Executive), Matthew Hayes, (Officer trustee elect), Fraser Luther-Yarwood (Officer trustee elect), Alexis Mannion (Finance Manager – Item 20.1 only)

18.2 Apologies

Melanie Digney (External trustee), Helena Schofield (Student trustee)

18.3 Absent

None

18.4 Declaration of interest

There was a declaration of interest for staff members in item 20.1 (Schedule 2)

19 ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

19.1 Accuracy

The previous Minutes were accepted as a true record.

19.2 Matters Arising

9.2 – The traffic light system for the Let's Be Honest monitoring system was no longer needed as the University was currently writing a Wellbeing report for students which included all but one of the recommendations from the Let's Be Honest report. This should be complete in time to be brought to the next Board meeting.

13.2 – Space redevelopment concerns – The Vice Chancellor had made a verbal response and the matter had been noted by the Vice Chancellor's group.

14.3 – Articles and Bye laws – There was an update included in the CEO report.

17.1 – Deputy Chair of the Board – An election was to be held later in the meeting.

LD

Professor Aletta Norval, ARU Deputy Vice Chancellor (Education) attended and gave a short presentation on the University Education Strategy and ARU re-structure. The SU President raised the concerns that had been fed back to the SU in the student consultation.

20 ITEMS FOR APPROVAL/DISCUSSION

20.1 Budget 2018-19

It was noted that the block grant being frozen for the first time in many years. It was further noted that next year's budget had been built by a bottom-up process using day to day figures. It was agreed that the Union would investigate ways in which to include officers in the budget process for next year. The CEO and Finance Manager confirmed that they were comfortable with the process and the assumptions that had been made in the creation of the budget. It was further noted that the Finance and Risk (F&R) committee had not had sight of the completed budget prior to the Board meeting.

The Board noted the increased risk to the Union's financial situation in the next (and future) years and that the ability to deliver on budget targets would be more complex, with the likelihood of delivering a surplus being reduced. It was further noted that adjustments may be needed during the year in the event of things not going as planned.

The Board requested that an update on Commercial income be brought to the September Board meeting and that figures be monitored by a Board member from October in order that any deficit could be reported immediately.

Board

The new system used to create a bottom-up budgeting process was NOTED.

A cost of living increase of 2% was CONSIDERED and APPROVED.

The Union's budget for 2018-19 was APPROVED.

Thanks were extended to the CEO and Finance Manager for their work in creating the budget.

20.2 Strategic planning proposal

The Board noted that the Union had faced a challenging year in delivering against the current strategic plan due to budgeted funding not be received to support additional staff positions. The Senior Management Team (SMT) had indicated that the timeline for delivery of the current strategic plan was not realistic and had made recommendations for a 2-year operating plan to be considered by Trustees at the September meeting.

ME

The proposed plan was APPROVED.

21 STANDING ITEMS

21.1 Chief Executive's report

Staff engagement survey

The Board noted that some results were challenging and that as career staff and full time officers faced different challenges, actions were being drawn up for both, with a bespoke plan developed for each. These would be shared with staff at the away day on 29 June.

ME

The Board noted that all staff, including the SMT, needed support, and consideration should be given on how to provide this. It was suggested that there were substantive challenges in the feedback from officers that needed to be addressed and that external experts should be used to facilitate this.

Board

ARU restructure

Officers had met with members of the University Corporate Management Team (CMT) and had expressed their disappointment at not being consulted earlier about the restructure. The Union subsequently communicated full information, including a FAQ section, to students via the SU website and social media. Feedback from students about the Union's approach to this decision by ARU had been very positive.

The University was currently drafting an all-student email to explain how the restructure would affect individual courses.

It was noted that any changes required to the Union's service delivery as a result of the restructure would need to be considered on a cost-neutral basis unless additional funding were forthcoming from ARU.

Article and Byelaws

It was noted that the Union's AGM had passed a special resolution to amend the Articles and Bye laws, but that these would only be implemented once approval had been obtained from the University's Board of Governors. The changes would be presented to the Board of Governors' meeting on 5 July.

