

Trustee meeting 17th March 2017

St Luke's Chapel, Old Observatory Quarter

Attendees: Attendees: Eden Bailey, VP for Access and Academic Affairs (EB), Alexander Bishop, Student Trustee (AB), Bethany Currie, VP Charities and Community (BC), Sandy Downs, VP Welfare and Equal Opportunities (SD), Tom Flynn, External Trustee (TF), Jack Hampton, President and Chair (JH), Richard Jackson, External Trustee (RJ), Marina Lambrakis, VP Gradates (ML), Oliver Rice, Student Trustee (OR), Benjamin Woolfe, Student Trustee (BW).

Also in attendance: Ryan Bird, CEO (RB), Humphrey Couchman, Spy Studios (HC), Jo Gregory-Brough, Communications Manager (JGB), Melanie Richardson, Office Manager (MR), Aman Ubhi, Operations and Events Manager (AU).

Introduction by JH:

Trustee Board welcomes Humphrey Couchman from Spy Studios.

New structure has been introduced to professionalise the running of the Trustee Board. Mel Richardson has been brought on board to take on much of the work previously done by CEO and Chair.

Before the next Board meeting thought needs to be put into a succession plan. The board is losing James Hunt, Richard Jackson and Tom Flynn as Trustees in 2019.

Action to be taken:

JH and RB will be planning recruitment and feeding back in June meeting.

1. Apologies

James Hunt and Harini Iyengar.

2. Minutes from the previous meeting (Paper 1)

The minutes were approved by the board.

3. Matters arising not covered elsewhere

Items requested by the board to be brought back to this meeting:

- Update on changes to elections and officer transition. Updates to elections will be in the Elections Presentation (agenda item 7). Leadership Team Committee have agreed objectives and the creation of a working group to look into officer transition.
- Coaching and mentoring for the new CEO. Jan Sower is taking the role of coaching and mentoring RB, they have had one meeting so far. JH and TF conducted RB's 3-month review in which objectives were agreed and will be discussed in upcoming CEO report.
- Freshers' Fair. This will be covered in the Welcome Week presentation (agenda item 6)
- Campaign numbers. Progress has been slower than first hoped due to elections and training of new staff members.
- Target Schools. The action plan is in place and on track. Matters have been successfully resolved.

- Student Trustees working group on numbers and make up. Results of this will be discussed in the elections presentation (agenda item 7).

Officer transition and campaign numbers to be brought back to the June board meeting.

4. Strategy Presentation

Presentation by Humphrey Couchman from Spy Studios. Copy of presentation attached to minutes.

Key points:

- (HC) The purpose of this project was to discover what is important to students here at Oxford, what are the barriers or lack of opportunities and how OUSU can assist.
- (TF) What was the response to the question 'do we need OUSU?' Is there a notion of centralisation on behalf of the colleges?
- (JH) More information needed on the 'too political' point. (HC) This came from all sources, not a specific demographic or with a pattern; it is based on individual opinion.
- (EB) There is a contradiction between the notion that we are 'too political' and 'too timid', what does this mean? (HC) There are different people with different opinions, timidity is based on how much you get involved in University issues; the view that OUSU are not vocal enough is because students haven't heard enough about OUSU.
- (TF) It is interesting that colleges and common rooms have come up as a barrier. This could be flipped as a strength due to the level of student engagement they provide. (HC) They are seen as a practical barrier.
- (HC) Key areas to consider; defining your purpose will resolve many negatives, stop focussing on the lack of a suitable building and focus on how you can adapt to this, make the most of media outlets.
- (TF) More progress has been made in 3 months than in 2 years of being a trustee. Presentation is aligned with where we should be going, and finally get a sense that we will have a clear purpose and strategy.
- (SD) Changing the way we think and work will be a massive culture shock, which will be noticeable to students. Would be interesting to have a review in a couple of years' time with same focus groups.
- (BW) The lack of building could be real incentive to work closer with the JCR's and MCR's.
- (SD) Really interested to see how the strategy is accepted by OUSU staff - as an organisation we need to accept that we are not different to other SU's. (TF) A lot of staff come from other SU's, so they have a tendency to compare. We cannot show them our strategy and our objectives and we can't communicate them to new staff.
- (OR) Was there a tangible difference in the concerns from undergrads/postgrads? (HC) There was a lot of common ground.
- (BC) We are better as a virtual SU, but many spaces come with strings attached. Policies of spaces can be a barrier for example, the Prevent Policy etc. (HC) doesn't need to be University space, OUSU could use independent spaces around Oxford.
- (ML) OUSU is exceptional and this has been a negative thing in the past. This presentation gives interesting ideas on how we make this our strength and an attraction. It is also interesting that focus groups were mostly graduates, as we don't engage a lot with this group.

5. REDACTED (Confidential)

6. Welcome Week Presentation by Jo Gregory-Brough and Aman Ubhi (copy of presentation attached to minutes)

- (JGB) Activity for A-level results was limited, mostly due to Jo start date. There has been good feedback on key activities. Moving forward we will be expanding, keeping content regular, with increased involvement from student media.
- (AU) FF is biggest event for students in Oxford. This year we introduced OUSU branded wristbands to make it clear that the event was run by OUSU, sold out of clubs and socs stalls and has an additional 800 students running those stalls, and made OUSU's presence at the Fair clearer. (JGB) We need to rethink OUSU presence at the Fair and make us more of a focal point. Rethinking days of the Fair, move to 2 days rather than 3 and introduce a commercial refreshers fair.
- (JGB) Welcome Week also includes common room talks and consent workshops. Consent workshops are our only touch point with every new student and we need to focus on this.
- (RJ) What percentage of students who attend the Freshers' Fair know it is run by OUSU? What feedback do we receive from students? (JGB) We need to look at tracking attendance other than wristband numbers and need to look at a way of capturing feedback.
- (BW) A Refreshers Fair would be a really good idea.
- (TF) Think about possible commercial opportunities for the Freshers' Fair - sell hoodies, termly passes for night clubs, NUS Extra cards. (AU) Proctor's do not like us to sell at the Exam Schools – it is in the rules/license of the venue. (TF) If cash can't be taken, have laptops (for NUS card sign ups).

