

Meeting:	Board of Trustees
Location:	Microsoft Teams Meeting
Date & Time:	Thursday 18 June 2020 at 9.30am

Present:

Eve Alcock	President (<i>Chair</i>)
Francesco Masala	Activities Officer
Jiani Zhou	Postgraduate Officer
Alisha Lobo	Community Officer
Tom Sawko	Sport Officer
Ruqia Osman	Education Officer
Rob Clay	Independent Trustee
Kate Aldridge	Independent Trustee (<i>Joined under agenda item 6</i>)
Alexander Robinson	Independent Trustee
Valerie Copenhagen	Independent Trustee
Marian McNeir	Independent Trustee
Jordan Kenny	Independent Trustee (<i>Vice-Chair</i>)

In attendance:

Gregory Noakes	Governance & Executive Support Manager (<i>Secretary</i>)
Andrew McLaughlin	Chief Executive
Rob Tyrrell	Incoming Officer
Freya Jackson	Incoming Officer
Annie Willingham	Incoming Officer
Ka Ho Ho	Incoming Officer

Item	
1.	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <p>The Board noted that Kate Aldridge would be late as a work related matter had arisen that they needed to manage first.</p> <p>All other Trustees were present for the start of the meeting.</p>
2.	<p>Notice of any other business</p> <p>The following item was identified for discussion under any other business:</p> <p>1) Trustee appointment.</p>
3.	<p>Declaration of conflict of interest</p> <p>No Trustees present had any conflict of interest to raise relating to any items on the agenda.</p>
4.	<p>Minutes of previous Board meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were approved by the Board and would be signed by the Chair at a later date (<i>See R1 of the Board reports</i>).</p>
4.1.	<p>Matters arising from previous Board meeting</p> <p>The Board received a report on matters arising from the previous meeting (<i>see R1 of the Board reports</i>).</p>
4.2.	<p>Decisions made without a meeting</p>

	<p>The Board received a report on decisions made without a meeting since their last meeting (<i>see R1 of the Board reports</i>).</p>
5.	<p>Appointment of Vice Chair</p> <p>The Board noted they had received an expression of interest in the role from Jordan Kenny.</p> <p><i>(Jordan Kenny left the meeting at this point)</i></p> <p>The Chair explained Jordan Kenny’s background working at the University of Roehampton and noted that they were an ex-officer of The SU themselves.</p> <p>The Board discussed and agreed to appoint Jordan Kenny as Vice-Chair till the end of their first term of office as a trustee (<i>19/12/2022</i>).</p> <p><i>(Jordan Kenny re-joined the meeting at this point)</i></p>
6.	<p>Coronavirus</p> <p>The Board received a coronavirus (<i>COVID-19</i>) pandemic update (<i>see R2 of the Board reports</i>).</p> <p>The Chair noted their concerns regarding the bus company First which, due to the pandemic, was experiencing reduced public use. If the company went under or had to change services this could seriously affect student travel to and from campus. The University were currently monitoring the situation closely. A Trustee noted this would be an issue affecting residents as well as students.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked what support The SU were giving students seeking tuition fee refunds.</p> <p>ANSWER: The Chair explained the Student Union sector were advocating for the government to pay the cost for refunds during the pandemic as they recognised that Universities could not afford to do this. To date guidance issued around this area had also been unclear on who would handle such complaints with the Office of Independent Adjudicator (<i>OIA</i>) stating this was outside their current remit.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked for an update on the request made to the University for them to support The SU by underwriting lost commercial income.</p> <p>ANSWER: The Chief Executive explained that they have arranged to meet with the University’s Director of Finance to discuss this. Following this they would then be in a position to update Trustees.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked for an update on plans for student welcome week.</p> <p>ANSWER: The Chief Executive reported on the options being explored and the work being done to engage student groups early and update online content.</p> <p><i>(Kate Aldridge joined the meeting at this point)</i></p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked what scenario planning The SU had done for the next academic year.</p> <p>ANSWER: The Chief Executive explained that there were currently too many big variables within The SU finances to start planning various scenarios for next year. Before proper planning could begin they needed to know:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the outcome of a £50,000 insurance claim The SU had made for lost business income; the full cost of the buy-out for the transport fleet lease (<i>a decision that had been made to make savings in the long term</i>); the exact cost of the furlough scheme on The SU. <p>The Board congratulated Officers and The SU on the great work they had done in continuing to provide support, representation and student activities during the pandemic.</p>
7.	<p>Black Lives Matter</p> <p>The Board received a report on Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity (<i>EDI</i>) issues which had been circulated separately to the Board reports (<i>see additional report</i>).</p> <p>Two of the Officers noted their concerns regarding the lack of EDI expertise among staff within both the University and The SU. They recommended that a long term EDI plan was needed in order to ensure that good progress made over the last two weeks continued.</p> <p>The Board discussed and agreed that they wanted a clear plan for improving EDI within The SU with regular progress reports being submitted to Trustees. A Trustee advised that The SU needed to make sure that it kept focused on all EDI issues and not just those appearing in the media.</p> <p>The Board discussed and made the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the EDI plan should include a RAG rating to clearly show progress being made; the EDI plan should be submitted alongside a progress report to each meeting; The SU should campaign for the University to sign up to the anti-racist charter; a Trustee should be appointed to keep oversight of this area of work within The SU. <p><i>(The Board stopped for a 5 minute break)</i></p>
8.	<p>SU Strategy</p> <p>The Board received a report on The SU strategy (<i>See R3 of the Board reports</i>).</p> <p>A Trustee noted that despite achieving the strategy's objectives the key performance indicators (<i>KPIs</i>) appeared not to have been affected. For the new strategy this would need to be addressed with actions changing if they were not affecting the KPIs.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked how KPIs would be monitored for non-website activities. ANSWER: The Chief Executive explained that increasingly SU activities required scanning in which allowed for this information to be captured and then stored with the rest of the data on the website.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked how The SU communicated its strategy to students. ANSWER: The Chief Executive explained that The SU was more focused on communicating its cause to students than the strategy as it recognised that this was more likely to attract initial student interest.</p>
9.	<p>Finance</p> <p>The Board received a report on SU management accounts, reserves and budget (<i>see R4 of the Board reports</i>).</p>

