



## Minutes

### BT-211-M2

A virtual meeting of the LSU Trustee Board was held on 26 October 2020 at 17:00 via an online meeting platform.

#### PRESENT:

Andy Doyle (Chair), Matt Youngs (President), Amy White, David Kiddie, Emily Hook, Emily Turnbull, Matthew Brown, Owen Henderson, Fejiro Aman, Ana-Maria Bilciu, Amie Woodyatt, Alex Marlowe and James Greer.

In attendance: Trevor Page (Union Director), Maria Turnbull-Kemp and Sue Lucas (Clerk)

#### 1. APOLOGIES:

#### 2. REGISTER OF INTERESTS

No change to the register of Interest

#### 3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND DEAL WITH MATTERS ARISING

- BT-211-M1 (10 September 2020) - Approved
- BT-203-M2 (09 July 2020) - Approved
- BT-203-M1 (21 May 2020) - Approved

#### 4. TO RECEIVE UPDATES ON ACTIONS RAISED

No actions raised

#### 5. TO RECEIVE MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

- Appendix 1: Draft YE accounts to 31 July 2020 - Loughborough Students' Union**
- Appendix 2: 2020-2021 Budget**
- Appendix 3: Draft YE accounts to 31 July 2020 - Loughborough Campus Nursery**
- Appendix 4: Draft YE accounts to 31 July 2020 – Loughborough Student Services**

MTK gave an overview of LSU's YE accounts, noting that the Union was confident in the year ending positively and, following some adjustments, the surplus will be c £170k. The support given by the Government is a big contributing factor. She added that the Nursery and LLS are also ending the year positively resulting in a c £220k surplus overall. The Auditors report and statutory accounts will be completed and brought back to the Trustees for approval in February 2021.

MTK reported that her team were currently working on the October accounts and that the figures for August and September were on track, adding that, unlike previous years, we are now able to review income on a daily basis, allowing TP and our commercial team to make decisions quickly.

#### 6. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE

##### a) Executive update (Oct 2020)

MY summarised his report to the Trustees, praising his team for their attitude and exceptional work ethic in what has been a difficult start to their term of office. The Union's traditional offering of activities to its members has been severely disrupted by COVID and, in particular, sectional output. Being one of the Union's core charitable objectives the Executive have been of the mindset to not just do the bare minimum but to adapt and to do things in the true Loughborough way. Action is one of the sections that has been heavily impacted; Historically reliant on in-person interactions with those who would be considered vulnerable therefore, only 9 of 22 planned projects are operating. One of the projects Action have adapted is 'Contact the Elderly' which has gone digital with the introduction of a pen pal scheme. Athletic Union - Rachel and James have put in significant amounts of work to ensure AU clubs are up and running, leading a return to play programme for training in a COVID secure manner. Students will still be able to enjoy sporting opportunities were possible. Other sections have moved where possible to a digital approach. Societies,

Media and Enterprise are offering workshops to student members. Welfare – by recognising all 9 welfare organisations as support groups have been able to take advantage of the slight exemption whereby they can meet in maximum groups of 15. Education – Ana-Maria took the bold decision to move to a selection process for Course Reps and School Presidents and has received a huge number of applications. The roles are now being appointed on competency rather than an individual being elected having received a single vote.

Executive Officer representation on University committees has increased this year ensuring that there is strong LSU representation in the University's COVID response governance structure. Organisational transparency is something that we are focusing on this year and continue to facilitate. The creation of a Exec Hub in piazza increases the visibility of the Officers and enables our volunteers and student members to engage directly. MY asked the Board to note 2 points. Firstly, the PM's visit, which initially saw negative social media traction but subsequently has delivered a beneficial position where we have been able to utilise this visit. Secondly, COVID Community Champions- a voluntary scheme led by the Students Union which was launched within 48hrs, recruiting 200 volunteers and has supported 1200 isolated students.

AWh asked about student engagement in sections and whether it was lower than previous years. MY replied, we have seen reduced memberships in all our sections but the level of engagement in our digital contents has been pleasing, we have learnt from this and it will be something we will looking at continue in to the future. AWh also asked if the positive outcomes from the PM's visiting were going to be communicated. MT replied that he was due to attend a meeting in mid-Late November and that once the conversations have been finalised it will be communicated.

ET raised a question about the Union's future commercial offerings. MY replied, there have been conversations around moving away from the model of commercial nightclubs and more towards bar experiences. This is something the whole Executive team are excited about and something we should have possibly looked at previously in view of the changing demographics.

DK asked how the returning students were received by the local community. MY replied that initially there was a lot of apprehension but many of the residents have been pleasantly surprised. With the Freshers events organised on campus fewer students went into town and the council have reported that they have received very little in the way of complaints.

