

University of Derby Students' Union
Trustee Board Summary Sheet

Agenda Reference:	TB/
Title of Report:	Minutes of Board meeting – 29/10/24
Written By:	Martin Beaumont – Head of Operations
Presented By:	Tony Atherton - Chair
Action Requested:	Approval

Trustee Board Meeting Tuesday 29th October 2024 – 5pm – Room E303 and Teams

Attendance	P/A
Trustee Board	
Tony Atherton (TA) Chair	A
Nicola Hartley (NH) External Trustee	A
Rosie Smith (RS) for the Head of Financial Accounting for the University External Trustee	P
Bradie McDaid (BM) External Trustee	P
Andy Winter (AW) External Trustee	P
Holly Lloyd (HG) (President)	P
Gabriela Gretkowska (GG) (VP Activities)	P
Pournami Padmanabhan (PP) (VP Education)	P
Jack McGuinness (JM) (VP Welfare)	P
Pieter Van Ellewee (PV-E) Student Trustee	P
Kiara Henry (KH) Student Trustee	A
Aliyu Baba (AB) Student Trustee	P
Union staff	
Emma Taylor-Large (ET-L) Union CEO	P
Martin Beaumont (MB) Head of Operations	P
Kay Jones (KJ) Head of Finance	A
Cassie O'Boyle (CO) Head of Membership	A

1. Welcome and Apologies - HL

HL, Vice-Chair of Trustee Board welcomed all to this meeting. Duly noting we are a Company Limited by Guarantee and a Charity. There is an assumption that everyone has read the papers for today's meeting, giving the opportunity for questions to be asked with clarification given as required.

2. Apologies/absentees & conflict of interest.

Apologies received from TA, NH, KH, CO and KJ.

3. To approve the minutes of the Board Meeting held on 06/08/24

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

Matters Arising

No matters arising. Actions from previous meeting completed apart from the action related to the SUSS Pension scheme. MB updated board that this action had been parked due to the financial audit taking place and that this work would recommence on return from annual leave (11/11/24)

Action – MB and KJ to continue SUSS Pension exit work and update board accordingly.

TO NOTE:

4.1 Formal Introductions

Formal introductions of the board took place. HL welcomes Bradie McDaid and Andy Winter to the board as newly appointed external trustees and looks forward to seeing their contribution and impact as board members.

4.2 Freshers/Operations Review – MB

MB delivered a presentation covering UoS Freshers activities and operational income performance. Unfortunately significant levels of detail cannot be provided at this stage in the absence of detailed management accounts, however the presentation has been put together using information available. MB covered the following information:

Freshers:

- Delivered 26 events over the two-week period.
- Generated income of **[Redacted]** from freshers fair activities.
- Received income of **[Redacted]** from UoD for Freshers wristband
- **[Redacted]** admits to Stonegate venues for Freshers events
- Over 80 give it a go sessions ran across clubs and societies
- Introduction of Union on tour
- 65 induction talks delivered

Commercial Performance

- Affirmation wristband income from UoD, with an increase in wristband usage due to the steps taking by UoS and Stonegate to secure better engagement in wristband offer.
- Increase in door sales across affiliate activities
- Outlet income:
 - Basecamp - £4,721
 - Blends - £21,725
 - OFGS - £3,338
 - MS Blends - £1,662
 - Keddies - £56,068
 - MS Shop - £4,341

MB summarised that outlet income had been impacted by a quieter first week of September than expected, with income being down vs budget across all outlets for this week. Alongside this outlets had struggled with the oversaturation of the lunchtime period, with outlets (particularly Keddies) struggling to deal with trade numbers during these periods and losing customers as a result. Furthermore, outlets such as Basecamp saw significant trade decline during the afternoon period.

Moving forward commercial will see the introduction of new product ranges within retail, seasonal specials within venues and the re-launch of the Basecamp kitchen which should lead to further sales increases.

AB queried what steps the UoS has taken to gather additional data from other Unions regarding the impact of the cost of living crisis on students and whether they are seeing similar trends to us. MB informed board that we had been working with wonkhe and had seen their starts related to this, however we had not done much work with other Unions.

Action – MB to explore information gathering from other Unions to highlight whether commercial challenges are seen across the sector.

RS queried the approach to management account production and the delays as a result of the audit taken place. Query was related to UoS being informed it could not start management accounts until closure of July following completion of financial audit. MB informed board that this approach was taken following feedback from our auditors, however UoS should reach out to SAGE directly to clarify system capabilities.

Action – KJ to reach out to SAGE to clarify system capabilities, with the aim of earlier production of management accounts during audit period.

Marketing Performance:

- Freshers income - [Redacted] with a positive variance to budget of [Redacted]
- Market trader income - [Redacted] with a positive variance to budget of [Redacted]
- Media sales income - [Redacted] with a positive variance to budget of [Redacted]

MB summarised that freshers performed well financially, with strong engagement from external businesses as a result of the hard work delivered by the Marketing and Communications Manager and the Marketing and Sales assistant. Future media sales will be challenging due to the financial pressures on business, but plans are being worked on to mitigate this.

