

Paper Title:	<b>Public Minutes to Board of Trustees Meeting, 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021</b>
Author/s:	Ann Binks
Date:	Approved 29 <sup>th</sup> March 2022

Topic and Purpose of the paper in brief:	Record of meeting of Board of Trustees.
Key Points from the Paper (5 maximum):	
List data or information sources:	Board paperwork
Please tick box if this paper refers to any one of the following:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A standing agenda item (or periodic planned item) <input type="checkbox"/> The Strategic Plan or Strategic Action Plan <input type="checkbox"/> An emerging priority or issue
<p>To what extent could the outcome of this paper affect the inclusiveness of the SU and the accessibility of the SU in respect to promoting equality, diversity and mitigating barriers to equitable engagement with the students' union?</p> <p>Board is the strategic, governing body of the SU from a legal and administrative perspective and therefore business directly relates to the SU's strategies to promote equality and diversity and provide an accessible, inclusive membership organisation.</p>	
Is this paper:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For decision or approval <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> For information and acknowledgement



## **CONFIDENTIAL**

### **15<sup>th</sup> December 2021 Board of Trustees Minutes of Meeting**

<b>Present:</b>	Dylan Cox	Co Vice President Campus equality & experience.
	Catalina Nita	Co Vice President Campus equality & experience
<b>Attending:</b>	Laura Tamara	Co-President
	Quadri Yusuf	Co-President (Chair)
	Paida Mash	External Trustee
	John Dix	External Trustee
	Winifred Soribe	Student Trustee
	Tania Struetzel	External Trustee
	Dan Login	External Trustee
	Beverley Hoare	University of Bedfordshire Trustee
<b>Date</b>	Mark McCormack	CEO
	Ann Binks (minute taker)	Head of Finance and Resources (minute taker)
	Amy McLaughlan	Head of Membership Services & Engagement
	Lisa Roerig	Head of Marketing, Communications & Business
<b>Location</b>	Zoom	

### **1: Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**

The Board **agreed** that Beverley Hoare is appointed to the Board as the UOB trustee. The Chair welcomed Beverley Hoare to the Board and introductions were made.

### **2: Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021 were **agreed**.

### **3: Conflicts of interest**

They might be the standard conflict of interest under item 7b when the CEO line management is discussed.



#### 4: Matters Arising/Outstanding Actions

Action
To see if a representative from the University would come to a Board meeting to discuss their new strategic plan and how they envisage the SU being involved – CFWD still trying to book UOB staff member.
Poll Board members to determine if Board meeting will be virtual or in person – The Board have suggested virtual meetings for the December and March meetings, then in person for the next two meetings as this would enable the incoming Executive to be met in person in July and would tie into the away day in September.

#### 5: Governance matters

Robert Benson has resigned from the Board as a student trustee to take up paid employment with Beds SU as a member of the student staff team.

Head of Membership services advised that they would be taking forward the recruitment of the new student trustees but would delay this until later in the second term but before next board meeting. Winifred's tenure ends in July so it will be more effective to recruit for both the student trustee positions at the same time.

Governance updates are on the new trustee home page. The charities commission has replied regarding our potential conflict interest and their response and guidance are posted on the home page.

Beverly Hoare who is Deputy Director Marketing, Admissions, Recruitment and Communications at the University and a valued member of the University's Senior Leadership Team with many years' experience at the University has been appointed as the University trustee.

#### 6: Executive Team Update

The Executive team gave the Board an overview of their activities and achievements.



The Co-President advised that the Executive team were working very hard to ensure that their faces are known to students and that they are supporting them on their 'journey.' The team have also been working on manifesto items including the inclusion of students who are parents and celebrating student's diversity and culture. Monthly verbal updates are being provided to the students on the website and links to these are included in the papers. The Board were asked if they had any questions.

The Board enquired if the Executive had any feedback from their meeting with events and marketing team. They advised that club nights were being moved to monthly rather than weekly and that a lot of Christmas events have been held, as well as the traditional mince pie type of event less traditional Christmas activities have also been showcased.

The Board also noted that currently different campuses have different facilities and wondered how this issue could be resolved. The Executive advised that the LSC sites are not owned by University, so it can be difficult to get any issues resolved quickly however the VC is aware of the situation and is in discussions with the owners of the building. So hopefully small improvements make take place in the not too distant future.

## **7: HR Report.**

### **7a) HR Sub-committee minutes**

These were taken as read and the Board advised that they had no questions or queries.

