



Minutes of the Meeting of the Trustee Board

Date: 1st July 2024

Time: 14.00pm – 17.00pm

Location: Devonshire House, University of Exeter

Membership:

Rhys Wallis (RW) – Societies and Employability Officer / Officer Trustee and Interim Chair of the Trustee Board
Alex Martin (AM) – Student Trustee
Ella Trudgeon (ET) – Student Trustee
Emma de Saram (EdS) – President / Officer Trustee and Chair of the Trustee Board
Julie Walkling (JW) – External Trustee and Deputy Chair of the Trustee Board
Margaret Laithwaite (ML) – External Trustee
Mia Robillard-Day (MRD) – Communities and Equality Officer / Officer Trustee
Nur Farah Meor Azlan (FMA) – Student Trustee
Pip Shaw (PS) – Student Living Officer / Officer Trustee
Reuben Sek (RS) – Student Trustee
Agneta Ravindran Buvana (ARB) – Student Trustee
Charles Jones (CJ) – External Trustees

Apologies:

Alex Stanley (AS) – Education Officer / Officer Trustee
Harriet Jones (HJ) – External Trustee

In Attendance:

Ali Chambers (AC) – CEO and Board Secretary
Cassie Thornton (CT) – Head of Marketing and Brand
Tony Reissner (TR) – Interim Head of Finance (online)
Eleanor Walker (EW) – Head of Organisational Development
Dani Alexander (DA) – Senior Coordinator, Board Clerk / Minute taker
Tom Barrass (TB) – Head of Student Engagement
Edward O'Sullivan (EOS) – Incoming Student Trustee (Observing)
Fanar Al-Derzi (FAD) – Incoming Student Trustee (Observing)
India Walton-Salmon (IWS) – Incoming Societies and Employability Officer (Observing)
Kira Brookes (KB) – Incoming Student Living Officer (Observing)
Sebastian Racisz (SR) – Incoming Education Officer (Observing)
Thomas Tran (TT) – Incoming Communities and Equality Officer (Observing)
Amy Holder (AH) – Senior Influence and Insights Manager – joined to present item 15.

MEETING MINUTES

1. Welcome to Trustees

The Chair welcomed incoming Officer and Student Trustees who were in attendance to observe the meeting.

Sadie Lyons (Social Media Coordinator) was in the room to take photos of trustee board. SL left at 14.05pm.

2. Apologies for absence

Harriet Jones (HJ) – External Trustee

Alex Stanley (AS) – Education Officer / Officer Trustee

3. Notification of Any Other Business

No other business.

4. Notification of Any new Conflicts of Interest

No new conflicts of interest.

5. Notification of Any Conflicts for this meeting

No new conflicts of interest for the meeting.

6. Minutes from the last meeting and action log

The Chair went through the minutes from the last meeting and the action log. Trustees were satisfied that the minutes were an accurate account of the last meeting.

When asked a question on the topic, RW clarified that according to the articles of association if a trustee misses up to three meetings in a row without reasonable mitigating circumstances, action can be taken by Trustees to remove said trustee. RW assured Board this was not the case for any trustee not in attendance at the meeting.

7. CEO Report

AC updated the Board on the CEO report.

EDS updated the Board on the Encampment which was established on the 14th May 2024 on Streatham Campus. The camp will be vacating on Wednesday 3rd July 2024 on the provision that members of the encampment will be involved in working groups on the divestment demand and support for Palestinian students.

Confidential: AC updated the Board on the strategic planning meetings with members of the University leadership team in regards to the SU Partnership in Cornwall. Information redacted due to confidentiality.

Trustees noted the paper.

8. Student Experience Report

PS presented the paper as read. PS asked for comments or feedback from the Board.

CT provided an update on the progress made on Guild spaces and the work done in collaboration with NDSS. CT assured Board of the continuity of the relationship between the Guild and the society even with the change in committee. A discussion was held with the new president of the society regarding the involvement of the society to improve Guild spaces and feed into the Estate Strategy of the University.

Officers were asked what their biggest win was for the 2023/2024 year. Officers listed several wins such as empowering students; working collaboratively with students on projects such as the community fridge, the governance of the Guild and contributions to Trustee Board.

