

**Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting held on Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 4.00pm held in Flintoff Meeting Room/Teams**

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**Members Present:** Avery Greator (Chair/Union Rep)  
 Dani Beckett (Deputy Chair/External Trustee)  
 David Lo (External Trustee) (online)  
 Chak Yee (Union Rep)  
 Camilla Duncan (External Trustee) (online) (partially attended)  
 Emma Sims (External Trustee)

**Guests:** Stef Hartley (Chief Executive)  
 Graham Wright (Director of Finance & Services)  
 Hannah Mason (Director of Membership Voice)  
 Jon Russ (Director of Engagement & Enterprise)  
 Doreen Walker (Executive Assistant) (online) (minute taker)

| <b>BT26.110</b> | <b><u>Meeting Administration</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Action</b> |
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|                 | It was noted that the meeting wasn't quorate therefore, no items where approval was required could be approved.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |               |
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|                 | 1.1 <u>Apologies for Absence</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |               |
|                 | Apologies for absence were received from Abigail Beavan, Arjun Kaur and Laura Kenny. There were no apologies received from Molly Martin.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |               |
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|                 | 1.2 <u>Declaration of Conflicts of Interest/Register of Interests</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |               |
|                 | There were no conflicts of interest declared.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |               |
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|                 | 1.3 <u>Declaration of Student Status</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |               |
|                 | AG and CY confirmed that they are still students.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |               |
|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |               |
|                 | 1.4 <u>Minutes of Previous Meeting</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |               |
|                 | The minutes of the meeting held on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2026 could not be approved as the meeting was not quorate. It was noted, however, that an amendment is required to point 3.8 of AG's progress report, as outlined in the email received from CY. This amendment will be made, and the minutes will be presented for approval at the next meeting. | <b>DW</b>     |
|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |               |
| <b>BT26.111</b> | <b><u>Actions from Previous Meeting</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |               |
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|                 | 2.1 <u>Pension Deficit new valuation – GW to send the auditors the draft figures for the pension deficit new valuation (min 2.2)</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |               |
|                 | GW noted that the new valuation of the pension deficit had not yet been published and, therefore, had not been submitted to the auditors. DB asked when it would be published. GW advised that it is expected in due course, but no confirmed publication date is available at this time.                                                                      |               |
|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |               |
|                 | 2.2 <u>Risk Register – HM to update the Risk Register at points E1, E2 and E6 as these are individual risks (min 2.4)</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |               |
|                 | HM confirmed this had been done.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |               |
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|          | 2.3 <u>Block Grant Sub-Group – to be formed to review previous block grant submissions and consider what investment would be required for a refurb of the Social Enterprise area (min 3.4)</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |    |
|          | SH confirmed that the block grant sub-group had been formed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |    |
|          | 2.4 <u>Student Priorities – HM and JR to consider how to clearly communicate the priorities and progress of the three student priorities (min 3.7)</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |    |
|          | HM reported that they had been liaising with Lance Plachciak and the Communications team to provide greater clarity on how the priorities and progress of the three student priorities are communicated.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |    |
|          | 2.5 <u>Trustees access to documents – SH and DW to look into how Trustees can access various documents for Board meetings through Sharepoint (min 3.12)</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |    |
|          | SH informed the Board that it had been agreed that all external Trustees would be provided with university email addresses to enable access to Board meeting documents and related materials. DW is currently progressing this.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | DW |
| BT26.112 | <b><u>Reports</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |    |
|          | <b><u>Finance</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |    |
|          | 3.1 <u>Draft Financial Statements</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |    |
|          | The draft Financial Statements had been circulated for Trustees' information. GW explained that elements of the Impact Report had been incorporated into the Trustees' Report. Income remained consistent with 2024, and an operating deficit of £95k was recorded.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |    |
|          | The balance sheet position had improved as at the end of July, following receipt of updated information regarding the pension fund. The pension liability reduced from £964k at the end of the previous year to £853k. GW emphasised that it is important to note that reserves are now in deficit and that this position cannot be sustained, with the deficit largely attributable to the pension liability. Cash at bank stands at £167k.                                                                                  |    |
|          | The remainder of the document comprises the accompanying notes. GW also advised Trustees that new SORP requirements will be introduced.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |    |
|          | 3.2 <u>Financial Update</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |    |
|          | GW provided an overview of the accounts. He noted that, at year end, overall liabilities had reduced; however, unrestricted funds were showing a deficit of £51k. He further advised that £30k has been awarded within the 2026/27 block grant to contribute towards redundancy and associated costs.<br><br>GW also reported that, subsequent to the year end, an additional unplanned redundancy occurred at a cost of £18k. As this arose from the restructure, the full cost has been provided for within these accounts. |    |
|          | 3.3 <u>Block Grant Document (incl draft budgets &amp; COL proposal)</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |    |
|          | SH informed Trustees that a Block Grant Subgroup had met to review previous submissions. A report, structured in line with the University's business case template, had been submitted to George Charles, Chief Finance Officer at the University, and was well received. It is anticipated that an award may be made at a level between the £1.6m requested. SH                                                                                                                                                              |    |

