



Newman Students' Union

## **NEWMAN STUDENTS' UNION**

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The eleventh meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on:

21 May 2013 in the Board Room at 17.00

### **Minutes**

#### **11.1 WELCOME AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Committee and new members were welcomed and introduced.

In attendance:

NSU President – Nathanael Murdoch - Chairing

Student Trustee – Matthew Leo

Student Trustee – Rebecca Crowther

External Trustee (from NU Management) – Tony Sharma

In attendance:

NSU Development Manager – Rob Balding – minuting

Jordan Berry – President (elect)

Rebekah Banks – Student Trustee (elect)

#### **11.2 APOLOGIES OR ABSENCE**

External Trustee – Elizabeth Dearn – Apologies

NSU Executive Member – Zoe Miles – Apologies

Shahzad Khokhar – Student Trustee (elect) - Apologies

Student Trustee - James King - Absent

#### **11.3 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

Minutes of meeting 10 (Document TB11-01) were approved as accurate.

#### **11.4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (*TO CONSIDER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING*)**



Newman Students' Union

#### **11.4.1 Trustee Election Update – Document TB11-02**

NM explained that one application for external trustee was received but after the close of applications. It was highlighted applications will now remain open for remaining positions, and the incoming President will decide when to close these in time for the next General Meeting.

Shazhad was invited but unable to attend this meeting due to prior commitments. It was also highlighted Rebekah's name had been spelt wrong.

**Other items were included on the agenda.**

#### **11.5 MATTERS ARISING NOT ON THE MINUTES (*TO CONSIDER MATTERS ARISING NOT ON THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING*)**

None

#### **Items to Receive**

11.6

##### **11.6.1 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MINUTES (Document TB11-03)**

The minutes were received. It was highlighted that point 1.7.13 regarding student safety outside campus (student crossing the road between Newman and the Sailing Club) was felt to have not been dealt with effectively. The issue had been received by residents and it appeared to have taken the Executive up to two months to do anything about it from what was included in the minutes. NM stated that he felt the minutes didn't give a fair reflection of this item and would speak with the Union chair regarding misrepresentation through in the minutes. TS highlighted that the Vice-President had raised this issue at Newman Student Services Committee. It was suggested that this should have then been reported back to students asap to complete the representation cycle and inform them of what work the Executive were doing. NM highlighted that NSU was trying to put in place a better filing system and record student issues better to ensure issues can be raised more efficiently in future. This includes new consultation forms to complete when dealing with individual cases.



It was also raised that there was frustration from students who attend meetings that don't seem to happen due to quoracy, also that the majority of students attending seem to be a group of residents and meetings therefore aren't representative of all students. There were 21 students at the last meeting, some attending simply to hear NM's leaving speech.

**Action required: NM discuss with Union Chair**

**11.6.2 PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Document TB11-04)**

The Board accepted the report.

It was suggested that in future the report should include outcomes, such as the Birmingham Presidents Group agreeing to officially boycott 'Carnage' due to the apparent lack of concern for student welfare at some of their events. It was questioned if this boycott had been fed-back to students, in particular those who promote carnage and sell tickets. NM stated that this had been done via NSU Website. NSU also remove any carnage advertising from NSU media throughout the year.

It was stated that the President had had a good level of engagement throughout the year with Newman University and this was very positive and has allowed students to have a better influence throughout the institution. The President explained that it is a challenge to balance engagement with Newman and NSU members and this is something that Sabbatical Officers need to improve on in future to ensure they can be fully representative of all students.

**11.6.3 UNION CHAIR'S REPORT (Document TB11-05)**

The board received the report and discussed some concerns:

There was no mention of a student forum which had been cancelled rather than postponed (22/03/13) due to the Chair and Secretary not being present. It was stated that this absence had not be replaced in time for the meeting even though meeting dates had been set months in advance.

The last meeting of Trustees had stated that the Chair's report needed to be a truer reflection on Exec. Progress and be critical where required, however it



## Newman Students' Union

was felt this feedback had not been taken on board with this report. NM explained he had thought he had discussed this with the Union Chair, however had not followed this up via email and so had no evidence of having this conversation.

Suggestions of improvements included:

- Including an attendance graph to show attendance rates throughout the year
- Democracy Officer – no areas to improve – suggests they are perfect officers.
- Resignations – even if officers resign the areas of work should still be covered so why aren't they reported on? Why is no progress mentioned?

**Action Required: NM**

### **11.6.4 DEVELOPMENT MANAGER'S REPORT (Document TB11-06)**

The Board received the report.

It was questioned if regular staff meetings were happening. It was clarified that they hadn't been in recent months. The Board expected that a regular meeting of all five full time 'staff' take place – 1 hour should be a good length of time. If this requires the office to close then it should to ensure everyone is kept up to date.

Staff only, should also meet for an additional 30 minutes weekly to discuss anything relating to staff.

