Oxford SU Trustee Board
11:00am, 12th February 2018 (Hilary Term)
Oxford SU, 4 Worcester Street, Oxford OX1 2BX.
Charity number: 1140687
Company number: 07314850

Oxford SU

In attendance: Farheen Ahmed, VP Welfare & Equal Opportunities (FA), Samuel Banks, Student Trustee (SB), Thomas Barringer, VP Charities & Community (TB), Catherine Canning, VP Access & Academic Affairs (CC), Kathryn Cole, Chair (KC), Katy Haigh, VP Women (KH), James Hunt, External Trustee (JH), Richard Jackson, External Trustee (RJ), Marianne Melsen, VP Graduates (MM).

Also in attendance: Ryan Bird, Oxford SU Chief Executive (RB), Melanie Richardson, Oxford SU People and Compliance Manager (MR), Emily Beardsmore, Oxford SU Head of Student Engagement and Communications (EB)

	Item	Actions
1.	Apologies - Apologies received from Harini Iyengar (HI), Tom Flynn (TF) & Alexander Curtis (AC). - Tarak Gorai & Oliver Rice not in attendance.	
2.	Minutes from previous meeting - Minutes were approved by the Board.	
3.	Conflicts of Interest policy - (RJ) Important to recognise the difference between conflicts of interest and the register of interest. Conflict of interest is defined in the Articles 53.1. May want to include this in the policy. - (SB) Does the policy include membership of student societies/groups for student trustees? Board agreed that this should be included. - Conflicts of interest policy approved by the Board.	**MR and RB to complete Conflicts of Interest Register**
4.	Matters arising from previous meeting KC gives an update on matters arising from the previous meeting: - Conflict of interest and campaigns are on the agenda today. - The management accounts were circulated. - RB review will be completed by Easter. TF and KC leading on this. - Exam schools letter has been drafted and shared with Emma Potts. KC will be working with Aman Ubhi (Head of Business Development and Operations) to make suggested edits. - Discussions on E&D are ongoing and they will be forming part of the staff organisational development sessions later this term. Student Council also discussed the Liberation Vision which is on the agenda today. - Space will be allocated for strategic discussions today and going forward. - SB and AC to update the Board on Council/Board communication via email. - Charity Commission work is ongoing and this will remain on the	**SB to circulate update to the Board on Council/Board communication.** **KC to circulate Exam Schools letter to the Board before sending.**

	action register.	
	- External appeals officer is in place. Update on elections will be in the CEO report today.	
	- Audited accounts have been approved by the Board via email. Audit findings report is on the agenda today as requested.	
	Discussion on the UCU strike action:	
	- (MM) We need to make clear why this is important to students by communicating the strike with a student focus, not a staff focus.	
	- (SB) Unsure as to whether students who are not employed by the University are allowed to stand on the picket line? If students are planning their own protests, how are we going to make sure standards are adhered to? (MM) The Proctors have suggested that we remind students that the University rules apply. (RJ) We need to think about possible negative scenarios in advance.	
	- (JH) We need to reflect in our statements how this concerns students. (FA) A student group leader communicated this very well in Council and we will be reaching out to them to help us communicate (via a blog post). (CC) We have student members who are also members of the unions, so we are also showing solidarity with them in our position. We need to support these students but also encourage an end to the strike.	
	- (KC) We are concerned about reputational risk and we will be keeping the Board updated on the situation. A lot of the work will go on behind the scenes but we will be publishing updates on the website.	
	- (SB) Students have not heard enough about this.	
	- (JH) We must review the point about being disciplined if they fail to cross a picket line.	
5.	CEO Report RB gives and overview of the CEO Report: - The staff restructure has now been completed. This is a transitional term for staff. (RJ) The advice service isn't on the staff structure, would be a shame to lose that label. (RB) The advice service still exists; the restructure has brought advice and policy staff together. Advice staff are now part advisor, part policy support, and offer support to Sabbatical Trustees. The outward facing brand has not changed. - Liam Challenger, Communications & Campaigns Manager started this morning. - Finance Committee have been through the budget in detail. It has been challenging on the income front but we are managing costs to make sure the budget is on track. The funding application is still ongoing; we believe that the application for years one and two have been approved, but year three has been rejected. (RJ) The University don't seem to understand our run down of reserves. This is concerning. (JH) We will be asking them to reconsider the decision. We ought to continue to run down our reserves; hold the present course for one year and look at it again once we know the University's final position. (RJ) Is this on the risk register? (RB) Yes. (KC) I am meeting with the Pro VC for Planning and Resources to discuss the decision. This was not the result we were expecting. - Elections came to an end last week. We were 292 votes down on last	**KC to update the Board following meeting with the Pro VC for Planning and Resources re. the funding application.** **RB to circulate elections stats to the Board.**

