

University of Derby Students' Union Trustee Board Summary Sheet

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| Agenda Reference: | TB/2021/ |
| Title of Report: | Minutes of the last meeting – 06.07.2021 |
| Written By: | Sally Cunningham – HR & Admin Manager |
| Presented By: | Chris Hughes, Chair |
| Action Requested: | Approval |

Trustee Board Meeting

Tuesday 6th July 2021– 5 p.m. Via Microsoft Teams

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chris Hughes (CH)

Chair

Trustee Board:

Joel Boulter (JB)

Student Trustee

Helen Roberts (HR)

External Trustee

Michael Spencer (MS)

External Trustee

Nicola Hartley (NH)

External Trustee

Tony Atherton

External Trustee

Officer Trustees:

Corey Beck (CB)

President

Josh Williams (JW)

VP Activities

Nina Cupric (NC)

VP Education

Emily Lane (EL)

VP Welfare

Observers:

Jack Tymon (JT)

President - Elect 21/22

Beth Baxtrem (BB)

VP Activities - Elect 21/22

Owen Marques (OM)

VP Welfare - Elect – 21/22

Joseph Webster (JW)

Student Trustee – 21/22

Matthew LeDoux-Deakin (ML-D)

Student Trustee – 21/22

Union of Students:

Vicky Hossack (VH)

Chief Executive

Martin Beaumont (MB)

Head of Operations

Suzy Stevenson (SS)

Head of Membership

Steve Taylor (ST)

Finance Manager

Sally Cunningham

HR & Admin Manager (Minutes)

APOLOGIES: None received.

Absent: No one

1. Welcome and Apologies - CH

Chair welcomed all to this meeting. Duly noting we are a Company Limited by Guarantee and a Charity.

Apologies / absentees are noted.

Introductions were given for the benefit of the incoming Officers Trustees and Student Trustees – JW and ML-D.

2. To approve the minutes of the Board Meeting held on 30.03.21 TB/2021/021

Minutes from the last meeting *agreed* as a true and accurate record.

3. Matters arising from: 30.03.21

Pay framework - any changes to the new pay framework and reward policy will be shared with the Board via email for any further comments – Completed.

Academy Bar proposal - MB email Academy bar Business Plan to the Board for any comments – Agenda item.

To reach a decision on freelance request from incoming President – Completed.

FOR DECISION

4. Final Budget 21/22 – VH/ST TB/2021/022

Very good news in terms of the Block Grant and funding that we have been given for the next Academic and financial year. This year we put forward a £50k uplift, outlining a number of service enhancements to our advice, sport within our Membership Services, and we were delighted that the request was met with positivity from the University decision makers.

We did ask for the University to cover the cost for the Market Research project we are about to undertake, that is an agenda item for today's meeting. That is a one-off cost, as we do not undertake this type of research every year and we certainly do not employ an external agency to run that activity for us. The University did note that within that £50k uplift, there is an amount included for that research project, and we should not therefore assume that the same level of Block Grant would be carried forward into subsequent years.

A positive outcome for the Peer Assisted Learning scheme (PAL), it was piloted this year and fully funded by the University for the Union to deliver a peer-to-peer study skills and support program for Foundation and Year 1 students. The scheme has been a great success, despite not having a full year of operation in order for us to fully evaluate the impact, even the initial results from the program were overwhelmingly positive and several key University leaders are huge advocate and supporters of the work our Peer Assisted Learning Coordinator has done on that project, and SS along with the Voice team, who should feel proud of the huge amount of effort that has gone into creating that

institutional wide scheme in a very short space of time. That has been extended and we have been given £62k towards the project.

To note - in terms of the budget presented today that has not changed vastly since we presented it at the last meeting in March:

- Changes within our Commercial areas that is as a result of the refurbishment we are now expecting to happen to the Academy Bar, so we have looked at the distribution of sales across both Blends at what that new outlet will provide for us into the new calendar year.
- Adjusted for additional income from the Furlough scheme which has been extended until the end of September. We are trying to maximise that particularly in August so that we can claim as much grant as possible from the Government that helps offset what is still quite a sizable deficit. So put forward in the budget is a deficit budget of £65,201, that is slightly changed from the draft budget we presented in March. The Senior Team are still working towards making sure that we minimize those losses in that deficit as much as possible.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- The £50k uplift will be seen in the Block Grant figure. £62k will be seen on the operating summary as the income and the breakdown of where all our income comes from. Those numbers will be shown and tracked through the year.
- In terms of the balance sheet, where we are coming out of predicting for the following year end July 2022, we will be coming out with the balance sheet showing again healthy bank asset position of £850k. That should be enhanced if our forecast shown at a £42k surplus for the year, currently we are predicting our forecast update is approximately £92k, so we should come forward with a £50k healthier balance sheet than is actually in the numbers provided.

