**St George’s Students’ Union**

**Trustee Board Minutes**

**Thursday 13th July 2017**

1. **Present:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| 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 2016/17 |
| Yuna Kishimoto | YK | General Secretary 2017/18 |
| Bethany Agnew | BA | VP Education and Welfare 2017/18 |
| Anass Ali | AA | Student Trustee 2017/18 |
| Bukola Ogunjinmi | BO | Student Trustee 2017/18 |
| Ruben Thumbadoo | RT | Student Trustee 2016/17 |
| Gillian Gibson | GG | Chief Operating Officer |
| Roger Horton | RH | External Trustee |
| Aileen O’Brien | AOB | Dean for Students |
| Steven Gilbert | SG | Ex-President |
| Vafie Sheirff | VS | VP Finance and Student Activities 2017/18 |
| Sam Khavandi | SK | President 2017/18 |
| Na’im Merchant | NM | Student Trustee 2016/17 |
| John McDonagh | JM | External Trustee |

1. **Apologies:**

Mark Lubbock

Chantal Liu

Judith Ibison

Saeed Azizi

Kea Horvers

1. **Minutes from previous meeting** were APPROVED.

*Steven Gilberts apologies missed.*

1. **Welcome/Introductions**

Each member of the meeting introduced themselves and their role.

1. **Financial Statement – IB/G (Paper B)**

GG: This paper is just for note. If anyone has any questions we are happy to answer them.

1. **Budget Proposals (Paper C)**

GG: The finance sub committee met and reviewed this in detail on Monday. This is for the final subcommittee members to make a recommendation to the board to approve these proposed budgets or not for next year.

*Budget proposals were APPROVED*

1. **Restatement of balance sheet and fixed assets register – GG (Paper D)**

GG: Outline the reasons for restating the balance sheet. Which included the move from Eddies to Pret and the negotiation of the sale for the infrastructure assets back to SGUL. It was noted that SGSU will be in a much stronger position than the previous year.

SG: how did you work out what our assets were as we weren’t previously sure?

GG: I went back through every transaction listening on our current Agresso system and on the prior system back to 2006 and I managed to reconcile that to some papers that Michelle found from the refurbishment when it happened. We haven’t been able to find them in electronic format. The Estates team have worked with me to distribute the £1.1M across these assets.

1. **SU Gym Provision reports – CB/DB (Appendix 1)**

Its all going ahead as planned, communication has gone out to staff. They are waiting until September to send to students. Appendix 1 shows the letter written to Jenny Higham about our concerns and an email response was received confirming that for the 3-year period SGUL will continue to invest in subsidising students and there will be no cap on how many students can get the £4 discount, it was more of a budget that is ok to overshoot.

It was noted that the communications from St George’s and the Union regarding this change has been poor. However, an internal communications team has now been appointed to help with the propagation of future communications.

It was noted that sports teams should be communicated about any changes to the sports hall ASAP.

1. **Second Floor Redevelopment – CB/DB**

It was noted that there had been several noise complaints, which was expected because of unanticipated concrete and scope of the works.

1. **Senior Officer/Zone Reports**

Events Zone – CB (Paper E)

IB: RAG week raised £1144. As a student body we’ve raised and £2362 and expenses £768 so final total £1593.61 which is all very low compared to previous years.

It was noted that these taking are continuing to decrease year on year.

A discussion follows about commitment from elected officers, and how the Top 4 are able to manage this.

NM: what does it take for an officer to not get signed off?

CB: someone who hasn’t attended any meetings, duties etc. or something drastic

NM: do we have a written framework for this?

**AP: New Top 4 - Construct a written framework to decide if officers should be signed off.**

RT: should be kept quite broad as is subjective. The steps to vote of no confidence a team.

AOB: yes, as there are no contracts a such

RT: people in the past who haven’t been signed off have generally done the job so poorly that at the end they don’t really want to take anything from it so it’s a different situation to someone who has tried hard.

CB: I did have a meeting with them after AGM about what we felt went wrong. The set-up of AGM didn’t wok in their favour.

NM: can some in a team be signed off and other not

IB: yes, and that will be happening in some of our teams

CB: I’m not sure there should be a written framework but rather it should be down tot eh zone leader of whether they have done enough. Of course, a vote of no confidence should still stand. The only people who understand how hard they have worked is the zone leader. I think writing everything into rules isn’t always the best way to go. If we take the human element out, then why does it matter to us? Not signing them off it can have a much bigger effect on the individuals in their future applying for jobs etc. if they asked me for a written reference then I would be honest in that reference but I think a certificate is less drastic.

Representation Zone – TA (paper F)

SG: TEF came with a number of opinions but nothing manifested. Why do you think it died out?

TA: people didn’t attend meetings and there didn’t seem to be much student movement here and then things changed politically also. It was unlinked from fees but still going up with inflation.

SG: how are the NUS treating it at the minute?

