

Meeting:	Board of Trustees		
Location:	Microsoft Teams Meeting		
Date & Time:	Thursday 10 September 2020 at 9.30am		
Present:			
Francesco Masala	President (<i>Chair</i>)		
Ka Ho Ho	Postgraduate Officer		
Freya Jackson	Community Officer		
Tom Sawko	Sport Officer		
Freya Jackson	Education Officer		
Rob Clay	Independent Trustee (<i>Joined under agenda item 7</i>)		
Kate Aldridge	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		
Item			
1.	Apologies for absence		
	The Board noted that Rob Clay would be late to the meeting.		
	Name	Reason	Accepted
	Valerie Copenhagen	Personal family commitments	Yes
	Alexander Robinson	Work commitments	Yes
	The Chair noted the sad passing of Rob Tyrell (<i>Activities Officer</i>) and thanked the Board for the support they had given during this difficult time.		
2.	Notice of any other business		
	No items were identified for discussion under any other business.		
3.	Declaration of conflict of interest		
	No Trustees present had any conflict of interest to raise relating to any items on the agenda.		
4.	Minutes of previous Board meeting		
	The Board received a report on minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising (See <i>R1 of the Committee reports</i>).		
	They approved the previous minutes for the Chair to sign subject to the following amendment:		
	P7 Agenda Item 9 Finance: ' <i>Finance & Audit committee to plan for a range of different scenarios for the next two year</i> ' should read ' <i>Finance & Audit committee to plan for a range of different scenarios for the next two year</i> '		
	The Board noted that the following matters were still to be actioned:		

	<p>ACTION: EDI plan to be updated and submitted along with progress reports to each Board meeting</p> <p>ACTION: The SU to campaign for the University to sign up to the race equality charter</p> <p>The Board noted that the following decisions had been made without a meeting in accordance with Article 101:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board unanimously re-appointed Marian McNeir as an Independent Trustee on the 28/06/2020. • The Board agreed it's committee membership on the 28/06/2020. • The Board agreed the Link Trustees on the 28/06/2020.
5.	<p>Strategy and Performance Monitoring</p> <p>The Board received a report on strategy and performance monitoring (<i>See R2 of the Board reports</i>).</p> <p>The secretary reported on a recent appeal that had been handled by the Complaints & Disciplinary committee. It related to the poor handling of a report of misconduct several years ago. Investigation showed that actions taken to update the complaint and student member disciplinary procedures since then had already addressed most of the weakness highlighted. It was noted that the appellant appeared to have been satisfied by the decision reached by the committee.</p> <p>The Chair of the Complaints & Disciplinary committee reassured the Board that they were confident that the current procedures developed over the past two years would ensure that such a case as this would be unlikely to happen again.</p> <p>The secretary explained the background behind the Student Life Pulse survey and how this was used to report on key performance indicators (<i>KPIs</i>). This survey had previously been run externally by Alterline but was being brought in-house so as to allow greater control over reporting. It was noted that the data collected for 2019/20 had been impacted by Covid-19.</p> <p>The secretary reported that the Bars & Entertainment Team needed Trustee details to set-up a new payment processor for their tills following a recent update to software. They requested and were granted permission to share these details in strict confidence with the Head of Commercial - Venues & Events in order to set this up.</p>
7.	<p>Risk Management (<i>This agenda item was brought forward for discussion</i>)</p> <p>The Board received a report on risk management (<i>see R4 of the Board reports</i>).</p> <p>The secretary reported on planned work to review the GDPR and privacy policies. It had been two years since these policies were adopted and recent changes agreed to the data sharing agreement with the University meant these needed to be updated. The changes, that had been discussed by the Chief Executive and the University over the past year, included gaining access to more sensitive Student data. This data would help with the widening participation work being carried out by The SU.</p> <p>A Trustee noted recent guidance on COVID-19 published for Higher Education and suggested that legislation would likely be following this about events. Having looked at The SU proposals for Freshers' Week they believed that this would likely still be able to proceed. It was clear that Government were keen to support safely planned social activities. However, this would not prevent newspapers such as the Daily Mail from seeking negative stories about students to publish.</p>

QUESTION: A Trustee asked if the University were supportive of SU plans for Fresher' Week.

