

**Trustee Board Minutes**

**Held on 30th May 2019 at 4.30 p.m.**

**Videoconference (02D09, H215, MC114 and BA-02-012)**

**Present:**

Kevin McStravock, President (Chair) David Longstaff, Chief Executive

Robert Stewart, Lay Trustee (Deputy Chair) Colin Campbell, Operations Director

Ashley Neill, Lay Trustee Clodagh Kennedy, Finance Director

Nicole Parkinson-Kelly Student Trustee Avril Honan, Membership Director

Kirsten Watters, Lay Trustee

Andrew McAnallen, Vice President Campaigns & Communications/President [Elect]

Collette Cassidy, Vice President, Magee.

Conor Keenan, Vice President Jordanstown

**In Attendance:**

Meghan Downey, Vice President, Belfast, Owen McCloskey, Vice President Coleraine, Shauna Murphy, Vice President Belfast [Elect], Christopher Chambers, Vice President Sports & Wellbeing [Elect] and Jackie Taggart, Note Taker

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| **Meeting Notes** | **Action** | **Update** |
| Agenda item 1: Welcome. The Chair welcomed everyone to the last meeting for this year and introduced the new team. |  |  |
| Agenda item 2: Apologies – Apologies were received from Thomas Logue, Student Trustee, Jim Coyle, Lay Trustee, Christopher McLarnon, Student Trustee,  Rhonda Burns, Student Trustee, Emma Bonner, Sports Union President and Oisin Kinsella, VP Jordanstown [Elect] |  |  |
| Agenda item 3 – Declaration of Interest: There were none. |  |  |
| Agenda item 4 – Starred Items: Nothing was starred for further discussion. |  |  |
| Agenda item 5: Minutes: Minutes of the meeting of 25th February were approved. |  |  |
| Agenda item 6: Matters Arising: Sports Union Review: DL advised that the report had been uploaded and AH had explained the various functions of sport through ourselves and the University. They are tendering for a third party to lead a review and applications closed last Friday. The process should be quick as it is under £30,000 and the University hopes to award this by 10th June. They had hoped to close it on 10th September, but we pushed back strongly as it is not useful to do the review when students are not here. It has to fit in to the sustainable review. As Trustees, you have a say twice on the services. In the TOR you are mapped in as a key stakeholder so we might get a meeting arranged over the summer to discuss initial observations. You can ask questions on the review to the person undertaking it on anything that is brought back for agreement. Anything that will change the scope has obviously a financial and operational point of view. There are 2 parts, 1 Informative – to throw ideas around and 2 To drill down into recommendations. I have spoken to AC about CCh joining the Steering Group. RS asked if there were any concerns and DL felt there weren’t any and said there was more credence in TOR about a more holistic approach and an insight on the invitation to amend the document and we had changed it to add a couple of extra layers on UUSU.  Central Risk Register: DL spoke on the downgrade of one of the risks which will fall off completely as it is not fit for purpose. The whole website page has been redeveloped. PJ is going to check that each core function is sufficiently mitigated. The abandonment rate is still high. It will sit on the localised comms risk register. |  |  |
| Agenda item 7: Chair’s Communication: KMcS welcomed the new Student Trustees. The handover process is well underway and ties in with induction strategies which is important this year for the 2 new roles. We are working with Development and Alumni on reconnecting with past Officers through social media content with Linked-In. UUSU has a specific database to provide mentoring for Officers. Careers and Marketing: We are looking for funding from DARA. University Award Initiatives: There were significant student acknowledgments over the year. GBD: New strategic programme, learning sequencing etc. We can expect to be a good stakeholder in this process. Developing Student Engagement: It will probably be at the end of this year before they would be confident in giving a date although things are starting to move, and new people in posts will drive the project forward. Sense Check on TB Sustainability Review: We are nearly 5 years into the 5&50 Strategic Plan and there has been little development. They are taking time to take stock and have recruited independent consultants to oversee the process. Student Voice is going to be integral for this and can go through UUSU Forum with AMcA as student rep. It will probably be Christmas before they can report back. Student Voice at Committee Level: The University will work with us through Student Voice on Committees. Officers can be consulted about anything they want to raise. Staff members will meet with student reps about the Committees. Welcome Week and Freshers’ Fest: