

University of Derby Students' Union

Trustee Board Summary Sheet

Agenda Reference:	TB/2020/001
Title of Report:	Minutes of the last meeting – 21.01.2020
Written By:	Sally Cunningham, HR and Admin Manager
Presented By:	Chris Hughes, Chair
Action Requested:	Approval

Trustee Board Meeting

Tuesday 21st January 2020 - Boardroom S303 - Kedleston Road, Derby

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chris Hughes (CH) Chair

Trustee Board:

Helen Roberts (HR) External Trustee
 Michael Spencer (MS) External Trustee
 Corey Beck (CB) Student Trustee
 Joel Boulter (JB) Student Trustee

Officer Trustees:

Daniella Quill (DQ) President
 Faye Davies (FD) (VP) Activities
 Melanie Welaratne (MW) (VP) Education
 Samira Mensah (SM) (VP) Welfare

Union Of Students:

Vicky Hossack (VH) Chief Executive
 Martin Beaumont (MB) Head of Operations
 Steve Taylor (ST) Finance Manager
 Sally Cunningham HR & Admin Manager (minutes)

University of Derby:

Carl Longworth Director of Estates

APOLOGIES:

Suzy Stevenson Head of Membership

Absent:

No one

AGENDA ITEMS:

Presentation of University of Derby Estates Strategy - Carl Longworth

A presentation to the Board of the Estates strategy over a 5 to 10-year period. Plans are to consolidate three vibrant University Hubs within the city. The network of these Hubs will cover Kedleston Road, Markeaton Street (to incorporate Britannia Mill) and the city centre – namely Friar Gate.

Collaboration has already taken place with Derby City Council to look at the presence, brand and identity, aiming to improve the footprint in and around Derby.

Capacity studies that adhere to the core principles being:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Transitions and Integration
- Outdoor Learning
- Socialising
- Identify Branding

The key emerging message - residential (accommodation strategy):

- Profile of room types suitable
- Student bed ratio is healthy
- Wider Derby market at limits of tolerance
- University leaking substantial amounts of 1st year demand
- Outstanding residential life programme (student welfare)
- Look at the potential for amount of beds

Action: To draft a paper on the future of the Union, supporting the Estates strategy by exploring facilities, activities and the brand.

The Board duly **receive** Estates Strategy presentation

CL left the meeting at 5:00 pm.

1. Welcome and Apologies - CH

Welcome to all board members. Apologies noted above. Duly noting we are a Company Limited by Guarantee and a Charity.

Conflict of interest noted for agenda item 7. Sabbatical Pay Review (closed item).

2. To approve the minutes of the Board Meeting held on 29.10.19

TB/2020/001

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

3. Matters arising from 29.10.19:

Reserves Policy - to remove the facility development fund, remain at three months with a target of six months – ***Ongoing – to further review on outcome of SUSS re-evaluation.***

Data Protection Agreement to be brought back to the next Board meeting for a decision – **Completed – now finalised and signed off this will be circulated to Trustees along with the minutes from today's meeting.**

FOR DECISION:

4. Annual Accounts 2018/2019 – ST

TB/2020/002

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- BHP presented to the Trustees at the last Audit and Risk meeting held in November 2019, to give an overview, showing an increased surplus from the year before and against budget.
- The reduction in debtors is good to note as the University has paid promptly.
- There is no provision in the accounts for SUSS as we currently cannot quantify this. BHP recommended that we do not include anything, hopefully we will know more in June 2020 what that liability may or may not be.
- We are currently due to go through the tender process for our next Auditors, presentations will be from local audit firms and BHP.
- ST and his team have clearly worked hard to ensure this year's audit is robust.

The Board duly **approve** Annual Accounts.

5. Budget Timetable – VH/ST

TB/2020/003

As a reminder to members of the budget process we went through last year, where we were ambitious in putting a three-year funding proposal to the University, we requested a significant uplift of approx. 10% in year 1, and inflationary increases for years 2 and 3. The University gave us the 10% uplift for the current year, which we are benefitting from. The University could not sign up to any long-term agreement but, they have asked for the block grant to come back to them again to review as per our previous process in April.

