

Meeting:	Board of Trustees	
Location:	SU Meeting Room	
Date & Time:	24 April 2024 9.30 – 12.00	
Present:		
<i>Name</i>		<i>Role</i>
Jimena Alamo	JA	Chair (SU President)
Rebecca Board	RBo	Vice-Chair (External Trustee)
Amber Snary	AS	Education Officer
David Lam	DL	Activities Officer
Hanna Hajzer	HH	Community Officer
Barry Hughes	BH	External Trustee
Christine Gibbons	CG	External Trustee
In Attendance:		
<i>Name</i>		<i>Role</i>
Beki Self	BS	Secretary (Senior Administrator (Governance))
Ryan Bird	RBi	Chief Executive
Mandy Wilson-Garner	MWG	Deputy Chief Executive

Item											
Part 1. Administration											
1.1.	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Name</th> <th>Reason</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Jura Neverauskaite</td> <td>Illness</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Abbie Watkin</td> <td>Commitment conflict</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bernie Morley</td> <td>Commitment Conflict</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Name	Reason	Jura Neverauskaite	Illness	Abbie Watkin	Commitment conflict	Bernie Morley	Commitment Conflict		
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Jura Neverauskaite	Illness										
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1.2.	<p>Notice of any other business</p> <p>No notice of any other business was raised.</p>										
1.3.	<p>Notice of any conflict of interest</p> <p>No conflicts of interest were raised.</p>										
1.4.	<p>Confirmation of minutes and matters arising</p> <p>Minutes of the previous meeting are approved. Matters arising: <i>Beki Self to amend minutes to make Christine’s appointment commencing post incorporation clearer.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> completed <p><i>To share Officer reports to Council on Top Ten with Trustees</i></p>										

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • included as part of officer reports <p><i>Beki to contact trustees about availability in January to ensure swift turnaround times.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completed <p><i>Beki to correct version of Activities report included in reports pack</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completed
<h2>Part 2. Main Items</h2>	
<p>2.1.</p>	<p>Area Spotlight – Advice & Support</p> <p>Rachael Corbett, Advice Manager (maternity cover) joined the meeting.</p> <p>Rachael presented an overview of the Advice & Support service and offers to students.</p> <p>Presentation to be included in reports and circulated to Board members.</p> <p>Questions from the Board</p> <p>QUESTION: What does ‘client’ in the presentation refer to? ANSWER: It refers to those using the service, which is almost entirely students although sometimes we do have parents get in contact.</p> <p>QUESTION: If the SU is not a wellbeing service and not a money advisor, what is the point of having an advice service in the SU? What differentiates it from a university service? ANSWER: From a students’ point of view, we are autonomous and independent from the SU. Many students who access Advice & Support would not engage with university services.</p> <p>QUESTION: How is the quality of advice managed? ANSWER: Advisors have regular 1-2-1s with the Advice Manager, there are random case reviews as well as feedback from students.</p> <p>QUESTION: Do you work with any other advice organisation? ANSWER: Yes, the team works with Advice UK and other SU advice services through them.</p> <p>QUESTION: If you are not a specialist in housing advice, what advice are you providing? ANSWER: Housing makes about 20% of the advice provided. Most of the work is signposting but one of the advisors was previously a housing advisor so can provide more specific advice.</p> <p>The trustees thanked Rachael for the informative presentation.</p>
<p>2.2.</p>	<p>Board Committee Structure</p> <p>People and culture have been largely focused on at a managerial level and would now like to have more of a strategic focus on the topic.</p> <p>Finance & Audit works well as a committee.</p> <p>The current structure needs rebalancing and with a proper focus on which policy and responsibility sits where.</p>

	<p>The SU would like the trustees to share their thoughts.</p> <p>A trustee noted it would be good to have an overarching and strategic long term view. Some kind of overarching plan of what will be going to each committee and Board would be helpful.</p> <p>Key points and questions from Board members are noted below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally the board like the idea of business development and looking forward. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It's good to have a space to look forward but could this instead be a task and finish group or an extension of a board/committee meeting. • If there is not an SU development committee, there will need to be clear dedicated time at Board for this work to happen. • There were concerns that 3 committees may duplicate work in some areas so particular care would be needed in crafting the terms of reference to avoid this. • All committees should have a governance calendar/scheme of agendas. • Could SU development meet less times than other committees? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Could have an extended Board meeting twice a year instead? • Leadership committee currently sits in an odd space. It is primarily operational and is an important space. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some areas are using it more effectively than others so work needs to be done to make it clear with staff what the role of leadership is. • Could each committee have a co-chair or vice chair? Someone you can ask the embarrassing or dumb questions to. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some Boards have a buddy system for new trustee members, this is something we could look at. <p>QUESTION: How would people & engagement as a committee fit alongside DPT. ANSWER: DPT is a largely operational and representative space which does not need trustee input.</p> <p>QUESTION: How do officers feel about the chair of committee potentially not being an officer? ANSWER: Would be okay if no officers wanted to do it as they shouldn't be forced but officers should be the first preference for chairing a committee.</p> <p>The Board chose to request a more detailed proposal including terms of reference for the next Board of Trustees meeting.</p> <p>ACTION: revised proposal including Terms of Reference to be taken to Board.</p>
2.3.	<p>SU Strategy</p> <p>Ryan Bird, Chief Executive (RBI) presented the current draft of the strategy.</p> <p>It was highlighted area planning is underway and the SU is on track to be starting the next academic year with a strategy. It was noted Deputy Chief Executive, Mandy Wilson-Garner has helped a lot with setting up the strategy before she leaves.</p> <p>It was noted this strategy explicitly builds from the previous strategy rather than creating a whole new strategy from scratch.</p> <p>Throughout the strategy there is a real shift to focus on enabling students to support each other to deliver the experience.</p> <p>The draft strategy will be sent to the Board of Trustees for more detailed comment.</p>

