Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees (BoT) held in the OU HR Training and Development Centre, Wilson Building, OU Campus, Milton Keynes 6 July 2015.

PRESENT

Ruth Tudor, President (Chair)
Al Thomas (Student Trustee)
Andrew Hulme (External Trustee)
Carey Shaw, OU Council Member (Non-Officer Trustee)
David Humble, V P Administration
Nik Morris, Deputy President

IN ATTENDANCE:
Rob Avann, General Manager (Secretary)
Wendy Burrell, Head of Engagement & Support (Observer)
Leanne Quainton, Executive Assistant (Minutes)
David McCann, Head of Communications & Technology (part)

SECTION A: INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1. WELCOME

1.1 The President welcomed Trustees to the meeting, advising that Wendy Burrell was successfully appointed as the Deputy General Manager and would be observing the meeting prior to her start date of 3 August 2015.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Anna Jenkins (Student Trustee)
Jonathan Fudge (External Trustee)
Peter Cowan, V P Educational Support & Research (4th Officer Trustee)

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

3.1 The Minutes (BoT 3/15/M) from the meeting in March were approved.
4. REPORT FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER/SECRETARY

4.1 The General Manager outlined the contents of the paper advising that the purpose of this item was to pick up any matters that had been dealt with online since the last meeting or for information purposes.

4.2 Trustees had approved the extension of the Nightline Service for 2015/16. The President had continued to raise funding of the service with the OU and reported that Council were supportive of the idea at their last meeting so it is hoped this will help move the discussions forward.

4.3 Increased interest had been received into Central Rep enquires with one student being from Vietnam. It was thought this would test how far the OU will go to facilitate students attending remotely.

4.4 Wendy Burrell, Head of Engagement & Support was appointed as Deputy General Manager and starts in the role from 3 August 2015.

4.5 The remainder of the report was noted without comment.

SECTION B: ITEMS FOR REPORT OR ENDORSEMENT FROM THE C E C

5 PROPOSED OUSA BUDGET 2015/16

5.1 VP Administration went through the budget report that had been noted at the C E C. The report detailed a deficit budget of £130k however £90k will be come from the designated reserves for Conference. Savings have been made to C E C and BoT meetings and on Central Services. Societies budgets have increased which includes £5k on a Societies drive as well as increases to grants. The Officer Team expenses have also been increased to reflect the reality of increased workloads and having to attend more meetings on campus. The discretionary spend has been reduced to £50k which is in line with the agreement with the University, £21k of which will be spent on Nightline. Tendering for audit and legal services will be done in 2015/16 and is reflected in the budget. A further addition will be made once the underspend of 2014-15 is known.

5.2 RESOLVED: The 2015/16 OUSA budget was approved.

5.4 OUSA STRATEGY

5.5 The General Manager brought the draft OUSA strategy to the meeting, produced following a long consultation process with both the C E C and staff team. The C E C had made some amendments at their previous meeting and were happy to put it to the BoT for approval.

5.6 Discussions were had around the strategy and further amendments were made.

5.7 Action: The General Manager to make amendments and post online for final approval.
5.8 CONSIDERATION OF PAYMENT FOR OFFICERS

5.9 General support in principle had been received at the CEC for the proposals with concerns around the issues outlined in the discussion paper. Paying Officers would limit terms to 2 years due to the Education Act 1994 which would preclude an Officer standing for a second term. This would result in a new tranche of Officers each term along with a President that would have had no past Officer experience. This loss of experience was not felt an acceptable option. It was also seen to be important that the President was paid but had had the opportunity to be an Officer before with another remit. This experience was invaluable. Therefore a two-tier approach seemed inevitable, with a paid President and the remainder of the Officers as volunteers. Other comments raised by the CEC had been concern around creating a 2-tier system; strong opposition to options A (a paid Officer Team to be based in Milton Keynes) and F (to keep the status quo); preferences towards options E and D on basis that more information on the legal and financial implications would be needed. It was thought that if option D was progressed, that the Deputy President, along with the President, should also be a paid role with the spread of responsibilities reworked more evenly.

