

EDINBURGH NAPIER STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
Board of Directors
Minutes of 12 June 2024
H11 Merchiston Campus

Directors in Attendance: Andy Houghton (Chair AH), Ailsa Crum (AC), Isobel Hall (IH), Erin Slater (ES), Geou Akshil (GA), Opeyemi Akindehin (OA), Ryan Cairns (RC), Antonio Garcia (AG), Evans Eghan (EE), Aswin V Podimon (AVP)

Apologies: Erin Johnson (EJ)

In attendance: Catherine Jones (CJ), Craig Reid (CR), Helen Woodward (HW)

Observers: Chika Marvis (CM), Debbie Chapman (DC)

Taking the minute: Susan Finn (SF)

Standing Items:	Action
<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>AH welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made to the incoming Officer and new Court Representative who attended as observers.</p> <p>Chika Marvis – Co-President for Education & Employability Debbie Chapman - ENSA Board Court Representative</p> <p>ENSA Team Leaders and Finance Officer were also in attendance in the absence of the CEO.</p> <p>Catherine Jones – Student Engagement TL Craig Reid - Graphic Designer/ Comms TL Helen Woodward – Finance Officer</p> <p>Apologies were received from Erin Johnston.</p>	
<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
<p>Minutes for Approval</p> <p>AH introduced the minutes of the last meeting in April. As there were no amendments proposed, the minutes were approved.</p>	
<p>Action Log</p> <p>There was no action log paper for this meeting. The previous paper showed two ongoing actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Carry out Student Survey on Sighthill campus: this will be done early in term one 2024/25 when students are back on campus. ➤ Hold meetings as per HR Review recommendation: AH to set up a meeting with incoming and outgoing Officer's before stepping down in June. 	AH

<p>Action: AH to set up a meeting with incoming and outgoing Officer's.</p>	
<p>Presentation from Elected Officers</p> <p>GA President Societies and Community</p> <p>GA thanked the Board and the ENSA staff team for helping to deliver multiple projects including the Happiness Project which was a great success. He felt there is an increased sense of community and greater working relationships with different university teams and ENSA which is a great thing.</p> <p>GA thanked IH for being a mentor and acknowledged it had been a great help.</p> <p>OA Co-President Education & Employability</p> <p>OA thanked everyone on the Board and all ENSA staff for their support throughout an amazing year and felt the Officer's were leaving a great legacy for the incoming Officer's to continue.</p> <p>RC Co-President Sport and Wellbeing</p> <p>RC agreed it had been a fantastic year which he had mostly enjoyed. He is looking forward to continuing in his role for a second year and is excited to focus on new things and wants to try and make sports more of a priority in the university sector.</p> <p>AH noted the Board's huge appreciation for the three outgoing Officer's and all they have achieved during their time in office which will have made a huge positive impact on student life at ENU.</p> <p>AH asked Officers if they had any advice to pass on to incoming Officer's.</p> <p>GA advised not to step in on each others roles and to speak the same language when speaking to different university teams.</p> <p>RC said to enjoy the year as it goes in so quickly and noted he was excited to work with the new Officer's.</p> <p>OA said to know each other's strengths as this will help with working well together.</p> <p>IH asked Officer's what piece of advice or recommendation they had for the Board.</p> <p>OA suggested more involvement with ENSA staff so they are aware who they are.</p> <p>GA suggested including staff more in organisational strategic planning.</p> <p>RC agreed with the above points and felt the Board could ask more questions when the Officer's are giving updates at Board meetings.</p> <p>AH noted Jenny Rees, the previous Chair of the Board, had talked about structuring the CEO report around the strategic framework and this should be picked up when the new CEO, Tony Foster, starts in September.</p>	
<p>ENSA CEO Report</p> <p>CR highlighted a few points.</p>	

