

# DSU Board of Trustees Minutes

Meeting Five of the academic year 2021-22

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 10:30am – 3:30pm | DMU Hugh Aston Room 1.47/Microsoft Teams

Members	Initials	Meeting 1 12.10.21	Meeting 2 15.12.21	Meeting 3 22.02.22	Meeting 4 26.04.2022	Meeting 5 07.06.2022
Geoff Kershaw (Chair)	GK	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Phil Gilks	PG	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Laura Arends	LA	A	✓	✓	A	✓
Beverley Shears	BevS	N/A	✓	A	✓	✓
Joanna Dine-Hart (Deputy Chair)	JDH	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Benjamin Smith	BS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Aashni Sawjani	AS	✓	✓	✓	✓	A
Puja Subramanian	PS	✓	A	✓	✓	✓
Youseff Labib	YL	✓	A	A	✓	✓
Luke Martin	LM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mehul Parekh	MP	✓	P	✓	✓	✓
Sam Sayer	SS	✓	✓	✓	N/A	N/A
Danielle Gillett – since resigned	DG	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Joe Stephenson (Deputy CEO & HOCS)	JS	✓	✓	✓	A	✓
Sarah Bradley (CEO)	SB	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
Paula Heneghan (Clerk and HOF&CS)	PH	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Elgan Hughes (HOMS)	EH	N/A	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nyashadzashe Nguwo	NN		✓	✓	A	✓

Key: "✓" = Present, "A" = Apologies given, "N/M" = Non-member, "P" = Partial attendance, 'X' = Non -attendance

## Formal

Item	Discussion	Actions
<b>1. Introduction/Apologies for Absence/Conflict of Interest</b>	<p>Apologies were received from AS.</p> <p>The incoming Executive Officers for 2022/23 also joined the meeting until 12 noon/lunch break. This included Amir Iqbal, Aliyah Khan and Meera Desani.</p> <p>Conflict of Interest Register – nothing new to add.</p>	
<b>2. Notification of AOB</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of new Student Trustees</li> </ul>	EH
<b>3. Minutes of the previous meeting</b>	<p>No comments/amendments</p>	
<b>4. Action Log and matters arising</b>	<p>PH gave a summary of the items which were all in progress or on the agenda</p>	
<b>5. CEO Update</b>	<p>SB gave an overview of the CEO Report distributed to Board before the meeting.</p> <p>Attended a SULets Board meeting on 06.06.2022 and they are looking to [REDACTED]. Not expecting this to impact DSU however. Question asked about the agreement DSU has with SULets for rental and sponsorship – verbal or written? JS confirmed that DSU receive two payments from them each year – [REDACTED] in rent and 2) [REDACTED] for marketing support. The second of these is a signed agreement. The first is a verbal agreement that DMU are aware of.</p>	

	<p><b>ACTION: Discussion outside of meeting regarding agreement with SULEts and add this to the risk register if necessary</b></p> <p>This will be the final Board meeting attended by three of our Executives today – JDH, BS and PS. SB expressed her thanks to them all on behalf of DSU.</p> <p>LM asked SB what are her main worries at the moment? SB views the incoming students for 22/23 academic as DSU’s biggest challenge and how we interact with them and draw them into the SU.</p>	GK/SB
<b>6. Student Voice/Student Council</b>	JDH attended her last student council meeting and it was very good. Two policies belonging to BS have been approved – Sexual Health and Mental Wellbeing. Discussion on small changes to some bye-laws to enable student groups to work more operationally. JDH felt it was a very productive and positive meeting.	
<b>7. Executive Officer Update</b>	Executives went through the presentation distributed to Board ahead of this meeting, providing a brief overview of the academic year 21/22.	

### Substantive items for consideration

<b>8. Risk Register</b>	<p>SB has recommended a new format for the register to make it clearer and easier to identify the risks and mitigating actions. A number of new risks have been added including 1) pandemic/s, 2) EDI, 3) effectiveness of the Officer team (we are now working at higher level within DMU so much more important/higher risk), and 4) IT equipment life (reflective of modern working practices).</p> <p>BS queried Section G2 which is high risk but has no actions currently? SB believes that we already have current controls in place that are ongoing. PG suggested adding some actions or amending the risk level so that this makes more sense.</p> <p>G5 – amend the likelihood</p>	
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	<p>NUS/national voice is now a big risk.</p> <p>O1 – PG commented that it was surprising risk level given that we are already in this situation? Also all of the Finance risks are green despite our current focus there. GK agreed.</p> <p>Operational risk for ICT – BevS queried that the appetite is higher than the risk? Also are very few red risks in document. SB would like guidance from Board as to what their highest/main risk/focus would be. Themes from Board would be helpful.</p> <p><b>ACTION: SB to take all feedback and amend register as required. Trustees to then confirm they are happy with the amendments and also the main focus to be on:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) EDI</li> <li>2) National picture</li> <li>3) Financial risks</li> </ol>	SB
<p><b>9. Reserves and Investment Policies</b></p>	<p>PH explained that this a policy that is tabled annually and was last done in June 2021. Drew attention to section 2.1 re the Facilities Development Fund. PH explained the background and previous use of this fund.</p> <p>LM asked if PH feels we are saving the right amount or too much each year? PH doesn't feel the amount is too much. We have a low risk appetite as a Board and three months seems standard practice in this type of policy.</p> <p>PG noted that Charities Commission advice is currently 3-6 months of reserves so 3 months feels ok currently. If we take on more commercial ventures then perhaps we could revisit in the future? Did feel like a very long policy though and could benefit from being shortened.</p> <p>LA asked if there is an investment plan for what money is saved? PH believes this is covered in parts of JS's presentation to Board later on but £100,000 doesn't go far and covers items such as IT equipment and decoration/furniture.</p>	

