



AUSU
Trustee Board Meeting
15th May 2015
Committee Room

Present

Jacob Dafydd Ellis (JDE) – AUSU President, Chairperson & Trustee
Grace Burton (GB) – AUSU Student Education Officer, Deputy Chair & Trustee
Will Atkinson (WA) – AUSU Student Welfare Officer & Trustee
Harriet O’Shea (HO) – AUSU Student Activities Officer & Trustee
Estelle Hart (EH) – AUSU External Trustee
Peter Curran (PC) – AUSU External Trustee
Sam Bache (SB) – AUSU Undergraduate Trustee
John Glasby (JG) – AUSU CEO
Andrew Morwood (AM) – AUSU Membership Services Manager

Skype

Catrin Hopkins (CH) – AUSU Finance Officer (Finance section only)

In attendance

Anmarie Evans – AUSU Executive Assistant to the Board
Lewis Donnelly – AUSU President Elect (observation purposes only)
Kelly Keat – AUSU Activities Officer Elect (observation purposes only)
Lauren Marks – AUSU Education Officer Elect (observation purposes only)

1. Apologies for Absence

Miriam Williams – AUSU Welsh Affairs & UMCA President & Trustee,
Shaun Bailey – AUSU Postgraduate Trustee

2. Declarations of Interest

None

3. Chair’s Business

JDE updated the Board on his concerns that we have not been able to complete the Mauritius Campus operational plan requested by the University due to waiting on University Departments. He also informed the Board that only 56 provisional applications have been received to date which is far shy of the 200 forecast.

Questions were raised over whether there was any financial risk to the Students’ Union and what the reputational risk might be if this project fails. He explained that he has made it perfectly clear that the SU would not expend any resources from the current block grant on resourcing support, services or visits to Mauritius. JDE went on to explain that the University expect this service to be provided and will brief the President Elect to ensure he keeps a close check on this.

Noted

JDE reiterated the importance of confidentiality and explained that due to the confidential nature of some of the agenda items, staff members would be asked to leave the room.

Noted

JDE updated the Board on the lack of communication and poor attendance from our Postgraduate Trustee, Shaun Bailey. A discussion was held on the best way forward and the Board agreed that the Chair would hold a meeting with Shaun Bailey to discuss any issues Shaun may be experiencing and to remind him of the importance and expectations of being a Trustee.

Action - JDE

JDE stated that response time in general to the Executive Assistant's request for papers has been poor and asked that all Trustees make every effort to improve this.

Noted

JDE updated the Board on developments since the Rugby Union investigation. He explained that names were passed on to the University but having met with the University Investigative Officer, the University have decided that there is not enough evidence to this forward. This has however, become a matter for the Police.

Noted

4. Finance Report

CH discussed the previously submitted accounts for March 2015 and explained that the figures show a £43k negative variance versus budget year to date. Trading is showing a deficit of £61k versus budget, with Charity £17k ahead. Contributing factors to this are high salary costs in the Bar and Events staff being paid enhanced SIA rates which is a license condition we have to meet.

Noted

CH updated the Board to explain that our Auditors have been on site over the last two weeks to do work on 2012/13 and 2013/14 accounts. Overall they are happy with the results but are waiting on a letter of support from the University. JG is in the process of chasing this up.

Noted

PC asked that with the Trading area presenting such a financial risk, should the SU be engaging in these activities unless they could be turned round? He enquired that with the deficit as at this level, do we believe that we can turn things around by year end? CH responded to say that they are still in the process of going through the figures for Summer Ball but with only two weeks left of trading; she felt that this would not be achievable.

JDE explained that this would be part of a wider discussion later in the meeting under Agenda item 8. JDE went on to explain, further the purposes of Officers Elect, the setup of the organisation in terms of a Trading arm and Charity.

5. Membership Services Report

JDE asked AM and AE to leave the room and GB took over as minute taker. A discussion was held over the Management of Membership Services. The Board outlined their disappointment that staff and officers have had to bring this to the attention of the Board. JG outlined a complaint made against AM that is currently being investigated by University HR and will report back soon.

Officers Elect were asked to leave the room followed by JG and a discussion continued.

JG was invited back where the discussion continued and direction was given.