<p>Staffing: There has been a lot happening with the Chair stepping down, CEO leaving, two Officer's about to leave and Lucy Grant, the Student Activities Administrator, leaving in August.</p>	
<p>Student and Activities Administrator: Interviews for this post were held on 11th June and an offer of employment has been made. CR noted that when the current SA Administrator, Lucy Grant, leaves in August, it will mean that Helen is unsupported with payroll and payments as Lucy's replacement does not have this included as part of their job description.</p> <p>It was recommended in Dee's handover document that a part-time intern (8hrs per week) or an existing member of staff could take on this role. It was noted there were no obvious candidates amongst staff.</p>	
<p>Events and Campaigns Intern: Interviews are being held on 13th June.</p>	
<p>Recruitment for New Chair of the Board: Currently being advertised on Good Moves and will be promoted on social media channels over the next few weeks. Applications are open until the 12th July.</p>	
<p>Student Lay Directors: Two posts will be advertised in September when the new CEO starts. It was noted that AVP is staying on for another year.</p>	
<p>AH acknowledged the support required for Helen.</p>	
<p>TG pointed out that as interns come and go this may not be sustainable.</p>	
<p>HW agreed she would prefer somebody in a permanent position for 16 hours per week, as interns would need to be trained every year. This would also give her the option of reducing her hours in the future.</p>	
<p>Action: AC to check the budget to see if an intern/permanent post to support Helen is affordable.</p>	AC
<p>Action: AH/DC to speak to Andy McGoff to ask if there is anyone in the university Finance team who could help temporarily.</p>	AH/DC
<p>Action: AH to remove any personal information from the contract document and share this with the TL's.</p>	AH
<p>Action: CR to share Chair of the Board advert on LinkedIn.</p>	CR
<p>Action: CR to post advert for 2 Student Lay Directors the week before Tony starts, with a 3 week closing date, applications to be sent to Tony.</p>	CR
<p>ENSA CEO Report: Staff Survey CJ went through the detailed report written by Daniel Wright, Head of Representation and Leadership Development.</p>	

The report showed the majority of staff were happy working for ENSA and knew what they were doing within their teams.

However, in the open comments section there were areas of dissatisfaction particularly around policies and the relationship with senior management and the Board. This is concerning especially without a CEO in post.

AH wanted to note a special thank you to Daniel for writing such a detailed and thorough report and made the Board aware that Daniel is happy to answer any questions.

AG suggested a programme of work may need to be developed to respond to the various issues raised and pointed out that a strategy day had previously been put in place but had to be postponed due to staff leaving.

AG said communication and consultations had previously been brought up at the HR committee and wondered if the sub-committees could look at an action plan going forward.

AH is meeting Tony Foster next week and will give him the report so he can see what catches his attention and start thinking of an action plan.

AH was concerned about the issue staff raised around accessibility to the Board, transparency and communication and wondered what the Board needs to do to address these issues.

IH echoed thanks for the report which she felt was the most detailed and insightful staff survey report she has seen since working with ENSA.

IH agreed there were some actions the HR committee could look into particularly with the sick pay policy.

IH pointed out that the Directors are voluntary roles and there is a lot that goes into the role outside of Board meetings.

IH suggested CEO and Officer's take information back to staff after Board meetings, so they are aware of what's being discussed. Staff could also be encouraged to contact the Board with any ideas, suggestions, or things they want to raise.

AH agreed a verbal debrief alongside the CEO/TL's after Board meetings is a good idea and has agreed a date/time for next week.

ES noticed there seemed to be a lot mentioned around development of staff, learning opportunities and wellbeing and thought that a strategy day focusing on these topics might help to address those issues raised.

ES also suggested an introduction session with staff and the Board then if a new staff member joins ENSA, a virtual meeting could be set up to give them the opportunity to get to know who people are and what they do in their roles.

<p>OA asked if staff members could be given the opportunity to attend a future Board meeting which would allow them to meet Directors.</p> <p>GA asked if ENSA staff could access the training courses and modules available to university staff and felt a communication on what's available would be helpful.</p> <p>AC is keen to get a date confirmed for a strategy day ahead of the new CEO starting, to take place when Tony is in post.</p> <p>CJ confirmed the full staff survey will be sent out to ENSA staff this week.</p> <p>Action: Directors to agree who is available to attend a virtual debriefing meeting with staff after each Board meeting.</p> <p>Action: AH and DC to contact Caroline Begbie about the university training courses available to staff.</p> <p>Action: TL's and the Board to confirm a date for a Strategy Day for when Tony Foster is in post.</p> <p>Action: TL's to suggest a few dates in July for Directors to join the morning call to do introductions.</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p>AH/DC</p> <p>TL's</p> <p>TL's</p>
<p>ENSA CEO Report: Union Bar</p> <p>ENSA looked into starting a relationship with Revolution which looked positive but unfortunately, they are closing down with staff being made redundant.</p> <p>As the outgoing CEO, Dee had an initial discussion with Three Sisters to let them know we were thinking of leaving.</p> <p>CJ has since contacted Three Sisters to update them on the situation and although they have said they want to keep working with ENSA, it would look different. At the moment ENSA gets kickback on all bar sales in the upstairs bar, however, they are developing an App which would track which university students come from.</p> <p>This would probably mean a smaller sponsorship and a kickback on ENU students only although there may be room for negotiation.</p> <p>CJ pointed out that she would feel more confident having someone to discuss the way forward with commercial negotiations.</p> <p>AH suggested asking Tony Foster if he would be available to step in to engage with these discussions.</p>	<p></p>

