



Date: Thursday 8 June 2023
 Time: 18:00
 Venue: South Wing G12 Council Room/MS Teams

Board of Trustees Minutes

Chair: Deniz Akinci, Union Affairs Officer

Members:	P	AP	AB
Beth Beasant, External Trustee (UCL Staff)		✓	
Clare Bracey, External Trustee (Non-UCL), Vice-Chair (External)	✓		
Deniz Akinci, Union Affairs Officer (Sabbatical), Chair	✓		
Dimitris Dimitropoulos, Student Trustee (DD)	✓		
Hamza Ahmed, Education Officer (Sabbatical)	✓		
Maheem Imran, Student Trustee (MI)	✓		
Mary McHarg, Activities & Engagement Officer (Sabbatical)		✓	
Petra Barran, External Trustee (UCL Alumni)	✓		
Rachel Lim, Student Trustee (RL)		✓	
Seyi Osi, Equity & Inclusion Officer (Sabbatical), Vice-Chair	✓		
Umair Mehmood, Welfare & International Officer (Sabbatical)	✓		
Xin Huang, Student Trustee (XH)		✓	

In Attendance:
Carl Salton-Brooks, Director of Student Experience
Deb Nichols, Director of Operations
Dorota Dominiczak, Director of Finance
John Dubber, Chief Executive
Katie Sykes, Head of Sports & Physical Activity
Paul Northcott, Director of Safer Associates for Excellence (SAFE), item 10
Rebecca McLoughlin, Governance & Administration Coordinator, Minutes
Simon To, Director of Policy, Governance & Advocacy, Secretary

1. Welcome & Introductions

The Chair welcomed all those present.

2. Declaration of Interest

There were none.

3. Minutes and matters arising from the meeting on 23 March 2023

The Board approved the minutes from the meeting on 23 March 2023 as a true and accurate record.

APPROVED

4. Actions and matters arising from the meeting on 23 March 2023

The Chair noted that all the actions had been completed.

5. Sabbatical Officers' Report

The Vice-Chair (Sabbatical) summarised the Sabbatical Officers' Reports and highlighted the key things that officers have worked on since the previous meeting. The Chair gave a brief overview of what they have been working on as there was no written report provided.

RECEIVED

6. Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive gave a summary of their report and highlighted the following:

- We held a successful programme of awards ceremonies to celebrate student achievements this year.
- The result of the student referendum on our membership of NUS was for us to remain affiliated to NUS UK.
- Camden Council have decided not to require Birkbeck to apply for planning permission to convert the Student Central building's use for teaching.
- Successful varsity against King's College London with UCL regaining the trophy.
- Sports and Facilities teams are continuing to work on plans for the redevelopment of the gym changing rooms.
- Confirmation of additional £660k funding to support student hardship.
- Russell Group SUs proposal for 2023-24 completed – consultation underway.

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7. Management Accounts (Quarter 3)

The Director of Finance gave an overview of the Management Accounts for quarter 3 and they noted that at the end of Q3, the Union's cumulative financial position remained strong due to good commercial performance and tight control over overhead expenditure. They stated that the April results show a net surplus to unrestricted reserves of £44k vs Forecast 2 deficit of £123k and a cumulative surplus achieved in the nine months of £247k vs YTD Forecast 2 of £110k. They highlighted that trading performance up to the end of March remained strong across the well-established outlets but April was a slower month. They noted that the Shenley rental income has increased following a long period of negotiations between the UCL Estates and Watford Football Club.

The Board discussed how the cost-of-living crisis could be affecting students spending and noted that footfall on campus has increased due to more in person exams.

The Board asked why the sports ground rent had been back dated. The Director of Finance responded that there is an agreement with Watford Football Club that the rent is increased annually so the increase had to be backdated to August 2022 which is when we should have received the increase. It was noted that UCL collects the rent for the sports ground and then it is then transferred to the Union.

The Board received the Management Accounts (Quarter 3).

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8. Budget 2023-24

The Director of Finance summarised the budget for 2023-24 and highlighted the following:

- The 2023-24 budgeting process delivered a balanced budget which shows a significant increase in income and expenditure.
- We are building capacity in all commercial and non-commercial departments to deliver Student Life Strategy and we will deliver the first year of Student Life Strategy with an allocated funding of £876k for 2023/24.
- The UCL East funding has increased significantly.
- The Commercial turnover from all our well-established bars and cafes, the gym, and two convenience stores is expected to rise to £5,553k.
- The East convenience store's performance will continue to be negatively impacted by low footfall.

The Director of Finance went through the forecast for 2022-23 compared to the budget for 2023-24. They noted that the 2023-24 budget will operate with a level of financial risk attributable to the costs of living crisis, high inflation, rising costs of supplies, and the current economic climate. The Director of Finance noted increased staffing costs account for the highest proportion of the Union's outgoings. They gave a breakdown of how funds are distributed to all Union departments and added that we are increasing capacity in the teams to ensure delivery of all our services.