- b) **To receive and approve the Loughborough Students' Union Executive Committee: Terms of Reference.**  
Approved

## 7. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE REPORTS FROM THE UNION DIRECTOR

TP asked the Board to note the Venue and Entertainment budget line in Appendix 2: 2020-2021 Budget – The Union's budgets were revised and a cautious assumption was made that there would be no income from Venue in the first term. It is now a working assumption that the Union will not reopen Venue operations until after Easter. Steps have already been taken to reduce costs; reducing staff in non-front-line services and deferring the annual pay rise, set to have been 2%, until the impact of the current situation has been fully realised. We also took the decision to provide the best Student Experience possible, maintaining strong customer relations for the future. Our "Socially Distance Social Club" was a massive success, and I am very impressed and proud of our achievements but it is worth noting that this is a very different operation - attendance is a few hundred as opposed to 3000 if the venue was fully operational. TP noted that without taking further action the Union will become cash-flow insolvent and put forward a four phase proposal for recovery; reducing cost, seeking guarantees from the University; seeking to sell Union assets (land and Buildings) and looking to new, safer and long term income sources.

AWh and DK requested that the Union SLT more readily consider calling on their knowledge and expertise, stating that they are currently being under utilised.

DK noted that the Directors report mentioned cutting staff numbers by 60% - something that we now seem to have backed away from. MTK replied, reducing staff further could have a detrimental effect on the Student Experience. We have worked on restructuring our operational delivery reducing costs from our back-office staff. AWO asked TP for some reassurance that if more redundancies were called for, LSU will maintain a presence in London. TP confirmed that unless the Board direct differently there will be no change to front-line services. DK also requested an update on the sale of the Nursery. TP confirmed that the sale was going ahead and that delays were being caused due to the OFSTED registration.



The Board discussed the future short-term plans for the Union, whether the Union plans to have hold a Grad Ball and the potential implications of further restrictions and lockdowns. The Union will be guided on these events by both the University and current Government guidelines.

JG queried the potential sale of the building to the University noting that, currently we have a great relationship with the University but what if that deteriorates in the future. TP assured the Board that we would look to negotiate a 40-50-year airtight lease with building guarantees adding that any lease would be presented to the Board for approval.

ET noted that the Directors' report proposed that the Union's venues move more towards themed bars and eateries adding that she felt it was a positive move and something that would be received well by students. If we decided to go down that route how quickly would you want to implement the refurbishment and would it impact on students this year, she asked. TP replied that ideally, we need to move on this quite quickly and would look to do refurbishments over the Christmas break. OH further commented on the versatility of the current venue spaces and asked TP if when considering designs for the venue has there been any consideration for bookable spaces. TP assured the Board that plans will be made available to them before any works are started.

AD summarised the points raised stating that we need clear governance plans when the proposals for the sale of the building are brought back to Board. The Union needs to communicate those plans to students who may have an emotional connection to building. With regards to the financial situation doing nothing is not an option and, although TP painted a deliberately bleak picture, we do know that the University is very supportive and helpful. The support available from both the Government and the University means that at this time, whilst we recognise the risks, we are not trading illegally and that we has Directors know that there are reasonable pathways for us to secure funding and secure different options . We recognise that the guidance from the Board to the SLT still holds true – let's be as efficient as possible. We should explore the options available and continue with the sale of the Nursery.

## 8. AGENDA ITEMS

### a) To update the Board on Health and Safety and facilities program – MTK

MTK reported that the office space and facilities for staff was not fit for purpose and that it was detrimentally affecting the morale of staff. COVID has changed the way we work and with more people working from home we have needed be more tech focused - something we are very lacking in. The building needs some TLC, the leaking roof needs to be replaced and the toilets need updating. H&S – a lot of work has been done to make the building COVID secure and we have invested in state-of-the-art cleaning materials. We have also had the opportunity to work closely with the University who have been extremely supportive. Our newly appointed H&S Officer, responsible for managing H&S across the organisation, will be looking at staff training and will update Policies for approval by the Board.

AD actioned a review of the Union's risk management to be presented to the Board in January 2021

### b) To note an addition to the Union's student discipline policy which aligns with University's COVID guidelines and supports sanctions imposed by the University.

- *Students suspected of breaching University or Government Covid-safety requirements will have a 14-day exclusion imposed on them (Guidance of Sanctions 2020-21) – The Union will support this sanction by imposing a full ban from the Union, anyone attempting to breach this sanction will be reported back to the University for further sanctions.*

Noted

## 9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

30 November 2020, 26 January 2021, 27 April 2021 and 29 June 2021