

# Board of Trustees Meeting

## Minutes

**Date** 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022  
**Time** 16.30  
**Venue** SU HQ

**Circulation:**~ Will Brewer, Anna Taylor, Emma Birch, Hamza Rehman, Tomi Amole, Chih Hsiang Lo, Jack Sperry, Thom Barnes Wise, D’Juan Blake, Caleb Heather, Tom Chaloner, Shydle John, Jake Thomas, Angella Hill Wilson, John Dubber, Robert Pegg, Harnaik Dhillon, Azzees Minot

**Executive Board:**~ Tracy Murphy, Mark Crook, Louise Marjoram, Steve Russell, George Dowding, Emily Chilton.

**Apologies for Absence**  
Shydle John, Caleb Heather

### **Declarations of Conflicts of Interest**

**TM** will leave the meeting for Agenda point 2.10 CEO Recruitment, **WB** requested any additional members of the Senior team who are considering applying for the role should also leave at this point.

### **2.1 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The Minutes of the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022, be approved as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

### **2.2 Matters Arising**

No further matters raised

### **2.3 Chairs Update & Full Time Officers Report** Will Brewer/ FTO’s

The Chairs update and FTO reports are taken as read, **WB** highlighted the salient points, including:

The key focus areas were~

1. Tomi Amole – Black History work
2. Hamza Rehman – Stand up to Islamophobia
3. Emma Birch – Kit Tender process and the Varsity progress
4. Chih Hsiang Lo – Education Target Surveys

5. Anna Taylor – Societies space
6. Jack Sperry – Committee work and CCSG

**JT** noted that the reports highlighted the increasing workload for Officers and questioned whether this is viewed as an issue? **WB** responded that he holds regular 1:1 meetings with FTO's and continually reminds officers to take time out and take a break, its is coming towards the end of our first term in office so we are ready for the time off. **AT** added that Staffing issues have caused additional pressure, but these are now being resolved.

## **2.4 MSL Development plan**

**Gary Bryant**

Gary Bryant MSL CEO, in attendance to update the WSU Board on MSL, **GB** provided the Board with a Paper providing context for the Board on what MSL does, a trading subsidiary of WSU providing digital services to Student organisations in the UK and Internationally, involving delivery and support of services that is non teaching and learning. **GB** went on to highlight the salient points:

FY 22 has built on ground on 20/21, post covid, out venues are drawn from 3 areas,

- Licence fees
- Service revenues
- Transactions

Our initial target market was the UK, and have commenced growing externally in Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and Australia, markets with a similar model to the UK.

### **MSL FY 22 Orders**

MSL was able to significantly add to its order book in FY22 with £1.5m being secured by the team with the majority derived from: new client acquisition in more diverse markets (10 – UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and a University direct); renewing clients on rolling and new 3 year licences; transaction revenues, as activities returned from Covid lows; and professional services, outperformance in this revenue line helped to offset the area of underperformance against plan i.e. licence and new product upgrades for existing clients.

### **MSL FY22 Customer Support and Customer Success**

The growth of the order book and activities to support current client retention were supported with the continuing transformation of MSL's approach to marketing including the addition of a new marketing automation platform, launch of a new website, re-design of our tendering enablement, and the doubling (from 1 to 2!) of the team with the addition of a digital marketing apprentice. The team continued outreach activities to both current and prospective clients with both MSL-led online sessions together with campaign activities to support the return to in-person events in the UK and Canada.

### **MSL FY22 Technical**

Having implemented the pre-requisites to improve MSL's devops infrastructure; enable faster deployment; and making it easier to address technical debt, the team developed a medium-term principles-based product strategy with a focus on providing user and services database structures and associated identity and authentication. Clients benefited from 17 releases; 172 implemented features; 151 bug fixes through the c.21,00 database changes deployed

**JD** Asked how the Union can best support MSL going forward, in view of being a supportive partner to enable the business to grow and develop and questioned the point regarding growing profits, the paper shows growing revenues and falling profits and questioned how the SU can assist as MSL is an important revenue stream for the Union? **GB** suggested that strategically MSL are considering what they want to do and how they will move forward, the support required from WSU is to be confirmed. Operationally there is no interdependency between MSL and WSU, so we need to consider the relationships WSU and the Trustees may have which could be advantageous for MSL.

Profits – **GB** agreed the profits do show a slight decline this year, due to the introduction of a bonus scheme.

**JD** suggested the key would be to see a forward-thinking business plan for MSL and the Strategy for the next few years, including how the SU can enable and support so we can agree a forward looking business plan and consider a discussion about what returns the SU can expect going forward and investment required to access new markets. **GB** responded he takes the points on board and is happy to feedback. **AM** agreed with the points **JD** made, and questioned in line with the SU strategy how MSL are working on Inclusivity and accessibility.

