TRUSTEE BOARD MINUTES
12-4pm, Wednesday 29th of January
Curle Room, Kings Buildings House

Present
Andrew Wilson (AW) – President (Chair)
Stephanie Vallancey (SV) – VP Education
Oona Miller (OM) – VP Welfare
Rosheen Wallace (RW) – VP Community
Bethany Fellows (BF) – VP Activities
Adam Turner (AT) – Student Trustee
Ross McCall (RM) – Student Trustee
Laura Ewell (LE) – Student Trustee
Max Browning (MBr) – Student Trustee
Levi Pay (LPa) – External Trustee
Stewart Goldberg (SG) – External Trustee
Tannya Gaxiola (TG) – External Trustee

In Attendance
Stephen Hubbard (SH) – CEO
Sarah Purves (SP) – Director of Membership Support and Development
Michelle Berry (MB) – Director of Commercial Services
Ross Wilson (RWi) – Director of Marketing and Communications
Euan MacLean (EM) – Director of Financial Services
Laura Power (LP) – Executive Assistant (Minutes)

Apologies
None

Section 1: Trustee Board Seminar

1. Welcome and Overview of Agenda
AW welcomed everyone to the meeting, noting there are no apologies and we have a full Board.
AW also welcomed Student Trustee, Max Browning, a new member of the Board.

2. Tour of Kings Buildings
SH led attendees around Kings Buildings Campus

Section 2: Ordinary Business

3. Standing Business
3.1 Conflict of Interest
None
3.2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting – Paper A

Approved

The minutes were approved however it was noted that some sections in the minutes ought to be reserved and are currently not. SH to review further in line with discussion before publishing online.

3.3 Matters Arising from Previous Meeting

AW noted the Trustee Board Action tracker. Actions have been updated as discussed in the meeting and can be found at the back of these minutes.

It was noted by SH that closed actions would drop off the tracker after review.

4. Brief Summary of Kings Building Campus Tour and likely Issues

There is a reserved minute relating to a commercially confidential matter.

Discussion turned to the Nucleus building and what the impact of the building would have on Kings Building House. SH stated there are plans to put in a linking corridor from the Nucleus Building that would mean people would enter Kings Buildings House from the Mayfield Bar and Grill.

5. Real Living Wage Strategy and Planning Round - Paper B

AW noted that by presenting this paper SH would like agreement on the Real Living Wage strategy statement, with discussion around the resources to pay it which relates to the planning round. SH noted that both topics have been submitted as one paper due to this link.

SH also noted he would like the Boards thoughts on the requests that will be presented in the planning round.

There is a reserved minute relating to commercial sensitive information and also information due for future release.

Discussions occurred around which pay rate the budget is being based on, given the results of the general election, which stipulated a higher than previously predicted increase in the National Minimum Wage, when it was discussed at the last Board meeting. SH stated that a few budget versions are being worked on to take into consideration different scenarios but stated the budget is being revisited and will comply with the increase in the National Minimum Wage for all age brackets.

SH to make the changes to the Real Living Wage strategy statement and provide a few options to the Board for discussion at the next meeting.

It was noted that both in the old Real Living Wage strategy and the new Real Living Wage strategy, which was approved at the last Board meeting are on
track for 20/21.

### 5.2 Resources to pay the Real Living Wage

There are reserved minutes due to commercial sensitivity relating to options around funding the Real Living Wage.

MB noted that the Association cannot compete with supermarkets and Association outlets should be thought of as more like convenience stores as they are based on campus and other supermarkets are a 5-10 minute walk away. MB noted that the Association’s profit margins are eroding as suppliers increase their costs so there is a challenge between being financially stable and being a good cost effective option for students.

MB highlighted that there needs to be a balance as one of the aims of the strategic plan is to be financially stable, whilst also providing a good service for our members. If there are no price increases then the Association cannot be financially stable as profit margins start to decrease.

### 5.3 Planning Round

There is a reserved minute relating to discussions around the University planning round and negotiations around Student Association funding.

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### 6. University Strategy and Students Association Collaborations – Paper C

SH gave a presentation on the current University strategy.

AW noted that the University is planning for a change in the demographic makeup of student body, partly due to Brexit.

AW noted that the Association must adapt in order to reach more of these students (differing demographics).

AT, we need to make it clear we are open to help students in a way that is beneficial to them.

OM noted currently PG research students are unsupported and more work needs to be done to engage with these students at a Student Association level.

OM also stated there is a mental health gap in supporting international students.

TG noted that there is a need to think about who we are here to serve and if the University changes its demographic then we need to change our approach to reach these students. Are we providing them with a service? If not how
RM asked if there was a way to target specific groups of students as students who receive a lot of communications from the University or the Students’ Association, which do not relate to them may make them by-pass e-mails from us that do actually relate to them.

BF noted the University can’t distinguish between staff and students currently (PG) so targeting specific groups is challenging but noted the Association has tools that enable them to target specific groups but not to the extent they would like.

MBr noted that the there is a high number of international students at the University and the University should be helping the Association to support these students.

SH also highlighted there is a need to balance services to different groups of students as current assumptions are we are only providing services relevant to 18-21 year olds from the UK, although that isn’t the case.

It was noted there is a need for the Students’ Association to build a broader network to grow student engagement.

7. President’s Report – Paper D
AW gave an overview on what activities the Sabbatical Officers have been working on and involved in since the last Board meeting.