ANSWER: The Chief Executive reported that they had been very supportive of The SU recognising the important lessons learnt from the US which showed that students would engage in 'underground' activities if none were provided for them.

QUESTION: A Trustee asked about test and trace procedures for activities.

ANSWER: The Chief Executive reported that The SU had two systems in place. For Bars students would have to sign in on entry with their student library cards which would automatically send details to the University, allowing for trace in the event of a local outbreak. While for all other SU events MSL sign-ups would be used allowing for attendance reports to be generated and sent to the University on request. The University were still working on their campus outbreak plans which were expected to be completed by the end of the week.

(Rob Clay joined the meeting at this point)

A Trustee reported on the concerns of local residents about students returning to the city. The Board discussed the suggestion that The SU should release a statement to the local chronicle regarding their plans. It was agreed that a possible joint statement with the University could be released to local residents. Direct messages around this were already being sent to residents through the community partnership especially within the Old Field Park area.

The Chair reported that the University were looking to secure a local testing centre that could be used in event of a local outbreak. A Trustee noted that the University they worked for were also pursuing this in addition to securing large numbers of home testing kits.

QUESTION: A Trustee asked if a local testing centre would be accessible for residents.

ANSWER: The Chair reported that they did not know but would check.

6.

Finance & Audit

The Board received a report on finance and audit (*see R3 of the Board reports*).

A Trustee reported on the Finance & Audit Committee's plans to monitor finances and take decisions at key points throughout the year to make further savings where necessary. It was noted that since the committee meeting further savings had already been made to the budget.

The Sport Officer reported that they were working with an Independent Trustee to identify potential grants that The SU might be able to apply for to subsidise various activities.

The Chief Executive reported that they were receiving reassuring messages from the University that both the Vice-Chancellor and Director of Finance saw The SU as vital investment area for student experience. This was an encouraging sign that they might be prepared to give financial support to The SU if needed to avoid the impact this might have on student experience.

A Trustee reported progress made towards addressing the two remaining audit recommendations. Due to staffing absence the segregation of duties had not been able to be achieved. Having spoken to the auditors they were reassured that they understood the current situation. It was noted that plans for The SU to go fully cashless might resolve the other audit recommendation concerning cash controls.

	<p>A Trustee reported that University were supplying additional budget to cover the additional costs associated with the acquisition of the Edge. Their assumption was that this would be a similar case for Dartmouth Avenue.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked what would Dartmouth Avenue be used for. ANSWER: The Chair reported that this was currently unclear as the University had yet to carry out room assessments to clarify max occupancy numbers. Once these were determined The SU would be able to better plan out activities for this site over the coming year. The building itself held excellent potential for student activities and had once been the site of the Bath Spa Student Union.</p> <p>The Chief Executive reported that for the same reasons it was not yet clear what student activities would be able to be delivered at the Edge. Regardless of the restrictions in terms of numbers there would still be a need to have staff in place to provide services. A number of former Edge staff were being recruited to new roles for this.</p>
8.	<p>Project/Campaign Management</p> <p>The Board received a report on project and campaign management (<i>see R5 of the Board reports</i>).</p> <p>The Chief Executive explained that project work was currently on hold due to the pandemic.</p>
9.	<p>Operational Matters</p> <p>The Board received a report on operational matters (see R6 of the Board reports).</p> <p>As this was the first Board meeting with the new Officer team the Officers introduced themselves to the Trustees.</p> <p>The Education Officer gave a verbal report on their actions as an Officer since the last Board meeting. This had been mainly focused on working with the Student Advisory panel to provide feedback on the University resilience curriculum for the year ahead. The other main focus had been helping to develop guidance for personal tutors where they had succeeded in ensuring that the first meeting was in person with students.</p> <p>The Postgraduate Officer gave a verbal report on their actions as an Officer since the last Board meeting. This had been mainly focused on work around the re-opening of labs for doctoral students. Another issue they had been raising with the University concerned there students not having appropriate workstations at home to work remotely.</p> <p>The Community Officer gave a verbal report on their actions as an Officer since the last Board meeting. This had been mainly focused on writing a mental health report which was one of the actions agreed at the February SUMmit meeting. They noted that the University had previously agreed to carry out a lot of actions in this area for September which had not been completed. Another area they had been working on was the anti-racist forum where they had secured black student representation and monthly reports on the work being done by the University's taskforce in this area. They noted that there were plans for the University to relaunch the Never Oaky campaign with new branding and further enhanced support.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked if the Never Okay training would still be delivered as part of student induction. ANSWER: The Community Officer confirmed that this would be and that a new role had been recruited in Student Services to oversee this new campaign.</p>

