**St George’s Students’ Union**

**Trustee Board Minutes**

**Thursday 18th May 2017**

1. **Present:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Corey Briffa | CB | President (Chair of the Board of Trustees) 2016-17 |
| Judith Ibison | JI | Deputy Dean for Students |
| John McDonagh | JM | External Trustee |
| Derek Banister | DB | Head of Estates |
| Matt Bull | MB | Accommodation and Sports Centre Manager |
| Gill Gibson | GG | Chief Operating Officer |
| Saeed Azizi | SA | Student Trustee |
| Ishaan Bhide | IB | VP Finance and Student Activities |
| Tanisha Amin | TA | VP Education and Welfare |
| Mark Lubbock | ML | External Trustee |
| Aileen O’Brien | AOB | Dean for Students |

1. **Apologies:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Na’im Merchant | NM | Student Trustee |
| Ruben Thumbadoo | RT | Student Trustee |
| Francesca Harris | FH | General Secretary |
| Roger Horton | RH | External Trustee |
| Kea Horvers | KH | External Trustee |

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

GG gave an update on HMRC: 30 working days from the correspondence being sent out which was yesterday. We haven’t had any written correspondence back yet but if we haven’t had it by Monday I will be chasing it, however the chasing process is quite tedious as you have to write to them to chase them but we have started the ball rolling so its just waiting for that to be paid into our account.

JM: on the third page last paragraph the £7000 should be £70,000.

1. **Financial Statement – IB/GG (Paper B) Reserved Business**
2. **Budget Setting Guidelines – GG (Paper C)**

GG: Gave a verbal summary of the newly proposed budget setting guidelines, a brief outline of the detail was explained. Including, the need to cap carry forward and to give the board privileges should a club or society not be meeting targets consistently.

JI: Has this been discussed with and shown to the societies?

GG: Following the Trustee board approval this will be present at AGM.

IB: Warned that some of these proposals may not be taken well by some clubs and societies.

GG: Clarifies that no sanctions will be retrospectively applied and the new guidelines start from now.

GG: when you look at the societies and cubs making the big deficit it’s the discretionary social spending that’s making the difference not the core spending.

AOB: Are there any clubs that could argue that it is core spending?

GG: Discussed the current contract with the boat club, and mentioned that there are no boats left within this contract. But bolstering reserves means large purchases like could be made if we had the reserves.

AOB: Noted that we should attempt to contact alumni who may be interested in sponsoring.

GG: if there were big donations from alumni for example this could be held in reserves and ring fenced for when they needed something which wouldn’t be a problem, the carry forward is different it’s operational budget that they’re getting year on year its not a donation.

JI: Asked for clarification on the second point.

GG: in previous year the budgets have been calculated and if it cost £1000 the clubs subs were expected to make up 25% of this so previously they would only be given £750 as a budget. I’m saying that I’ll give £1000 and an income target of £250, meaning you can monitor this and make sure the total spending is in line with what you planned. This allows monitoring but also it currently looks like everyone is over spend and you have to work out if subs are enough.

IB: we are also proposing that the budgets go online on Agresso as opposed to offline in documents which will be more work or us but good in the long run

GG: The club may feel like they’re getting more expenditure budget but for the first time ever they have a written down amount they need to make in subs

IB: previously the unspent budget was absorbed by the union but we are proposing that going forward any budget that isn’t absorbed is their budget for the next year.

GG: if you understand against the budget we will say the underspend is their carry forward but you’ve proven you can do it for less so we will reduce the budget to what was spent that year but you do have the carry forward too. There is now a benefit to underspending. To communicate this to clubs and societies I have made some slides which simplify the rules and pull out the key changes making it quite clear that its an equitable and fair way of making sure the whole student body is free to do what they want to do. I can circulate these later if you like and they will be presented at AGM.

🡪 *APPROVED*

1. **Fixed assets register (FAR) - GG (Paper D) Reserved Business**
2. **SU Gym Provision Report – CB/DB/MB**

DB: Gave a verbal summary and update on where we are at with the Tooting Leisure Centre (TLC) proposal. Key points:

* 3 Year agreements
* Rates starting at £19.99 and increases £2 per year.
* SGUL have agreed to discount £4 per student for the three-year period to be capped at an annual value of £30,000.
* RLSC use will be retained by the SU (Sports hall, squash courts) and still made available for exams.
* Space is looking to be sublet to Sanjay Sharma – Heartbeats cardiac rehabilitation centre, which will also run the MSc in cardiology.

DB: was looking for endorsement of this proposal to move to more advanced stages and start formalising the agreement.

GG: Noted the proposal was good, but questioned what was going to having with students who currently have RLSC membership.

DB: A start date needs to be agreed, provisionally set 1st June and the RLSC to be closed on 1st August. A reimbursement process will happen.

JI: Queried if there were more than 600 students who wish to sign up.

