

Scottish Universities Sport

Active~ Competitive ~ Innovative

Précis and action points from the Executive Council meeting held on Friday 25 November'05 at the Scottish Institute of Sport, University of Stirling.

Present

Jim Aitken (JCA), In the Chair
Filippo Antoniazzi (FA)
Juliet Balfour (JB)
Louise Campbell (LC)
Ross Campbell (RC)
Mike Fitchett (MH)
James Williamson (JWil)

In attendance

Stewart Fowlie (SF)
Susie Elms (SE) ~ Institute item only

Apologies for Absence

Lawrie Randak
Osla Dougal
Jamie Watson

Raleigh Gowrie (RG), who joined the meeting latterly

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND SCENE SETTING

1. Everyone was welcomed, with especially warm greetings extended to Ross Campbell (serving as a representative of the Competitions' Committee) and Louise Campbell (serving as a representative of the Professional Development Committee).
2. JCA stated that he would record and circulate notes of the meeting.

HOMOLOGATION

3. *Meeting of 4 October'05*- the précis of the 2nd Executive Council meeting was reviewed and approved as an accurate record. JCA commented that the notes had been distributed widely to all elected Committee reps, Directors and AU Presidents. This was welcomed. It was further decided that the note could, and should, be circulated openly to all stakeholders.
4. *Matters Arising:*
 - a. Advocacy- Recent SUS related activities were reported: SF presented to the SSA AGM on 27 Oct'05; sportscotland issued a press announcement on the SUS formation; and JCA attended sportscotland's annual partners' meeting on 31 Oct'05. More, a SUS update will be appearing in the next edition of the UCS newsletter, and JCA will be attending the next UCS Mge meeting in Cardiff on 8 Dec'05. These initiatives were welcomed, though it was agreed that a more general SUS briefing should be prepared for circulation to NGBs and V-Chancellors.
 - b. Review of University Elite Sport- JCA updated on the soon to be published and wide-ranging research study (commissioned by sportscotland and undertaken by Wharton Consultants) into the attitudes of elite level athletes studying at University. This would conclude that Universities were ideal hosts for top class performers, providing flexible study options, superb training facilities, cutting edge support services, experienced mentors and an overarching culture that encouraged the pursuit of excellence. JCA commented on some misgivings around the 1st draft of the consultant's report, and explained that MF/FA/JCA/SF/RG/Brian Ewing had reviewed the text and offered sportscotland substantial amendments to the narrative and recommendations. These have been incorporated, resulting in a much-improved final draft, which is now due for publication early in the New Year. Exec welcomed the report, and thanked the reviewers for their positive intervention on behalf of SUS and the sector.

POLICY AND RESOURCES

Budget Planning

5. Consideration was given to paper SUS(EX)m3-1 (finances). Eleven Universities had responded to the consultation. This had shown unanimous approval for the proposed budget; majority approval for the method of calculation (6 fully supportive; 3

ACTION

JCA

All

SF / JCA

JCA

supportive; Strathclyde/Glasgow Caly against); majority approval for the level of funding charge (6 fully supportive; 4 supportive; Glasgow Caly against); and three requesting assistance with lobbying. A very long and detailed debate ensued, particularly in relation to the method of calculation, and the concerns expressed by a minority of Institutions. Exec was acutely aware of the issues raised, and entirely sympathetic to them. That said, and after yet more exhaustive debate (and building on discussions at Exec 1-6 Sept'05-paras 9-11 and Exec 2-4 Oct'05-paras 6-8), the Exec concluded that partnership contributions should be set solely against, and in direct proportion to, population size. This proposal would be phased in gradually (with population size becoming increasing prevalent and ultimately the sole index for setting subvention rates - but initially it would be shared with team entries: yr 1-60:40; yr 2-70:30; yr 3-80:20; yr 4-100:0). With this, the following actions were agreed:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Arrange face-to-face meetings with the minority of Institutions who had not yet responded (Napier; Paisley; QMUC; UHI) or who were not in favour of the funding plan (Glasgow Cal; Strathclyde) to explain the reasoning to them. b. Approve the proposed budget 2005-08. c. Adopt the preferred payment method (para 5 above). d. Invite David Beattie (Director of SRS, University of Aberdeen) to propose options around SUS' banking arrangements, and in maximising the investment return on the SUSF/SUPEA c/f reserve. e. Proceed and invoice member Institutions for their partnership contributions. This would include a list of the membership benefits in affiliating to SUS. | <p>JCA / MF / SF</p> <p>JCA / SF</p> <p>Exec</p> <p>DB</p> <p>JCA / SF</p> |
| <p>6. Budget discussions closed with Exec accepting the sensitivity of the matter, and agreeing to do everything possible to retain SUS' inclusiveness. It was also decided to accelerate approaches for funding support from sportscotland and BUSA. The importance of the on-going BUSA review was noted, and it was agreed this would have fundamental and inevitable consequences around BUSA's cash inflow and outflow.</p> | <p>Exec</p> |

