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| **Trustee Board** Date: **Tuesday 22 September 2015**  Time: **5.30pm** Number: **24**  Venue: **Committee Room 1, Student Union, Edinburgh Campus**  |

**In the Chair**: Stefan Kay, Trustee (SGK)

**Also Present** : Brian Hay, Trustee (BH)

Stephanie Harper, Trustee (SH)

Samantha Forsyth, Trustee (SF)

Hannah Frances, President (HF)

Peter Gilchrist, Vice President, SBC (PG)

Sahara Choudhury, Vice President, Wellbeing (SC)

Miranda Matoshi, Vice President, Community (MM)

**Apologies**: Sharon Baines, Trustee (SB)

Susan Kirkman, Trustee (SK)

**In Attendance**: Gail Edwards, Chief Executive Officer (GE)

Fiona Hall, Finance Manager (FH)

Iain Herbert, Commercial Manager (IH)

Gillian Fortune, Executive Assistant (Minute Taker)

**ACTION**

**4.5 Meet and review other partnerships IH & PG**

**4.13 Look at alternatives for SBC Student Space & University Funding TB & Exec**

**4.15 Meet up if other venues found TB**

**5.7.1 Look at Finance Figures – any questions to FH TB**

**5.9 Come Up with 5 Risks to be considered TB**

**8.3 Distribute “pretty” version of Operational Plan to TB GE**

**8.6 Trustee Mentors and Sabbaticals make arrangements to meet TB & Sabbs**

1. **MINUTES**

1.1 **Matters Arising**:

BH asked about item 4.3.1 in the Minutes regarding the Budget. The CEO reported that the budget had been sent to the University for perusal, so far no comments had been received.

All the Action points had been done. The SBC Project would be covered in the meeting.

1.2 The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 May were approved and seconded and duly passed.

1. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

2.1 No notes on conflict of interest.

1. **WELCOME**

3.1 The chair welcomed Iain Herbert the new Commercial Manager to the Trustee Board. He then asked IH to give the board a brief summary of his background before coming to the Student Union to work.

1. **SCOTTISH BORDERS CAMPUS BUSINESS CASE**

4.1 IH had visited SBC, consulting with GE and PG looking into the opportunities for a new student facility at the Campus. The results were noted in the report tabled at the meeting. While the proposed premises were very good and the owner seemed to be very helpful IH had been instructed to look at it from a business viability point of view and this paper was the result.

4.2 IH went through the various points made in the report giving explanations of the figures he had quoted and giving more details to the Board on the thinking behind the different proposals he had brought forward.

4.3 IH, GE and PG had discussed the report earlier in the day and had included funding for a CCTV system, rent etc. All were disappointed that the facility just could not be run as a viable business. All agreed that some form of student facility was needed at SBC but this business model was not viable.

4.4 After much discussion on catering, bar and other options to fund this venture the Board were agreed that yes, the SBC HWU students did need a facility to call their own, they weren’t sure how this would be achieved.

4.5 IH agreed to meet with PG and look for another opportunity – perhaps working in partnership with an existing business which could provide the space and had the facilities available and running already.

4.6 SGK thanked IH for his work on this project and for the report.

4.7 PG stated that the result was not what he wanted, of course. He felt that more could be done with the space on offer. He would love to go to Plan B, but feel that with his experience and knowledge of SBC he could make a go of the venue as a student facility. He has already looked at alternatives but none of them would work. The students at SBC do not feel part of Heriot-Watt University, the campus or any other connections. They leave their rooms, go to classes and then return to their rooms, going home at the weekends and everything is very insular and isolated.

4.8 The Trustee Board discussed the issue at length. BH asked if it was possible to buy some facilities from the owners of the catering etc at SBC. PG stated that this had been investigated and the Campus Management were not keen on the idea and did not want to give any space to HWU. BH asked if funding could be applied for from the Watt Club. Apparently funding was available from the University but it wasn’t enough to get the project started and maintained for a trial period. PG said they were willing to look at the funding but couldn’t state how much they would give.

4.9 PG stated that he felt this was a matter of urgency, four years had gone by trying to get this project off the ground and up and running. Students were commuting from Glasgow etc and the lack of facilities was getting worse. He felt HWU needed to look at this as a matter of urgency, if it was left for much longer the student’s lives would be worse and it would be more difficult to recover from this decline.

4.10 Further discussion ensued on how to proceed, it was agreed that student space was needed but we didn’t want to alienate the University who we were looking to perhaps help fund the project. He feels passionately about this project and would love the chance to go ahead and give it his best shot and see what happens, because he feel that if the project doesn’t get off the ground this year, it won’t happen.

4.11 It was agreed that PG and IH would look at it again. IH stated that we needed to be very careful, he had worked out that the spend per student during Edinburgh Freshers Week was less than it would take to sustain a facility at SBC.

