

### **Board of Trustees**

The fourth ordinary meeting of the Board of Trustees for the 2019/2020 session, was held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020 in Meeting Room 3, Beit Quad at 3pm.

#### Unconfirmed minutes

Present:	Jill Finney (Chair)	Board of Trustees Chair
	Kate Owen (KO)	External Trustee
	Graham Parker (GP)	External Trustee
	Phillip Power (PP)	External Trustee
	Stephen Richardson (SP)	External Trustee
	Dorothy Griffiths (DG)	External Trustee
	Abhijay Sood (AS)	Union President
	Shervin Sabeghi (SS)	Deputy President (Welfare)
	Ashley C. Brooks (ACB)	Deputy President (Education)
	Fifi Henry (FH)	Deputy President (Finance & Services)
	Thomas Fernandez-Debets (TFD)	Deputy President (Clubs and Societies)
	Lloyd James (LJ)	Council Chair
	Ansh Bhatnagar (AB)	Student Trustee
	Jinpo Xiang (JX)	Student Trustee
	Milia Hasbani (MH)	Student Trustee
	Daniel Faehndrich (DF)	Student Trustee
	Graham Atkinson (GA)	Interim Managing Director
In Attendance:	Victoria Agbontaen (VA)	Governance Officer (Clerk)
	Jayne Hufford (JH)	Interim Finance Director
	Tom Newman (TN)	Head of Membership Services

**Item 01 - Welcome and Chair's Business**

1. The Chair welcomed the group to the fourth Board meeting of the Academic Year 19/20.

**Item 02 - Conflict of Interest Declaration**

1. None Declared

**Item 03 – Apologies**

1. None

**Item 04 – Minutes from 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

1. Chair advised that the minutes were not previously reviewed and were not a complete accurate description of the last meeting.
2. GP added that actions and decisions were not well captured, and some wording was required to be amended.
3. Chair agreed VA and herself will go through the minutes to make any corrections and requested for members of Board to feedback to VA any changes.

**Item 05 - Action Tracker and Forward Agenda**

1. Chair noted that the action tracker is to be updated as many actions had significantly moved on.
2. DG requested an update on the topic of student rent. SS informed Board that the campaign is indefinitely postponed due to Covid-19 until there is a clearer understanding around student accommodation for next year.
3. AS added that the break-down of accommodation costs in halls will need to be revisited as it is likely construction will not be completed due to lockdown.
4. Chair questioned if the online petitions systems had been circulated to the Board. SS explained that the systems team has been focused on the Drupal 8 update but as this project has been ongoing for longer than expected, the online petitions system has not progressed as planned.
5. AB added that as we are likely to be remote working for the foreseeable future, the online petitions system should be made priority and would be useful. AS agreed.
6. TFD gave a brief update on the Imperial Union Concert Hall timeline project which has been ongoing for the past couple of years. Pre Covid-19, the works were scheduled to take place during the Easter break but it may be possible for this to start earlier due to the cancellation of the BBC Proms.

**Item 06 - Health and Safety**

1. GP outlined that the last time H&S Committee met was 10<sup>th</sup> February and those minutes had already been discussed and confirmed. The Committee has not since met and therefore have no new minutes to discuss.
2. GP explained the scheduled H&S meeting was postponed as there was a lack of clarity around the undertaking of tasks under the H&S requirements.

**Actions**

**Members of Board to collectively feedback to VA on minutes to obtain a more accurate record of the meeting and outline the actions.**

**VA to update and remove completed actions from the action tracker.**

**FH to circulate Silwood Paper to Board before next meeting.**

3. GP specified the current H&S Committee is a governance committee and is not operational and put forward a suggestion to have a committee in place that covers the operational needs first.
4. FH agreed there should be an operational committee moving forward in order to have full oversight, however a structured governance H&S meeting needs to be logistically considered in terms of being able to report to Board.
5. GA added that at the upcoming H&S meeting there will be a wider discussion had around how best to move forward. Additionally, stating that having several committee meetings sometimes comes at the expense of not being able to fully complete the work that is required to be done.
6. Chair also added that H&S is paramount to begin to understand how the organisation will operate post Covid-19, questioning what the timescales are in terms of getting to where we need to be.
7. GP stated there are three things that need to be considered while discussing timelines; putting something in place to give governance to, when an audit and review takes place and by whom and thirdly who is responsible for ensuring delivery and what role will College play.
8. Chair agreed to wait until discussions on MD Report to gain a clearer understanding of purposed timelines.

