



Newman Students' Union

## **NEWMAN STUDENTS' UNION**

### **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

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

30<sup>th</sup> November 2012 in the Board Room at 13.05

### **Minutes**

#### **9.1 WELCOME AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Committee and new members were welcomed.

In attendance:

NSU President – Nathanael Murdoch - Chairing

External Trustee (from NUC Management) – Tony Sharma

External Trustee – Elizabeth Dearn

NSU Executive Member – Zoe Miles

Student Trustee – Matthew Leo

Student Trustee – Rebecca Crowther

In attendance:

NSU Development Manager – Rob Balding

#### **9.2 APOLOGIES OR ABSENCE**

Student Trustee - James King - absent

#### **9.3 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

Minutes of meeting 08 were approved as accurate.

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

9.4.1 (from 8.4.1) NM – copyright information flyer (Document TB09-02); not yet complete – NSU was waiting for NUS to check out the 'education clause' in copyright law for clarification. Basic guidance will be produced shortly. In the meantime NSU has found a fact sheet to give some explanation to students regarding copyright law.



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NM – Health and Safety guide for students (Document TB09-03); The meeting requested that contact details be added, to add under group leaders/student responsibility that they must undergo relevant training when required. It was questioned if this type of document needed to be seen by the Trustees, it was agreed it was as Trustees have ultimate responsibility for H&S and any H&S related documents should be seen by the Board.

Driving on Business (students) RB Document (TB09-04) – RB explained key points, being not to pay mileage costs to students to ensure it is clear that driving is discouraged, paying would give the impression that NSU approves students driving, the emphasis is placed on students to check that their insurance is adequate, that driving 'on business' would not be permitted – this is defined within the policy, but driving on leisure is permitted but discouraged. Students wishing to take union resources are responsible for checking they are covered under their own insurance and should be approved by a relevant person, e.g. Sports Officer for sports resources, committee members for Society resources. It was emphasised that there is no clear line regarding students driving and to current knowledge has not been clearly tested in a court of law regarding where liability may lie. Input had been sought from NUC's Health and Safety Officer, Registrar and University College Secretary, and NUC Health and Safety Committee and suggestions taken into account. The Policy was passed.

It was then discussed how to disseminate this, it was agreed it should be made available on the NSU Website and also taken to the Executive who should then pass it onto relevant students in their care, e.g. Societies Officer to forward to all society committee members.

**Action required – NM**

### **9.4.2 – Committee Positions**

It was explained that at the last meeting NM/ZM were elected to sit on sub-committee (Appointments and Health and Safety) but to review at this meeting as this led to these committees being 'Executive' heavy. It was agreed that LD would replace ZM on the Appointments Committee and RC would replace NM on Health and Safety Committee in their Trustee role.



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

none

### **Items to Receive**

9.6

#### **9.6.1 FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES (Documents TB09-05 and TB09-06)**

The minutes were received, no points of concern.

#### **9.6.2 END OF YEAR MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS 2011/12 (Document TB09-07)**

The Accounts were received. It was stated these are likely to be the last in this format, the NSU Administrator and Accountant are now working to convert them to the Charities Commission Statement of Recommended Practise (SORP) format. The old format has been produced to enable a comparison to the new format and consistency with previous years. Budget monitoring (cash flow) is now taking place manually monthly. It is believed that these two documents are sufficient to enable NSU to monitor its spending however is investigating if a quarterly accounts report can be easily produced by the SAGE software. It was suggested to speak with NUC Finance Dept. as they may be able to help adapt the software to provide a budget monitoring report automatically to save time. This would not therefore show cash flow, but this could be monitored by looking at monthly bank statements. It was discussed that there were, however benefits to this cash flow method in terms of readability. RB to discuss with relevant personnel.

**Action Required: RB**

#### **9.6.3 PRESIDENT'S REPORT (DOCUMENT TB09-08)**

The Board accepted the report. Consistency from year to year was discussed, with specific relation to the Student Information and Advice Centre (SIAC). It was stated that this has been difficult as it relies on voluntary students to provide the service NSU would like. Student who attend Council/Forum/General meetings in the past have tended to be friends of the Executive or Residents and place the focus towards entertainments and little



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on other services. It was suggested that Trustees could help balance priorities of the organisation in these cases to help improve consistency in, and services provided.

The Trustees stated progress with Course representatives was positive, however the President stated they felt it should still be better and would be reviewing the system during the year with an aim to improve election rates, quality of elections and the numbers of reps. receiving training.

RC leaves to attend lecture.

### **9.6.4 UNION CHAIR'S REPORT (Document TB09-09)**

The board discussed the report, stating that the main issue still seemed to be engagement of mature students. This was discussed with the Board deciding that the focus of NSU should be to ensure it represents their views correctly, and that mature students should know how to voice their views if they wished. Focus shouldn't necessarily be towards putting on activities to expect their involvement.

The board stated it was a good and comprehensive report.

### **9.6.5 DEVELOPMENT MANAGER'S REPORT (DOCUMENT TB09-10)**

The Board received the report and wished to thank RB for work over the past year.