	year with a 17.6% turn out. No formal complaints were made. Candidate numbers were up and all but one sabbatical position was contested. Turn-out was down on last year, which is disappointing but not surprising due to a lack of staff capacity. A full review will happen. (SB) The two slates from last year worked really hard to encourage voters. We need to work with student reps in colleges; slates are able do this but is hard for us. (TB) There has been feedback that the campaigning window was too short. Candidates didn't feel able to publicise themselves and the student newspaper cycle didn't sync. (RB) Behind the scenes planning was much improved on last year. (RJ) Elections were excellent, really impressed by passion and engagement at hustings and results night. Last year was the first year we ran it in Hilary; we have an agreement with the University not to run elections past 4th week, so we don't have much choice than to keep the timeline as it is. - (SB) Do we have a student friendly version of the strategy document? We need to make this available to students and deliver it in a way that makes sense to them. (RJ) Is strategy document online? (RB) No, but it was shared with elections candidates. We will make this available to students if we are asked, but it's currently not in a student friendly format. - (KC) We've been very internal looking this year, which has been reflected in each CEO report this year. KC thanked RB on behalf of the Board. (RB) Hoping to focus more of my time on student focused tasks going forward. (KC) Ryan has had a lot to deal with over the last year; as a board, how can we support him? (RB) The day to day support from the Board and spending time on the strategic discussions in meetings is very helpful for me. - RB thanked the board for their ongoing support.	
6.	Sabbatical Trustee Report KC gives an overview of Sabbatical work and projects: - MM: Finished work on the graduate suspension consultation; gathered responses from 113 graduate students and used this to write a paper for the consultation. The Graduate Access project has taken up a lot of time. This project includes many different strands – one of the more important strands is a partnership with an organisation called Project Access. Set up a working group for Grad Access and working with key stakeholders in the university to ensure that this project will continue. Other key priorities have been Department Reviews, Virtual Learning Environment Review, UCU Strike, University Continuation Charge consultation and elections outreach to grads. - CC: Student Council voted to continue the boycott of the NSS and there has been the announcement of the UCU strike action. As well as continuing to represent students on committees relating to access and academic affairs (of which we have had at least 4 new ones added since last board) we have also successfully run our first access recognition scheme which recognised 271 students from 30 colleges for giving their time to outreach work at Oxford. Nominations were sent by colleges and departments and were for students at all degree levels and was a nice positive engagement at the start of this term. - KH: Priorities for this term are; Parents and Carers, Abortion Rights, Sexual Violence. Assisted It Happens Here (our anti-sexual violence	