It was suggested to hold the meeting on a Tuesday morning, with everyone being able to submit items to the agenda in time to email it by 4pm Thursday. A quick email of key bullet points would be sufficient notes rather than producing full minutes.

**Action Required: staff/sabs**

### **11.6.5 POLICIES PASSED AT UNION GENERAL MEETING/STUDENT FORUM (Document TB11-07)**



## Newman Students' Union

'Creating an Inclusive Culture'. Student Trustees felt that this policy had not been clearly passed and had been rushed at the end of the meeting. There was no option/time given to allow students to debate the policy and the vote had been a quick show of hands which didn't give the justice to the debate which it needed. It's also not clear in the minutes what happened. It was agreed that this should be put back to the membership NM to discuss with the Union Chair.

**Action Required: NM**

### **11.6.6 TRUSTEE REPORT TO AGM (Document TB11-08)**

It was highlighted that this is something which Trustees should take more ownership of in future, and ensure that a member of the Board is available to answer questions from the membership to allow students to hold the board accountable. It was recommended that this shouldn't be the President or Executive member as they will already be at the AGM to be held accountable in the Executive roles by the membership.

*Item 11.14 was discussed at this time to ensure the discussion could be had before members of the board leave who had indicated they only had a limited time available.*

### **11.6.7 FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES (Document TB11-20)**

Were received

## **AGENDA ITEMS**

### **11.7 ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS (Document TB11-21)**

The final draft of the Trustees Annual Report and Accounts were presented to the Board for formal approval for the previous financial period.

It was highlighted that additional sections had been added to the Report as advice provided by NUS differed from the standard advice available from the Charity Commission. The report therefore now covers both sets of guidance.

RB wished to thank KCLSU for their support in the early stages and the example they had provided so NSU could see where it was aiming to be.



## Newman Students' Union

The Board queried the Grant of Accommodation line – it was explained that as a Charity NSU must also account for resources other than monetary grants it receives, and then divide this appropriately against cost headings.

The Board had a discussion regarding student participation and engagement, highlighting 200-300 students maximum, were involved in sports and societies, yet receive a high level of resourcing. Most students participate in commercial activity with 1000+ purchasing NUS Extra cards. It would be hoped that NSU aims to include all students in advice and representation through the course rep. system. It was highlighted that some services cost more than others.

The Board approved the Report, NM and TS to sign, RB to submit along with Annual Return on the next day following the meeting.

### **11.8 Constitutional Changes to Student Meetings Frequency and Quoracy (Document TB11-10 and TB11-11):**

NM explained that this year had set a new record for meetings going ahead on the first attempt, but still only achieved 3/8. He had queried NSU quoracy targets with approx. 20 other Unions and NUS. NM had presented a motion to the last General Meeting to alter Quoracy for General meetings, dropping AGM from 4% to 2% and UGM from 2% to 1.5% and this had been passed. The Board queried why not 1% for everything – to which it was answered that UGM had gone ahead twice this year achieving 2% and so this is possible, NSU should not give itself targets which are too easy. The President felt he had exhausted ideas to achieve 4% turnout – promotion had been creative, (yet still room for improvement), agendas having a range of items e.g. Presidents' leaving speech. It was recognised that advertising is poor and more needs to be done around this. Members had approved the change at AGM.

The President asked the Board to approve the changes as required. RC declared a personal interest as the changes would reduce targets in the following year as an incoming Executive Committee Member. The board approved the changes.

The Board were also asked to approve the Frequency amendment of Student Forum (as also passed by the membership) reducing the number of meetings from every month in term time to 3 or 4 times a year in teaching months.

The Board approved this.



Newman Students' Union

NM to update relevant documents.

**Action Required: NM**

### **11.9 NEWMAN SPORT (Documents TB11-12 and TB11-21)**

The President explained that currently three groups work in isolation to provide sporting activities at Newman. The idea behind the sports restructure is to provide a more holistic approach.

It was questioned what the Sports team views of this were and the financial impact of the change.

It was explained that the portion of NSUs block grant which was spent on sport and a portion of the Activities Administrator's role to do with sport would be transferred to the University. Sports teams are behind the change as it should provide more opportunities. The membership has approved the suggested changes at AGM.

The Board discussed possible outcomes. It was stated that NSU is currently working over-capacity for sports and the work could be done better elsewhere. The portion of the staff member transferred would be topped up to a full time sports only role in the university. More resourcing overall would be available to student sport in the new structure.

RB stated that whilst everything could go smoothly and give benefits to student, he did have some concerns based on 'what if' questions, e.g. if teams didn't recruit would NSU still be expected to deal with this (and other related problems) even though teams would be University provided and resourced teams in the new structure. Also what if Newman didn't want to resource certain sports – the current system gives control to the students where-as the new system only allows students to be represented. In theory teams not covered by Newman could still be picked up through the Students' Union as NSUs Objects wouldn't change, however the amount of resourcing both financially and through staff support NSU could provide would be minimal.

