

**TRUSTEE BOARD MEETING**

**The Minutes of the Trustee Board meeting held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at 6.00pm in NH209.**

**Sederunt:**

Kevin Campbell, Sabbatical Trustee (**Chair**)  
Chris Daisley, Sabbatical Trustee  
Rachel Simpson, Sabbatical Trustee  
Yetunde Ogedengbe, Sabbatical Trustee  
Stuart McCallum, External Trustee (arrived at 6.18pm)  
Lisa Kirkwood, External Trustee  
Brian Beck, External Trustee  
Nicola Paul, External Trustee  
Alan Adamson, Student Trustee  
Susanne Quigg, Student Trustee  
Gavin MacLeod, Student Trustee

**Apologies:**

Jen Broadhurst, Student Trustee

**In Attendance:**

David Carse, Chief Executive  
Gordon McTweed, Activities Manager (present until item 14)  
Caroline Miller, Representation and Advice Manager (present until item 14)  
Melissa Cairney, Finance Manager (present until item 14)  
Kathryn Collins, Clerk  
Jenny Simpson, Wylie and Bisset LLP (item 4 only)

**At 6.00pm the Chair commenced the meeting.**

**1. Chairs Announcements**

The Chair welcomed and thanked the members for their attendance at the meeting.

The Chair explained that our External Auditors, Wylie and Bisset, will be presenting the Audited Accounts 2017, Letter of Representation and Management Letter, for agenda item 4. The Chair said that the Senior Management Team would be leaving after agenda item 14. The Chair discussed members of the Board going to the new Re: Union Bar and Grill after the Board meeting. However, for those that can't manage there will be a more formal event organised after the December Board meeting.

**2. Declaration of any Conflicts of Interest**

The Chief Executive stated that he had a conflict of interest on agenda item 15, Senior Managers Notice Period.

**3. Agenda Change of Order**

The Chair asked members if anyone wished to move any items further up the agenda or moved into a different section. No items were asked to be moved on the agenda.

#### **4. Audited Accounts 2017, Letter of Representation and Management Letter**

Jenny Simpson, a Partner from Wylie Bisset LLP, our external auditors, presented the Audited Accounts 2017, Letter of Representation, and Management Letter. It was confirmed that the total income from all sources was £769,622 (2016: £797,972) and expenditure was £763,360 (2016: £795,938). This resulted in a surplus for the year of £6,302 (2016: £2,036). There were unrestricted funds of £91,466, including free reserves of £61,005. It was explained that the accounts meet FRS SORP 102 requirements. In discussing the Balance Sheet the auditors felt there was a strong position of c£80k for the Net Current Assets and that the current reserves target is £191,000. The Board were referred to the Independent Auditors Report and that in their opinion the Financial Statements give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 July 2017.

Jenny Simpson presented the Management Letter and highlighted that there were no recommendations from the audit and one ongoing recommendation from 2016 that is being addressed later in the agenda. The auditors have not identified any areas within this audit on where internal controls could be improved. The auditors also presented the Letter of Representation, included within the Management Letter, for approval. It was explained that the Letter of Representation attests to the accuracy of the financial statements that the Students' Association has submitted to the auditors for their analysis.

The Chair called for a vote to approve the Students' Association Accounts 2016/17, note the Management Letter and approve the Letter of Representation by the Chair on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017, after the GCU Finance and General Purposes meeting and subject to any minor amendments. **Vote: For: 11; Against: 0; Abstentions: 0. The Audited Accounts 2017 and Letter of Representation were approved.**

*At 6.18pm Stuart McCallum arrived at the meeting.*

Jenny Simpson invited the Board to attend the Wylie & Bisset Annual Charity Seminar, in Glasgow, on 31 October 2017. Further details will be sent out via the Chief Executive. **Action: Chief Executive.** The Chair thanked Jenny Simpson for attending and thanked Wylie and Bisset LLP for a smooth audit.

*Jenny Simpson left the meeting at 6.20pm.*

#### **5. Banking Review**

The Finance Manager presented the Banking Review paper and explained as per the Financial Policy and Procedures a banking review should take place every three years. The Bank of Scotland currently provides the Students' Association Banking Services. An initial assessment suggests exploring other banks to establish whether a better service could be offered. The Trustee Board were asked to note current progress in reviewing banking services. The approval of the Board would be sought prior to moving bank.

#### **6. Financial Policy and Procedures Update**

The Finance Manager presented a paper outlining how the recommendation within the Management Letter 2016 from the external auditors would be addressed. The recommendation was that the Association 'considers the development of formal written procedures governing the arrangements and regularity of banking cash takings'. The Chair called for a vote to approve the section of text to be added to the Revised Financial Policy and Procedures. **Vote: For: 11; Against: 0; Abstentions: 0. The Financial Policy and Procedures will be updated to include the new section of text.**

## **7. Management Accounts to August 2017**

The Finance Manager explained that the paper is a summary of actual costs to the end of August 2017, against the Base Budget 2017/18. The Finance Manager clarified the main variances as outlined within the commentary. The Balance Sheet as of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017 is included showing the Financial position. A Quarter 1 Reforecast is planned in October 2017.