A Trustee explained to the Board that The SU with its current reserves could support a deficit until the end of the next academic year.

QUESTION: A Trustee asked for an update on commercial income plans for 2020-21.

ANSWER: The Chief Executive explained that The SU was unlikely to be able to resume club nights for the foreseeable future. They were therefore exploring other opportunities for commercial activities such as temporarily switching from a bars operation to a retail one.

The Board discussed and agreed that the Finance & Audit committee should meet in July to explore and plan for a range of different scenarios for the next academic year.

ACTION: Finance & Audit committee to plan for a range of different scenarios for the next academic year.

10.

Governance

The Board received reports on the following:

- Student Member Disciplinary policy (see R5 of the Board reports);
- Complaints policy (see R6 of the Board reports);
- Business Continuity and Recovery policy (see R7 of the Board reports);
- Student Group policy (see R8 of the Board reports);

The Board adopted the Student Member Disciplinary policy subject to the following amendments;

- **P1 Confidentiality** 'All named individuals will be erased from the disciplinary record after **3** academic years' **should be amended to** 'All named individuals will be erased from the disciplinary record after **4** academic years.'
- **P3 Sanctions** 'Under exceptional circumstances, where the severity of the misconduct justifies it, **a longer ban than those contained with the table below can** be issued for any misconduct.' **should be amended to** 'Under exceptional circumstances, where the severity of the misconduct justifies it, **a lifetime ban may** be issued for any misconduct.'
- **P3 Sanctions** 'Unjust treatment of another person based on a protected characteristic' **should be amended to** 'Unjust treatment of another person based on a protected characteristic (**age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation**)'

The Board adopted the Complaints policy subject to the following amendment;

- **P1 Confidentiality** 'Details of specific complaints will be erased from records after **3** academic years.' **should be amended to** 'Details of specific complaints will be erased from records after **4** academic years.'

ACTION: Board amendments to be made to Student Member Disciplinary policy and Complaints policy

The Board adopted the Business Continuity and Recovery policy.

The Board discussed and agreed to delegate the adoption of the Student Group policy to the Leadership committee to allow for consultation with key staff and students.