To note – Chair gave particular thanks to VH, SS, ST and CB who have worked very hard to get this year's Block Grant proposal through. Clearly this shows that the University feels the Union is doing an outstanding job.

The Board duly **approve** Final Budget 21/22.

5. Finance Memorandum - VH

TB/2021/023

No concerns raised.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- None raised.

The Board duly **approve** Finance Memorandum.

6. Market Research – appointment - SS

To follow

Presentation of the timeline in terms of 2021 and costs for the work required from four shortlisted Market Research companies, who have specific expertise and experience working in the higher education sector. Tender will begin through to August, with the view to have a company in place ready to engage with us for September. We will go back to the companies to let them know we have a budget of £15k (INC vat), negotiations will begin following the Boards recommendations.

All include a Union staff workshop, that includes a limited number, Youth Sights staff survey is for all staff. A student survey is the key offer; we would work with University partners to make sure we have a legitimate data. Although surveys are not favorable with the University, as our students are surveyed a lot, however this is the best way we are able to gain student feedback, particularly from far reaching groups, and those who are not currently engaged with the Union.


All offered additional focus groups for a more qualitative approach, to explore particular themes so we can truly understand what students are looking for from their Union.

Alterline are the only company to offer a University staff survey, all the others suggested University staff interviews, should we choose this option, we would look to work with the University Executive Board as this would give the Union an understanding of what they are looking for.

Red Brick have worked with our Union in the past and are the only company who spoke to us about segmentation, which is a section of key questions to further understand what market segment they would place them in, backed up with advice and guidance on how the Union can communicate specifically to those segments of students, for example a high achiever, a highly engaged to those who are at University to purely focus on academic study.

All offered a report of their findings and a debrief session to allow the Union to fully understand what the research shows. Additional uplifts were offered to support the writing of the strategic plan and developing a set of strategic metrics that we could measure against our activity. Redbrick and Alterline offered additional support in terms of ongoing annual reporting and how we can ensure the strategic measures are captured throughout the next five years.

Green is included within the cost; orange represent additional costs:



Initial Comparison

| | Initial scoping meeting | Union staff workshop | All student survey | Student Focus Groups | University survey | University interviews | Segments | Report of findings | Debrief session | Strategy & KPI support | Ongoing tracking & reporting | Cost (excl. VAT) |
|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--|----------|--------------------|-----------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Red Brick | | | | | | | | | | Additional £6,500 | Additional £3000 per annum | £12,629 (+ £1840 incentives) |
| Alterline | | | | 30-40 students | Open ended q's | 10 x interviews | | | | | Additional cost £1250-£8950 per annum | £15,100 - £19,550 |
| Social Engine | | | | | | 8 x interviews | | | | Additional £4,600 | | £17288 |
| Youth Sight | | Staff survey £8,088 additional | | | | Stakeholder workshop £4,440 additional | | | | | | £20,330 - £30,770 |

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- To clarify the £25k listed in the Block Grant application was inclusive of a contribution from the Union which we had already provisionally included. So, whilst we anticipated a £25k cost to the project, the University have not given the Union the full amount towards it.
- Social Engine are based in the West Midlands (who specialise in working with Unions), although none of the companies are local to Derbyshire.
- In relation to the scoping meetings, a return on investment and the impact of their work on other institutions /Universities - Youth Site certainly focussed on a return on investment, they are currently working with Derby University in recruitment research, looking at prospective students and what attracts them to Derby. They spoke on linking those pieces of research by overlaying the University research with what showed for the Union.
- A key part of the initial proposals was to ask, 'what experience have you got in reaching the broader student voice as possible?' We are different to other Unions; in that we do not have the direct contact details of all students. For the work that will happen with any company, the Union will need to work with the University to secure a legitimate interest to gain the data to reach the students that we cannot already speak to.
- We have recommended Red Brick to other Unions who have sought similar support or services. The company manage to return a good survey response rate, hold the focus groups, that work without any struggle to gain feedback. It proved a success for us when we used them to formulate our strategic plan.

Action: Once further information has been sought resulting from conversations today the Board to approve Market Research company via email – to appoint in time for September – data completed with reports by the end of January 2022.

The Board duly **note** the appointment of a Market Research role.

7. KPIs 21/22 - SS

To follow

Presentation of our KPIs that include objectives and the key performance indicators (slides are to accompany the minutes).

