

## **University of St Andrews Students' Association**

### **Minutes of the Students' Association Board Meeting**

**Held in the Committee Room, 15<sup>th</sup> May 2017, 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), Lorraine Callaghan (student trustee), Pia Szabo (student trustee), Ruaridh MacIver (Association Chair), Professor Lorna Milne (University-appointed trustee, item 5.2 onwards), Jacqueline Cassidy (lay trustee, by telephone), Debbie MacCallum (lay trustee, item 1.3 onwards).

**In attendance by invitation:** Lewis Wood (Association President-Elect), Claire Shirey (Director of Wellbeing-Elect), Charlotte Flatley (Director of Student Development and Activities-Elect), Hannah Jacobs (Director of Events and Services-Elect), Zachary Davis (Director of Education-Elect), Tom Abbott (Athletic Union President-Elect), Iain Cupples (Secretary to Board), David Whitton (General Manager), Jonnie Adamson (external auditor, item 1.4 only).

#### **1. Chairperson's Business**

The Chair of Board welcomed everyone, in particular those joining the Board for the first time. Members and those in attendance were asked to introduce themselves and their roles.

##### **1.1 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Andy Goor (University-appointed trustee) and David Stihler (lay trustee).

##### **1.2 Acceptance of the Minutes of the Students' Association Board Meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

It was noted that these incorrectly referred to the minutes of 20<sup>th</sup> October 2016 being approved, rather than those of 10<sup>th</sup> December 2016. Subject to this correction, the minutes were approved.

##### **1.3 New Trustee Position**

The selection panel had interviewed and unanimously nominated Debbie MacCallum for the vacant position of lay trustee. The Board approved this appointment, effective immediately, and Debbie was invited to participate in the remainder of the meeting.

##### **1.4 Audited Accounts**

Due to the deadline for submission of the accounts to OSCR, these had been sent to OSCR following the Finance subcommittee meeting.

The external auditor presented the accounts to the Board. He drew trustees' attention to the new accounting standards and their effect on pensions liabilities, which he noted was a benefit as it quantified the liability and gave a truer accounting of the Association's financial position. He noted also the restricted fund for summer internships, the allocation for IT costs in relation to the memorandum of understanding with the University, the increase in bar income in the last financial year despite a challenging market, the apportioning of administrative staff costs on p17, and the effect of the reallocation of security costs to subcommittees and others in relation to events income.

The Chair noted the importance of a stable financial position. These accounts reflected the first full year of full operations following the redevelopment, and the performance was strong. On the other hand, there would also inevitably be some increase in capital expenditure costs following redevelopment. There was some discussion of the optimal level of reserves – it was noted that these should be neither too low nor too substantial.

The external auditor was thanked and left the meeting.

### **1.5 Matters Arising**

#### **a. MoU for IT**

This was now finalised and was awaiting a signature on behalf of the University. The intention now was to compile various memoranda, service level agreements etc. with different parts of the University into a single overarching document.

#### **b. Charity Law Briefing**

An early July date was proposed for an event combining this briefing with a strategic planning day.

#### **c. Review of Board Policies**

Charlotte was in the process of collating various student councils, board and management policies and procedures, looking at appropriate review cycles.

### **1.6 Amended Laws**

An amendment regarding opting out of membership was approved. It was noted that the procedure for opting out would be revised to ensure a single point of contact for students and that the procedure was compliant with all relevant legislation.

## **2. Finance Committee Business**

Finance had approved capital expenditure for a new lighting board. The feeling of the committee was that the financial position at present was positive, but there was a need to focus on 'down times' when undergraduate students were away and revenue was low. This would be discussed further at the planning day.

## **3. Staffing Committee Business.**

### **3.1 Staff Protocol**

This compiled various existing guidance and practice on staff and student roles into one document, touching also on the role of students who were also employed as casual staff. It would be incorporated into inductions for staff and volunteers. The Board approved this document.

The Board noted that the annual staff survey had been completed and a report would be circulated before the next meeting.

## **4. Governance and Nominations Committee Business**

The committee had discussed board composition, in the light of the increase of the number of sabbatical positions from four to five. No conclusion had been reached, so the Association Chair and President had agreed to prepare an options paper for the Board (see item 5.3).

The committee had also received a report on the annual student elections.

## **5. President's Business**

### **5.1 Draft Strategic Plan**

Charlotte emphasised that her aim in drawing up this plan was to ensure that it was used by staff and officers, and supported them. The goals set out in the plans were priorities and areas of focus, rather than being intended as exclusive.