DB: Answered that this is something that would need to be clarified by the university finance committee and numbers would need renegotiation. DB explained the figure was based on historical uptake so felt it was realistic, but appreciated it could peak.

CB: Noted that if the university were so confident with numbers, the £30,000 should be a budget, with the view that it could be underspent and equally could be overspent.

DB: there is always that risk though. I can go back to the organisation and raise the question though.

JI: is 600 the current usage?

MB: it’s the historical usage with a bit of room

DB: the numbers based on the student population is consistent with other universities in terms of uptake but there is always the risk that it could be different.

SA: Noted that several students may already use neighbouring facilities including TLC.

DB: when we initially approached TLC they were adamant that they wouldn’t reduce their fees from the £40 per month but when we approached them again they managed to reduce them as they felt they had lost a lot of users to the gym group so they need the turnover and they feel members will come back in 12 months’ time but they may not.

GG: Noted that students may change across to our tariff if it is cheaper.

JM: there is a limited capacity of what they can take on and if the students feel this is a great deal and they over subscribe considerable, what capacity does TLC have to take the 600 and how many would they turn away, and often there are peak times so if the students felt this was a good deal but there was influx of people at peak times how will TLC cope with it?

DB: there is a peak demand, TLC’s opening times are longer than ours which will help. There is a diversity in the offer so its not just a gym provision, there is also classes and the pool etc so people can do different types of exe3rcise not jut the gym and they have more equipment than we have had. There are additional classes and a sports hall facility. Not everyone will be using the gym equipment at the same time. It will be a risk but it just one we need to be mindful of and to monitor.

JI: there is no restriction on times students can use the gym?

DB: No

CB: Note that long term the main goal would be to bring the gym provision back on site

DB: long term I have put together an estates strategy in which can we look to work with the pelican hotel to build an additional hotel block with accommodation and on the ground/1st/second floor could this be expanded to put in a gym and other facilities that we don’t currently have which is the long term aim. I think we can do that without large sums of capital investment that the university has to provide – the development can be driven by the pelican hotel and a private developer.

IB: last I heard we were having some money going towards the development for the sports hall that currently exists at the RLSC. Where are we on that?

DB: I think we need to put that in next years’ capital programme and look at what work we can realistically do and whether we want to slightly defer that work until we know what we are doing with Sanjay Sharma so not do any work in the changing rooms and if we do any then initially focus on the sports hall and areas that wont change such as the squash courts and the sports hall.

CB: Noted RH thoughts around the negative view of SGUL selling student space for commercial gain. RH also expressed the issues following the 3 year deal. RH also expressed that £1 per week subsidy is not a great deal for students.

ML: Going back to Roger’s point at the moment the RLSC is a student union facility and the cost of refurbishing it is not practical or feasible, what will happen at the end of Sanjay’s occupation, does the SU get it back?

DB: Long term we want to try and re-provide a new sports facility in conjunction with the development but that is probably further ahead than 3 years and TLC would only sign up to a 3-year deal and I think we would sign up to another 3-year deal and in that period, build the new facility.

ML: I buy into Corey’s point about improving student experience but from the unions perspective are we going to end up losing assets? If we can keep an asset so the university have to come back to us to use it and do a deal with us but I think if our rights in that asset are pr4eserved then the student experience is fine but if we lose the rights then its slightly different for us to consider

CB: The lease states that the facility can only be used as a student recreational facility so it maybe comes down to if we put a clause on if we remove that statement that its only for 3 years and then must be renegotiated.

DB: When we’ve got to a point with Sanjay Sharma when we have got draft heads of terms then we will discuss these with you and we can all comment on this to ensure we don’t lose out.

CB: The Sharma deal is still in early sages

DB: I met with Sanjay 2-3 weeks ago and he is still keen but has got to find the funds to re-develop the space so I think that maybe when I have got draft heads of terms to send to him and will forward onto the trustees to review.

JI: Asked to separate actions, noted that yes carry on with the 3-year deal but can we get some confirmed linkage between the use of the asset and SU gain from this. For example, if Sanjay is renting out the facility, is that money being linked into promoting student recreational opportunities on site.

DB: when we originally discussed this part of the £30,000 was taking a contribution from Sanjay to discount students but even though we haven’t got him on board we have committed to that.

SA: Raised a concern on how well this had been communicated with the student body.

CB: Responded, saying a survey was released which has over 2500 responses. Lots of information and decisions were based on this. Following approval students will be informed at AGM. CB felt confident with student consultation.

CB: Are we in agreement that we go ahead with the deal but need some confirmation on what will happen after the Sanjay Sharma deal and the over and above 600 sign ups.

🡪 *Agreed*

1. **Second Floor Redevelopment – CB/DB (Paper E)**

DB: Gave a brief update explaining that the university were going out to tender and results should be received in about 2-3 weeks. It was noted that there was still risk around timing and finishing of the bar. Particularly due to time restrictions of some exams.

JI: that sounds like you don’t think it will be ready for Freshers?