The Board instructed JG to remove the role of Deputy CEO from the Students' Union.

Action – JG

The Board strongly encouraged JG to support AM in finding alternative employment.

Action - JG

EH requested an externally facilitated internal review to include staff input.

Action – JG to contact NUS

6. Staff Survey Results

JG presented the results from the staff survey and was requested to leave the room. A discussion was held around staffing/structure. JDE expressed concern of staff understanding of the Governance of the Organisation and of our priorities in line with our Strategic Plan.

JG was invited back to the room and the Board requested that the full report including the comments be distributed to the Board and to be completed as standard for future surveys.

Action – JG

7. AUSU Investigation Report Conclusion

JG was asked to leave the room. EH presented her findings with the following recommendations but stated that there was no disciplinary case to answer.

- Communication between CEO and staff should become a feature of CEO appraisal.
- The CEO should issue an apology to all staff members for offence caused by the blog in question. This apology should address the view from staff that the blog undermined their role in the continuing development of Aberystwyth Students' Union.
- A process for disciplinary action against the CEO should be formulated and implemented with consultation.

EH further recommended that the following are implemented and external support is sort from NUS or NUS preferred suppliers to implement these with immediate effect.

- A review of disciplinary processes and social media policy should be undertaken with staff involvement
- An externally facilitated all staff away day planned to tackle these and those in the staff survey and to forward plan
- Regular all staff meetings timetabled
- CEO to meet one on one with staff
- A staff consultative committee is formed to discuss and agree changes to policy that impacts staff
- A focus on improving HR processes within the union

All recommendations were Approved by the Board

JDE thanked EH for her time in conducting the investigation.

JG, AM, AE and Officers Elect were invited back to the meeting for the rest of the agenda items.

8. AUSU Events Task Group Report

Following instruction from the Board, an Events Task Group was formed and the following recommendations were proposed:

- ia. Outsource Freshers' & Summer Ball to an external company or companies in order to

offload the financial and staff time risk from these events such as Bierkeller, Freshers, May Ball - **Approved**

- ib. Provide other entertainments in house through a committee system to make our events accountable to students and utilise the talent in the student body such as Winter Ball, Grad ball, Movie nights, Quizzes, Society nights, Open mic, etc. – **a discussion was had to make this committee less formal and to create a model that satisfies the Board to include as many Student Staff as possible. Action - JG**
- ii. The formation of packages that could be sold to clubs/societies/groups of students would encourage students to book the Union for their own events – **Approved**
- iii. The formation of packages that could be sold to students would encourage students to attend events at the Union – **Approved**
- iv. The Picture House should remain a quiet space (when possible) - **Approved**
- v. Marketing and Communications should be primarily responsible for events publicity and advertising and should therefore remove the individual Facebook account. Marketing and Communications should also create individual flyers and calendars for general events – **Approved**
- vi. The Working Group recommends low level investment into toilet seats, paint and ceiling tiles – **Approved**
- vii. An Entertainments Committee should be formed. This will be a committee within the structure of Manaschu AUGS Trading Ltd. and be chaired by the Managing Director – (the make up of the committee will depend on ib) **Approved**
- viii. The Entertainments Committee should meet monthly – **Approved**
- ix. Packages to be sold by reception and assisted by coordinators – **Approved**
- x. The remit of the Entertainments Committee should be:
 - To discuss programming and content
 - To approve programming and content
 - Set the work plan of the 2 Coordinators
 - Consider large requests by students/ outside companies to hold events at the Union (these will be known as the Gold events under the packages scheme)
 - Package contents and prices to be set by committee
 - Oversight of workflow between Events, Bars and Marketing to ensure continuity and cooperation
 - Coordinators and/ or Mat to be responsible for external relations such as Somewhere_to - **Approved**
- xi. The Entertainments Committee reports to the Commercial Trading Managers Meeting - **Approved**
- xii. The Entertainments Committee will be serviced by a staff member - **Approved**

A discussion was held around the role of Events Coordinator and the Board were invited to vote on making the role redundant.

For: 6
Against: 0
Abstain: 1

The current contract that exists for the Events Coordinator is to be provided to the Chair along with information on our redundancy process. The Chair will contact the Trustees to conclude.