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|  | will attend a meeting with the Vice-Chancellor's Group (VCG) to present the Block Grant bid.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |    |
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|  | SH also updated Trustees on the recent Social Enterprise Review. In summary, the focus for the coming year will be on identifying quick wins and providing clarity to operational staff on actions to enhance Union spaces. Trustees were advised that a useful report had been received from Nina, the external consultant who conducted the review. The next step will be to use this report to develop a strategy.                                  |    |
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|  | It was noted that sufficient funding has been requested within the Block Grant bid to sustain activity for a further year, alongside a commitment to develop a joint strategy with the University. The new Director of Estates will work over the next year to support the development of a joint strategic plan with the University.                                                                                                                  |    |
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|  | DB asked what happens after the VCG meeting. SH said that the report will then go to the University's Resources Committee for approval.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |    |
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|  | Trustees thanked SH and GW for the report, noting that it was well written. CY queried whether the £1.6m requested included the pension deficit figure. GW confirmed that it did.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |    |
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|  | ES raised concerns regarding the Social Enterprise Review, particularly in relation to staff capacity and teams being stretched. SH acknowledged that while some actions identified are relatively straightforward and can be implemented easily, others may require additional external support, subject to available funding. SH also noted that the organisation is a small team, with one member of staff currently on long-term sickness absence. |    |
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|  | DB asked what the next steps would be following the review and whether a formal strategy is required. SH confirmed that staff planning days have been scheduled for June, during which the team will consider how to develop a Social Enterprise strategy. SH will also review the student framework and provide an update to Trustees at the June Board away day.                                                                                     | SH |
|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |    |
|  | <b><i>Governance &amp; Risk</i></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |    |
|  | <b>3.4 <u>Recruitment of new Trustees</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |    |
|  | A discussion took place regarding the recruitment of new Trustees, following the recent loss of a Student Trustee and with ES due to step down at the end of May upon completion of her second term.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |    |
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|  | It was <u>agreed</u> that this would be revisited at the June Board away day, alongside consideration of the overall Board structure and recruitment approach. It was suggested that recruitment be launched in September, with support from Atkinsons, who assisted with the previous process. A recruitment timeline will also be developed.                                                                                                         |    |
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|  | HM will bring a proposal to the June Board.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | HM |
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|  | <b>3.5 <u>AMM – Byelaw Changes</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |    |
|  | The proposed Byelaw changes were approved at the recent Annual Members' Meeting and were presented to the Board for ratification.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |    |