## 2.5 CEO Update

**Tracy Murphy**

**TM** acknowledge the challenging times for colleagues and FTO's during October.

The CEO report is taken as read, **TM** highlighted a number of points

- ◆ We have achieved above Budget Contributions for operations
- ◆ Student Council work, which has been a massive piece of work and helping on collaboration with the University.
- ◆ Grade 7 middle managers - providing a more inclusive platform to give them a forum to voice their concerns and issues through the Reflections Now and Next meeting. A wider all staff Voice forum meeting will be held in January 23.
- ◆ SCF – Staff Consultative Forum, We are holding a colleague Lunch and Learn session, to highlight to Staff what the SCF has achieved on their behalf, including:
  - Inclusivity Days – giving Colleagues the opportunity to take a day off to focus on a important event to them, could be religious, spiritual or diversity event etc, the time off will be managed through swoping working Bank Holidays or customary days.
  - Duvet Days – 1 day within a 12month period, when pressures of home, life etc make staying at home a better option, using Annual leave, but it can be very short notice, i.e. morning of the day of request.
- ◆ Operations – **SR**- Performance has been excellent within the outlets, despite a significant fall in Student footfall, the University outlets have not been able to trade as well, which **SR** believes it is due to loyalty of students to our outlets, the promotional work carried out through Welcome week, and monitoring the trends within the outlets and reacting to them. **SR** provided the Energy Savings and the Cellar saving equipment should arrive next week.
- ◆ Membership Services – **LM Governance Regeneration**  
We are delighted to report that after many months of diligently working on the Governance Regeneration (GR) project, it was finally pushed over the line at Student Council on 29th November 2022.
- People and Development – **EC** briefly ran through the new appointments.

**RP** congratulated **SR** on the Operations results, but queried the events income being slightly down, **SR** explained this was due to the disappointing response to Freshers Party, and added

that tickets are being purchased far later than in previous years, and although most events are sold out, this is taking right up to the day of the event.

Impact assessments – **JS** suggested we highlight the Impact Assessments discussed and the outcome discussions taken on behalf of the WSU Board. Also, it is important that we look at the TOR for the impact assessment group.

## 2.6 Management Accounts

**Mark Crook**

**MC** took the Accounts papers as read, highlighting a number of points

We are waiting for the University energy bills to understand the full extent of the price increase, we may not have a true picture until the end of January 23. The block Grant payment should be received from the University shortly.

**HD** questioned the Balance sheet, Debtors and Creditors and whether we are paying our smaller supplier in a timely manner, **MC** responded that he can guarantee that our suppliers are paid on time, and will supply **HD** and the rest of the Board with a report.

**JD** questioned the variance between Ads and Sponsorship, we are a long way off budget, **MC** explained that this is an invoicing issue and will pick up in the next period.

**JS** raised the MSL contribution figure, **MC** suggested that the expected figure is very cautious, **TM** responded we will be looking at the budgets in February and this figure will be adjusted.

## 2.7 People and Development Update

**Tracy Murphy**

**TM** provided an update on the People and Development structure. Following **TM's** step up to Interim CEO, Natasha Patel has moved up to Learning, Inclusion and Belonging Manager reporting to **TM** and Emily Chilton has taken the Interim role of People Director.

## 2.8 Inclusion and Belonging

**Natasha Patel**

Natasha Patel (**NP**) attended the Board meeting for this agenda point.

**NP** provided the Board with the Inclusion and Belonging Plan 2022. Introducing the plan and giving the Board a brief overview of the journey to put the plan together. The document underpins what we do as an organisation on the ED&I front. **NP** welcomed feedback. **HD** congratulated all those who have worked on this, and question if the KPI's and Measurables will be reported on going forward. **NP** agreed we will start to role out the plan and will produce an action plan to measure the work and successes to hold to account on the implementation.

**TA** requested the next steps, **NP** responded that the next steps will be to go through the completed plan with the I&B committee, we will start to work on the launch and in bedding of the plan. The time line will be within Term 2, with the intention to have completed training by term three.

**WB** requested approval of the Inclusion and Belonging paper. The Board approved the paper.

## 2.10 KPI's Update

**George Dowding**

**GD** provided the Board with an update paper including our 7 targets set against our strategic plan which we will judge our performance on between now and 2025 A high-level overview of work undertaken so far in the academic years 21/22 and 22/23 towards achieving those targets.

**GD** highlight the main points in a number of areas including:

- ◆ Students voting in SU elections - **Target 30% Actual 24%**
- ◆ Achievement of our annual financial goals
- ◆ Advice Centre users empowered to make informed choices **Target 92%% Actual 96%**
- ◆ Students actively engaging with the SU - **Target 23% Actual 24%**
- ◆ SU Russell Group ranking by National Student Survey (NSS) score
- ◆ Colleagues reporting that the SU lives its values.
- ◆ Student satisfaction with the SU – **Target 60% Actual 67%** (awaiting full report)

**CHL** questioned the Student satisfaction results will there be further information on the parameters of this, **GD** will distribute the full report to the whole Board.

