



AberSU
Trustee Board Meeting
8 May 2014
Committee Room

Present

Ioan Evans (IE) – AberSU President, Chairperson & Trustee
Mared Ifan (MI) – AberSU UMCA President & Trustee
Laura Dickens (LD) – AberSU Student Support Officer & Trustee
Grace Burton (GB) – AberSU Student Education Officer & Trustee
Olivia Prewett (OP) – AberSU Student Activities Officer & Trustee
Stephen Meachem (SM) – AberSU External Trustee
Elfyn Jones (EJ) – AberSU External Trustee
John Glasby (JG) – AberSU CEO
Catrin Hopkins (CH) – AberSU Finance Officer
Andrew Morwood (AM) – AberSU Membership Services Manager

In attendance

Anmarie Evans – AberSU Board of Trustee Clerk.
Jacob Dafydd Ellis, Miriam Williams and Will Atkinson – Incoming Officer Trustees (observing only)

1. Apologies for Absence

Estelle Hart (EH) – AberSU External Trustee
Christopher Lloyd-Jones (CLJ) – AberSU Postgraduate Trustee

2. Approve Minutes of Meeting held 21st February 2014

Minutes of the previous meeting, held on the 21st February 2014 were approved as a true record of account.

Proposed: IE
Seconded: OP

3. Matters Arising

It was suggested that the current KPI's for the Officers in the constitution are extremely out of date and have no relevance. JG stated that they are looking at this as part of the Governance review and stated that it would be a good idea for Officer KPIs to be set during the summer induction period.

Noted

Events – the Board had requested that a structured survey be completed to establish what type of events students want. JG informed the Board that a focus group for this purpose had been arranged in April but was very poorly attended by students. Tony Bickley will be attending the National Events Forum in September where he will get the chance to participate in debates and provide further feedback on national trends.

Action – JG (Ongoing)

IE stated that he has not submitted the Spar proposal to the Assembly due to commercial losses and the opening of the shop in Llanbadarn. JG stated that the shop is performing really well at the moment and agreed to provide an update on the shop's current position at the next meeting.

Action – JG

4. Officers' Reports

The Chair asked the Board to read over the provided Officers' Report. The Chair explained that he had not completed a report but gave a verbal explanation of what he has been involved with. He explained that since elections he has been to NUS Wales Conference, NUS UK and busy helping with 7s event due to one of our staff members having a bereavement in their family. He also informed the Board of winning the NUSW Awards for Officer Team of the Year and Campaign of the year for Housing.

The Board asked why it was necessary for an Officer to cover the role of a staff member and IE stated that as he had been Activities Officer last year, he had the specific experience and knowledge to help out. It was stated though that actions have been put in place to prevent this happening again by developing staff knowledge across the organisation .

Noted

5. Finance Report

CH ran through her previously submitted report and stated that we have a negative variance of £64k versus budget due mainly to an under recruitment of students and the move of 2000 students to Llanbadarn. CH explained that they have done a significant amount of work on Bad Debts and have reduced debtor days from 132 to 92. CH also explained that we had a successful 7s event and after reforecasting the year end budget, it shows a surplus of 1k.

SM asked for further clarification on commercial performance as it appeared events staffing costs matched revenues. JG explained that Bars/Events are performing very poorly whilst all the new daytime operations were performing well and having a positive impact.

EJ stated that we should be reviewing the budgets formerly every quarter and would like to see the balance sheet/cash flow split between the Charity and the Company.

Action – CH

CH updated the Board on Accounts sign off for 2011/2012. EJ expressed concern that this was still ongoing and stated that we must set the auditors a final date for completion. A discussion was held around the tender being a fixed fee and requested the expertise of SM in this matter. It was agreed that a separate meeting be held as soon as possible to explore this.

