

Summer Ball 2008 Report

A Report by the Deputy President (Finance & Service)

Please note that some of the details given in the verbal report and associated budget is commercial-in-confidence. Through lessons learnt in previous years, it would be foolish to undermine the Executive Committee by releasing details of this project in a public forum. Additionally, there are a number of details contained within that will be announced as part of the build-up to the event.

The Past - 2007 Centenary Ball at South Kensington

The event last year was a massive event with over 2,000 students descending on the South Kensington campus. There were a number of criticisms but they are minor in consideration of the scale of the event.

Positives: Financially, a success. Notable achievements include increase in College grant from £20,000 to £25,000 and an increase in total sponsorship. Large increase in attendance numbers which turned the event into a massive success.

Criticisms: A number of issues with the bars which have been identified, which included advertising spirits as £1.50 which lead to the MDH selling out of spirits. A large number of items were missing from the budget which meant that false impressions were gained on the profit margins involved, which is likely to have informed spending behaviour nearer to the event. The top table arrangement prevented more tables being used for dinner. Outstanding sponsorship of £5,000 is likely to reduce the overall profit to ~£6,000. Slow ticketing system on the night and gates 20 minutes late.

The Present

We still have a lot to do and a long way to go but it is shaping up nicely. Current priorities include student input and involvement as well as getting the line-up confirmed.

Currently the biggest question is the size of the marquee that will be sited on the Queen's Lawn. A recent proposal to the College Management Board for a large marquee to be set up for 3 months was blocked. This means we are currently awaiting details as to the exact cost of the marquee. We have one headline act confirmed and another non-firm commitment.

Tickets are now on sale online and sales have had a predictably slow start but this will have definitely changed by this time next month. We are aiming to sell a total of 180 entertainments tickets and 200 dinner and entertainments tickets by the end of the first price hike.

Due to its commercial sensitivity, please see the separate paper for details on the budget.

The Future...

By the end of the term we should have the headline acts confirmed and the dinner logistics arranged. We have two more price rises planned and we have ticket targets to hit by each hike.

We hope to continue the success of last year's event by making the Summer Ball 2008 even bigger and better than ever before...

Snow Ball

I would like to open a discussion into establishing an autumn term ball, towards the end of term (Snow Ball) and whether the Executive Committee feels it would be worthwhile.

Review of Risks

Please see appendix 1 for a discussion of the risks that are currently being reviewed.

Appendix 1. Summer Ball Risk Management

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Responsibility	Possible Mitigating Actions	Early Warning Indicators
Ticket sales targets not achieved.	H	M	DPFS	Increased publicity and promotion. Release of information relating to line-up, etc.	Sales targets for each price-hike.
Sponsorship target is not reached.	H	L	Communications & Sponsorship Coordinator DPFS	Early dialogue entered with potential sponsors. Exploitation of contacts through clubs.	Sponsorship not secured by end of Spring term.
College donation is not credited.	H	L	President	Firm commitment in writing from College Secretary and Chief Operational Officer.	No firm commitment.
No marquee on the Queen's Lawn – associated financial burden.	H	L	President	Dialogue with	Lack of a firm commitment as to what marquee will be on the Queen's Lawn.
Difficulty getting line-up confirmed, and associated impact on publicity drive.	M	M	Entertainments & Promotions Manager	Pressure placed upon agents and artists. Contracting artists when immediately available.	Headline acts not confirmed by start of Summer Term.
Poor performance in bars.	M	H	Trading Manager	Use of experience and foresight. Plan for all eventualities.	Lack of planning.