

OPEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ASSOCIATION**Student Leadership Team (SLT)**

21 – 23 April 2023

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT

The SLT is asked to:-

- i) **note** this regular report from the Board of Trustees

1. There is a requirement under the Articles of Association for the Board of Trustees (BoT) to provide a report to the Student Leadership Team (SLT) at each meeting. This report is intended to provide the following:
 - a) a formal opportunity for SLT members to raise any questions arising from the minutes or other matters relating to the role of the Trustees, and
 - b) the opportunity for Trustees to raise any specific items with the SLT or report on progression of any non-routine matters.
2. The Board met on the 31st January 2023 on Campus and online via Microsoft Teams. The meeting minutes are available to view [here](#).
3. The Chair welcomed Trustees to the meeting, giving a special welcome to Sarah Pickersgill, newly elected Trustee and also to Lou Robinson and Nichola Connolly, who were observing the meeting from the Student Leadership Team.
4. The Chief Executive updated Trustees on the progress of work taking place following the Governance Review in 2021. Several recommendations were brought forward to Trustees, the first which proposed *changes to bring expertise into the team, spread workload and support the Deputy President remit to remain part time*. Trustees approved the recommendation to explore the development of the roles. The second recommendation was to *split the Trustee and SLT elections to allow them to happen in alternative years*. The Chief Executive explained that the proposal for this was to explore it further with Stone King, to assess the viability of holding elections in alternate years. Trustees approved the exploration of this recommendation. The final recommendation was that the *Council Member is appointed from within the elected team*. Concerns were raised around this due to an already huge workload for SLT. Then, a suggestion was made to appoint the Council member instead. Trustees approved the exploration of the recommendation with Stone King but requested to widen the available options.

5. Following conversations at a previous FRRRC meeting, regarding the Deputy President's struggle to juggle the immense workload and part time hours, it was proposed at this Trustees meeting for a temporary increase in the Deputy President's hours from part time to full time until the end of July 2023. In this time, work would be undertaken to reduce the workload of this role to bring it back down to 0.6FTE. It was also proposed to backdate the increase in salary to October 2022 to recognise the additional hours that had been worked. Trustees approved this proposal.
6. The interim Director of Membership Services presented the Individual Representation business case. Due to the OU's current financial situation, they have indicated that they would be unlikely to fund the service for the next academic year. The business case was therefore asking for £43,000 from the reserves to fund the continuation of the service until 2023-24, should the University be unable. Trustees approved this funding for the next financial year.
7. Previously at the July 2022 meeting, OUSET requested a donation from the Association, however it was rejected due to there not being a detailed plan on where the money would be spent. The Head of Operations and OUSET Chair returned to this meeting with a more comprehensive plan for how the donation would be allocated and spent. The proposal requested for 100k donation as well as an annual donation from the Association, based on TOTUM card sales. Trustees were happy with the funding proposal and therefore approved the 100k donation to OUSET. With regard to the second request, the Board agreed in principle to donate the commission earned from the sale of TOTUM cards to OUSET starting with the current year. This will be reviewed and a decision then made annually as part of the budget setting process.
8. The President, Deputy President and VP Administration provided an Officer Trustee update. They highlighted engagement as a current issue within the SLT, with some members struggling to engage and commit to their roles which results in their workload falling on to others. It was agreed that future role descriptions need to be more honest and realistic about what the role entails – both the positives and negatives listed.
9. Trustees received the usual standing items; Societies Report, GDPR working group update, Appointments Committee Terms of Reference, Strategy Performance Report and the Staffing Report.
10. Staffing matters: Due to the recruitment freeze being implemented in the last quarter, we haven't seen as many changes or recruitments as we have previously done. However, we are very pleased that Beth Metcalf has been appointed as permanent Chief Executive. Subsequently, Dan Moloney has returned to his substantive post as Director of Engagement. Adnan Rahman has had to step down from his role due to personal reasons. In the meantime, Dan is picking up some of the Policy and Public Affairs work. At the end of January, Hannah Prue joined the Community team as Projects Officer (Student Community) and is settling in well to her new role. On the 10th March, we were sad to say goodbye to Ellie Milnes-Smith as she left the Association to start her new role in the OU. We wish her the best of luck in her new position. Due to the recruitment freeze, she will not be replaced but instead, Emily Cox and Denisa Bartova from the Volunteering team will be increasing their hours to help assist in covering Ellie's workload. Following a slight restructure of the Senior

Management Team, Jess Smith was successfully appointed in the new role of Associate Director: Projects & Services. Meanwhile, Alison Lunn's remit has slightly changed and subsequently she has settled into a new role, Associate Director: Finance & Compliance.

11. The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Tuesday 25th April 2023.

Beth Metcalf
Chief Executive