

Meeting:	Finance & Audit Committee
Location:	Microsoft Teams Meeting
Date & Time:	Thursday 19th November 2020 at 9am
Present:	
Tom Sawko	Sport Officer (<i>Chair</i>)
Francesco Masala	President
Jordan Kenny	Independent Trustee
Kate Aldridge	Independent Trustee
Rob Clay	Independent Trustee
Valerie Copenhagen	Independent Trustee
In attendance:	
Gregory Noakes	Governance & Executive Support Manager (<i>Secretary</i>)
Helen McHenry	Head of Finance
Andrew McLaughlin	Chief Executive
Anna Spencer-Gray	RSM Auditor (<i>Present for items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6</i>)
Item	
1.	Apologies for absence All Committee members were present.
2.	Notice of any other business The following item was identified for discussion under any other business: 1) Rowing Club Purchase
3.	Declaration of conflict of interest No conflicts of interests were declared in any items on the agenda.
4.	Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising The Committee received a report on the previous meeting (<i>See R1 of the Committee reports</i>). They approved the previous minutes and noted the following matters were still to be actioned: ACTION: The Head of Finance to check what the impact of the proposed change to the limit authorisation would have been on last year's asset register. ACTION: The Head of Finance, Sport Officer and Valerie Copenhagen to identify charity grants to apply for to help support The SU through the pandemic.
6.	Audit Findings Report (<i>this agenda item was brought forward for discussion</i>) The Committee received a report on audit findings (<i>report circulated separately</i>) The auditor went through the audit findings report with the Committee noting that the only real issue identified was the ' <i>Going Concern</i> ' policy. It was explained that the auditors were looking for a 12 month forecast to be sure that The SU would remain a viable charity in the long term. This meant getting University assurances on next year's budget earlier than normal. The auditor reported that there were no new audit recommendations and only the segregation of duties recommendation remaining from last year. They recognised that this was a difficult

	<p>recommendation to achieve for a small finance team, particularly when impacted by staff absence.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked if the proposed restructure of the finance team would help address this recommendation.</p> <p>ANSWER: The Head of Finance explained that the new manger role would provide them with more support including being able to cover their position in the event of their own absence. This along with a review of the financial procedures would improve the segregation of duties within the team.</p> <p>The Trustees Rob Clay and Kate Aldridge reported that they had no concerns to share following their phone call with the auditors.</p> <p>The auditor thanked the Head of Finance and their team for all the work they had done during the audit.</p> <p>(Anna Spencer-Gray left the meeting at this point)</p>
5.	<p>Annual Accounts</p> <p>The Committee received a report on the Trustees’ annual report and audited accounts (<i>see R2 of the Committee reports</i>).</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked when was the final deadline for feeding back on the Trustees’ annual report.</p> <p>ANSWER: The Head of Finance reported that this was the end of November.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked what the difference was between restricted and unrestricted funds.</p> <p>ANSWER: The Head of Finance explained that unrestricted funds can be re-purposed but restricted funds cannot as they can only be used for the purposes they were originally intended for.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the Trustees’ annual report and agreed that the tone of the report needed to be more celebratory of The SU successes. This report would be especially important in the future if The SU start applying for charitable grants. The inclusion of impact statements was suggested and it was noted that this had been done in the past.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the idea of having an impact report in addition to the Trustees’ annual report. Such a report could serve to better demonstrate the positive impact The SU was having in terms of achieving its Charitable Objectives. To be successful this would need to have a clear purpose and audience in mind. This report could be developed by the Marketing Team working with the Insights & Engagement Manager and approved by the Board.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the Going Concern section of the Trustees’ annual report and noted that this had been expanded on compared to previous years. This was to reflect the increased concerns brought about by the impact of COVID-19 on commercial income.</p> <p>ACTION: Trustees’ annual report to be circulated to committee members for feedback.</p>
7.	<p>Finance & Audit</p> <p>The Committee received a report on finance and audit matters (<i>see R3 of the Committee reports</i>).</p>

	<p>The Head of Finance reported that the University were indicating that it was their intent to fund The SU at current funding levels for the next few years. Once formally agreed by the University's Finance committee this would be put in writing to The SU. They had also indicated that they were prepared to reverse cuts previously made and provide financial support to help cover the deficit budget resulting from loss of commercial income.</p> <p>The Committee discussed and agreed that new budget plans needed to be drawn up to reflect a plan A where the University provide financial support and a plan B where they do not. They agreed that the University's reassurances were positive news but that in the event that the University did not follow through on this The SU would need to ensure it met the planned deficit of £150,000. This may require the need for drastic decisions to be made.</p> <p>ACTION: New budget plans to be drawn up to reflect a plan A where the University provide financial support and a plan B where they do not.</p> <p>The Head of Finance reported that the insurance company had made an offer to The SU of £24,000. This was for a claim previously made to cover a month's worth of lost trading activity (£50,000) under the disruption to business insurance. It was the Head of Finance's recommendation that The SU accept the offer as there were still legal challenges going on in the Courts around whether the insurance company was obligated to pay this. It was not certain what the outcome would be and The SU needed to recover money where it could.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked if this money was factored into the budget. ANSWER: The Head of Finance confirmed that the budget did not currently factor this in and therefore this money would help The SU financial position.</p>
8.	<p>Risk Management</p> <p>The Committee received a report on risk management (<i>see R4 of the Committee reports</i>).</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked if The SU had only one Business continuity and recovery plan. ANSWER: The Chief Executive confirmed that The SU had developed a single generic plan that shows how it would react in response to any business disruption. In almost all cases this was to switch to remote working.</p>
9.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>The following item had been previously identified for discussion under any other business.</p> <p>1) Rowing Club Purchase</p> <p>The Head of Finance reported that the Rowing Club wanted to make a purchase for a boat that would cost over £10,000. In order to do this the committee's permission was required.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked if this was SU money? ANSWER: The Head of Finance explained that the Club was raising money for this themselves but The SU would have to underwrite this if they weren't successful. However, given their previous experience and successes in the past the Head of Finance believed there was little risk of them being unsuccessful.</p> <p>The Chair noted that the Club had money within their own budget ring fenced for a boat house project that could be used if needed to cover the cost of the boat in the event unlikely event they were unsuccessful.</p>

	The Committee agreed to authorise the purchase.
10.	<p>To confirm the date and time of future meetings</p> <p>The Committee agreed the following dates and times for future committee meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 10th December 2020 9-10am • Thursday 21st January 2021 9-11am • Monday 15th March 2021 9-11am • Thursday 20th May 2021 9-11am <p>The Committee agreed to add a meeting on the 10th December to review and discuss the University's response to their request for financial support. This would be prior to the Board of Trustees meeting which the Committee would give a verbal report to. The Chief Executive confirmed they would share the University's response with Committee members once received.</p>
The meeting ended at 10.35am	
Item number	Action
4	The Head of Finance to check what the impact of the proposed change to the limit authorisation would have been on last year's asset register.
4	The Head of Finance, Sport Officer and Valerie Copenhagen to identify charity grants to apply for to help support The SU through the pandemic.
5	Trustees' annual report to be circulated to committee members for feedback.
7	New budget plans to be drawn up to reflect a plan A where the University provide financial support and a plan B where they do not.