### **9.6.6 POLICIES PASSED AT UNION GENERAL MEETING/STUDENT FORUM (Documents TB-09-21 to TB09-23)**

The board received the policies. No concerns were raised.

## **Items for Report**

9.7

### **9.7.1 PUBLIC BENEFIT GUIDANCE (Document TB09-11)**

The meeting received the core guidance for the Charity Commission website and it was explained that when deciding on activities that consideration must



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be given towards how the activity meets the Unions Objective of improving students' education and the further benefit this gives to the public.

### **9.7.2 TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (Documents TB09-12 and TB09-13 – student version)**

It was explained that this was the draft wording for the Trustees Annual report, to be received/amended in preparation for receiving the SORP accounts. It could not be approved until the accounts were completed to ensure the finances match the report content. It was explained that sections highlighted yellow are for trustees to decide if they were appropriate or should be amended in particular.

Risk Management – Trustees felt they had managed risk adequately so far, through checking accounts and the Presidents Report.

Public Benefit – Trustees felt they had had regard to the guidance.

Reserves – 'debtors' to be removed.\*

Fund in deficit – none (checked with Accountant).

Apart change \*, all wording accepted.

It was questioned, and then agreed that a student version should be produced as NSU is a member led organisation and so effort should be made to engage students in an attractive and targeted report. A few minor corrections were noted. It was agreed the report should be made available on line and in the NSU Office, to both current and prospective students.

**Action Required: NM**

### **9.7.3 BUDGET MONITORING (Document TB09-14)**

No problems to note.

### **9.7.4 RESERVE'S POLICY (Document TB09-15)**

Following RB drafting the Trustees Annual Report and learning more about reserves policies a few minor amendments were suggested. The board discussed the need to hold funds vs. current funds held. It was agreed to increase the policy as suggested to 35,000, to be reviewed at a later point in the year. The Minimum and Target levels were kept the same.



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### **9.7.5 FUNDS FOR INVESTMENT**

It was explained that if holding reserves, NSU could invest these in a higher interest rate account to earn additional income, as long as funds were not solely held for investment and that they were able to be readily accessed should they be required. Following a discussion it was agreed that a portion of the reserves, £15,000 should be invested into a 3 year account, ideally Halifax as previously used, or other well-known established bank, on condition that if funds needed to be withdrawn there would only be a loss in interest earned, not funds invested.

**Action required: NM**

### **9.7.6 UNION AWARENESS REPORT (Document TB09-16)**

It was stated that whilst the research gives some good qualitative feedback, numbers surveyed seemed too low to give a clear overview. It was suggested that a photo sheet would also be shown as a second part to the last question to see if seeing faces helps jog students' minds as the Executive believed they and their roles are more well-known but not by name or Position. It was also hoped that scores for both this survey and the National Student Survey (NSS) would improve following the 'I Am A Member' campaign early next semester.

9.7.7 Risk Register and Management Documents (TB09-17 a and b, plus tabled document TB09-24.

Following a discussion it was agreed that NSU should produce a Risk Register and a procedure for it. It was agreed that key risks to add to the register are:

- Loss of Block Grant
- Loss of staff and experience
- Health and Safety of activities (in particular student led activities)
- Being Sued (following an accident)
- Poor training and capability
- Commitment of Executive Committee members, Staff and Trustees.
- Loss of Reputation
- Students feeling disenfranchised/poor attitude towards involvement
- How appropriate the Governance and Structures of the organisation are.
- Theft or miss-appropriation of funds



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- Access to appropriate facilities

**Action Required: NM/RB**

RC returns

### **9.7.8 PROCEDURE FOR ALLOCATING STUDENT GROUP RESOURCES (Document TB09-18)**

It was explained that the next three items had been added following the institutions' governors reviewing their responsibility towards NSU under the Education Act. Whilst they were happy that their duties were being fulfilled, following a recent request for the past 5 years accounts from NSU which had not been requested, it was felt NSU could tighten up further in some areas.

The procedure was passed.

### **9.7.9 AFFILIATIONS PROCEDURE (Document TB09-19)**

The procedure was passed.

### **9.7.10 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY (Document TB09-20)**

The policy was passed.

## **9.8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **9.8.1 FairTrade Clothing**

Following NSU hoodie supplier removing their FairTrade range from their catalogue, the Trustees approved the purchase of Ethically sourced clothing instead.

### **9.8.2 Volunteer**

It was stated that a prospective student had requested to volunteer some time to NSU to gain some work experience. RB was currently investigating the process for this. Trustees approved taking on a volunteer.

### **9.8.3 Papers**



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It was request that where possible papers be printed and posted to members to save Trustees printing their own, and where electronically supplied to combined into one PDF for ease. To also check document numbers.

#### **9.8.4 Meeting Times**

Following a discussion it was agreed to hold meeting Mon-Thurs starting no earlier than 17.30. NM to arrange next meeting date.

Meeting ends 16.00