| **Description:** | Trustee Board Meeting | | |
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| **Date:** | 8th February 2023 | **Time:** | 17.30pm- 19.30pm |
| **Chair:** | Hafsa Haji | **Location:** | Zoom |
| **Staff present:** | Ed Nedjari (CEO)  Danielle Sevenoaks (Communications Manager)  Lisa Ronson (Finance Manager)  Hafsa Haji (SU President)  Tor Grant-Callier (Campaigns and Activities Officer)  Mana Misaghi (Policy Advisor)  Janette Joyce (Auditor)  Stephen Norton (External Trustee)  Eireann Attridge (External Trustee)  Kofi Siaw (External Trustee)  Elsabet Genti (Student Trustee)  Luca Di Mambro-Moor(Student Trustee) | | |
| **Apologies:** | Rhiannon Suchak (Student Engagement Manager)  Wala Osman (HR Manager)  Victoria Chwa (Education Officer)  Pradeep Thatai (External Trustee) | | |

**Minutes**

| **Ref.** | **Item** | **Summary Points** | **Action** |
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| **1** | **Welcome and Introductions** | The chairperson welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked trustees to introduce themselves as there were new members. |  |
| **2** | **Declarations and note any**  **possible conflict of interest** | The Chairperson said there are no declarations. |  |
| **3** | **Minutes from last meeting**  **and subcommittees**  **● Approval**  **● Actions Update** | Chairperson asked if there were any actions to  approve and trustee’s said no. |  |
| **4** | **Declarations for any other**  **business items** | No other business. |  |
|  | **Organisational Updates** |  |  |
| **5** | **CE Report /SU Grant needs for 23/24** | The chief executive informed trustees that we are currently going through our re-forecasting process. We just need to check that we're on the right track. We're not massively overspending in some areas as we are ensuring the money goes into the departments that are needed the most.  The CE adds that they don’t think there will be major changes in fundings for the academic year 2023-24. There won’t be new departments, or a project for a new building so they don’t see changes being made in the SU finances.  This is not to say there won’t be changes to improve the SU experiences but they can model what they’ve got from last year and take it into the new year. The SU still has to do the detailed work and make sure that any percentage increases and inflationary increases are all taken into consideration and there are plans for the work that needs to be done.  They also add that a new role is needed in the SU, as someone that has the ability to analyse and research our students is required. This role will help the SU find information easier as they will do research and we will work towards finding solutions for where there are problems. |  |
| **6** | **Strategy Initial overview Shared** | The university is currently writing their 10 year strategy, although the SU’s strategy is three years long. It's nice to be flexible but since the SU can’t be sure of what will happen in six months, it’s hard to predict how things will be in three years. Once a researcher is found the university will see value in this role as well, because lately they have been struggling in communicating with students and finding out what students want. If the SU has a researcher they will be able to provide the university with useful information about students, which will help improve their university experience.  The SU’s strategy document has been shared with frontline staff as well as the advice team, this is to ensure that those that work with students are able to share their views on how best we can improve. Advice is a department that has been dealing with many complaints from students, in regards to how little communication they receive from the university.  They believe that by April or May they will have a clear understanding of how the structure will be and with the help of a timeline, nothing will be missed out.  The chief executive believes that now they have got the right culture and right team in order to actually have a strategy. They believe that getting the university involved is a good idea although they won’t allow them to rewrite the strategy. |  |
| **7** | **Receive Comms plan** | The communications manager shared what they have been working on internally for the last couple of months just before Christmas. They go on to mention that the SU branding didn't say a lot about GSU so one of the things that they thought of doing is changing the brand. If the SU wants to appear stronger, the changes should be also in the branding. One of the things that they started doing was reaching out to a few freelance designers who could come up with the logo, the idea and branding for GSU. |  |
| **8** | **by law** | The policy advisor shared with the trustees that they had some motion submissions from students and these were voted on, in forum and passed into policy. Some of these required updates to the bylaws, which was not done at the time and this is something they are aiming to do now.  If these changes are approved by everyone, they will then go on to draft a new set of bylaws, then send it over to their solicitors to check the legal side of it. The chairperson asked if trustees approve the changes to be made and they all approved. The policy advisor thanked the trustees and said that they will also be updated about the constitution amendments. |  |
