



**UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN STUDENTS' UNION  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Published Minutes of the Board of Trustees held on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015  
at 10:00am in the Students' Union Boardroom.

**Present :** Brian Alcorn, President (Chair) Olivia Hill VP Welfare and Community, Scott Davidson Vice Chancellors Nominee, External Trustee Victoria Langer Vanessa Wilson External Trustee, Jenny Lowthrop External Trustee, Roger Buttery External Trustee, Matthew Smeeth Student Trustee, Jack Maddock Student Trustee, James Loveday Student Trustee and Jennifer Johnson Student Trustee (entered on agenda item 11).

**Also in Attendance:** James Brooks Chief Executive and Hannah Coleman HR and Office Manager.

**1.1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Hayley Jayne Wilkinson VP Activities and Nyasha Takawira VP Academic Affairs.

**1.2 Declaration of Interest**

**No Declaration interest was received.**

**2. Minutes of the meeting**

**Agreed:**

- The minutes of the previous meetings held on the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2014 were agreed as an accurate record.

**3.1 Matters Arising**

**Noted:**

- The Alterline review of other Union's Advice Services was circulated to the Board.
- Running commentary has been inputted on the KPI tracking form.
- The publication of Board minutes is a separate agenda item. President Brian Alcorn met with Vice Chancellor Mary Stuart who indicated that it was the Board's decision to publish the minutes.
- The amendment has been made to the motion.
- The outcome of the appeal was written to Rugby League, no reply was received.
- Chief Executive James Brooks has been officially put onto the Executive Board.

**4. Finance**

**Noted:**

- All documents taken as read.
- All documents go through the Finance Subcommittee with Finance Controller Dean Howard in attendance.
- The decision was taken to close The Swan and Engine Shed/Tower Bars over the Christmas Period.
- External Trustee Roger Buttery would like to meet with Finance Controller Dean Howard to discuss the reports.
- Issues with Lloyds Bank have not been resolved. Mandates which allow the electronic transfer of money have not been updated and as such payments above £10,000 are rejected. An official complaint has been submitted.
- The Students' Union will look to tender banking services next year.

**5.1 Sabbatical Officer KPI Tracking Form 2014-2015**

**Noted/Discussed:**

- Annual Membership Survey (AMS) started last Monday and has been incentivised with a launch event and prize giveaways. There has been a response rate to the AMS.
- Target for attendance on committees is inclusive of apologies.

- It was questioned if aiming for 0% of students answering strongly agree/agree to the question on loneliness was realistic.
- KPI's can be reviewed next year and as part of the new strategy.

## **5.2 BUCS Team Report**

### **Discussed:**

- There has been no walkovers yet.
- Women's football and rugby league are doing well even though they have had no Union funding.

## **6.1 Chief Executive's Report**

### **Discussed:**

- No further action has been taken to date regarding the Trademark of The Shed. Planning permission has been approved for the new signage.
- The Union could update the electoral commission on what has happened.
- The Union is following the Charity Commission guidelines.
- The University SMT are identifying a time to invite all candidates onto campus to provide opportunity for free political debate.
- The campus is not public. Candidates do not have the right to walk onto campus at will and sell products.
- Other Universities have the policy which has been adopted including Bishop Grotteste.
- The Charity Commission should be looking into similar issues to minimise the risk to organisations.

### **Agreed:**

- Chief Executive James Brooks to discuss the issues regarding the general election with NUS.

## **7.1 Strategic Themes KPI Tracking Form**

### **Noted:**

- The employability working groups did not continue to convene as they were not fit for purpose. The Careers service has the resources available to lead on employability whereas the Union does not at present.
- The Union agreed to support the Careers events through promotion and publicity.

## **8.1 Board Minutes Publication**

### **Discussed:**

- It is important that the Board is transparent.
- Few students have reported to have asked for the minutes of the Board which is not a high ratio compared to the staff resource required in the process proposed for publishing the minutes.
- Other Student Unions publish their Board minutes.
- Publishing the minutes would provide a better understanding of the Board of Trustees.
- The Union has a policy for No Freedom of Information. There could be a Q&A on the minutes at Student Council.
- Analytics could be produced on how many click rates occur on the published minutes.

### **Agreed:**

- Board Minutes to be published following the proposed process.
- Advertise that the minutes are being published.
- Bring a report on the usage and demographic of who is looking at the minutes to the next Board meeting.

## **9. Unconfirmed Minutes of Meetings**

### **Noted:**

- The membership of Sub Committee to be reviewed in June.
- Sabbatical Trustee Olivia Hill to continue to take up position on Election Sub committee should any action be required following the election results.

### **Agreed:**

- All minutes were approved subject to amendment in Election Sub Committee Minutes; External Trustee Vic Langer was present at the Elections Sub Committee through Skype.