Trustees highlighted the importance to engage with St Luke's students over the coming year. Assurance was given that St Luke's service provision and spaces are a focus in the annual plan for campus engagement. This will start with research into St Luke's students and their use of the campus to better inform consequent service provisions.

PS and MRD updated Board on the recipe book project and the success of it.

Trustees noted the paper.

9. Impact Report 2023/2024

CT presented the paper as read. Trustees received a copy of the impact report for the year 2023/2024. Trustees were shown a video created by a student staff to present the impact report.

Board was asked to discuss the performance of the Guild against the KPIs to date.

TB updated Board on the immediate plans to increase meaningful engagement with the Guild through the Brand Activism plan. TB also touched on longer term

plans to increase engagement and representation through the student representation review which was discussed later on in the meeting.

EW updated Board on plans to have a more holistic approach to student staff in order to ensure their experience working at the Guild is more meaningful. EW updated the meeting on plans to develop the skills of student staff and use those skills in the most meaningful way.

CT updated Board on the immediate plans to use Insights data such as Big Guild Survey and NSS scores over the summer to better understand which students are not engaging with the Guild and why.

Student and Officer trustees gave their perception as students on the role of the Guild throughout their journey at university. They highlighted the importance of stating the Guild's purposes to students so that they can engage with the Guild more meaningfully.

CT updated Trustees on plans to work with university employability services in October 2025 to market part time jobs to and recruit first year students.

Trustees noted the paper.

10. Management Accounts

TR presented the management accounts to the Board for May 2024.

TR reminded Board of the exceptional financial transactions that occurred in 2023-2024, namely the donation received for the SUSS payment from the University and the subsequent payment made for SUSS, as well as the revaluation for the Patrick Heron artwork. With those exceptional transaction, the surplus is of £5,453,701. For the purpose of comparing Actuals to Budgets, the extraordinary transactions were excluded giving a surplus of £197,431 and variance of £127,548 as of May 2024. TR presented the summary by department and the rationale behind underspends and overspends.

TR noted the Society 5 largest and 5 negatives balances.

RW highlighted the training officer and student trustees receive when they join the Trustee Board as well as the training society committee members received when they step into their position, and asked officers to reflect on the training they would receive, and its use.

Trustees noted the importance of transparency when it comes to the Guild's account and suggested looking at ways in which the Guild can communicate its management accounts and financial decisions more clearly to students.

Following discussions held in recent FAC meetings, the next management accounts presented to Board in Autumn will contain more details and a narrative to explain the largest positive and negative balances.

TR updated Board on the balance of restricted funds which includes Musical Instruments, TEF, Nightline and Green Impact. Following conversations with the Senior Leadership Team, Auditors and University, TR noted that the aim for the end of the 2023/2024 financial year is for that balance of restricted funds to be null.

TR updated Board on the end of year combined forecast and noted that the combined surplus is estimated to be £37,936 which is a £2,262 variance from the 2023/2024 budget.

Trustees approved the Management Accounts.

11. Guild Financial Budget 2024-2025

TR presented the paper as read.

Trustees were asked to approve the 2024-2025 budget and to Note the updated 5 Year Plan.

The Student Engagement, Brand Activism, People and Culture, Governance, and Finance plans were briefly presented by relevant staff members to give trustees an understanding of the annual planning for 2024/2025.

JW joined the meeting at 15.30pm.

FAD left the meeting 15.50pm.

TR walked through the budget for 2024-2025 including income and expenses and the forecast for upcoming years. TR explained the rationale behind the process for calculating the forecasted budget for upcoming years. Trustees were asked for comments or questions.

Trustees approved the annual plans and budget for 2024/2025.

The meeting took a break from 15.55pm-16.00pm

12. Student Representation Review Update

PS presented the paper as read. TB updated the Board on the progress of the student representation review group. TB presented the challenges identified with the current representative model. TB and PS walked through the strands of the proposed alternative representative model.

Trustees were asked to approve the recommended models of representation for student consultation in autumn 2024 with the objective of a final representation model being presented at Board in December 2024.

TB noted that key university stakeholders, the Athletic Union, and the SU have been kept inform of the general direction of the project and will be presented to them in a formalised manner further down the line when more progress has been made on the review.