In brief,

1. Building a vibrant student community

2. Support you through all transitions of the student journey by connecting you with each other

3. Developing you through transformative opportunities

4. Championing clear and effective Student Voice

5. Delivering flexible support and guidance

6. Create data driven positive outcomes

EL left the meeting at 5:50 pm

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- Consider looking at including the measure of democracy in terms of the Elections and to include the diversity around that. We know the numbers of students who vote is not high in contributing towards the election process, pushing that higher would appear to be an important KPI going forward.
- We do have KPIs and objectives at a team level that focus on increasing voter turnout and increasing the demographics in that area, whether that be their course, ethnic origin, or gender. We can certainly start to share the student engagement in that area if that is of interest to the Board.
- In terms of a KPI our focus has been in making sure we have a good field of candidates who then go out to campaign and secure those votes. It is something internally that we are constantly monitoring to try and increase each year. That to be reflected within our KPIs for this year is no problem to do.

The Board duly **approve** KPIs 21/22.

TA left the meeting at 6:00 pm

FOR DISCUSSION

8. Union Impact Report and KPIs 20/21 - CB/SS

TB/2021/024

Writing this document was a rewarding experience. It shows an honest reflection of the year and looks to recognise some of those challenges and the risks that we have taken - with the support of the Board, and the collaboration with the University that has enabled the Union to achieve significant wins that are detailed within the report.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- A great document and makes people feel proud to be a member of the Board of the Students' Union.
- Credit to Union employees and Officers for all of that work and contribution within the report, given the circumstances of this past year we have produced many things worthy to note.
- The impact report has been submitted at our last Student Affairs Committee, that include heads of contact, senior and key University staff that we work with, and was presented excellently by CB at Governing Council and at Academic Board that include academic staff and professional services that sit on that large committee.
- The report is written for students, so we will ensure our marketing team share the document and pull-out key achievements that will be shared across our channels.
- We will approach the University's student communications team to send this out via email with a link to the full document on our website.
- The Union are now bond holders. For those who are familiar with the Derby local business environment, we are fully paid members of our local business network with many opportunities for the Union to share our good news stories through that link.

Action: To look at getting messages across to prospective students and local businesses in terms of the Impact Report.

**9. Academy Bar Refurbishment – MB
Executive Summary**

Paper below

This paper provides an update to the Trustee Board regarding the currently proposed refurbishment of the bar including current costs, timescales, and risk updates.

Principle Information

At the 30/03/21 Trustee Board meeting we discussed the potential refurbishment of the Academy Bar and the Unions financial contribution to the project, should it go ahead. During this meeting, there was a belief that the project would be greenlit, to open the new outlet in September for the start of the new academic year. This timescale is no longer realistic due to the following factors:

- The requirement for the space to have new heating and ventilation systems installed has significantly increased the price. The original project cost was estimated to be in the region of £300k, however, the new estimate is approximately £675k. Despite this increase, there has been no request for the Union to go beyond its potential £150k investment. This estimate also includes refurbishment works of the decking area as requested by the board.
- The increase in cost has led to the project being required to go through the University Executive Board (UEB), which was originally pencilled in for discussion at the 14/06/21 meeting. At the time of writing this report, it has still not been discussed and appears to be stalled in the purgatory that is University decision making.

These factors were outlined during the Finance and HR Committee meeting on 18/06/21, with 3 options put forward. These options were:

- Option 1 – The University delivers a small project this summer to improve heating and ventilation systems alongside decorating the space. The full refurbishment works would take place next summer, resulting in the space being required to operate as a bar for the next financial year.
- Option 2 – The University completes the full refurbishment works this year; however, this would result in the bar not opening until December. Given the delays in the project being discussed at UEB this would now be January or February.
- Option 3 – The University does nothing this year and completes the full works next summer.

The HR and Finance Sub-committee determined that option 2 would be the more favourable one based on the financial information and views of the committee.

Despite there being a commitment for additional information to be provided in advance of this board meeting the failure of UEB to discuss this means there are no further updates or plans for the board to discuss or decide on.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- The Board agrees with the direction outlined by the Finance and HR Committee, with regular updates provided digitally.

- In an attempt to move this project, forward VH will pick up the discussion with the Vice Chancellor in the coming weeks, and at the Project Board meetings connected with the Business School, where a catering proposal strategy will be considered. Currently the options the Union has are purely commercial – with optional retail and café spaces.
- The University does not appear to be scaling back on some of the improvements it wants to make on site. The Library will still be the main one, with a digital one based at the Business School in the city centre.