There is a strong feeling the University are expecting us to submit an inflationary increase. A conversation will be held with the Head of Financial Accounting and Control (currently the Interim University Finance Director), who sits on our Audit & Risk Sub Committee to determine what that inflationary increase might be; we will discuss anticipating a 3% increase against everything, not just our salary costs.

The only outstanding items we need to discuss are the Union taking on formally the running and revenue associated with the International Travel Awards. Currently SS is away in Iceland as part of those trips with 40 students. The University spend approximately **[Redacted]** on three trips delivered throughout the year; these costs would *not* form part of our block grant if it were, this would then affect our NUS affiliation fee which would increase as a percentage of our block grant. The Union would look at running the trips in a more cost-effective way and try to offer more places to students.

On reporting our KPI's, the University have taken a keen interest in our pilot project for Peer Assisted Learning that falls within the membership team. We will not realise the outcome of that work until June/July and, it will not form part of our decision for funding.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- We were careful to include what we needed to in the uplift we received this year. The work that MB and his team are doing in our commercial areas will afford us some growth as we have seen in the reforecast.
- If there are any areas / projects the Union would want to develop we would be able to cover that with a 3% uplift.

The Board duly **approve** Budget Timetable

6. Reforecast 2019/2020 – VH/ST

TB/2020/004

The paper presented today is summarising the additional projects and activities we want to complete due to the projected £30,000 surplus that we have as part of reforecast 1, with some capital expenditure requests items included.

To consider the external staircase in terms of the Estates strategy presentation, the expected life of that pay back period perhaps being 5 year instead of our standard ten year, as realistically we may not be in the same space. It is not at this point the SMT wish to formally request to the Board for that capital project, as we do need to consult with staff to ascertain if they would be fully onboard with the project. Should they want a staircase, it will come back to the Board for formal sign off.

We were budgeting a breakeven position at the start of the year; we have completed our reforecast that has led us to have a lot of confidence in our financial performance and generating a higher than expected level of surplus. We are suggesting rather than keeping that surplus and carrying that forward to the end of the year, we spend it on improving our services and the student experience. If it is not the direction the Board wants us to go in, we are pleased to receive that feedback, it is not necessarily signing off on those individual projects, it is more with that direction that we are currently moving in.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- Apart from the external staircase, the other capital expenditure items could easily be relocated to another site.
- If the Unions' move took place in three years (as mentioned during the Estates Strategy earlier), £25,000 over that period is a substantial figure.
- The projects we have identified will certainly have the greatest impact as well as being on our list of things to do for a while. For example, the website live chat facility is something the advice team have wanted to do for a while, but at that point in time we have lacked the cash to install it.
- The Academy is a main concern for venues, as shown in the trends in terms of having the confidence in delivering events and whether we get any attendees. We are going through a process where we will look at delivering bigger and more engaging events but holding less throughout the year.
- Retail has had a huge recovery compared to previous years, with the current Retail Manager doing a fantastic job with the resurgence he has with his team and the satisfaction we are seeing is the main key.

- Blends refurbishments is good; an objective within the operational plan is to maximise what the social space can offer.

The Board duly **approve** Reforecast 20109/2020

FOR DISCUSSION:

7. Sabbatical Pay Review – closed item – VH

TB/2020/005

DQ, FD, MW & SM left the meeting at 5:30 pm

MB left the meeting at 5:40 pm

We have received a NUS report looking at Officer pay, that prompted a look back to when was the last time Officer was reviewed, which was 2015. The paper includes a background history to the current rate of pay the Officers receive and information on the NUS report and our regional Union comparisons. Also noted is that we are due to consider a 2% cost of living increase for all staff including Officers in April 2020, this will be discussed at the Finance & HR Sub Committee next month. If that 2% increase is applied, it would increase the Officer salary to £18,914 which is slightly below the regional average.

