



**Meeting of:** Board of Trustees

**Location:** Virtual Meeting

**Date and Time:** 4pm 16th April 2020

**Members:** Zulum Elumogo (Chair), Wil Barber, Jack Boyd, David Gordon, Inka Pearson, Yusuf Rafique.

**Apologies:** Issam Jamaledine

**In attendance:** James Hann (CEO), Sarah Chowdry-Grant, Jasmeet Chana, Jen Hastings, Maddy Thomson Nick Smith (Secretary).

	<b>Item</b>
1.	The chair <b>welcomed</b> members and the board noted apologies  The meeting was taking place remotely as allowed under section 52.2 of the Articles because of Covid-19.
2.	There were no Conflicts of Interest to declare.
3.	The board <b>approved</b> the Minutes of the Last Meeting without amendment. There was the following matter arising. a) The website tender had been reviewed and a further draft was required.
4.	The board <b>noted</b> the draft Minutes from the subcommittees
5.	There had been no Chairs actions taken since the last meeting
6.	The board <b>noted</b> the Chief Executive Report. The following was raised a) Steps were being taken to assume a welcome week that could take place physically on campus, but this would be reviewed. There was currently no plan for student staff recruitment for the event but this may also change. b) The elections had taken place with a drop as a result of the Pandemic. The elections had been signed off as a fair and free election by the Returning Officer. The board expressed congratulations to all candidates. c) There had been issues in rolling out Bluerunner in recent months but these would be resolved for the next academic year. d) In future it was requested that updates from teams should include previous year comparisons. <b>Action:</b> JH
7.	The board <b>noted</b> an update from officers a) All officers had written a letter to the School to raise their concerns about accommodation and assessment. A "no detriment" policy was being drawn up by the School and the union would be consulted about that. Discretion was likely to be given to exam boards but it was difficult to see how parity between subjects could be achieved on this. b) All summer term fees had been waived for School earned halls and there has been a request to offer a grant for all 3 <sup>rd</sup> party accommodation providers who are not offering a discount for students. This should only apply to one provider. c) As well as supporting MO, DG was now vice chair of a School working group on sexual violence.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d) JB was completing the drug strategy and training for new outreach officers.</li> <li>e) There was some frustration among student officers about the communications from the School and the fact that this could increase anxiety among students.</li> </ul>
8.	<p>The board <b>noted</b> the management accounts for February</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) At the end of the period the deficit position was £97,000, around £22,000 below budget but this was principally due to expenditure of the SU fund. Without this the deficit was on target. Commercial services were on target for budget but expenditure was below target principally due to staff savings.</li> <li>b) £133K was due to the LSE SU around half of which was outstanding from Art Students' Union. There were outstanding VAT issues to clarify the final amount and as a result these were not being chased. The rest of the debt was principally from the School.</li> <li>c) There was a cost to HMRC of sales that were not VAT exempt in the cafes, for example to staff members who made purchases from the cafes. The transfer of the shop to LSE has reduced the VAT that can be reclaimed from HMRC. Two VAT advisors were being considered to assist with several outstanding VAT issues.</li> <li>d) Additional hardship funds of £50,000 had been secured.</li> <li>e) The expected cost of Covid-19 to the Union could be around £250,000 in lost sales. Measures are being taken to cut discretionary spending in order to minimise the financial impact.</li> </ul>
9.	The board <b>approved</b> the 2020/21 budget principles as recorded in the closed minutes.
10.	The board <b>noted</b> the Business readiness report. In future this would not be a separate report but form part of the regular workload for staff.
11.	<p>The board <b>approved</b> updates to the finance manual.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) There were different documents for the high-level principles and operational issues for staff.</li> <li>b) The handbook also picked up the requirements from the last Auditors report and codified issues such as journal posting and payment limits into the manual. Debt would be more regularly chased and reported in the monthly management accounts.</li> <li>c) MT was thanked for her work on improving the financial rigour of the Union.</li> </ul>
12.	<p>The board discussed the Covid-19 crisis and the impact on the Union.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) There was a balance between closing services for the student beneficiaries and protecting the finances of the Union and supporting staff members wellbeing. It would be unclear how well the Union met this balance for some time.</li> <li>b) The School had worked closely with the Union on closure for several weeks before the government announcement that the public should stay at home. Staff members were working from home, mainly on their own devices at present.</li> <li>c) Students who had sought event refund to fundraise for a club or society had the option to donate it to that student group. Both the activities and finance teams had offered significant support to student requests for help.</li> <li>d) All student staff in the gym had been put on furlough. Other student staff would be offered this even where they were on zero-hour contracts. Furloughed staff would have the 20% of wages not paid by the government topped up.</li> <li>e) Furloughing had been offered to full time staff. Some were not able to be granted this as they offered a core service. The furloughed staffing arrangements would be reviewed on a three-weekly basis. No staff have used their right of appeal to the arrangements. Staff members could be called back in. Furloughing was also offered to the sabbatical team.</li> <li>f) The payroll for the union was £105,000 per month. Assuming that only the currently furloughed staff remained in this position for April and May approximately £56,000 of payroll costs would be saved.</li> <li>g) It was not likely that LSE would open their campus in the coming term. Other universities were delaying opening in the autumn term.</li> <li>h) Staff were thanked for their work during this time.</li> </ul>