MB finished his presentation by briefing the board on all current campaigns that the marketing team is running.

AB queried what events/activities UoS marketing is delivering solely for PGR students, with MB committing to providing this information. Upcoming UoS communications strategy will provide more information to support this also.

4.3 Officer Manifestos – HL, PP, JM, GG

UoS Executive Officers are taking the submitted paper as read and will be covering the key progress areas from their manifestos.

HL summarised her key areas as:

- **Lets be friends campaign** a key part of her remit. Working to identify hard to reach students and the activities they want to engage with. First event aimed at student carers delivered last week and although quiet is seen as a good platform for future events.
- **Talk to US Tuesdays** is slower to get launched due to calendar challenges. HL is expected to launch this fully in November
- **Enhanced social media presence** focussing on the delivery of Thursday thoughts and additional social media activity featuring Executive Officers.

PP summarised her key areas as:

- **Increasing student representation** working with the voice team to enhance the student rep system and ensure all courses are covered, alongside working with UoD to enhance student representation system also.
- **Enhancing academic support services** like PAL and develop at Derby.
- **Increasing visibility for careers and employment services** highlighting what the services offers to students, ensuring all students are away of service and how it can be utilised for their benefit

GG summarised her key areas as:

- **Enhanced inclusivity with clubs and societies** working with societies and SLS coordinators to review inclusivity plans submitted by societies and utilise these as examples for future plans. Also gathering anonymous feedback from members to drive change.
- **Increasing student engagement** working with HL on this campaign, alongside working to drive higher engagement within apprenticeships. Union on tour campaign delivered over Freshers to drive engagement amongst students at other sites and halls of residence
- **Enhancing marketing strategies** working with clubs and societies to drive enhanced marketing activities, with a current focus on Black History Month content. Alongside this work continues on BUCS takeovers, driving the sense of community amongst clubs and societies.

JM summarised her key areas as:

- **Student safety** is taking the majority of workload, with meetings taking place around the purple flag accreditation scheme, with JM attending the working group. Activity held with the local constabulary to support the campaign against violence against women and girls. Worked with local MP in relation to potential instances of mistreatment of students within employment in Derbyshire.

- **International student events** working with the International Student Officer to scope and deliver enhanced student events. Will be working with clubs and societies further identify areas that could support this.

HL commended to work ethic and delivery of the officer team, with them working together strongly on a variety of key areas.

AW queried how GG has found the induction talks with apprentices and how they are going so far. GG commented that the inductions have gone well so far, however we have only delivered a couple at this stage. Early student feedback demonstrates interest in clubs and societies alongside UoS events. However, there have been challenges in getting responses from some of the cohorts and GG in working to get responses to this.

AB challenged a gap identified in the ideas forum process and how feedback is provided to ideas places on the forum. AB would like to see better mechanisms in place that see feedback and responses given to ideas. ET-L identified that this required a discussion at Exec to ensure the feedback loop is closed.

Action – ET-L to lead agenda item at Exec regarding ideas forum and feedback loop.

Action – JM to arrange meeting with Mental Health Officer to discuss what additional mental health support/activities can be delivered to PGR students

BM queried if all societies/clubs are required to deliver an inclusivity plan on a yearly basis. GG informs board that groups are required to deliver a yearly action plan with their 5 aims for the academic year. The inclusivity plan is baked into this action plan and ensure these groups factor inclusive arrangements into their activities. This is covered in committee training, with an external company delivering EDI training to all groups.

Action – GG to share an inclusion plan with BM for review and feedback.

4.4 CEO Report – ET-L

ET-L provided an update on her CEO report which is taken as read. Highlights from report are:

- **Recruitment of two external trustees** which ET-L feels will bring new skills and knowledge to the board that will complement the expertise we already have and benefit the UoS strategic planning process.
- **Student Survey** is currently live and will help shape the strategic direction of the organisation. Alongside the ET-L will be looking to set up focus groups related to specific areas of interest. Should any board members be interested in participating in these focus groups they should reach out to ET-L directly.
- **Staff Survey Results** are within CEO report. Current plan to meet with SLT members to discuss results, prior to briefing managers and then all employees. Receipt of summary of results from external HR company, with us looking to gather staff feedback related to the PDR process and how this can be changed.

- **Enhanced meeting focus** with a drive on all staff meetings, manager meeting and delivering objectives across the organisation with a focus on bringing teams together better moving forward.
- **Enhancing UoS spaces** with work happening to explore potential presence/expansion into the Cavendish building and OFGS. MB covered that preliminary discussion had started regarding spaces in these buildings, both commercially and as a service. The UoS needs to acknowledge that its long-term future will not be at KR, there it is important to be involved in discussions regarding upcoming spaces and our place within them.

RS queried that there had not been any change in employee knowledge/understand of the Trustee Board across the organisation. RS as whether there would be an appetite for board members to attend future employee meetings to introduce themselves and share their knowledge. ET-L confirmed that she would like to ensure there is more board presence at UoS activities, including meetings, staff events/activities and UoS events such as elections and awards evenings.

