

Board of Trustees Minutes

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4:30pm 2 April 2019 | C103, Tait Building

Members	Initials	Meeting 1 16.10.18	Meeting 2 04.12.18	Meeting 3 05.02.19	Meeting 4 02.04.19	Meeting 5 30.05.19
Kristina Pereygina (President) (Chair)	KP	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Tuna Kunt (VP Education)	TK	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Nazia Bharde (VP Activities & Development)	NB	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Nick Ratcliffe (Lay Trustee and Deputy Chair)	NR	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Edward Pearson (Lay Trustee)	EP	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Janet Legrand (Lay Trustee)	JL	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Alan Latham (Lay Trustee)	AL	✓	A	A	A	
Clare Searle (Lay Trustee)	CS	✓	A	A	A	
Sajil Shahid (Student Trustee)	SS	✓	N/M	N/M	N/M	N/M
Katherine Higgs (Student Trustee)	KH	N/M	✓	✓	A	
Emmanuel Pobe (Student Trustee)	EPo	N/M	✓	P	✓	

Key: "✓" = Present, "A" = Apologies given, "N/M" = Non-member, "P" = Partial attendance, "X" = Non-attendance

Included in the circulation	Initials	Reason and Meeting Section
Philip Gilks	PG	Chief Executive (Committee Secretary)
Hannah Roberts	HR	SU Head of Membership Development and minute taker
Ellie Simes	ES	Sustainability Officer, PAF (Presenting on SDG)
Annette Yunus Pendrey	AYP	Environmental & Ethics Officer, SU (Presenting on SDG)

Formal

At the start of the meeting there was a presentation by the Union's Ethics & Environmental Officer and City, University of London's Sustainability Officer on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals which is noted under item 18.

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received from KH, CS, AS

2. Declarations of Interest

NR declared that he has been employed as a staff member at PA Consulting.

3. Minutes

3.1 The Board approved the Minutes of the meeting held 5 February 2019. (Paper: BT1853M)

3.2 The Board noted the Matters Arising (Paper: BT1854A), noting the following:

- Items 10 Shop Income paper is now complete, to be discussed in this meeting.

- Item 14 BDS item is now completed. Officers met with proposer of the motion and discussed what happened, this was also followed up by an email.
- Item 20 SDG also complete, see papers.

4. Decisions taken between meetings

The Board **noted** that no decisions had been taken by the Chair since the last meeting.

5. Items brought forward by the Chair

No items were brought forward by the Chair.

6. Executive Committee Minutes

(Paper: BT1855)

The Board **noted** the minutes of the Executive Committee of 6 December 2018.

Strategy

7. Strategic Review Update

(Paper: BT1856)

The Board received an update on the progress of the Strategic Review from PG. The process is ongoing. Responses are at 1,200 with an aim of gaining 1,500, the ratio of students who start the survey and complete it is very high. If the Union fails to meet the response threshold, or lacks response in certain areas then further focus groups will be held to compensate for missing data ie. Students at Bunhill Row or similar. The Union staff workshop was well received and went well. Some of the stakeholder interviews are behind but this is being picked up by Social Engine.

JL highlighted that over 3,000 people voted in the recent Spring Elections and suggested contacting all those students to complete the survey. PG responded confirming that there is a communications plan in place with good incentives. The Union is also taking further advice from Social Engine.

TK raised that the timing of the survey is not good as it is the end of term and many students are currently preparing for exams. PG responded with the rationale for the timing, adding that there is no real good time as the year is very busy. For the timings to align so that the strategy can be implemented for 2019/20 the aim is for the Board to sign off the strategy at the away day on Thursday 11 July.

The Board **noted** the update.

Executive

8. Chief Executive Report

(Paper: BT1857)

The Board received the report from PG. There are a number of new staff who have now settled in and are getting on well. The Union has been working on the results from the staff survey and PG has carried out a refocus task to look at what can be changed, the main area for consideration is annual planning which will be addressed by SMT and the Operational Managers. The real issue on last year was staff turnover and recruitment which happened over the summer months. There will be more emphasis on planning this in the summer.

