



TRUSTEE BOARD

MINUTES FOR THURSDAY 23RD JUNE 2022

VENUE: EBS 1.1

The meeting was recorded for the purpose of minutes

The quorum for this meeting shall be 50% +1 (quorum must include at least four Sabbaticals and at least one External Trustee and at least 1 student trustee if in post)).

Trustees:	
Samira-Caterina Monteleone - Chair	President
Callum Broadbent	VP Education
Dorothy Akuamoaa	VP Welfare
Isabella Ciuta	VP Community & Engagement
Nashwa Alsakka	VP International
Liv Matthews	VP Student Experience
Barry Van Eupen	Lay trustee
Chantel Le Carpentier	Lay Trustee
Lee Rodwell – Vice Chair	Lay Trustee
Lily-May Cameron	Student Trustee (Colchester)
Verneicia Handfield	Student Trustee (Colchester)
Dauda Abdulsalam	Student Trustee (Colchester)
Attendees:	
Craig Stephens	Chief Executive
Steve Haugh	Director Marketing & Strategy
Barbara Reynolds	Director of Finance & HR
Reeves Watson	Director Services Activities & Support
Caron Moor	Governance Coordinator
Invited:	

Apologies:	
Gerardo Palmieri	Student Trustee (Colchester)

1. *ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING				
Topic	Action	Who	Due Date	Outcome
Summarize budget discussion with VC	Agenda item 3. CEO Report: CS to summarize the conversation had with the VC for the Board	CS	23/6/2022	Complete

Keep Board updated through budget process	Agenda item 3. CEO Report: Regular email updates to be sent to the board as we go through the budget process	CS/BR	23/6/2022	Complete
Meeting with Sabbs to discuss security change and training requirements	Agenda item 11: Security Contract: Set up meeting with Sabbs team and Sam to discuss security change and further training	SM	23/6/2022	Ongoing

2. * APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM 28TH APRIL 2022 AND MATTERS ARISING/ACTION LOG (5 mins)

Subject matter: Approval of minutes from the last Trustee Board meeting

Supporting Documents Name: Minutes – Trustee Board 28th April 2022

Decision or approval required: Yes

- Congratulation on the elections and introductions was done for the incoming Sabbs
- Thanks was given to the outgoing Sabbs for their input and support this year
- Minutes approved

3. * CEO REPORT (15 mins)

Subject matter: Update from Craig Stephens, CEO on relevant events since the last meeting

Supporting Documents Name: None

Decision or approval required: No

- We have had some excellent engagement from students over this academic year especially considering that the number of students on campus is down, we have had good uptake for late night trade, engagement activities have been well received and most recent was SU Street Fest which was established in 3 weeks and had 2.5k ticket sales but more people attended on the day. We put this on because of the Uni's finance position and they gave us money for the activity. The event has cost considerably more as it was a free event and we also had very successful attendance at the evening event in Sub Zero
- A discussion took place about the recent serious social media issue

4. * CHAIR REPORT VERBAL UPDATE (10 Mins)

Subject matter: Update from Samira- Caterina Monteleone, SU President and Chair of Trustee Board on relevant events since the last meeting

Supporting Documents Name: None

Decision or approval required: No

- Consultation about tackling misogyny and sexual violence which is not just women but includes the trans and non-binary population we would like to see elected community officers involved in this where relevant
- Policy and Resource committee, talked about Stonewall relationship and the Uni want to go back to gender critical individuals to ask for their thoughts on Stonewall, point was made clear that there was already a survey that went to all those individuals but this group did not respond, the topic is very sensitive to the LGBTQ+ and non-binary communities, and it was requested that the incoming President continue to push back on this with the Uni
- Admissions: looks like accommodation marketing by the Uni (returners campaign) has

been successful with over 1,000 students taking it up, question was asked about what this does mean for SU Homes and what support the Uni will give to help the SU

