



UEA Student Union (Company number: 0966 4303)

Board Meeting

Mon 29 Apr 24 @ 1600 in the Union House

Minutes (Version 1)

Trustees Present

Taylor Sounes (TS)	FTSO, Chair and Under-Graduate Education Officer
Anwar Azari (AA)	External Trustee
Liz Bigalke (LB)	PTSO
Ivo Garnham (IG)	Student Trustee
Simon George (SG)	External Trustee
Luke Johnson (LJ)	FTSO (Activities & Opportunities Officer)
Elise Page (EP)	FTSO (Post Graduate Officer)
Meg Powley (MP)	Student Trustee
Serene Shibli Sexton (SS)	FTSO (Campaigns & Democracy Officer)
Holly Summers (HS)	PTSO
Nathan Wyatt (NW)	FTSO (Welfare, Community & Diversity Officer)
Peter Robertson (PR)	External Trustee
Katerina Iliopoulou (KI)	External Trustee

Apologies

Emeka Chikaosolu (CE)	Student Trustee
Dev Aditya	External Trustee

In attendance

Tim Cave (TC)	Assistant Director – Finance (ADF)	Virtual (from Item B4)
Richard Hunter (RH)	Assistant Director – Operations (ADO)	(from Item B4)
Jumara Stone (JS)	CEO	
Mike Hill (MH)	Head of Representation and Advice	Virtual (Item C1)

Observing

Quorum

Article 103. Half the post-holders on the Board of Trustees and such quorum must include a minimum of two External Trustees and four Trustees who are Ordinary Members of the Union (**Ordinary Members:** student members of the Union being students at the University of East Anglia (As further defined by **Article 17**) and full-time Student Officers (**Article 165.29**)).

The **quorum** for this meeting is **8** Trustees.

Article 105. Where the resolution or issue under discussion concerns a matter in respect of which some or all the Trustees have a conflict of interest, **the quorum shall be 5.**

A. Section A: Meeting Business

A.1. Statements from the Chair. The Chair;

- A.1.1. Noted the departure of Jonathan as Clerk. The board thanked him for this hard work.
- A.1.2. Welcomed Peter and Kat to their first Board meeting.
- A.1.3. Provided an update that External Chair recruitment had commenced and that the hope was to shortlist a couple of weeks after the meeting, with a potential appointment by the end of May.

A.2. Administrative Items

- A.2.1. **Quorum.** The Chair confirmed the meeting was quorate.
- A.2.2. **Apologies.** Apologies were accepted as shown.
- A.2.3. **Confidentiality Statement.** The Chair reminded all present of the need for confidentiality.

A.3. Declarations of Interest.

- A.3.1. No declarations of interest were made.

A.4. Appointment of External Trustees

- A.4.1. It was agreed unanimously that Peter and Katerina be formally appointed as External Trustees on terms lasting until July 2026

A.5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting: 12 Feb 24.

- A.5.1. It was agreed, unanimously, that with this correction, the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting; the Chair agreed to sign them as such.

A.6. Action Log.

- A.6.1. Outstanding actions are shown at the end of the minutes.
- A.6.2. **12 Feb 24 – B.1.7 – A nightbus update and metrics for success**
 - A.6.2.1. It was reported that the costs to the Union of the Nightbus project has gone down to £20,000 rather than the £40,000 that was requested previously due to the university contributing £22,000.
 - A.6.2.2. It was reported that this should be launching in September.
 - A.6.2.3. Discussed followed surrounding how the Board would know if this was a good use of funds or not.
 - A.6.2.4. It was agreed that as no formal KPIs had been set, this action would remain as open and ongoing until more formal KPIs were set.
- A.6.3. **12 Feb 24 – B.6.2 – Clarify FTSO right to join a Union**

A.6.3.1. JS confirmed that, following conversations with the Unison Branch Secretary, that FTSO can join a trade union.

A.6.4. **12 Feb 24 – C.3.16 – Brief on impact of Freedom of Speech Legislation**

A.6.4.1. JS and PR provided the meeting with an update on the impact of Freedom of Speech Legislation.