The Board noted the increase in staffing costs for next year and asked if this was just for 2023/24 or would this be an ongoing increase. The Director of Finance responded that because of the type of organisation we are, we will always have a heavy staff cost. The Board noted that this could be an issue if we do not deliver our budget and suggested that after 3-4 months of trading next year, the accounts should be brought back to the Board to see how we are trading against target. The Director of Finance responded that we will potentially need to re-forecast earlier if we are not performing. The Chief Executive added that there is a £90k contingency built into the budget and at forecast 1 we will monitor closely how we are performing. The Board noted that there is a high target for commercial which will need a lot of support to achieve the forecast.

The Board asked if additional funding for UCL East was coming from UCL and the Director of Finance confirmed that it was.

The Board discussed the timeline for the opening of the Hanger Shop and it was noted that as the pizza facility is moving to the George Fahra Café, this will stay open later to offer pizza to customers in Huntley and Mully's. The Board noted that The Hanger Shop will be relocated to Phineas over the summer whilst renovations are taking place in the current shop space.

The Board asked if the merchandising agreement with UCL had been confirmed and the Director of Operations responded that it has.

The Board resolved to approve the Budget for 2023-24.

RESOLVED

9. Cleaning Contract

The Director of Operations stated that the Union is now out of contract for cleaning provision, as the contract officially ended in April 2023. In line with the previous decision of the Board of Trustees, the Union has taken this opportunity to assess the insourcing and outsourcing model for cleaning services. The Director of Operations confirmed that the Union's preferred model is always insourcing, however the assessment we have undertaken has shown that an insourcing model for cleaning would be significantly more expensive than outsourcing and comes with operational and technical challenges which would put the Union at risk. Therefore, the Union went to the market to search for a suitable outsourced provider, and following a robust procurement process, Otium Limited are recommended to be a preferred supplier of the cleaning provision for all spaces. The Director of Operations confirmed that Otium is significantly cheaper, and they can provide a 7 day a week service. They also specialise in gym cleaning.

The Board asked if the new contract would have a break clause. The Director of Operations confirmed that a contract has not yet been drawn up but there will be break clause included. The Board noted that Otium use sustainable products and will also be offering employment out to students.

The Board resolved to approve the following:

1. Appoint Otium Limited to be the Union's new specialist cleaning provider for the Union.
2. Approve signing a contract for three years with an option of a maximum extension for a further two years.
3. Approve that the Union involves an external specialist in the contract negotiations as required to ensure that terms of business protect the best interests of the Union.

RESOLVED

10. Safeguarding Review

The Director of Student Experience stated that due to new guidance from the Charity Commission and our growth as a charity, earlier this year we commissioned an extensive review of our safeguarding policy and practice which has now been completed by an external agency, Safer Associates for Excellence, SAFE. An action plan has been developed and we are beginning to move forward with the relevant recommendations from the report to ensure we are able to demonstrate best practice in this area. The Director of Student Experience noted that we have identified a requirement for the Union to have its own safeguarding policy and no longer feel it appropriate for the Union to simply rely on UCL's Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and Procedure. They added that a final draft version of our new Safeguarding Children and Young People and Safeguarding Adults at Risk policies has been developed.

The Director of Student Experience introduced the Director of SAFE, Paul Northcott who went on to outline the findings in the report.

The Board asked how this new policy would be communicated to staff. The Director of Student Experience confirmed that it would be included on the agenda for various Union meetings, there will be a short communications campaign and there will also be initial training

for all staff. The Board commented that it is good for the Union to have a rolling programme of training and awareness raising rather than just a one-off approach.

The Board resolved to approve the new Safeguarding Children and Young People, and Safeguarding Adults at Risk policies.

RESOLVED**11. Student Life Strategy update**

The Director of Student Experience summarised the priorities for the first year of the Student Life Strategy and highlighted the following strands:

- Prioritise community.
- Build foundations.
- Spend time on development.
- Bake in impact & evaluation.

The Director of Student Engagement went through the six evaluation themes and highlighted what was hoped to be achieved.

The Head of Sports & Physical Activity highlighted that a key area is our provision in disability sport and a new team member has been recently recruited to assist with this. They added that there will be two more positions introduced over the summer. The Head of Sports & Physical Activity went on to add that another area of great progress is the Union's accreditation with the Talented Athletic Scholarship Scheme (TASS).

The Head of Sports & Physical Activity went on to add that it will be a big challenge to grow to 50% of students engaging with sports & physical activity at UCL by 2028.

RECEIVED**12. Review of the Annual Operating Plan 22/23****RECEIVED****13. Risk Management Policy****RECEIVED****14. Report from Disciplinary Pool****RECEIVED****15. Report from Supervising Trustee****RECEIVED****16. Returning Officer's Reports 2022-23****RECEIVED****17. Data Protection Report****RECEIVED**

Board of Trustees

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18. Health & Safety Report (Quarter 2 & 3) & Annual Review

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19. Complaints Report

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20. Revisions to the Governing Documents

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21. Board Schedule and Business Cycle 2023-24

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22. Union Policy Update

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23. Report from the meeting of Governance Committee on 9 May 2023

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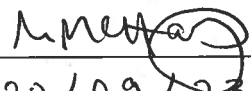
24. Report from the meeting of Risk & Audit Committee on 16 May 2023

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25. Report from the meeting of Finance Committee on 23 May 2023

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26. Any Other Business

Minutes approved as a true and accurate record	
Chair:	MARV MCHARG
Signature:	
Date:	20/09/23