

Trustee Board meeting

14/03/2024

Attending: Danial Hussain, Edward Jacobs, Emilie Tapping, Jacqui Clements, Kennedy Aliu, Mia Clement, Nikki Smith, Charlie Palmer, Fay Shorter, Rosalie Chapman, Jennifer Lynam, Ben Ward

Apologies: Nick Entwistle, Danielle Cotton, Nick Harris.

MC approved by the Board as Acting-Chair of the Board in the absence of NH.

Agenda item 1: NS - Transformation Plan

- The initiative is now referred to as a Transformation Plan rather than Turnaround for better alignment.
- The Trustee Board has agreed in principle to transformation, and collaboration with the University is essential.
- The Student Union Review recommendations are finalized, pending stakeholder engagement.
- The University expects the SU to be financially self-sufficient, requiring cost savings to fund a Change Director.
- The plan spans from April 2024 to October 2025, focusing on restructuring, financial sustainability, and student representation reforms.

Key Priorities & Challenges

1. Structural Changes:

- Better support for sabbatical officers.
- Clarity on SU's purpose and student representation within Oxford's unique collegiate system.
- Implementation of SU Review recommendations.
- Developing an inclusive, values-driven culture.

2. Immediate Budget Actions (April – End of 2024 Academic Year):

- Freeze non-essential activities.
- Continue core activities: Student advice service, student-led campaigns, APP submission, committee attendance, and SU communications.
- Suspend Student Council temporarily, repurposing it for the Transformation Committee.
- Contract renegotiations to sustain income-generating activities.
- Staffing adjustments, ensuring confidentiality due to potential redundancies.

3. Longer-Term Plan (June 2024 – October 2025):

- Gradual reintroduction of staff roles.

- Implementation of revised student representation model.
- SU elections return in 2025 for the 2025/26 academic year.
- Expansion of commercial activities through a College Collaboration Network.

4. Financial Position:

- Projected year-end surplus: £27,000, but every month of delay costs £18,000, risking a deficit.
- A new funding request to the University (PRAC) is planned for February 2025, covering 2025/26 operations.

Next Steps & Timeline

1. Key Stakeholders:

- Trustee Board decides today.
- University meetings: Tonight & March 25.
- NUS, contract partners, and staff engagement next week.
- Joint SU-University statement planned for next Tuesday.

2. Transformation Committee:

- Max 8 members, ensuring continuity & quick decision-making.
- Co-chair model proposed (SU & University).
- Define University membership allocation & student representation.
- Embed SU Review recommendations & ensure student engagement.

3. Decisions Needed Today:

- Approval to enter transformation.
- Confirm activity freeze & core activities.
- Develop FAQ for student communications.
- Staffing consultation process initiation.

Short interval for break out rooms and discussion groups.

Trustee board votes majority in favour of the Transformation Plan.

Agenda item 2: NS – Transformation Committee membership

- The Board are asked to discuss and agree committee membership, and nominate Trustees for Transformation Committee.
- The University will be requesting 2 places, one to act as Chair. We have suggested co-Chair model and this should be discussed at meeting this evening.
- JC suggests 2 University members, 2 External Trustee, 2 Student members (one being a Sabbatical Trustee) and Chair of Student Council.

Trustee Board votes majority agreement with principles proposed.

1. Trustee membership

- Ben Ward and Fay Shorter nominate themselves as External Trustee members
- DH and JL nominate themselves for Sabbatical Trustee member

Boards approves BW and FS for External Trustee positions on Transformation Committee.

DH and JL leave the meeting for the Board vote on the Sabbatical Officer position.

Majority vote in favour of DH for Sabbatical Officer position on Transformation Committee.

Agenda item 3: NS - Communications.

- NS gives an overview of the comms timeline.

Trustee Board votes to approve the principals of proposed timeline.

Agenda item 4: NS - Charity Commission Reporting

- JC notes that although transformation is not a serious notifiable incident, it would be good practice to report to the Charity Commission and inform them of the objectives and aims of the transformation project.

Trustee board vote majority to progress with reporting to the Charity Commission.

Agenda item 5: NS - Future meeting dates

- Meeting due on 21st March – Cancel and meet after Easter holidays
- Next meeting dates to be decided via email

AOB:

- NS expresses thanks to the Trustee Board
- The Board noted that they are incredibly grateful and appreciate all of NS's hard work on this project.