It is good governance to review the salary and only fair on the Officers to do so, feeling comfortable to note the paper today, pending the cost of living review which will happen ahead of the next meeting. For whatever reason we do not decide to award a 2% cost of living for all staff and Officers VH suggests that we review Officer pay again.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- There is a connection that we try and tie our cost of living awards to the University, we have not yet found out what they are doing in terms of their cost of living increase.
- Any changes to our Officers salary will go to our Student Scrutiny Panel for approval of Officer pay that is decided by the membership, the next meeting is in February.
- There is certainly an argument to say that pay could detract potential candidates coming forward for Elections 2020/21.
- It is what would we consider to be a good graduate pay offer, we must make those positions seem attractive, competitive and fair for students that may also be looking at other graduate opportunities.
- Some other graduate schemes can offer considerably more than the regional 'mean' figure of £18,946; it is understood the Union are not able to offer more than that figure.
- The attraction to an Officer role is for a person who is not necessarily motivated by pay but rather a person who wants to make a difference.
- Agreement to formalise an Officer pay review to take place every three years with a recommendation.
- Suggestion to gain feedback following this years Election process to gain an insight into what stopped a student from running for an Officer position and what would encourage a student to be involved in that process.

- It is well known that other graduate schemes offer large development packages.
- It is worth noting we offer and encourage Officer development for example away days to learn from other Officers, 360-degree reviews, mental health training, mediation skills, future career support for outgoing Officers, this is something the Union is proud of being able to do.

To note: general agreement to review the Officers pay as per comments noted above on a 3-year cycle.

The Board duly *receive* Sabbatical Pay Review

Action: During the evaluation at the end of an Officers term, to gain further insight from our current Officers on the weighting of pay in their decision making.

DQ, FD, MW & SM returned to the meeting at 5:50 pm

8. Trustee Board Recruitment Update – VH

TB/2020/006

The closing date for this recruitment drive is next week, so there is still some time for people to express interest. We have two vacancies; someone with a HR background and an alumni or sector leader or someone well connected with the Derby community.

We have had a good mix of people who are considering the role, although not necessarily confirmed applications. Peridot will collate and complete an initial suggested shortlist. We will see everyone who has applied, but Peridots recommendations will be put forward on who we might want to interview. Ideally to be selected and onboard in time for the full board meeting in March.

Shortly recruitment will commence for a new student trustee member following the removal of KS.

To note: Trustees to please let VH know if they wish to be involved in this recruitment process.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

None raised

The Board duly *receive* Trustee Board Recruitment Update

9. Annual Plan KPI's Q2 – VH

TB/2020/007

It is extremely busy across the Union with lots of activity we are making good progress in terms of all our KPI's, particularly with numbers of students becoming engaged and, delivering impactful projects particularly through our programme rep scheme.

There are plenty of good things going on that we make sure we are reporting against by capturing every student that gets involved asking for their opinion on the experience and measuring those.

We have no areas of concern in terms of not achieving some of those KPI's.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- In terms of when we were setting these KPI's we did align resource to these areas and focussed on what we needed to deliver it.
- We have since identified that on the list of spending was additional resource for the National Student Survey (NSS), that opens next week. This is a significant measure for the University as it dictates their league table position and an important question for the Union which is one of our key metrics.
- We have identified from students they want more free items and better events, there are certain things the Union can do as more feel-good activities. We will look to source some environmentally friendly freebies that will be given out across this campaign period tied in with some of our messages. And, we are looking at getting the University to co-fund an end of year formal celebration event.

Action: For future submission of Annual Plans to change the font for easier reading.