5.10 ACTION: The General Manager to obtain further advice and information regarding the legal and financial implications.

5.11 RESOLUTION: Proposal to explore this further was approved in principle upon further investigation and consultation with students.

5.12 APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE REQUEST FOR DELEGATED POWERS

5.13 The President outlined the current procedure advising that this request has come to the BoT to quicken up the process from what is currently a timely and unnecessary procedure. Work has been done recently into making any appointments to the Central Reps more robust by meeting potential candidates at an annual Central Reps Seminar as well as steps now in place to enable the Appointments Committee to remove individuals should they not be performing correctly. Taking this into account the President asked the BoT to delegate overall powers of authority to the Appointments Committee, removing the CEC/BoT from the process, quickening up the procedure and removing unnecessary barriers.

5.14 RESOLUTION: The proposal for delegated powers to the Appointments Committee was approved, subject to annual review.

5.15 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE OU-OUSA RELATIONSHIP AGREEMENT

5.16 The Relationship Agreement is a formal document which lays out the terms of OUSA’s relationship with the OU, the commitment both organisations will make and OUSA obligations under the Education Act as a Students Association.

5.17 A review of the document is underway, led by Director Students Keith Zimmerman and the President. The General Manager and Jerard Bretts from the Director Students Office have been tasked with reviewing the document and the proposed amendments were detailed in the paper’s appendix. Further amendments are due in
the summer therefore the BoT will be asked to approve again before the document goes to the Vice Chancellors Executive in September followed by Council in November for final approval.

5.18 Trustees noted the proposed changes.

### SECTION C: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE DECISION

6. **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

6.1 The overview of expenditure to date and forecast to end 2015/16 was received.

6.2 **RESOLUTION:** The proposal to replace the office M F D Printer was approved and the A3 High Volume Colour agreed as the model to purchase.

7. **COMMUNICATIONS INTERN**

7.1 David McCann, Head of Communications and Technology was in attendance for this part of the meeting to present the proposal to extend the contract of the current Communications Intern from end September 2015 to end July 2016.

7.2 David highlighted that the 9 months originally stated in the contract had, on reflection, not been enough time for the Intern to complete the 3 main areas of work assigned. Heather Bloomer, currently in the role has built up a skillset that will be useful to the team in the preparations to Conference next year as well as to allow her to have adequate time to fully concentrate on the other projects.

7.3 The intention will be for a new intern to start in August/September 2016 but to start the recruitment process early 2016. Time will also be spent reviewing the role as changing the contract to a 2 year cycle to fit in with the Officer Team terms might be more appropriate.

7.4 **RESOLUTION:** Trustees approved the proposal and will await a further proposal after the review of the role has been carried out.

8. **AFFILIATION TO NATIONAL COUNCIL OF VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS (NCVO)**

8.1 The General Manager asked Trustees to consider a proposal to affiliate with the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (N C V O) from 1 August 2015. This would cover both staff and trustees and enable access to the resources and membership of this professional network that champions and strengthens charities in England by enhanced volunteering, connecting organisations and sharing good practice. Affiliation would give access to advise, support and information services including tailored email briefings, guides and research and also gives discounted rates on training, consultancy and conferences.

8.2 **RESOLVED:** Trustees agreed to the cost of £1308 for 3 years membership.
9. **STAFFING MATTERS**

9.1 This discussion was of a confidential nature and therefore has been reserved to the confidential section of the minutes.

10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

10.1 Future meeting dates: It was agreed that the next 2 face to face meetings of the BoT would be:

- Monday 16 November 2015
- Thursday 24 March 2016

11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next face to face meeting of the BoT will be held on Monday 16 November 2015. Al Thomas tendered early apologies to this meeting.

Discussions will continue online in the meantime.