



Trustee Board Summary Minutes
Held on 27th May 2021 at 4.00 p.m. by Microsoft Teams

Present:

Collette Cassidy, President (Chair)
 Aaron Ward, Lay Trustee
 Nicole Parkinson-Kelly, Vice President Education
 Kirsten Watters, Lay Trustee
 Chris Chambers, Vice President Sports & Wellbeing
 Ashley Neill, Lay Trustee
 Andrea Probets Lay Trustee

In Attendance:

David Longstaff, Chief Executive
 Colin Campbell, Operations Director
 Clodagh Kennedy, Finance Director
 Avril Honan, Membership Director
 Grace Boyle, Vice President (C)/VP Education {Elect}
 Ryan Harling, Vice President (Magee)
 Owen McCloskey {President Elect}
 Fintan Darragh, VP Sports & Wellbeing {Elect}
 Robert Millar, Vice President, Belfast {Elect}
 Curtis Donnan, Vice President Coleraine {Elect}
 Rebecca Allen, Vice President Jordanstown {Elect}
 Jackie Taggart, Note Taker

Meeting Notes	Action	Update
<p>Agenda Item 1: Introduction:</p> <p>The Chair advised that papers were circulated in advance and due to time limitations would be taken as read.</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 2: Welcome:</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the 4th meeting of the Board and congratulated the incoming Officers for the academic year 2021/22 on their election.</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 3: Apologies:</p> <p>DF and GA</p>		

<p>Agenda Item 4: Declaration of Interest:</p> <p>There were no declarations.</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 5: Starred Items:</p> <p>There were no starred items.</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 6: Minutes:</p> <p>Actions from Minutes: The Chair advised that all actions are being covered in this meeting's Agenda or have been decided.</p> <p>Board update on EDI: There is a special section of the website dedicated to EDI and it is now live with events.</p> <p>Minutes of 25th February 2021 were approved.</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 7: Matters Arising:</p> <p>There were no Matters Arising.</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 8: Chair's Communication:</p> <p>The Chair updated as follows:</p> <p>£37.7 million was given to UUSU and the University. Different workstreams have been developed regarding the £250,000 Mental Health initiative money and the spend timeline of this is referenced in the CEO's report. Eligible students started receiving the £500 Covid disruption grant from the 26th March. National representatives lobbied for non-eligible students access at the Department of the Economy meeting last week. Lobbying will continue.</p> <p>Three campaigns had been held this academic year; Mental Health, Sustainability, and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion which saw an increase in engagement and will enhance the student experience.</p> <p>UUSU has been recognised nationally through the USI Student Achievement Awards where we were shortlisted for 5 awards and won 3. Officers received thanks for their work.</p>		

The Vice Chancellor has just delivered comms on the next academic year and Belfast development aspect. Two planning assumptions are now:

- 1 In September, learning will return to normal if the current situation around Covid remains.
- 2 This year's learning will continue with category 1 students remaining on campus, along with students who need to be on campus to progress their studies, with online classes for others.

Regarding Belfast, in Semester 1, most of the teaching for Jordanstown and Belfast students will take place in Jordanstown. At the start of semester 2, most of the learning will commence at Belfast. It had been hoped that there will be open days for staff and students ahead of this transition.

It was noted that the President had won one of the awards that she hadn't mentioned which was that of Full-Time Officer of the Year for which she received the Board's congratulations.

Agenda Item 9: Chief Executive Officer's Update:

The CEO advised:

Following on from the Chair's report on the VC's communication, we have invited staff to a meeting next week for staff to raise any concerns around it, with a substantive meeting to discuss the timeline around any return to campus working at the start of July. It is fully dependent on advice and current Covid improvements being maintained over the summer period.

News has come from a survey that 75% of students nationwide want to get back on campus and we need to ensure that we can meet their needs.

Sports: The Board had previously seen a presentation around a vision for sports into the future. On this, we have had discussions with the University and communicated that there needs to be additional thinking into a few of the elements which are been taken forward by a small group of Officers and staff.

DL passed to AH who shared a paper showing new societies and more activities which, being online, can be tracked a lot easier.

- Sport: Student sport is campus based so low activity.
- Representation: Representatives across the board were trained.
- Student Council: All Council seats were filled. Numbers were reduced but all meetings were quorate so that the number of Policies passed are more meaningful.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elections: Voting numbers are down slightly due to lack of campus activity. • Volunteering: There is a new strategy for Volunteering. • Advice: The Advice Bureau exceeded online appointments from last year. <p>The Board asked for a dashboard of 1 page to be loaded on to the pack. The Chief Executive Officer was thanked for his report and UUSU were congratulated on lobbying regarding the Mental Health Initiatives money been deferred, thereby showing dedication to the students.</p>	<p>AH to continue to provide information as a matrix report to the Board as an addition to the online pack.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 10: Management Accounts/Budget 2021-22:</p> <p>The accounts and budgets were explained and detail specifically provided below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admin Salaries and Wages are on budget. • Closure of commercial services has ended, although stock and equipment need to be disposed of appropriately. • UUSU Sport has a £33,000 spend at the end of April and is a ring-fenced budget. It shows an end of year surplus of £140,000 with £26,000 projected. <p>Next year is difficult to predict, so it is based on the budgets broadly the same as last year with award ceremonies planned in as normal. We have a provisional 2% grant increase on the current year included; Admin Salaries and Wages will be for the same number of staff. UUSU vehicles were disposed of as they were not needed, so no depreciation of vehicles. There was a marketing reduction of £5,000 and printing costs should remain low. We have a projected surplus of £64,000 and this is important as we need to start looking at building reserves up.</p> <p>The Board asked when the University will confirm our budget. The draft budget will go to Resource Committee and UUSU should receive a reply in August.</p> <p>The Board inquired on the provision of motor vehicles which had been disposed of, and whether these may be needed once more in the future, this will be reviewed.</p>	<p>Motor vehicle usage to be reviewed in first semester.</p> <p>CK to examine how other SUs operate from point of view of good governance and sustainability</p>	