There was substantial discussion of the contents of the plan, particularly in the area of measuring and benchmarking. It was agreed that measuring success was something that should be done once or twice a year formally, though informal review would obviously be ongoing. The need to make long-term sustainability of the financial position more explicit was also noted. Some other amendments were suggested: Charlotte would incorporate these and circulate an updated version.

### **5.2 Advocacy Review**

This had progressed and a paper would be submitted to the first Board of the new academic year with recommendations, covering the extent of services offered, rebranding, online content, feedback, training, and other areas. The Chair asked that this paper include how the new sabbatical positions would work with advocacy staff.

### **5.3 Board Composition**

Charlotte presented this paper, following discussions at Governance and Nominations.

The Board agreed that the critical criteria for structure were a student majority, in compliance with the constitution, a strong student voice, and effectiveness. It was felt that the option of adding another lay trustee and increasing the Board to 15 members (option 5) may harm effectiveness by making the Board too large. The Chair noted that this was otherwise largely a question of how the student voice should best be represented and so asked for views from student members.

After much discussion, no consensus could be reached and so a vote was held. This identified option 3, the removal of the Association Chair as a student trustee *ex officio*, as the Board's preferred option. This would take effect from the next student elections.

### **5.4 Sustainability Policy**

This policy had been overdue for revision and had been discussed by management and at Councils. It reflected current practice in the Association. It was agreed that the General Manager would report back on implementation. The Board approved the policy as written, to be reviewed on an annual basis.

### **5.5 President's Update**

Four candidates had expressed interest in the Rectorial elections.

## **6. Director of Events and Services' Business**

Regular entertainments events were now over for the year. Graduation Ball tickets were selling well. The merged shop operations had incorporated student input in areas like photography and design, but there was still a feeling that direct student input into the shop board was desirable so that students could have influence on issues like pricing (including student discounts) and the range of products stocked. Charlotte noted that as the merged shop was located in the Union building, these issues reflected on the Association's image. It was agreed that Taryn, David Whitton and David Scott would ask for a meeting with the University on this issue.

## **7. Director of Student Development And Activities' Business**

Honorary life memberships for the year had been agreed: 47 students would receive the award for various contributions to student life. Societies awards had also been held.

Subcommittees had been asked to submit budget proposals for next year by 1<sup>st</sup> July. Dates had been agreed for Byre access for the next ten years: the DoSDA would be on the management board for the Byre. A number of Mermaids shows would appear at the Fringe this summer with support from the Association – Debbie suggested liaising with local tourism sources to publicise this.

Board dinner had been a success and Caroline thanked all those who had contributed. Thanks were minuted to Caroline for her own work here.

The volunteering policy had seen changes to the structure of the recognition scheme: the aim was to recognise both number of hours and the quality of the work done. The University had agreed that the two highest levels would be acknowledged on the HEAR transcript. It was agreed that more input and review on the policy from trustees was required – the exact method was to be determined but might include email circulation, a conference call or a meeting over the summer.

## **8. Director of Representation's Business**

### **8.1 Director of Representation Update**

The Teaching Awards had taken place and had been a success. A policy on Technology Enhanced Learning, intended to allow lecture capture, had been rejected by University committees but would be revised and resubmitted. The elections report had been presented to the governance and nominations committee and would be circulated to trustees after this meeting.

### **8.2 CAPOD MoU**

This memorandum reflected current practice in services provided by or with the University's Centre for Academic, Professional and Organisational Development. It was approved by the Board.

## **9. Association Updates**

### **9.1 SSC Report**

Subcommittee handover was in progress, with most interviews and selection complete.

### **9.2 SRC Report**

There had been a productive handover/team building session.

## **9.2 Association Chair Report**

The Laws would be updated over the summer and any amendments passed by student councils but not yet approved by Board would be brought to the next meeting.

## **10. AOCB**

### **10.1 Health and Safety Report**

A report from the H&S consultants was received by the Board. The Board expressed an intention to work more closely with the University on health and safety issues in future if possible.

### **10.2 Data Protection**

The issue of the new General Data Protection Regulation was discussed. External advice and expertise would be required to ensure compliance, possibly including insurance and consultation with the University.

The issue of management data was raised and trustees requested more information in certain areas, including equal opportunities information in relation to staffing. It was agreed that this would be provided in an appropriate format.

A request was received from an incoming sabbatical officer in relation to external employment and this was approved.

Thanks were minuted to the outgoing sabbatical officers for their contributions to the Board.

## **11. Date of Next Meeting**

To be confirmed.

David Scott, Chair of Board