4.12 It was agreed to go forward with the project, carefully, making sure it was pitched as a student safe place being funded by the catering and bar facilities on the premises, rather than as another student bar. PG informed the meeting that he would be going back to SBC having to disappoint the students yet again. They had bought into the project and would be sadly disappointed that it was not progressing.

4.13 SGK asked the Board to agree that: we would have another go at finding an alternative and that the Executive would put pressure on the University to help get the project funded.

4.14 Further discussion ensued on the tactics which would be employed to get the project funded, it would be touted as a need to enhance the student experience at SBC and to boost student morale on the campus, a student space was urgently needed.

4.15 SGK asked that if PG and IH went ahead and did some more work on the project would the Trustee Board agree to meet to discuss this topic as and when required outwith the other meetings arranged. This was agreed.

IH left the meeting at 6.30pm.

1. **FINANCE UPDATES**

5.1 FH want through the papers which had been tabled at the meeting. These included the Management Accounts to 31 July 2015. FH gave more details on the numbers reported and some background to the figures. Trading was not good last year, however we do know the causes. FH said that we now have positives in play, but we definitely needed trading to do better, much better. FH stated that she would have the August accounts available as soon as possible.

5.2 FH informed the Trustee Board that as the annual audit would be taking place in November, she would be busy with that so for the September figure she would headline them and send them to the Trustees so they could see the differences during Freshers Week. The figures were very good but there had been a drop in catering income compared to last year when we had the Pizza outlet.

5.3 SGK asked if anyone had any thoughts on what could be done to improve the commercial sales. GE stated that she felt we were busier and that she would like to see the numbers for the last month. She felt we needed to look at the catering on offer in the evenings and to look at improvements in the bar. We needed to get better at marketing our catering and bar facilities and get some offers available for the students to promote the facilities. GE said that improvements were happening in the Shop where sampling was being used as a promotional tool to get the students engaged. The Commercial Manager would be looking to improve the layout of the shop and other ways to improve the figures.

5.4 SGK stated that it was a good thing that we were in profit.

5.5 SF asked about the figures re staff expenses. FH explained re the staff taxis home at the end of the shift etc. There were some licensing costs which were high and these areas needed to be identified separately.

5.6 A budget was being done, the contingency funds needed to be topped up. FH gave an explanation of the expenses, siting the Pay Review and several things which had needed money spent on them.

5.7 **RBS Branch closure on 7 November**: We used the University branch for change orders and banking the takings. Alternatives had been looked at but it was difficult. The Sighthill branch of the Bank of Scotland which was a close alternative was closing down as well. FH will keep the Trustee Board informed on the progress in finding a cheap and safe alternative.

5.7.1 SGK asked that the Board go through the figures outwith the meeting and if they had any questions to email FH.

5.8 **Risk Management**: FH distributed a brief paper on this subject which OSCR needs each charity to have in place for accounting requirements. The paper had already been distributed to the Senior Management Team who will work on their own departments and the finished result would be brought to the Trustee Board in due course. Any questions should be directed to FH who will be pleased to explain and answer any queries.

5.9 FH asked the Trustee Board for five risks that need to be thought about.

5.10 FH reported that there was a risk management policy already in place, although this was more Health and Safety, but OSCR had new rules which needed to be covered. The idea was to start afresh which was deemed a better idea and thought would be given to the reputation of the Union etc etc which were not covered previously. GE and FH would work towards having the paper in place ready for the Trustee Planning Afternoon in November. The auditors could help but they try to get the clients to do this for themselves. BH asked if the Trustees could help. FH explained that the auditors would look at it but the paper needs more work to bring it up to date. The Trustee Board needed to look at the wider issues and the grated risks involving reputation etc etc.

5.11 SGK thanked FH for her hard work on the papers and the budgets. He also thanked everyone involved in Freshers Week for their hard work which had given the Union such a good profit.

1. **HERA STAFF REVIEW**

6.1 GE gave a brief update on the progress and how all staff had now been informed of the outcome. No appeals had been launched. The increase in salaries had been done with effect from 1st September, with budget approval by the Trustee Board, there had been various reactions from the staff. This whole process had taken four and a half years to complete but was needed to bring the staff salaries and wages in line with the University rates of pay.

1. **SABBBATICAL REPORTS**

 Each Sabbatical Officer present gave a brief update on what they had been doing since the start of their work in June.

7.1 **President**: HF was very busy with University and academic related matters, which varied considerably and required varying degrees of commitment. The No Where to Study Campaign had been so successful and she had attended the opening of the new James Watt Study Hub which will be open all year round for student to use. The Learning and Teaching Matters poster campaign would be launched soon, which would highlight the role of academic mentors etc. School Officer recruitment was progressing well. The L & T Board was going well and she had contributed positively to this committee. The President would be working to arrange meeting with Heads of School to discuss rates of pay for PG students, and the PG Reps were continuing to meet regularly.

