

**SUBT 19/20 Minutes February 2020**

**UNIVERSITY OF SUFFOLK STUDENTS UNION BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2019/20**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 25 February 2020 in A1.03, Atrium Building**

**Chair:** Jen Mackness (External Trustee)

**Present:** Lou Chiu (LC) (External Trustee); Andrew Crowe (AC) (External Trustee); Georgia Downs (GD) (President, SU); Amy Grant (AGr) (Vice President, SU); Peter Knights (PK) (Finance Manager, SU); Sarah Tattersall (ST) (CEO, SU); Alex Gooch (AGo) (Student Trustee); Stuart Tinsely (STin) (Director of Finance and Planning, University of Suffolk); Caroline Waters (CW) (External Trustee)

**Secretary:** Sarah Tattersall (ST)

**Clerk:** Selena Timmins Chapman (Assistant Manager (Committee and Validation), University of Suffolk) (STC)

**Apologies:** Jake Thomas (JT) (Student Trustee)

Agenda Item	Notes	Action
1. Welcome	The Chair welcomed members and those in attendance.	
2. Apologies	JT sent apologies.	
3. Conflict of interest	No conflicts of interest were declared.	
4. Remarks from the Chair	<p>The Board Development Day held 22 November 2019 had been a valuable undertaking.</p> <p>The Chair noted that her term of office would conclude in spring 2021. Regarding succession planning, members were asked to pass on any potential nominees to the SU.</p>	All
5. Minutes of previous meetings	Members approved minutes of the meeting held 01 October 2019.	
6. Action record and matters arising	<p>All actions on the Action Record continued to be ongoing.</p> <p>Matters arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The minutes of the meeting held 09 July 2019 were formally approved;</li> <li>• SU's in the region had been contacted regarding the secondment opportunity (Student Engagement Manager) but due to the short term nature of the role no interest had been expressed.</li> <li>• The business contingency plan had been added to Teams for members to review;</li> <li>• It was agreed ST would ensure SU staff were aware of the business contingency plan;</li> <li>• An update on SU shop matters was provided under item 11, Shop SU;</li> <li>• GD had met with the Head of Quality Enhancement at the</li> </ul>	All ST