A.6.4.2. The board heard that the 2% of block grant fine proposal had been removed and that the Higher Education Minister, Robert Halfon, had resigned.

A.6.4.3. It was noted that current guidance has been criticized for being unhelpful and overly simplistic and that there would be a third consultation on the issue. The proposed process of implementing the new regulations will likely involve a case-by-case adjudications, leading to a chaotic initial phase, but that the initial period is more likely to see universities rather than SUs facing challenges for non-compliance.

A.6.4.4. It was agreed that as more information became available that this should be reported in CEO reports and the Risk Register.

Action: CEO to include relevant updates on Freedom of Speech Legislation in their CEO Report.

B. **Section B. Items for Decision**

B.1. **Articles of Association Approval**

B.1.1. The Chair updated the board that:

B.1.1.1. The University and Union Council had agreed the changes to the Articles of Association

B.1.1.2. The changes reflected what had been discussed at the previous meeting as well as other items identified as out of date by Jonathan the previous Clerk.

Trustees questioned whether the changes to trustee terms would require anyone to leave the board. The Chair reported that this wouldn't be a problem as they were appointed on a 3-year term at the time. It was agreed that relevant External Trustee terms should be noted and reappointed at the June meeting.

Action: Relevant External Trustees should be reappointed at the June Meeting

Action: Trustee Term Expiry dates to be included on the next Agenda.

- B.1.2. It was agreed, unanimously, to ratify the changes in the Articles of Association, pending a renumbering and removal of tracked changes, effective from July 1st 2024.
- B.1.3. It was agreed, unanimously, that the Chair would Renumber and Remove tracked changes and then the CEO would submit the new Articles to companies house.

Action: Chair and CEO to prepare and submit Articles of Association to Companies House.

B.2. **Data Sharing Agreement**

B.2.1. JS reported that:

- B.2.1.1. This was the result of a project of work with Rob Bloomer, Interim Director of Governance at UEA.
- B.2.1.2. This was so that the Union could better understand the membership and the groups of members we are not meeting to help set KPIs for the team on who to reach better.
- B.2.1.3. There had not been a Data Sharing agreement for some time and that this was going to be a welcomed change in terms of understanding our members and our engagement.

B.2.2. Trustees discussed a range of issues relating to this:

- B.2.2.1. Data Access and Usage: There is confusion about the previous data sharing arrangement. The current process involves accessing demographic and individual course data for project work. The agreement aims to streamline data sharing to support project work and address specific issues, such as complaints.
- B.2.2.2. Student Disciplinary Data: The inclusion of disciplinary data is a new aspect not present in the previous arrangement. The alignment between university and student union protocols for handling disciplinary cases was discussed. Access to disciplinary data will be limited to relevant cases and will not be broadly accessible.
- B.2.2.3. Handling Sensitive Cases: Serious allegations, such as plagiarism or drug-related incidents, were discussed in terms of how data might be shared and handled. The emphasis is on collaboration between teams to ensure safety and compliance.
- B.2.2.4. Legal and Licensing Issues: The discussion touched on the challenges of handling drug-related incidents in licensed premises. Legal

obligations, such as reporting drug possession or intent to distribute, were considered. There are specific protocols for dealing with medicinal use cases and confiscation procedures.

B.2.2.5. Security and Data Protection: Concerns about the security of the data sharing system, particularly in light of past data breaches at other institutions. The need for a robust system to manage and protect shared data was emphasized.

B.2.2.6. Communication and Consent: There will be communication to students about how their data is shared. Students have the option to opt-out of data sharing with the student union.

B.2.3. Following the discussions, it was agreed unanimously to endorse the Data Sharing Agreement to be signed.

B.3. UEASU Strategic Vision 2025 – 2030

B.3.1. JS presented the new strategic vision to the Board.

B.3.2. The Chair noted that this was not yet an implementation plan but rather a strategic vision. KPIs and further iterations on an operational strategy would come to the board further down the line.

