

UCB Guild Trustee Board

19th June 2020, 11am

Location: Guild Boardroom, Moss House

Members: Officer Trustee, Ross Loveitt (RL); Officer Trustee, Alpha Jallow (AJ); Student Trustee, Ashlea-Jayne Mallett (AJM); Student Trustee, Paula Couto (PC); External Trustee, Lorraine Teague (LT); External Trustee, Andy Parsons (AP) [Chair]

President, Ross Loveitt (RL), Vice-President Education, Alpha Jallow (AJ), Communities Officer, Ashlea-Jayne Mallett (AJM), Diversity Officer, Paula Couto (PC)

In Attendance: Guild Manager, Sarah Kerton (SK), Representation and Advocacy Coordinator, Cassie O'Boyle (COB)

Item	Title
1	Introduction and Administration (20 minutes)
1.1	AP introduced the meeting. The meeting was quorate with all members of the Trustee Board present. There were no apologies.
1.2	No conflicts of interest were declared.
1.3	SK updated the board on the action log. The Guild manager appraisal was noted as postponed, as well as HR subcommittee because of COVID-19. AP asked that RL and AP organised to have SK's appraisal before RL leaves UCB Guild. For finance training, SK has organised for NCVO to deliver training for trustees during summer 2020. Decision/Action: AP, LT, RL and SK to find an appropriate time for the Guild Manager appraisal.
1.4	The board approved the minutes of the previous meeting.
1.5	REDACTED LT raised the stress risk assessment as being something important for staff members during COVID-19, SK noted these had been conducted. LT asked that it would be important that we had risk assessments in place for returning to work after COVID-19.

	<p>Decision/Action: SK to develop return-to-work COVID-19 risk assessments in collaboration with our insurance provider</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Executive Reports (30 minutes)</p>
<p>2.1</p>	<p>AJ lead on the officer update. AJ noted the success right from the beginning of the year from Officer residential and ensuring the Guild was led by students and their feedback.</p> <p>Throughout the year, AJ noted the importance of working in collaboration with other institutions across Birmingham/the Midlands and the student movement. AJ noted the training delivered to Course Reps was appreciated by reps and gave reps the opportunity to understand their role within the Guild and not only the University. Reps and Officers were also given signposting training which has ensured that they only deal with circumstances that they are trained and responsible for.</p> <p>In addition to changes to the rep system, the introduction of the online ideas forum has also provided an opportunity for the wider student body to provide feedback to the Guild. Regarding elections, AJ noted that unfortunately, due to COVID-19, the week was cut short, but this was successful in terms of the demographics of students taking part in the election.</p> <p>Society numbers were noted as a huge success, having jumped from 150 to 623 society members this year. These groups have also been encouraged to remove barriers, including the free membership of Course Based Societies which has had a positive impact on students being able to engage in the Guild.</p> <p>55% students at UCB are from BAME backgrounds and AJ highlighted our response to the Black Lives Matter as being another success for the Guild to ensure we can engage and support black students effectively.</p> <p>The Executive developed a policy in response to COVID-19 in collaboration with student leaders. This campaign was successful, and we were able to get the University to remove students from their housing contracts as well as see improvements in communication and assessment and feedback.</p>

	<p>AJ shared the success of the Business Course Based Society event in February that was focused on alumni and current student engagement – with over 50 students present on a Saturday.</p> <p>RL noted the professionalism of the Guild including the website pages and our ability to reach out to students and engage. AJM noted our response to COVID-19 in general has been a huge success. AJM also thanked Ross for his contribution to the Guild over his time as a student and as an Officer.</p> <p>AP congratulated the Guild Officers and staff on their response to COVID-19 and the professionalism they have developed which was evident from the report they submitted.</p> <p>REDACTED</p> <p>AJM added the importance of the introduction of the society’s forum will mean that students are accountable to each other as leaders, rather than the Guild.</p>
2.2	<p>SK updated the board on the Guild Manager report.</p> <p>Regarding the COVID-19 campaign, SK congratulated the Executive on being able to deliver this and work collectively with the student body. As well as the ability to change elections quickly and flexibly in response to COVID-19.</p> <p>SK noted the disappointment of the turnout of the elections but there was success in the training and the diversity of the people running in the election. Despite the circumstance, there was still a higher turnout than in 2018.</p> <p>SK congratulated AJ on a successful election as the incoming President.</p> <p>SK noted having a space on campus is important and COVID-19 has put this into perspective. There is also a challenge in terms of delivering officer training because of COVID-19.</p>