	<p>University and confirmed that the goal of three-week turnaround for student feedback would be monitored by the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AG had further explored the issue of affordable student accommodation laundry facilities and had determined firstly, that this was not a student priority at this time and secondly, that there was not much scope for positive change;</li> <li>• ST had provided Freshers' Fair feedback to the Student Experience Group (SEG);</li> <li>• An update on staffing was provided under item 7, CEO report;</li> <li>• Further guidance about the obligations of charitable and commercial operations (relating to the Board Development Day) was available on Teams and an update was also provided under item 11, Shop SU;</li> <li>• The process of requesting additional block funding to support LSC and GBS students was underway;</li> <li>• STin reported that no new UK-based partnerships similar to LSC and GBS were currently planned.</li> </ul>	
7. CEO report	<p>The following updates were provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSS scores in student-led areas were not as good as had been expected and the SU would look at how it could further support student leadership;</li> <li>• The University was working with partner institutions to raise awareness around responsibilities related to NSS;</li> <li>• The Student Engagement Manager had formally resigned;</li> <li>• The newly appointed Student Representation Co-ordinator was doing well in the role;</li> <li>• Completion of strategic aims was on target;</li> <li>• Work on strategic aims from 2020 was underway;</li> <li>• Promoting the nomination of Officer roles for 2020-21 was a priority.</li> </ul> <p>Following routine updates, members discussed the repercussions of the resignation of the Student Engagement Manager. ST reported that day-to-day business was achievable but that there was a need to ensure the revised structure allowed opportunity for strategic planning. ST would look at the re-distribution of line management opportunities and would present the updated outline structure to the May 2020 Board of Trustees meeting.</p>	ST
8. Executive report	<p>The following general updates were provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freshers' Fair had been well attended although efforts to encourage mature students and students with caring responsibilities had not been as successful as was hoped;</li> <li>• Whilst the Self Care Fair had not been as well attended as was hoped, it had nonetheless been good a experience in hosting an event at the SU social space;</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparations were underway for the 2019-20 Summer Ball.</li> </ul> <p>The following presidential campaign updates were provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Random Acts of Kindness project had been successful and would be re-branded in the hope that additional funding for a similar project could be secured;</li> <li>• The profile of SOFIA, the online feedback tool, was increasing with feedback growing month on month</li> <li>• Officers were looking at ways to increase course representative engagement.</li> </ul> <p>The following vice-presidential campaign updates were provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AG would look at ways to help Liberation Officers engage with their represented members;</li> <li>• The Suffolk Wellbeing Ambassadors scheme was underway;</li> <li>• Consultation with staff and students had been undertaken with the aim of progressing the launch of the SilverCloud mental health app.</li> </ul> <p>The Board was pleased with the progress made on the presidential and vice-presidential campaigns and encouraged GD and AGr, when handing over to new Officers, to communicate how success could be measured in terms of campaigns and events.</p>	AGr
9. Management AC Jan20	PK reported a larger than expected operational surplus, £60,000, at the end of January 2020. The increase was due to successful bids, marketing department income, wages that did not need to be paid (i.e. for roles where no one was in post) and lower than expected printing/ marketing costs. It was expected that the surplus would be spent in due course, for example on staff training and other planned expenses. PK believed that the SU would converge to budget during the second half of the fiscal year.	
10. Approval of Accounts 2018-19	<p>PK noted that the auditor had queried the need for a distinction between restricted and unrestricted reserves and had recommended all reserves be transferred to unrestricted. Members approved this proposal.</p> <p>The Chair, ST, and PK had reviewed the accounts with the auditor and were satisfied. It was noted that the SU shop did not show trading yet and was therefore not included. Members approved the accounts for SUSL and the SU.</p>	
11. Shop SU	<p>Members discussed the sustainability of the SU shop. Whilst the shop had been well-received, it was generating a loss. It was not feasible to raise prices therefore the SU proposed changes to the student front of house job roles and funding to ensure short-term viability of the shop. Members agreed to the two points proposed by the SU and were satisfied that this decision was justifiable due to the amount of SU administrative work undertaken in these roles. It was noted that whilst the impact of the proposal had not yet been included in year-end figures, it was not expected to be detrimental to the SU's other plans.</p> <p>It was agreed that a full review of the shop's viability would be undertaken in December 2021.</p> <p>Members then discussed other potential solutions. Positive items of note included the following:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whilst the amount of shoplifting was within expectation, steps were being taken to reduce theft;</li> <li>• It was hoped that the NUS would be able to offer more support of the shop from March 2020;</li> <li>• Footfall was expected to increase significantly following nearby refurbishment from 2021;</li> </ul> <p>The SU was exploring a formal agreement with the University in support of the shop. Members queried whether it was also possible to work in partnership with the University to ensure that the front of staff roles remained attractive and competitive. It was recommended the SU seek the advice and support of other SUs on these matters, perhaps via Workplace.</p> <p>STin noted that vending machine competition would be operating soon in the library and recommended that the SU attend any relevant open catering meetings. GD noted that there would need to be a message around the impact of competition on the SU shop and social space.</p>	
12. Bye-law amendments	<p>Members discussed the proposed alterations to the bye-law around giving sports and societies the ability to endorse candidates in elections. It was noted that the change aimed to formalise a process that took place informally, for the purpose of allowing the SU to productively manage this process.</p> <p>Members agreed proposed amendments to the bye-laws.</p>	
13. Risk register	<p>Proposed revisions to the risk register were approved. Members thanked ST for her working in preparing the revisions and STin for his input.</p> <p>It was noted that as the role of Student Engagement Manager was vacant, responsibilities would need to be re-allocated.</p>	ST
14. Any other business	<p>It was expected that a small number of apprenticeship students based at Adastral Park would start from December 2020. ST would investigate SU support for these students as well as any planned increases in student numbers.</p>	ST
15. Date of next meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 May 2020 from 4pm</li> <li>• 14 July 2020 from 4pm</li> </ul>	