

## **Chair of the Trustees' AGM – 17th March 2026**

### **Introduction**

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am pleased to present this report outlining the work of the Board over the past year and the steps taken to ensure the Students' Union continues to operate effectively, responsibly, and in the best interests of its members.

The Board of Trustees met regularly throughout the year to fulfil its responsibilities for governance, financial oversight, risk management, and strategic direction. Trustees have continued to provide constructive challenge and support to the staff team, ensuring that the organisation remains compliant with its governing documents and charity law while delivering services and representation for students.

### **Governance and Accountability**

The Board maintained a strong focus on governance and transparency throughout the year. During the February 2026 meeting, the Board approved a series of updates to the Students' Union Byelaws to ensure that governance arrangements remain clear, consistent, and aligned with current organisational practice.

The Board also oversaw governance matters relating to trustee appointments, including the re-appointment of an External Trustee, subject to ratification by the appropriate democratic body.

### **Financial Oversight**

Ensuring the financial sustainability of the Students' Union remains a core responsibility of the Board. In November 2025, Trustees formally approved the audited financial statements for the financial year 2024–2025, following a presentation from the Union's external auditors, Godfrey Wilson. The auditors confirmed that they were satisfied with the financial statements and that the organisation remains a going concern.

The Board also reviewed and approved regular management accounts for both the charity and trading entities across the year, providing assurance that financial performance continues to be monitored closely. Oversight of these matters was supported by the Finance, Risk and Control Committee, which reported regularly to the Board.

## **Strategic Planning and Organisational Development**

A significant milestone this year was the approval of the Students' Union Strategy for 2025–2029. This strategy will guide the organisation's work over the coming years, providing a clear framework for supporting student representation, engagement, and wellbeing. The Board also received regular updates on the Union's Annual Plan (targets), enabling Trustees to monitor progress against strategic objectives and ensure that activities remain aligned with the organisation's charitable purpose.

## **Risk Management**

Trustees continued to review and monitor the organisation's Risk Register to ensure that potential risks are appropriately identified and mitigated. During the year, the Board approved revisions to the risk framework and scoring matrix to better reflect the organisation's current operating environment.

## **Partnerships and Commercial Agreements**

The Board considered and approved the renewal and extension of the accommodation partnership agreement with Native, extending the contract through to the 2028–2029 academic year. This agreement provides increased financial certainty for the Union and includes improvements to the partnership arrangement, including guaranteed income over the contract period and the delivery of student-focused events.

## **Student Representation and Organisational Capacity**

Trustees also considered the sustainability of the Union's current Sabbatical Officer structure during the year. The Board discussed the operational pressures associated with delivering the Union's activities with two full-time officers and explored the potential benefits of returning to a three-officer model. While Trustees recognized the potential advantages of expanding the officer team in terms of representation and capacity, the Board also noted the financial implications involved. Considering the Union's current financial position and wider funding uncertainties, Trustees agreed that any change to the officer structure would require careful consideration of financial sustainability and further engagement with the University regarding funding arrangements.

The Board also provided oversight of democratic and student engagement activity, including discussions around potential referenda relating to industrial action, ensuring that any such processes remain balanced, transparent, and clearly focused on student interests.

## **Looking Ahead**

As the Students' Union continues to navigate a challenging financial and higher education landscape, the Board of Trustees remains committed to ensuring strong governance,

financial sustainability, and strategic clarity.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to extend my thanks to our elected officers, staff team, volunteers, and fellow trustees for their dedication and hard work throughout the year.

**Mohammad Galib**

Chair of the Board of Trustees