	<p>BS noted that if £100k doesn't go very far then is it worth having if we would still need to borrow more to do things? PH confirmed that we are not able to build that reserve pot currently and DMU are not likely to support as they have previously on capex requests given their current financial status. We could set a target and it not be achievable. PG feels there is a safe amount in there for viability but without a specific plan then its best not to build up a big reserve, but to use members money each year or year.</p> <p>PH confirmed that if a transfer is made to the FDR then it can be taken back to general reserve if needed at another date. Any capital requests over £5000 have to go to Board for approval already.</p> <p>Approval given to transfer £100,000 to Facilities Development Reserve and the board approved the Reserves Policy.</p> <p>A short discussion was held regarding the investment policy.</p> <p>PH is continuously keeping an eye on interest rates in banks. Main thing is our money is safe, accessible and in a reputable supplier. We also only changed banks in 2021.</p> <p>BS asked if we ever take advice from third party companies with regards to investments? PH is aware that we have used external trustees, DMU financial advisers previously but it is not a huge sum for investment so will call for help if/when required.</p> <p>Investment Policy approved by Board.</p>	
<p><b>10.</b> <b>IT Hardware</b></p>	<p>PH referred the trustees to the paper tabled and gave a short summary.</p> <p>Majority of DSU home-workers are using their own equipment and that is often not up to standard and also to obtain the Cyber Essentials Accreditation DMU would require staff not to be using their personal devices from Dec 22.</p> <p>SMT have two suggestions:</p>	

	<p>Option A: £46,000 capex outlay - This includes providing all staff with the ability to work from home with a laptop etc to use working from home and the office and includes ITMS support.</p> <p>Option B: £9,000 capex outlay - This is to use the desktops in the office already and give them to staff to take home to use. We would still need to buy a number of laptops to ensure all staff have a computer. There is some budget allocated already for general replacement of PC's and current desktops will be replaced by laptops as and when they require replacement.</p> <p>SMT are recommending Option B to Board to approve.</p> <p>Lots of feedback that option A is very expensive – this is the price given by DMU ITMS using their procurement process and includes the support they currently offer us also. BevS stressed that we do want to remain part of the DMU ITMS infrastructure for various reasons including cyber security, back ups etc.</p> <p>All of Board are in support of Option B and SMT will look to build a steady replacement plan. Reminder that new DSE assessments would be undertaken for staff as items are distributed – PH agreed</p>	
	<p>Break for lunch</p> <p>Amir Iqbal, Aliyah Khan, Meera Dasani and YL all left the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>11. Commercial Vision</b></p>	<p>SB presented a slideshow to Board that will be distributed to all after this meeting.</p> <p>Our recently closed members survey will provide us with significant detail once the results have been analysed.</p> <p>BS noted that if The Union is changed again in purpose/appearance, this would be the third time in four years so does that lower our reputation? SB noted that with the remote learning that has taken place due to the pandemic and new students in September, then not all customers would</p>	

be aware of the change. We need to give 22/23 time to breakeven but any franchise going in there would be a big splash anyway.

GK asked if we need The Union if it only contributes 9% of income? SB feels its important that the area is not left empty for new students. The Commercial & Development Committee are there to look at things on a shorter basis. EH noted that empty spaces/closed shutters also affect the number of students dropping into the Membership Services areas, both go very much hand in hand.

JDH asked if the products that we plan to bring into the shop etc will be eco friendly? This is what students want and the DMU approach currently is very sustainably focused and its their merchandise we are largely selling. DMU's responsibility to support us in supplying this.