- Campus non-binary supporting strategy paper and making sure that they consulted with students as the current paper does not say this, assurance was given that they did but we would like it noted in the paper
- Big Plan and technology support and digital poverty: moving things online and asked about Southend and Loughton as they are often not mentioned, this will go into the next academic year
- Handovers: ongoing work with Sabbs including Southend
- Council and strikes: strike have ended but could come back again in November and went to emergency council meeting so students should not be affected was reported in professional services group that every single mark has been delivered
- Cost of living: discussion with staff and students
- Soccer aid: and Samira scored a goal and a real testament for how sports can engage with students and links to volunteering too and credit to the football team who organised this themselves
- Attendance at Wonky conference by Callum and Samira
- AGM meeting was held on the second arrangement which Barry attended and thanks was given for this
- Thanks was given to everyone and all the departments in the SU for supporting and helping Samira during the last year
- It was asked that incoming Sabbs be trained/updated on the Reindorf report so that they are fully aware of it and the gender critical issues

5. MINUTES FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

- Union Performance – 27th May 2022
- Human Resources – 21st June 2022 – minutes to be circulated
- Audit & Risk – 21st June 2022 – minutes to be circulated
- Health & Safety – 26th May 2022
- Tackling Racism – 9th June 2022
- Essex Student Lets – 27th May 2022
- UESU – 28th April 2022

***Resolution of Changes for Committees:**

- Nothing to report

Subject matter: Minutes from Sub-Committee and Board meetings that have been held since the last Trustee Board on 28th April 2022

Supporting Documents Name: Minutes – Union Performance 27th May 2022; Minutes – Health & Safety 26th May 2022; Minutes – Tackling Racism 9th June 2022; Minutes – ESL 27th May 2022; Minutes – UESU 28th April 2022

Decision or approval required: No

- Audit & Risk was moved and rescheduled to the 29th of June

6. * FINANCE UPDATE – BR (20 mins)

- Period 10 Accounts
- Forecast
- Service RAG P10

Subject matter: Update by Finance Director of Period 10 Accounts and Forecast

Supporting Documents Name: Financial Perf Review P10; Summary Man Accts 2021_22 P10, Service RAG P10

Decision or approval required: No

- BR presented the period 10 financial accounts
- Sub Zero and SU Bar continue to perform really well
- Top Bar remains closed due to flooding back in January, the insurers have now agreed on responsibilities and repairs are underway and will open in term 1
- Corbett Theatre in Loughton continues to see really low sales due to competition from the Hive pub
- The Store and The Kitchen show a drop in sales as well as the Greenhouse Café
- Loughton Café saw some improvement in sales due to increase in breakfast trade and enhanced range of hot drinks
- SU Homes has a continuing commission shortfall due to a drop in property rent: 115 managed properties versus budgeted 126 and tenant find properties we let 60 against a budget of 89
- Overall, we currently have a surplus of £336.6k against budget of £565k, shortfall of £228.6k, services are £449.4k behind budget due to lack of footfall on campus due to hybrid working and cessation of large lectures
- Enabling: net underspend of £139.7k due to maternity leave, insurance rebate and lower irrecoverable VAT from catering: Finance - lower irrecoverable VAT, insurance premium rebate; IT – maternity leave savings and underspend deferred for future periods; PED – student staff cost savings/training scheduled for periods 11 and 12; Facilities – repairs provision will be expensed prior to year-end; marketing – staff costs and print/design savings
- Student Activities & Support: new underspend of £127k due to no Heirloom event, staff turnover and some funding from the Uni which we have been able to use which is offset against the services with an overall shortfall of £228.6k behind budget. Exec – chose not to have student staff administration assistant this year; SU Advice – Loughton vacancy term time only but have struggled to recruit this position, and post has now been pulled; Education – staff cost savings/pension opt out; Engagement – Heirloom savings, even & campaigns expenditure deferred to part fund Street Fest; Activities – staff cost savings; Southend – event & campaign expenditure part funded by community event & activities grant
- Forecast: net deficit of £322.5k against budgeted surplus of £124k, improvement on last month's forecast which was £337.4k loss. Funding requirements to meet Reserves target is £347k from provision of £374.3k
- Cash solvency and reserves: if with had no funding from the university this year we would be looking at a cash surplus of only £34k. Including funding our cash will be £438.8k
- Question raised: will we still get the full amount of money from the Uni? Response: that is a conversation that we will have with them, we will ask for the money that we need and if they have money, they need to spend their may be an opportunity for capital investment
- Question raised: When is the financial year end? Response: 31st July
- Question raised: what is SS admin in Exec budget: Response: Student Staff in the Exec team
- Question raised: student welfare seems below the variance? Response: we transferred costs out of Sub Zero and the Student Welfare now contains the costs for the welfare angels, and the drugs dogs which we had not budgeted for as it was funded by the Uni, but it has not continued so we need to budget for it as it is an important part of welfare
- Comment: is it possible to ask the Uni for this money for drug dogs or could we work on partnership with the Uni to provide this? Response: Yes, it is worth us asking
- Question: rising prices from suppliers, will it continue to be an issue and are we looking at new suppliers? Response: Spar is our supplier, rising prices is an issue everywhere and we need to find a balance