PG gave an update on the catering tender and shared his concerns about how the process was being carried out and the consideration given to that areas agreed with City Property and Facilities ahead of the tender. The Union is still however engaging fully in the process.

Since the last Board the Spring Leadership Election took place with a new Officer Team being elected – there has since been a meeting with SMT and the Officers-elect to discuss next steps, development and induction.

The Academic Impact Awards are taking place on 16 May, 17:00 – 20:00 and Carrot Awards are taking place on 4 April, all Trustees are encouraged and welcome to attend. Information will be shared. The 125 event is also taking place on Thursday 5 April from 12:00 – 16:00 for International Carrot Day.

Lastly, PG introduced the potential QMSU Advertising Partnership proposal, adding that discussions have recently started and a further update will come to the Board. The Board had a further discussion around other funding opportunities.

The Board **noted** the report with comments.

9. City Council Report

(Paper: BT1858)

The Board **noted** the report.

Finance, Risk and Audit

10. Management Accounts

(Paper: BT1859)

The Board were presented the management accounts by PG in the absence of SB. The accounts show that the budget is underspent however they do not reflect the reforecast budget which was agreed at the last meeting of the Board of Trustees. PG continued that it is likely that the Union will be working to underspend budgets by year end, this will be addressed with the team. Now the Union has closed the consultation of the Joint Contracts we will be looking to reinvest some of the money, most likely in staffing.

PG reported to the Board that there is a decrease in income, mainly due to TOTUM sales. Staff expenditure continues to be down, mainly due to staff opting out of the pension's scheme – this has now been calculated on actuals. Societies Funding is allocated but not spent, this should start to resolve itself over the final term. There have been issues with the excel spreadsheet for the Management Accounts and the external person the Union has worked with has been on leave in the run up to the papers being produced. It was noted that further work was needed to improve the quality and accuracy of the management accounts and other options for support need to be explored. **[ACTION]**

JL suggested speaking with Knox Cropper about this. She added that it does not give the Board confidence when numbers are reported all over the place.

The board **noted** the Management Accounts with comments.

11. Initial 2019/20 Budget Planning

(Paper: BT1860)

The Board received this paper from PG who introduced it. Overall the Union is receiving a 2% cut to the overall budget, despite the figure being higher. This is to make up for staff salary rises which will happen on 1 August 2019. The staff team have submitted budget proposals for this year but there is a significant increase/overspend which will be reviewed over the coming weeks. PG added how he is concerned that there would not be capacity to spend this money finalising with the recommendation that he believes the money would be better in Pay, rather than Non-Pay lines. PG will budgeting based on actually who is in the pension scheme, rather than the assumption everyone is having a pension.

EP asked how City SU staff salaries compares to the sector. PG replied stating that they are on average the same as other SU's that we compare to. For example Middlesex or Kingston. The Union does not compare to the likes of UCLU or Kings. Union staff have communicated that they are frustrated by the way our roles are graded in comparison to University staff roles, where for example an Administrator is a Grade 5. These are non-comparable. It is a constant conversation for line managers. The University is currently reviewing the grading of all roles, PG is interested to see how the Union will compare. The main themes in the staff survey was that they feel overworked and underpaid.

JL asked where staff go when they move on – University, Union or external all together. PG responded saying that they tend to go on to different Unions, or our into the HE sector. Most use small Unions to develop and then move into management roles when they are ready.

Final comments from PG on the Budget Planning was regarding leaving some capacity for the completion of the Strategic Review. JL added that she believes more staff posts would be most sensible.

The Board **noted** the initial plan with comments.

12. Union Retail Shop

(Paper: BT1861)

The Board received the update from PG in the absence of SB. The paper does not show the true cost of the shop which would include management time, uniforms and other operational costs but it does give a recollection of how we price and what is going on at a glance. The main headline is the shop is struggling, on some days we only sell one item – it is not affordable in its current model. There are high costs associated with paying the London Living Wage as well as VAT, it makes the cost of physically opening the shop very high. This may change on 1 August when we can sell confectionary, there may be a chance to undercut some prices on campus. The set up in the shop is quite poor, there are a number of things that have not been considered when it was constructed and this limits what we can do. There can be some good improvements from August but we are never going to make a lot of money.