ACTION: Leadership committee to adopt Student Group policy following consultation with key staff and students

11.	<p>Committee Review</p> <p>The Board received a report on review of committee structure (see R9 of the Board reports).</p> <p>The Board adopted the proposed committee structure and terms of references subject to a single amendment to the Leadership committee terms of reference:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P1 Committee Membership 'b) The committee members will be: the 6 elected officers up to 2 Independent Trustees appointed by the Board should be amended to 'b) The committee members will be: the 6 elected officers' <p>ACTION: Board amendment to be made to the Leadership committee terms of reference</p> <p>The Board discussed and agreed that committee membership would be agreed via email.</p> <p>ACTION: Board committee membership to be agreed via email</p>
12.	<p>Appointment of Link Trustees</p> <p>The Board received a report on Link Trustee appointments (see R10 of the Board reports).</p> <p>The Board discussed and agreed Link Trustee appointments would be agreed via email.</p> <p>ACTION: Link Trustee appointments to be agreed via email</p>
13.	<p>SU Sustainability</p> <p>The Board received a report on SU Sustainability (see R11 of the Board reports).</p>
14.	<p>External Speakers</p> <p>The Board received a report on external speakers for 2019/20 (see R12 of the Board reports).</p>
15.	<p>Complaints & Student Member Disciplinary</p> <p>The Board received a report on complaints and student member disciplinary (see R13 of the Board reports).</p>
16.	<p>Health & Safety</p> <p>The Board received a report on Health & Safety (see R14 of the Board reports).</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked what actions had been taken with regards to the health & safety of staff working remotely.</p> <p>ANSWER: The Chief Executive explained that each staff member had been given a workstation assessment with the Departmental Safety Co-ordinator. They had also been permitted and encouraged to pick up any equipment from the office that they needed to improve their workstation. This would continue to be monitored as staff exited the furlough scheme over the next two months.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked why there was such a high number of reported accidents for cheerleading.</p>

	<p>ANSWER: The Sport Officer explained that cheerleading was a sports club that, unlike other clubs, had no national body setting safety standards. The clubs activities had been paused and they would not be continued until The SU had decided what this should be.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked about the ventilation problem in The SU Advice & Support office.</p> <p>ANSWER: The Chief Executive explained that there had been a verbal agreement when the building was built that essential work to the building would be covered by Estates. This had been confirmed by the previous Chief Executive. Estates were currently refusing to pay for this and The SU could not afford to for this. Following a SU request the University's Health & Safety Adviser had inspected the office and confirmed that while not ideal it was still useable.</p>
17.	<p>Chief Executive and Officer reports</p> <p>The Board received the CEO and Officer reports (<i>See R15 of the Board reports</i>).</p> <p><i>A Confidential Minute was taken at this point.</i></p>
18.	<p>SU Area Reports</p> <p>The Board received a report on SU area activities (<i>See R16 of the Board reports</i>).</p>
19.	<p>Minutes of committee meetings</p> <p>The Board received the report on committee meetings (<i>See R17 of the Board reports</i>).</p>
20.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>The following item had been previously identified for discussion under any other business:</p> <p>1) Trustee appointment</p> <p><i>(Marian McNeir left the meeting at this point)</i></p> <p>The Board agreed that Marian McNeir had skills that would be useful to the Board but the diversity of the Board also needed to be considered.</p> <p>They agreed that the Leadership committee should review the current backgrounds and skills of the current Board before any decision on this was made.</p> <p>Outgoing Officers</p> <p>The Board congratulated and thanked the outgoing Officer team recognising that due to the pandemic this had been an unusual end to an Officer year. They agreed that post-pandemic the Officers should be invited back for a meal.</p>
21.	<p>To confirm the date and time of future meetings</p> <p>The Board noted and confirmed the following meeting dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 10th September 2020 at 9.30am • Thursday 10th December 2020 at 9.30am • Thursday 25th March 2021 at 9.30am • Thursday 17th June 2021 at 9.30am

The meeting ended at 12.43pm.

Item	Action
9	Finance & Audit committee to plan for a range of different scenarios for the next academic year.
10	Board amendments to be made to Student Member Disciplinary policy and Complaints policy.
10	Leadership committee to adopt Student Group policy following consultation with key staff and students
11	Board amendment to be made to the Leadership committee terms of reference
11	Board committee membership to be agreed via email
12	Link Trustee appointments to be agreed via email