Guild of Students

Trustee Board Meeting
Monday 12th January 2026, 15:30– 17:30
Mandela Room, Guild of Students

Present
Ruth Pipkin, External Trustee **(RP)** (Chair)
Antonia Listrat, Guild President **(President)**
Jacob Dyke, Education Officer **(EO)**
Abhijeet Patel, Sports Officer **(SO)**
Simrah Inamdar, International Officer **(IO)**
Emeline Brown, Activities & Employability Officer **(AEO)**
Abby Kenrick, Welfare & Community Officer **(WCO)**
Aliasgar Gandhi, Postgraduate Officer **(PGO)**
Helen Stone, External Trustee **(HS)**
Mikey Brown, Postgraduate Student Trustee **(MB)**
Mitali Gohel, External Trustee **(MG)**
Simone Hawley, BAME Student Trustee **(SH)**
Mark Price, External Trustee **(MP)**
Umar Sabir, Undergraduate Student Trustee **(US)**
Harshitha Naidu, International Student Trustee **(HN)**

In attendance
Jo Thomas, Chief Executive **(JT)**
Adam Sheridon, Director of Engagement **(AS)**
Nick Bailey, Director of Finance & Systems **(NB)**
James Lindsay, Director of Community & Representation **(JL)**
Emily Badger, Director of Operations **(EB)**
Amy Simon, Executive Assistant **(AS)** (note taker)
Claire Maitland, Residence Life Manager **(CM)** (Agenda Item 14 only)
Coral Brookes, Senior Residence Coordinator for events **(CB)** (Agenda Item 14 only)

Apologies
Penelope Hackett, External Trustee **(PH)**
Neil Hanley, University Representative Trustee **(NH)**
Emma Wedge, External Trustee **(EW)**

The Chair welcomed all attendees and introduced the new Trustees. The meeting began at 15:40.

No	Item for Discussion	Notes	Action
1a	**Minutes of Previous Meeting (03.11.25)**	The Chair presented the minutes of the previous meeting, dated 3rd November 2025, for the Board's approval. **The Board approved the Trustee Board minutes.**	**Noted** **Approved**
1b	**Matters Arising**	The Chair presented the Action Tracker for the Board's information. **The Board noted the Action Tracker.**	**Noted** **Noted**

2	**Declarations of Interest**	The Chair asked Trustees to declare any possible conflict of interests relating to the items on the meeting's agenda. EO declared a conflict of interest.	**Noted** **Noted**
3	**HR Committee Minutes (11.11.25)**	WCO presented the HR Committee Minutes (11.11.25) for the Board's approval. WCO noted the TOR was approved at previous meeting. **The Board approved the HR Committee minutes.**	**Noted** **Noted** **Approved**
4	**Finance Committee Minutes (11.12.25)**	President noted the Finance Committee Minutes (11.12.25) for the Board's approval. NB noted that papers brought forward from the Committee **The Board approved the Finance Committee minutes.**	**Noted** **Noted** **Approved**
5	**Engagement Committee Minutes (18.11.25)**	AEO noted the Engagement Committee Minutes (18.11.25) for the Board's approval. **The Board approved the Engagement Committee minutes.**	**Noted** **Approved**
6	**CEO Report**	JT presented the CEO Report for the Board's approval. HS queried what has been done regarding the current staff absence rate. JT noted the Senior Team are reviewing the data and the Occupational Health Team are utilised as required to support staff. **The Board approved the CEO report.**	**Noted** **Noted** **Approved**
7	**Proposed Change to Student Group Membership**	JT presented Proposed Change to Student Group Membership for the Board's approval. JT provided context for the paper and the proposal to amend the Byelaws in order to permit the restricting of group membership based on beliefs. JT noted the Guild has worked with NUS and our Lawyers and has followed specific advice based on Guild circumstances. MB queried what the Guild's Byelaws say about restricting membership. JL noted that Student Groups are open to all students and confirmed that no groups currently restrict membership based on protected characteristic. MP noted the Group's goal is to further the beliefs of the Christian Union (CU) society. MP noted the proposal is logical, but the challenge is the	**Noted** **Noted** **Noted** **Noted** **Noted**