**Item 07 - People, Appointments & Remuneration Committee Minutes**

1. KO updated Board on PARC meeting explaining that the majority of the meeting was spent discussing how the Union has managed its staff and how they are working within this time along with some other issues around furlough, recruitment and induction plans.
2. SS added that PARC approved the renewal of JF and KO as lay trustees. Given the Unions circumstances and unprecedented issues around Covid-19, continuity is important for the Board, as agreed by PARC.
3. Chair added it's important that we now know two new lay trustees are to be recruited and up and running for the end of the forth coming academic year.
4. Chair and KO both felt it would be disruptive for the Board for them to go at this stage but by July next year a replacement chair and lay trustee will be required.
5. KO explained that the Committee thought it useful to have a final PARC meeting in July while the current Officers are still in post.
6. SS gave an update to the PDRP process discussed at PARC explaining that more support and guidance for Managers is needed to ensure the meetings can be done in a valuable and helpful way.
7. KO agreed that there has not previously been a good performance management process in place, including preparing and training Managers who have not been through this process before.

**VA to add recruitment of chair/lay trustee to PARC forward agenda for 2020/2021.**

**Item 08 - Communications Committee minutes**

1. TFD updated Board on Communications Committee outlining discussion topics including Felix and their transition online, Officer Communications during Covid-19 and internal communications.
2. TFD explained the feedback from the reports were that they were very tactical and needed to be more forward-looking and strategic. TFD added that Chair actioned Committee members to bring future reports with forward-looking plans. In addition to this, the Committee felt the way our progress is evaluated needs to be reviewed as our metric comparisons are not always up to par.
3. TFD explained that he brought a Student experience survey paper to the Committee which is an annual survey led by the College. TFD highlighted in the survey there is a section on accommodation in which the Union is listed as co-owners, but we have not however had any oversight of the questions.

**VA to add onto Student Experience Survey review to Board forward agenda.**

**Item 09 - Governance Committee minutes**

1. DG informed Board that the safe-guarding policy was discussed during the committee meeting and expressed her concern about not yet having this in place. However, due to fewer students on campus due to Covid-19, this has become less urgent, but a policy still needs to be in place and approved in line with the College.
2. KO and GA confirmed safe-guarding policy work is being done via PARC.
3. DG explained election participation was down this year and the committee spent time discussing reasons as to why this had occurred and agreed the progression of covid-19 was a major distraction for students.
4. It was agreed that the Liberation roles should be held with the Summer elections. SS added that with four out of nine roles still vacant after Leadership Elections it was not enough elected roles to start the year with.
5. GA highlighted that ICU benchmarks itself with other Unions in terms of overall turnout, but most other Unions are only referring to Sabbatical and part-time Officers whereas ICU reports its turn-out for CSP Elections as part of that. Therefore, we are recording and reporting it in a different way to much of the sector.
6. MH added during the meeting it was considered whether election turnout is the most appropriate representation of how successful elections are and whether there are other factors we should consider.

**AS to contact editorial team and liaise with Felix Editor regarding online content.**

**Item 10 - F&R Committee minutes**

1. GP stated that the F&R meeting felt like a welcomed gear change and invited FH to speak on the meeting.
2. FH agreed and informed Board of the attendance of Victoria Hoskins from Rathbone investments during the meeting, highlighting the updates on the Union profile which at the time of reporting was up and doing well for

the sector. However, FH stated it is important to note the market is incredible volatile and is likely to change.

3. FH added there were concerns around CSP finances due to covid-19. Nonetheless, processing refunds has been a lot smoother than anticipated.
4. FH noted that the trading income as well as the ability to generate income was also addressed during F&R.
5. Chair questioned GP as to when the Strategic Risk Register will be provided to Board. GA said it had not yet been reviewed but needs to be evaluated and updated.

