



GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The fifth ordinary meeting of the Governance Committee for the 2017/18 session, was held on Thursday 17th May 2018 in Meeting Room 6, Beit Quad at 4:30pm.

Unconfirmed minutes

Present:	Dorothy Griffiths (DG) Alex ‘Chippy’ Compton (ACC) Fintan O’Connor (FOC) Nicholas Burstow (NB) Owen Heaney (OH) Tom Bacarese-Hamilton (TBH) Jarlath O’Hara (JOH)	Governance Chair Union President Deputy President (Welfare) Deputy President (Education) Union Council Chair Deputy President (Clubs & Societies) Managing Director
In Attendance:	Jomana Al Ahmad (JA) (Clerk)	Administration Support Manager
Apologies:	Paul Beaumont (PB) Andrew Keenan (AK)	Alumni Trustee Head of Student Voice & Experience

Item 1 <u>Welcome</u>	Action
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair welcomed the group to the fifth meeting of the 2017/2018 year. 	
Item 2 <u>Conflicts of interest declaration</u>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> No conflicts of interest declared. 	
Item 3 <u>Apologies</u>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Andrew Keenan Paul Beaumont 	
Item 4 <u>Minutes from 19th March 2018</u>	
<p>The Committee agreed and confirmed that the minutes have been accurately recorded.</p>	
Item 5: <u>Matters Arising</u>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The following action points were carried forward to the next meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee to consider options to mitigate the risk caused by the heavy reliance of the voting system on individual staff members, and to provide a plan of approach for DG and PB as the process is captured, ACC to update 	

<p>Committee on action to be taken in July, the deadline is autumn elections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JA to schedule a final Governance meeting in July to wrap up outstanding issues - ACC to provide an update on the lapsed Union Policies for the July meeting and have a discussion around how often these policies should be reviewed moving forward - To maintain the continuous review of Lapsed Union policies, SMG should be responsible for these policies - A forward Agenda Item to be added to the July meeting is the disciplinary procedures policy <p>2. Minutes approved.</p> <p><u>Item 7- Election review</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. JOH briefly presented the paper which includes various feedback he collated on the March elections and provided recommendations to be implemented for the next leadership elections on March 2019 2. DG commented that the elections review has two objectives, the first is a general review to evaluate the elections and the second is to evaluate the change in timings this year i.e. the reduction of voting and campaigning timeline from two weeks to one week. DG added that the review makes it clear that there were flaws in some processes during the election 3. OH commented that there was a view that the shorter timing favoured those who already had established some popularity, JOH responded that the overall feedback was positive about the change in timing, however there was greater dissatisfaction around the technicalities 4. NB added that it is perceived that the primary target in the change in timing is maximising the voting time, ACC responded that ensuring the campaigning time is sufficient is essential. 5. ACC added that the lack of communication also resulted in some dissatisfaction as processes were mainly communicated through word of mouth 6. DG concluded that the feedback suggests that the future elections should remain shorter as done this year, however the processes needs to be managed more effectively 7. ACC mentioned that there was a recent paper which was circulated to council suggesting a new timetable for elections, the paper suggests that campaigning should begin on Wednesday, voting opens on Friday and closes on the following 	
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<p>Friday. No feedback was given on the paper by council yet</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. DG proposed that the first Governance Committee of next year should approve the timetable for elections as this must be done in advance, DG presented the possible timetables for elections as follows, Wednesday to Friday as proposed by the paper or Wednesday to Wednesday. i.e. campaigning from Wednesday to Friday, and voting from Friday to the following Wednesday to shorten the timeline to one week 9. JOH commented that generally people were very happy with the length of voting and a large number of votes is received as soon as voting is open 10. FOC suggested asking AK to feedback best practice from other unions, JOH will discuss this with AK 11. OH suggested that if the Wednesday to Wednesday timeline is agreed, should the Union hold off on announcing until Friday to be able to deal with any appeals? ACC suggested asking PB for feedback on this 12. DG summarised the proposed timelines as the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 days campaigning and 5 days voting and announce results immediately - 2 days campaigning and 5 days voting and announce on Friday (allowing 24 hours for appeals) - 2 days campaigning and 7 days voting and announce results immediately 13. OH confirmed that he will consult these suggestions with Council 14. DG added that the Committee will aim to finalise the proposal for next year at the final Governance meeting 15. DG enquired about who will be responsible for leading the elections? JOH responded that a member of staff and senior manager will take this project, he added that the key change will be to separate admin and PM tasks for different roles, and to allocate the admin suitably 16. NB enquired about the other success measures which will be used to evaluate elections, and whether communicating them should be a key focus, JOH provided examples for success measures such as the diversity of candidates, satisfaction of candidates , resolution of complaints etc , NB suggested that the wording in the recommendations to articulating the objectives and that the Union should ensure that the number of turnout to elections should still be a key measure for the success of elections 	<p>JA to add to forward Agenda</p> <p>JOH to discuss voting/campaigning time in other Unions, AK to feedback to Committee</p> <p>OH to gather feedback on suggested elections timelines with Council</p> <p>JOH to change wording in recommendations</p>
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<p>17. DG suggested that an agenda point for the first meeting next year should be looking at external metrics and internal metrics for elections success and how each should be communicated</p> <p>18. JOH pointed out the DROs (deputy returning officers) were not supported fully, therefore, AK was answering all the questions, a key recommendation is to provide DROs which training and documentation to ensure that they are able to relieve the workload from the PM in future elections</p> <p>19. DG suggested compiling a document to guide DROs and to ensure that this document is delivered to them as training, the effectiveness of this will then be evaluated next year</p> <p>20. JOH also suggested that DROs should not have to communicate decisions, this is an admin task which takes a significant amount of time, therefore admin support should be provided to them, DG suggested changing the wording of this recommendation to make it more positive</p> <p>21. FOC requested clarification on the final recommendation in the paper, JOH clarified that it means ensuring responsibility is clear to allow for performance management, NB suggested adding individual staff responsibility to be added in the wording</p> <p>22. NB posed the question: how do we ensure that all the points are actioned and recommendations are implemented in the paper, JOH responded that the project manager owns these responsibilities, DG suggested that the PM should come with a proposal to the first Governance committee of next year and the committee will ensure that they have implemented the recommendations</p>	<p>JA to add to forward agenda for next meeting</p> <p>JOH to oversee the production of a guideline document for DROs</p> <p>JOH to change the recommendation wording</p> <p>JA to add to forward agenda for the first meeting of the AY 18/19</p>
<p><u>Item 6 – Governance Review Update</u></p>	
<p>1. ACC updated the committee that the changes in constitution and Bye-Laws have not yet been approved by Council, she suggested calling on an extraordinary meeting to approve them this year or wait until next year to do so.</p> <p>2. ACC presented an idea to work on a 3-5 year governance plan, aiming to ensure that governance documents are continuously updated so that the documentation rather than evaluating it once every 5 years</p> <p>3. The plan also aims to assess disciplinary procedures, DG mentioned that a policy must be written to ensure that the process is clear, and this will need to be monitored carefully next year. DG proposed that governance approve this policy and</p>	