| **9** | **Goldsmiths SU Handbook** | The chief executive explained that the staff handbook has been updated and the one staff were using was an old version. The new handbook provides more information of who staff can contact if they have queries and explains more what is expected from them as SU staff members. They asked if they all had the chance to review it and approve the new handbook.  Trustees approved the handbook and thanked the HR team for the work. |  |
| **10** | **Approve Audited Accounts / Receive Audit Report** | The auditor introduced themselves and mentioned what they were going to talk about in the meeting. Their report was about the SU’s statutory accounts,audit and their audit findings. They reminded everyone that the statutory accounts are a compliance document, which are a legal requirement, and not designed to be a management tool.  These accounts are prepared in accordance with the charity statement; a recommended practice that is issued by the Charity Commission.  They explained that as a charity, the organisation's profit and loss account or income expenditure account is called a sofa statement of financial activities. The statement records all income and expenditures that the organisation has recorded in it’s accounting system throughout the year. They explained what the tables and columns in the documents meant in depth, to give more of an understanding of how to read the figures.  After taking total expenditure of two and a half million away from the total income of 2.6/5 million ,we made a surplus of 70 nearly 80,000 pounds in the year, which is a pleasing result, given where the organisation was. A balance sheet is a document that records and looks at everything that we owe and own since 31st July 2022. The organisation has fixed assets in the balance sheets which it will continue to benefit from for a period of more than one year, for example IT equipment that will be used by different staff members and then there are also current assets.  These are assets or cash that will convert items that will then convert to cash within the next year. The finance manager added that the whole team is working really hard to make sure that they maintain a positive position in the balance sheet. Meetings have been put in place to ensure as an SU we will end the year where we want to be and enter into next year in a sustainable position.  The chief executive agreed with what the finance manager said and mentioned how important it is that we spend the money we have in the right places, on the right things and at the right time. Looking at our balance sheet, the organisation had an excess of assets over liabilities of £393,000 which isn’t to spend as this is money that belongs also to the SU sport clubs and societies.  The auditor mentioned that it is required to have reserves as an organisation. This is because If anything were to go wrong or happen, the organisation will be able to exist for a certain period of time such as three months allow To Summarise the money that the organisation has in reserves, covers payroll for about three months and this money can at least see it through and pay debtors.  An audit is a verification of transactions and balances to conclude that our financial statements are free from material misstatement. So within Crowe, they use a methodology and that methodology allows them to consider materiality up to around 2% of the organisations income, which means they were using materiality level of around the 53,000 pound mark this year. What this means is that if they found an error of up to 53,000 pounds, they would be talking to us very seriously about the need to adjust it.  The auditor asked if there were any questions. |  |
| **11** | **Sabbatical Officers Update** | The chairperson thanked everyone for their contribution and mentioned that they had a meeting with some members of the senior management to discuss the DSC payments. During the meeting they tried to finalise when the remaining payments will be made as some students were still waiting for their January payments which is concerning. Talks about them transferring these payments to the SU were also made, since they are struggling with their department.  They have conducted two rounds of the new governance strategy for democracy stock which are the liberation executive education and societies committees.They went through the old motions and changed things that needed to be updated or removed. This goes to show that the organisation has an active student union engagement. The university communications director has requested for the SU to be involved with their communications strategy planning, which goes to show that the university has realised how the SU has been organised with what it does and how well it communicates  During the meeting with the senior management, they were informed that the report and support system that the university uses, which is originally for cases of anything to do with harassment or abuse of a sexual nature, will now include racial harassment and other forms of discrimination can be reported under that system. |  |
|  | **End the meeting** |  |  |

**Action Items**

| **Ref.** | **Action Item** | **Action / Decision** | **Action By** | **Due Date** |
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