**AHW** requested more information on the results with regards to Medical students, who have historically been less satisfied with the SU, **WB** requested that we have additional feedback regarding students from WBS, WMS and WMG.

**TC** requested to know how many students responded to the survey, the number of responses was 2300 for the student questions. **TC** from a students point of view, suggested that improvements on the Website could be made to make it clearer when looking for information. i.e., when looking for course reps you find 450 making it difficult to find your course rep.

**TA** added that during this cost of living crisis Medical students are particularly hard hit, it's important that we prioritise working with these students during this period.

## CEO Recruitment

**TM** left the meeting. **WB** introduced the CEO paper, including the following points;

Date	Process	
December 2022	Review job advert and job description Pull together working group – Recommendation to approve this as the P&R committee	
9 <sup>th</sup> January 2023	Job advert to be published for 3 weeks (send applications at the end of each week to panel)	Hold weekly working group meetings to discuss process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shortlisting criteria</li> <li>- Assessment day planning</li> <li>- Presentation question</li> <li>- Interview questions</li> <li>- Weighting of activities in process</li> </ul>
29 <sup>th</sup> January 2023	Job advert to be closed	
30 <sup>th</sup> January 2023	Final CVs to be sent to panel	
31 <sup>st</sup> January 2023	Shortlisting meeting (3 piles yes/no/maybe)	
31 <sup>st</sup> January 2023	Notify candidates of outcomes	
9 <sup>th</sup> February 2023	Interview day	
10 <sup>th</sup> February 2023	Decision	

- Advertise on Guardian jobs, SU jobs and BAME recruitment. **JD** had also suggested Third sector jobs and Jobs.ac.uk
- Timeline, **WB** would like to have a new CEO in place for a period time prior to the changeover of Full-time officer team.
- Advertisement period reduced to 3 weeks
- Process suggested a shortlisting followed by a single assessment day.
- Approval of the P&R committee to oversee the CEO recruitment work
- Decision by the 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023

**TA** requested the timeline for the P&R committee to carry out the work. **WB** suggested the committee would meet once a week to facilitate the work

**RP** felt that the timeline gives the impression of a 'shoe in' for the role, to get the level of interest and transparency the timeframe needs to be extended

**HD** suggests the single day to scrutinise the applications is very tight.

**AHW** If the advert goes out in the timeframe, we need to give enough time to ensure complete diversity, possibly we should have a social media campaign prior to the Advertisement going out to highlight to possible candidates and former candidates. **WB** responded that the P&R committee will look at these suggestions. **EC** agreed with the social media campaign and will take all points on board. **JD** agreed the advertisement should be out for longer and suggested that a two-stage process would be preferable, **WB** outlined the two stage process, **RP** suggested an open two stage process to leave you with flexibility on the interviewing, **AHW** agreed and suggested we should have a comprehensive communication pack for the candidates. **WB** will be a contact for candidates who wish to discuss the role.

**HD** inquired as to whether there would be an option for online interviews, **WB** suggested the preference would be in person, but we could be flexible if required.

**WB** gave an overview of the points raised:

- 2 stage process – which will effect the timeline, with at least a week between stages
- 4 week advertisement window
- Social media campaign
- P&R will provide a trustees reflective piece on what they want from the CEO and that the candidates fit in with our values
- Student representation
- Additional time for application consideration, if required
- **WB** suggested a panel including
  - Will Brewer
  - Full time Officer Representative
  - University Representative
  - Student Trustee Representative
  - Lay Trustee Representative
  - Emily Clilton HR support
- Student and Staff sessions to provide their voice and the importance of the weighting of this feedback.

**AHW** agreed on the clear selection criteria, and the leadership development approach should be brought into the process, which will be covered in the P&R committee.

**JT** requested a report on the previous recruitment process

**TC** understands why People and Remuneration committee take responsibility for the recruitment, but questioned why this doesn't sit with Governance and Appointment's? **WB** responded that G&A deals with Governance of all documents and paperwork and deals with the trustee recruitment, P&R deals with internal staff recruitment at all levels.

**JD** further points - consider psychometric testing, competency-based tests, **HD** felt having used them in the past they add little value, **AHW** added she does like them generally, but they are useful for development, may be therefore useful for the successful candidate.

**WB** requested to approve P&R as the group responsible for organising the CEO Recruitment, and to approve the timeline with the inclusion of additional points as discussed.

The WSU Board of Trustees agreed to approve the amended timeline and P&R as the committee responsible for organisation of CEO recruitment.

**LM** questioned who would be completing the Lessons learnt work for review at the P&R committee. **EC** will work with relevant parties to pull this together.

## **2.11 Action Log**

**HD** suggested the Action Log be updated with a more accurate achievable date for the Risk Register update work,

- Bubble Tea – Action ongoing

## **2.12 AOB**

**JS** questioned that the Board should have site of the Motions passed at Student council. **LM** to distribute to the Board via email.

**Next Meeting – 16<sup>th</sup> February 2023**