Professional Staffing

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| <p>7. FA spoke to paper SUS(EX)m3-2 (staffing) and the pre-circulated job papers for the SUS Sports Manager's and Executive Officer's posts. He outlined the rationale behind the structure of the documents, though he had received limited feedback on their content. FA added that RGU's HR section had undertaken a broad review of the posts, and recommended a grade around AA2. This would have to be ratified once the final job notes, and host Institution, were known. After further consideration, the following actions were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. FA to make final adjustments to the SM/EO posts (advert/job notes) in consultation with RG; JB; OD as Committee Chairs. b. Defer designs on the Administrator's post until the SM/EO were in post, and the office location was decided. c. Approve the proposed recruitment plan, delegating detailed actions to FA/SF/JWil (key dates might have to be adjusted to take account of the Xmas recess; add leisure opportunities to sector wide network advertising; JCA to replace SF at interview stage, and involve RN (SM post) and JB/OD (EO post) as appropriate). | <p>FA/RG/OD /JB</p> <p>FA</p> <p>FA / SF / JW</p> |
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Business Plan

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| <p>8. Agreement was reached to accelerate efforts to prepare the initial SUS business. This would be a succinct document, highlighting relevant contexts, financial allocations and key actions under Executive and Engine Room headings. After deliberation, MF and SF agreed to set out a framework for the document, so that Committee Chairs could develop the detail, including KPI's.</p> | <p>MF / SF</p> |
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Office Location

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| <p>9. SF indicated that the Universities of Stirling and Edinburgh were the only institutions expressing interest in hosting the SUS Office base. With this, SF spoke to paper SUS(EX)m3-3, which set out a series of actions to select the best option. After discussion, the proposed action plan was agreed, with MF/RC/SF being invited to advance matters, and to make recommendation to the next Exec meeting (Jan'06).</p> | <p>MF / RC / SF</p> |
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ENGINE ROOM UPDATES

10. Committee Chairs were invited to report on their activities over the past month.

Competitions Committee (CC)

11. In the absence of RG, SF gave a brief overview on behalf of CC. Work is on-going in making contact with SDCs, and in assessing the scope of respective programmes, alongside related resource requirements. However, the scope of the task ahead was becoming clearer, and there was much to do (club development; SDC support; NGB lobbying; BUSA competition formats; volunteering; network communications, and so forth) and this would be discussed at the upcoming CC meeting on Friday 2 Dec'05.

RG

Physical Activity Committee (PAC)

12. JB provided another upbeat report on PAC, which had met for the second time on Friday 11 Nov'05. This had continued the process of identifying key objectives for the year, including how best to link with and influence statutory agencies, both locally and nationally. JB noted with regret that Steph Tibbert would be leaving her post at Glasgow, and this would create a void within PAC. Exec encouraged JB to fill the vacancy with co-opted members in order to maintain momentum. In closing, JB stated the value in generating a promotional leaflet about PAC's remit, and in forging a research agenda with Professor Nanette Mutrie at Strathclyde. PAC is next due to meet on Tues 17 Jan'05. JB was thanked and congratulated on her update.

JB

Professional Development Committee (PDC)

13. In OD's absence, SF introduced paper SUS(EX)m3-4 (branding). A lengthy discussion ensued around logo options, and after full consideration, it was agreed to:

- a. Select one of the designs as the new SUS Brand - this was achieved.
- b. Adopt the proposed marketing actions and time-line set out in the paper.
- c. Empower PDC to implement the plan, including arrangements to unveil the new SUS logo at the Xmas Seminar on Thursday 15 Dec'05.

