

**Imperial College Union
Board of Trustees / 29 September 2021**

Board Subcommittees Update

- Author(s): Dr Tom Flynn (Managing Director)
Dorothy Griffiths (Governance and Membership Chair)
Stephen Richardson (Interim Finance, Audit and Risk Chair)
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- Purpose: A summary of the work of Finance, Audit and Risk, Governance and Membership and Management Sub-Committees of Board.

1. Finance, Audit and Risk

- i. Terms of Reference & Membership: Trustees approved the new terms of reference but noted that as the year develops there will be opportunities to develop the terms of reference further as well as having a yearly review.
- ii. 2020/21 Financial Performance Update: RS explained that financial planning for 2020/21 was particularly difficult as a result of the pandemic and a significant number of changes within the organisation and the finance team. The operating surplus of the Union is a surplus of £154k, compared to a budget deficit of £18k. This improvement was expected in the later stages of the year as venues and retail reopened, the benefits of the Job Retention Scheme ('furlough') and vacant staff post savings.
- iii. Strategic Risk Register Review: it was noted that the risk register is developed and presented on the basis of both inherent and residual risk after the mitigating actions are taken into consideration. This ensures that the Board remains focussed on the major issues and makes the document a more effective and live piece of work. Trustees were informed that the Union has a strong relationship with the central University and the core objectives for the next year in the representation team is to build those relationships in academic departments.
- iv. Statutory Audit Timeline: members were informed that the draft account for the audit is being submitted in early September and field work starting mid-September so the accounts can be filed in advance of the Charity Commission deadline in May. RS informed members that the auditors being used this year are new and were replaced due to issues of poor performance with the previous auditors. Trustees were informed this was a formal process led by the F&R committee, its Chair and also involved the Director of Finance at the College to ensure a robust process. RS noted there will be a minimum three-year review on the auditors moving forward.
- v. CapEx Update: members were notified that the organisation is considering three major capital investments this year including the Reynolds Bar refurbishment (College project with Union input), Union shop renovation and several minor developments to the Union building (a helpdesk, zoom pods and permanent advice centre location).
- vi. 2021-22 CSP Grant Allocations: subcommittee approved the preliminary allocations that CSP's have been granted for 2021/22. SL confirmed that CSPB completed the budget under the assumption the Union would be functioning under normal circumstances for the new academic year. It was agreed that there is a need to review the allocations process and this information

will be benchmarked moving forwards, as those exact numbers do not currently exist. Trustees agreed that as 2020/21 was an exceptional year, therefore no funds will be transferred in or out of the Activities Development fund this year and the closing balance this year will remain as the opening balance next year with a view to review this further next year.

- vii. Umbrella H&S Policy: as numerous H&S policies had been approved by Finance and Risk Committee over the last year this resulted in a requirement for an Umbrella policy. The policy contains all the common elements, a policy statement and introductions/responsibilities, training, reviews etc. Trustees approved the Umbrella H&S Policy and agreed H&S policies should be reviewed once a year, even if there are no changes

2. Membership and Governance

- i. Terms of Reference & Membership: members approved the new terms of reference including the purpose and membership of the subcommittee with a view to revisit them at the end of the year. The procedure for selecting members of the subcommittee was agreed between the Union President and the Board Chair.
- ii. RO & DRO Appointment & Election Rules & Regulations: members approved the appointment of the Returning Officer (Ryan Bird) and Deputy Returning Officer (Tom Newman) for the 2021/22 Leadership elections. Members also approved the election rules and regulations for the 2021/22 academic year noted that the Union will be returning to in-person elections.
- iii. Update on Governing Documents: The Committee were made aware of the current status of the Governing Documents and the changes to the byelaws over the last two years will be made available on the website. Members were informed that a template will be produced for any constitutional changes to enable easier tracking of changes. Members agreed that the governing documents will be updated as and when changes are made so the most up-to date version is always available on the website.
- iv. Disciplinary Review Update: The Committee were informed of the current status of the review of the Unions disciplinary procedures. The new procedures, which were approved by Council and Board last July and required the Governance and Membership Committee to make a number of appointments of which were agreed as outlined in the paper. Subject to the approval of the Board, members agreed to proceed with the recommendations provided.
- v. Democracy Review Update: The Committee were informed that over the next year, there will be a formal project plan reviewing the democratic governance structures including Union Council and its relevant subcommittees and how these groups function and operate. It was noted that this project will be led by the Union President with collaboration from the Council Chair, Representation Manager and relevant wider staff team members.