	<p>AP asked whether online forums had a part to play in the Guild’s democracy and communication. RL responded this was and will continue to be an important way to support placement students and students learning from a distance.</p> <p>Regarding the University decision to release students from their housing contracts, AP noted the importance of noting the positive decision of them to change their mind because of our campaign.</p>
3	<p>Annual Plan and Budget (60 minutes)</p>
3.1	<p>AP noted that the annual plan would need to be submitted to corporation.</p> <p>SK introduced the annual plan and the overarching vision will still be to be recognised as one of the best Students’ Union’s in the country by 2024.</p> <p>Regarding the journey we had been, SK compared our success to the strategic document from 2016, of which we have achieved all aims set out then.</p> <p>SK noted we hope to see a jump in core leaders within the Guild because of the implementation of the new governance system. We know we have a great open rate in terms of Guild communications, and we are hoping to grow this in the next year too.</p> <p>AP highlighted the importance of being able to measure engagement via the website and in our communications. SK agreed and explained the work that the Guild would be doing in terms of data sharing with the University to support with retention and attainment.</p> <p>Our challenges in our annual plan include COVID-19, our space, and our ability to scale up as an organisation. These challenges are somewhat different to the norm in the sector because we do not rely heavily on our commercial income.</p> <p>The three goals for the Guild for the year ahead were:</p>

1. Quality learning for all, including Course Based Societies, academic representation, and high-quality evidence. In terms of the measures, SK noted the importance of measuring against not only Q26 of the NSS but all the questions on student voice. LP asked if we should be aiming higher than a 1% increase, though AP noted that often the differences are marginalised and therefore 1% is ambitious.
2. Liberation for all, AJ noted the importance of this for us to be a successful Guild. We need to ensure that all students are supported and get an equitable experience within the Guild and the University. SK added we are using the model of the Course Based Societies to re-develop the liberation societies this year.
3. A better student life, in relation to effective, sustainable, and impactful student groups. Regarding the wellbeing strategy, AP asked for some information to be added on our roles as providers, to advocate and as partners. The board agreed the measurers of this section should be edited and should include something related to student leadership.

SK highlighted the important foundations for the strategic plan being the partnership agreement, a Guild ran space and a 3-year strategic plan, all of which is pulled together by in depth student and stakeholder research.

AP asked if Officers felt that this plan represented where the Executive wanted the Guild to go in the future. RL agreed this was positive, particularly including the introduction of measurers. PC noted that from students she has worked with, this plan is representative of what they would want and expect for the Guild. AJ agreed this was the direction the Executive supported but noted that it may be that the methods change in how we deliver on this plan.

	<p>LT asked how we planned on measuring throughout the year and not just at the end of the year. SK explained her plan was to put together a workplan that underpins this and will be reported to the board at each meeting, including a RAG system on each goal.</p> <p>SK explained that this would later feed into a comms plan and a way for the Guild to explain to students exactly what we do and what we are trying to achieve.</p> <p>Decision/Action: SK to update the annual plan to contextualise the NSS score comparisons against the movement rather than the percentage increase.</p> <p>Decision/Action: SK to add a measure in regarding student leadership and the feeling of our student leaders that they have had an impact.</p>
3.2	<p>SK introduced the budget and explained there was a small decrease in the budget this year and this included an introduction of a contingency reserve of £10K.</p> <p>On Student Communities, the grant funding for societies is reduced to 12K. Some of this is because of COVID-19 as there will be a reduced engagement in terms of face-to-face activity and sport, in the first semester. This funding has been reallocated into different pots and rather than a £30K open bucket, there is 12K for Course Based Societies, and 4K for Liberation funding alongside the generalised £12K pot for general societies. This funding will be managed by the student forums that we are developing. COB updated the board about the amount of sport-based societies, as it is unlikely that these will operate to the same level as previous years as for 2020/21. This is because there has been a decrease in students coming forward to lead these groups.</p> <p>AJM noted that while the £12K for students is not a large amount of money, she believed we could support students to come forward with any comments or complaints on this to the Guild. SK and agreed it was important that the Guild were able to support starter societies to better put together a budget and manage expectations.</p> <p>AP asked about kickstart and how that interacts with our society memberships. AJM noted that not all the funding from kickstart can be spent in the guild and SK added that</p>

