



Minutes

BT-213-M1

A virtual meeting of the LSU Trustee Board was held on 27 April 2021 at 17:00 via an online meeting platform.

1. PRESENT:

Andy Doyle (Chair), Matt Youngs (President), Fejiro Aman, Emily Turnbull, James Greer, Amie Woodyatt, Richard Taylor, Owen Henderson, Alex Marlowe, Emily Hook, Matthew Brown, Ana-Maria Bilciu.

In attendance: Trevor Page (Union Director), Maria Turnbull-Kemp, Josh Gray and Sue Lucas (Clerk)

2. APOLOGIES:

3. REGISTER OF INTERESTS

To be distributed and then updated before each meeting.

4. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND DEAL WITH MATTERS ARISING

- BT-212-M2 (26 January 2021)
Approved

5. TO RECEIVE UPDATES ON ACTIONS RAISED

6. TO RECEIVE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

a) To receive and note the Finance and Operation Report April 2021

b) To receive and approve Appendix 1 – Management Accounts 31 March 2021

MTK gave a brief overview of the financial accounts to 31 March 2021. The accounts show a large income figure from the sale of the Nursery, money which was allocated to complete phases 1 and 2 of the refurbishment. During this financial period we have continued to open our outlets and have seen a significant increase in revenue. The Socially Distanced Social Club (SDSC) is proving to be an outstanding success and therefore we are only forecasting a deficit of c£20k - £40k at the end of the Year.

MKT updated the Board on the provision of IT for the building, noting that she will be meeting with the University to look at networks. The Union have appointed an external provider to work with us, offering a 52wks a year IT solution.

ET noted that MTK had highlighted the level of revenue generated by the SDSC and asked whether the Union had seen a similar increase in revenue at JC's. MTK's response was that the food offering at JC's had been dramatically simplified, burgers, chips and pizza, and that income is higher than pre-COVID levels. She also added that the average spend at the SDSC was c£20pp, again, an increase on pre-COVID spend and suggested that this may be due to the time it takes to order drinks. ET also asked – with the SDSC proving to be a success

would the Union consider the setup for summer festivals in the future. MTK, COVID has given the Union an opportunity to look closer at its offerings and will absolutely do things differently.

7. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE

a) Executive update (April 2021)

MY updated the Board on the progress officers have made towards achieving their manifesto points. He added that despite the circumstance he was very pleased as President to say that, in the main, they had all done exceptionally well. There are, however, some instances where officers need a little more support but we have those in hand.

ET noted that FA's point to 'improve the effectiveness and popularity of the Ideas forum' had moved from amber to a red and asked what was the reasoning for that? FA's response was that initially there had been a lot of traction and interest in the Ideas Forum but recently we have seen a considerable drop in engagement. He attributed some of the failings to technical issues experienced with the Suggestions Model stating that we have been unable to make changes to the Officers' names on the back end and therefore we have been unable to do regular updates. He also noted that many of the submitted ideas were longer term projects which require the Union to work with the University and again this has resulted in delayed updates. FA noted his intention to create a regular newsletter which he hopes his successor carries on.

8. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE REPORTS FROM THE UNION DIRECTOR

a) **To receive an update on the building redevelopment**

TP presented his report to the Board which updated the Trustees on works carried out in phases 1 and 2. The rationale behind carrying out the work was to address the now delayed start for the new building and to offer students returning a more inviting functional space. Phases 1 and 2 focused on our commercial offering. New welcoming entrance, increased study space, daytime bar and coffee lounge, improved catering and a new executive hub. Cognito's (yet to be rebranded) is a mature venue space open all day and early evening. Bookable spaces for meetings and student performance groups.

To seek approval for Phase 3 – Cultural Change

TP outlined the assumptions made regarding the Union's potential growth, increased expenditure and lack of significant new income streams. Based on these assumptions we posed a number of questions aimed at answering the question 'How do we best facilitate the student experience?' By designing a co-located Student Opportunities Office, where our administrators can evolve into a broader development team, and reviewing the level of resources available for frontline services, we will enable our administrators, section leads and volunteers to work with greater collaboration rather than operating in silos. TP also noted the requirement for additional works which came to light during the completion of phases 1 and 2, replacement lift, repairs to and replacement of air handling units, IT cabling and infrastructure and new Room One entrance.

AW asked for some clarity as to why the face lift of the building was prioritised over essential functions like a working lift, air handling units and IT cabling. TP noted that the necessary repairs to the air handling units and IT cabling were only discovered during the redevelopment. There is a working lift in the building but it is a little difficult to access and therefore it was always our desire to have a second working lift - but phase one could happen without it. MTK added that during an audit in Jan 2021 it was reported that there were a number of C1 and C2 electrical faults which required urgent attention. Facilities Management have had 40 electricians on site repairing the electrics to a safe standard. We also discovered that our fire alarm system was not fit for purpose and needed to be updated. The University have been extremely supportive by helping us to ensure our building is safe. The building will not open on 10 May 2021 unless it is signed off by LCC's Building Control. RT noted that the support from the University cannot be considered a blank cheque by the Union but discussions of money should not get in the way of doing what is needed from a H&S prospective, adding that the works carried out will ensure that all risks are mitigated to tolerable level.

The Trustees discussed at length the different elements of the proposed phase 3 development requesting that TP circulate the final plans when they are available. AD summarised the discussion points and asked



the Board for their approval based on the following assumptions – phase 3 would not proceed without a funding grant from the University and full backing of the section chairs and student groups affected by the creation of a co-located student opportunities office. Approved

To receive and approve 2021/22 Sabbatical Officer contract of employment.