3. Management Committee

Advice Centre Review: Cat Turhan (Representation and Advice Manager) discussed the strategic need for the service and currently, the way the advice centre operates is not fit for purpose. CT also discussed the need to recruit more members of staff to support the service and further support to be put out marketing the services and what the advice centre offers. It was suggested that an Advice Manager be recruited to assist in training staff, developing

relationships with College and will be responsible for managing the advice caseworkers. The Advice Manager will also be responsible for their own caseload, training casual staff on contract checking and supporting other staff. In addition to this, an Advice and Outreach coordinator would be recruited to focus on the heavy admin which often burdens other staff and oversee freshers stall and other College/sector-wide events.

The committee discussed having a presence in Reynolds, White City and how the Advice Centre will be able to support medical students. Similarly, it was suggested to consider the use of specific staff expertise in other issues, for example employment issues and how the Advice centre would be able to draw expertise from staff.

- i. Vaccine Passports w/Nightclubs: It was advised that as Government guidance had not proceeded with the initial plan of 'covid-passports', the Union would be following guidance and will therefore not require students to provide proof of a negative test or vaccinations before entering Union spaces for events. It was agreed that students will be encouraged to take tests beforehand, however this will not be checked as it is not a legal requirement. Staff will be required to wear face masks and those exempt from wearing masks will wear a visible lanyard informing students of this. Masks are not mandatory for students within venues but there will be clear signage/email comms informing students to stay home if they are feeling unwell. The committee discussed the need for consistent comms between CSP's and venues to ensure there is one set standard and no miscommunication between groups regarding events and expectations.
The committee considered different options for crisis comms for Welcome week and it was agreed that if any news outlets reach out the Union, the Union President will be the only individual who will communicate with them in writing. Felix and the College media team will also be looped in if this instance were to occur.
- ii. Helpdesk Design: The committee discussed the requirement for the helpdesk to have sufficient heating, hearing loop, drinking water and clear out of office hours signage. Signage from all areas of the building informing Students that the helpdesk is on the ground floor was also agreed as necessary. It was agreed that it would be valuable to have a key drop-off point for those CSP's who need to drop keys off out of hours. The committee recommended having a digital screen in the reception area where there can be cross promotion around the shop/CSP's, Advice centre and other Union services as well as braille on the door signs.
- iii. Welcome Fair: It was noted by the committee that Queens Lawn is still under construction and there has been little progress in the last few weeks. This raises concerns for the Welcome Fair as without the use of the lawn, there will be limited availability of space for CSP's and other student and Commercial groups who require stalls.
It was agreed that TN will contact the College and confirm if it would be possible to use Princes Garden if Queens Lawn is not ready. However, as Princes Garden is not covered, this raises concerns in the event of bad weather on the day.
- iv. Meeting Pods: the committee discussed having meeting pods where staff are able to take private meetings. There were concerns around whether the meeting pods were ventilated, and the committee were informed that the pods are air conditioned based on the outside condition. It was agreed that staff would book this out via an outlook calendar and if there is a requirement for more pods due to demand vs availability this will be reviewed.
- v. UCH Redevelopment: it was noted that the UCH redevelopment project is on track to be completed according to the timeline with a completion date of 7th October 2021 with the bar and top layer seating to be completed.