7.2 **VP Wellbeing**: SC was working with the Muslim student groups to take a strong stance against the PREVENT legislation. She was working on branding for the Liberation Groups and planning a recruitment drive for the groups to get them up and running effectively. SC was helping the Students With Kids group to get more accessible lecture times and open a dialogue with the University on their behalf. She was hoping to get many campaigns up and running in the forthcoming year among them Safe Taxi Scheme, Mental Health Week, Women in Science campaign, Diversity Week and many more.

7.3 **VP Community**: MM informed the Board about work she was doing on the commercial services, and on the facelift which had been given to the Bar and the enhanced menu for the catering. Student feedback so fare was very positive. Freshers Week had went well and been amazing. She had spoken to loads of people about loads of different things. MM would be starting personal development workshops which would be taking place in the James Watt Hub as well as in the Union. A ball would be taking place on the Friday night, resulting from an alliance with the Economics society which she hoped would be an annual event on a par with the Beer Festival, student led and backed by the Student Union. MM would be working on enhancing communications between the Union and students, which would help promote our events, campaigns, and everything else that we do, letting students know about it. Two new interns had been employed and would be used for commercial promotion and student engagement campaigns. MM hoped to get more students volunteering with the Union as we needed them to support the many campaigns we had planned. MM wanted to promote “soft” skills rather than career driven skills and wanted to open this up to all the students. SF offered to help involve her colleagues as speakers at the workshops, MM gratefully accepted the offer.

7.4 **VP SBC**: PG reported that the SBC Freshers Week had gone really well, with a visit from the Queen on the Wednesday (for the opening of the new railway line) helping put Galashiels on the map and create a fantastic positive image of the borders in general. PG asked that more help was needed in SBC to organise and run the events, himself and Rachel were just not enough, although the Freshers Helpers had been really good this year, they did vary from year to year and the level of student involvement changes. PG had done a lot of work promoting the NSS Survey to the students and this had resulted in a very positive result in the survey, this would be continued. He was hoping to set up meetings with local charities to get students involved, helping ties with the local community. There had been a major failure of all SBC MSC students (20) in their exams, which had resulted in a deferment. A PG rep was needed. School Officers from last year we working with the School to see what was needed to improve. He would be trying to get the facts (at the moment most of the talk was anecdotal) and see what had happened to cause this failure. PG would be working on trying to get more societies and student groups started up. PG warned that the next Sabbatical at SBC would need more support and that without this help any work done so far would fall apart.

1. **CEO REPORT**

8.1 The CEO added updates to her written and tabled paper. The CEO gave more details when questioned on a topic.

8.2 **HERA and Cost of Living Wage**: The CEO asked if it was possible to agree the cost of living increase by email with the Trustee Board when this was negotiated by the University later in the year. This was agreed. SR asked if the Union would be keeping pace with the University on their pay increases, the CEO said we would try to do this, but this would need to be looked at. BH asked if this could be confirmed by the Trustee Board as a matter of policy.

8.2.1 The CEO was asked how the staff would qualify for spinal point increases. The CEO agreed that this would need to be looked at as well and agreed on. One way could be at the annual appraisals and related to performance. The CEO asked that the Trustee Board note this would need to be agreed. SGK agreed that a small group could perhaps pick this up and get something in writing for future Boards to note. Policy should be put in place. The timing would need to be looked at as the appraisals took place during the summer and the cost of living increase usually happened in November backdated to August, this would be put to the Senior Management Team and then the Trustee Board perhaps, for the next financial year.

8.3 **Operational Plan**: GE will send round a copy of the Plan in a couple of weeks, to ensure the Trustee Board get the “pretty” version.

8.4 **Student Trustee Interviews**: SGK asked that he be excused the interviews for the Student Trustee post as he has mentored one of the applicants and feels this would be a conflict of interest.

8.5 **Student Panel**: BH asked about the Student Panel and whether we would able to put questions owned by the Student Union not the University, over a range of issues and we would have questions and focus groups. GE agreed this would be a good opportunity to get feedback and to get information out there.

8.6 SGK asked that the Trustee mentors and sabbaticals meet up and that this be put into the Actions for this meeting.

1. **AOCB**

9.1 The Meeting went In Camera.

1. **DATES OF MEETINGS**

10.1 The Meetings of the Trustee Board have been agreed as :

Wednesday 11 November at 5.30pm, Edinburgh Campus, Committee Room 1

Tuesday 19th January at 5.30pm, Edinburgh Campus, Committee Room 1

Wednesday 27 April at 5.30pm, Edinburgh Campus, Committee Room 1

Trustee Board Planning Day TBC - November