B.3.3. It was noted that:

B.3.3.1. Background and Need for Student-Facing Strategies: Previously, the strategic operational plan focused primarily on internal KPIs without involving students or informing them about the goals and efforts of the departments. This led to a disconnect where students were unaware of what was being worked towards, and their input was not considered in structuring these strategies.

B.3.3.2. Development of the New Strategy: To address this, a new approach was taken in recent months involving meetings with various student stakeholder groups to gather their perspectives. This led to the creation of a student-facing strategy with clear themes based on student feedback. The next steps include presenting this strategy to the Career Start team to formulate a detailed operational plan, which will be shared with the broader team in June and finalized by August. This new strategy aims to align departmental efforts with student expectations and provide clarity and direction.

B.3.3.3. Implementation and Feedback: The strategy aims to help the team understand the importance of their work by aligning it with student

requests, thus providing clear direction and accountability. However, the previous lack of KPIs and strategic clarity for the last 2-3 years is being addressed.

B.3.3.4. There is a consensus that while the term "Students Transforming" may seem cheesy, it encapsulates the core mission and will be integrated into the new strategy. Feedback indicates the need for a more accessible and meaningful tagline, and discussions are ongoing to refine this aspect. The strategy will emphasize employability and volunteerism as important, though not the primary focus, to ensure it addresses broad student interests.

B.3.4. Following this, it was unanimously agreed to endorse this as the new Strategic Vision for UEA Students' Union.

B.3.5. It was agreed that this would then be launched to staff in June, with public facing versions ready for the new academic year.

B.3.6. It was also agreed that a report on the KPIs for the strategy should be reported at the September Board meeting once this is developed, but that this will be a point of discussion at the Strategy Day.

Action: Report on KPIs to be updated on at the Board Meeting in June, with a formal paper on KPIs coming in September.

TC and RH joined the meeting

B.4. Waterfront Plan

B.4.1. JS and RH presented the paper:

B.4.1.1. They emphasize the financial difficulties faced by the commercial sector, including clubs and student unions, due to post-COVID changes in customer behavior and the cost of living. Regular club nights are declining, while one-off events and live music continue to thrive.

B.4.1.2. They highlights recent successes in new events and the financial contributions they bring but notes that these are not enough to offset overall declines. They discuss the potential negative impacts of surrendering the waterfront lease, including damage to reputation, loss of income, and competitive disadvantages.

B.4.1.3. Several options are presented: continuing with the current lease, potentially extending it for another ten years, focusing on profitable events, and exploring partnerships with external promoters. The

recommendation is to invest modestly in maintaining the waterfront for the remaining two years of the lease to allow more time to assess trends and try to turn the situation around.

B.4.2. Trustees proceeded to discuss the following key aspects:

- B.4.2.1. Lease and Extensions: The venue still has two years left on its current lease. There's an option to discuss extensions with the City Council, but there is a need for a bullish approach in negotiations.
- B.4.2.2. Investment and Renovation: There is a proposal to invest around £140,000 (from reserves) into necessary renovations, including fixing the lift and toilets, to make the venue suitable for daytime use and to potentially increase its revenue streams through events like weddings, conferences, and community activities.
- B.4.2.3. Partnerships: The potential for collaboration with the University of East Anglia (UEA) was discussed. UEA's involvement could provide an initial financial injection, aligning with their strategic goals of community engagement and creating a civic space in the city center.
- B.4.2.4. Operational Concerns: There are significant concerns about maintaining security and staff quality, with suggestions to consider selling security services to other venues. The importance of reliable and student-friendly security was emphasized.
- B.4.2.5. Financial and Moral Considerations: There's a recognition of the financial risks involved, balanced against the cultural and social value of the venue. The history of the Waterfront as a significant cultural asset was highlighted, and there was a call to quantify its social enterprise value beyond mere financial metrics.
- B.4.2.6. Strategic Vision: The overall strategy includes a push for more innovative and creative uses of the space, reflecting changing student preferences and broader community needs. The potential to attract a diverse audience and make the venue a central hub for various activities was discussed.
- B.4.2.7. Board Support: The board members expressed a mix of cautious optimism and concern. There was support for giving the current leadership a chance to implement their vision, with the understanding that a review would follow to assess progress and viability.