13.	The board <b>deferred</b> a set of meeting dates and board cycle for the next academic year to the June meeting. They approved an update meeting for 13 <sup>th</sup> May at 4pm.
14.	The board <b>approved</b> the closed minutes without amendment.
15.	Trustees only meeting

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

Covid-19 Update meeting: 4pm 13<sup>th</sup> May (proposed)

Full board meeting: 4pm 15<sup>th</sup> June followed by an End of Year Social



**Meeting of:** Board of Trustees

**Location:** Virtual Meeting

**Date and Time:** 4pm 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020

**Members:** Zulum Elumogo (Chair), Wil Barber, David Gordon, Issam Jamaledine, Martha Ogu, Inka Pearson.

**Apologies:** Yusuf Rafique.

**In attendance:** James Hann (CEO), Sarah Chowdry-Grant, Nick Smith (Secretary).

	<b>Item</b>
1.	<p>The chair <b>welcomed</b> members and the board <b>noted</b> apologies</p> <p>The meeting was taking place remotely as allowed under section 52.2 of the Articles because of Covid-19.</p>
2.	<p>The board <b>noted</b> the Covid-19 crisis and the impact on the Union.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) The Union remained open and was still working on campaigns for LSE students and taking part in NUS national campaigning. This work included lobbying Sanctuary students to include the fee waiver that other student housing companies have introduced.</li> <li>j) After lobbying from ZE, the School had agreed to donate £40,000 annually to St Mungo's in return for a holistic approach to homelessness on campus, including volunteering opportunities for students. DG was clarifying the position of the ethical investment policy and ensuring it could be implemented in a way that would satisfy its proponents. MO had been coordinating the response to the School's no detriment policy.</li> <li>k) The advice centre was busy with Covid-19 related queries and allocating the Hardship Fund which had increased in size to cope with the Pandemic and there had been an increase in enquiries on extenuating circumstances.</li> <li>l) Students were being asked their views on the students' union but it was expected that the response rate would be around half that of previous years (500 not 1,000).</li> <li>m) 24 staff members had been furloughed from 8<sup>th</sup> April including the whole of the social team and the VP Activities. A societies coordinator had been moved from furlough. The scheme would bring in around £100,000 for the Union from government funds. Communication including all staff briefings has been put in place.</li> <li>n) A scenario including no first term income would come to the June board. Discussion were starting internally and with the School about how the Union and Institution could return to a physical operation. ZE was a member of the welcome group for the School and they and the Union were both considering how a "virtual" welcome or hybrid model could occur.</li> </ul>
3.	<p>The board <b>noted</b> the cashflow position for the Union</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The Union had £1.4M in the bank which included £690,000 within restricted clubs and societies accounts. There was not expected to be a shortage in cashflow over the coming months.</li> <li>b) Outgoings had been reduced as much as possible but it was expected that an additional year end deficit of £90,000 was likely as a result of the Pandemic.</li> </ul>
4.	<p>An impact on Societies and Clubs was presented by SCG which the board <b>noted</b>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The impact was not as negative as expected despite events being cancelled just before the lockdown.</li> </ul>

	<p>b) There was one significant debt within the Sports teams accounts due to the cancellation of the AU Ball. There were other debts among societies and the volleyball society but not related to the Covid-19 Pandemic.</p> <p>c) A number of events had been cancelled but there were still virtual events being held for students in many cases. Student groups were being encouraged not to plan or hold events in the Michaelmas Term.</p>
5.	<p>JH provided an update on the SUSS scheme which they <b>noted</b>.</p> <p>a) The 2019/20 contribution would be £95,000 followed each year by annual increases:</p> <p>b) 5% increase for 2020/21 to £97,000</p> <p>c) 8% increase for 2021/22 to £108,000</p> <p>d) 5% increase for 2022/23 to £113,000</p> <p>A paper on paying a lump sum option and further details will be presented to the June trustee board</p>
6.	An item was raised in closed business

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**Full board meeting: 4pm 15<sup>th</sup> June