

Imperial College Union
Deputy President (Finance & Services) Council Report
A note by the DPFS – Stefan Nubert

Handover

I received a comprehensive handover during July. I thank Michael Foster, my predecessor for all his advice and guidance, which continued official post-handover. During July I attended various introductory meetings with various members of College Staff, along with other training and handover events arranged internally.

New Drinks and Prices

During the summer (prior to handover) the contract with our draught supplier (Matthew Clark) came to an end. An in depth tendering process was carried out by the Commercial Services Manager (Matthew Bowman). An agreement was met with Greene King and as a result prices have increased on certain items. The Greene King agreement was the best offer available to us for continuing to offer low prices to our members.

Coupled with this new contract Greene King provided and fitted over £15,000 of new bar equipment for both the South Kensington bars and Reynolds, which have decreased the time taken to pour a pint from over 20 seconds to below 10 seconds. Matthew Bowman recorded a record time of 8.6 seconds. This will help overcome so of the difficulty faced with service speed on busy nights.

Certain products have been replaced with Greene King equivalents, but we will continue to offer a varied range of draught products. Greene King will be also the first of many beer festivals on the 9th of October. This agreement runs for two years and includes sponsorship for the next two summer balls.

We Are Metric

Applications for We Are Metric nights were opened during September with the deadline for October being set at the end of September. For the remainder of the winter term, a deadline was set for the end of October. At the time of writing the number of applications received is only three (two approved). This is notably down on this time last year when a total of 15 were received. This is partly due to Jazz & Rock withdrawing their regular Tuesday event. Further advertising is taking place.

Discussion is taking place between myself, the DPCS and Commercial Services Manager on how We Are Metric nights can be improved for the benefit of clubs and societies.

Casual Staff Recruitment

Our first casual staff recruitment took place over the 26 and 27 of September. In excess of 150 online applications were received, from which around 80 were invited to our initial recruitment day. 64 attended the first recruitment day. A series of tasks were designed and run by myself, Malcolm MacPherson (Entertainments Manager) with assistance from bar team leaders. 46 were hired and invited to attend the second training day, of which 42 attended. Training was divided into two main areas of bars and stewarding (run by the DPFS).

The number of applications was down on last year, and so the number of staff hired was also down on last year. Both teams (bar and stewards) still need further numbers recruited. Also feedback has been received from freshers that would like to work at ICU but were unable to attend the training before starting their term. I have spoken to Matthew Bowman about this issue and we are looking at running a second recruitment phase in late October/early November.

Changes to Wednesday Nights

A major point on my election manifesto was to review the entry prices on Wednesday and Friday nights. This was also a major point for Paul Beaumont (President). A series of discussions took place between myself, Paul Beaumont, Matthew Bowman and Joseph Cooper (Managing Director) in regards to what changes were financially viable.

Paul Beaumont and myself carried out a review of Wednesday and Friday door takings and entry numbers. Some issues became apparent with the quality of some of the data we were dealing with.

The result of this work is that a entry fee will remain in place for the coming month of October for Wednesdays. This will be reduced to £2 and be in place from 21:30 onwards. This will then be again reviewed at the end of October.

Another issue related to Wednesdays is the music. Matthew Bowman and myself have been tasked with developing a structure to how we run our Sports Nights. We will no longer have DJ's in Metric between 20:00-21:00 with playlists developed to be used, rather than music being under the control of bar staff.

Friday nights will be reviewed separately during October.

Welcome Week

The preparations for Welcome Week went well. We again ran the Mingle over two nights to accommodate all halls. The Saturday was at capacity, with Sunday being around 700 (excluding 'walkups'). Saturday's bar take was up on 2011. Feedback received on the night was generally very positive and luckily the rain held off.

Tickets for the Freshers' Ball are selling fast. The DPCS has been working hard to prepare for Freshers' Fair and the Afterparty. Sports Night will take place on Wednesday with charging from 20:00 with an entry fee of £2.50. A Comedy Night was held on the Monday.

I want to thank all the staff involved throughout the preparation and running of Welcome Week and especially the front-line staff who worked so hard. Discussion has already taken place between Matthew Bowman and myself on improvements for next year.

Club Finances

eActivities was launched during September. All modules are now online apart from the reps section. There were some teething problems but most club officers are now getting to grips with the new system.

Management group training was held to discuss various aspects of the new system, along with some of the main issues they may encounter. Further discussion groups will be held.

Credit card authorization for Honorary Senior Treasurers (HST's) has yet to be moved fully online. I have been in communication with the HST's in regards to this change and providing appropriate training materials.

Asset Management & Disposal Policy

A new asset management policy is currently in development between the DPFS, DPCS, Malcolm Martin (Finance Manager) and Antony Crowther (Student Activities Manager). This is in response to an issue raised by the last external audit by Deloitte. A series of threshold values have been developed to improve the detail of the assets captured on the asset register. It is hoped to begin implementing the new asset register and management system by January 2013.

In conjunction a new disposal policy for assets is being developed. Current finance regulations are being adjusted to reflect the limits of authority on expenditure for the DPFS and DPCS but in regards to the value of assets being disposed of. It is believed modification of these regulations will eliminate potential bottlenecks and delays in the current system and bring the disposal policy more in line with the policy on expenditure limits.

Casual Work Pay Scale Review

The National Minimum Wage for over 21's was increased to £6.19 per hour as of October 1 2012. As a result ICU's level 1 casual pay scale increased to £6.93 per hour (due to the added holiday rate). Level 2 (supervised senior staff) was increased to £7.93 per hour from £7.49 in reflection of the increased workload and responsibility of this role.

Links to FIE: Foundation for International Education

Paul Beaumont and Becky Lane (DPW) have initiated communication with various other institutions around Imperial College. All of the Sabbatical team has attended various events in the area.

One of these (FIE) held a welcome event on campus. Discussion has taken place between Rachel Alcock (Student Life Coordinate for FIE) and myself about running their future receptions in Metric. Rachel has provided provisional dates for their next event in January.

Leave

I was on leave 19 August and 22 August.