

**University of St Andrews
Students' Association**

Minutes of the Students' Association Board Meeting

Held in the Committee Room, 25th February 2016, 5:15 pm

Present: David Scott (Chair, lay trustee), Joe Tantillo (Director of Representation), Chris MacRae (Director of Services), Kyle Blain (Director of Student Development and Activities), Patrick Mathewson (Association President), Annie Newman (student trustee), Charlotte Andrew (student trustee), Andy Goor (University-appointed trustee), Zara Evans (Association Chair), Jacqueline Cassidy (lay trustee), David Stihler (lay trustee, via conference call), Chris Marks (lay trustee, via conference call).

In attendance by invitation: Iain Cupples (Secretary to Board), Jillian Cowan (Management Accountant), Christine Miller (Clerk to Board), Jonnie Adamson (external auditor – item 2.1 only), Aline Heyerick (PG President, item 8 only).

1. Chairperson's Business

The Board formally approved the appointment of Mr Stihler as a lay trustee.

1.1 Apologies for Absence

Professor Lorna Milne (University appointed trustee).

1.2 Acceptance of the Minutes of the Students' Association Board Meeting of 10 December 2015

It was noted that Ms Cassidy had been erroneously left off the attendance list. With this amendment, the minutes were accepted.

1.3 Matters Arising

- a. MOU for IT

Still outstanding.

- b. Volunteer Strategy

A Volunteer Policy had now been developed and would be considered by the next Staffing committee and at the March meeting of Board.

- c. Society Intellectual Property

Mr Stihler and Mr Blain would discuss and update the Board at the March meeting.

d. Finance, Audit and Risk committee

The terms of reference were accepted. Mr Scott and Mr Mathewson would look into updating the risk register.

e. Postgraduate Representation

This would be discussed under item 8.

2. Finance Committee Business.

2.1 Year End Financial Results 2015

Mr Adamson presented the report to the Board. He noted that the Association showed a surplus for the year, and that there had been a significant increase in the value of assets, following the redevelopment. 2015 was the first year since redevelopment began that the Association had a full year of trading in bars and catering and this had improved the results significantly.

As a result of redevelopment many new assets had to be capitalised and old assets written off, though a large proportion of assets written off had already had their value depreciated to zero. The overall effect was to increase the insurance value of assets and depreciation costs considerably, going forward. Mr Adamson also noted the effect of the contribution from the Association to the cost of the redevelopment.

Entertainments income was down due to the closure of Venue 1 during part of the year. A key risk for the organisation was the long-term health problems of a key member of management staff.

Mr Adamson informed the board that the format of the accounts would change next financial year. There was an option to make the change in stages but Mr Adamson's recommendation was that the move should be made immediately, a recommendation the Board accepted. The pension deficit might need to be accounted for as part of these changes and Mr Scott noted that a discussion had been had at Finance about how to quantify the Association's deficit and the implications of this. Other information, such as key management salaries, may have to be made public as part of the changes.

The Board signed off on the accounts and agreed to reappoint the auditors for another year.

Mr Adamson agreed to liaise with Ms Cowan over a finance induction session for new student trustees.

Other Finance Business

Board approved expenditure on external signage.

It was agreed that the sabbatical Memorandum of Understanding needed to be revised. Mr Cupples and Mr Mathewson would follow up on this.

3. Staffing Committee Business

Board approved the Staffing Committee's recommendations on payment of First Aiders.

The implementation of the Supervision Policy had been delayed due to staff absence, but a report on progress would go to the March Board.

Mr Cupples noted that the annual staff survey would be run in March.

4. President's Business

Mr Mathewson reported on the appointment of Professor Sally Mapstone as Principal from September. The Board agreed that it was important to establish good relations with the new Principal: efforts would be made to arrange a meeting with Mr Scott as Chair of Board in addition to student officers, and an invitation to visit the Union building would be extended to Professor Mapstone.

The communications team were looking into developing a Union app and had a grant set aside for the purpose.

Members of the sabbatical team had taken part in an Admissions trip and this had been a great success.

RBS had announced an expansion of student bed spaces that should help to alleviate accommodation pressure. The University had also announced a fund of £250,000 to address financial hardship for international students.

5. Director of Events and Services' Business

Mr MacRae reported that Refreshers' Week had been a success. The PR team was working well, and data was being collected on regular events.

6. Director of Student Development and Activities' Business

Mr Blain reported that societies and subcommittees were generally doing well but that charitable activity seemed to be down slightly. The Student Project Fund was working well and had received numerous applications. The Volunteer Portal would be piloted with two subcommittees.

Room bookings were very busy, with a number of bookings by University departments. It was agreed that while it was important for the building to be a hub of the University community, and indeed the wider St Andrews community, student

bookings, particularly society bookings, had to come first. Mr Blain would review policies and procedures to ensure this was the case.

7. Director of Representation's Business

Mr Tantillo reported that he had been working with the University on expanding academic flexibility beyond sporting commitments, and had been surveying students on extensions and deferrals. The annual Teaching Awards nominations were now open, as was the National Student Survey: students would be encouraged to participate in both. NUS had been in touch over working with the Association on campaigns, although accepting that St Andrews would not become a member until such time as the students decided to affiliate. The Annual Report would be published in the spring ahead of the AGM and this needed to be a priority.

8. Postgraduate Engagement

Mr Tantillo presented a paper on the future of postgraduate representation. He explained that this had come to Board without going to Councils first. This was unusual but had come about because discussions with the University had gone on longer than anticipated and now certain decisions had to be made ahead of the election. Councils already having dissolved, the Board were being asked to take these decisions.

Mr Scott made clear that the Board should focus on those immediate decisions in its discussion, and refer any larger, non-pressing issues back to the Councils and the student body for consideration. This would include any discussion of changes to the sabbatical structure, which formed part of the paper.

Mr Tantillo explained the background, in which the University had provided a stipend in an effort to support the PG Convener by paying for their time. Despite this, PG conveners had run into serious academic difficulties due to the demands of the role. The University were now clear that they would no longer provide the stipend and sought other solutions.

A wide discussion was had amongst members in which the following points were agreed:

- For the next academic year, the role of PG Convener would be split as suggested in the paper.
- In that time, the Councils should consult with PG representatives on how best they could be represented.
- Discussions should be had around changes to the DoRep role alongside this consultation.
- The University would be asked to allocate the money formerly used for the stipend to support PG representation in other ways.
- The Board would support PG students in agreeing effective systems of representation in the Association and University.

9. Redevelopment

Mr Mathewson reported that work was still needed on the piazza. Visibility of the air handling units was also an outstanding issue.

The University had requested a written report on the redevelopment process: Mr Mathewson would lead this with the management team.

10. AOCB

10.1 Strategic planning/handover day

A date would be set in the last week of April.

10.2 Shop

The Board received a paper outlining a proposal for a merger of the Association shop and the University shop. This had been drafted by Mr Mathewson and Mr Scott with assistance from the management team and was not a formal proposal from the University. The recommendation was to proceed.

The Board discussed in some detail the issues involved, including commercial considerations, strategic issues, implications for staff, how to meet student needs in matters of stock and price, and management of risks. Following this discussion the Board agreed in principle to the idea of a merger. A formal agreement with the University would need to be formulated and a formal consultation with staff would begin as soon as possible.

10.3 Board dinner

A date of 22nd April was proposed.

10.4 Elections

The Board noted a recent controversy over the elections and that such incidents could present a reputational risk to the Association.

10.5 Thanks

The Board noted thanks to the outgoing student trustees, Ms Evans, Ms Andrew and Ms Newman.

11. Date of next meeting

31st March.