Discussions occurred regarding the number of students who have put themselves forward for election positions. SP noted that numbers are currently low but there is no concern at present as similar to previous years. The closing date is the 19th of February.

An issue was raised regarding the short time frame from signing in to the University network to being logged off automatically. SP took note of this to raise with the University.

SH summarised his report and highlighted the below.

8.1 Teviot Redevelopment
Discussions ongoing on how this could meet the Universities strategy. SH will keep the Board updated as discussions progress.

LE wants to know action we are taking to limit the impact of building the development i.e. think about doing a counter action regarding planting trees to mitigate the Carbon emissions used in development of the building. This falls in line with the University strategy of aiming to be carbon neutral.
SH stated there is room for collaboration on this due to the mutual Sustainability strategy but is not sure if this has been fully thought about so SH will feedback to University estates and update the Board.

**8.2 Membership Survey**

AT noted there was disappointing numbers in terms of responses and asked if we have a plan on how to increase engagement.

SH stated the University pushed back sending out the survey a few times so the date it did go out on may not have been the ideal time to send it out and this may be one of the reasons for the low response numbers.

SP also noted we changed software provider so the interface may have put people off responding. SP to conduct more analysis and feedback to the Board

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<td>EM summarised paper F noting the figures are the latest figures. It is the first time this financial year we have slipped behind the budget. Forecast indicated that this trend will continue, with a deficit of 40k.</td>
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**9.1 Forecast**

EM is working on a revised forecast based on these latest figures and is hopeful that predictions have improved.

Membership Support are operating in a favorable position in their budget which is reflective of the organisational restructure. Adverse variances are seen in central costs, also due to the organisational restructure.

**9.2 Cash Flow**

EM stated cash flow is in a better position than it was a year ago. Festival, last year boosted our cash flow and we are still benefiting from that.

It was noted the statutory account for FY19/20 will show a big drop due to change in pension provision.

AW asked how the month end process was progressing in terms of reducing how long it takes to generate figures. EM noted it has progressed but not the extent outlined in the strategic plan. EM noted the staffing shortages and that the recruitment of the Head of Finance would help with this stating that he is currently in the middle of the interview process.

LPa asked if merchant fees will be a reoccurring expense to which EM stated, yes. LPa asked what can we do about it and EM noted we can put it out to tender stating that 80% of transactions are by card currently which reduces the risk to the organisation but the cost is higher due to transaction fees.

RM noted that lines reported in accounts will be changing so will not be able to look at trends across the board however asked if after the budgeting process EM can look at key trends and make sure they don’t get lost.
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<th><strong>10. Annual Review of Student Council Policy – Paper G</strong></th>
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<td>EM noted there is an element of manual work involved with MB stating a summary of top line sales is possible but it gets challenging when it comes to costs. EM to work on a high level sales trend report showing current budget allocations and present to the Board.</td>
<td><strong>EM</strong></td>
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<td>SG would like to see the Student’s Associations gross margins compared to the gross margins of similar sized Student Unions which are not situated on campus. MB and EM to work on this and feedback to the Board.</td>
<td><strong>MB / EM</strong></td>
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<td><strong>AT</strong> asked if business areas could be added to the tracker and also an explanation of why some topics were closed i.e. did they happen or was it not possible to take it forward. SP to amend the summary to take into consideration AT’s comments and bring back to the Board.</td>
<td><strong>SP</strong></td>
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<td>It was noted there are no officers on service excellence project board, SP to amend this in paper G.</td>
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<td>Discussions occurred around the council motion to remove the selling of beef from our outlets. It was noted that we do want to encourage people to eat more plant-based foods but do we really want to restrict choice? The financial impact of such a policy is currently being looked at with the idea that if the motion passes this will be brought to the Board to discuss the financial impact.</td>
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<td>It was noted that a feasibility study is a reasonable suggestion.</td>
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<td>It was noted that this may be a discussion for the sustainability group and also that there may be work to do on the ban plastic bottles motion that has been raised previously. It may be worth reviewing current sustainability policies alongside the sustainability objectives that are drafted.</td>
<td><strong>SP / RW</strong></td>
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<td>Discussions turned back to the beef restriction. It was noted the Board has the power not to implement any policy if it would be detrimental to the organisations finances however the Board also has a responsibility to represent the members of the Students’ Association.</td>
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<td>It was noted that conflict between the Board and its members is best avoided but has happened in the past. OM stated that if this did occur then there would need to be communication between the Board members and the students as to why the motion was overturned in a bid to resolve the conflict.</td>
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<td>AT agreed more communication would be beneficial and suggested more information about the Board and its responsibilities during University induction would help students understanding.</td>
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<td>AW noted that we want to inform our members of the Board and be transparent about decisions made so that we can be sure motions are put forward by informed members of the Students’ Association. BF noted that we should do more to show where our beef comes from and that the farms are ethical.</td>
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| 11. | Legal & Risk Update – Verbal
None but noted will be updating insurance soon. |
| 12. | Subcommittee Minutes
12.1 Finance, Risk and Audit Subcommittee – Paper H APPROVED |
| 13. | AOB
None |
|   | AW asked SMT to leave the meeting to start the reflection exercise with the Trustees noting SMT would be available after the meeting for an informal catch up. AW closed the meeting, noting the next Board meeting would be in March 2020 |