### **Matters for Discussion**

#### **Item 11 – Budget 2020/21 Expectations**

1. GA advised Board they are currently going through the process of budget setting for the year ahead and have agreed a headline target of £40,000 surplus for next year.
2. After the first round of detailed budgeting, the Union is looking at a £110,000 deficit.
3. GA highlighted even with the reduction in salary costs, there is still £150,000 to be found. This process will be done with JH and GA decide what to deprioritise and having discussions with Heads of Departments to confirm where savings can be made.
4. GA noted once this is completed, a draft budget for approval will be presented during the upcoming F&R meeting. This will be accompanied with scenario planning operating on a business as usual basis but building in a number of different scenarios caused by covid-19 and focusing on what needs to be done financially to address this.
5. Chair questioned if we have taken the maximum opportunity of furlough as the scheme is running until October. GA advised that although the scheme is running to October, we are unsure to what extent the government will subsidise this and what percentage the employer will be expected to cover.
6. GA explained that based on what is available to us and following College's approach, we have furloughed the right amount of staff, but it should be constantly reviewed.
7. PP added that in College it is only commercial services staff being furloughed and as students are still studying there is an expectation that services should still be delivered to these students and agreed this approach is accurate.

#### **Item 12 – Impact of Covid-19 and Closure**

1. GA summarised the paper outlining what has been done so far and what is being done to manage what is going on in the coming months and year.
2. GA stated he had been impressed with how colleagues have responded and there is still a sense of connection and engagement within the staff highlighting some of the wellbeing initiatives being done along with regular check ins and staff meetings.

**GA to provide update on SRR to Board on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020.**

3. Short-term planning for the year ahead has begun in terms of freshers, welcome week activities and representing new students accurately.
4. GA explained that it is too early to specify the long-term implications of covid-19 for the Union but with scenario planning, there will be thoughts around expected fundamental changes.
5. GA explained that a business as usual model was put forward as to properly understand the cost, changes and financial implications of the BAU starting point. GA explained there will be significant impacts of how commercial services and events will run at least up until January at the earliest.
6. DF questioned as to whether the Union and College are not going to move in the direction of government guidance due to being a wider campus and community.
7. GA replied that in order to open those resources they need to be managed well and we would not operate in the same way as a standard hospitality organisation.
8. SR and PP added that it is important to speak with Faculty Deans and work with the academic departments as partners is key and very important.

#### **Item 13 – MD Recruitment and Induction**

1. GA highlighted there was good feedback from PARC which endorsed the paper and agreed it was a good approach. GA asked for thoughts from Board as to how the process is managed and organised before it is operationalised.
2. SR suggested that Tom Flynn should meet with key academic colleagues in the College. Phil agreed to share a list of colleagues with GA.
3. DF also added that it is important for Tom to meet with some of the senior volunteers and CU Presidents at the start of the year.
4. Chair added that it is important that the list of key stakeholders is ready as it is critical for the development of the Union as well as assisting Tom in building and establishing relationships.
5. Chair thanked GA and all those who were involved in the recruitment process.

**GA and PP to put together a list of College academics from College as part as new MD induction by end of May.**

#### **Item 14 – Induction Plan for new Board Members**

*TN joined the meeting*

1. TN explained to Board that this forms as one of the eleven project plans. A lead Sabbatical Officer, Project Manager and project team have been established. The project rationale has been developed in line with delivering the induction online to new Board members.
2. TN added that the paper had previously been taken to PARC and advice was that it is important to ensure time is spent understanding feedback from current Student Trustees to enable an efficient induction.
3. Feedback was that the 'Trustee Away Day' was informative and helpful in building rapport so TN

**AS and Chair to discuss appointment for new Student Trustee for 2020/21 by end of May.**

advised thoughts are being put into how to replicate this remotely.

4. MH added that it is important to look at getting mentors for the Student Trustees and asked we align the training for those appointed over Summer. AS confirmed Student Trustee appointments will be taking place much earlier this year so training will be aligned.