LD

The Board extended congratulations to everyone involved in managing such a complex project.

21.2 Financial report

This had already been taken to the F&R committee.

The report was NOTED.

21.3 To receive minutes of the sub committees

- **Appointments and Governance**

Headlines from A&G included

- a discussion on the Articles and Byelaws – thanks were extended to ME, BD and the staff team
- trustee recruitment – the Chair had spoken to existing committee experts to establish their intentions
- HE legislation – links to NUS and Bates Wells and Braithwaite updates to be circulated to all trustees and committee experts.

ME

It was noted that, as the current Deputy Chair of the Board would be retiring after the September Board meeting, a new Deputy Chair needed to be elected. Tanya Curry was nominated for the position and a vote took place. Tanya Curry was unanimously elected as Deputy Chair of the Board and would take up the position at the September Board meeting.

- **Finance and Risk**

Headlines from F&R included

- SUSS pension – this was an old final-salary scheme which was in deficit and currently attracted payments to cover this. There was potential for additional payments being necessary after the re-evaluation which was due to take place next year
- 92 – sales breakdown and wastage figures would continue to be monitored by F&R
- Limited company - there was potential to reactivate the Union's trading company but a cost benefit assessment was needed before a final decision was reached.

- **HR and Employee Engagement March 2018**

- Agreed that Paternity policy would be aligned to University policy and requested Maternity and Adoption policies be reviewed for next meeting.
- Recommended that rolled up holiday pay be discontinued and that new software package be trialled to record hours and calculate holiday pay.
- Officer induction had received considerable input from current team and it had been agreed that a long thin induction was the way forward.
- Travel and Mental Health policies to be brought to the next meeting.
- A discussion regarding training of SVLOs had taken place and it had been agreed that current vacancies would not be filled immediately, but that plans would be put in place to support students in the meantime.

- **HR and Employee Engagement May 2018**

- As there were budgetary implications for the proposed increased mileage rate this had not been recommended. HR&EE had recommended that the Board approve the revised Travel policy, apart from the increase in mileage rate.

The Board APPROVED the Travel, Subsistence and Expenses Policy whilst retaining 35p per mile as agreed by HR&EE.

- HR&EE had recommended that the Board approve the revised Maternity and Adoption policy.

The Board APPROVED the Maternity and Adoption policy.

- It was noted that the Health and Wellbeing working group had recommended some minor changes around the wording to include wellbeing as well as stress in the Health and Wellbeing policy. HR&EE recommended that the Board approve the policy.

F&R

ME/AM

SD

The Board APPROVED the Health and Wellbeing policy.

SD

- Harassment and Bullying Policy. HR&EE recommended that the Board approve the policy.

The Board recommended that amendments were made to include reference to the ACAS code and to clarify the procedure for accusations concerning line managers or the CEO. It was recommended that there should also be reference to the length of time that records of accusations should be kept on an employee's file. The Board requested that the revised Policy should be taken to a future HR&EE committee for consideration.

22 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION OR TO NOTE

22.1 To note report from interim Student Council meetings

The report from the Student Council meeting on 25 April 2018 was noted.

22.2 To note report from interim Executive meetings

The report from the Executive meetings on 31 January, 14 March and 18 April 2018 were noted.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

CEO appraisal

This had taken place in May. The next steps would be setting the CEO one page plan and KPIs. The CEO expressed his thanks to the members of the appraisal panel for their support and positive feedback.

Trustee resignations and retirements

The Board extended thanks to James Barlow, who was resigning after this meeting, and Janice Maclean, who was retiring after the September Board meeting, for their support during their time of office and wished them well for the future.

Officer team

The Board extended thanks to the current officer trustees for their contribution to the Board during their term of office and wished them well for the future.

Books Plus review

A meeting had taken place with the University Director of Finance to discuss the proposal to withdraw the Books Plus scheme. It was noted that the Union would need to assess the impact of the potential withdrawal of the scheme, particularly with regard to the shop income and society memberships.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 6 September – Board away day – 10.00-6.00 – Corporate Suite (MAB404)
- Chelmsford.



6/9/18

