

Meeting:	Board of Trustees		
Location:	Microsoft Teams Meeting		
Date & Time:	Thursday 9th September 2021 at 9.30am		
Present:			
Annie Willingham	President (<i>Chair</i>)		
Jacob Withington	Education Officer		
Siddharth Singh	Postgraduate Officer		
Elizabeth Stacey	Sport Officer		
Zoe Paumelle	Activities Officer		
Rob Clay	Independent Trustee		
Kate Aldridge	Independent Trustee		
Marian McNeir	Independent Trustee		
Jordan Kenny	Independent Trustee		
Alexander Robinson	Independent Trustee		
In attendance:			
Gregory Noakes	Governance & Executive Support Manager (<i>Secretary</i>)		
Nicky Passmore	Chief Executive		
Barry Hughes	Incoming Independent Trustee		
Item			
1.	Apologies for absence		
	The Chair welcomed Barry Hughes, the new incoming Independent Trustee, to the meeting. A round of introductions was held to introduce everyone.		
	Name	Reason	Accepted
	Meg Crossman	Hospital appointment	Yes
	Valerie Copenhagen	Unknown	Yes
2.	Notice of any other business		
	No items were identified for discussion under any other business.		
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 actions arising		
	The Board approved the previous minutes and noted the actions arising from the previous meeting.		
	They discussed the proposed delay to the student trustee recruitment and the concerns about how this might be perceived by students. The Chief Executive explained that the recent trustee recruitment had flagged a number of gaps within the induction process and paperwork that needed to be addressed first. The Committee agreed that plans should be drawn up to ensure that the recruitment was completed before the start of the next academic year.		
	ACTION: The Governance & Executive Support Manager to develop a plan for recruiting another student to join the Board.		

5.	<p>Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer</p> <p>The Board received a report appointing a Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer (<i>See R1 of the Board reports</i>).</p> <p>They approved the following individuals being appointed to following positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Returning Officer: Head of Student Voice & Engagement. • Deputy Returning Officer: Change & Inclusion Manager. • External Appeals Officer: Deputy Chief Executive of Bath Spa SU. • Acting Returning Officers: The six SU Officers for their relevant areas.
6.	<p>Risk Register</p> <p>The Board received a report on the risk register (<i>See R2 of the Board reports</i>).</p> <p>QUESTION: An Officer asked if there was anything more that could be done to further reduce the risk of the two highest risks on the risk register.</p> <p>ANSWER: The Chief Executive explained that there was nothing that could be done about the University's review of VAT treatment on staff salary recharges other than maintaining good relationships with them. However, with regards to the block grant risk this might be possible to mitigate by agreeing a multi-year block grant with the University.</p> <p>The Board discussed the idea of having a multi-year block grant and agreed that this should be further investigated it.</p> <p>ACTION: The Chief Executive to investigate the possibility of a multi-year block grant being agreed with the University.</p> <p>A Trustee noted that the Finance & Audit committee had discussed and agreed that there was more that The SU could do to mitigate the health & safety risk. A number of planned actions were being taken within this area which would mean that by the time of the next annual review this risk would be further reduced.</p>
7.	<p>Reserve policy</p> <p>The Board received a report on the reserves policy (<i>See R3 of the Board reports</i>).</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked if the reserves were intended to cover The SU closing and paying staff redundancies.</p> <p>ANSWER: Another Trustee explained that the reserves existed to support The SU against the possibility of adverse financial circumstances where the budget planned does not transpire.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked what 12.5% of annual costs would equate to in £s and if this was more than The SU had had in previous years.</p> <p>ANSWER: Another Trustee explained that this would make the minimum free reserves amount about £200,000 which was slightly higher than it had been in previous years.</p> <p>The Board approved and adopted the reserves policy.</p>
8.	<p>Finance & Audit</p> <p>The Board received a report on finance and audit matters (<i>see R4 of the Board reports</i>).</p>

