



**AU President's Forum
6/5/08**

Room 2/04, Napier University, Craiglockhart Campus

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|----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|-----|
| Present: | Andy Smith | Chair, RGU, Exec | AS |
| | Kerry Anderson | Secretary, Glasgow, Comps | KA |
| | Anna Anderson | Vice Chair, Dundee, Exec | AA |
| | Dave Waddell | Napier | DW |
| | Simon Messenger | Edinburgh, PDC | SM |
| | Steve Rea | Glasgow Caley, Comps | SR |
| | Lucy Botham | Strathclyde, Comps | LB |
| | Gordon Cox | Aberdeen, PDC | GC |
| | Eddie Bryant | Heriot Watt, Comps | EBr |
| | Siobhan Wilson | Paisley, SUSPAC | SW |
| In attendance: | Stew Fowlie | SUS | SF |
| | Ed Nicholas | BUSA Rep | EN |
| | Hannah Dunwoody | GCU Incoming | |
| | Mike Wallace | Napier Incoming | |
| Apologies: | Ian Lowe | Abertay | IL |
| | Ed Barker | St Andrews | EBa |
| | Niall Sturrock | Non student rep | NS |

AS welcomed everyone to the final Forum of the year and asked that the contributions of Michael Bates, UHI, were noted as his time in office has now ended.

1. Minutes

- 1.1 Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted.
- 1.2 Updates – tacographs issue will continue to arise. All buses registered after 1st April 07 are required to be fitted with tacographs, however they are not required to be used.
- 1.3 Matters arising
 - 2.6 **ACTION** LB to allocate list of SDCs for Presidents to contact and encourage to attend SUS Conference.
 - 9.1 PDC developing a skills set that all Presidents should have. GC and SM to follow this up for Presidents Training Day.

2. AU Forum MOT

- 2.1 Some key questions have been raised regarding the AU forum: Where does the forum sit within SUS? Could we be working better? What should the forum look like next year? Is it fit for purpose?
- 2.2 QMU/SAC have been notably absent and do not have much involvement. It is agreed that we should try and get them along to the SUS Conference. Some institutions still have outstanding fixtures against them and it has been quite difficult to get in touch with someone. It is suggested a buddy system is put in place for next year and the GC and SW lead this as they

are staying for a second year. The forum has a collective responsibility to improve relations all round.

- 2.3 How will the forum interact with BUCS? EN advises that the chairs forum is likely to be expanded to include the chairs forum of UCS i.e. directors and that there are no plans for a separate student chairs forum. He also advises that the Midlands already have a joint forum.
- 2.4 SF asks how we would feed in? This needs to be decided. Currently the forum feed into BUSA but this may no longer be appropriate with BUCS. There are different areas that will require consultation and some issues will be specific to exec, some to comps/PDC. There are student and department representatives on all of these committees and so dialogue should be directed to the committee best equipped to deal with it. The Presidents will always be a sounding board for issues – this currently works well within SUS.
- 2.5 Some discussion suggests that the forum is condensed into 3 meetings per year and that they last a full day. Main communications with BUCS can be fed through the various SUS committees. Forum would concentrate on all of the pros highlighted in document produced by AA – specific sessions on relevant topics. Must include a social aspect.

ACTION AS/GC/SW to meet and work on meeting structure for the forum.

Present at training day.

ACTION AS/GC/SW to go through previous minutes (past two years) and identify recurring themes to be used as a basis for new structure and what could be covered.

3. Continuity of sports unions

- 3.1 AA highlights that there may be a need for targets to ensure the continuity of sports unions. Each President puts a lot of hard work in during the time they are in office and do not want to see it go to waste. How do we ensure continuity? Different people have different priorities and projects can be left.
- 3.2 GC asks the forum if we see a future in sports sabbaticals? Is it the best way to run things?
- 3.3 All agree that it can be unfair to ask a sabbatical to run the whole of student sport with limited support and acknowledge that many institutions are beginning to move away from this.
- 3.4 LB informs the forum that many institutions interview potential candidates. Some discussion suggests that this has implications at each institution and would be extremely difficult to introduce, especially in more traditional institutions.
- 3.5 It is agreed that all sports unions need to work on becoming more professional and better at managing their affairs. **ACTION** AA and LB to produce a paper on how sports unions could become more professional for the training day at SUS conference.