RS also picked up on the continuation of poor scores related to pay, rewards and recognition, asking what ET-Ls though were on this. ET-L highlighted that she had already acknowledged this issue with employees, making it clear that although there was not currently the money to increase pay, she would instead be focussing on other ways of offering rewards and recognition. Currently she has introduced a change that gives employees an additional 3-days off over the Christmas period which has been well received by employees. It is ET-Ls aim to continue looking for these opportunities to ensure employees feel valued. Alongside this salary changes have been implemented across Advice, aligning them with the sector average, with this being mitigated by a reduction of employees within that team.

Action – ET-L to share calendar of activities/meetings with board members.

JM queried what the UoS definition of development was and whether this aligned with employee expectations of what that means. ET-L felt that the UoS and its employees were on the same page, that the UoS had and continues to invest in the development of employees to either provide promotion opportunities or equip them to seek employment opportunities elsewhere.

4.5 Financial Summary – MB

MB provided a summary of the organisations financial information which can be found in Appendix A.

UoS performed strongly in the 23/24 financial year, despite initial projections of a £47k deficit. Financial variance related to staffing changes and cost savings on salaries across multiple departments, with limited to no impact on the service delivered by the organisation.

4.6 ARC Minutes – MB

MB presented ARC minutes to board for visibility, not approval and to ensure that information discussed at ARC feeds through into full-board. During this meeting the following was discussed/approved:

- Updating and approval of Risk Register
- Approval of terms of reference
- Approval of financial procedures

Action – RS requested a tweak to wording used within matters arising of ARC minutes. ‘May’ is required to change to ‘Will’. MB to change.

RS queried lack of visibility of proposals for upcoming ASM. ET-L informed board that as highlighted within her paper ASM had been delayed to allow a longer planning period for the bigger changes the UoS would like to introduce. Any papers or changes will come to board in January prior to the ASM taking place.

Action – ET-L to ensure ASM proposals go to full board in January.

TO DISCUSS:

5.1 KPIs – ET-L

ET-L summarised the KPI’s which were provided in advance. There have been minor tweaks to the previous document, with an updated version being provided in appendix B.

KPI’s based on our strategic plan, student feedback and priorities identified during her time as CEO. KPI’s have been seen and fed into by UoD Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer. Given absence of some board members ET-L proposes sending these out to board members for review and digital approval.

RS notes that some dates have not been updated within the KPI’s with a requirement for ET-L to change these.

JM felt that some of the proposed KPI’s sat alongside strategic aims that may not have been relevant. ET-L explained that the strategic plan does not allow the flexibility she would like at this stage, therefore some KPI’s sit within the area that most relates to them. JM also queried how we will be able to track the types of students that access services and events if we cannot access the data to support/evidence this. ET-L confirmed that CO is working with the UoD to secure this data as it is within the best interest of both organisations for it to be accessible.

Action – ET-L to send updated KPI’s out to board members for digital approval. RS has already approved within this meeting.

5.2 Strategy Day – ET-L

ET-L updates board of her aims to deliver a UoS strategy day, which is organised for February 18th 2024. ET-L is seeking ideas/feedback from the board related to how they would like the session to run. Board confirmed that:

- They would like to see the meeting split into two parts. With board members having a session in isolation to external parties, with these joining an afternoon session.
- Meeting would ideally take place at OFGS, with a tour of the Cavendish building lined up if possible.

Action – ET-L to reach out to board members regarding strategy day and seek input into session

5.3 AOB

NMW Changes – MB

MB informed board that information has just released related to the NMW/NLW with the following known:

- 18-20 age range changing to £10 an hour
- 21+ range changing to £12.21 an hour

MB feels that the UoS need to utilise the lengthy notice we have of this change and strategise its response to these changes and any funding requirements the organisation may have. The UoS has always responded to the changes at the bottom level, however a review of the impact of these changes on the UoS pay progression framework needs to take place and be delivered at FHRC.

Board also accept a review is required of the additional impact of the budget once it is released.

Meeting ended at 19:00

Trustee Board Meeting Action Summary 29/10/24

No	ACTION	ACTION OWNER	DUE DATE	STATUS OF THIS ACTION
1.	Action – MB and KJ to continue SUSS Pension exit work and update board accordingly.	KJ	29/11/24	
2.	Action – MB to explore information gathering from other Unions to highlight whether commercial challenges are seen across the sector.	MB	29/11/24	
3	Action – ET-L to lead agenda item at Exec regarding ideas forum and feedback loop.	ET-L	05/11/24	
4	Action – JM to arrange meeting with Mental Health Officer to discuss what additional mental health support/activities can be delivered to PGR students	JM	29/11/24	

5	Action – GG to share an inclusion plan with BM for review and feedback.	GG	04/11/24	
6	Action – ET-L to share calendar of activities/meetings with board members.	ET-L	04/11/24	
7	Action – RS requested a tweak to wording used within matters arising of ARC minutes. ‘May’ is required to change to ‘Will’. MB to change.	MB	29/11/24	
8	Action – ET-L to ensure ASM proposals go to full board in January.	ET-L	04/11/24	
9	Action – ET-L to send updated KPI’s out to board members for digital approval. RS has already approved within this meeting.	Et-L	04/11/24	