

## University of St Andrews Students' Association

### Minutes of the Students' Association Board Meeting

Held via MS Teams on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2021, 5:00 pm

**Present:** Amy Feakes (SAF Senior Officer), Dan Marshall (Association President) Gavin Sandford (Association Director of Student Development and Activities), Emma Walsh (Association Director of Wellbeing), Andy Goor (University-appointed trustee), David Scott (lay trustee, Chair), Ananya Jain (SRC Senior Officer), Clare Peddie (University-appointed trustee), Will MacFarlane (lay trustee)

**In attendance by invitation:** Iain Cupples (Secretary to Board/HR Manager), Jillian Cowan (Management Accountant/Deputy General Manager), Sophie Tyler (Athletic Union President), Chris Clarke (Operations Manager), Dave Whitton (General Manager), Lottie Doherty (Association President-Elect), Leonie Hoher (Association Director of Education-Elect), Jess Smith (Athletic Union President-Elect), Anna-Ruth Cockerham (Association Director of Wellbeing-Elect), Avery Kitchens (Association Director of Student Development and Activities-Elect)

#### 1. Chairperson's Business

##### 1.1 Welcome

New members were welcomed and introductions were made.

##### 1.2 Apologies for Absence

Tom Groves (Association Director of Events and Services), Amy Gallacher (Association Director of Education)

##### 1.3 Acceptance of Minutes of Students' Association Board Meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021

These were **accepted**.

##### 1.4 Matters Arising

**170321.01** - this would be dealt with under item 4.

**170321.02/03** - the revised Laws were with the Court Office. In principle there appeared to be no major concerns. Outstanding changes to the Laws would be completed by June.

**170321.04** – this meeting was still to be arranged.

**170321.05** – this action was ongoing. A contract would be circulated by email for approval.

#### 2. Governance, Nominations & Staffing Committee Business

##### 2.1 Update from GNS meeting 21<sup>st</sup> April 2021

Applications for the vacant lay trustee roles had closed, a shortlist of candidates had been drawn up and interviews would take place on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021 with a view to formally appointing the new trustees at the June board.

On the corporate trustee issue, Will MacFarlane (WMac) provided a brief summary of the issues for the benefit of new trustees before moving on to update the board on progress. Advice now indicated that creating a corporate trustee structure may not be the best route as the change of structure could trigger pension liabilities. Final advice was due to be received any day but incorporation in some form could be recommended instead. Trustees would be updated by email when this advice was received. David Scott (DS) noted the need to engage with stakeholders including the University as early as possible if a substantial change was likely. DS also noted the importance of transparency on this issue. WMac was a member of the selection committee so this would facilitate a discussion with candidates.

The revised job description for Building Manager and the decision to appoint the Acting Building Manager on a permanent basis, subject to agreeing satisfactory targets on performance and training with the Operations Manager, were **approved**.

**Action point: WMac to circulate advice from Turcan Connell as and when received.**

### **3. Finance, Audit and Risk Committee Business**

#### 3.1 Update from Finance Audit & Risk Committee

For the benefit of new trustees, DS summarised the financial impact of COVID, noting that the Association had been able to make use of its reserves to continue operating. The three year forecast would be shared with new trustees and they would be briefed on the assumptions underlying these projections. DS noted that the latest financial results were within these forecasts.

Jillian Cowan (JC) updated trustees on the current funding situation including applications for one-off funding from various sources. JC also discussed costs of re-opening services for students now that pandemic restrictions allowed this: the goal was to break even on commercial services. Trustees noted the importance of provision of services even if break even could not be achieved.

The recommendation to amend the financial cascade to allow the FAR committee to approve expenditure of up to £25,000 for capital or £15,000 for operational matters was **approved**.

In connection with item 2.1, a new risk had been added to the register covering the risk to recruitment of lay trustees if a structure limiting trustee liability was not adopted.

**Action point: JC and Chris Clarke (CC) to arrange briefing for new trustees on three year financial projections.**

### **4. COVID 19 Operations**

#### 4.1 Update from Board Working Group on Operational Plans

CC discussed the phased reopening of services as restrictions eased. Study spaces were made available to students from 27<sup>th</sup> April, with Rectors' due to open from Monday and the outdoor piazza area (serviced from the Main Bar) due to open from the last day of exams (8<sup>th</sup>

May). Opportunities to serve non-members over the summer were being pursued with the aim of improving the financial position: the licensing board were agreeable to this. The importance of working co-operatively with the University on moving Can Do activities into the Union Building over summer was discussed.

## **5. General Manager's Business**

### 5.1 Update from Management Team

A prospective tenant had been found for the retail unit with a draft lease due to be drawn up for entry in September.

## **6. President's Business**

### 6.1 Update from President

DM discussed planning regarding the May Dip.

## **7. Director of Events and Services Business**

### 7.1 Update from Director of Events & Services

Not present.

## **8. Director of Student Development and Activities Business**

### 8.1 Update from Director of Student Development & Activities

Gavin Sandford (GS) gave an update on volunteer recognition work.

## **9. Director of Director of Wellbeing Business**

### 9.1 Update from Director of Wellbeing

Taken as read.

## **10. Director of Education Business**

### 10.1 Update from Director of Education

Amy Gallacher (AG) was absent but DM gave an update. The progress of the postgraduate representation project (funded by enhancement theme money) was discussed: a comprehensive report had been produced and work had begun on implementing recommendations. This work would lead to an increase in the workload of the PG Academic Convener: to make this sustainable, suggestions had been made including paying a stipend to the Convener, creating a PG sabbatical position, or employing support staff. Each would offer advantages and disadvantages.

Trustees recognised in particular that many student officers and volunteers had significant and increasing responsibilities: DM referenced feedback from outgoing officers in this area. The Board agreed that more data on this was needed. It would be necessary to look to the University for support on these issues to continue to sustain improvements in student representation, activity and development, all of which represented key areas of the student experience. This would feed into the strategic plan.

**Action point: DM to lead on incorporating student officer and volunteer support needs into strategic plan.**

## 11. Association updates

### 11.1 SRC/SSC Updates

Amy Feakes (AF) discussed the first meetings of the student committees under the revised structure.

## 12. AOCB

CP noted that the University would be interviewing for a new role of Director of Student Experience on the 7<sup>th</sup> May: this role would co-ordinate student facing activities and liaise with the Association.

A date in July would be set for a strategic planning meeting for trustees and senior management.

**Action point: DS to set date for strategic planning meeting in July.**

The need to revise service level agreements with the University including data sharing agreements was noted. The management team should review existing agreements.

**Action point: management team to review service level agreements with the University.**

## 13. Date of Next Meeting

16<sup>th</sup> June 2021

### MATTERS ARISING/OPEN ACTIONS

Ref	Description	Owner	Target Date & Status
280421.01	Advice from Turcan Connell to be circulated when received.	WMac	Immediate

280421.02	New trustees to be briefed on three year financial projections	JC/CC	June 21
280421.03	Student officer and volunteer support needs to be integrated into strategic plan	DM	June 21
280421.04	Date to be set for handover/strategic planning meeting in July	DS/IC	June 21
280421.05	Management team to review agreements with University	IC/CC/JC	Ongoing