



UNIVERSITY OF WEST LONDON
STUDENTS' UNION

UWLSU Trustee Board

Meeting of 30 October 2019, 5pm, St Mary's Road, Ealing

MEMBERSHIP: Jacob Pepper (Chair) (JPe), Janine Braithwaite (JB), Ancha Joof (AJ), Maddy Ruzzene (MR), Andrea Miller (AM), Anthony Coad (AC), Helen Dawit (HD)

SMT: Tye McMahon (TM), Jacquie Powell (JPo), Matt Myles-Brown (MMB), Amy Eden (AE)

IN ATTENDANCE: Vanessa Dankyi (VD), Mohamad Bahsoun (MB)

APOLOGIES: Helen Dawit (HD), Patrick Fuller (PF), Amy Eden (AE)

Minutes of Trustee Board

1. Tour of Sports Centre, new SU Central front desk and Inspection of bar food preparation facilities

1.1 Trustees undertook a tour of the new UWL Sports and Fitness Centre; SU Central front desk and the food preparation facilities in Freddie's Bar as they related to papers being discussed in the meeting.

2. Minutes from last meeting

2.1 The board **approved** the minutes from the last meeting with the following amendment: point 7.2 needs to be amended from the minutes on 4/09/2019 to refer to improving SU staff capability rather than cost efficiency as outlined in the report.

3. Declarations of interest

3.1 There were no declarations of interest noted.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

4.1 The following matters were identified as outstanding actions from the minutes:

4.1.1 AE to provide new format for the risk register at the December 2019 meeting

4.1.2 MMB to continue liaising with UWL regarding subsidiary students

5. Report on Union Reserves

5.1 The board **noted** the Report on Union Reserves. The following points were also raised in discussion:

- 5.2 Trustees expressed concern that the SU reserve levels were low when benchmarked against other student unions and the charity sector more generally.
- 5.3 Trustees engaged in a discussion about the unique nature of the partnership between the SU and UWL which mitigated some of the risks other SU's might experience, but determined that the sector faces an uncertain future due to Brexit, potential changes to fees and instability in the global economy.
- 5.4 MB, the Deputy Chief Financial Officer for UWL discussed the current positive financial position of UWL and the fact that it is in UWL's business interests to ensure that the SU does not fail. He also suggested ways that risk could be mitigated for the SU in alternative ways to building cash reserves.
- 5.5 Trustees requested that the CEO prepare a further paper or policy for the December 2019 meeting outlining the ways in which the SU's reserve levels might be increased to an industry benchmark of at least 3 months over a period of 3-5 years. This paper should consider both cash and non-cash provisions and should be developed in consultation with UWL.

5.6 Actions

TM – To liaise with UWL and prepare a further paper on reserves for consideration at the December 2019 Board meeting.

6. Proposal for bar maintenance and improvement works

- 6.1 The Board **noted** the proposal for bar maintenance and improvement works. The following points were raised in discussion:
- 6.2 Trustees agreed that there is a pressing need to respond to the ventilation issues in the bar to improve amenity and the student experience.
- 6.3 The business case proposed in the paper could be further enhanced through a more detailed analysis of both risk and opportunity and Trustees requested that a revised report be prepared for the December 2019 meeting that explored alternative scenarios to enable them to make a more informed choice.
- 6.4 Trustees noted that whilst any further discussion about bar renovation works would need to be considered in the context of a further paper on the reserve levels, they view any proposed bar renovation and enhancement of trading conditions as a separate business decision.
- 6.5 It was proposed that support be sought from UWL to assist in the development of the revised business case for the bar renovation works.
- 6.6 It was proposed that future proposals for capital works projects should follow a consistent presentation format to assist with informed decision making.

6.7 Actions:

TM – to produce revised report that includes various operating scenarios

TM – to create a capital project proposal template

Note: Mohamad Bahsoun, Deputy Chief Financial Officer UWL left the meeting at 18:25.

