**Minutes for Trustee Meeting**

**15/06/2015**

**Present:** Issy Cooke (Chair), Yusuf Ahmad, Umar Yunas Chaudhery, Edward Pearson, Zain Ismail, Janet Legrand, Om Kalthoom-Bushamaillah.

**Apologies:** Tariq Pasha.

**Present:** Yemi Gbajobi (Secretary), Dr Craig Stewart, Donna Niccolls, Imogen Adie, Sheikh Hassan

1. **Welcome: The meetng started at 5.10pm**
2. **Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising**

The minutes of the last meeting were approved subject to some minor quieries which NS will communicate outside of the meeting.

1. **Chair’s Action**

IC updated the board that she had signed the Annual Accounts 2014/2015 as Chair’s Action.

1. **Chief Executive Report**

YG highlighted that she would be leaving on the 29th July, and her objectives have been set out as to deliver on the Strategy; Finances; Staff culture and development so that staff still feel supported on her departure. She highlighted that all three are on the agenda.

1. **Chief Executive Recruitment**

The CEO Job Description will go to HR soon and the advert will be out for 6 weeks. YG set the closing for 15th July, shortlisting the following week and interviews on the 9th August. She noted that the delay was to allow Susannah Marsden, Director of Student and Academic Services, to take part. The aim is to have the advert out for end of this week/beginning of next.

Deliberations are ongoing on the appointment of an interim CEO.

**Action**: Interim appointment name and CV to be circulated to board once appointment.

1. **NUS Affiliation**

IC outlined that a student had come forward asking for a disaffiliation referendum from NUS. Official proposals will come to a future meeting.

NS clarified that a referendum on affiliation would be a binding decision which Trustees could overturn but this would be unusual. This would last until something else happened to change the position.

YG highlighted that that some more work was needed on looking at the rules for referenda.

NS agreed with EP that some students wouldn’t be equipped to make an informed decision, but the Students’ Union have the ability to educate students. EP noted that there are arguments on both sides and the regulations have to allow both sides to be heard fairly and equitably.

**Action**: Review Referendum Regulations before next meeting, to prepare for any necessary changes.

YG noted that the Returning Officer for the Referendum will be the CEO.

1. **Election Report**

CS presented the Election Report. No questions were asked.

1. **Update on the Union Rebrand**

IA updated the Board on the Union Rebrand, and presented the outcomes. Holdens’ who are undertaking the rebrand highlighted that there was a challenge of getting the University to communicate the SU brand, and that there was an issue of the SU having difficulty communicating with students and no central hub. The SU staff and leadership is respected.

The tagline of the new brand is ‘we’re making history’, highlighting our campaigning work and where we want to be as a fearless organisation. The organisation will now be referred to as City Students’ Union, and not an acronym ‘CULSU’.

The Board thanked ID for her work and a quick turnaround. EP noted he found the rebrands’ geometric design to be confusing, and not very impactful. He said the C branding seems meaningless/unclear. He noted that he liked the connection to a horn but that this is not clear. NS noted that it’s different to anything he’s seen before in SUs and Universities. This sets the Union apart from other Students’ Unions and other players on campus. JL said that the rebrand is great, crisp, not the red of the University, differentiating the SU. She highlighted that the logo should always be next to the name but the brand is really cohesive.

IC highlighted that the official launch will be ‘clearing day’ on the 11th August. She also highlighted that the SU had already met the University about following the logo/SU brand, and there is a plan going forward to enforce the brand.

YA asked with EP about whether there is any plan to get student feedback. IC highlighted that this was difficult at this time of year, and the project is also quite far down the line. UYC highlighted the Union could go back to the students who took part in the focus groups. YG cautioned that there has to be clarity about what the purpose of this feedback would be. UYC suggested that it makes sense to go back to the students who took part in the Focus Groups. IC agreed that presenting the brand to them was a nice idea.

The Board approved the Rebrand.

1. **Vision 2020**

YG presented a draft Students’ Union Strategy. She highlighted the process that had led up to this point. She highlighted 6 key components. The Challenge, out values, the Strategy, our priorities, 2020 key performance indicators, and lastly our enablers.

The one page Draft Strategy is attached to these minutes as an appendix.

In discussing the SU’s values (Inclusive, broadminded, creative), it was highlighted that there is a need for different kinds of equality from the staff away day. Staff really supported the broadminded value. And Creative (not creative and self-discovery) is clearer.

EP asked if one of our values shouldn’t be that we are international, and another is collaborative. YG argued that this is also covered through the broadminded value. JL noted that the Strategy is really well articulated. ZI noted it looks good, appeals to him and is not unnecessarily complex. NS noted that there are SU’s who are the reverse, which is good as it is worth saying, as not everyone agrees with them.

Yemi outlined 5 Priorities:

Priority 1: ‘We understand the needs of our students and are the recognised experts in the students’ experience at City and issues affecting them’. This involves increasing research capacity, improving our data collection and use.