7. *DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, CONFLICT & RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS – BR (10 mins)

Subject matter: Confirmation of declarations, conflicts and related party transactions from Trustees

Supporting Documents Name:

Decision or approval required: No

- Declaration of interest forms were given out to each Trustee to be completed and returned

8. * BUDGETS – BR (5 mins)

Subject matter: Approval of Budgets as presented in the separate morning session

Supporting Documents Name: Report – Budget 2022-23 proposal

Decision or approval required: Yes

- 2023 academic year is a transitional year and we have a budget that should deliver surplus of £55.6k, we need to make sure that the SU remains in a financially stable position whilst the strategic review is undertaken. We had done an initial review of commercial services and as a result have identified some short-term savings, mainly in Engagement and Support, to offset the predicted shortfalls in the Services provision.
- Uni core grant fundings has been agreed but no additional transitional support going into 23/24
- Reserves target: this budget will ensure that we will be at 86% of target at the end of next year
- Commercial landscape on campus: There maybe issues with footfall in terms of the introduction of hybrid working for University staff, large lectures will return but unlikely to return to pre pandemic levels. Same approach has been taken in relation to exams but expect to see the return of on campus exams
- Looking at a different environment going forward from pre pandemic, retail shows the difference in our sales as predictions are much lower than pre pandemic because of the changing landscape
- Prediction for inflation is now 11% which will bring significant challenges
- Student numbers expected to be similar level to current year with increases in 24/25
- The document shows the budget and assumptions and commercial services rationalisation
 - We have closed the Extra Store and permanent staff have transferred over into other retail areas
- Question: Re SU Homes issue and the cost of living, increased bills, students are stating they are better living on campus, what is the future of SU Homes? Response: Reeves /Sam/Gemma are going to be writing a business plan. In relation to the demand for purpose-built student accommodation what we will see is that effecting the private sector market in that poor suppliers in the market are being pushed out, good suppliers are being able to rent but having to be negotiable on rent as demand for their properties have dropped, we think we will see a decrease in rent overall for student accommodation. We are also working with a utility company to roll utility cost at a fixed level into the bills and should help by fixing the costs for the whole year, it may be possible for the company to roll this out to tenant find properties to see if the fixed utilities can be offered elsewhere
- Item added to Action: investigate if the fixed utilities offering can be offer elsewhere e.g., for tenant find properties
- Question: what about the 2nd budget that was being presented to the Uni? Response: we had decided that there is no point giving you the pre pandemic budget
- Question: from the assumption's sections and the Eco Store and stationery, will sales be transferred to the Extra Store? Response: we need to think about what we call that store as we are looking at echo clothing as well and will fall into the business planning process
- Question: Top Bar and income based on trading period of this year but was only active in the 1st term? Response: we look at the trend and apply that trend into the full year
- Trustees were asked to agree and approved the budget, which was unanimous

9. * STRATEGIC PLANNING 3 YEAR RECOVERY – BR (5 mins)

Subject matter: Approval of Strategic Planning 3 Year Recovery as presented in the separate morning session

Supporting Documents Name: Report – Strategic Review 2022-23 (strictly confidential)

Decision or approval required: Yes

- Report was approved

10. * STAFF RESOURCE PLANNING – CS (5 mins)

Subject matter: Approval of Staff Resource Planning as presented in the separate morning session

Supporting Documents Name:

Decision or approval required: Yes

- When we set the agenda, we thought that we would have made decisions about staff resource planning, we need more time for this and it is now part of the strategic planning and recovery plan
- Process was agreed by the Trustees

11. *SECURITY – RW (10 mins)

Subject matter: Update of Regency's performance in term 3

Supporting Documents Name:

Decision or approval required: No

- RW gave an update on the Prosec security team and the events pre and post them working as our security team
- Question raised: can the Sabbs see the type form comments? Response: Yes, it will be shared tomorrow

12. * END OF YEAR IMPACT REPORT DRAFT – SH (10 mins)