Action – JG/JDE

9. External Trustee Membership Increase

GB took over as Chair and invited JDE to explain his reasoning for increasing External Trustee Membership to 5 (and no less than 3). JDE went on to explain that with the setup of the new Sub Committees, expectations and duties of External Trustees will increase and therefore more External Trustees are needed to service this demand. Further discussion was held around ensuring the skills audit tool is used to ensure we appoint the necessary candidates. The Board was reminded that this change would need Students' endorsement.

Approved by the Board

10. Student Survey Report

JDE resumed the Chair and invited JG to present the results from the 'Big Ask' survey. JG explained that he that he was disappointed with the response rate and a discussion was held regarding whether it would be more beneficial to include more questions into the National Student Survey that the University carry out.

Noted

11. AUSU International Strategic Plan

GB took over as Chair and invited JDE to present his paper. JDE explained his previously submitted report whilst emphasising the importance of AUSU adopting an agreement with the International Office and ensuring engagement of our International members.

JG will liaise with relevant departments on implementing an International Students' Operational Plan. **Action - JG**

Approved by the Board

12. Employment & Remuneration Committee Recommendations

JDE resumed the Chair and asked PC to explain to the Board the recommendations made by the Employment & Remuneration Committee.

- To increase the salary of the Sabbatical Officers from £16,251.96 to £17,500
- To back date the salary to January 1st 2015
- To increase the salary of Sabbatical Officers in line with the increase in cost of living as part of a 10 year plan, ending 2025

Approved by the Board

13. Sub Committee Member Approval

The following membership was agreed:

Appointments & Governance Committee Membership

Peter Curran – AUSU External Trustee & Chair

AUSU President

AUSU Education Officer

Estelle Hart – AUSU External Trustee

Chief Executive in attendance

Any other staff member as deemed necessary

Finance, Audit and Risk Committee Membership

Peter Curran – AUSU External Trustee & Chair
AUSU President
AUSU External Trustee (vacant)
AUSU Welsh Affairs & UMCA President
Sam Bache – AUSU Undergraduate Trustee
Chief Executive in attendance
Finance Officer in attendance

Employment & Remuneration Committee Membership

AUSU External Trustee & Chair (vacant)
AUSU Welfare
AUSU External Trustee (vacant)
AUSU Student Trustee (vacant)
Chief Executive in attendance

Equality & Diversity Committee Membership

Estelle Hart – AUSU External Trustee & Chair
AUSU President (ex officio)
AUSU Activities Officer
AUSU External Trustee (vacant)
AUSU Student Trustee (vacant)
Chief Executive in attendance
Any other staff member as deemed necessary

A discussion was held regarding who would service these committees and it was agreed that the Executive Assistant would carry out this role. This will be reviewed.

Action - JG

14. Managing Director's Report

GB took over as Chair and invited JDE to update the Board on Commercial activities. JDE explained that he set up a committee to discuss trading and commercial activity of the organisation. A summary was provided around actions already taken to reduce staffing costs, initiatives introduced and future possibilities.

Accepted by the Board

15. Elections Report

AM gave a brief overview of the success of elections and invited the Board to note and discuss the Elections Report.

EH stated that she would like to express her congratulations to Dan Meehan in terms of participation of the Elections but raised concerns that there was only 1 person running for most Part Time Officer roles and asked that this be investigated.

Action – AM

WA asked whether the liberation conferences were included in this year's strategy and asked that AM look into the finances of us being able to include this.

Action – AM

EH requested that we investigate whether our MSL system can be changed so that International Students don't need to self-define before having to vote.

Action - AM

16. CEO Report

JG gave a summary of his report. This covered SLTA's, QAA, Varsity, Rugby 7s and Summer Ball. JG also covered recent failures in our democratic structure as well as an update on Trustee Recruitment and an update from the Rugby Union Appeal. JDE thanked JG for successes achieved over the year.

17. Approve Minutes of Meeting held 13th March 2015

Minutes from the previous meeting, held on 13th March were approved as a true record of account.

Proposed: GB

Seconded: HO

18. Matters Arising

None

19. A.O.B.

The Board thanked the Officers for all their hard work and wished them well for future endeavours.

20. Next meeting

The next meeting will take place on Friday 7th August, 10am, Committee Room of the Students' Union.