The Board duly *receive* Annual Plan KPI's Q2

FOR NOTING:

10. Finance Update (November) – ST

TB/2020/008

Summary: Operating results. Income summary 4 Months to 30 Nov 2019

	Budget	Actual	Variance
Core/Support	453,380	445,471	(7,908)
Venues	219,254	217,023	(2,230)
Retail	292,045	308,898	16,852
TOTAL	964,679	971,392	6,714

Net Surplus/(Deficit) 4 Months to 30 Nov 2019

	Budget	Actual	Variance
Core/Support	(6,907)	13,938	20,845
Venues	45,834	39,882	(5,952)
Retail	28,062	33,548	5,486
TOTAL	66,989	87,369	20,380

Core/Support Comment:

General

Marketing

- NUS card sales income down on budget £5k, Contracts down £2k. Freshers up £2k.

Clubs/Societies:

- Academic societies grant brought-forward from 18/19 (£12.5 k) was released in line with spend last year. Nil released to date this year – budget (£15 k) all in September, therefore £15 k adverse variance showing due to timing only, but for both income and expenditure.
- Societies 'US fund' budget £20k only expensed when claimed, therefore £3.8 favourable variance to date timing only.

Democracy

- Budgeted income £2k related to student rep conference funding now confirmed from SAGE at the University.

Commercials Comment:

Academy – Sales volume down to Budget (£7.5k 10%), sales profit down £7k, mainly wet sales due to volume deficit (margins holding up), labour £2.5k overspend, resulting in an overall adverse £9k variance bottom-line.

Events – Sales ahead of budget (£5.5k, 13.4%), wristbands by £4k. Net surplus £7k ahead.

Blends - Sales volume £9k (11%) behind budget, margins holding up (except food 10% down, with overall gross profit £7.3k behind, labour £2k overspend, £7k adverse bottom line.

Friargate – Sales volume £9k ahead of budget, margins £7k ahead (incl. £2k Univ. "extended hours" contribution to offset £2.6k overspend on labour. Bottom line £2.9k favourable to budget.

Retail:

Keddies - Sales volume ahead of budget (£14k - 6%), 1% ahead on Gross Margins (£7.5k), labour £700 overspend, £5.77k favourable bottom-line.

Street –Sales volume in line with budget, and net deficit.

Britannia Mill - Sales volume in line with budget, and net deficit.

Balance Sheet

Cash - Bank position shows a positive movement by £198k over the period to £944k bank balance, drivers being positive trading £103k (before depreciation), supplemented by creditor increase £200k.

Trade Debtors – Balance at £52k (University £36k), has increased from Year-end (£48k).

Other Debtors – Mainly prepayments (NUS affiliation £20k, kit sponsorship £10k, University Nuffield contribution £10k).

Trade Creditors – Balance £147k, with University balance £4k.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

None raised

The Board duly **note** Finance Update (November) 2019.

11. CEO Report – VH

TB/2020/009

The University were notified they were going to be subject to an audit, commissioned by the Office for Students that was going to particularly look at the experience of part time students here at the University. As part of that audit they interviewed staff and students and asked for evidence from the University as to how they are particularly addressing those student's needs, for example how they are getting on with their degree, what they are achieving, their experience of complaints and appeals.

As part of that audit VH and DQ completed a student submission, put together in a creative way by video student case studies and using quotes from different feedback surveys. The submission aimed to be a representative as possible in showing what the part time student experience was at the University. Mainly positive feedback was received from the University, with constructive suggestions given back to the University about those areas that could be improved.

The results will be released in a couple of weeks as to whether the University have passed. VH would like to thank DQ for her support and creative influence.

Another piece of work is looking at the Student Charter, which was introduced by our VP Academic Affairs five years ago and is now due for a formal review. Students will be involved; it sets out the responsibilities of students and their rights and what they can expect to receive in return from the University.

Ongoing work with the NSS Task groups to ensure the campaign goes as well as possible.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

Discussion around NUS:

- Considering the last general election, the NUS appeared to have no impact regarding gaining student votes, yet NUS are supposed to be the organisation that represents students at a national level?
- Interestingly NUS sent out an email following the general election, showing the impact that their campaign had on students, with 600,000 students accessing NUS campaign materials, yet this did not necessarily impact upon the general election result. NUS are considering their efforts throughout the general election campaign as an absolute success.
- NUS can celebrate a win in work done to ensure students register to vote, in terms of the student voice on how they feel this certainly was not evident.
- NUS have been plagued over several years with political factions in the terms of their full time Officers, that has set them back in terms of the rest of the work of the charity and staff behind the scenes to run projects.
- It has been observed at NUS Conference around political groups that form, are their delaying tactics to get policy passed with lobbying being marred.

