

Imperial College Union

DPFS Report

A Note By the Deputy President (Finance and Services)

A brief rundown on what I've been up to over the summer.

Centenary Ball

My main involvement with the Centenary Appeal will be the Centenary Ball and the date for this has already been set as the 16th June, 2007. Plans are already being made for what will be the biggest party ICU has ever thrown and a fitting kick-start to the Centenary itself. Some students have already expressed an interest in getting involved and we will be recruiting a full Centenary Ball committee and a number of working groups to ensure student involvement throughout the process. We have already opened negotiations with some potential sponsors and hopefully these will prove to be highly fruitful. I also attended the Plasa '06 trade show over the summer which has helped form some good ideas for the ball.

Freshers' Week

I have received a number of very good reports about Freshers' week and believe it was enjoyed by all, even if a couple of events were slightly under-attended. In particular, the Freshers' Ball on Friday night appeared to be extremely popular (especially Jo Whiley's set) and I have received a number of complimentary comments. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved for their considerable efforts.

Refurbishment Programmes

It has been a busy summer for refurbishments with not only the Central Union Building being refurbished but also Wye and the Reynolds bars receiving a face-lift. The Wye bar refurbishment has been very well received by the Wye Executive and students and I would like to express my thanks and congratulations to all staff involved in the project.

The discovery of asbestos in the core of the Union building, along with a couple of other minor issues, have unfortunately delayed this part of the first phase but all three bars were open in time for Freshers' week with the plasma screens now having been installed in Da Vinci's.

Governance Review

I have been heavily involved in the Governance Review being presented at this meeting of the Council. I believe that this has got to be one of the positive moves this Union has ever taken to improve its governance and includes a number of highly commendable ideas. I hope that it meets with the expectations of the membership and also that it receives the practical criticism it deserves. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my personal thanks to those who have worked with me not only on my subgroups but also on the other groups on which I sat.

Web Policy

I have re-written the Union Web Policy, which lapsed at the end of the academic year 2004-2005, and this now reflects the current situation, the policy was passed by the Executive and I urge all club officers responsible for websites to look over the new policy, I will be more than happy to answer any queries that may arise.

Training

As with all Union Officers, there has been a busy training schedule over the summer and this has been largely productive and reasonably well attended. I have been involved in a number of finance training sessions and am confident that these will prove useful to all Officers with financial responsibility throughout the year. As a part of this, the Union Finance Manual has been extensively re-written (a fairly major project in its own right) and I hope will prove to be a valuable resource. Copies are available online and in the Student Activities Centre for those officers who have yet to collect a copy. My door is always open to club financial officers if they have any queries and I am more than happy to offer advice and assistance where necessary.

One of the training sessions was held in Wye and I believe that this proved to be useful. I look forward to a close and mutually beneficial relationship with the Wye Executive and their clubs throughout this year.

Club Investigations

An unfortunate part of my job is overseeing club finances, this also leads on to looking at other aspects of their operation if they give cause for concern as part of my rôle as Clerk to the Union Disciplinary Committee. There have been a number of investigations carried out over the course of the summer and many of these issues have now been resolved, thankfully no more clubs have threatened to sue us. Unfortunately, I am unable to comment further on a these cases as they pertain to individuals against some of whom disciplinary action is still a possibility. Most of these issues have been simply resolved with clubs coming to an agreement with the Union to address the issues and concerns and fortunately further action has not been necessary in the vast majority of cases.

Other Club Finance Issues

I am heavily involved with looking at a few clubs finances to help improve their current situations and am also working with other clubs on sponsorship deals. The Union now centrally monitors all sponsorship agreements in order to improve efficiency and the service that clubs receive.

Trading Issues

After a resolution of the Executive, we have now installed an EPoS system to the South Kensington Union Building trading operations. I believe that this will represent a significant benefit to all those who frequent the venue and represents a positive step forward.

Meetings, Interviews and External Relations

As always, summer has been a busy time for sub-warden interviews and I have represented the Union on a number of these.

I have also met with a number of College managers over the summer and feel that some useful contacts have been made that can improve the relationship between the Union and the College for the benefit of the members.

I have also represented the Union at two American Colleges in London both of which have associate membership schemes. These went very well and will hopefully continue the currently good relations between the Union and these colleges and help to forge even closer links.

JM – 09/10/06