

Trustee Board Minutes (Virtual Extraordinary Meeting)

From meeting held on 27th April 2020

Present

Robert Smeath, External Trustee (Chair) **(RS)**
 Joshua Williams, President **(President)**
 Amanda Sefton, Education Officer **(EO)**
 Ryan Ginger, Activities and Employability Officer **(AEO)**
 Amelia Gibbins, Welfare and Community Officer **(WCO)**
 Josh Dooler, Sports Officer **(SO)**
 Joanne Park, International Officer **(IO)**
 Alice Tucker, Student Trustee (Undergraduate) **(AT)**
 Rosa Alaluf, Student Trustee **(RA)**
 Tom Goodman, Student Trustee (Postgraduate) **(TG)**
 Christian Oko, Student Trustee (International) **(CO)**
 Johnny Davis, External Trustee **(JD)**
 Henrietta Brealey, External Trustee **(HB)**
 Wyn Williams, External Trustee **(WW)**
 Chris Davies, External Trustee **(CD)**
 Erica Conway, University Representative Trustee **(EC)**

In attendance

Jo Thomas, Chief Executive **(JT)**
 Nick Bailey, Finance Manager **(NB)**
 Sam Jones, Interim Executive Assistant **(SJ)** (note taker)

Apologies

Tobiloba Adeyemi, Postgraduate Officer **(PGO)**

The Chair welcomed everyone and the meeting commenced at 18:05.

ITEM	NOTES	ACTION
CEO Update to Trustee Board	This Extraordinary Trustee Board meeting was held virtually via Zoom, and was called in response to the current COVID-19 outbreak. RS welcomed Trustees to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.	Noted
	JT presented the previously circulated update to the Board on the Guild's response to the COVID-19 outbreak.	Noted
	The EO enquired about the number of Student Staff who had responded to the proposal to furlough them. The CEO noted that a large number of staff had responded positively to being furloughed, and a number of students who had yet to respond were being followed up to ensure that they could be paid.	Noted
	JT noted that there had been complexities with the transition to the number of staff working from home, but the situation had stabilised and services had continued to operate despite the closure of the building and all staff working from home.	Noted

	<p>HB asked about the level of planning for possible partial opening if social distancing is required in the workplace. The CEO noted that the Guild was following the University's lead in working practices, but initial planning was underway for possible partial opening of the Guild. EC noted that the University was planning for campus not to open before 1st June.</p> <p>The President noted the possibility for a phased return of staff if Government regulations are changed in the in the coming weeks.</p> <p>HB noted the possibility for delivery/take away services in Guild venues if there was a significant fall in footfall, despite a relaxation of the national lockdown. JT noted proposals for delivery services and alternative business practices in the Venues team, were currently being discussed.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>
Officer Team Updates	<p>The President presented an update from the Officer Team on their projects and mandates during the lockdown:</p> <p>The WCO noted ongoing work on supporting students with difficulties with University Accommodation during the lockdown, including providing a template letter for student's to ask their landlords for a rent reduction or to be released from their housing contracts. The WCO noted that the University had released students in halls from their accommodation contracts if they we're no longer staying on campus.</p> <p>The IO noted ongoing work with the WCO on student accommodation contracts, as a significant number of International Student's remained in campus accommodation. The IO noted lobbying efforts for the University to increase its student hardship fund.</p> <p>The SO noted ongoing work supporting sport's clubs to hold online AGM's and get involved in fundraising events, many for NHS charities, via sponsored 'indoor runs'. The SO noted that they were keeping in touch with UoB sport staff, who were delivering an online sport and fitness programme. The SO also noted ongoing work on 'Green Impact', including an online 'Student Sustainability' forum.</p> <p>The AEO noted ongoing work on online society elections, support for student groups and Committee members, planning for the Guild's 'Virtual Neighbourhood' platform, and ongoing employability support for students.</p> <p>The EO noted ongoing work on student rep elections. The EO noted that they had been focusing on education outcomes for students during the Covid-19 outbreak. Following the University's initial policy position, the Guild had launched a feedback collection from students, to which more than 800 had replied, noting significant concerns.</p> <p>The EO that the Guild had proposed five changes to the University's policy, which had been rejected. The Guild had subsequently started a 'No Detriment' campaign and an open letter to put pressure on the University to amend its initial policies, which was ongoing.</p> <p>JD noted a possible increase in academic appeals going forwards if students are not satisfied with the support they have received from the University, and an increased demand for support from Guild Advice. JT</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>

	<p>noted ongoing discussions on increasing capacity during the appeals cycle.</p> <p>TG noted difficulties for Postgraduate students in progressing with their degrees. TG noted the need for Guild action Postgraduate degree provision and assessment. The EO agreed to discuss outside the meeting. EC noted that PG student support was being reviewed at an individual level.</p> <p>The President noted ongoing disruption at Students' Unions across the country as the sector dealt with the challenge of the lockdown. The President noted ongoing discussions about strategic priorities for the Officer team for the rest of the year.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>EO</p> <p>Noted</p>
<p>Financial Update</p>	<p>RS noted that Finance Committee had recently met to review the Guild's financial situation during the COVID-19 outbreak. JD updated the Board on discussions at Finance Committee. JD noted that the Finance team had worked hard to achieve a break even position for the budget year, utilising the Government's job retention scheme. JD noted discussions on the Guild's budget for next year and possible scenarios for maintaining a balanced budget in the long-term, including possibilities for additional commercial revenue and changes to the Guild's structure.</p> <p>JD noted that they would be reluctant to make significant use of financial reserves in light of the Guild's financial pressures, in light of the HMRC and SUSS pension issues.</p> <p>EC noted discussions at Finance Committee on the University's transitional funding as part of the ongoing SUMS review discussions. EC noted that even with an additional funding of £250k from the University, difficult decisions would still need to be made around the Guild's budget for 2020/21.</p> <p>The President noted possible alternative commercial provisions for Welcome Week 2020 in light of possible ongoing social distancing regulations.</p> <p>WW noted the valuable work of the Guild in beginning long-term financial planning in light of the COVID-19 outbreak.</p> <p>RS thanked the ongoing hard work of the Trustee Board, and noted the difficulties that the Guild's long-term finances posed. RS noted that the Guild's Budget 2020/21 would be reviewed at the next Board meeting.</p> <p>RS thanked Trustee's for attending the meeting and noted the ongoing hard work of Officers and staff under difficult circumstances.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>

The Chair closed the meeting at 18:50.

Signed

Date