



Minutes

BT-211-M3

A virtual meeting of the LSU Trustee Board was held on 30 November 2020 at 17:00 via an online meeting platform.

1. PRESENT:

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

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

2. APOLOGIES:

Amy White

3. REGISTER OF INTERESTS

No update to register of interests.

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

- BT-211-M2 (26 October 2020)
Approved
- The Board noted the resignation of David Kiddie – Notice of one month was given on the 27th October 2020.

5. TO RECEIVE UPDATES ON ACTIONS RAISED

- a) Update on action raised (BT-211-M2, 26 October 2020) – The Board delegated the approval of the Health and Safety Policy to the SLT and requested that it was returned to the Board on completion.

6. TO RECEIVE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

- a) Finance and Operation Report November 2020
- b) Appendix 1: Year End accounts 31 July 2020
- c) Appendix 2: Management Accounts 31 October 2020

MTK gave a brief update on the management accounts before inviting questions. MTK stated that Loughborough was still in tier 3 and that there was very little income. We are working on the forecast every couple of weeks so that we continue to have an accurate position of where we are. She also noted that the progress on the Nursery sale was moving on at a pace now that the Ofsted registration was complete and that she anticipates the sale being finalised by 1 February 2021.

FA asked MTK whether the figures stated in her report included the income from the sale of the Nursery. MTK's reply was that the figures presented in today's reports do not include any income from the sale of the Nursery.

AD asked if the £220k loss was cash or statutory and if statutory what is the cash position at the end of the year. MTK confirmed that the figure was statutory which takes into account depreciation. She added that she had no concerns in respect of cash, noting that, the next payment from the University was due in

January. AD raised an action for MTK to produce a cash position forecast for the next meeting. He summarised that ultimately the operational profit of the organisation should be net cash neutral by the end of the Year. TP added that this is largely due to a restructure of staff saving £300k on wages, furlough payments received from Government and the sale of the Nursery.

7. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE

a) Executive update (Nov 2020)

MY summarised his report to the Board highlighting the fact that the Union continues to pump out opportunity and representation for students noting that the quality and diversity of the opportunities and representation available have seen an increase despite being a digital blend. He continued by mentioning some of the outstanding achievements of the Section Heads and Executive team.

Rag – through a collaboration with Heads Up, the AU and student households, Rag have led on raising c£45k for Movember Charity which is an increase of £17k on their total for last year.

Education – AMB is spearheading a University scale campaign and survey. ‘Tell us how it’s going’ The response and engagement was bigger than expected and in fact saw more responses than any previous survey. The feedback was very positive and AMB continues to work with University colleagues to improve the learning and teaching experience.

AU – Sport is doing very well considering the circumstances. JG continues to be transparent, posting updates in line with Government tier changes and guidelines.

Student Ideas – FA relaunched the Ideas Forum (which translates to: LSU does change) which has gathered a lot more traction and engagement this year with some of the ideas receiving just under 300 votes.

Welfare – AM is leading on a Christmas taskforce which will offer support to students staying on campus over Christmas. AM added that he was working collaboratively with the University and senior volunteers to deliver a smart central offering to students at what is one of the toughest times for mental wellbeing. An example of what we are looking to offer is Christmas lunches, self-care boxes and virtual events where people can meet.

London – I would like to say a word of thanks to AW who is working with us to create a taskforce which will develop a strategy to increase LSU’s presence in London.

RT noted that the Sabbatical team and professional staff of LSU have been outstanding this term, mobilising the support of students and the leadership shown is fantastic. He continued by saying the University are hugely appreciative of the whole team.