	<p>Trustees noted the strategy is very positive with a distinct focus on students, student representation and enabling students to make change.</p> <p>ACTION: Final draft of the SU Strategy to come to the June Board.</p>
2.4.	<p>24/25 Financial Position *CONFIDENTIAL ITEM*</p> <p>This topic has been discussed at Finance & Audit Committee so this is a chance to update the whole Board.</p> <p>The block grant from the University has been reduced and there will be a 65k gap to break even next year.</p> <p>There is currently a recruitment chill and senior team restructure ongoing meaning we can cover the costs of year 1. This will allow the SU to create a longer-term strategy for managing the reduced block grant.</p> <p>It is unlikely the incoming Vice Chancellor will notably change the University's current financial plan. The new Vice Chancellor will create an opportunity to challenge the SU being considered a 'professional service'.</p> <p>Whilst we are employed by the University, the SU has no say in salary costs.</p> <p>There is a sensitivity analysis about to take place and how this will impact year on year.</p>
2.5.	<p>Incorporation Update *CONFIDENTIAL ITEM*</p> <p>Chief Executive, Ryan Bird (Rbi) provided a verbal update on incorporation.</p> <p>The decision was made that the University and SU should jointly write to HMRC. The University has led on this and has contacted HMRC. It may take up to 12 weeks for a decision.</p> <p>The case being sent to HMRC is a risk and the risk register has been updated to reflect this.</p> <p>It was noted that it would not be appropriate to consult staff until there is a response from HMRC as there are too many unknowns currently.</p> <p>The University are looking at options for if HMRC does not accept SU staff salaries on joint contracts being VAT exempt.</p> <p>Ryan and the trustees want to note their thanks to Helen McHenry and Emily Burstow for their extensive work on incorporation.</p>
<p>Part 3. Committees and Reports</p>	
3.1.	<p>Operational Report</p> <p>The report is taken as read and trustees were asked for question or comment.</p> <p>QUESTION: Space is mentioned a few times, is there a plan going forward for SU space? ANSWER: SU space and infrastructure is one of the enabling strands of the incoming strategy. Part of this is being in conversation with the University about taking over the café in the Edge.</p>

	<p>There are also conversations about Dartmouth Avenue as it is not clear if the University will renew the lease and a number of activities will need to find a new 'home'. Some options include using The Virgil or SCALA Building in the city.</p> <p>QUESTION: Food is up but coffee is down, do we know if our coffee being provided by Starbucks has any correlation to this given the international calls to boycott Starbucks? ANSWER: The SU has not received any formal complaints regarding using Starbucks. The international brand recognition is incredibly helpful to trade and a number of other SUs returned to using Starbucks after attempting to move away.</p> <p>ACTION: Results of Together We Shape Tomorrow to be shared to Board.</p>
3.2.	<p>Current Financial Position</p> <p>Head of Finance Helen McHenry provided an overview of the Current SU financial position.</p> <p>Key highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Ball tickets are doing okay. • Varsity was a massive success with great sales. The SU are still collecting all the data and costings related to the event to accurately know the profit. • The only capital expenditures have been within the bars area. • It was noted the ChaOS event (Choral & Orchestral society) was a particular success, further lending evidence to students shifting towards one off events.
3.3.	<p>Officer Reports</p> <p>The reports were taken as read and trustees were asked for questions or comments.</p> <p>The chair extended thanks to Hanna and Amber who have been covering a lot of the PG officer remit.</p> <p>Trustees requested a top level summary of the reports with a focus on the strategic.</p> <p>ACTION: Beki and Jimena to look at creating a summary or cover page for the officer reports.</p> <p>ACTION: Dedicated report for the remit of PG officer even if this is being covered by other officers.</p>
3.4.	<p>Officer Elections Report</p> <p>The report is taken as read and trustees were asked for questions or comments.</p> <p>The Board would like to thank those who made the elections happen behind the scenes.</p> <p>No other comments or questions.</p>
	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Trustee Recruitment – It was highlighted recruitment for student and external trustees will be undertaken soon.</p>

	The Board extended their thanks to Mandy Wilson Garner for her contribution to the SU and the Board and wish her well in retirement.
	Date and time of future meetings June 13 th 14.00 – 16.30

Item	Action	Action Owner	Exp Finish
2.2.	Revised committee structure proposal including Terms of Reference to be taken to Board.	BS	06/2024
2.3.	Final draft of the SU Strategy to come to the June Board.	Rbi	06/2024
3.1.	Results of Together We Shape Tomorrow to be shared to Board.	BS	09/2024
3.3.	Beki and Jimena to look at creating a summary or cover page for the officer reports.	BS/JA	06/2024
3.3.	Dedicated report for the remit of PG officer even if this is being covered by other officers.	JA/AS/HH	06/2024