

Meeting:	Finance & Audit Committee		
Location:	Microsoft Teams Meeting		
Date & Time:	Thursday 27th January 2022 at 9am		
Present:			
Elizabeth Stacey	Sport Officer (<i>Chair</i>)		
Jordan Kenny	Independent Trustee		
Kate Aldridge	Independent Trustee		
Barry Hughes	Independent Trustee		
Annie Willingham	President		
Valerie Copenhagen	Independent Trustee		
In attendance:			
Helen McHenry	Head of Finance		
Mandy Wilson-Garner	Deputy Chief Exec		
Charlie Slack	Head of Student Voice & Engagement (<i>Secretary</i>)		
Item			
1.	Apologies for absence		
	Name	Reason	Accepted
	Nicky Passmore	Sickness absence	Yes
2.	Notice of any other business		
	Four items were identified by the Head of Finance:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single points of failure • Scheme of delegated authority • VAT • Planning round 		
3.	Declaration of conflict of interest		
	No one had any conflicts of interests to declare in any items on the agenda.		
4.	Minutes of the previous meeting and matters arising		
	The Committee approved the previous minutes and noted the matters arising.		
5.	Finance and Audit		
	<p>SU Financial Position: The Head of Finance reported the management accounts show a healthy surplus driven by performance early on, good commercial performance and staff vacancies have helped. One area of potential risk is around the Saturday club night events which have dipped. The Head of Commercial Venues & Events is exploring alternative options. Monthly forecasting activities with Area Managers are now underway. The committee received oversight of the restricted funds.</p> <p>Question: A trustee asked about the staff costs associated with volunteering</p> <p>Answer: The permanent staff funding appears in a separate section, the report shows the casual staff costs of which Volunteering have none.</p>		

Question: A trustee asked how the impact of inflation was being anticipated

Answer: The Head of Finance outlined how staff pay inflation was calculated by the University and beyond our control. The increase in fuel and associated milage claims was currently being investigated. Currently seeing some impact through supply chains within commercial areas.

SU Reserves: The Head of Finance reported on the impact of current performance on the reserves. The high amount of restricted funds in sports has been addressed with the sport team who are mapping out expenditure for semester 2.

Audit Recommendations: The Head of Finance reported on the two recommendations from the auditors: Banking reconciliations and Segregation of duties. Full segregation has been challenging without Finance Manager and Chief Exec, will likely have a recommendation about over reliance on the Head of Finance. Journal processing has been added to the risk register. The Deputy Chief Exec will now sign off in the absence of the Chief Exec. The Head of Finance outlined a number of other areas of general advisory that had arisen, and steps being taken in response.

SU Finance policy work: The Head of Finance reported a consultant has been engaged to undertake the work around the new finance policy. This will be circulated to members of the committee in advance of the next meeting.

Budget planning: The Head of Finance reported that budget planning is now underway ahead of the April 25th deadline to University Planning Team, and outlined the process. Discussions about a multi-year grant have been postponed until the Chief Exec has returned. The Committee discussed trends across the sector leading to cuts in Students Unions grants. The approach to staff vacancies and the relationship to the University in this regard was discussed. The Head of Finance will bring the budget to the March meeting of Finance & Audit Committee.

6.

Any other business

Single points of failure: The absence of the Chief Exec creates a single point of failure around signatories. The Head of Finance requested that the Deputy Chief exec be added as a bank signatory. This was **agreed**.
The Head of Finance outlined recent issues with access to credit cards for purchasing and requested to set up a credit card in her name. This was **agreed**.

Scheme of delegated authority: Currently do not have a scheme of delegated authority. The Finance Policy work has raised need for it. It was agreed this should be a priority setting out broader capacity across the Students Union. Valerie Copenhagen offered support in creating this document.
The University Head of Strategic Governance is reviewing the Universities scheme of delegated authority and has engaged a legal firm to review what oversight the University should have of SU Finance. The SU has been asked to join the briefing. The outcome will go to Board of Trustees for further review.

VAT: The Head of Finance reported that the University have traditionally not applied VAT when recharging salaries. This is being reviewed and University is preparing a case to go to HMRC. The Head of Finance has been asked to attend a meeting with University auditors to discuss SU VAT status and is taking advice from Crowe. The members of the Committee agreed that the Head of Finance should engage Crowe to provide consultation and take steps accordingly in response to the invitation.

Planning round: As discussed previously in the meeting, the planning process is underway and the budget request will be brought to the March meeting.

7.	To note the date and time of future meetings These were noted		
	The meeting ended at 09.52am		
	Action	Action Owner	Exp Finish
5	Finance Policy to be circulated to members of committee upon completion. Trustees asked to review and feedback.	Head of Finance	Feb 22
6	DCE to be added as a bank signatory	Head of Finance	Jan 22
6	HoF to set up credit card	Head of Finance	Feb 22
6	Scheme of delegated authority to be created	Head of Finance/Deputy Chief Exec	April 22