Noted and approved.

9. AGENDA ITEMS

a) **To receive a proposal for the transfer of Loughborough Students' Athletic Union to the Sport Development Centre.**

JGre highlighted the key themes and significant issues raised within the paper, these being the lack of club support and AU development including sponsorship and recruitment and the lack of sport specific knowledge and expertise. The AU have a small workforce that are overwhelmed and spend insufficient time on aspects such as H&S and first aid. The feedback received from the Board shows that there would not be a clear consensus to approve the proposed transfer so JGre asked the Board to answer the following questions?

- Does the Board accept and recognise there are significant issues within the AU that must be drastically resolved to secure support for the AU and better its sustainability?
- Does the Board recognise over recent years and at present the organisation as being unable to meet the needs of the AU operating appropriately?
- Can the Board agree that if nothing is done within a reasonable timeframe the AU and the reputation of sport at Loughborough University will be put at an element of risk specifically relating to the loss of BUCS and the quality of experience within competitive sport under the AU.
- Can the Board recognise that operationally the AU would run better under SDC?
- Is the Board committed towards resolving all the issues raised within the paper, if so, what is the expected timeline?

In relation to the AU merging over to SDC

- Would the Board come to a decision on this with further information and support provided by the University by the end of the academic year?
- Can the Board agree that LSU and the University can commit on supporting future changes whatever the outcome?

AD noted the role of the Trustees and highlighted the need to explore issues relating to the governance of the Union in particular the Union's Articles of Association, Companies House and the Charities Commission.

ET suggested and the Board agreed that JGre's paper highlighted the need for internal review and change particularly in support of staff and volunteers but felt that moving the leadership and representation aspects of the AU to SDC would not be in the best interests of our student members. MY added that the challenges being faced by the AU already existed but have been exacerbated this year by the pandemic. He also noted that it had not always been the case and therefore there is a requirement for modernisation led by the SLT. He continued, we would have fundamentally failed the Sport EO if we do not address the imbalance and concerns JGre raises and, whilst specific to his role, these also exist elsewhere in the Union and therefore we must do some remedial work on addressing these issues.

RT noted his conflict of interest before agreeing that there were details that needed to be worked through. He suggested that the financial argument for remaining in the Union was not particularly strong and could be overcome. He also highlighted areas like pitch side medical provision which he felt would be best suited to SDC and although the paper is not 'oven ready' it sets a direction of travel that he would support. He would argue that the fundamental issue is what do we mean by student leadership and what do we mean by AU in this context. He suggested that a careful piece of work could swiftly identify the areas students spoke passionately about protecting. He asked what it is about student oversight and leadership that we want to preserve and grow. Can we identify it, come to a consensus, and then move forward with the bulk of JGre's proposal?

AD summarised the discussion stating that it feels very difficult and there is a great deal of concern about transferring the AU outside of the Union but there is less concern about transferring the management to facilitate the AU with student leadership.

Action raised - Working group JGre, MY, TP and RT to do a piece of work that would build on the work already done with the Union and University. The remit will be to look at areas that absolutely make sense to relinquish to the SDC; look at what it means to our Articles of Association and status as Trustees; ask whether we can still comply with financial and governance related issues and how do we protect student leadership and control of representation. He added that there are things that we could address quickly in the normal course of business rather than challenging the fundamental structure of the Union. RT suggested it would be helpful to build on the comments discussed today and asked if it could be included as part of the remit.

b) To note approval of the H&S Policies circulated on 22 March 2021 to Trustees.

The Board approved the policies in principle but asked that they are re-circulated once all the suggested changes had been completed. MTK thanked those who had read and commented, RT will email through his suggestion and MTK hopes to have them completed by early May before making them available and published on the website.

c) Item for discussion – Proposed consultation on the structure of the Executive and Student Opportunities.

MY asked the Board to consider his proposal for a consultation which will explore, review and reflect on the structure of the executive and student opportunities. He stated the current structure, whilst only being in place for two full terms, poses fundamental challenges which are unlikely to be remedied with time. The Board felt strongly that the student consultation should be a priority and that they should not be presented with a 'this is what we think is the best representation for your Students Union' rather, they should be empowered to voice their opinion. JGra also noted that the Union has seen a number of changes in recent years and asked that if during this consultation period it is felt that a restructure is necessary - any new structure should be robust and resilient to change for at least 3-6 years.

Action: MY to report recommendations to the Board with due consideration for the views of students.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

To discuss the prioritisation of Loughborough London (LL) led by AW.

AW noted that she would be bringing a full in-depth paper to the next meeting of the Board but asked the Trustees to start thinking about the student experience offered to London students. Loughborough University is a holistic University and any potential student researching will only see what is available in Loughborough. She would like to see a more concrete action going forward and would like to see the Union take the initiative on providing a LL experience.

ET agreed that LL needs to be an ongoing discussion point on the agenda but it needs the support of the University and Executive. AMB added that it was within the remit of the Education EO to provide a student experience for London and that the Union could throw money at it but unless we offer the London experience



it would not work and suggested that the student trustees ask the University about their aspirations for London.

Recruitment and appointment of Non-Student Trustees.

AD actioned SL and TP to lead on the recruitment and appointment of three non-student trustees and a future chair. He noted that his term of office is due to end in fourteen months and that this is now a matter of urgency.

date of next meeting: 29 June 2021