## **8. Volunteer Satisfaction Survey 2017**

The Activities Manager introduced the paper which presented the results from the Students' Association Volunteer Survey 2017. 68 people responded to the survey out of a possible total of 1,073, a response rate of 6%. 85% of respondents gave positive feedback and recommended the Students' Association as a good place to volunteer, which is the Volunteer Engagement Index score and a Key Performance Indicator within The Bigger Plan 2020. The scoring around engagement was only 64% due to a low scoring question on whether volunteers would consider a career in Students' Associations. The Activities Manager said that due to the high cost of participating, the Students' Association will undertake its own volunteer survey, every two years and added that the timing of the survey and incentives was required to be considered next time.

## **9. Member Satisfaction Survey 2017**

The Chief Executive introduced the paper and explained that the Students' Association works with the University of Strathclyde Students' Association, Edinburgh University Students' Association, Heriot-Watt University Students' Association and Queen Margaret University Students' Union on a joint annual student satisfaction survey and this is the second year of the project working in collaborative partnership. Why Research were commissioned to evaluate the findings per students' association and a benchmarking report. The survey was only open to students studying on the Glasgow campus. The response rate was 898 students. The Chief Executive went through the report and highlighted that responses were similar or more positive for 2017 compared to 2016. The main exception to this was ratings for quality and value for money for Commercial Services which all saw poorer satisfaction. He explained that with the introduction of the Re:Union Bar & Grill should address this area. The Chief Executive encouraged members to read the benchmarking report but explained that the Students' Association continues to perform well against other associations. He added that the partner association continue to identify a theme each year to learn lessons from each other.

## **10. NSS Student Survey Results 2017**

The Representation and Advice Manager introduced the National Student Survey (NSS) Survey Results 2017 paper. The 2017 survey has had substantial changes with the students' association question being changed to "The students' union (association or guild) effectively represents students' academic interests" (question 26) instead of "I am satisfied with the Students' Union (Association or Guild) at my institution" (question 23). The Students' Association received a score of 51% in 2017, down on the UK sector (57%) and Scottish sector (52%). The Chief Executive explained that research conducted by Alterline with 18 unions suggested that students do not understand the new question. He also highlighted that the survey was launched before the University agreed date and communications to students. A discussion took place and it was suggested that research was conducted on how GCU students responded to the question. The Chief Executive added that he was in discussions with the Student President about having a NSS Working Group to help turn things around and improve on this area. The clubs and societies satisfaction score was 59%, down on the Scottish sector (68%). Members' attention was also drawn to the open comment themes outlined within the report.

## 11. Quality Students' Unions Audit Report

The Chief Executive presented the final Quality Students' Unions report. He explained that the auditor had accepted all the changes proposed by the Board, Executive Committee and Senior Management Team. The report confirms that we have moved from Good to Very Good and have therefore met this Big Action within the Bigger Plan 2020. The Chief Executive highlighted that we had received excellent in the following areas: strategic planning, governance, people, services, representation and campaigning, review and evaluation and context. The Chair again thanked all those involved in achieving this quality mark and reminded members that GCU Students' Association is the second association in Scotland and the first modern university to achieve this accreditation.

## 12. The Big Plan 2020 – Year 1 Update

The Chief Executive introduced the Year 1 Progress Report for The Bigger Plan 2020 against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Big Actions. The Chief Executive went through the paper giving an overview of each KPI and Big Actions achieved. The Chief Executive reminded members that many KPIs were purposely set to be bold and challenging for the organisation. A discussion took place on the main challenges within 2016/17. The Chief Executive also explained that the Commercial Strategy, Risk Register, Financial Projections, Marketing and Communications Strategy were also re-aligned to The Bigger Plan 2020, removing capacity from delivery of the strategic plan.

Nicola Paul highlighted that the Marketing and Communications KPIs were challenging depending on the algorithms used, which were not always consistently applied within social media. Nicola offered to support the Communications and Media Co-ordinator in reviewing the bounce rate and social media reach KPIs. Nicola highlighted that there was no link to the Facebook page from the website. The Activities Manager was actioned to introduce Nicola Paul to the Communications and Media Co-ordinator and to highlight feedback received. **Action: Activities Manager.** The Chair thanked Nicola for her offer of support.

## 13. Departmental Yearly Plans 2017/18

The Chair explained to members that each department produces an annual Departmental Yearly Plan to outline how they will meet The Bigger Plan 2020 (Key Performance Indicators, Big Actions and Departmental Measures). The Chair explained this paper whilst this paper was operational in nature he welcomed feedback from members.