	<p>A Trustee reported that the forecasted deficit was £62k against the operating budget of £213k, which was well under the £150k that the Board had previously set as a maximum to be used from the reserves. This was a very good position to finish the year given the context of the pandemic.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked about the high variance between spend and planned budget for staff salaries and wages. ANSWER: Another Trustee explained that this was down to savings made from staff vacancies.</p> <p>The Board discussed and agreed that it would be helpful if notes could be included within the management accounts next to high variations between spend and planned budget to explain them. They also agreed that it would be useful for the Head of Finance to attend Board meetings.</p> <p>ACTION: The Head of Finance to be invited to future Board meetings.</p> <p>ACTION: The Head of Finance to include explanation of high variations within the management accounts.</p>
9.	<p>Chief Executive</p> <p>The Board received a report from Chief Executive (<i>see R5 of the Board reports</i>).</p> <p>They discussed and agreed that The SU should be active in communicating with local residents about the measures that they are taking to ensure that Freshers week goes ahead safely. The Chief Executive explained that communicating the measures to ensure safety was the responsibility of the University and not The SU. Several Trustees supported the idea that The SU should be responsible for its own communications.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked would a student who tested positive during Freshers week be eligible to get a refund. ANSWER: The Chief Executive explained that a refund would not be possible as the cost of event is entirely funded by the tickets.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked for an update on the Edge. ANSWER: The Chief Executive reported that a formal agreement had now been reached with the University regarding the building. There were still issues on the University's side as they now needed to find another way of making their savings. Going forward The SU would keep the Edge costings separate in the budget in order to monitor the situation.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked if 15% staff vacancy is high for the sector. ANSWER: The Chief Executive confirmed that in normal times this would be high but all feedback from HR and other student unions was indicating that this was a national trend.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked if The SU could have longer notice periods for key staff members. ANSWER: The Chief Executive explained that the staff were employed by the University who set the notice periods based on staff pay grades.</p>
10.	<p>Top Ten</p> <p>The Chair reported that the topics for the Top Ten this year would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attainment gaps • drug harm reduction

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal tutors • Sustainable investments • Sulis club refurbishment • Mental health provisions • Inclusive spaces on campus • International student fees • Mandatory training for supervisors • Post Covid recovery planning <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked how the Top Ten are formed. ANSWER: The Chair explained that the Top Ten are developed from a long list of student issues identified through research carried out by the Student Voice team. Once completed the Top Ten acts as a list of issues to lobby the University on.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked if the Top Ten was fully representative of all students. ANSWER: The Chair explained that The SU had other mechanism for representing wider student issues and that the Top Ten was list of issues that often fall under the University's radar.</p> <p>The Chief Executive explained that the role of the Board with the Top Ten is to offer support to the Officer team. It was for the Officer team to decide what issues should be on the Top Ten.</p> <p>ACTION: The final wording of Top Ten to be circulated to the Board for information.</p>
<p>11.</p> <p>11.1.</p> <p>11.2.</p>	<p>Operational Matters</p> <p>Officers</p> <p>The Board received a report on Officers (<i>see R6 of the Board reports</i>).</p> <p>The Chief Executive reported that they would be looking at restructuring these reports with the President and Head of Voice so that they reported on the Top Ten and manifestos.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked what training and support do Officers receive. ANSWER: The Chief Executive explained that Officers receive a week long induction followed by an NUS Leading Change session. In addition to this Officers also receive a senior staff member to act as a coach and have regular check-in meetings with the Deputy Chief Executive.</p> <p>Area Operations</p> <p>The Board received a report on area operations (<i>see R7 of the Board reports</i>).</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked if The SU should be concerned about the low numbers of organisations that have signed up for a stall during Freshers Week. ANSWER: The Chief Executive explained that due to the pandemic a lot of organisations were being cautious as they weren't confident that Freshers Week wouldn't end up being cancelled. In terms of lost income this was not significant and still manageable within the budget. However, the Marketing team would continue to do their best to get more organisations to sign up.</p> <p>QUESTION: A Trustee asked for an update on Dartmouth. ANSWER: The Chair and Sport Officer gave an update on plans for Dartmouth. This year Dartmouth will not be a testing site which means that The SU will be able to host student</p>

	activities as it was originally intended to. Current work is well underway to prepare the place for students to be able to come in and do activities there.
12.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>No items had been previously identified for discussion under any other business.</p>
13.	<p>SU News</p> <p>The Chief Executive reported on some key highlights in terms of news that had happened since the last meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of our Lloyd Scholars was runner up in the national Lloyd's Scholar Volunteering award. Another Lloyd Scholar was runner up in the national Lloyd Scholar Champion Award. • The SU has been shortlisted as part of the Bath Life Awards - event is on the 9th September. • The rowing club has secured a number of informal pledges from the University and alumni to fund building a new boat house.
14.	<p>To confirm the date and time of future meetings</p> <p>The Board noted and confirmed the following meeting dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 9th December 2021 9.30am • Thursday 31st March 2022 9.30am • Thursday 16th June 2022 9.30am <p>Thank you</p> <p>The Board formally thanked Rob Clay, the outgoing Trustee, for all the help and support that they had given during their time as Trustee with The SU. A thank you gift would be on its way to them.</p>
The meeting ended at 11.50am	

Item	Action	Action Owner	Exp Finish
4	To develop a plan to recruit another student to join the Board.	Governance & Executive Support Manager	09/12/2021
6	To investigate the possibility of a multi-year block grant being agreed with the University	Chief Executive	09/12/2021
8	The Head of Finance to be invited to future Board meetings	Governance & Executive Support Manager	09/12/2021
8	To include explanation of high variations within the management accounts.	Head of Finance	09/12/2021
10	The final wording of Top Ten to be circulated to the Board for information.	Governance & Executive Support Manager	09/12/2021

