

UNIVERSITY OF ROEHAMPTON
ROEHAMPTON STUDENTS' UNION TRANSITION COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the 14th meeting of the RSU Transition Committee held on
27 March 2020 remotely via Zoom**

Present: Dan O'Donoghue (Chair), Reggie Blennerhassett, Levi Mbiya,
George Turner, George Walker

In attendance: Mark Gillespie, Bal Kaur

Notes: Elaine Lentell

Apologies: Jonathan Chien

RSUTC14.1 Welcomes, introductions, apologies, and conflicts of interest

Apologies were noted.

RSUTC14.2 Minutes of the 13th meeting of the RSU Transition Committee

Approved: The minutes of the 13th meeting of the RSU Transition Committee held on 28 February 2020 (Paper RSUTC14/1), subject to the clarification that 6 expressions of interests had been received for the Clerk to Committees vacancy and 13 for the external trustee positions (Item RSUTC13.5).

Noted: The matters arising from the previous minutes (Paper RSUTC14/2).

RSUTC14.3 Coronavirus: Impact on Education and Accommodation

Received: A verbal update from the Vice-President, Community and Welfare.

Noted: That the Union had issued a survey to students to gather feedback on the impact of coronavirus. Over 170 responses had been received.

The most pressing student concerns related to accommodation. The PVC and COO confirmed that a holding email had been sent to affected students, although it was advised that students now living off-campus should follow general government guidance. One of the main challenges was getting students to inform the University that they were still living on campus and to address this a logging-in system was in the process of being installed.

That module conveners would be contacting students with guidance on assessments and exams.

That several initiatives to support students during the coronavirus crisis were in the process of being implemented, e.g., the 'Stay Connected' app on the University website. The Director of Student Support

Services was also looking at the wider aspects of student engagement and how the University could provide support.

It was suggested that the Union should forward a list of students' questions to the Marketing and Communications team.

Action: Vice-President, Community and Welfare

**RSUTC14.4 Review update on financial management and action plan
- 2nd Quarter Management Accounts**

Received: A Management Accounts summary and the 2nd quarter accounts (Paper RSUTC14/3).

Noted: That ongoing industrial action by the UCU had affected revenue, e.g. takings at the Hive, and that disruption caused by coronavirus would further reduce revenue. Events would be rationalised to mitigate loss of income. It was therefore unlikely any events would be scheduled for the remainder of 2019-20 and the number of events planned for 2020-21 would be reviewed.

That the 2nd quarter had proved challenging because of the disruptions. However, due to the current closure of the Hive savings would be made on food orders and temporary staff wages.

With reference to casual staff hours for March, it was advised that if staff were able to work from home they would be paid. The University's Director of HR was also looking into the Government retention scheme. It was therefore suggested that the Union's CEO and the University's Deputy Director of Finance should collate a list of RSU staff likely to be affected by the current working restrictions and forward it to HR. It was further suggested that Union staff who were unable to work may be able to be redeployed temporarily if the University was notified.

That in spite of these challenges the budget remained relatively healthy. The Union's CEO was working with Jonathan Chien in the University's Finance department on the year-end projection and on researching any government grants that may be available.

That Union staff members were required to opt out of the Union's pension scheme by April 2020 under auto-enrolment rules. The Union's CEO would be writing to the staff concerned to let them know.

The Union's CEO and Deputy Director of Finance would be meeting with the new auditors shortly and would provide an update at the next meeting.

Actions: Union's CEO, Deputy Director of Finance

RSUTC14.5 Progress update on Turnaround Plan **CONFIDENTIAL**

Received: The draft revised Job Evaluation Scheme document at appendix 1,

draft Sickness Absence policy at appendix 2, and draft Time Owed in Lieu (TOIL) policy at appendix 3 (Paper RSUTC14/4).

Noted: That staff feedback on the revised policies had now been received. The policies had been duly revised and recommendations noted in the above papers.

The Committee **agreed** that given the uncertainty of the current situation, the Union's full strategic review should be postponed until 2020-21. Instead, an interim review would be carried out and then the situation would be assessed in three months' time.

Action: Union's CEO

RSUTC14.6 Update on appointment of new trustees

Received: A verbal update from the Union's CEO.

Noted: That the recruitment process for appointing trustees had now closed (applicants' CVs were circulated to the Committee prior to the meeting).

The Following actions were agreed:

- Circulate a late application outside of the Committee to members
- Create a table summarising the applicants' skills and experience and matching them against the skills matrix
- Forward the information to the PVC and COO and Acting University Secretary for feedback
- Take the recommended shortlist to the Trustee Board for approval

Actions: Union's CEO, Chair

RSUTC14.7 Update on ongoing investigation **CONFIDENTIAL**

Received: A verbal update on the investigation from the Union's CEO.

Noted: That there had still been no formal response from the ex-employee's solicitors.

That before considering any further course of action the University's Insurance Officer should investigate whether the Union had notified the insurers about the suspected fraud within the time limit and would therefore be eligible to make a claim.

Action: Insurance Officer, Union's CEO

RSUTC14.8 Update on RSU elections

Received: A verbal update from the Union's CEO.

Noted: That the RSU elections had been paused. The Union would meet on Monday 30 March to outline the timeline for the elections taking place online, with the aim of having the officers in situ by July 2020.

RSUTC14.9 RSU Sabbatical Officers – committee representation

Received: A list of formal University committees with representation from RSU sabbatical officers (Paper RSUTC14/6).

Noted: The Committee discussed the paper and it was agreed that the incoming sabbatical officers could review the representation at the start of the 2020-21 academic year and change it if need be.

RSUTC14.10 RSU Summer Ball

Received: A verbal update from the Union's CEO.

Noted: That the 2020 Summer ball may be cancelled given the current restrictions due to coronavirus.

That there were some significant expenses such as deposits for stage equipment, but that the possibility of refunds or carrying over the contracts to 2021 were being explored. It was agreed that the Union's insurance policy should be forwarded to the University's Deputy Director of Finance to check whether it would cover any losses.

Action: Union's CEO

Date of next meeting: 24 April 2020

*Elaine Lentell
Secretariat
March 2020*

Actions - University of Roehampton RSUTC14, 27 March 2020				
Minute	Item	Action	Owner	Due
RSUTC14.3	Coronavirus Impact on Education and Accommodation	Forward a list of students' questions to the Marketing and Communications team	Vice-President, Community and Welfare	24 April 2020
RSUTC14.4	Review update on financial management and action plan - 2 nd Quarter Accounts	Collate a list of RSU staff likely to be affected by the current working restrictions and forward it to HR Provide an update on the meeting with The new auditors	Union's CEO, Deputy Director of Finance Union's CEO	24 April 2020 24 April 2020
RSUTC14.5	Progress update on the Turnaround Plan	Carry out an interim strategic review in lieu of the full review and then assess the situation in three months' time	Union's CEO	July 2020
RSUTC14.6	Update on appointment of new trustees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate a late application outside of the Committee • Create a table summarising the applicants' skills and experience • Forward the information to the PVC and COO and Acting University Secretary • Take recommended shortlist to the RSU Trustee Board for approval 	Union's CEO, Chair	24 April 2020
RSUTC14.7	Update on ongoing investigation	Investigate whether the Union is eligible to claim against its insurance policy and provide a summary of findings	University's Insurance Officer, Union's CEO	24 April 2020
RSUTC14.10	RSU Summer Ball	Forward the Union's insurance policy to the Deputy Director of Finance to check whether it would cover any losses	Union's CEO	24 April 2020