



AberSU
Trustee Board Meeting
1st August 2014
Committee Room

Present

Jacob Dafydd Ellis (JDE) – AberSU President, Chairperson & Trustee
Miriam Williams (MW) – AberSU UMCA President & Trustee
Will Atkinson (WA) – AberSU Student Support Officer & Trustee
Grace Burton (GB) – AberSU Student Education Officer & Trustee
Harriet O'Shea (HO) – AberSU Student Activities Officer & Trustee
Stephen Meachem (SM) – AberSU External Trustee
Estelle Hart (EH) – AberSU External Trustee
Christopher Lloyd Jones (CLJ) – AberSU Postgraduate Trustee
Joshua James (JJ) – AberSU Undergraduate Trustee
John Glasby (JG) – AberSU CEO
Catrin Hopkins (CH) – AberSU Finance Officer
Andrew Morwood (AM) – AberSU Membership Services Manager

In attendance

Annamarie Evans – AberSU Board of Trustee Clerk
Dan Francis – NUS - Observing

1. Apologies for Absence

Elfyn Jones – AberSU External Trustee

2. Declarations on Interest

EH – Joined university of Wales, Trinity St David as a staff member
JJ – Still Part Time Officer here at AberSU
JDE/MW – NUS Wales Welsh Language Officer

3. Approve Minutes of Meeting held 8th May 2014

Minutes of the previous meeting, held on the 8th May 2014 were approved as a true record of account.

Proposed: EH

Seconded: GB

4. Matters Arising

Events – the Board received a paper on a recently held Ents Forum that was attended by the Events Coordinator, Tony Bickley:- this had been received too late to include as part of the CEO report as was originally intended. EH stated that this paper was not suitable for presentation to the Board in its raw form and reiterated the importance of receiving papers in time for the electronic mail out.

A discussion followed on the viability of continuing with night time events and it was agreed that a detailed report should be prepared and presented to the Board by the Events Coordinator in the Trustee meeting scheduled for 5th December.

Action – JG/Tony Bickley

JG reported that the shop showed a year end surplus of £62k, outperforming budget by 133%. As such, the need to consider entering a partnership agreement with Spar could be considered off the agenda for the foreseeable future.

Agreed by the Board

Elections Report - AM informed the Board that he is currently working on a Strategic Plan for Elections and asked that he be allowed to present it to the Board for the next meeting.

Agreed by the Board

The Board also requested that the Elections Strategy be discussed with the Officers before submitting to full Board. The Board stated that it is important to think about how accessible it is to become an Officer, and ensure that the Strategy explains in detail what it is to be an Officer.

Action – AM

Governance Paper – A discussion was held on the set up of the Sub Group covering Governance as it was felt that from an equality and diversity side that women were not well represented on the group. The following members were agreed to sit on this group going forward:

Grace Burton (Chair), Estelle Hart, Stephen Meachem, John Glasby, Catrin Hopkins and Andrew Morwood.

Agreed by the Board

EH stated we need to complete a delegated scheme of authority and proposed that this is discussed in the next Governance Meeting.

Noted

5. Officers' Reports

JDE explained the new traffic light system in place for the Officers to measure where they are in their Manifesto commitments:- this is available to view on the website. EH explained that the Board are not there to scrutinise the Officer Reports, the reports are for information purposes only.

Noted

6. Finance Report

CH ran through her previously submitted report and stated that we are showing a provisional year end deficit of £27k, a negative variance of £50k versus budget. A poor performance in the commercial operations (-£130k) was partly offset by a better than budget charity result (+£80k).

EH stated that she would welcome an honest appraisal on whether the Entertainments side are a drain on the organisation. JJ stated that we need to look at the negative variance of Bars £102k going forward. JG explained that he had highlighted these trends to the Board approximately 6 months ago and it is something that needs some serious thought as the results for 2014/5 start to evolve.

Ongoing

Budget 2014/15 – EH stated that she would like to see contingency plan for lowering student numbers as it is better that we take a conservative more cautious view.

Action – CH

EH asked that the Board be updated in between meetings on where we are with accounts. Proposal to send out monthly financial report with management accounts.

Action – CH

CH presented the amended 2014/5 budget with changes to the reporting of food and coffee:- these have been moved to the Charity company to maximise VAT benefits. No other changes were made to the original budget.

The Board approved the amended 2014/15 Budget.

7. Chief Executive's Report

JG summarised his previously submitted report. His report covered Operational KPIs, New Officer Induction, a presence on Llanbadarn Campus, HR, NUS & NUS Wales along with a list of meetings with key stakeholders.

EH welcomed the opportunity of securing extra space for the students in Llanbardarn but stated that any commercial venture needs further discussion and asked that JG provide a report on cost implication etc. of securing this space.

Action – JG to send the report via email by week ending 8th August

A discussion was held on recent developments in NUS and NUS Wales and a concern over the potential levels of support given all the recent staff attrition being experienced. Concern was also raised over lack of an NUS Equalities Officer to support AUSU on training. The university also no longer had an Equalities & Diversity trainer. Internally delivered training organised for staff would have to be sufficient until either of these posts are filled.

Noted

8. Impact Report

JDE commented that the impact report was excellent, very striking but was something we perhaps should have completed sooner, possibly before elections.

Noted

WA raised concerns regarding Marketing constraints and how it was affecting him being able to do his job. The Board agreed that the Marketing & Communications Manager should attend the next Trustee meeting, and that this should be part of a regular program of staff attending Board meetings.

9. Staff Engagement Survey

JG ran through his previously submitted report and explained that the survey was completed to get an idea of staff morale and engagement 12 months after the restructure was completed. He stated that he was broadly happy with the engagement index but there were several specific areas of concern, particularly around a lack of respect for colleagues and lack of shared direction and purpose. Membership Services staff scores were consistently 10% worse than other departments and this was also a cause of major concern. He has discussed this with AM and various meetings have been arranged to start to address this with staff. AM explained that the staff in his team are incredibly motivated individuals but the key challenge was to find a way for them to join together.

Noted

10. Business Calendar & Dates

All meetings dates agreed.

Although JJ will have ended his post as Undergraduate Trustee for the 5th December meeting, it was agreed that he will attend with the new Undergraduate Trustee as part of his handover.

A.O.B.

JDE informed the Board that we have received Elfyn Jones' resignation as External Trustee with immediate effect. The Board agreed that JDE will contact Elfyn and send him the Board's wishes and thank him for all his hard work whilst in post. The Board also agreed that to start thinking about advertising the position following a skills audit of the existing Board.

Action – JDE

Strategic Plan – JDE will speak to JG as we may need to reassess certain areas and update the operational KPIs accordingly. Any further information will be provided for the Board.

Action – JDE/JG

JDE informed the Board that he has sent a complaint letter to Sir Emyr Parry regarding comments he made at Fellows Dinner that he felt undermined students. He is awaiting his response.

Noted

Admin – the Board asked that paper reference be added to the cover sheets of reports and that the pages are numbered. AE will look at completing the papers through dropbox.

Action – AE

NSS – Action - AM to circulate the results for the Board.

JDE commented that he has been in dialogue with Marketing & Communications Manager, Jamie Barker, regarding current procedures and issues that have occurred. He is confident that Officers are committed to finding a way forward with the working relationship and asked that JG speak to Jamie regarding this and of his attendance at the next Trustee meeting.

Action - JG

Next meeting is scheduled for Friday 3rd October, 1pm, Committee Room.