	<p>The Sport Officer gave a verbal report on their actions as an Officer since the last Board meeting. This had been mainly focused on getting sport clubs ready for running their activities in accordance with relevant COVID-19 guidance. They noted that The SU had changed it's sporting membership from individual club membership to a single sport membership that allowed members to engage with all sporting activities. Alongside this they had also been preparing training for student committees and working on developing alternative healthy ways to travel to campus.</p> <p>The President gave a verbal report on their actions as an Officer since the last Board meeting. This had been mainly focused on holding the University to account for a lack of progress they have made towards diversity within the University. They were also responding to the issue that a lot of student staff had not been put on furlough by departments when they should have been. Currently working with senior University staff members to address this. They had also been involved in the recruitment and appointment of three new lay members to University Council. Alongside all this they were also still supporting the societies area in the absence of an Activities Officer.</p> <p>The Board congratulated the Officer team for the incredible work they had done recognising the difficult and unusual circumstances they were having to work under.</p>
10.	<p>Governance</p> <p>The Board received a report on governance (<i>see R7 of the Board reports</i>).</p> <p>The secretary reported on the old student policies noting that in the past six months only nine people had visited the page where these were held. Last year the policy rounds had been discontinued due to declining lack of engagement with them.</p> <p>However, the policies that remained had potential to cause issues for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they proposed practices that would now be considered poor; • they proposed actions that were unrealistic and impossible to achieve; • they made unclear statements that were open to a wide range of interpretations; • they conflicted with other adopted policies that needed to be followed. <p>The secretary explained that many of these documents were not actually policies, as defined by the dictionary, but requests for The SU to carry out particular actions. When these actions were completed this left a <i>'purposeless'</i> policy on the website which had to be kept for three years. Currently the last of these <i>'old'</i> policies was not due to expire until December 2022.</p> <p>The secretary explained that previously consideration had been given to the development of a SU <i>'stances'</i> document based on a design seen by the previous President and the Chief Executive when they visited student unions in the Baltic states. This would create a comprehensive list of the stances that The SU took on various matters such as accommodation, tuition fees, accessibility, etc. Having these listed in a single document would allow for ease of access by students and consistency in approach between successive Officers teams.</p> <p>The secretary proposed that the <i>'old'</i> policies should be removed and a SU <i>'stances'</i> document developed to replace these.</p> <p>The Board agreed that the Leadership committee should review the <i>'old'</i> policies and make recommendations for unnecessary policies to be removed subject to confirmation by an Independent Trustee.</p>

	<p>ACTION: Leadership committee to review old policies and make recommendations for their removal to an Independent Trustee.</p> <p>The Board also agreed that the Governance & Executive Support Manager should work with the Community Officer, President and Student Voice Team to develop a SU stances document.</p> <p>ACTION: Governance & Executive Support Manager to work with the Community Officer, President and Student Voice Team to develop a SU stances document.</p> <p>The Board discussed recruitment plans and agreed that a priority list should be developed to inform future recruitment beyond the next appointment. In particular this list should identify traditionally under represented backgrounds that they will proactively seek out to fill future vacancies.</p>
11.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>No items had been previously identified for discussion under any other business.</p>
12.	<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 December 2020 at 9.30am • Thursday 25th March 2021 at 9.30am • Thursday 17th June 2021 at 9.30am
<p>The meeting ended at 12.05pm.</p>	
Item	Action
4	EDI plan to be updated and submitted along with progress reports to each Board meeting
4	The SU to campaign for the University to sign up to the race equality charter
10	Leadership committee to review old policies and make recommendations for their removal to an Independent Trustee.
10	Governance & Executive Support Manager to work with the Community Officer, President and Student Voice Team to develop a SU stances document.