<p>the governance committee will be responsible for monitoring it</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. DG suggested adding the disciplinary policy on the forward agenda to be evaluated at the end of next year 5. The plan also will look at ensuring that the Governance committee defines what Council should look like and improve the way Council operates, ACC added that there must be clarity on the distinction between board and Council to membership, therefore the governance committee should define what the role of the Governance committee, vs Council vs Board 6. DG posed the question: should we assess the name of this committee and consider changing it to provide more clarity? Or should we have a clear description to ensure everyone understands the role of this committee 7. ACC will be writing a handover on updating Bye-Laws and constitution since this is a large complex task to ensure this president in this position in 5 years has support in this task 8. ACC suggested that this document is evaluated yearly to ensure relevance, OH added that these documentation can now be easily changed if changes do not have to be confirmed by College. DG suggested adding a forward agenda item for every year to review this documentation once a year 	<p>JA to add to AY 18/19 forward agenda</p> <p>ACC to complete a handover on updating Bye-laws and Constitution</p> <p>JA to add to forward agenda</p>
<p><u>Item 8 – Elections at board sub committees</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DG suggested making changes in the timelines suggested in the paper to incorporate the discussions from today's meeting, this should include the constitution review, the disciplinary procedure policy review etc and JOH will discuss this with AK to ensure these additional points are added in the timeline 	<p>AK to amend timelines as outlined in the meeting minutes, JOH to discuss with AK</p>
<p><u>Item 9 - NUS charity Code of Governance</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DG mentioned that a useful exercise to do is to compare how the Union currently operates in terms of Governance with the NUS Code of Governance for best practice recommendations. 	<p>JA to add this to the July meeting Agenda</p>
<p>Chippy, Nick and Fintan left the meeting to attend to other commitments.</p>	
<p><u>Item 10 – Volunteer Policy</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TBH presented the aim of the paper briefly as a document which ensures that there is an 	

<p>agreement between the volunteer and the organisation/Union member to clarify expectations from both parties</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. DG added that they key objective should be to make this a simple document which explains what we expect, and what the volunteer can expect from us, this policy must also capture process for communicating underperformance to volunteers 3. DG suggested the standardisation of job descriptions for similar roles, TBH agreed that he will focus on primary roles and ensure there is a standard policy for all of them, however this may be difficult as there are many different types of roles 4. JOH suggested reviewing the health and safety section to ensure it promotes a good health and safety culture to ensure that volunteers take initiative to report health and safety issues 5. TBH posed a question regarding implementation especially for volunteer roles, DG responded that compliance for the policy must be mandatory for elected volunteer roles, and JOH suggested discussing this with EH as she is working on the investors and volunteers initiative 6. TBH confirmed that the document will be complete to be approved by the last Board meeting of the year <p><u>Item 12 – AOB</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TBH outlined recent issue faced by a club and the problem of clashes between our process and the legal process that were needed. - Whilst this did not cause much disruption this time, it was suggested that an amendment/exception be made to ensure that compliance with the law is attained and the process is streamlined. 	<p>TBH to complete the review of the volunteer Policy by June's Board</p>
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Next Governance Committee – TBC