*TN left the meeting.*

### **Matters for Decision**

#### **Item 15 – Union Plan/Block Grant**

1. GA explained that it was useful to bring this paper to Board as it sets out a plan for the next one year as the Board owns the operating plan for the Union.
2. GA stated although things have changed due to Covid-19, the items that had previously been agreed to be the Unions focus, should remain the same and the areas of work are the right ones. However, GA added that as scenario planning drafts are progressed, the focus will have to be revised when required.
3. GA put it forward to the Board whether there were any additional comments or questions regarding the one-year plan.
4. DG had concerns around College finances due to covid-19 and questioned GA as to whether the request for additional monies from the College was rejected as some of the projects were urgent and important. GA responded by saying, there would have to be assumptions made within the budget about the Union are willing to finance for example, EPOS and any health and safety projects.
5. PP agreed that it should be clearer by June what the College may be proposing in terms of having students on campus taking into consideration social distancing.
6. SS also added that the College will be communicating to students their plans for the next academic year at the beginning of June, so we need to ensure the Union is communicating in line with this.
7. DF confirmed if plans around welcome week will be fully transitioned to happening remotely online. AS said planning has been for on site events but the focus is now transitioning that planning to happen remotely.
8. AS explained the block grant was submitted in April and we should expect to hear a response from 1<sup>st</sup> June then he will further prompt College.

**AS to provide Board with an update into the Block Grant proposal at next Board meeting in July.**

#### **Item 16 – Interim Managing Directors Report**

1. GA noted the key points from the paper were the completion of the reorganisation and a setup of 11 distinct projects within the interim plan.
2. GA highlighted the new Leadership structure helps to give clarity over responsibilities and oversight of work within the organisation.
3. ACB questioned the direction regarding issues of health and safety as this is has been an ongoing issue.
4. GA explained there are three key points required to be efficient within H&S. First being having a Senior Manager accepting responsibility and being

accountable for H&S related issues. Secondly, updates to the H&S policy allows for a clear framework setting out how H&S is approached and lastly the H&S plan.

5. GA also explained that in terms of wellbeing, staff are worried about job security and covid-19 generally but there are a several wellbeing exercises being held within the staff team to help with support. TFD agreed.

#### **Item 17 – Union President Report**

1. AS explained that a more recent topic within College has been around Student experience which has become more integrated within the College's decision-making.
2. AS congratulated SS and LJ on the success in the Leadership elections. Chair and KO agreed and were happy with the continuity at this time.

#### **Item 18 - Deputy President (Education) Report**

1. ACB explained that his work around representation has been a collaborative piece with SS and AS.
2. ACB added new structured educational meetings with Faculty Reps and College staff have been set-up to deal with issues caused by covid-19.
3. Regular meetings over MS Teams has worked well with PGR students, ACB explained as it has previously proved difficult to set up official meetings.
4. Finally, ACB highlighted that the representation team has been working well during lockdown and regular meetings have helped to keep up moral within the team.
5. DF questioned what work and discussions have been had with the College regarding remote examinations. PP said there have been some difficulties with issues around systems and internet connection but nonetheless things have generally been going smoothly.

#### **Item 19 – Deputy President (Welfare) Report**

1. SS took the paper as tabled and requested for any questions or comments. None.

#### **Item 20 – Deputy President (Clubs and Societies) Report**

1. TFD took the paper as tabled outlining the paper is responding to the current context as well as looking ahead.
2. TFD requested for any questions or comments regarding the paper. None.

#### **Item 21 – Deputy President (Finance and Services) Report**

1. FH noted the main subject of the paper was around the Summer Ball which has been cancelled, adding the headline act will be moved to 2021 so the deposit will not be forfeited.
2. Chair asked Board members to confirm if they reject FH suggestion on how to proceed with next years Summer Ball. None received.



3. FH stated work around services and sustainability will be a bigger part of the DPFS role moving forward.

**Item 22 – Union Council Chair Report**

1. LJ highlighted a Union Council paper submitted by AS and FH where Council unanimously voted to support the principle that we should be paying the London living wage to student bar staff. AS added that Council was happy for the timeline of implementation to be left to Board.
2. LJ confirmed that policy renewal process is on track to be completed by June.

**AS and LJ to send updated byelaws and constitution changes to marketing to create and upload new document by next Board meeting.**

**Date of next meeting: 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020**