- There is an expectation that the reforms NUS are finalising this year will go to conference, we will wait to see the effectiveness, certainly we will pay a lot less to NUS for our affiliation under these proposals.
- It will be interesting to see if some of the changes to their governance structures make NUS more of an effective lobbying group.

The Board duly **note** CEO Report.

12. Marketing Report – VH

TB/2020/010

There is a lot of content around some of our priorities coming up, certainly for Refreshers mainly focussed for next week, the emphasis will be driving up membership for sports and societies.

Our Advice team are giving a large amount of work to appeals, Destressival is a popular campaign around mental wellbeing.

Elections has begun with nominations currently open, we now know our three existing Officers will not be rerunning for a second year, and DQ will finish her second term this year, so we will have a new Officer Trustee team for 20/21. We have important targets around Elections in terms of reaching the number of students voting.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- Our Marketing & Communications Manager is keen to attend at the next meeting to give more detailed update.

The Board duly **note** Marketing Report.

13. Officer Trustee Reports – OT's

TB/2020/011

Officers gave a summary on the report presented today, showcasing achievements so far and progress by means of their manifesto points.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

None raised.

The Board duly **note** Officer Trustee Reports.

14. Membership Services Report – VH

TB/2020/012

These reports fall in with the times of the University Students Experience and Learning and Teaching Committee meetings, this report covers the period between September to November, the beginning of the academic year.

Key to note are main issues the advisors have been supporting with in terms of the significant increase in PhD students reporting dissatisfaction with their experience as a PhD student at the University. The Union has an active PhD Rep who has been funnelling a lot of feedback to us regarding their whole experience in this first term of reporting.

University's Student Finance team was noted in terms of supporting students with Student Finance England. The Student Loans Company recently came on site to run a focus group with students on honest feedback around their experiences of student finances and particularly student loan payments.

Additional comments/clarification/recommendations:

- The Student and Graduate Experience team (SAGE) are running a Stay Safe Campaign along with support from SM. Where practical tips are offered in terms of student safety particularly the areas near to Markeaton Street and Britannia Mill sites.
- The Police will be on site promoting their Safe Neighbourhood Campaign with free resources for the students. Alongside SM will be running a similar safety campaign and offering gentle reminders to the students via social media channels.

The Board duly *note* Membership Services Report.

15. Any Other Business – All

Action: SC send calendar invitations to Board members:

Election Results Night	Friday 6 th March	7:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Academy Bar (upstairs)
Varsity	Wednesday 1 st April	All day	Kedleston Road
Education Awards	Thursday 28 th May	7:00 pm – 10:00 pm	Derby Theatre

No requests for a second closed session. Meeting ended at 7:15 pm.

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 31st March – 5:00 pm – 7:30 pm – Boardroom S303

Trustee Board Meeting Action Summary 21.01.2020

No	ACTION	ACTION OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS OF THIS ACTION
1.	University Estates Strategy - <i>To draft a paper on the future of the Union, supporting the Estates strategy by exploring areas, activities and the brand.</i>	All		ONGOING
2.	Reserves Policy - to remove the facility development fund, remain at three months with a target of six months – <i>Ongoing – to further review on outcome of SUSS re-evaluation.</i>	VH/ST	MARCH 2020	ONGOING
3.	Sabbatical pay review - <i>During the evaluation at the end of an Officers term, to gain further insight from our current Officers on the weighting of pay in their decision making.</i>	VH/SC		

4.	Annual Plans KPI's updates - <i>to change the font for easier reading.</i>	SS	MARCH 2020	
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✓ COMPLETED OVERDUE OUTSTANDING ONGOING

DRAFT