	campaign) in organising a series of successful events to commemorate sexual abuse and sexual violence awareness week, including a photo campaign, research showcase, first response training workshops and I was also invited to speak on a SV panel at Brasenose on behalf of the SU. Currently reviewing first respondent training with the help of student welfare support services and OSARCC to ensure we are providing the most up to date and supportive training service possible. Looking into ways we can make our SU more child-friendly to better engage with student parents and carers and hope that by the end of this term to have engaged with more of these students to better understand their needs. Currently developing a training programme to train others to compassionately support students attending an abortion clinic with the assistance of BPAS. - FA: Will be hosting further welfare officer focus groups to collect information on baseline requirements for Colleges and PPHs. Have been working with the University on their approach to Prevent-related issues, and will hopefully ensure that any training is centrally proscribed. Also working with the President (& Student Advice) on Uni Mental Health Day activities - we hope to launch lobbying packs to ensure staff delegates (from welfare teams in Colleges) receive mental health training. Worked with allies across the University to evaluate the possibility of more BAME-specific studentships. - TB: Major projects this term have been cycle safety, promoting a letting agent rating system for students and coordinating Student Volunteering Week. Continuing meetings with the E&E Reps, the Charity Reps, RAG and campaigns. - KC: This Girl Can Week and Estranged Students Solidarity Week, feeding into the local plan to shape Oxford for the next 20 years, and fighting changes to Council Tax exemptions for suspended students. We've elected a new SusCam Committee and we're currently working on a guide for Common Rooms to better support suspended students. Last week we ran a day of events at the SU in aid of Time to Talk Day. #ThisisOxford mental health anti-stigma campaign launched earlier this term, which is a series of blog posts from Oxford students studying alongside a range of mental health conditions. Running Rent Negotiation training for all the common room officers who will be involved in negotiations in their colleges. - (JH) Does anyone's brief include environmental issues? (TB) Yes, mine. The university sustainability team is good at reaching students, work with them a lot. Also helped to get students on to their working groups. - Board commended Sabbatical Officers on their excellent work and encouraged them to not focus on priorities for their remaining term.	
7.	Audit Findings Report - (JH) Positive report. One recommendation (amber status) in relation to RAG. We have discussed this at Finance Committee and feel that a check against good practice would be beneficial, as we are ultimately responsible for the money. We hope to have made substantial progress on this by the next audit. - (TB) Successor for my position is from RAG and will be knowledgeable in this area. - (SB) There was an article in the Cherwell re. a decrease in RAG	**Finance Committee to follow up on Audit Findings Report.**

	fundraising. (TB) This related to the RAG ball in 2016 which raised less than £1000. This has prompted us to be more transparent with figures and look at RAG's accountability. RAG should be publishing their accounts and producing a report to Council. - (RB) The auditors issue was with record keeping (expenses etc.) in particular.	

8.	Institutional Memory
	
	- (SB) It would be easier for Sabbs and other officers if there were some institutional memory at Oxford SU. (KH) Can we make sure hand over happens between Sabbs? There is also an issue with campaigns and RAG not reporting to Council, we need to encourage this.
	- (MM) This is great but we need a way to enforce it.
	- (RJ) Need to factor in the role of office staff and external trustees; they aren't expected to contribute but we are the ones who have the institutional memory.
	  - (TB) One of the ways we could enforce this is by creating an expectation that the handover is an ongoing document throughout the Sabbs year. The problem is that things aren't updated. (SB) We could include this in as an expectation of the Sabb role?
	  - (KH) Something to consider for Council review too, problem with campaigns not reporting. (SB) Whose job is it in council to hold campaigns accountable? We could include responsibility for this in a council bylaw?
	  - (KC) Board are generally happy with the outline. There will be an update at the next meeting.
		KC to bring update to the next Board meeting.