Action – JG/CH

6. Chief Executive's Report

JG summarised his previously submitted report. His report covered Events, Democratic Structures, iGrad Survey, Llanbadarn and the Operational KPI's. He thanked IE and OP for their hard work over 7s weekend and assured the Board that backup staff members will be in place should we experience same situation again.

With regards to the Operational Plan, EH requested that a column be added to say who is responsible for each item. EH also requested that the CEO include in his future reports any interaction with key stakeholders and a list of meetings attended.

Action - JG

7. Compliance Review

JG gave an overview of this new report and the rationale for it. He stated that since completing it, he has thought about adding an employment section. MI asked JG to consider adding the up to date Welsh Language Act as another section.

Noted

8. Election Report

AM ran through his previously submitted report and explained that overall the Elections were much less troublesome than last year but we have had some feedback that this year's campaigning seemed flat so we will investigate.

GB stated that AM should pass this report through the Elections Committee before submitting for Trustees.

Noted

EH provided her comments prior to the meeting. Under Elections Report she stated the following:

Why aren't equalities strands measured across positions?

This isn't a paper that is suitable for the Board. For the next meeting could we have a conclusion to the report that discussed impacts on KPIs and strategy as well as identifying any problems?

AM will clarify directly with EH regarding above statement

9. Governance Discussion

AM provided the Board with a report on adopting a new internal governance model. EH provided comments prior to the meeting as follows:

Deeply concerning that there is no board level responsibility for equality. I would suggest a committee is created to take these issues forward.

Action – AM to add to new model

Has the paper been discussed with the Governance unit at NUS?
The Board agreed with this and AM will contact NUS.

Action - AM

Not happy with pre deciding committee chairs, we need to appoint on skill.

Noted and will be discussed at the next ad hoc Governance Meeting.

EJ commented that this paper was a good starting point but more discussion is needed. It was agreed that a smaller Sub Group will be set up with two External Trustees to look at Governance, to clarify whether this Board has authority over the Trading company and to look at the current financial regulations. The Board approved the following members to be present in this Sub Group.

Elyfn Jones, Stephen Meachem, John Glasby, Andrew Morwood and Catrin Hopkins, IE or current president and GB.

AE will check availability and set up a meeting as soon as possible.

Action – AE

In the Governance paper, AM to change External Member to External Trustee for proposed chairs of sub committees.

Action - AM

10. Banking Provider Review

EH provided comments on the above report. She stated:

Why did this happen? In the previous meeting time restraints reduced the amount of time finance could use to focus on bad debt. This seems like a pointless exercise, disappointing that there has been no ethical review of banking in this, rendering the exercise even more pointless. Why these three banks and not more? Call for another actual review with ethical concerns at the forefront.

CH explained the reason for the review as this was one of her annual objectives and it is something that had not been done for years. Since we spend several thousand pounds each year on banking charges, it was considered prudent to review this to ensure we were getting value for money from our current provider. EJ stated that this should be a 3year tender review/exercise and an ethical review could become part of that.

The Board agreed this is the way forward.

11. Timeframe for production/dissemination of meeting papers

Following a comment previously provided by EH, it was agreed that papers will be provided 2 weeks before the meeting date, they will be disseminated 1 week before the meeting is held and once sent electronically, there can be no further reports for submission to the Board.

Agreed by the Board

A.O.B.

In a follow up to the previous meeting regarding the motion that was passed at assembly to make clubs and societies fully bilingual, it was agreed that MI and OP meet up to produce templates that can be utilised by Clubs and Societies that are practical and affordable. JG pointed out that any increased costs from implementing this would have to come from somewhere else as it had not been budgeted for and it would be reckless for the organisation to agree to this without fully understanding the cost implications. This information will be provided for the next Trustee Meeting.

Action – MI/OP

It was agreed that AM will arrange training for staff on Equality.

Action – AM

MI requested that we look at how we communicate GMs to students given the very poor attendance.

Noted

Next meeting is scheduled for Friday July 18th, 10am, Committee Room.