JG questioned the Red, Amber, Green (RAG) manifesto ratings noting that many of them had not been started and that, since Officers were already a third of the way through their term, How do you intend to get from red to green? AD suggested that the Board should be mindful that the manifestos were written in a different era and that we should realistically ask what success would look like for the rest of the year. MY added that the RAG ratings were a benchmark and that from a coaching point of view we would be asking the Executive to be brave and consider ‘how am I going to adapt’. The RAG rating will be updated prior to the Board meeting which will include footnotes. ET asked whether there had been any consideration for communicating any adaptation of manifestos to students stating that the Executive and Section Chairs are elected based on their manifesto points. MY’s response was that it would be up to the individual Officer, but he would be keeping the elected student representative body (DRC) informed of any changes. FA added that the Officers would have the opportunity to convey details of any change during their performance reviews.

AD summarised, stating that the way in which the RAG ratings were presented to the Board was very helpful and enable us to keep a record of the great work being done towards fulfilling our charitable aims. He also echoed RT’s comments about the performance of the Sabbatical team adding that the outcome of COVID is that, without the nightclub, student services are now at the forefront of our activity resulting in a new lease of life which is impressive.



8. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE REPORTS FROM THE UNION DIRECTOR

TP presented a report to the Board that looked at the purpose of and issues facing the Union building. He stated that due to the pandemic the plans for a new building have been pushed back and that the current building is not fit for purpose adding that it was also in a poor state of repair. He proposed several steps aimed at addressing those issues which included a plan to make better use of space, currently dominated by venue, which is only used 30% of the time. He asked the Board to approve in principle the proposed changes to many of the public areas which would lead to a cafe to cocktail bar, a comfortable daytime space (the living room), an activity area, a nightclub and a pub. The developments would be completed on staggered timeframes with smaller projects starting in Dec 2020. He estimated the cost to be in the region of £250k but stated that by staggering the projects we can call a halt at any time.

The Board discussed at length the need to consult and communicate with the wider student body on the future of their Union. There was also a concern raised by the Student Trustees regarding the capacity of the Nightclub and potential loss of revenue and operational logistics.

ET raised a question about the performance space in the café to cocktail bar – How will these events be advertised to students and will these be open mic events. JG noted that the proposal seemed very ambitious with a large amount of work being completed on a very tight budget and asked to see some prioritisation of works that are really needed. AM added that he would welcome the opportunity to wear his EDI cap and be involved in ensuring that the building was accessible to all.

TP responded; the nightclub capacity will be 2.5k which would accommodate the attendees of most Wed and Fri night events and for larger events we would erect marquees. Currently, when the venue exceeds 2.5k people, there is a detrimental effect on takings due to queuing at the bars. I am very hopeful that there will be a strong demand for the nightclub, and we would hope to open more regularly. The café to cocktail bar will be open every night with scheduled events being marketed and put on by one of our fantastic student groups, free of charge. Consultation – I don't think the students are of the opinion that this is their building, but we have used Market Research, looked at what others are doing in the sector and spoken to a small focus group who said, it was a great night out but the venue is very poor. We first need to understand why students use our venue; I do not think it is because they like hardcore music but rather that it is where their friends are. I agree that we need to speak to more students as well as looking at what is happening in the youth market and other Student Unions. There is a huge amount of data available and I do not think that our students are so unique that they do not fit the demographics.

AD summarised, whilst the Board are directionally comfortable with investing in the Union to make it better there is a wide range of views on what being better is. There should be a degree of change management and consultation with our membership, making sure that we do create more flexibility in the building but that we also understand what students want. We should aim to protect the heritage whilst building new traditions and new ways of thinking. Our members have a lot of emotion attached to the building and therefore by completing the project in phases we would hope to bring people with us.

9. AGENDA ITEMS

- b) To receive and approve the Delegation of Authority Policy – TP

The Delegation of Authority Policy was presented to the Board as a draft, the Board requested more clarification on the language used throughout the document and a clear understanding of financial approval limits. Action TP/SL to review the policy and present to the Board at a later date.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

AD noted the vacancies on the Board for Lay Trustees stating that we need to refresh the skill set on the Board and that we should look to reach out to Loughborough Alumni through the University. He added that once the job posting was created that all Board members should share this themselves.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

26 January 2021, 27 April 2021 and 29 June 2021