

**University of St Andrews
Students' Association**

Minutes of the Students' Association Board Meeting

Held in the Committee Room, 20th October 2016, 5:15 pm

Present: David Scott (Chair, lay trustee), Charlotte Andrew (Association President), Jack Carr (Director of Representation), Caroline Christie (Director of Student Development and Activities), Taryn O'Connor (Director of Events and Services), Lewis Wood (student trustee), Professor Lorna Milne (University-appointed trustee), Sigrid Jorgensen (Association Chair), David Stihler (lay trustee, by telephone), Jacqueline Cassidy (lay trustee).

In attendance by invitation: David Whitton (General Manager), Iain Cupples (Secretary to Board), Christine Miller (Clerk to Board).

1. Election of Board Chairperson for 2016-17

Mr Scott, as outgoing chair, reminded members of the eligibility rules, that the Chair must be a non-student trustee other than a University appointee, and asked for nominations.

Mr Scott was the only nomination proposed and the Board unanimously approved his appointment as Chair of Board for the academic year 2016-17.

2. Chairperson's Business

2.1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Pia Szabo (student trustee), Chris Marks (lay trustee) and Andy Goor (University-appointed trustee).

2.2 Acceptance of the Minutes of the Students' Association Board Meeting of 19th May 2016

These were accepted.

2.3 Matters Arising

- Memorandum of Understanding for IT

Mr Scott had met with the University and a draft memorandum had been to Finance for approval. Some minor amendments had been made. The finalised memorandum would be signed by management and enacted.

- Volunteer Strategy

Ms Christie would bring an updated draft to the December meeting. Mr Stihler and Mr Carr would advise and assist. It was noted that selected HR policies were in the process of being updated to explicitly cover volunteers (see item 4.2). The key question of defining who was covered by the policy was briefly discussed.

- Charity Law session

Mr Scott had talked to a lawyer who was willing to run a session on charity law for the trustees and was in the process of identifying a date.

- Shop merger

It was noted that two members of staff on secondment to the shop had now decided to leave. Both were long serving members of Association staff: their contributions to the Association were recognised and thanks minuted.

Arrangements for student input into the shop operations were under development and Board would be kept up to date on this.

- Memorandum of Understanding for sabbatical officers

A revised memorandum had been drafted, which the sabbatical officers had seen but this still needed to be signed by the officers and the Chair (on behalf of Board). Ms Andrew and Mr Cupples would follow this up.

3. Finance Committee Business

3.1 Approval of 2016-17 Budget

The Board discussed the projections and in particular the need to maintain trading performance at the current levels, which had been in line with expectations for the new facilities and represented a sustainable and sound financial position. The budget for the year was **approved**.

3.2 Approval of Capital Expenditure

The proposed capital expenditure was **approved**.

In addition to these items, the Board briefly discussed the need for the Risk Register to be updated: an updated register would be made available at the December board.

4. Staffing Committee Business.

4.1 Deputy General Manager Role

The Board **approved** the recommendation of the Staffing Subcommittee that this role be added to that of the Management Accountant.

The Board noted some minor amendments to the job description following the Staffing meeting, and that since that meeting HERA analysis results had come in and recommended an appointment on Grade 7. This was also **approved**.

4.2 HR Policies

The Board **approved** these policies.

4.3 Sabbatical Remits and Oversight of Representational Activities

Mr Carr presented a paper on a proposal to split the Director of Representation role. It was clarified that this was not a final proposal – the Board was being asked at this time to discuss the concept and approve in principle further exploration of the idea.

There was a wide ranging discussion covering the importance of the functions overseen by the Director of Representation, including democracy, education and student welfare, and the increasing demands in these areas, particularly with regard to education. Professor Milne, speaking from her experience as Proctor, discussed the increasing importance for the University of formally involving student representatives in discussions of teaching and learning and the reliance of the University on the Director of Representation in this regard. It was noted that many other students' associations, unions and guilds had over the last few years created a dedicated sabbatical for education issues, often by splitting a role covering both education and welfare.

The relationship between a potential Director of Wellbeing role and Student Services was discussed: the Board noted that Student Services were supportive of the proposal. There was also discussion of the role of the Student Advocacy staff in working with and supporting the student officers. Finally, how the split might protect and further postgraduate issues was considered.

The Board expressed broad support for the proposal with the following points to be considered:

1. Secure and sustainable funding for a new sabbatical position must be ensured.
2. The views of SRC and SSC should be sought and clear student support for the change expressed by these bodies.
3. Clear remits and boundaries for the roles must be approved.
4. Policies covering the interface between sabbaticals, Student Services and advocacy staff should be drawn up, particularly addressing the importance of referring students to appropriate support.
5. Appropriate staff support and backup must be in place.
6. Final approval would depend on all of these points being addressed in writing and considered by the Board.

5. Governance and Nominations Committee Business

5.1 Update of positions to be filled and timescales

Mr Marks' term as a lay trustee was due to end and the Governance and Nominations committee had met to consider what qualities to seek in a new trustee. They had concluded that there were no key areas of knowledge in which the Board was without either internal knowledge or additional support, so the most important qualities in a new lay trustee would be personal qualities such as approachability, availability and a St Andrews connection (though not necessarily to the University). A role description for lay trustee would be circulated to trustees for consideration and advertising options considered: in the meantime board members were urged to consider using personal connections to identify potential candidates.

6. President's Business

6.1 Draft Strategic Plan

Ms Andrew was thanked for her work in developing the draft from discussions with the current and outgoing sabbatical teams and others. There was discussion of how this should be progressed, with agreement that the next step was a meeting with the senior management team. The hope was to refine the current draft to focus on three or four key priority themes, which should dovetail with operational activities. Further key performance indicators may be added, for example growth in subcommittee activity. It was also suggested that PG-specific goals should be added and PG representatives consulted about this.

The current draft would be revised for the December board to take these comments into account, as well as additional input from other stakeholders including management and students.

6.2 Update from President

Ms Andrew discussed the changes to University fees for both rUK students and international students and plans to consult and inform students about these changes. She also updated the Board on a consultation by Fife Council on the impact of the HMO ban in the town centre, Raison weekend, plans to work with other Scottish student associations on the impact of leaving the EU, Raison Weekend and plans for Alumni Weekend.

7. Director of Events and Services' Business

7.1 Update from Director of Events and Services

Ms O'Connor updated the Board on the attendance figures for entertainments events, which remained strong: on work with the Athletic Union on social events: on non-alcohol based events: on the setting up of a student shop forum: and on Freshers' Week figures.

8. Director of Student Development And Activities' Business

8.1 Update from Director of Student Development and Activities

Ms Christie had held a review of Freshers' Week with duty managers, many of whom had expressed a desire to return to this role next year. She discussed the importance and focus on promoting student society and subcommittee achievements in Association communications.

9. Director of Representation's Business

9.1 Update from Director of Representation

Mr Carr had given the Board a written update (see papers).

10. Association Updates

10.1 SSC Report

See papers.

10.2 SRC Report

See papers.

10.3 Association Chair's Report

Ms Jorgensen discussed Councils communication, and a planned publicity campaign. There had been an extra meeting of SSC scheduled to deal with surplus business. Informal discussion sections had been added to the agenda for both Councils and had proven productive. Ms Jorgensen issued an open invitation to trustees if they wanted to attend Councils meetings.

11. AOCB

Trustees were asked to ensure that register of interest and contact details were up to date.

Thanks were minuted to Ms Andrew for preparing and presenting the report on the building redevelopment to the University, which had been well received.

12. Date of Next Meeting

8th December 2016.