4. Intra mural updates

- 4.1 This is to be passed onto next years SUSPAC and forum. Follow up is needed after the meeting in Aberdeen in December.

5. BUSA

5.1 Competitions Review

- 5.1.1 Held in Leeds. Knockouts changing to allow longer calendar of fixtures and better quality of competition. BUSA asking if we should carry on with current system or move to a seeded draw. Knockout options circulated in the mailout - feed into AS which option we prefer.

- 5.1.2 EN asks the forum to support the proposals – driver for development and possible regionalisation. SM has issues with the seeding of Premier League teams as they are all drawn at home until SF meaning it is more difficult to progress.
- 5.1.3 SF highlights that the walkover rules have been relaxed which is a positive step. However, we do not want a regional cup structure forced upon Scotland – that would be a deal breaker.

5.2 BUCS Update

- 5.2.1 Meeting regarding structures has now taken place. More information will be distributed at Chairs forum. There will be positions on the Exec for development and nations & regions.
- 5.2.2 EN stresses that it is important we keep checking the mail out for updates. JA is heavily involved in the group discussing structures.
- 5.2.3 AGM – decision has not been made re the name and board. Info has been poor from the NewCo
- 5.2.4 If we are unhappy with the process that has been followed there are people we can collectively go and speak to.

5.3 BUCS Conference and BUSA Awards Dinner

- 5.3.1 Sign up details for conference now out – **ACTION** sign up incomings!
- 5.3.2 **ACTION** book up for Awards dinner!

6. Engine Rooms

6.1 Exec

- 6.1.1 BUCS development – similar stance to forum on what is happening. More info is needed however nothing to be unhappy about at this stage. New Chief Exec, Karen Rothery, is coming to Scotland as part of her induction process.
- 6.1.2 SUS-BUCS relationship to be looked at with the financials in particular. SF and JA putting a paper together for Ed Smith – terms of reference/terms of engagement. Level of funding to Scotland to be discussed.
- 6.1.3 Subscriptions should still be made to both SUS and BUCS.

6.2 Competitions

- 6.2.1 SDC Forum will be held at the Conference on the Wednesday afternoon.
- 6.2.2 SF indicates that BUSA are concerned about moving to leagues of 5 in tier 1 (not concerned what we do in tier 2 and below). **ACTION** SF is writing to BUSA with further reasoning.
- 6.2.3 If the competitions review doesn't go through a decision will need to be made on whether to withdraw teams from knockouts below the Trophy.
- 6.2.4 Days of the week – only so many hours available but if adding teams causes problems then please flag it as an alternative may be possible. It may be possible to accommodate quirky requests so just ask!

6.3 Physical Activity

- 6.3.1 Articles needed for newsletter. **ACTION** All to submit suitable articles.
- 6.3.2 Clarification on SUSRAG – Scottish Universities Sports Related Academic Group. Separate from SUS but JSt attends meetings. Identify areas where more can be done for sports students.

6.4 Professional Development

- 6.4.1 Conference in Dundee. Program is ready – Gregor Townsend is a speaker.
- 6.4.2 Handbook for Presidents is in the pipeline. Suggested that a SUS induction about different committees is done at presidents training as well as something about loyalty to SUS, SUS cups and fixtures.
ACTION SF to circulate last years agenda for training for comments and suggestions

7. AOB

- 7.1 EN email traffic – add him to distribution list
- 7.2 SM informs the forum that he received a letter from the RFU saying that all travel from knockout stages post QF will be refunded.
- 7.3 BUCS Membership – all institutions to ensure that their Vice Chancellor signs the agreement and that it is returned to BUSA.
- 7.4 SF asks all institutions to ensure that invoices due to SUS are paid ASAP.
- 7.5 Thanks are given to AS for chairing the forum this year and representing us at the Chairs Forum.