	<p>for some students, they cannot join the societies with their kickstart as they have high additional costs on their course.</p> <p>AJM and RL asked for some funding to be added into the budget for nominal course rep costs.</p> <p>REDACTED</p> <p>SK noted that the partnership agreement and the strategic plan would hopefully help with being able to support with this.</p> <p>Decision/Action: The Board approved the edited budget for the year ahead.</p> <p>Decision/Action: SK to add staffing structure to the annual plan.</p>
3.3	<p>SK introduced the new staffing structure recommendation. SK's suggestion is the development of a deputy director role in the form of a new staff member.</p> <p>The finance and administration system should cover society administration and the remaining elements of society experience will fit within the Representation and Advocacy Coordinator role.</p> <p>The introduction of a deputy director role will also reduce risk in terms of having a single senior leader within the organisation. SK has used the NUS pay benchmark to suggest a salary, alongside the compared grade within the University. SK has also suggested in changing the names of the roles, we may have more success in gaining staff that were looking for a senior role. AP asked about the recruitment timeline, and SK suggested that due to COVID-19, it is likely we may be able to recruit for September.</p> <p>AJ asked if we thought that the pay would recruit the right person. SK suggested that pay alone may not attract someone but the prospect of working for UCB Guild might, alongside the timing of COVID-19 meaning talented people may be having to leave jobs.</p>

	<p>Decision/Action: The board approved the new staffing structure within the Guild.</p> <p>Decision/Action: The board agreed AP, SK and AJ would take part in the recruitment panel.</p>
3.4	<p>SK flagged that the guild was in the process of applying for QSU (Quality Students' Union) and this would form part of the strategic plan. The board agreed receiving the QSU would be a good benchmark for the annual plan.</p> <p>Decision/Action: SK to add the QSU benchmark to the annual plan as a measure of success.</p>
4	<p>Financial Update (25 minutes)</p>
4.1	<p>SK noted the allowance from the charity commission to delay the submission of the audited accounts. The board agreed that this should still be prioritised.</p> <p>The board approved the minutes of the previous meeting</p>
4.2	<p>SK has re-sent the management accounts to counterculture as they do not correlate to the budget properly. SK noted that once the systems are in place, the management accounts will happen in house rather than through the external agency.</p> <p>The board agreed not to approve the management accounts as they were unhappy with the quality or the timeliness of the accounts.</p> <p>Generally, the message from the accounts is that there were no alarm bells in relation to spending this year and the budget is as expected.</p>
5	<p>HR Update (10 mins)</p>
5.1	<p>SK has added COVID-19 and stress, as requested by the board, to the risk registers.</p> <p>AP noted the importance of setting up a date for the Guild Manager appraisal.</p> <p>Regarding HR subcommittee, SK has suggested that some additional trustees were added to the group to ensure quoracy. AJ will sit on this board moving forward. AJM asked for descriptions of each board to be sent to her and PC.</p> <p>Decision/Action: SK to meet with PC and AJM to discuss HR subcommittee.</p>
6	<p>Any Other Business</p>

6.1	There was no additional business. AP thanked and congratulated RL on his contribution to the Guild and the transformation that he has made.
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