### **7b) CEO Performance review and Objectives 2021**

### **7c) H&S update and return to campus operations**

The Board advised as they were discussing covering the CEO's paternity leave it did not make sense for SLT to leave the meeting at this point in the agenda. Tania Struetzel advised that they have met with the CEO to discuss progress against objectives, paternity leave and the student voice.



The CEO objectives progress report was taken as read. The CEO advised that a lot of their focus for the last term has been getting 'ahead' to enable them to take their paternity leave. SLT have been very supportive, and the CEO feels comfortable going on paternity leave. Development plans have been made for areas where there needs to be a lot of 'push' when they return. We have come to terms with the scale of challenge around student inductions and are struggling to get academic staff to support the appointment of Course Reps, therefore it is unsurprisingly that we are struggling to get in classrooms. Staff morale does feel like it's improved and we realise that we have limitations while we are understaffed.

With reference to COVID, we are maintaining a presence on campus as far as we can while keeping safe. There is a small concern about how comfortable staff will feel about returning after Christmas. The VC asked specifically what would happen with Plan B and we had advised that we will stay open and keep front line services open if viable.

If footfall in the venues is so low that it becomes unviable to keep them open we might have to go to UOB and advise that we need some kind of support to keep them open.

Beds SU safety measures were strengthened last week and circulated to staff. Staff are now required to wear face masks at all times and do a lateral flow test each time they attend the office.

The Board advised that they did not have any questions.

## **8: Finance Report**

### **8a) Management accounts and reports**

The Board were presented with a set of management accounts.

The Board asked what the main income drivers were on commercial operations and were advised that they were coffee sales and private events.

### **8b) Finance Sub-Committee minutes**

These were taken as read the Board advised that they had no questions or queries.



## **9: CEO Report**

### **9a) CEO Report Summary**

The report is taken as read and Head of Marketing has circulated membership statistics to the board.

The CEO advised that the report 'sung the praises' of the Executive officers who are working hard for students, which is what the Union is all about and central to the mission of the charity. An update following on from the video, there has been a lot of activity this term which has involved reaching out to students by holding a lot of events, visiting different campuses and a strong online presence. An example of our engagement is we have had 950 enquiries through our new enquiry service.

Report on delegated action – we have two vacancies and a long-term sickness absence going on for over a year. A new member of staff has been recruited as the Communications coordinator and we have a new Project Administrator who is funded from the governments kick-start programme.

The Board advised that they didn't have any questions regarding the CEO report.

### **9b) Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)/Strategic Plan**

KPI's had been discussed at the Board away day. The paper discusses what we want to achieve from reporting the KPI's and the context surrounding them. Do the KPI's give the full picture, for example do more advice cases necessary mean that there is a better advice team, or the quality of advice given has improved? Some KPI's do not feel strategic but they are still relevant so are included. KPI's need to be helpful in determining if an objective is going to succeed or fail.

The trustees were asked to consider if there were too many KPIs. The trustees had suggested lead and lag KPI's and the CEO has researched them and felt the concept would be helpful. The KPI's sort to reflect the health of the organisation while building in ongoing ownership, without being too burdensome. The trustees were invited to give their feedback of the framework and how it is set, with measurements December, March & June (lag measurements) and a review in October.



The trustees queried why red is ok and green bad and were advised that the wording on page 3 was incorrect and the colour code was, as you would expect.

The trustees also queried how goal 3 - Students come together in support of their career and skills development- was being measured and what we are we doing to track things at a local level for students

The CEO advised that this was a very difficult objective to measure and the most effective way of measuring them has yet to be devised. The impact of Goal 2 was also very difficult to report on. In our reporting we need to go passed the number of rep we have and report how we supported them, how engaged they are and the impact they have made. Ideally, with the website we would not look at the number of visitors but the outcome of the visits.

Head of Marketing advised that we are still learning about our new website so it might be possible to report conversion rates.

**Action** look at how we are measuring website KPI's and to obtain more quality data reporting around our reps.

### **9c) Risk Register**

The trustees reviewed the Risk Register and had no questions.

### **9d) Byelaw changes**

The Board had been presented with a wish list of changes to the Byelaws in June and had advised that they should be discussed with the new officers. This has been completed and the Board are presented with a paper with the byelaw changes highlighted in blue. The Board **approved** the byelaw changes.