OD / SF

14. Time was spent considering the arrangements for the SUS Xmas Seminar at RGU on 15 Dec'05. It was hoped that everyone within the SUS 'family' would be encouraged to attend the day, and participate in plenary sessions (SUS update; club development/volunteering, with workshop groups); specialist fora (Directors; AU Presidents; AU Administrators); consultation sessions (on PAC&PDC); fun events (RGU Treasure Hunt) and social interaction. A 'date for your diary' has already been circulated and this will be followed early next week with an outline programme and details on registration. Cost would likely be c£10 pp to cover hospitality, though FA/OD were hoping to have some of these costs offset by commercial sponsorship. 30-70 people were anticipated to attend. Exec looked forward to the Seminar, and pledged support to OD, FA, and PDC.

OD / FA

SCOTTISH INSTITUTE OF SPORT

15. Susie Elms, Performance Lifestyle Co-ordinator, Scottish Institute of Sport, joined the meeting and was welcomed. She proceeded to outline the Institute's work in lifestyle management, including the make-up and involvements of her local teams, and their links currently into HE/FE. A full and free flowing discussion took place, and this concluded with agreement to:

- a. Embrace the recommendations set out in the upcoming research Review of Elite University Sport (paraphrased in 4b above).
- b. Forge stronger links and communication channels between SUS (primarily Directors) and the Institute (SE and her local PLAs) on performance lifestyle matters.
- c. Ensure athlete databases are harmonised and rationalised to uphold awareness, maximise resource allocations and avoid duplication.

SIS / SUS

16. The discussion closed with sincere thanks to SE and the commitment to communicate on a regular basis. SE left the meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

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| <p>17. <i>Health Check</i> - JCA enthused that huge progress had been made over the last two months in establishing SUS, and he expressed his indebtedness to the Exec and its Committees for their selfless and tireless work to date. The investment in time and effort was starting to pay dividends, and there was no doubt that this would ultimately deliver the common goals of achieving more and better physical activity opportunities across the HE sector. Exec endorsed this view and committed to building on the promising start.</p> | <p>RG/JB/OD
/SF</p> |
| <p>RG joined the meeting.</p> | |
| <p>18. <i>Housekeeping</i> - SF introduced paper SUS(EX)m3-6, which set out a number of proposals on housekeeping issues. After discussion, it was agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Endorse the proposals for labelling papers for SUS committees.b. Adopt the recommended arrangements for paying expenses.c. Adhere to the meetings calendar proposed at the 2nd Exec on 4 Oct'05. | <p>All
All
All</p> |
| <p>19. <i>AU Presidents' Forum</i> - RC sought clarification on the relative remits of the AU Presidents' and the CC. JCA stated that CC was the constituted forum for discussing and ratifying policy/practice on all aspects of student sport (SUS Leagues; BUSA knock-outs; I-M; NGB leagues and so on). The AU Forum was designed with two roles in mind; to provide as a support network for AU Presidents (to allow discussions on day to day issues affecting sabbaticals), and also to serve as the Scottish Conference as per the BUSA constitution. However, any issues with policy implications would be passed for approval to CC because this was the ratifying body for SUS. Exec agreed that there should be little scope for conflict because 4 AU Presidents and BUSA were members of CC and this would allow a robust representation of any issues raised at the AU Forum. These points were noted and it was agreed that the relative distinctions between AU Forum and the CC should be underlined at the CC meeting next week.</p> | <p>RG / SF</p> |
| <p>20. <i>Papers</i> - Exec welcomed the production of succinct discussion papers, and congratulated SF on his input to SUS since taking on the role of Acting Sports Manager.</p> | <p>All</p> |
| <p>21. <i>Next meeting</i> - week beginning 23 Jan'06 - to be confirmed</p> | <p>All</p> |
| <p>22. Meeting closed at 1500 hrs with a vote of thanks to all concerned, and gratitude to Scottish Institute of Sport for hosting the meeting.</p> | <p></p> |