AH’s team are doing a lot of work and rebranded to Welcome U, making it a holistic experience. There have been major changes with a lot more pre-entry information led by the University but the SU will be involved with a pre-entry personalised page, joining instructions, and information on events and how they can get involved. We will focus on Talks and Tours and have responsibility for managing student volunteers over that period. We currently have 60 but we would like 100. The Freshers’ Fayre has changed to Freshers’ Fest. University Governance: Council is to have a change of Chair to be succeeded by JP, Chief Executive who has been in Council for a couple of years interconnected through the Student Complaints Panel. She is a good ally of the SU. Impact Report is currently underway and is our report for members which has been re-named from End of Year Report and tells how we have aligned to our strategic plan. We have had 3 extremely successful awards ceremonies and excellent student representation. Thanks to AH and her team for the work they have done over the past couple of months. This is my last meeting and I wish to thank everyone on Trustee Board, DL, CK, CC, AH and the Student Trustees. RB will be standing down as will CKeen, EB and MD. | KMcS to circulate Impact Report to the Board next week. |  |
| Agenda Item 8: Chief Executive Officer’s Update: DL informed that KMcS gave a speech and had a standing ovation and thanked him on everyone present’s behalf. There was a meeting at the beginning of this month to bring all staff together, except for commercial services staff. We had left it up to them as to whether they would attend, and they declined. It was a really successful and very open meeting and break-out sessions were included, 1 on UUSU Values and 1 as a member journey as it currently stands. This was as if every one of our 27,000 students were assigned to them and Level 1 was completely unengaged and Level 7 were like the people in this room, how would they progress a student from 1 to 7. The website has had quite a lot done over the last quarter. We are starting strategic planning cycle. KMcS, AMcA and SMT had a meeting to brainstorm initial thoughts. There will be a meeting with the Officer Team, then Managers within the organisations, to map out how we will deliver it and are developing it under directorates hoping that in September, we will have something meaningful of a strategic plan to bring as a substantive item. UUSU Values: We have done some initial scoping with Officers then at the all staff meeting. Marketing Team: There is a placement student joining the team as Digital Marketing Assistant paid for by the University. There were 2 or 3 good candidates and 1 has accepted the role, which is quite critical to qualitative research, then implementing the research, which is going on everywhere. Jordanstown: The work should be complete by the end of August; Magee: Further works over the summer on graphic enhancement; Belfast: Level 5 space is required for another function within the University. We asked for something to entice us and, confidentially, they have offered a space close to the SU office at no cost. 360 Degree Reviews: SMT are undertaking PDPs as individuals to see how we can develop in ourselves. We are also going to look into working with the individuals that are carrying out the process to have a team dynamic so we can develop in 2 areas. Matrix Responsibility is at a formative stage and needs a bit more work and we will talk to the departments that it affects to start mapping. Where colour exists is where we are losing somebody to try and make the process a bit more workable. It is currently in a crude form and will be developed over the next few weeks. | DL to circulate top level strategic and coordinated plans to Trustee Board.  DL to present UUSU Values to Trustee Board for ratification. |  |
| Agenda item 9/10: Management Accounts/Budgets: CK presented the accounts for the 9 months to 30th April and reminded the Committee of the meaning of each column of figures and that the block grant is received over the year on a monthly basis and there will not be much expenditure over the next 3 months. She gave the projected figures against budget: University funding is as planned; the loss from generated income from commercial services stands out as all commercial services have struggled this year. All turnover is down except Magee Catering and we anticipate no units will make a profit this year; the Marketing income is slightly down on budget; Sundry Income is up due to income generated through Welcome Week. Expenditure: Salaries & Wages are down, and we held out on recruiting 2 posts; Commercial Services process was to be completed by the end of the year, but this is not going to happen. Membership Services is slightly