

University of St Andrews Students' Association

Minutes of the Students' Association Board Meeting

Held in the Committee Room, 6th December 2017, 5:15 pm

Present: Lewis Wood (Association President), Charlotte Flatley (Director of Student Development and Activities), Hannah Jacobs (Director of Events and Services), Zachary Davis (Director of Education), Claire Shirey (Director of Wellbeing), Pia Szabo (student trustee), Professor Lorna Milne (University-appointed trustee), Jacqueline Cassidy (lay trustee, items 4.3 onwards), Debbie MacCallum (lay trustee), David Scott (lay trustee)

Apologies: Andy Goor (University-appointed trustee), Dave Stihler (lay trustee), Lorraine Callaghan (student trustee)

In attendance by invitation: Iain Cupples (Secretary to Board), Christine Miller (Clerk to Board), Johnnie Adamson (Auditor, items 1 to 3 only)

1. Re-Appointment of Lay Trustees

The Board approved the re-appointment of David Scott and Jacqueline Cassidy as lay trustees.

2. Election of Board Chairperson

David Scott was nominated by Debbie McCallum and seconded by Lorna Milne. No other valid nominations being made, David Scott was duly appointed Chair of Board for the year 2017-18.

3. Audited Accounts

These had been reviewed in detail by the Finance Subcommittee and Johnnie Adamson (JA) was asked to present a summary and the key points for the Board.

It was noted that the format was broadly similar to the previous year. The auditors' report was unqualified with no concerns raised. JA highlighted items relating to pensions liabilities, the effects of the shop merger, commercial turnover and the University grant where there were changes from the previous year. It was noted that the overall financial position was healthy but that the reserving policy was to be updated and reported to the next Board meeting. Having discussed the auditors' report, confirming that the Finance Committee had reviewed them in detail and were recommending for approval, and noting that they were being presented unqualified, the Board approved the audited accounts. In relation to the findings and recommendations from the auditor's report it was confirmed that the management team would provide a response with actions and dates.

As discussed in the review of the accounts, it was noted that the Deputy General Manager with the management team would update the reserving policy and make a recommendation to the Finance Committee.

Attention was also drawn to the auditors' letter of representation, in particular the acknowledgement of the duration of current auditors' appointment and the requirement for trustees to satisfy themselves regarding the auditors' independence prior to re-appointment.

Trustees would defer this issue pending circulation of information concerning proposed mitigating measures by the auditors.

4. Chairperson's Business

4.2 Acceptance of Minutes of Students' Association Board Meeting of 19 October 2017

The minutes from the Board meeting of 19th October, 2017 were approved.

It was noted that the action regarding student discounts in the merged shop had to be followed up – Lorna Milne agreed to pursue this.

4.3 Matters Arising

a. Memorandum of Understanding

The Chair noted that the Memorandum of Understanding for IT remained outstanding with the current action sitting with the University. It was further noted that previous Board discussions had highlighted the importance of formalising the arrangements with the University for items including Union Building, Shop, IT Services, Data Sharing, etc. All agreed that there is a strong and collaborative relationship with the University but it remained important for the Association to have more formalised arrangements in place. The Chair will initiate discussions with the University on this through formal communication with the COO and Proctor in order to agree a way forward.

b. GDPR

The EU General Data Protection Regulations will come into force on 25th May 2018 and the Board recognised this as a priority area, but one in which external expertise would be required to ensure that appropriate measures, procedures and controls are in place. The management team were asked to identify an appropriate approach and plan and to identify suitable sources of external advice and assistance. A written update from management would be expected with a target date in January.

4.4 Sabbatical Roles 2018/19

It was noted that this academic year is the first full year following the changes to the sabbatical roles. At the time of the new sabbatical arrangements being approved it was agreed that there should be a review of how the new roles were working and their effectiveness. In order to allow a full year of operation, a preliminary report of feedback on the progress to date would be delivered at the April/May Board, with a formal review of the new sabbatical arrangements at the end of the academic year.

5. Finance & Risk Committee Business

It was noted that the first quarter figures were positive although timing changes to the academic term resulted in a variance from the previous year. It was also noted that the full year figures (as per the accounts) had reflected a successful year. The reserves policy had been discussed and a paper would be brought to the Finance Committee and then the Board.