ZI suggested a change of wording: ‘we will understand the needs of the students and the issues affecting them, and be the recognised experts in the students experience at City’. JL asked if the SU is an advocate, as this doesn’t come out of the draft. YG highlighted that there had been a discussion about whether there was a missing advocacy and welfare priority.

Priority 2: ‘ Every student will be able to identify how the Union has had an impact on their academic experience at City’. NS asked if the next stage is to set KPIs. YG agreed, and that a question is if the Board should set these year by year or for three years. OKB asked how the SU could use Programme Reps to campaign and lobby, as this didn’t happen when she was a Programme Rep. YG highlighted that this is something we need to do and this highlights the gap.

Priority 3: ‘We will create and develop communities at City to which every student feels they belong and supports and respects them’. NS noted that ‘high quality infrastructure’ is jargon. He also highlighted that there is an issue of quality of events as well as quantity.

Priority 4: ‘We will help students take the next step after University’. JL asked what the overlap is between what the SU and Careers Service provides. YG agreed that we hadn’t worked out our contribution to employability, and need to.

Priority 5: ‘Supporting students’ has not yet been drafted.

YG highlighted that the enablers underpin strategic priorities.

The Board provisionally approved the Strategy, with minor amendments as proposed by the board to be made and circulated (ACTION)

**10, Governance Review**

NS noted that the University is rightly concerned the SU does things in the right way, and has asked questions about readiness and risk mitigation. In terms of readiness, the things we would need to do as a company, we already need to do as a Charity, and the University needs reassurance. In terms of Board competency, the Board has been looking at these with the skills audit and Board recruitment. The Board would be responsible for the CLG, the regulations are quite light touch. The question of changes to the style of relationships, these should in some areas change anyway for example in relation to finance. He highlighted that management of the Board would require little change – for example resolutions rather than decisions. The Board has already asked for more support for Board.

NS noted that while the SU continues to use University processes, there should be more recognition of the SU as a separate body, possible more formally through Service Level Agreements.

IC suggested that it needs to be pointed out to the University that the difference that the changes being discussed would be less than they consider, and as YG noted we do many of the things they are concerned, the Students’ Union does them anyway, with limited support.

Action: YG, IC, YA and NS to rewrite and develop the paper before the next Governance meeting.

1. **Management Accounts**

DN presented the most recent Management Accounts. She noted the same trend from the –previous report. She noted that the SU will not have to pay VAT on staff in future. This is a saving of £79000 on staff. If the Union did have to, we would be overspent by £5000. Spending has increase on instruction from the Board, but underspends continue in other areas. The most significant spending to come is for the Barbican for the Freshers’ Fair. She noted that shop sales are still continuing and there would be more through Graduations. She noted that she had contacted the University Debters department to collect from BAM. Santander have paid £5000 for student media. Student and Academic Services should be paying £10,000 for the Redbrick research which the University agreed to spend.

The Students’ Unions’ underspend will still therefore be approx. £40000.

1. **Budgets**

YG noted the block grant next year will be the same as this year at £650,000 as a base. The Students Union is now seeking to negotiate for more to cover Freshers’ Fair. Support for the Board is going as a business case to Finance, and they know that this is coming.

JL suggested that now the Strategy is set, this might be a good time to start talking about funding the Strategy, and how much this requires. IC highlighted that this will require a 3 year financial strategy.

1. **Website Proposal**

IA presented the responses to tender for redesign of the website, improve the ‘user journey’/experience, and establishing an online shop. The two responses prioritise different elements. EP highlighted the importance of having the best website to highlight the new brand and Strategy. JL agreed but highlighted the importance of specifying everything that the Students’ Union wants. NS noted the less expensive options are style or substance, with the more expensive option as hopefully both. NS prioritised functionality over style, as the most important factor. However, he asked if the higher cost option can be negotiated down.

YA asked if there should be concern Holdens hasn’t worked with MSL before, and if the outcome would be functional on mobile. AI noted both would be mobile compatible, and Holdens would be using google analytics. She also highlighted that Holdens had worked with wordpress and there are similarities. She noted there is a little risk, but they are relatively confident.

The Board agreed that the Students’ Union should go back to Holdens and seek to negotiate the price down. If the price cannot be negotiated down, the Board agreed to pay the higher quote.

1. **Internal Audit**

Action: fuller discussion at next meeting. The Board is effective in controls, but there are some things to work on. She highlighted points of good practice, and points to work on, many of which the Board has already highlighted or upon which they have begun to work.

1. **Carrot Rebrand**

The board discussed if there should also be a rebrand of the Carrot Union mascot as a sub brand along with a new crest, to go along with the new brand. This would cost approx. £2000. IC highlighted that the University Alumni Office would be interested in supporting this. IC asked if the Board would agree to pay for this upfront, with Alumni eventually covering the cost.

YA highlighted that one of his manifesto points is to ask students if they want to continue with the carrot, and so suggested holding off on doing this independently and asking for this to be included in the website proposal. The Board agreed that this negotiation attempt should be made.

1. Meeting closed at 8.25pm.