## **10. Student Council Motion**

### **Discussed:**

- The policy needed to be reviewed. The Union's policies remain intact for 3 years.
- Student Council recommended including Britain First to the list.
- Prescribed terrorist organisations that the Government published could be put on the list.
- The list should be broader to allow for discretion to grant or not grant permission for particular organisations.
- The potential for public disorder is covered within the External Speakers Policy.
- The motion is a student political policy based on the NUS drafted version to prevent Sabbatical Officers sharing a platform with the names on the list as a statement of principle.

### **Agreed:**

- The Motion was approved including the recommendation by Student Council of the VP Welfare and Community annually reviewing the list.

## **11. Charity Commission Review**

### **Noted:**

- No email has been received as yet from the Charity Commission following their visit.
- James Brooks was commended for how well the Charity Commission visit went.

## **12. Risk Register**

### **12.1 Finance Sub Committee Recommendations**

#### **Noted:**

- Lincoln Council are to put money into the community cohesion in the West End.
- There has been substantial progress made on resolving the fire alarm issue with the University estates department identifying and agreeing to the work which is needed to be done to make it fit for purpose. Temporary fire orders are currently in place. A meeting in April with Estates has been scheduled to review the progress made.
- A process will be put in place to 'flag' any attempt of room bookings using the University timetabling system which does not comply with policy. The process will require a declaration by the individual who books the room.
- It would be beneficial if this process can be adopted by the Union due to Sports and Societies room bookings.
- The University's Freedom of Speech policy is not being updated until the terrorist document goes through government. The University Secretary Paul Walsh is keeping the Union informed of conversations happening with the conference office.

#### **Agreed:**

- The recommendations for the Risk Register were approved.

## **13. Policy Approvals**

### **Noted:**

- The Business Fundraisers and Commercial Partners Policy was produced following an internal finance audit carried out based on good practice recommended by the Charity Commission. The policy could be used for Commercial Partners; BAM and Pyramid Posters.
- The Union is to meet with Unison to consult on the Social Media Staff Policy. Unison have reported they have substantial changes to be made to the policy. The Union's policy is based on the University Social Media Policy.
- Point 5.1 "getting a colleague to check the content before it is published" within the Social Media Policy may not be realistic to expect. Effective training should minimise potential risks when staff are using social media.

- The Acceptable Use Policy would cover monitoring of IT resources. James Brooks has the authority to access employee's ICT accounts through the helpdesk if required.
- The Volunteering Policy could include international volunteering and may need clarification of who purchases the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) checks.
- The Sports and Societies Funding Policy does not stipulate an appeals process as it goes through Executive Committee and is rejected on the grounds of Ultra Virus.

**Agreed:**

- Point 5.1 "getting a colleague to check the content before it is published" to be removed from the Social Media Staff Policy.
- Volunteer Coordinator to amend the Volunteering Policy to include International volunteering and clarify who purchases the DBS either the Union or the volunteering organisation and send to External trustee Jenny Lowthrop for approval outside of Board.

**14. Trustees Terms of Office Extension**

**Noted:**

- Matthew Smeeth declared a conflict of interest due to being named within the proposal. It was recommended that Matthew Smeeth is included in the happy for discussion but not the decision.
- Currently, Student Trustee positions start and end at different dates. To support terms of office continuity and training, it is proposed that Student Trustee positions run alongside Sabbatical Trustees terms of office.
- Student Council has approved a VP International Officer subject to funding from the University. The Membership of the Board can be reviewed by the Board.
- The Articles of Association stipulate that the terms of office should run alongside the academic year.
- A by-election is scheduled for the vacant Student Trustee Positions to run alongside the Course Reps and Sports and Societies Reps elections.

**Agreed:**

- Trustees Terms of Office extension was approved.

**15. Standing items on Board Agendas**

**Agreed:**

- The standing items on the Board were approved.

**16. General Election 2015**

**Noted:**

- Document was tabled.
- The campaign to educate students to register to vote in partnership with Lincoln College and Bishop Grotteste, in compliance with the Lobbying Act.
- A total of 658 students registered to vote on National Voter Registration Day on the 5th February 2015.
- VP Welfare and Community Olivia Hill has secured restricted funding from NUS.
- The Government are due to invest £530,000 into registering young people to vote with £380,000 going to NUS which all Unions can bid for. The limit that can be bid for could be in excess of £10,000.
- Costs have already been incurred which have not been budgeted for. Publicity materials have already purchased with £100 for banners will hopefully come out of the nus funding.
- A long term benefit to the Union and for students could be sourced through the NUS funding.

**Agreed:**

- An overspend of £450.00 was approved. Approval of further funding is dependent on the outcome of the bid for the NUS funding.
- The Board to be updated accordingly on any other plans regarding the General Election 2015.

## **17. Finance Sub Committee Recommendations**

### **Agreed:**

- All recommendations were approved.