Subject matter: Update of draft End of Year Impact Report

Supporting Documents Name:

Decision or approval required: No

- SH shared the new style website that will go out next week which has been broken down into the three terms
- Credit was given to Jake and the marketing team for putting this together
- It was requested that photos go out from Street Fest
- Could add a what do you want to see next section to create ideas for the next years events
- Also add in We Are Rebels and some of the other events, national awards, top 10 SU, sports etc that were done
- Some of it can be lifted into a document for the finance report

13. *INCORPORATION – BR (10 mins)

Subject matter: Update on the incorporation process if any progress has been made

Supporting Documents Name: None

Decision or approval required: Yes

- USS have advised cost will be £8k and SAUL stated £23k of which they would contribute £10k, so we are looking at £21k on top of cost of incorporation. Uni initially agreed to fund

the costs proposed, we will need to talk to them about the additional £21k

- The position that we could take here is that the board already agreed that we move forward to incorporation and if you are happy that we make professional decisions as your representatives on when that incorporation takes place as we are at risk of significant costs
- Once we know the business proposal in January it can come back onto the agenda again, we know that it will take a year to do incorporation
- Question: we paused the tender process for auditors due to incorporation? Response: yes, we did, we will have to give that some thought but if we consider this in January, we can also make the decision on when we go out to tender again
- It was unanimously agreed by the Board to re review in January / February and then consider it again
- Overview of the incorporation process to be given to incoming Sabbs in September
- Item added to Action: Consider incorporation in January/February once the strategic plans are fully known
- Item added to Action: Incoming Sabbs to be given an overview of the incorporation process in September

14. * POLICIES PASSED BY PARLIAMENT – CS (5 mins)

- Strike Policy

Subject matter: Further amendments to the Strike Policy since the last Trustee meeting held on 28th April. Main change was to add in what happens if the SU does not support strikes and Parliament did vote to withdraw support for this current strike

Supporting Documents Name: None

Decision or approval required: No

- No further comments were made

15. * DEED OF PARTICIPATION AND INDEMNITY – BR (5 mins)

Subject matter: Physical signing of the Deed of Participation and Indemnity by the SU President and Barry Van Eupen (Lay Trustee)

Supporting Documents Name: Execution Version – Deed of Participating and Indemnity

Decision or approval required: No

- Barry and Samira signed the physical documents

16. * ELECTION DATES – CS (5 mins)

Subject matter: Approval of scheduled dates for October Elections to cover PG positions and any remaining SCO and Parliament positions that were not successfully filled in the May elections

Supporting Documents Name: None

Decision or approval required: Yes

Nominations: 10th Oct to 18th Oct 22

Campaigning: 21st – 28th Oct 22

Voting: 26th to 28th Oct 22

- Dates approved

17. * PROJECTS – CS (5 mins)

Subject matter: Update on any new/planned projects

Supporting Documents Name: None

Decision or approval required: No

- Top Bar refresh
- MOA capital funding from the Uni into a multi activity space
- SU Bar capital funding from the SU
- Some things that we are buying to improve service provisions
- Planning to apply for the Santander space to be used for volunteering
- Question raised: if we do get the additional funding from the Uni is this what the money will be used for? Response: The Bar could do with more work so that may be something we do the following summer
- Question raised: Cine10 plans why were they delayed? Response: the pandemic got in the way and other competing priorities

18. * BOARD DISCUSSION (TRUSTEES ONLY) (10 mins)

Subject matter: Opportunity for Trustees to meet/discuss without SU staff being present
Supporting Documents Name: None
Decision or approval required: No

Next Meeting

29th September 2022

Actions arising from this meeting and Cfwd

Topic	Action	Who	Due Date	Outcome
Fixed utilities offering	Agenda item 8. Budgets: investigate if the fixed utilities offering can be offer elsewhere e.g. for tenant find properties	CS/RW	29/9/2022	
Uni security team	Agenda item 11. Security: Speak to University security team to see if they can be trained/support security for venues	RW	29/9/2022	
Incorporation	Agenda item 12. Incorporation: consider incorporation in January/February once the strategic plans are fully known	BR	Jan/Feb 2023	
Overview of incorporation for incoming Sabbs	Agenda item 12. Incorporation incoming Sabbs to be given an overview of the incorporation process in September	BR	29/9/2022	