Following the discussion the Board approved the new structure, agreeing up to £5,600 spend from the Block Grant and half the salary cost (including NIC etc.) of the Activities Administrator could be transferred to the University should all relevant approvals for the structure go through.



**Action required: NM**

**11.10 CO-OPTED OFFICERS AT AGM (Document TB11-13)**

The update was received.

**11.11 BUDGETING PROCEDURE REPORT (Document TB11-14)**

The board received and approved the suggested changes. It was agreed the lack of a budget for the 2013/14 year was an issue and that the Board expects to be able to approve the budget before the commencement of the financial year. The Development Manager apologised for this explaining that improving the budget format and monitoring system, plus creating the first Annual Accounts in the new format had been prioritised and Finance Committee had not yet had time to meet to discuss the next budget. In future FC would aim to complete this during March/April at the latest in time for May's Trustee Board meeting. Finance Committee will meet as soon as possible to draft budget options for the next financial year, at which point Trustees will either need to meet again to approve the budget or to approve it via email over summer. In future this process should take place in time for final proposals to be submitted to May's Trustee Board.

The Board wished to thank the Development Manager and NSU Administrator for their efforts with this.

**11.12 BUDGET MONITORING (Document TB11-15)**

It was highlighted that due to time restrictions Finance Committee had not yet completed the end of year projections; however believed NSU was still on target to make a deficit of up to £5,000.

**11.13 EXECUTIVE AWARENESS SURVEY (Document TB11-16)**

The results were received. The survey showed some improvement, in particular the 'I am a Member' wristbands were mentioned for the first time,





## Newman Students' Union

however scores for students knowing they were a member and awareness of the Executive were still low. Recommendations were accepted. It was also requested in future to include a simple % change for comments to give a quick comparison.

### **11.14 STUDENT ENGAGEMENT PROJECT (Documents TB11-17 and TB11/18)**

The Board received the papers.

It was stated that both a member of the Trustees and the Development Manager had worked with Kevin Doherty (Vice-President) on a few occasions to help and support him with this project, however the results were disappointing.

RC had identified the key difficulties listed and the project so far only included what NSU currently does and if it worked or not. The main sections on moving forward an improving had yet to be started. The last Trustee Meeting had not only asked for the initial project to be completed by this meeting, but also to have been implemented and the report to include an evaluation and further suggestions of improvements to take forward to the new academic year. From Communication with the Vice-President it was believed that the project had only been started three weeks before the meeting. The project also showed a lack of research, in particular with regards to discussing it with students – the content and phrasing is such that it was believed that the project was written at a desk with little input from elsewhere.

The Board request that the project is completed within 6 weeks of the discussion with KD, RC to give further help and support. NM offered to take it on, however the Board prefer KD to complete as this is something that will require consistency and understanding to take forward into the new academic year.

**Action Required: Vice President/RC**

### **11.15 AUDIT FOLLOW UP REPORT (Document TB11-19)**

The report was received and the board was satisfied with progression.



Newman Students' Union

*TS leaves*

### **11.16 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Board discussed attendance of some Trustees, highlighting LD consistently struggles to get to meetings and JK has now been absent from 2 out of 3 meetings. The Board were concerned that this is not sufficient to be able to fully fulfil duties. NM to discuss this with relevant Trustees.

**Action Required: NM**

The outgoing members of the board were thanked for their effort and input over the last 12 months.

Meeting ends 19.21



**Newman Students' Union**

On-going tasks removed from previous table.

Date	Action to be taken	Deadline	No. of <u>meetings</u> pending	Person Responsible	No. of meetings overdue	Action Taken
04/03/13	The Development Manager to have their first annual appraisal by the next meeting	Next Meeting		NM/LD		Appraisal Meeting Booked.
04/03/13	NSU Administrator to have their first annual appraisal by the next meeting	Next Meeting		RB/LD		Appraisal Meeting Booked.
04/03/13	Strategy for engaging and informing less engaged groups	Next Meeting	1	KD RC to help.	0	Strategy not developed.
04/03/13	Back Date Monthly Monitoring in line with new budget format	Next Meeting		RB		In discussion over whether this is feasible.
21/05/13	Discuss AGM minutes with Union Chair	Next Meeting		NM		
21/05/13	Discuss with Union Chair the criticalness of their report	Next Meeting		NM		
21/05/13	Hold staff & sab fortnightly meetings. Hold separate fortnightly meetings for sabs and staff	Next Meeting		NM/RB		



**Newman Students' Union**

21/05/13	Send constitutional changes to BoG	Next Meeting		NM		
21/05/13	Oversee completion of Newman Sport	Next Meeting		NM		
21/05/13	Attendance issues discussion with relevant trustees	Next Meeting		NM		