TA: they are keeping it on their radar.

SG: What did you learn and take from your Nicosia trip and take from it in your day to day managing?

TA: we got lots of feedback which we fed into the revalidation but mostly recommending best practice we get involved with and making sure they know they can access my role and making sure they invest more in social and study spaces and highlighting certain things they think we have better; they have other things which are much better. So was good to highlight that to them. In my handover, I will be telling Beth to make early contact with them.

CB: we did also see some quite worrying things in Nicosia which we weren’t previously aware of so it was also about making sure that if things like that are happening that they feel there is a communication link where we can bring these things up. They are all given our contact details at the start but our main communication is through their Medsoc president.

TA: I had a concern that their former VP Welfare was a student at the same time.

Participation Zone – IB (Paper G)

Communication Zone – FH (Paper H)

NM: what have zone leaders learnt form managing larger teams to take forward?

IB: Discussed issues when dealing with volunteers who decide to step down from their duties.

CB: Ishaan summarised it well. There is no way to penalise these people. I could spend hours on someone that doesn’t want to take part or put my time into those that do and get more out of them. Most people come into these roles not knowing what they will have to do which is a flaw in the roles.

RT: is it worth in the future designating certain days of the week that you’d expect them to be available to do their roles or example some other universities do this with sports officers. Similarly, there could be certain days when they are not contactable and can not be expected to do their role on those days. These could be decided early on.

CB: one way we are tackling it is through Gills appointment of a finance apprentice which means the student activities role can focus more on the activities aspect so this should help the sports officers etc.

GG: it will also free up Michelle’s time which will give some staff support to the officers which they may not currently feel they can ask for.

BO: I feel that if someone comes to AGM and says their piece and later find that later what they said has been ignored for example in signing off the charities officers they may question how you went about making those decisions.

CB: if the conversation at AGM was to pass the officers that would be fair, but it was just to pass their report. If anyone in that room felt they should not be passed as officers then they would need to suggest a vote of no confidence of those officers which is the way the constitution deals with these issues. I don’t think it’s right to allow officers to do a huge amount of work, and allow a group of student to assert a punishment on them without following the constitution.

SK: you also don’t want to discourage the students from getting involved. They may not feel happy to run if they see people not getting signed off etc and we already struggle getting people to run.

IB: they weren’t passed at AGM and they are able to request a revote but the chair said no though its allowed so these are problems.

CB: contentious issues where people who don’t understand the constitution. These are things that need to be taken forward next year and is the exact reason having the democracy officers in the room who will be able to give clarification and find the correct information so that should help.

NM: the chair should also have encyclopaedic knowledge of the constitution

CB: it is also good to have someone who can challenge the chair as they are still a human.

1. **SGSU Year Report 16/17 (Paper I)**

NM: INTO relationship with SGUL?

AOB: It has gone!

SG: How did the feedback go?

CB: Councils members loved it and feel it should carry on forever and we should continue this in how much we’re sharing. It was a nice summary for them and what has really changed for me is that I stated the year off and we didn’t see student experience as a priority, but now its number one on the risk register which I feel is a positive change. This is my third report into council and normally I give actions for suggested changes and they really like this that the issues are being directly addressed.

1. **Commercial Update – GG (Paper J) – Reserved Business**
2. **Strategic Update – CB/GG**

CB: we have continued the work. We had an update meeting with Aneesa from the NUS diagnostic team. Aneesa seemed happy with where we are and the progress we had made. Gill and I have also spoken to a marketing/strategic development company who gave us some good idea on market research and have pointed us in the direction of a company who fit what we are looking for and have experience of things like us. We have ideas on how to reach non-engaged students and a variety of students so there are some strategies for fresher’s but also for students at the end of their courses. Its key to get all that together, we’ve approved a budget for strategic development, there is now £10000 which is to be invested In the strategy and developing this key document and making students aware of it. This is just an update to say we are progressing we have ideas and we will now start making more progress on finalising things and the first market research should start around fresher’s and fresher fayre.

GG: the only thing to add it that we now have the budget which means I strongly feel this will end up being more than just a document and will shape the way we work and operate and that is how I will gauge the success of the strategic development when its shaping the SU from all perspectives and is driving the student facing activities as well.

It was noted that the incoming sabbatical officers must take this project on and develop a detailed and engaging document.

**AP: New sabbatical officers to be directly involved in strategic development and report their involvement to the board.**

1. **Risk Register and Risk Action Group (RAG) – GG/CB (Paper K)**

CB: Gave a brief overview on how we measure and monitor the risk register. It was noted that the following changes had taken place:

**Mitie risk reduced, as a result of the current deal with SGUL and Pret a Manger.**

**Financial risk as a result from now subvention grant increase has decreased, It has been confirmed that the SU will be gaining an extra £100,000 a year.**

**Risk to the SU Shop as a result of a new outlet on ground floor hunter wing has been decreased, as a result of Pret taking occupancy in Jenner wing. Although may still have an impact on profits.**

**May ball has decreased as it was a huge success can meet the budgets but there is some risk around graduation ball which may be a hit that we take**

**Anticipated staff shortage decreased as something Gill and we have discussed this as an ongoing risk for any business**

**New venue hire scheme decreased as hopefully with the redevelopment and have some professional photographers coming in so we can put it into the new scheme**

SG: you’ve got a 5-year plan with the new bar, is there a commercial plan linked into that as the bar is stagnant currently?