Chris Daisley raised that the Full Time Officers Objectives were not included within the Departmental Yearly Plans. The Chief Executive explained that they had been removed as it was felt that staff could not hold the Full Time Officers to account for not working on objectives, this being the role of Student Voice. After a discussion the Chief Executive agreed to ensure the objectives are included within Departmental Yearly Plans, even where there is no staff support allocated. **Action: Chief Executive.**

## 14. Full Time Officer Model Review

The Chair introduced the paper on the Full Time Officer Model Review carried out by Lucidity Solutions and gave some background to the reason for the review. He explained that the review forms part of the Democracy Review, which is a Big Action within The Bigger Plan 2020. The Chair explained that the report outlines the new structure is working well, and has continued to cement the partnership between the Students' Association and the university and that students felt well represented overall and were satisfied with the model. Recommendations are also included in the report. Overall, the Chair said he was delighted with outcome of the research. The Board agreed to fully endorse the Full Time Officer Model Review. The final report will be presented to Student Voice on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2017 and made available to stakeholders.

*At 7.30pm, the Senior Management Team left the meeting.*

*The Chief Executive left the meeting room due a conflict of interest at item 15.*

#### **15. Senior Managers Notice Period**

This item is confidential.

#### **16. Chief Executive Report**

The Chief Executive presented his paper and highlighted some key points. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) applies from May 2018 and the Students' Association will be required to update our Data Protection Statement to a Privacy Notice/s as well as a review all of our processes and rules around direct marketing and creating retention policies.

The Chief Executive said that the University confirmed that GCU Students' Association are 25 years old on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2018 and for the Board to have a think about what event could take place next year to mark the occasion.

#### **17. Health and Safety Committee Trustee Vacancy**

The Chair explained that there is currently a vacancy for a Trustee to sit on the Health and Safety Committee. Alan Adamson had agreed in May 2017 to be a member of this committee in the interim and was happy for this to continue if there was no other appetite from other Trustees. It was noted that no other Trustee was available to take up the vacancy at this time. However, the Chair asked if anyone else would be interested later on throughout the year to let him or the Chief Executive know.

#### **18. Trustee Board Previous Minutes**

The Chair called for a vote to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Trustee Board held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2017. Only four Trustees were present at the previous Board meeting and eligible to vote. **Vote: For: 4; Against: 0; Abstentions: 7. The minutes were approved.**

#### **19. Matters Arising**

##### **19.1 Management Accounts sent to Trustees**

The Chief Executive confirmed that the Management Accounts to May 2017 were circulated to all Trustees. This matter is resolved.

##### **19.2 Recommendation from Auditors for Financial Policy Procedures**

The Finance Manager presented a paper (item 6) to the Board on the update of the Financial Policy Procedures. This matter is resolved.

##### **19.3 Trimester 2 2016/17 Report sent to Trustees**

The Chief Executive circulated the Trimester 2 2016/17 report to all the Trustees. This matter is resolved.

#### **19.4 International Students within Clubs and Societies**

The Chief Executive said that the lower satisfaction score for clubs and societies within the International Student Barometer would be addressed within the Departmental Yearly Plans for 2017/18. This matter is resolved.

#### **19.5 Student Trustee Recruitment**

The Chief Executive said recruitment was opened in September 2017 for the remaining Student Trustee vacancy. There were a total of four applications and Jennifer Broadhurst was appointed as a Student Trustee by the Trustee Board Appointments Committee. This matter is resolved.

#### **19.6 Trustee Board Residential Training**

The Chief Executive invited NUS Scotland to deliver part of the Trustee Board Residential Training on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017. This matter is resolved.

#### **19.7 Document Finance Systems**

The Chief Executive said that the documentation of the Finance Systems have been delayed due to completing Financial Year End. This is an ongoing action that will be completed as soon as practicably possible. This matter is ongoing. **Action: Chief Executive.**

#### **19.8 GCU Student Record System and PhD Students**

The VP SEBE is investigating with GCU Registry whether PhD students require student email accounts in addition to staff email accounts. This matter is ongoing. **Action: VP SEBE.**

#### **20. Executive Committee Report**

The Board noted the Executive Committee Report.

#### **21. Risk Register**

The Board noted the revised Risk Register.

#### **22. Annual Review of Accreditations**

The Board noted the paper on the annual update on the Healthy Working Lives and Green Impact accreditations.

#### **23. Trustee Board Training Evaluation 2017**

The Board noted the paper on the Trustee Board Training Evaluation 2017.

#### **24. Student and External Trustee Appointments**

The Board noted the paper outlining the recent Student and External Trustee Appointments.

#### **25. Register of Interests 2017/18**

The Board noted the Register of Interests 2017/18.

## **26. Any Other Business**

The Chair discussed allocating time after the Trustee Board Meeting for 'Board Talk'. It was agreed by members that this was not required for this meeting.

The Chief Executive asked the members to submit a Trustee biography and headshot photograph for the website. **Action: Trustees.**

The Chief Executive asked members to check the Register of Interests and to let him know of any errors. **Action: Trustees.** It was noted that the Conflicts of Interests Form had still to be completed by the new Student Trustee, Jennifer Broadhurst. **Action: Jennifer Broadhurst.**

Brian Beck asked about whether papers were normally printed. The Chief Executive informed members that there are iPads and tablets available if anyone wishes to use them instead of a paper copy of the Board Papers and to advise the Clerk in advance of the meeting.

**The meeting closed at 8.00pm.  
This next meeting is on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017.**