9.	Nominations Committee update KC gives an update from Nominations Committee: - Nominations Committee met in January. Harini Iyengar is leaving her post today. Tom Flynn will stay on until the next meeting to complete Ryan's review. - We now have recruitment timeline and aim to have two new external trustees in place by the next meeting.	**KC and RB to keep the Board updated on trustee recruitment process.**
10.	E&D update KH gives an introduction to the Liberation Vision. - (KH) Thank you to Richard for comments already made re. rewording. Class Act are outlined as a liberation campaign as this is currently going through Council. - (SB) What does it mean for Council to own these documents? (FA) Council would keep us accountable to these Visions. - (JH) There is a significant section about government policy; we cannot take a political stance, is this in pursuit of our objectives? - (TB) Could we include super campaign clarification?	**KH and FA to revisit document based on feedback and circulate to the Board.**

11.	Campaigns and Community discussion	
	EB gives an overview of the current campaign review	
	Feedback:	
	- **Katy/Sam/Kate:** **What are our Campaigns?** Our campaigns are an opportunity for students to be involved in political discourse, the representation of certain communities and practical volunteer work. **What are the limits?** Currently no scope for short-term projects and we aren't reaching students who are not already part of campaigns. **What can we change?** Create a hub vs. project system; campaigns would be communities with the purpose of representation, and any work they do on campaigning would be short term engagement in specific projects. **What aren't they doing?** Not engaging with exec or submitting reports to council. **How do we integrate our campaigns?** Community; we participate in their structures. Representation; they participate in our structures. Projects; Sabbs and campaigners collaborate to reach a specific goal. **Campaign set-up:** Chairs of campaigns need less work, restructure how they are set up so that there are set roles for engaging with the SU. **What are our expectations?** Participate in SU decision making structures (council & exec), meet regularly, engage with their Sabb sponsor. **How we will support them?** Provide them with meeting spaces, training, project steer and institutional memory.	
	- **Catherine/Marianne/James:** **What is the role of the campaigns?** It should be clear what we can offer them, what their role is and how they represent students. There should be a push on the campaigns to actually be student-led; is it a Sabbs responsibility to make sure that the campaigns are functioning? We need to cater for a wider student body. What about Grads? The current system is not catering for the wider student body. **What are our campaigns?** Campaigns as a term is trying to cover too much; we have campaigns, representations groups, liberation groups, social groups and networks and volunteering groups. There is the possibility of an evolution into becoming a campaign, but may start as one of the others. **Where does the support come from?** Is support just from Sabbs or should we be looking at staff support. Financial support should be needs allocation rather than block amount. We could support them to become a group external of the SU. - (RJ) If they leave Oxford SU, they would then have no connection to us? (MM) Sometimes campaigns might evolve into something else; instead of shutting them down, we would support their transition into a club or society.	
	- **Tom/Farheen/Richard** **What is the role of our campaigns?** They have a great role to play in creating a social community, but perhaps representation isn't an ideal fit for what they do. Some do have a role to play in consultative caucus, especially the liberation campaigns.	

	What do we expect from them? We should expect them to be financially and democratically responsible, but we don't want to prescribe too much of what they do – keep them student led. We would give them support in chairing, reporting, etc. They have a goal/target, this is usually a long-term thing, but we would ask them to break this down into termly/yearly targets. Currently the campaigns have a Sabb sponsor, but it may be better to have a strategic contact (a Sabb) and an operational contact (Liam Challenger, Communications & Campaigns Manager). Super campaigns don't work. We could introduce evaluation of campaigns after 3 years; is there still a need, what would the goals be for the next year? Campaigns could then be shut down if there was no plan going forward. - (RJ) Representation of campaigns at Council, what is their role? (TB) RAG needs to be considered too. - (RJ) Campaigns are not campaigns if they don't campaign. (SB) We could label them on our website as "active projects". - (KC) Campaigns are student hubs which run specific projects students can get involved with; could become involved for just a 4-week project, for example. (FA) We need to look at how we advertise our volunteering opportunities? - (EB) There are some definite key themes. Will feedback to student engagement team and will present the board with some structured options. Any additional thoughts, email EB directly.	
12.	AOB - (KC) Final meeting for the current Student Trustees. - Board would like to record their thanks to the outgoing Student Trustees. Thanks also recorded to HI.	
13.	Date of next meeting - Friday 18th May, 10.00am.	