TT highlighted the importance of having a mix of opportunities for students to be involved in representation during and after their studies due to the time constraints some students may experience whilst pursuing a degree. TB noted that opportunities for graduates are under consideration in the review.

Trustees asked for assurance that students would be supportive of the changes. Trustees discussed feedback being directed to the Guild President.

TB noted the challenges around communicating the proposed changes to the representation model to students and highlighted avenues for communication.

Action: Present a model of representation to be approved by Board in December 2024.

Trustees approved the recommended approach.

13. Governance Working Group Update

RW presented the paper as read.

Trustees were asked to scrutinise and approve the schedule of business for 2024/2025, to approve the role descriptions for the role of Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees.

Trustees noted article number was missing on the delegation of authority.

Action: Update delegation of authority with the correct article number

Action: Business schedule dates – update dates schedule

Action: Consider gaps in representation at the Trustee Board level at the next Away Day.

RW noted the external chair review conducted by NCVO and noted the full report will be available shortly.

Trustees approved the new delegation of authority with the action above included.

Trustees approved the schedule of business 2024/2025 pending a rectification of the dates for the second People and Governance Meeting.

Trustees approved the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Committees role description.

14. Trustee Board membership

RW presented the paper as read. RW updated Board on the current membership of the Trustee Board, and asked Board to consider gaps in representation.

Board was asked to approve the re-appointment of Margaret Laithwaite for a second term of four years serving on the Trustee Board.

Not including ML, 11 trustees were present in the meeting, all 11 trustees voted in favour of the re-appointment of Margaret Laithwaite for a second term of office.

Action: Trustees agreed that gaps in representation on the Trustee Board will be addressed at the Away Day in October 2024.

Trustees noted the paper.

15. EOS left the meeting at 17.00pm

16. Stakeholder Evaluation Project

AH presented the paper as read. AH updated Board on the progress of the stakeholder evaluation project.

AH talked through the process of identifying the stakeholders that were selected to take part in the evaluation survey. Paul Blackmore and Joe Wall to be added to the list of stakeholders. Trustees noted the paper.

17. EDS and MRD left the meeting at 17.02pm

18. FAC Update and CGR Update were removed from the agenda. ML and JW were available to receive questions from trustees about the committee update should they have had any.

19. Risk Register

AC presented the paper as read. AC updated Board on the new Risk Register which was reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team and scrutinised by Board at the last Deep Dive in May 2024.

Action: Trustees will discuss the Risk Register at the Away Day in October. Trustees approved the move of the item to a later meeting.

20. Sustainability Update

TB presented the paper as read. TB updated Board on the current proposed approach to sustainability within the Guild.

The Board was asked to consider the current approach outlined and to sustainability and the proposed approach for developing a stronger framework for sustainability going forward.

Trustees noted the paper.

21. Byelaw Change

TB presented the paper as read. TB updated Board on the proposed changes to the Byelaws following a review of the Advisory Board.

Trustees approved the changes as outlined in the paper.

22. Items for Information

- a. FAC minutes
- b. CGR minutes
- c. Employee Engagement Action Plan July 2024

23. Any Other Business

Note of thanks from RW to members of the Board, JW, ML, FMA, SLT and L&G Governance Team.

Note of thanks from AC to JW and FMA for their contributions to Board as their term of office comes to an end.

24. Feedback Form

Trustees were asked to complete the Board feedback form after the meeting.

25. Date of the Next Meeting – October 2024

26. End of meeting 17.22pm

ACTION LOG

Action	Date of action	Deadline	Responsible for action
Create top level principles around EDI for the new building within the Estates Strategy	12/04/23	2023-2024 On hold due to delay to new building	People and Culture, and Operation Team
Present a model of representation to be approved by Board in December 2024.	01/07/2024	December 2024	TB
Consider gaps in representation at the Trustee Board level at the next Away Day.	01/07/2024	October 2024	Trustees
Consider the new approach to the risk register at the next Away Day.	01/07/2024	October 2024	Trustees
Update delegation of authority with the correct article number	01/07/2024	October 2024	DA
Business schedule dates – update dates schedule	01/07/2024	October 2024	DA