

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 13 JUNE 2018

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MEETING	Board of Trustees
DATE	28 September 2018
PUBLICATION	Open
STRATEGIC THEME	None
PROGRAMME	None
CORPORATE PROCESS	Minutes of meetings are formal records of Committee discussions, and decisions made under delegated authority from the Board.
SUMMARY	The minutes of the last meeting are presented for scrutiny and approval.
BUDGET IMPLICATIONS	None
RISK	None
CONCLUSION	The Board is asked to APPROVE the minutes as an accurate record of the last meeting, and COMMENT on any matters arising.

Members present

Anthony Baker, Ted Lavis-Coward, Sabrina Seel, Rosa Tallack, Charlie Walker, Martin Parker, Louise Shillinglaw, David Evans, James Creer, Megan Croll

In attendance

Gareth Hughes, Martin Horrocks, Kirsty Morrison, Claire Marshall (minutes), Laura Wilkinson, Ben Zealley, Estia Ryan, George Walker, Meg Haskins, Saul Cahill, Ellie Scorah (for opening of meeting)

Apologies

Josh Barker, Beth Watling, Oliver Colling

Notification of any other business or conflicts of interest

RT asked for a discussion on Diversity and the Charity Governance Code.

Hello from a team member

Ellie Scorah joined the meeting and discussed her role as Communications Assistant. Ellie is an English graduate from Durham University (Trevelyan College). Her role was varied and included sending out the President's email, social media, writing blogs, responding to press queries, promoting student groups, and photography. She is currently working on two projects: the Pincident campaign which has included wandering around the city dressed as a giant pin; the social media tease reached 10k people (a good post usually reaches 4k). The other project is the 'Mental Health Matters' campaign; PG students appreciated this as they often get neglected. Ellie also told trustees about her work creating content for the advice service.

Ellie mentioned some fun things she has asked the officers to do in the past including a Pancake Day challenge and an Easter egg hunt. JC congratulated Ellie on her success in her projects so far, and asked if there were any particular changes she had implemented that led to the success. Ellie responded that her role was actually new, so it was more down to the fact there wasn't the capacity for those kinds of projects beforehand.

Minutes from the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Chief Executive's Report

GH presented his report, and was pleased to note that Durham SU had completed Part A of the Quality Students' Unions quality assurance framework. Part B is now underway and trustees will be updated on it in the coming months.

GH thanked the Opportunities team, and congratulated Durham SU's student groups, for their success at the National Society Awards. Durham student won the best event award for the second year in a row for the Charity Fashion Show, and also won the best campaign, project or initiative for Its Not OK at Durham.

JC asked for any update on making student charitable fundraising sustainable and low risk. GH continued to meet with the key volunteers involved, who had understandable concerns but accepted the premise of the exercise. GH had further meetings arranged for later in the week.

LS asked if there was data protection training planned for trustees. GH said that the Chair of Audit and Risk Committee had attended training, and that there would be something included in the induction for new trustees.

Finance Report

MH presented the Finance Report. Durham SU will have a better than expected end-of-year, and will make around a £30k surplus.

There is a commercial deficit of £16k, attributed to meeting bar target but with margins on food and beverages are not as good as expected. However, stock concerns previously reported to Board make a significant negative contribution. Auditors had suggested an external stock taker, which has been arranged immediately, with a follow up external stocktake at the end of the year. Audit and Risk Committee and Finance Committees had both addressed the issue.

MH detailed further the stock control measures, including some current limitations with software that were being worked around. The Commercial Manager was the designated stock control manager, and was supported by two duty managers.

Some shortfalls in venue hirer were due to some over-budgeting but also some rebates applied to a long standing client due to maintenance failures in winter months. These concerns have been addressed, and the Chair noted the work that had been undertaken to secure sustainable commercial income.

Finally, GH noted the continuing discussions with the University to secure compensation for building works in the conversion of the ballroom to a lecture theatre. These were nearly concluded, and GH hoped to have the arrangements sorted before the end of June.

Annual Plan 2018/2019

GH presented the Annual Plan, and gave a brief description to each section and encouraged questions from trustees, explaining that the Strategic Development Projects are the steps we will make towards what is in the strategy document.

MP stated that the plan was ambitious, which was great, and asked who would be responsible for delivery of what. GH advised that the senior leadership team would turn strategic projects into objectives for staff, in order to clarify accountability across Durham SU.

JC asked if we were continuing to work on the transfer arrangements for Stockton students from Durham University, to Newcastle University, and GH advised that there was no continuing relationship, but Durham SU would keep any pre-existing advice cases.

The Board asked about the evaluation measures and GH advised that there was a vast range of student data, so there was no need to commission further research at present. GH committed to bringing a paper of evaluation mechanisms to a meeting of the Board in the autumn.

The Chair thanked GH and said that the Annual Plan is well documented, and the Board looked forward to seeing delivery.

The Board approved the Annual Plan.

Budget 2018/19

MH presented the Budget. The proposal was for a budgeted deficit of £29131, which would be covered by a surplus in the 2017/2018 accounts. The senior leadership team believed that this was an appropriate proposal, which reflected the projects planned in current year and not spent which would, for various reasons, actually occur early in 2018/2019.

The budget assumptions included a 3% cost of living increase, an allowance for increments within the pay policy, and the adoption of the foundation living wage. These were all positive developments which reflected investment in the Durham SU staff team.

CW asked for further information on salary breakdown across strategic themes. GH described how a distribution model had been developed by the Finance Manager (with no individual post allocated at less than 50%). This supported greater transparency to funders and stakeholders.

The Board approved the Budget.

Trustee Recruitment

The Chair thanked LS for everything she has done for Durham SU over the last three years, and presented LS with flowers of behalf of the Board. LS said she had enjoyed her time as a trustee, and it was nice to leave the organisation in great shape to move forward.

GH advised that Assembly had approved new terms of office for OC, AB and MP.

The recruitment for the new external trustee is underway and there has been excellent levels of interest from high quality candidates. Two candidates will meet with GH, RT and MP this week, and then have a discussion with AB next week. The preferred candidate will be invited to attend the next Board meeting as an observer, as Assembly won't approve the appointment until the autumn.

Proposed Board and Committee plans for 2018/2019

The Board was content with the proposed business for 2018/2019.

Any Other Business

RT asked about progress on Board diversity work, as within the Charity Governance Code project. GH advised that LS had worked on the main Governance Code, and AB has looked at diversity. This discussion would inform trustee recruitment. A consolidated paper will follow.