up due to money from Welcome Week. Variance: Cleaning Expenses are up quite significantly per hour and the University is going out to tender for a new Company; Legal and Consultation Fees: Provision of £10,000 was allowed which was not used; Marketing Expenses: Saving was anticipated but more website costs are coming to fruition. RS queried the cleaning expenses difference and it was explained that we use the same contract cleaners as the University. Costs went up in line with minimum wage and we are running more events. CC reminded of the further increase in April. CK hoped there would be savings made after the tender process. DL agreed that there is concern over these costs escalating at such a rate and he will contact Estates to try and resolve it. It will not be ignored.  Next Year’s Budget: CK explained this is the last of the 3-year funding for student enterprise. Income was generated through trading outlets which was based on figures from this year although the first semester was more profitable; Rents & Franchises: This figure has been picked out of the air as we don’t know the figure from new suppliers; Marketing is based on this year together with Sundry Income; Salaries & Wages: There was 1 additional staff member for the Membership Services team and pension costs are quite substantial. There is another maternity leave coming up with no funding available, so it has to be absorbed somewhere; Sport has a 2% increase; Other costs are: cleaning which we hope we can reduce; Legal & Consultancy: bank charges down as, if we don’t have commercial services, we won’t have bank terminals; Laptops: We bought a batch independently this year, but will be going through the University managed desk tops system. There is a surplus of £609 but Commercial Services will have an impact next year. There could be a significant loss next year. We will then decrease the reserves again. We need to stabilise the reserves position after the severance payments. DL felt concern with a break-even budget but said that CK has surmised it well. It is a difficult year to predict and we will be more fluid with accounts.  The accounts and budgets were approved and DL thanked CK for her work. | CK to email Trustee Board about severance developments over the summer. |  |
| Agenda item 11: Operating Update: DL updated the Board that he had populated the Plan a bit more from the end of year student survey which had 1400 responses and hopefully we might see beyond the biggest response figure of 1597 when the exams finish and students are accessing our services through the Advice Centre. We will close it in 2-3 weeks’ time. AH said the results are out in the third week in June, so we will keep it running until then. 41% of students are aware of functions so we are doing better than we initially thought. RS inquired which functions and DL replied that we don’t go into that, e.g. Q1 Are you aware of the Union’s functions? Q2 Which services are you aware of? We don’t track Q2, but we can pull out a specific. The Election turnout increased by 13% shown in the latest survey figures. NUS is currently undertaking a restructure and we can make a decision on that later. LTA nominations were well below the target which is disappointing with a drop-off in terms of nominations. We have changed the branding significantly and it did not resonate within the student body. A wider awards agenda could help as the awards were compact as we had 2 under out belt and had reached the end of the good will from the electorate and the timing could be changed. RS agreed with staggering the awards. DL said they were celebratory events, so we need something to celebrate. There was a discussion at Management Board on whether there is enough synergy between LTA and Colours at the start of April or May. There was a huge success with engaged students in enterprise of a 21% increase. Commercial Services are in the red which speaks for itself. The number of students using the app has grown by .5% and is getting traction. We have changed it as we have changed the website. The app doesn’t allow someone to manage the student experience. Awareness of Sports Services, 62% of students are aware of our advice services, academic or wellbeing. This is positive quality of influence as it is useful to see that students don’t think we are adding lip service but are influencing quite directly. There will be more data over the coming months on Governance Line. AMcA felt there is a need to go through the audit process for Green Impact soon, but DL said it would fall below line again, so we need to get something in place over the next couple of months. | DL to bring a proposal on developing the app to Trustee Board. |  |