DB: Explained that the rest of the space is fine, it’s just the bar itself due to it’s complex nature. Detailed explanation followed and noted that the physical bar may needed to be fitted at a later stage.

JI: would that be in a year’s time?

DB: possibly over Christmas we would have it manufactured and ready to go and then just a case of having it put in.

GG: As we are no longer moving the back wall we could potentially do all the tiling etc in the back so that bar is only the physical structure that needs replacing but the rest of the features would till be done just the physical bar

JI: it would be a shame – is over Christmas feasible?

DB: yes, a lot of the companies still work over Christmas

GG: it’s the period we are closed for the longest anyway as well. The update is that we are having our final sign off meeting on Tuesday where we will be ticking the boxes of tiles, colours, fabrics etc and absolutely finalising every detail.

JI: is it normal for tenders to go out so close to the work?

GG: Explained the reasons tendor process was so late that due to the team not feeling confident in Hunters design we decided to source an external company. Harp interiors was then appointed. Harp were confident that they have worked with multiple suppliers who could finish the project in time.

SA: You mention this being seen at AGM, will this be confirmed before or after this?

CB: Noted that these designs have been based on survey’s, knowledge from the executive and other key stake holders to ensure designs incorporate everything. It was also noted that designing had been led very much by the design team.

GG: we gave them a clear playing field and they decided to take our existing logo and make that the basis so it very much feels like the students bar but a more welcoming version. hopefully the different space areas will cater to different groups of students as well not just a drinking environment.

1. **Commercial update – GG (F)**

GG: Gave a verbal summary of the commercial update, Key points included:

* New tills- Teething issues
* Payment sense – Teething issues
* Coffee machines - Admin kitchens
* Damages due to broken into vending machines.
* Changes in stock take team due to poor service in the most recent stocktake.
* Ben – Project Search work experience.

**Eddie’s Space – Reserved Business**

1. **NUS Strategic Review response – CB/GG (Paper G)**

CB: Explained the rationale behind the document, and that it makes it clear our goals for the short, medium and long term.

SA: from the analysis is there a university we are like in terms of what they found with infrastructure or how we run things, as we could eek advice from that university. I know she may be bound by confidentiality but worth a try?

AOB: I thought we were a bit more set on recruitment for the board and skill set or is that just implied as it doesn’t say anything about that in short term

GG: I will extend it to say to undertake a skill set audit of the board and recruitment drive.

AOB: we were particularly taking about having more independents on the board

GG: we said we would look to have a more diverse background in some of the trustees

JI: where did we get to in terms of sabbatical officer roles. I wondered where we had got to with rethinking the job descriptions and the work load.

AOB: we did talk about this. For example, how much counselling the VP welfare should do

GG: on the second point in the panned action for the second red point in our review structure of the union and staffing structure which includes the sabbatical officers but I can elaborate here.

TA: I spoke to one of the members of the board of the OIA about my role and what the NUS would advice and they said that they had a lot of student officers that do provide the same as me and if I’m not giving the impression that I have a qualification then its fine

JI: Maybe short term things like note keeping could be done to be protective.

CB: We will make those changes.

ML: I have a few comments on the letter that I will send tomorrow

GG: it will probably go out on Monday

1. **Staffing structural proposal – GG (Paper H)**

GG: Gave a verbal summary on the proposal of a new apprentice scheme.

CB: are we in agreement?

🡪 *AGREED*

1. **Risk Register – CB (Paper I) Reserved Business**
2. **Financial Improvement – (Paper J)**

No Changes

1. **AOB**
2. **Subvention update - CB**
3. **Student staff Christmas celebrations – CB/GG/IB**

IB: Noted that historically the Students’ Union has spent a large amount on Christmas celebrations. IB explained the rationale for decreasing the expenditure and a joint staff party between Shop and Bar staff was the direction to go. IT was noted that SGSU would then hold 3 Christmas parties, One for executive volunteers, another for full-time SGSU staff and another for part-time student staff in both the shop and bar.

GG: the profits will go back to the students as none of these events have been in our own bar and hopefully, although it wont go down very well with people sued to this happening, but for the first time we are writing full budgets for both the trading and the charity and I cant justify that in the budgets.

IB: I think seeing as all the trading profits go into the charity to subsidise the most we are are representing 5500 students and spending £600 on 8 bar staff members is unacceptable.

CB: my concern is how will we be communicating this. In terms of a document that goes out to Matt and Rich.

GG: it doesn’t need to be a document it’s a conversation – we are in the process of setting our budgets and tis has gone through the board.

1. **Ian Spires – Resignation**

CB: I received an email form Ian after he missed the exceptional board saying he no longer felt he can dedicate the time due to work commitment. I thanked him for his commitment over the years and said he will be a great loss to the board. It was noted that while we lost Ian we gained John.

1. **Dates of the next meetings**

* 13/07/2017 – 17.30 H2.6 (Handover Board)