		specific "Evangelical Christian framework". The specificity could be seen as discriminating against other Christian views of the belief.	
		JT noted that protected characteristics will not be discriminated against as this is the law.	**Noted**
		The Chair noted that the idea of a student being required to declare their religion to be a committee member is uncomfortable and queried whether it could follow that, in the future, a student may have to explicitly declare their sexuality to be a part of the LGBT+ committee. The Chair noted the students already vote on who they would like to elect to be committee members and the current committee have the opportunity to raise a vote of no confidence. There are many levels of control, so it is not necessary to change the Byelaws.	**Noted**
		MB noted the Byelaws state groups are "open to all" – this matter is a legal question regarding the level of autonomy the groups have. MB queried whether a change in the Byelaws would allow the Guild to defend itself in an Equality Act claim about indirect discrimination. MB noted that currently the Byelaws are drafted so not disadvantage any group in particular and as such there would not be a claim under the Equality Act.	**Noted**
		The Chair noted that the Guild's purpose is to keep activities open to all students.	**Noted**
		MG noted that it does not seem to make sense to say there is only one way to confirm your religion in the Christian Union as there are many types in all religions.	**Noted**
		The PGO noted diverse ideas for the Group's progression are likely to be curbed if all committee members are required to sign the Doctrinal Basis. The PGO further noted some students may not believe in certain clauses or ideas outlined in the Doctrinal Basis and it is not right to stop them for running. There will be no advancements or innovation if you restrict who is allowed to run for Committee.	**Noted**
		The President noted this change could result in more divisions between students and it does not work practically.	**Noted**
		JL noted there are other religious Groups that students could join if they prefer a Group that is aimed towards to certain denominations.	**Noted**
		SH queried what outcome the Guild may face if the Byelaws are not changed. JT noted the Group would most likely continue to progress through the Guilds complaints process.	**Noted**

		MP noted the group may argue against the ideal of allowing someone who does not align with their beliefs to have a committee position as this would not allow the group to run in the way that they desire.	**Noted**
		The President noted that this is the main society for the Christian religion and hosts a number of different denominations and by enforcing the signing of the Doctrinal Basis could actively exclude students.	**Noted**
		EW (in absence) noted the need to remain with the Guild's principle having the groups be open to all.	**Noted**
		The Board members voted against the proposed changes to the Byelaws. For = 1, against = 11.	**Noted**
		The Chair noted the Byelaws and the ruling of the Activities Committee will stay the same.	**Noted**
		The Board rejected the Proposed Change to Student Group Membership.	**Rejected**
8	**October Management Accounts**	NB presented the October Management Accounts for the Board's approval.	**Noted**
		NB noted the October Management Accounts were presented at Finance Committee.	**Noted**
		NB noted a net expenditure of £74k, £11k greater than the budget net expected position.	**Noted**
		NB noted a full year vacancy savings provision of £113k were target 2.7% of total staff costs or 3.4% of core staff costs. NB also noted the overall saving last year was more than twice the budgeted savings of this year.	**Noted**
		NB noted £34k delivered savings for permanent staff cost, overspent by £32k in student staff. NB noted two core staff vacancies in the Facilities team with the budget being allocated to student staff in full.	**Noted**
		NB noted a facilities cost linked to teaching and learning spaces which was expected to be £19k for the year and was not included in the budget. NB noted this was hoped to be recovered from the University but that has not been agreed.	**Noted**
		NB noted the cash position was healthy at the end of October. NB noted the Quarter 2 block grant payment was received on the last day of period, which inflated the cash position by £1m.	**Noted**

		HS queried whether we have approached the University regarding payment for the teaching space payments. NB noted this has not yet been raised.	**Noted**
		MB queried the expenditure regarding the teaching spaces.. NB noted £19k a year is the anticipated full cost for the year for student staff only and includes the cost for additional set up, portering, turn around in the day, and sign posting at the start of the year.	**Noted**
		PH (in absence) queried whether the variation in bar stock was linked to fraud. AS noted, that immediate action was taken. This included stock taking reports and checks, stock line recount and three additional external stock takes. The result was that the variation was most likely due to an administration error and not related to fraud.	**Noted**
		PH (in absence) requested more information regarding the conflict of interest in nightclubs and gyms. AS noted, media sales and bookings in Welcome Week which were declined due to conflicts with commercial activities..	**Noted**
		The Board approved the October Management Accounts.	**Approved**
9	**Budget Re-forecast**	NB presented the Budget Re-forecast for the Board's approval.	**Noted**
		NB noted a business-as-usual update. NB noted £66k decrease in budgeted net income from £9.7k budget to – reduced to £56.4k Net Expenditure forecast .NB also noted the pension adjustment charge has been updated to take into account the discount factor.	**Noted**
		NB noted a review of staff costs is taking place in addition to trading adjustments. NB also noted allocations are being made from the strategy fund. NB noted £26k in savings generated by a reduction in core staff costs, that has been reduced by allocations from the strategy fund to new core fixed term posts.	**Noted**
		NB noted the room bookings budget surplus was £30.7k but has decreased to £13k. NB noted there is not a large commercial conference booking this year which has resulted in a substantial decrease in income.	**Noted**
		MP queried what happens to the bar stock in the transition period. AS noted the team is reviewing the stock reduction processes. Most of the stock can be retained or resold with only a few exceptions. JT noted the bar closes and reopens every summer and the same process applies when closing Joes and reopening with JDW.	**Noted**
		The Board approved the Budget Re-forecast.	**Approved**
10	**JDW Project Update**	AS presented the JDW Project Update for the Board's information.	**Noted**
		AS noted the creation of a project delivery, oversight and governance group to ensure the project is delivered on time and within budget.	**Noted**

