

**St George's Students' Union
Trustee Board Minutes
Public Minutes of the 1st Trustee Board Meeting 2016-17
Thursday 10th November 2016-11-10**

1. Present:

Corey Briffa	CB	President (Chair of the Board of Trustees) 2016-17
Tanisha Amin	TA	VP Education and Welfare 2016-17
Ishaan Bhide	IB	VP Finance and Student Activities 2016-17
Francesca Harris	FH	General Secretary (Clerk to the Board of Trustees) 2016-17
Steven Gilbert	SG	Ex-President Trustee 2016-17
Na'im Merchant	NM	Student Trustee 2016-17
Judith Ibison	JI	Deputy Dean for Students
Aileen O'Brien	AOB	Dean for Students
Roger Horton	RH	External Trustee
Saeed Azizi	SA	Student Trustee 2016-17
Derek Bannister	DB	Director of Estates and Facilities
Matthew Bull	MB	SGUL Facilities Manager
Nicola Arnold	NA	SGUL Director of Finance
Al Powell	AP	NUS Strategic Development Officer
John McDonagh	JM	Interim SGSU Finance Manager
Mark Lubbock	ML	External Trustee

2. Apologies:

Ruben Thumbadoo	RT	Student Trustee 2016-17
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3. Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes were PASSED.

4. Financial Statement – IB/JM/NA – Reserved Business

5. Management restructure – CB/NA

NA explained how the advert for COO closed two weeks ago. Three candidates have been shortlisted, however interviews have had to be postponed for a week. The three candidates all have relatively strong CVs but have different backgrounds. The interview panel will consist of NA, RH, IB and CB. If a second opinion is needed, then AOB may meet with the candidates. The process has taken longer than anticipated but things are nearly there now. We believe that having someone with a wider brief and different view will be very valuable to the SU. The start date of the COO will depend on which candidate is appointed.

6. SU Gym Provision Report – CB/DB/MB (Paper C)

DB explained that gym provision for the SU is being looked into. We want to find a way that we can provide affordable, accessible and modern gym facilities for students. Currently we

have Rob Lowe which has been leased from the trust by the university. This lease runs out in 2066, but the facilities are in poor condition and the centre has been running at a loss for the last 5 years. It has not been staffed sufficiently and historically we have not been able to increase student subscription fees. There is around 600 students who use the RLSC, with just over 300 having signed up this year

A survey was carried out in October with over 200 responses. We found that a high percentage of the members use the facility in the times that we are unable to supervise it. 40 The Gym Group initially was the only external supplier meeting our requirements, but we are now waiting for a discussion with the tooting Leisure Centre.

TA said that we have looked at capacity, and it was found that at The Gym Group people are having to wait around at peak times and this has been taken into consideration.

CB said that the TLC may have better scope and stability. In terms of student experience we would be gaining much more for a similar price which they would be willing to pay.

CB said that he understands peoples qualms with the options. If we are going to do this then there should be some kind of capital expenditure on the current facilities in order to improve the squash courts and sports hall that we would retain.

CB said that plans and negotiations will continue and there will be an update at the next Trustee Board meeting.

7. Strategic development – NUS/CB

AP explained that through the membership contact system we works to engage the executive and see what can be done. Last year the question asked by the SU was how best to use the political voice of the SU around the time of the JDC strikes. The strategic support unit works to support SUs to achieve their charitable objectives while recognising how we can create clarity for the organisational and political direction of the Union using diagnostics. Diagnostics are quite rare and are used for SUs which are unsure of what to do next and are done on a neutral platform. The first step is research which is done before the team come to the SU, structured interviews are then held. At the end of diagnostic reports there are 10-12 recommendations made on the improvement of the SU. This is a free, affiliate service.

CB thought this was a good thing to consider in the light of restructuring the SU. It would be good to get a good strategic plan in place with the help of the NUS.

NM asked whether the diagnostics can look to the level of the running of the trustee board.

AP said that trustees will be spoken to, however the development of the trustee board is a different service. Any challenges within the trustee board or its governance would be highlighted within the service.

SG was concerned about a previous case where an SU received a negative report and there were detrimental consequences of this.

RH said that it's very important to ask the right questions when using this service, but that it could be very useful.

CB has ideas of what to ask including governance, making sure the student voice was heard politically, and essentially whether our current structure means we are doing a disservice to students.

RH said he has always been impressed with the support the SU gives to the students, and has at times been concerned that the SU is doing the job of the university.

CB said that his concern about the diagnostic was only in the timings of going ahead with it and who would take control of it – most likely the COO.

Jl suggested that general questions are asked, for example 'how effective is our current structure?'