B.4.2.8. Future Options: If the proposed plans do not yield the desired results within a set period, exploring partnerships with private entities like the Academy Music Group (AMG) was suggested as a fallback.

B.4.3. The Chair asked Serene not to vote on this item due to a previously declared conflict of interest. Simon also departed the meeting midway through this item.

B.4.4. Remaining trustees then unanimously agreed that:

B.4.4.1. Staff should go back to the Council to determine their position

B.4.4.2. A clear business plan with KPIs should be brought to the next meeting.

B.4.4.3. A decision should be sought more quickly from the university on their involvement in the venue.

B.4.4.4. Concrete financial plans for the investment should be drawn up

Action: JS to report back on these decisions

Action: JS to bring a KPI report for the Waterfront to the June meeting.

The meeting recessed for a short break.

RH Left the Meeting

MH joined the meeting

C. **Section C. Items for Report**

C.1. **Elections and Membership Engagement Insight**

C.1.1. The Chair welcomed MH to the meeting and thanked him and his team for the comprehensive report.

C.1.2. MH reported:

C.1.2.1. An exceptional turnout in this year's elections, with increased participation in officer positions and conveners. They stress the importance of using data to guide focus for the next academic year.

C.1.2.2. Notably, 68% of students accessing the advice center are students of color, a significant figure in a predominantly white institution, rising to 72% for academic issues related to inclusion.

C.1.2.3. MH called for data-driven planning to support officers and address known issues that the university has not actively tackled due to a lack of demographic data

C.1.3. Trustees then proceeded to discuss and the key points were:

C.1.3.1. Clarification on the number of officer positions available, confirming there were no reductions.

- C.1.3.2. The possibility of increasing voter turnout to 3000 next year, with emphasis on setting and striving for high targets.
- C.1.3.3. The impact of election cycle duration on candidate well-being, with suggestions to shorten the pre-voting period while possibly extending the voting period.
- C.1.3.4. Variation in voter turnout by position, noting higher engagement for roles like Environment Officer and lower turnout for positions representing marginalized groups due to smaller voter pools.
- C.1.3.5. The need to publish detailed election results, which was intended but not executed this year.
- C.1.3.6. Evaluation of the campaign period's effectiveness, highlighting the need for better planning and support to reduce candidate stress and improve outcomes.
- C.1.4. Trustees formally thanked Mike and the team for the report and wished them the best of luck for the next academic year.

MH Left the meeting

C.2. **Sub-Committee Reports**

- C.2.1. **Risk & Oversight.** SS reported that the R & O committee had not met, there was no report.
 - C.2.2. **Appointments & HR.** EP reported that there was no meeting held and no report.
 - C.2.3. **Management Committee.** LJ reported that management committee was due to meet the week after the board.
 - C.2.4. **Finance Committee.** NW reported that all finance issues were covered in the Finance report section.
 - C.2.5. It was noted that the subcommittees were being reviewed and would be brought to the next meeting.
- Action:** Chair to propose new subcommittee structure at the next meeting.

C.3. **Finance Report**

- C.3.1. TC highlighted three key points:
 - C.3.1.1. Management Accounts (March YTD): Overall net income is favorable to the budget. However, there's a trading deficit of approximately [REDACTED] offset by reductions in career staff and non-staff overhead costs. Despite a poor first trading month, the situation has stabilized, preventing a significant deficit.

C.3.1.2. Annual Report: The annual report has been signed and is being filed, with a filing deadline of tomorrow. There was a late issue regarding pension liabilities, but it is expected to resolve with the university and scheme trustees' support.

C.3.1.3. Future Planning: The trading position is not expected to improve significantly. A proposed career staff structure will not drastically change the financial situation. Budgeting for the next year will likely start with a deficit, contingent on UEA's response to funding requests. The final projected position will be clearer after key elements are consolidated over the next few months.