		MP noted Joes will be adhering to JDW's policies and procedures and queried whether they align with our ethical requirements. AS noted there are a few differences in the policies, and the Guild will not align exactly with JDW's pay scales. AS noted the team is currently reviewing JDW's operations manual.	**Noted**
		EO queried whether will student staff remain in the same department they currently work in and AS confirmed this would be the case. AS noted this commercial opportunity will create more jobs and opportunities for students.	**Noted**
		HS queried when further information will be sent to students and what the next steps are. AS noted a date for the build needs to be confirmed alongside finalising the budget, the changes in staffing and promoting the project publicly.	**Noted**
		The Board approved the creation of a JDW Governance group.	**Approved**
		The Board noted the JDW Project Update.	**Noted**
11	**Officer Action Plans**	The Full-time Officers presented the Officer Action Plans for the Board's information.	**Noted**
		Chair noted these were presented in earlier during the Trustee Away Day.	**Noted**
		The Board noted the Officer Action Plans.	**Noted**
12	**Annual Survey Results 2025**	EB presented the Annual Survey Results 2025 for the Board's information.	**Noted**
		EB noted the Survey results are being reviewed and feedback from the managers and Senior managers is being collated. Further, the research is being evaluated to understand how it will impact the Guild's KPIs and priorities.	**Noted**
		The Chair queried what support the Board can offer. JT noted a research timeline must be created and this may need to go to tender.	**Noted**
		MG noted Cost of Living (CoL) discussion points from the away day.	**Noted**
		The President noted would be good to review the free text comments from the survey.	**Noted**
		The AEO noted there are a high number of students in Student Groups however there are more students who want to join but are not able to and noted the work being completed to resolve this. AEO further noted that some Groups activities are more affordable and CoL can affect the number of students who attend groups.	**Noted**
		JT noted number of students attending Groups this year is 13,064. This is an increase of 1,500 students in comparison to 2024/25.	**Noted**

		The Board noted the Annual Survey Results 2025.	**Noted**
13	**Strategic Plan Update**	EB presented the Strategic Plan Update for the Board's information. EB noted the Guild's strategic priorities are being reviewed by the Officers and managers to understand how the Guild's KPIs and priorities need to be adjusted for the remainder of the strategy time period. EB noted the analysis from the Away Day will be reviewed and further information will be presented at a future Board meeting. **The Board noted the Strategic Plan Update.**	**Noted** **Noted** **Noted** **Noted**
14	**Residence Life Strategy**	CM and CB joined the meeting at 17:05. CM and CB presented the Residence Life Strategy for the Board's information. CM noted the vision and mission of Residence Life. CB noted the locations of the UoB accommodations and partner sites with ~7,300 students. CB noted all UoB students at these sites have access to events and support. CM noted the team is funded by student's accommodation fees. CM further noted the teams hold monthly meetings for wellbeing and events. CM noted the team is in Year 2 of the strategy. The team's plans for Year 3 include national events, more extra-curricular activities and further expansion. CB noted events are led by core staff and students. CB further noted a development in peer-to-peer services carried out by student staff. CB noted welcome events and wellbeing events. CB also noted the team will be collaborating more with Student Groups on roadshows. CM noted positive results from the Residence Life surveys from welcome week. CB noted the achievements of welcome week including attendance of 18,810 students. 94% of responses rated their welcome event as good or very good and 90% of students liked flat chats. CM noted the team had 265 cases in the first term. CM highlighted that the team in on track with their achievements from Year 2 and compared the statistics for engagement. CM noted the Residence Life town hall event and the attendance of a student at student living group. HN noted some students live in partner sites accommodation and so may not realise the services are available to them. CM noted ~95% of	**Noted** **Noted** **Noted** **Noted** **Noted** **Noted** **Noted** **Noted** **Noted** **Noted** **Noted**

		students booking through partner sites are UoB students and they will not be declined support. US queried whether student ID numbers are collected at Residence Life events. JL noted IDs are swipe upon entry which allows the engagement data to be captured. **The Board noted the Residence Life Strategy**	 **Noted** **Noted**
15	**Good Governance Update**	JT presented the Good Governance Update for the Board's information. **The Board noted the Good Governance Update.**	**Noted** **Noted**
16	**Democracy Operations**	JL presented the Democracy Operations update for the Board's information. **The Board noted the Democracy Operations update**.	**Noted** **Noted**
17	**AOB (Any Other Business)**	No items noted.	**Noted**
18	**Meeting Reflection**	No items noted.	**Noted**

The Chair closed the meeting at 17:35.

Date of Next Meeting: Monday 16th March 2026