## **18. SUMS- future development plan.**

### **Noted:**

- SUMS is getting a lot of attraction nationally and is being seen as sector leaders for website.
- The trademark of SUMS has been submitted but not yet confirmed.
- Any future earnings with SUMS needs to be carefully considered to not hinder the development of it for the Union and its membership services.
- Two other partners could be brought on board to reduce costs which could be reviewed within one year and expanded with other Unions if successful.
- Commercial advice should be taken to find the most appropriate vehicle for development of SUMS.
- The development of SUMS has been done at the Union by talented Graduates who can build the system.
- Hull University Union contributes financially to the development of SUMS as they do not have the staff resource.
- Head of NUS Digital is due to visit the Union.
- SUMS is being demonstrated to the University Finance and ICT departments are looking into a cashless service within their Commercial services.
- SUMS will need to be taken out of the Charity should it expand financially and be put into the Trading Company.

### **Agreed:**

- James Brooks to speak to Director of Research and Enterprise Andrew Stevenson for commercial advice regarding SUMS.
- Update the Board accordingly on progress made with SUMS.
- Delay in the partnership with two other Unions until an update has been sourced from Hull University Union for Board approval.

## **19. Democracy Commission Review**

### **Noted/Discussed:**

- A review was undertaken on the student democratic structure by an advisory panel of ten engaged students from different demographics of the Union.
- A fifth Sabbatical officer; VP international Officer was proposed to address the growing numbers of international students.
- Vice Chancellor Mary Stuart has not formalised the allocation of budget for the fifth Sabbatical Officer but has indicated that funding for the Officer would be on top of the block grant.
- The proposed zone structure would support in the scrutiny and accountability of Officers. Student Council would have more time available to debate motions and policy through the zone structure.
- Additional staffing resource still needs to be reviewed.
- Brian Alcorn was commended for his work on the Democracy Commission Review.
- The President and VP International Officer will be on the membership of each zone. VP's can attend other zone meetings. Knowledge of each zone should be shared at Executive Committee.

### **Agreed:**

- The proposed recommendations were approved in principle, noting the budget for the 5<sup>th</sup> Sabbatical officer.

## **20. LGPS Pension Scheme**

### **Noted:**

- Peoples Pension to be introduced to all new employees within the Charity in line with junior members of staff wishes and the Limited Trading Company of 1%,3% and 5% contribution rate.

- Peoples Pension gives the Board discretion to add in a better pension scheme if they wish to attract Senior Managers.
- Pension auto enrolment will cause problems with student members of staff if they have to pay contributions.
- Unison questioned if the Union could allow new employees into LGPS should they be enrolled within it already.
- It would be unfair on other employees to offer any new employee enrolment into LGPS.

**Approved:**

- Proposal to cease LGPS and offer new employees the Peoples Pension was approved.

**21. Sabbatical Officer Written reports**

**Noted:**

- Reports taken as read. VP Academic Affairs Nyasha Takawira can circulate a report due to her absence.
- VP Welfare and Community Olivia Hill was commended for being able to attend the housing accreditation scheme panel. No student representative has been able to sit on the panel before.
- The new Activities dashboard was commended.
- The Executive Committee approved £1000 to be allocated for a community fund day on campus.
- There are 16 candidates for full time positions for elections which includes 11 females.

**22. Health and Safety**

**Noted:**

- A student has broken his collarbone whilst out in Snowdome.
- A student has broken his leg whilst playing football.
- Significant progress has been made on the fire alarm system which should be resolved by April.
- The University have agreed to audit Health and Safety within the venues.
- The Front of House and Safety Coordinator Wayne Granger is completing a NEEBOSH and IBOSH course.

**23. CEO Appraisal**

**Discussed:**

- The CEO should have a regular progress review to set objectives and discuss support.
- It was questioned if reviewing the paperwork after each Board and having the agenda item as a standing item was necessary.
- It is important that the CEO has informal conversations with the Deputy Trustee and Chair of the Board regarding progress and support.
- The Board of Trustees could potentially change and there is no documentation currently that has recorded the Board's satisfaction with the CEO's performance.
- The CEO's job description needs to be updated.

**Agreed:**

- The CEO to have an annual progress review undertaken which is reviewed every 6 months.

**24. Any Other Business**

**Unison**

**Noted/ Discussed:**

**Agreed:**

- James Brooks to circulate a paper detailing alternatives to Unison for approval.

**Associate Membership**

**Noted:**

- Ambulance service in Lincoln would like to use the venues within the Union. Associate membership for the ambulance service was proposed by VP welfare and Community Olivia Hill to allow the membership to be free of charge.

**Agreed:**

- VP Welfare and Community Olivia Hill to review if the ambulance service is private or if it is East Midlands Ambulance Service and email this information to the Board for approval of associate memberships.

**25. Date of next Meeting:** 15<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

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Chair

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Date

Published