C.3.2. Following questions from trustees, it was reported that Estimates would be due to go to Union Council at the Annual General Meeting and that the Budget for the next year would be presented at the next Trustee Board.

TC left the meeting.

C.4. **CEO Report.**

C.4.1. The CEO;

C.4.1.1. drew the attention of the meeting to the previously available report

C.4.1.2. noted the number of people who had left the organisation recently, including the Assistant Director of Charitable Services, Head of Marketing, Insight and Communications and Director of HR and Shared Services.

C.4.1.3. Welcomed any questions

C.4.2. Trustees discussed a range of parts and then closed the discussion.

C.5. **Union Council Report.**

C.5.1. It was reported that Union Council was not quorate and so no decisions needed to be reported.

C.6. **Dates of Future Meetings.**

C.6.1. The final meeting date was noted.

C.7. **Any Other Business** – No other items of business were noted.

It was noted that there were confidential items to discuss.

There being no other business, the open part of the meeting closed.

Outstanding Actions

Item	Action	Responsible	By when	Update
4 Dec 23 5.2.b.i	Present financial report / forecast on costs / benefits of extending lease on Waterfront	TC	Next Board Meeting 12 Feb 24	On agenda – Item B4
12 Feb 24 A.5.2.3	Circulate fully costed proposal to support the intention to extend the Waterfront lease by 10 years in time for consideration at the Finance Committee meeting	CEO	Next Finance Committee meeting Fri 16 Feb 24	On agenda – Item B4
12 Feb 24 B.1.7	Develop proposal for external Trustee to be Chair for delivery to Student Council	Chair & CEO	Now	Complete – update on agenda Item A1
12 Feb 24 B.5.9	Provide a bus update and metrics to assess success	LJ	Next TB meeting 22 Apr 24	Further update at next meeting.
12 Feb 24 B.6.2	Clarify FTSO right to join a union	CEO	Next TB meeting 22 Apr 24	Closed
12 Feb 24 C.1.1.6	Invitation to attend next Finance Committee meeting	All trustees	Mon 19 Feb 24	All trustees were invited
12 Feb 24 C.3.6	Confirm if the LGBTQ+ bar decision is a TB or Student Council decision	CEO	Now	Closed
12 Feb 24 C.3.8	Increase SOC member involvement in SU activities	CEO	Now	Closed
12 Feb 24 C.3.16	Circulate short brief on impact of Freedom of Information legislation on the SU	CEO	Next TB meeting 22 Apr 24	Delay to June Meeting
12 Feb 24 C.3.17	Circulate link to new UEA strategy	CEO	Now	Closed
29 Apr 24 A6	CEO to include relevant updates on Freedom of Speech Legislation in their CEO Report.	CEO	Ongoing	
29 Apr 24 B1	Relevant External Trustees should be reappointed at the June Meeting	Chair	Next TB meeting 25 Jun 24	
29 Apr 24 B1	Trustee Term Expiry dates to be included on the next Agenda.	Chair	Next TB meeting 25 Jun 24	
29 Apr 24 B3	Report on strategy KPIs to be updated on at the Board Meeting in June	CEO	Next TB Meeting 25 Jun 24	

29 Apr 24 B3	Formal paper on Strategy KPIs	CEO	September Board Meeting	
29 Apr 24 B4	Report back on the following decisions surrounding the waterfront: A. Staff should go back to the Council to determine their position B. A clear business plan with KPIs should be brought to the next meeting. C. A decision should be sought more quickly from the university on their involvement in the venue. D. Concrete financial plans for the investment should be drawn up	CEO	Next TB Meeting 25 Jun 24	
29 Apr 24 B4	Produce a set of KPIs for the Waterfront for approval.	CEO	Next TB Meeting 25 Jun 24	
29 Apr 24 C2	Propose a new Subcommittee Structure	Chair	Next TB Meeting 25 Jun 24	

Future Meetings

Tue 25 Jun 24 @ 0900

Papers by Fri 14 Jun 24