| Agenda item 12: Commercial Services Update: DL advised the Board that there are 4 parties interested who have passed the PQQ stage and attended the site walk-arounds with AC and the site Vice Presidents. This gave them the opportunity to meet commercial staff and see the facilities. The PQQ stage only ascertained if they have the means and operation to deliver and we are now at ITN stage where we will invite them to negotiate to give us more parity, factored in meetings, to ensure the areas of core importance to us. although this makes the timeline extendable. In September the contract will be awarded, and a period of mobilisation will follow, so there could be a few weeks trading as UUSU before any transfer of services take place. It is the right decision as it is important that we get the right person in. Commercial Services Staff at Coleraine and Jordanstown understood the rationale, but Magee staff expressed concerns and as soon as we can tell them who the contract is being awarded to, they will adapt to the change. We will meet with the Managers over the summer and let them know how things are going. All 4 interested parties had shared the view that they could carry out the transitioning over a weekend. | DL to notify the Board by email of any updates over the summer. |  |
| Agenda item 13: Staff Policies: DL advised, for information, that the Policies had been taken to Staffing Committee in a huge level of detail. There had been over 40 originally and he had adjusted them to be more modern and simpler to understand. We have a meeting with Unite, the recognised Trade Union on Tuesday and they may raise elements of the disciplinary process which has been tweaked as it would lead someone to dismissal more quickly. Staffing Committee will be told of any recommendations. Over the summer we will be launching policies as part of the website intranet. |  |  |
| Agenda item 14: Good Relations Update: KMcS explained that this is in relation to a policy that was passed at a Student Council meeting in November on provision of bi-lingual signage. Historically it had been discussed quite a number of times. Before Christmas, a Good Relations Working Group reconvened which included ourselves, Provosts and representatives from University Equality and Diversity Department and Campus Life, together with other key areas of the University where it was agreed there was going to be a sub group, which has met on 2 occasions since the last Trustee Board meeting and anything arising from it will go back to the main Working Group. AMcA said that we don’t believe that the University wants to shut down our Policy. We will look at a multi-lingual or trilingual policy, focusing specifically on directional signage. There is no hard and fast rule for application in implementing such a policy for certain occasions, not every single sign. Any implementation would be played out on a public sphere. We will be keeping in touch with you all and the University in that respect. Maybe with a trilingual policy we could lead the way on this issue. DL said it is challenging that a lot of legislation is sitting in Stormont, so we don’t have a global example but follow what is best practice. The people who raised it at Council have looked at public bodies and local charities that have implemented it quite successfully. The University has taken a risk adverse approach. Initially everything was a potential impact as a high risk. We have lobbied the University to pull back and focus on political environment and measure the impact to ensure there are mitigations against that. Time is a concern as there is a danger of losing its relevance with Council, the highest democratic student body. The impact study takes 6 months, then there is the implementation itself. RS inquired if this was public signage or University’s Policies Guidance and KMcS replied it was a mandate for UUSU signage and then lobbying to extend it to the University’s signage. RS summarised that there was to be no bilingual signage, but trilingual or multilingual welcome signage. |  | AMcA to update the Board. |
| Agenda item 15: Trustee Board: KMcS advised that the Student Trustees Application had been extended to 14th June and asked Student and Officer Trustees to push this out to people. There are 2 vacancies for Student Trustees and a further 1 at the end of the year with the external vacancy later. DL felt we should hesitate to go with the Recruitment Agency, bearing costs in mind, as we could use Linked-In. We have also potential people we know that we should reach out to. KMcS agreed that former involved students might be interested. |  |  |
| Agenda item 16: Sub-Committee Reports: Sub-Committee Reports had been provided for perusal and information. |  |  |
| Any Other Business: KMcS referred to the list of proposed meetings and asked that if anyone cannot attend a meeting to contact CC. |  |  |
| Date of Next Meeting: 12 09 19 |  |  |