### **9e) Election Eligibility Timeframe**

Due to the various patterns of study at the University, Beds SU gains and loses members during the election period. In recent years, this has caused some confusion as students who were members at the time that they nominated themselves, were not members by the time that the team came to do basic checks at the close of



nominations. As a result, it is proposed that a date and time be set to take a snapshot of the membership data to form the definitive list of who is eligible to stand in that set of elections. The paper outlines the rationale behind the team's decision this year and seeks to identify members who may be adversely affected (i.e. lose their opportunity to run in an election). This should be a short-lived issue/drastically reduced in future years due to the recent approval of a standardised academic calendar for the next 5 years.

Proposal for 2022 Elections is the data snapshot for the 2022 Election be taken at the opening of nominations, this year set for Monday 10th January 2022.

The trustees were advised that when a student stop being a student they drop of our system. We have had situations in the past that by the time voting had started the candidates were no longer students, one potential candidate had an appeal outstanding with the University so was still on the register but was no longer registered by the time campaigning had started. The situation at the moment is unfortunate and complicated.

The trustees enquired what the provision was for interrupting students, from an SU view. ie can they still assess advice? They were informed that the Union does not get data for interrupting students but if they come to advice, we do support them as associated students. The trustees also enquired if the data would be static and were advised that the Union is working on developments that enable manual additions.

The Board **agreed** the data snapshot should be taken on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 to determine candidate eligibility.

## **10: Additional Business Items**

### **10a) Block Grant strategy**

The paper is taken as read.

The trustees advised that selling Project Outreach to the University could be an option as they would value it greatly and it aligns with their strategic aims. They also wondered if there was a role for some kind of broader PR campaign selling success



stories. The Impact report was full of really good news stories and the benefit the Students' Union brings.

**Action** to report to the Board the plan for the 'PR' campaign to increase awareness of the Union's achievements with the University.

#### **10 b) Affiliations & Payments to affiliated bodies**

The paper was taken as read. Beds SU is a member of the National Union of Students (NUS); it pays an affiliation fee to NUS to become a member. Annually the trustees are asked to review the payment and accountability of such payment. The trustees **approved** the payment of the affiliation fee.

#### **10 C) Impact Report**

This is provided to the trustees for information. Head of Marketing advised that Cassandra Power had done a great job producing the Impact Report, working with staff across the union to produce the report in what had been an extremely challenging year, but outstanding achievements had still been reported, especially in the digital field.

#### **10d) Beds SU Survey**

The trustees had been provide with the Beds SU insights and analysis report. This had been written by a new member of Membership services staff and they had produced a high-quality report, it was quite a read but very insightful. It had been provided for information and to show how our strategy is in line with the student experience.

The trustees advised that there appeared to be a huge problem at EES which is dragging down the scores. Is this a location perception or expectation problem? Have we an action plan to target this area of concern? The CEO advised that 90% of EES students were based at Bedford. The new Bedford reception was now up and running to increase the Unions visibility and awareness. The students felt that they didn't want so much but felt weren't getting anything. The majority of EES students are mature students who commute to campus so their expectations would not be high. They are harder to reach cohorts, so we have started doing ad hoc activities with course staff ie



go into classrooms before Fresher's. They are students that are hard to keep in contact with but we have made a start

The trustees also noted that white students were less likely to consider themselves as members. The CEO advised that they would sense check the strategy and look for any gaps. The report has given us insights for next year and will be very helpful during the Block grant negotiations. The trustees asked if the report would be shared with the faculties and were advised that it would be but previously two faculties had come back and said the response rate wasn't high enough.

## **10 e) Annual Members Meeting**

A recap of what happened (especially what changed) for the Annual Members' Meeting in 2021 and an outline of what is planned for the year ahead. The pandemic forced a change in approach to the Annual Members' Meeting which saw the "meeting" go both 100% virtual and asynchronous (on-demand). The 2021 Annual Members' Meeting was the first in several years to reach (and exceed) quorum, and without the use of physical incentives. Looking ahead to the 2022 Annual Members' Meeting, a similar approach is proposed, with comments and suggestions welcomed in these very early planning stages

The trustees advised that they did not have any questions on the paper and were advised by Head of membership to email if they thought of any queries.

## **11.AOB**

The date of next meeting 28<sup>th</sup> March 2022 via zoom if anybody wants to request an in person meeting, please email and we will put out a poll

The trustees thanked SLT and the wider staff team for all their hard work during term one.