#### **The Union**

- Feedback tells us students want healthy, convenient food between lectures
- Option to pre-order food?
- Option to deliver
- Free click/collect – looking to reinstate this
- Convenience to be captured
- Focus on pop-ups and drawing students in to the area
- Being able to offer something healthy but fast is an operational query and we can't focus on satisfying every demographic
- Possible to use student franchises/businesses?
- Offering food outside of Chartwells hours of business? Chartwells close at 5pm

#### **Supplies Shop**

- Idea of an eco-shop split with merchandise

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope for DSU merchandise to be sold and loyalty for course reps?</li> <li>• EH noted that groups are able to buy through the shop currently and have personalisation too but need to advertise this more to societies etc</li> <li>• What are we famous for so we don't contradict ourselves?</li> <li>• DMU is an enterprise university so student pop-ups fit the USP</li> <li>• Online stock would be what we sell in the shop already</li> </ul> <p><b>Partnerships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion around [REDACTED] [REDACTED] suggest that the revenue in 14 weeks since opening is £300,000. There would be costs to DSU to set up but this is a proposal for SMT to explore and bring to a future Board meeting</li> <li>• Franchise model open to wider company interest for bids/applications not just [REDACTED]</li> <li>• DSU is splitting from current providers Univibe and 2Four6</li> <li>• Native provide a guaranteed income and free up our Business Development Coordinator's time to focus on private hire etc</li> </ul> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p><b>ACTION: Timeline for [REDACTED] for JS to bring to Commercial &amp; Development Committee</b></p> <p>LA asked about bringing in more private hire to the Function Rooms. SB wants that focus to be in Year 2-3 when we have a better understanding of what people want. The Function Room and nightclub are one and the same space and not particularly welcoming so we need to change that.</p> <p>Need to bring downstairs income up to at least 25% of commercial outlet revenue.</p>	<p>JS</p>
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	<p>BS asked what our aim would be if we bid for the [REDACTED] in the future? JS feels that the ideal is that the entire campus centre building becomes ours and all commercial activity is ours.</p>	
<p><b>12.</b> <b>21/22 Financial Update and year end forecast</b></p>	<p>PH went through the financial update distributed to all before the meeting. Overall we are in a favourable place compared to the December 2022 approved budget but there are some adverse items, off set by underspends, savings etc.</p> <p>The Function Rooms closed for this academic year on 18.05.2022 due to low attendance. This was earlier than normal by approx. 3-4 weeks but allowed for staffing costs to be saved during that time.</p> <p>Reforcasting has been done up to 31.07.2022 and ends with a [REDACTED]. EDI audit of [REDACTED] has affected the bottom line - this was approved as unbudgeted spend at the last board meeting.</p>	
<p><b>13.</b> <b>22/23 Budgets</b></p>	<p>PH presented Plan A 'Breakeven' budget to Board and asked for approval from trustees today. PH talked through the budget summary paper tabled and noted key areas:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £12,000 recent saving as have ended SLA with DMU HR and now being managed in-house</li> <li>• Leaving the Executive Support role vacant to save salary cost [REDACTED]</li> <li>• Plan would be to create a Student Hub with Membership Services staff in the downstairs space as well as Executive Officers so students arriving at the SU would have immediate face-to-face contact with staff rather than being signposted elsewhere</li> <li>• Plan to use spaces downstairs year round so not empty [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Freeze would be reviewed at the October and December 2022 board meetings with the possibility of extending the deadline after 31.12.22 if needed.</li> <li>Cost of living increase to match DMU still applies to all staff - in budgets at 3%</li> <li>Important how we communicate this [REDACTED] to staff</li> <li>Approved by Board to [REDACTED] with immediate effect until 31.12.22</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION: What changes to Executive admin support are being made?</b></p> <p>The Union is the main risk so SMT are keeping a close eye on that. BS asked where SMT would draw the line on losses within The Union? PH believes that is something for the Commercial and Development Committee to look at closely meeting on meeting. It would also depend on what/how other commercial areas are doing/performing. SMT do not want The Union left empty/closed as we approach the possibility of tendering for the [REDACTED].</p> <p>Budget A approved by Board.</p>	SMT
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### Other Items for discussion

<p><b>14.</b> <b>Meeting Review</b></p>	<p>BevS commented that the meeting had been really good and the prep work very thorough. Had a really good debate on all items.</p>	
<p><b>15.</b> <b>AOB</b></p>	<p><b>Appointment of Student Trustees</b> EH confirmed that two new student trustees have been appointed as of 1.07.22 –</p> <p>Stephanie Glazbrook Benjamin Smith</p> <p>GK expressed his thanks to all outgoing Executive Officers and YL as he finishes as a student trustee.</p>	GK

**Meeting closed**

**Items for receipt (not discussion)**

**Future Meetings**

- 11<sup>th</sup> October 2022
- 13<sup>th</sup> December 2022
- 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023
- 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023
- 20 June 2023