NB enquired whether the Union has ownership of the space. PG responded that the Union is allocated the space for the purpose of a shop, there is also an online shop. TK added that the shop is not just about sales and profits but also about the profile it offers the SU to students, ie. having a physical presence. NB asked whether there was an option to make the space into something different, such as a social space. TK responded saying that the Courtyard Café space will change after the catering tender is complete anyway.

PG concluded that within this paper he was presenting the current situation that the shop is costing us money and will continue to cost us money.

The Board **noted** the paper and **approved** the recommendations to be put into action for review at a later date.

13. VAT Review

(Paper: BT1862)

The Board received the paper from PG in the absence of SB. This is a positive paper which has the potential for the Union to see some VAT back. Once we stop paying VAT on staff salaries we will be under the threshold to deregister for VAT.

In the paper SB proposes that we now engage Knox Cropper to look into this and claim back what we can from HMRC. Later down the line we may look to deregister.

The Board **approved** the recommendations from the paper.

14. Joint Contracts

(Paper: BT1863)

The Board received the update from PG on joint contracts. He updated that there was a staff consultation and that the Union received no formal responses from the changes.

JL confirmed it has gone through CGNC.

The new contracts have been delayed on the University's side but once they have that sorted they will be in place. There will be VAT savings for April, June, July that will need to be reallocated – it will most likely be actioned straight away.

The Board **noted** and **approved** the paper.

15. Auditors 2018/19

(Paper: BT1864)

The Board **noted** the paper.

Governance and Related

16. Review of Financial Regulations

(Paper: BT1865)

The Board received the updates to the regulations from PG in the absence of SB.

The Board **approved** the updates to the paper.

17. Returning Officer Report

(Paper: BT1866)

The Board received the RO Report from HR. As described in the report the Union ran a free and fair election, with a total of 56 candidates running across all elections. There were 5 official complaints over the process of delivering vote week.

JL congratulate TK on her election and extended her commiserations to KP and NB.

NR asked whether candidate have a budget to work to, enquiring how the Union audits spending. HR responded stating that depending on the role candidates have a specified amount to spend. This is audited at the end of the election, complaints can also be submitted should someone believe a candidate has spent too much on their campaign.

TK suggested the Union looks at implementing printing caps to minimise the impact of printing as the amount of paper was huge across the week. PG added that having three incumbent Officers running really changed the perspective of people campaigning. There was a lot more activity in comparison to last year.

The Board **noted** the the paper.

18. Sustainable Development Goals

(Paper: BT1867)

At the start of the meeting the Board received a presentation on the SDG's from AYP and ES which set the premise for the discussion.

The Board **received** the paper from KP, she added that everywhere the SDG's have gone internally (committees) have been very impressed by the work. This also includes it going to Council, KP invited JL to add anything further on this matter. JL added that it was useful to see the development of how the institution was working towards the SDG and it was welcomed by all members.

KP and TK asked for the Board to agree for the Union to sign the accord without Professor Sir Paul Curran as the University was being slow in their action. KP added that the Officer team believes if the Union signs then the University may be quicker to act.

KP added that AYP (E&E Officer) would be grateful if this was signed within her term of office.

EP responded that it would be good to get on with it and sign.

The Board **approved** the paper agreeing that the Union should sign the SDG's.

Decision

The Board approved the paper and agreed that the SU President would sign the SDG this term. **[Action]**

19. Student Members Meeting

(Paper: BT1868)

The Board received the paper from PG. He added that the only real thing to be aware of is the affiliation to Nightline which comes with a cost, but that it was a good step to take. NB added that this a positive step for students.

NR asked about the Oppose PREVENT motion and whether it poses any problems to the University. NB asked for clarification on what NR meant, adding that there was a strong mandate from the students that this should happen. NR added that he understands that stance but what wanted to know what it means for the Union in practice. PG said that many Unions have this policy and how they choose to implement it differs, this is a piece of work which is to come.

The Board **noted** the paper.

Other

20. Any Other Business

There was none.

Date of the next meeting: Thursday 30 May, 16:30
Board away day: Thursday 11 July
Board Secretary: Philip Gilks