7. UWLSU Key Performance Indicators

- 7.1 The board **approved** the UWLSU Key Performance Indicators. The following points were also raised in discussion:
- 7.2 There had been a delay in reporting the proposed KPI's for the year due to a delay in finalising key financial information from the previous financial year. Ideally the KPI's would be signed off at the September board meeting.
- 7.3 Some targets have been reduced due to income reductions and therefore capacity has decreased, whilst others have been adjusted downwards due to a desire to achieve diversity in the types of students engaged.
- 7.4 The automatic inclusion of nursing students in engagement figures also ceased in 2018/19 which reduces the overall level of engagement when looked at in year on year terms.
- 7.5 Trustees noted that F3: would be amended to reflect 'a compliant external audit' rather than a 'clean external audit'.
- 7.6 Trustee's discussed how the SU might measure the level of satisfaction UWL has with the SU and a measure that might track the success of the partnership to achieving UWL's strategic goals. Trustees requested that this be discussed with relevant UWL staff and reported back to the December board meeting.

7.7 Actions:

TM – To correct grammatical errors in KPI table.

TM – To consult with UWL staff about a potential measure for the effectiveness of the relationship between UWL and the SU and report back to the December 2019 meeting.

JPe - To ask the Student Liaison Committee on 31/10/2019 for their view on a measure for how effective the relationship between UWL and UWLSU is.

8. Confirmation of majority decision without meeting – Part 1 of 2

8.1 In between meetings Trustees made two resolutions relating to the **operation of the Sports and Fitness Centre** and the Performance Review of the SU CEO.

8.2 The board **noted** the following statement:

8.2.1 On 27 September 2019 a request was sent via email to Trustees with details of the operating plan and budget for the SU's management of the Sports Centre, requesting approval for the:

- a. Undertaking of the work
- b. The proposed operating budget
- c. expenditure for the sum of £39,016 (inc VAT) per year for the lease of gym

On 4 October, these resolutions were passed by majority with more than required 50% approval.

9. Governance Review

9.1 Whilst the board had a detailed discussion about the SU governance review at its last meeting, a further opportunity was given to discuss the content of the review given its scale and complexity. The following points were discussed:

- 9.2 The board noted the comprehensive and thoughtful work undertaken by MMB to develop the project to its current state.
- 9.3 Trustees discussed the need to consider students who were studying at UWL through partnership arrangements and requested that MMB consult with relevant UWL staff to ensure that the SU fully understands its obligations in relation to all students.
- 9.4 Trustees reflected that upon review the current UWL Code of Practice could be clearer when setting out roles and responsibilities and that ideally SU would be consulted when the document was next reviewed.
- 9.5 The Code of Practice does not mention all of the protected characteristics. This was deemed to be a potential beneficial addition to the policy in the next review of the code.
- 9.6 Trustees noted that whilst UWL's growth into new partnerships and acquisitions should be commended, it is important to note that student experience could be at risk if careful planning was not undertaken as these partnerships and acquisitions take shape.

9.7 Actions:

MMB – to continue to seek clarification from UWL about students who are eligible for membership of the SU

MMB – to undertake further consultation with Marion Lowe about the Code of Practice

Note: Janine Braithwaite, Vice President Education left the meeting at 19:17.

10. Any other business

- 10.1 Trustees noted the recent media reports of increased sexual violence at UK university campuses and requested further information about the SU and UWL's preparedness and response to similar incidents.
- 10.2 MMB provided information about existing UWL policies and work currently being undertaken to enhance these responses.
- 10.3 Trustees requested to be keep informed about further policy developments in this area as they happen.

10.4 Action:

MMB – To report back to Trustees about the work of the UWL Sexual Violence response group.

Note: Tye McMahon (Chief Executive Officer), Matthew Myles-Brown (Head of Membership) and Jacquie Powell (Head of Operations) left the meeting at 19:29.

11. Confirmation of majority decision without meeting – Part 2 of 2

- 11.1 In between meetings Trustees made two resolutions relating to the operation of the Sports and Fitness Centre and the **Performance Review of the SU CEO**.
- 11.2 The board noted the following statement:

11.2.1 On 14 October 2019 a request was sent via email to Trustees with details of the process for the CEO's annual performance appraisal requesting approval for the:

- a. proposed process
- b. addition of CEO performance appraisal as an annual item of business for the board.

On 17 October, these resolutions were passed by majority with more than required 50% approval

12. Close of business

- 12.1 There being no other business, the chair closed the meeting at 7.40pm. The next meeting will be held on the 11 December, 5pm, St. Mary's Road, Ealing. There will be a Trustee dinner following the board meeting.