<p>Action: AH to ask Tony Foster if he would be willing to help with commercial negotiations.</p>	
<p>Action: EE to look into a way to gather data that shows where students enjoy spending social time.</p>	AH
<p>CEO Induction</p>	
<p>AH thanked those who were involved in the recruitment process for the new CEO and was pleased to confirm that Tony Foster will join ENSA on the 2nd September after serving notice.</p>	EE
<p>Induction: AH asked the Board their thoughts on what this should look like and who would normally deal with this within ENSA.</p>	
<p>IH pointed out that as the previous Chair, Jenny Rees, had also been the interim CEO before Dee was appointed, she had probably done the induction for Dee.</p>	
<p>AC thought it should be a shared responsibility with the Board and Exec team.</p>	
<p>AH asked DC, IH and AG if they would be happy to work together at creating an induction folder and sharing ideas on what the first weeks should include, who in the university the CEO should meet and in what priority.</p>	
<p>It was agreed the template from Daniel's induction for other post holders could be used as an introduction to the organisation and the university.</p>	
<p>Action: DC/IH/AG to work together at creating a CEO induction.</p>	
<p>Transition Period: AH is keen to ensure there is overall governance and leadership as well as support for the Team Leaders during this period. It was noted that one of the three TL's is off sick for the next few weeks.</p>	DC/IH/ AG
<p>The Board discussed the option of a short-term interim.</p>	
<p>AC noted there is scope to bring in an interim if required and suggested someone could possibly come in for 2/3 days per week if the rate was around £350 per day.</p>	
<p>CR felt it would have to be someone with a strong university or Student Union based background otherwise it could prove to be more of a hindrance having to get them up to speed with how the organisation works.</p>	
<p>CJ agreed that an outsider coming in may not be good for staff morale.</p>	
<p>HW suggested asking the previous Chair, Jenny Rees, if she was available to step in.</p>	
<p>AC confirmed this was not an option as Jenny was working on another job until October.</p>	

<p>GA asked if it was possible for the TL's to step up with the help of the Board. AH noted the Board would need to be more available to support the TL's if this was to be an option.</p> <p>AC agreed that the Board would need to have a clear plan to be able to provide support and advice to the TL's.</p> <p>IH suggested looking at bringing in an interim for a particular area such as HR or Finance.</p> <p>AG noted the caretaker CEO is a specialised role who would be called in to this kind of situation.</p> <p>AG asked if the TL's would this be recognised financially for stepping up. AH advised this would need to be discussed within the HR committee and Finance & Risk committee.</p> <p>Action: AH to approach ACO to enquire about a CEO interim with HE and SU experience. Action: Directors to think about what areas they could help TL's with.</p>	<p>AH</p> <p>ALL</p>
<p>Updates from Committee Chairs</p> <p>The FR Committee and HR Committee had not met since the last Board meeting.</p>	
<p>Finance Reports</p> <p>AC advised the finances were in good shape and the surplus is looking to increase nicely. HW agreed things looked better than last year.</p>	
<p>AOB</p> <p>AC proposed to coopt AH back onto the Board to help with the transition arrangements and allow continuity until Tony's arrival in September.</p> <p>All Directors agreed to the proposal.</p> <p>It was noted that AH would continue as an External Lay Director and DC is replacing AH as Court's Representative.</p>	
<p>AOB</p> <p>GA asked to discuss a personal matter with the Board.</p>	

CJ, CR, HW, SF left the meeting.

The next Board of Directors meeting is tbc