The Board duly *receive* Academy Bar Refurbishments update

FOR NOTING

10. Finance Update (May) - ST

TB/2021/025

Summary: Operating results

Income summary 10 Months to 31 May 2021

| | Budget £000s | Actual £000s | Variance £000s | Forecast £000s |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Grant + JRS | 863.3 | 932.2 | 68.9 | 919.5 |
| Core/Support | 107.0 | 44.8 | (62.2) | 51.5 |
| Venues | 81.0 | 161.3 | 80.3 | 104.0 |
| Retail | 146.4 | 125.9 | (20.5) | 107.2 |
| TOTAL | 1,197.7 | 1,264.2 | 66.5 | 1,084.2 |

Net Surplus/(Deficit) 10 Months to 31 May 2021

| | Budget £000s | Actual £000s | Variance £000s | Forecast £000s |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Core/Support | 73.4 | 192.0 | 118.6 | 198.6 |
| Venues | (55.2) | (26.4) | 28.8 | (30.6) |
| Retail | (55.0) | (26.1) | 18.9 | (39.9) |
| TOTAL | (36.8) | 129.5 | 166.3 | 128.0 |

Sales/Net Income

Grant Income - Net gain of £41.6k (budget to date) from extended CJRS, though £17k deficit to forecast, due to changed work patterns.

Welfare - £8k college income budgeted, not proceeding, but £3k recovered this month for 2019/20 Buxton living room refurb.

Other cost centres performing to within +/- £2-3k tolerance of net income forecast, Keddies £5k deficit.

Balance Sheet

Cash - Bank position shows a positive movement by £159k during the period to £1.02m bank balance, drivers being mainly Covid-JRS income driven £183k YTD

Trade Debtors – Balance at £49k, UoD balance £43k

Other Debtors – Mainly prepayments - Insurance £7k, NUS affiliation £3k, April accrued CJRS income £8k.

Trade Creditors – Balance £30k, UoD balance £NIL.

Other Creditors – Accrued costs - audit £10k, Nuffield hire £9k, general PO commitment £17k. Preferential creditors – PAYE/NIC £17k and VAT £14k Covid deferment from Apr.'20 to March-Dec '21 (instalments).

Reforecast – Current end-of-year surplus estimate £97k.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- Explanations given by ST in terms of finance update for the benefit of our new Officer and Student Trustees.

The Board duly **note** Finance Update (May).

JW left the meeting at 6:30 pm.

11. Union Trends Report – SS

TB/2021/026

One other area to highlight from the Trends Report is the increase in the number of cases that the Advice team have seen in students engaging in 'contract cheating'. This will become a key campaign for the Union next year as a result of this.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- None raised.

The Board duly **note** Union Trends Report.

12. CEO Report - VH

TB/2021/027

VH took the opportunity to express her thanks to NH and her colleagues in providing the framework and initial thinking in what the Unions pay framework now looks like, and to TA who offered his time to support our managers with some training.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- A number of staff have enjoyed returning to the office, equally a number have shared concerns in terms of returning on site. We will work with those individuals and their managers

to offer reassurance, being clear our offices are Covid safe and that we are anticipating their return.

The Board duly *notes* CEO Report.

13. Officer Scrutiny Reports – OT’s

TB/2021/028

Chair thanked the current Officer Trustee Team in all that they have accomplished this year, realising the constraints of this past year, and acknowledging all they have achieved.

CB – will return to study, taking up an MSc in a Sport Scholarship at Loughborough University.

EL – will return to teaching as well as joining Derbyshire Mind as an external Trustee Board member.

JW – will begin a MSc in 2022 academic year, as well as considering some job offers received.

NC – has been successfully elected for a second term in her current role as Vice president (Education) 21/22.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- The Board wishes the outgoing team the very best for their futures.

The Board duly *note* Officer Scrutiny Reports.

14. Any Other Business - CH

Chair gave particular thanks to HR for her support over the last three years, her passion for the students has been visible throughout along with the skills brought to the Board. And of course, to JB for his tireless support in his role as Student Trustee, wishing them both well for the future.

To note – congratulations to our outgoing Officers and JB have received Honorary Life Membership from the Union. This shows the impact they have had as students and Officers.

Chair thanked everyone for today’s meeting, reminding members to make contact should anyone require additional support.

Meeting ended at 6:50 pm.

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 2nd November 2021 - Microsoft Teams.

Trustee Board Meeting Action Summary 06.07.2021

| No | ACTION | ACTION OWNER | DUE DATE | STATUS OF THIS ACTION |
|----|--|--------------|------------|-----------------------|
| 1. | <i>Once further information has been sought resulting from conversations today the Board to approve Market Research company via email – to appoint in time for September – data completed with reports by the end of January 2022.</i> | SS | Mid-August | |
| 2. | <i>To look at getting messages across to prospective students and local businesses in terms of the <u>Impact Report</u>.</i> | SMT | | |

COMPLETED

OVERDUE

OUTSTANDING

ONGOING

DRAFT