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|  | <p>ES proposed amendments to Byelaw 320, specifically:</p> <p>a) the removal of 'Vice President Liberation &amp; Equality'.</p> <p>c) the removal of 'Liberation Collective'.</p> <p>HM to action these amendments.</p> <p>Subject to these amendments, the Board will ratify the Byelaws at the Extraordinary meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> April as the meeting is not quorate.</p> | <b>HM</b>                 |
|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                           |
|  | <b>3.6</b> <u>Student Assembly</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                           |
|  | HM reported on the Student Assembly held the previous week, noting that approximately 25–30 students attended both online and in person. Attendees heard updates from SU Representatives on current activities and voted on 30 submitted motions. Pledges were agreed across three areas, which are now being explored further.                                                        |                           |
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|  | Four motions were progressed to the Annual Members' Meeting as follows:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                           |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled Students' Commitment</li> <li>• Amendments to Byelaws 3, 4, 6 and 7</li> <li>• A neurodiverse friendly approach supports all neuro types</li> <li>• Review the structure and practices of the SU</li> </ul>                                                                                                                          |                           |
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|  | HM commented that the Assembly was successful. SH emphasised the importance of clearly determining how approved motions will be taken forward, noting that decisions on next steps sit with the Board. ES agreed to draft a response to the motions, and HM will share details of the passed motions with ES.                                                                          | <b>ES/HM</b>              |
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|  | <b>3.7</b> <u>Policies Document</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                           |
|  | SH noted that the Employee Handbook requires review, with significant updates needed. It was <u>agreed</u> that external support may be explored for this work, subject to available funding. ES and CD offered to share examples of handbooks and people policies with SH.                                                                                                            | <b>SH</b><br><b>ES/CD</b> |
|  | It was also noted that the Reserves Policy requires development. GW to action.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>GW</b>                 |
|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                           |
|  | <b>3.8</b> <u>Risk Register</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                           |
|  | The Risk Register was noted. There were no questions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                           |
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|  | <b><i>Strategy, Projects and Impact</i></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                           |
|  | <b>3.9</b> <u>Advice Service Plan</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                           |
|  | Due to time constraints, HM advised that her presentation would be circulated to Trustees following the meeting. She reported that a three-year Advice Service Plan is now in place, providing a stronger foundation for future development.                                                                                                                                           | <b>HM</b>                 |
|  | HM also noted that Steph Lomas, Advice, Insight & Influence Manager, is currently developing a handbook, which will be a valuable resource.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                           |
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|                 | <b>3.10</b> <u>CEO's Report</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |           |
|                 | The CEO's report was taken as read. SH added Laura Pike's report on organising and democracy. DB advised that she would share the reasonable adjustments document used by her organisation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>DB</b> |
|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |           |
|                 | <b>3.11</b> <u>Elections Report 2026</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |           |
|                 | The Elections report was taken as read. There were no questions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |           |
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|                 | <b>3.12</b> <u>Progress Update (Operational Plan)</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |           |
|                 | SH reported that key highlights of the progress report had been presented in the slides. She emphasised the importance of community building and noted that full first-year results will be available in June.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |           |
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|                 | SH highlighted a significant increase in student group membership. While societies membership had reduced, overall student presence within the Union has been more visible this year. Improvements in marketing have also led to increased student engagement.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |           |
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|                 | Additionally, there has been an increase in merchandise, including a substantial order from External Relations, which was distributed to students free of charge.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |           |
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|                 | <b>3.13</b> <u>Union Reps Progress Reports</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |           |
|                 | <p>AG took her report as read and informed Trustees that she had been successful in the NUS elections. Trustees offered their congratulations.</p> <p>CY also took his report as read and advised that he has been lobbying for disability awareness training to be made mandatory for all staff, noting that progress is being made, and a positive outcome is anticipated.</p> <p>DB asked the Reps what their final key priorities are. AG advised that her original priorities had been impacted by other demands and she has not yet had the opportunity to fully reflect on them. CY identified his remaining priorities as securing a position on the University's Board of Governors and progressing the Disabled Students' Handbook.</p> |           |
|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |           |
| <b>BT26.113</b> | <b><u>Any Other Business</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |           |
|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |           |
|                 | There was no other business.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |           |
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| <b>BT26.114</b> | <b><u>Dates of Future Meetings</u></b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |           |
|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |           |
|                 | <p>Weds, 29<sup>th</sup> April – 3-4.30pm – Extra-Ordinary Board Meeting</p> <p>Mon, 22<sup>nd</sup> June – 9-5pm – Summer Board away day (incl Board mtg)</p> <p>Mon, 24<sup>th</sup> Aug – 4-7pm</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |           |