8. Reports from the Senior Officers

a) Events Zone – CB (Paper D)

CB gave a verbal summary of the written report.

b) Student Participation Zone – IB (Paper E)

IB gave a verbal summary of the written report.

c) Representation Zone – TA (Paper F)

TA gave a verbal summary of the written report.

SG asked what was being done to rectify the issues with Paramedic Science year reps, as the university should be stopping Kingston from undermining the SU.

TA explained that having finally has the conversation about using the same reps, this has been a huge step in the right direction. It has also been discussed with Jane Saffel that there may be a whole new direction for senate to make it more useful for students, allowing better feedback for the direction of the university and the SU.

CB explained that it is a long-term issue that joint faculty students don't engage with the SU. CB would like to develop a role of 'Democracy Officer', who would run elections, hopefully improving voting numbers and engagement. This would also enable elections to be run to their full potential, as it is very hard to the president to balance this along with everything else. There has also recently been discussion over having a Joint Faculty Officer role which would be in both of the SUs, hopefully further bridging the gap that there currently is.

d) Communication Zone – FH (Paper G)

FH gave a verbal summary of the written report.

SG commented that he was concerned about the amount of work that is put onto the General Secretary of the SU, and suggested a stipend.

9. Commercial update – CB (Paper G, Appendix 2,3)

Shop: CB explained that generally everything has been going well. The shop has increased, promotions have been successful, and Matthew has been working very hard with his team.

Bar: Bar figures were presented. The new coffee machines which are downstairs are used by staff and the SU recharges this to estates per cup used. The new washing machine at Horton Halls is costing around £6000. We had a successful fresher's and the next couple of months are expected to continue being busy for the bar with Christmas and shows coming up. Capacity of the bar has also increased as a result of licensing changes.

Eddie's Café update: Reserved Business

Merchandise: CB said that merchandising is going well. We have just put through a large order for Cyprus.

Venue hire has had less interest, there were two interested people however they didn't complete bookings.

Digital Advertisement: We have also gained a new digital poster board which are paid to us per screen. We have total control over what goes on the screen and we are aiming to get more in the future.

10. Second Floor Redevelopment – CB

CB has been in conversation with an architect over plans for redevelopment of the second floor. The university and Jenny Higham have suggested that they may be willing to put money into this project, and an architect is currently working on drawings.

11. May Ball – FH/TA/IB/CB (Paper I)

CB explained that in the interest of improving student inclusivity of the SU we have decided to hold one ball, which will combine a number of events. The overall aim is to save money whilst improving SU events. We will be combining Sports Ball, Freshers Ball and Awards Evening. We have also cut down on a lot of Freshers Fortnight this year to improve profitability. The date is going to be 17/05/17 which has been selected after looking at the exams and results calendar, and planning has begun early.

RH asked whether the event has to be self financing or if the SU is prepared to subsidise it. In the case of the latter then it must be clear how much the SU would be willing to subsidise by.

CB explained that we will be taking into account the savings we've made, and the ticket sales will be the main sources of income we use. We will put some money towards the event to ensure it is a good event, but the only money we are prepared to subsidise it with is the money we have saved from events we have cut.

SG asked if a risk register has been put together for the proposal.

CB explained that the ball has gone into the risk register. Individual risks may be identified once planning and full consideration has taken place, however the budget contains a contingency plan for if things went wrong, as well as it being based on absolute maximum figures giving us room.

Jl was concerned that only 400 tickets out of the whole student body doesn't necessarily allow inclusivity.

TA explained that we are starting small because last year's sports ball was the first sold out ball which has been held. The plan is to work off that event's success and be able to get bigger in the future.

NM raised concerns that the environment of an end of year ball may not be one in which parents who may have wanted to attend awards evening would enjoy.

TA explained that we are not modelling the event on an SU disco, it will be a much more formal event which will be clear to students. There will however, be the opportunity for students to be taken to an alternative venue after the event if they want to. In terms of subsidy for award winners there will be some, however we are looking at changing the way awards is run.

12. Risk Register – CB – Reserved Business

13. Financial Improvement Plan – CB – Reserved Business

14. AOB

a) Sabbatical Handovers – SG

SG discussed how it was unacceptable and unprofessional that one of this year's sabbatical officers had only just received a written handover, and how he feels there should be safeguarding in place to protect against vulnerable roles being left without a handover.

IB suggested that it should be explicitly required constitutionally that handovers must be provided for senior officers, and would be beneficial to have a timetabled handover period in person.

AP: Student Trustees and SG to look into making this constitutional

NM questioned whether any repercussions should be enforced in the event of a handover not being received.

15. Dates of the next meetings

- 09/02/2017 – 17.30 H2.6
- 18/05/2017 – 17.30 H2.6
- 13/07/2017 – 17.30 H2.6