7. Elections presentation by Jack Hampton and Jo Gregory-Brough (copy of presentation attached to minutes)

BW takes position as co-chair.

Key points:

- (JH) Purpose of this presentation is to get a sense of whole project; it's strengths and weaknesses and plans for moving forward.
- (TF) Could have a candidate prospect database that is being populated in Michaelmas Term. Current regulations have to change – Returning Officer should be an external and the Deputy Returning Officer should be the CEO.
- (TF) Hustings aren't about the attendees; they are about the candidates and their development. Easiest way to make elections night a success is to get a celebrity to announce the results.
- (AB) OUSU needs to be more visible during the elections, not just the candidates. (JGB) We are looking at pop-ups in colleges etc.
- (EB) A bigger conversation is needed to determine whether slates detract from candidate numbers. (JH) Slates can act as a barrier for multiple people running in one position stream.
- (EB) Although there was some success for voluntary roles there were no women running as student trustees; success is diversity not just numbers. We need to bear this in mind. Targeted advertising in the future? (AB) Diversity of Student Trustees has been discussed at the working group. Something we will be working on in the future. (EB) reserved positions for women would encourage them to run.

The Board congratulates JGB for her work on the welcome week and elections presentations.

8. CEO Report (Paper 3, appendices 1 and 2)

RB would like feedback as to what the board would like to see from the CEO report. Short-term objectives outlined in this report are; the delivery of strategy, department structure, the transition between officer teams, provision of budget and delivery of office move. Finance committee is meeting again at the beginning of April – we are currently under target in OSSSL, costs are below budget and we are looking into reserves. HR sickness levels are high and MR will be working with Ryan to organisationally support our staff. Departments now have clear objectives and departmental plans.

Key Points:

- (EB) What was the issue with the careers guide? (RB) We didn't sell enough advertising space. This is due to our relationship with careers service and we are looking in to for the next guide.
- (OW) first responder training, equips students to respond to someone who may be dealing with something difficult - concerns from the SAS, have mentioned that a student came to them with these issues and they found it difficult to deal with. Going to be looking at it like consent workshops, thinking about institutional investment which will work along staffing structure. Also local organisations for consultation. Risk assessment being looked at.
- (TF) Good structure of the CEO report. (RJ) Too much information has been included in previous papers.
- (TF) Could there be more student staff on Reception? They are the biggest advocates for the organisation. (MR) We have problems with university workload leading to absences and rules around students working whilst studying causes problems with recruiting.

The paper was noted by the Board.

RB to bring risk register back to future meeting.

9. Oxhub Partnership (Paper 4)

RB explains that the paper was shared with JSCSUM where it was received well. (BC) In conjunction with Harry (OxHub President), designing a new programme which would be jointly delivered and our campaigns would be able to feed in. OxHub are in favour of the changes.

The paper was noted by the Board.

RJ is happy to get involved with and legal implications of the partnership project.

10. REDACTED (Confidential)

11. Finance Committee (Paper 6)

RJ explains that Finance Committee was set up in 2011. RJ is proposing that they are invited to look at their remit.

Key Points:

- (RJ) Is there anything in the bye-laws that needs changing? Budget advisory group – does this function? (JH) No, has been removed from the rota at council.
- (RJ) The same vacant posts come up again and again and we need to change bye-laws if we are removing advisory groups or things will get out of sync.
- (JH) Looked at reserves policy, conversations will be followed up at the next Finance Committee meeting in April. We will have a policy at the end of the next meeting which will allow Ryan to know what he is able to spend.

12. Media Board Governance (Paper 7 and Appendix 3)

OW gives a brief outline to the paper:

Paper looks at media board make up. It was hard to get previous members of the radio station and student newspaper involved, and there were also constraints caused by the media board reporting to OSSL board. Trustee board to approve the media board changes which have been taken through council, highlighted in appendix 3.

Key Points:

- (TF) Is student media is a service which the SU provides? The CEO being the managing editor may cause membership problems and may be seen as a staff member 'censoring' information. (RJ) Accountability and responsibility lies with the CEO, the media board are the ones which say whether something is not published, not the CEO.
- (RJ) Consultation phase was missed while the paper was still in draft, but everything is fine at the approval stage.

The paper was noted and approved by the Board.

13. Modernising OSSL Governance (Paper 8)

Key points:

- RJ is tidying up the final work on the last quinquennial review. OSSL governance needs to be changed.

RJ and RB to continue to work on this.

14. AOB

- (AB) 16th June 2016 Board approved for OUSU to open two bank accounts, each with £75,000 compensation limit. Is now aware that the compensation limit has now gone up to £85,000 – if appropriate we have £20,000 leeway, to move reserves from the university into those bank accounts.
- (TF) Responsibility for moving money in bank accounts should be made by the CEO in conjunction with the chair of Finance Committee.
- (JH) Thank you to the outgoing student trustees, you have been brilliant. Contributed to a culture of Student Trustees being properly involved and recruited.

(JH) Thanks to Alex for bringing information on bank accounts to the Boards attention.

JH to ensure that decisions re. moving money in bank accounts will be made by the CEO, in conjunction with the Chair of Finance Committee, in the future.