GG: a subset of the charity strategy should and will contain a strategy for its wholly owned trading subsidiary that is a core part of the group strategy because one can’t exist without the other I think there should be something along side it but should be a part of this a whole

SG: any thought of bringing in fresh eyes along with the refurbishment into the bar, new age with the bar and we’ve had Rich and Kenton, is there scope to bring in someone new to help bring the bar forward?

It was noted that following refurbishment of the bar, a new commercial plan alongside the strategy should be developed, to incorporated new events / venue hiring opportunities.

**14.1 Risk action group**

CB: Suggested the implementation of a risk action group, who’s role is it focus on monitoring and assessing the risk register. A draft constitutional change was made and a risk evaluation template was created. The idea being that the Trustee board only hear about risks that have changed, are new or have been removed.

GG: also ensures risks are monitored.

It was noted that this would have to be a subgroup so the role of chief operating officer could form a part of the quorum.

***APPROVED – to be added to constitution***

1. **Financial Improvement (Paper L)**

This is here as a final look and to be approved that we remove the financial improvement plan and instead we will do a strategic plan and update incorporating the financial improvements.

*APPROVED to be removed from standing items.*

1. **Election of Deputy Chair**

Need to elect a deputy chair for next year.

CB nominated himself.

APPROVED.

1. **Applications for Finance Committee**

If we look at the additional sheet, there have been some changes from Judith. Judith asked if we need to specify how to report to the board of trustees?

NM: there are other specifications in the constitution.

CB: the committee must not consist of more than 7 but which is minimum and maximum committee size?

NM: currently there is no cap on membership

AOB: needs to be an odd number so either 7 or 9 so leave at 7

JI: is £2000 reasonable threshold?

GG: yes I think its reasonable we capitalise anything over £500, £2000 would be an exceptional item but anything between £500-2000 does happen that we need so I think 2000 is reasonable

IB: we also have the exec finance committee for things under £2000

GG: I also need some scope to buy things other wise my job isn’t viable and would be unmanageable

CB: the 1.6 it says VP FSA would have prime responsibility for the unions finances how does the board feel about that? Should the board have responsibility?

IB: that has been lifted fromm the constitution.

AOB: looks fine other wise

NM: why no less than 4 times a year?

IB: because that’s how often the board meets so can happen a month before each meeting for example

NM: couple of grammatical errors noted.

*APPROVED*

*Applications for the finance committee:*

*Sam*

*Chantal*

*John*

*Roger*

*Judith*

*Beth*

*APPOINTED*

1. **Elections of Appointments Committee**

Terms of reference that need to be changed there are a couple. This is the committee that talks about removing any trustees and an audit of the board to ensure there is the right skill set on the board it is chaired by ex student officer trustee. Would anyone like to volunteer. We need 4 people including the ex student officer trustee

GG: shouldn’t be more than one student officer trustee

*Aileen*

*Corey*

*Sam, Beth and Vafie volunteered*

*Each gave a minute speech as to why they should be appointed*

*Vote was taken*

*BETH was appointed as the student officer on the appointments committee.*

**AP CB: Lay trustees will be invited to volunteer.**

IB: as the SU I feel we should monitor the attendance of the external trustees and we should be mindful of that in the future.

CB: I agree and this will be coming in the strategic plan and how we monitor it.

GG: appointments committee will have a big job with this next year

NM: there are a number of documents being circulated to help with this monitoring next year

1. **Appointment/Stepping down of Trustees**

We must first appoint the new trustees. These are SK, VS, BA and YK. APPROVED. Student trustees BO CL and AA. *APPROVED*

Stepping down will be IB TA SA NM RT FH and SG. *APPROVED.*

1. **AOB**

**SGSU Policies and Procedures Update**

GG we are reviewing these and will be working with SGUL. One thing to note is that even where we mirror a policy with SGUL and sue that policy, legal liability for anything that happens at an SU event lies with the board of trustees even if its under the SGUL policy.

AOB: there have been found to be a lot foggy areas if something happens at a student event or if a complaint is made by a student against another about how much responsibility lies with the Union and how much SGUL. This is something that really needs to be tightened up. Jenny laws will also be helping with this. We want to make sure the policies and procedures fit with each other and protect the board and the SU. Incidents in social settings in particular are a risk and this should be noted.

GG: I think this should be added to the risk action group.