



## A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2013-14 WAS HELD AT 5PM ON 6 NOVEMBER 2013 IN THE BOARD ROOM.

15 NOV 2013

BT-141-M1

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### MINUTES

**Present:** John Palmer (Chair), Josh Hurrell, Zak Evans, James Carroll, George Martindale, Sam Minnitt, Richard Taylor.

In attendance: Andy Parsons, Louisa Allen, Hannah Chrisp (VP Democracy & Communications to present on point 7).

JP welcomed RT, the new COO of LU.

1. **Apologies.**

Louise Batts, Mark Dunkley.

2. **Register of interests**

Received from Richard Taylor. Any updates please notify LA.



R Taylor Register of  
Interest Nov2013.pdf

3. **To approve the minutes of the previous meeting and to deal with matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda – BT-132-M2. The minutes were approved.**

4. **To receive and approve a report from the Executive – JH.**



Board of Trustees  
Executive Report.doc

JH presented the report.

JC – the falling NSS scores, are they the same issues as have been raised before? Why has nothing effective been done in preceding years? BLF and the exec have devised a clear list of 10 action points. RT challenged that they are the same issues exactly; we need to drill further down to find statistically robust areas to improve. JC has sat on previous committees including LTC and Senate and the issues seem the same to him. AP noted the Student Experience Research shows that it is the students who are performing least well who are most unhappy and this needs to be one focus for improvement. We do now have access to the module feedback though the delivery system needs to be improved. JC will there be a 'rate my lecturer' system? JH to list what specific actions the Union is going to take. GM: Gables, was their participation successful? It is difficult because of their committee being under age. We will look at this earlier next year (the students move in earlier than university students and often only stay in hall for one year, similar to John Philips). The video. JH met with the brand consultant today and a counter strategy was discussed. JC would like the Union to be more proactive in defending itself against reputational risk. GM noted that it could have devalued the rebrand/quality. JP stated that a plan will be presented at the next Board meeting.

GM asked about Hey Ewe – ZE and Jennie Cooper have been more proactive with promotion, targeted emails and offers such as bring a friend for free, and prices are not changing. JC – Media resilience? AP stated we have employed an intern who was previously a contracted freelancer. Part of his role is to train others and broaden the range of people who have knowledge. JC – 2 DOs lost? 1 had a contractual issue with her paid job, the other due to health reasons.

5. **To receive a financial update including September management accounts and approve the budget – AP/ZE.**



Copy of Budget  
1013-14tidyv2.pdf



Financial-commentar  
y (1).docx



September  
MgmntReports .pdf

AP presented the financial update – discussed together with point 6. We receive around £60-62 per head, which leaves us 25<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> in the list of funded unions. We need to diversify our position to the university – for example if we can improve the NSS score (eg with peer-assisted learning like Bath) then we may be able to present a better case for an improved level of funding.

JC - have the figures been adjusted for inflation – for example the amounts the colleges give us is effectively less year on year. AP stated there is a new principal in the college, and we are hoping to form a better relationship and therefore we can approach that issue (meetings next week).

GM – is Label the only cut in Media? Only their overspend. We would hope that NaSTA will break even or make a small profit.

JC – some of the overspends are quite large, why? Some was about not getting revenue in. It is reviewed monthly; JC's opinion is that this is worse. AP stated that expenses are committed, eg print costs or sabb costs, and revenue income is the change. GM suggested we plan to offer opportunities at a smaller cost to us in future, eg Label online exclusively. The Board requested further information on our control and forecasting processes for the next meeting.

**The Board noted the report and approved the budget**

6. **Any items referred to the Board from Union Council and vice versa:**

a) **Amendments as approved by Council 30/10/13 presented by HC.**



HC Council reform  
report.pdf



LSU-Constitution-v8-  
0draft3-council-edits

HC presented the amendments.

JP suggested that we look at the processes of the Board in a few months once the new student forum is established. This is an important governance issue and this is good progress for the beginning of the year.

GM – the union affairs committee may not work as well as the forums. HC stated that those students with specific interest in the constitution etc will be the ones who stand for the UAC, without those having no interest having to sit through it. GM is sceptical that there will be 15 students who will willingly stand for that and be active participants without careful training and development opportunities. JH stated that the job description being very narrow should help with that.

AP noted that the Board will be involved if the forum does not achieve consensus with the exec or UAC's decision on a proposal, for purposes of further financial/strategic scrutiny.

GM how will this be communicated to students in a positive way? HC was hoping to get the process in place before Elections but unfortunately there isn't time. Councillors will

therefore be re-elected so that an Elections Committee can be in place in time for Elections. Forums will be targeted.

SM – exec scrutiny issue with impartiality if committees have been appointed by the section heads? The process of picking section representatives has not been settled. It will be discussed – probably not people from the section committee. How will open slots be allocated? If we are oversubscribed, do we guarantee students a future place? This again will be discussed – it’s important to keep the forum at manageable numbers.

MP – directing the work of the executive? The forum is for ideas to be generated, the exec will then explore those ideas to see if they are feasible by the next forum. The exec is also accountable to the UAC/PMSC.

The Board noted the proposed changes to the constitution and indicated its support. It was noted that further amendments to the Standing Orders and schedules would be needed.

#### 7. To receive a report on progress on the Student Experience Research project – AP



Student-experience-  
exec-ref.pdf

AP presented the report.

GM – there is a danger of forcing some people who would be content with not being a part of the culture into taking part in it (eg sing off) and that can lead to them being unhappy. SM agreed that the drinking culture is also quite pervasive in halls and being unengaged at that stage has a knock on effect on everything else. AP stated that we know about these students (eg some of them are Academic Individualists) and we can tailor our communication and offer to suit what they need. Halls have to be convinced that there are other ways of involvement than the traditional hall methods – an alternative culture. JH noted that is part of the university student experience committee’s remit.

The Board noted the research JP emphasised the need to link research of this high quality to actions. AP indicated that the revised Strategic plan aimed to do just that.

#### 8. To consider and approve an update and amendments to the Strategic Plan - AP.



Strategic-plan-Oct-2  
013.pdf

AP presented the update pointing to the clear links between the needs identified within the research, the budget and the plan.

Notably

- the emphasis on Academic representation in objective 1
- Objective 4 emphasises the importance of a wider range of entertainment and activities which are not drink related.
- Objective 2 increasing opportunities for challenge and personal development.

It is important to note that some things which are new are likely to take some time to build an audience.

We can fix about half of the issues the currently unhappy students have this should have a positive impact on all the student survey based indicators. This should mean that we can once again unequivocally claim “the best student experience in the UK”, and a 5% increase on our NSS score would make us top, better than Bath. These factors would have a significant impact on the University’s reputation with prospective students and recruitment but we need adequate resources in order to deliver on them.

That is the case to make to the University.

**The Board noted and approved the update and the Mission Plan and values card to be circulated to staff and volunteers.**

9. **To receive a report from the Union Director – AP.**
  - a) **Implementation of the branding and communication strategy**
  - b) **Loyalty scheme**
  - c) **Risk register – unaltered**
  - d) **Tenants and franchise partnerships (see commercial strategy).**



Union-Director-Report.docx

AP presented his report.

**The Board approved AP's report and the proposals therein.**

10. **Institutions.**

- University strategy
- College.

11. **To note the audit plan from Grant Thornton – AP.**



LSU-2013-audit-plan.pdf

The audit is on track.

12. **Any other business.**

**Barclays loan documentation**

This will need to be completed once the new board members are in post.

13. **Date of next meeting – Tuesday 10 December 2013 at 5pm.**