5.1 Risk Register

This was recognised as a key area that needed to progress. An update will be provided to the Finance & Risk Committee and then be reported to the next Board.

6. Staffing Committee Business

None.

7. Governance and Nominations Committee Business

An update was provided from the G&N Committee where there had been discussion regarding the process for re-electing lay trustees. In discussion, it was recognised the importance of a robust and transparent process for nominations but also balancing that with encouraging continuity from lay trustees, particularly with the annual change of student trustees. It was agreed that it would be appropriate to review the role and remit of G&N recognising that in many organisations such a committee would have a remit covering areas such as succession planning, diversity and input to Board performance. The Board agreed that the G&N committee members should arrange a specific meeting to seek input regarding these issues and to inform recommended changes. The Chair of the Board will be invited to provide input to the meeting along with the University Vice Principal responsible for Governance.

8. General Manager's Business

8.1 Update from General Manager & Management Team

The General Manager's update was noted. It was highlighted that following the recent Health & Safety review the consultant's report would be circulated to trustees.

In discussion, the Board requested that an operational/business plan for the year ahead should be provided, with input from the management team and sabbatical officers as appropriate.

9. President's Business

9.1 Update from President

Lewis Wood discussed the SRC's position on Brexit and the press attention around this. He also discussed the Rectorial election and the appointment process for Rector's Assessor, and how the role of the Rector and Rector's Assessor related to the activities of the Association and particularly the SRC.

Work has been progressing in developing key performance indicators to provide more measurement and reporting of activities and operational performance. This will result in regular reporting to the Board.

Thanks were noted by Lorna Milne, on behalf of the University, to the sabbatical team for their assistance with Raisin Weekend.

10. Director of Events and Services Business

10.1 Update from Director of Events & Services

Hannah noted that the attendance numbers for the Bop were up each week on last year's. A number of good productions had been held in STAge. A paper on lighting equipment would be brought to the next Finance Committee. Booking procedures for commercial spaces would be revised.

11. Director of Student Development and Activities Business

11.1 Update from Director of Student Development & Activity

The Charities campaign Race2Barcelona had raised over £10,000 for nominated charities to date. Charlotte was looking for ways to encourage societies and subcommittees to book online. The Student Project Fund had funded numerous worthy projects so far this year including an Ecology conference. Charlotte would be working on employability with the Careers Centre. The volunteer recognition scheme was proving very popular.

11.2 Co-option of a Lay Board Member to the Students' Association Volunteering Team

In connection with the volunteer recognition scheme, Charlotte explained that there was a need for a non-student trustee to fill a role on this team, contributing to the sustainability of the scheme. The team would meet a couple of times per semester and would work with a similar team based in the Athletic Union/Sports Centre. Debbie McCallum was nominated and appointed.

12. Director of Director of Wellbeing Business

12.1 Update from Director of Wellbeing

Claire made reference to a recent survey suggesting students want to see more daytime events. The Wellbeing committee were working on this with relevant staff and officers. A new Member for Racial Equality had been appointed to the SRC. Clair was working on publicity for elections to drive up engagement.

12.2 Rectorial Election Report 2017

Noted.

13. Director of Education Business

13.1 Update from Director of Education

Zach had presented a paper about enhancement themes to the Enhancement Themes Group. He discussed the teaching awards, the need for a more formalised structure, and their use as a source of data on teaching quality. In connection with the new NSS question, focusing on students' association's contributions to academic quality, Zach had completed the first draft of publicity strategy for academic representation and the role of the Association in supporting this.

An update at next board on postgraduate student engagement was requested. It was noted that many subcommittees now have PG officers as part of their structure. Discussion of how the Association is meeting the needs of other students from non-standard backgrounds, including mature students, commuter students, etc. would also be useful.

14. Association updates

14.1 SSC Report

The excellent work in relation to community relations, driven by the Community Relations committee, was noted. A paper on subcommittee finances had been circulated and was noted.

14.2 SRC Report

Senior officer not present.

14.3 Association Chair Report

It was noted that additional training for council members has helped engagement.

A change to the Laws concerning the Rectors' committee was approved.

15. AOCB

15.1 OSCR letter

The Board noted a recent communication from OSCR suggesting linking accounts published on a web page to the OSCR entry for the charity. The Board approved that this should be done.

16. Date of Next Meeting

22nd February 2018