<p>The Board inquired as to the recommended amount of reserves and was advised that it was 3 months of the operating costs. The Board suggested some consultation with other Students' Unions on the level of reserves held.</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 11: Operating Plan Update:</p> <p>Changes are in red text with an arrow indicating tangible movement over the last quarter. A possibility of the Jordanstown closure being prolonged was referenced.</p> <p>In commercial closure terms, UUSU is continuing to offset costs by selling Commercial Services equipment and stock which the Operations Director had undertaken and received thanks for his work.</p> <p>We are ahead of time on developing engagement tiers and are working on a structured student engagement menu to try and get the passive to engage and the engaged to hyper-engage. There will be an update on this from AH at the Annual Board Review.</p> <p>Reserves: UUSU has developed quite a strong solvency position and better than break-even budget for next year. Building the Reserves figure to £300,000 is within our planning position. We hope that the Board will agree to increasing reserves year on year, so we are in a strong position.</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 12: Central Risk Register:</p> <p>Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee has already received the full Risk Register with all directorates and Trustees get an abridged version of the highest risks. Commercial Services risk has been removed from the Central Risk Register and is now in the local operating register alone where it should drop off completely in due course. Sports Services and continued improvements is substantive, but we will take a slower approach as to how it is delivered and will continue to review it.</p> <p>The Board inquired if there was opportunity to access any of the University's strategy funds. This was a project fund for bidding for time limited funding for core strands of University strategic goals. UUSU had accessed some for the student voice system for this year. Bids must be very focused on a goal in line with the University's perspective.</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 13: Sports Legal Costs:</p> <p>The sports function in UUSU currently is provided with a ringfenced amount of funding. Over the past 2-3 years UUSU has been absorbing some legal costs accrued by the sports function at its own wider</p>		

<p>determent and impacting its overall reserves. As sports is significantly underspent this year it was proposed that UUSU recouped the legal costs from sports to cover its outlays thus far.</p> <p>After a significant discussion, Trustees felt that the recouping of costs was appropriate and agreed that the costs incurred from the commencement of the legal proceedings to the end of July 2021 could be recouped. This is within the gift of UUSU as the costs are accruable by sports and are direct costs to them. However, it was further agreed that the principle would be taken to Sports Management Committee the following week for oversight and to ascertain if there were any wider issues that may be prevalent.</p> <p>Finally, it was also discussed that as the legal cases were ongoing, what may happen to future costs. It was presented to Trustees that usually sport would spend up to their full budgeted allocation so in a normal (non-pandemic) year it would be difficult to charge anything to sports. Trustees acknowledged this and suggested any further discussions that are required could be held later.</p>	<p>Proposal to be reviewed at May 2022 meeting.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 14: Business Continuity Plan:</p> <p>The plan will eventually be owned by Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee for review every 6-12 months after being presented initially in October. It still requires some detail within each recovery period as to what needs to be in place to provide help for staff if there is an incident and how to log it. Comms and cost systems should be online as quickly as possible, and control measures assessed and cultivated to ensure minimum impact. No member of SMT is based permanently at Coleraine and Magee and Secondary names listed as placeholders until it is finalised as it may be unfair to ask anyone below management to look after this. Comments and suggestions were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustees were happy with the document; • It was noted that some of business continuity issues could happen at a weekend or evening when the primary contact is not on-site and can lie with any senior member of staff. • When you look at the risk of things for immediate and then 7 days, it will become clearer. • Office numbers could be re-directed; • In a working environment, doing a mock incident is a good idea and AN was happy to provide some examples of scenarios. <p>It was approved for SMT to develop further over the summer period.</p>	<p>AN to supply incident exercises.</p> <p>SMT to develop the plan further and reshare with Board.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 15: Proposed 2021-21 Meeting Schedule:</p>		

<p>The dates were approved.</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 16: End of Year Governance Update:</p> <p>This was escalated from Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee and will be submitted annually to the Board for key governance issues.</p> <p>The Board queried the timeline for the Annual Board Meeting and suggested a face to face meeting later in the summer. It was noted that the current Officers have a core role to feed into the process and would have left at this point. It was mentioned though that the Board could reconvene in July, in person hopefully, or to Belfast for a tour. This notion was approved.</p>		
<p>Agenda Item 17: Boardroom Apprentice Scheme Extension:</p> <p>GA had taken part in this scheme and had asked if she could continue in the role for another year given the working limitations of 2020-21 owing to Covid. The Boardroom Apprentice Scheme organisers agreed this was fine as GA would get more development to her experience. The Board agreed and approved that this was extended to the end of June 2022.</p>	<p>DL to liaise with GA and BA on this.</p>	
<p>Agenda Item 18: Any Other Business:</p> <p>Extension of Audit Contract: This year's audit will be complicated with the closure of Commercial Services and Coleraine Club so the Auditors who have been with us for 3 years and are familiar with the set-up will be better placed to provide this. At the end of 2022 it should be a clean set of operations, and this makes it practical in terms of re-tendering. The Board approved the contract extension for 1 year given the circumstances.</p> <p>Bye-Law Amendment: Board members had been emailed on 13th May requesting approval for an amendment from Student Council that instead of the initial bye-law of 50 student signatures, it moves to 25 when students cannot get signatures on campus. 2/3 of a majority is required and we need to follow due process in seeking the Board's approval for this. This was approved.</p>		
<p>Date of Next Meeting: Annual Planning & Evaluation Meeting on 7th June 2021</p>		