

## Relationship with BUCS

Over the last few months SUS has had the opportunity to shape the direction of BUCS, and particularly its remit/role in Scotland. Discussions have been held with Ed Smith and Karen Rothery and SUS was asked to develop a paper to submit to Ed which would outline a proposed partnership agreement between the two organisations. A copy of the draft response which was sent back in June is appended below as a reminder (Appendix Two).

Following further talks with BUCS SUS has just received the proposal for funding arrangements below (Appendix One). This details a proposed rebate of £20,000 and states the conditions that would be attached to that.

As the rebate offered is less than originally asked for Exec needs to give thought to the terms of the arrangement and what can realistically be delivered for the smaller amount.

### SUS Executive is asked to:

Item
o Comment on the draft response from BUCS

## **APPENDIX ONE**



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### **Proposal for funding arrangements, BUCS and Scottish University Sport**

It is proposed that BUCS refund a sum of £20,000 to SUS for this financial year (1<sup>st</sup> August 2008 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2009). This is against projected payment to BUCS of approximately £85,000 (Affiliation fees plus “UCS” fee). SUS and BUCS will agree on the services and activities that SUS will take responsibility for and deliver over this period. This should include:

#### **Governance and Business**

1. Provide a staff member to sit on the BUCS Executive Group, to act as the representative for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland on this group. The Executive Group is an advisory group which will meet 3 times annually.
2. Liaise on BUCS behalf, where appropriate, with Wales and Northern Ireland, to gather opinions and feedback, on matters raised at Board, within the Chairs Forum and in the home nation's competition frameworks.
3. To assist BUCS in the delivery of business wide initiatives in the professional services sector.
4. To liaise with the Executive Group elected members, in particular the Regions and Nations elected member in the execution of BUCS business.
5. To liaise with the BUCS staff member responsible for Regions and Nations.
6. To provide financial information to the BUCS Head of Financial services as required and agreed.
7. To liaise with BUCS in regard to funding opportunities for the support of service provision or other initiatives which the business agrees to be beneficial to members.

#### **Sports and Competition**

1. Uploading all SUS Conference League and Conference Cup fixtures to BUCS deadlines
2. Uploading all SUS Leagues to BUCS deadlines
3. Ensuring that SUS League formats are based upon BUCS entries, confirmation of this prior to season start dates as specified by BUCS.
4. Providing administrative, volunteering and officiating resource for any BUCS events taking place in Scotland.
5. Distribute kit and equipment allocated by BUCS to international representative teams.
6. Work on BUCS behalf with Home Nations International teams to negotiate international representation and participation.
7. Liaise with the elected competition and events Executive Group member with regard to competition structures, leagues and events.

8. To support BUCS in the staging of any international competitions or events in support of it's International Strategy.

### **Marketing and Promotion**

1. To promote the BUCS brand in a reciprocal arrangement as required, including on the website, SUS publications and other communication media as appropriate.
2. To provide news, stories, articles and information to the BUCS media and communications team for inclusion in the various communications vehicles, including BUCS Essentials, The new monthly newsletter and the termly business publication, in a timely manner.
3. Promotion of all BUCS competitions, events, leagues and conferences as appropriate.
4. Allow the (permitted) use of the SUS mailing lists for BUCS communications to member institutions, Vice Chancellors, Directors of Sport and other parties as requested.
5. To liaise with the BUCS marketing and media team to promote commercial income streams through advertising, selling merchandise and other routes at events and other opportunities, with shared income.
6. To permit the use of the SUS website and other media, as agreed, for BUCS sponsors marques, as agreed by BUCS within national sponsorship property arrangements, with prior agreement.
7. To permit the use of BUCS branding and advertising at events staged by SUS.

## **APPENDIX TWO**

Dear Ed,

### **Introduction**

This paper has been written following recent discussions and aims to kick-start the process of designing an official partnership agreement between SUS and BUCS.

This seeks to progress the commitment to adopt a flexible Regions and Nations policy within the new organisation.

It seems natural that the distinct aspects of this agreement should cover the principal operational areas which SUS and BUCS have in common, namely Advocacy, Competitions, and Professional Networks. The remainder of the document briefly outlines our thinking in these areas, followed by a suggested financial arrangement in line with the proposed operations.

In effect, it is envisaged that SUS would be empowered to develop and deliver, within the agreed scope and quality assurances, these aspects of the BUCS programme in Scotland. Such an arrangement would uphold the UK aspect of BUCS and allay concerns over duplication of effort and double funding by institutions in Scotland.

Further discussion of these proposals is warmly welcomed by SUS.

### **Advocacy**

The visibility of HE sport in the UK and the development of sound working arrangements and relationships with other sports related agencies is a particularly important area for the future. Collectively we need to find the best solution to the problem of interacting with Government, Sports Councils, Sports Governing Bodies and other organisations within their own jurisdictional boundaries.

### **Terms**

- SUS to act on behalf of the HE sector with Government, sports governing bodies and other relevant organisations with Scottish remits
- BUCS to act on behalf of the HE sector with Government, sports governing bodies and other relevant organisations with UK-wide remits
- BUCS to be invited to attend a minimum of two SUS Executive Council meetings per annum

### **Perceived benefits**

Sport is a devolved governmental function and therefore the advocacy work undertaken on behalf of the HE sector needs to be specific to Scotland. In terms of the various BUCS regions, Scotland should be viewed as a special case – a super region – by dint of its status as a division, playing conference and Home Nation.

SUS benefits from enjoying existing relationships that have already been formed with key partners in Scotland. There is a high level of recognition of SUS as the agency for HE sport in Scotland and SUS is increasingly involved in national discussions and consultations.

Such a profile is something that the UK wide organisations do not maintain at this time and resource commitments are yet to be made in this area under the BUCS model. There is also a shortage of 'local knowledge' amongst BUCS staff and officers in this area.

It is deemed sensible to open the doors of the SUS Executive to a BUCS representative at regular intervals. This should serve to promote corporate cohesion and strengthen relations between the two organisations.

## **Competitions**

### ***Terms***

- BUCS to design, provide and control top tier domestic team competitions
- BUCS to design, provide and control access to International competitions
- BUCS to design, provide and control individual UK-wide competitions
- BUCS/ SUS to design, provide and control domestic representative competitions
- SUS to design, provide and control lower level domestic team competition
- SUS to design, provide and control individual 'Scotland only' competitions

All of the above to happen within agreed parameters (finance, quality control, available overall points etc)

### ***Perceived benefits***

SUS member institutions will always value UK opportunities, at appropriate levels and the new arrangements should underline and protect this involvement. Many events and opportunities can only be delivered by BUCS and Scottish involvement in these is right and should be encouraged.

On a regional level, thanks to the close knit nature of the network, SUS is better able to respond to local circumstances and priorities. As an organisation we are able to consult quickly and effectively and can therefore be more flexible and responsive to members.

SUS is democratic, joined-up and has well-developed plans and structures and is currently at a stage in its development where it is mature enough to absorb greater responsibility for competition programmes that take place exclusively in Scotland.

The new proposals provide a clear distinction between UK and Scottish regional programmes, thus helping to resolve questions over value for money.

This demarcation is consistent with early thinking on delivery of these services under BUCS and may provide a useful test case or model for other parts of the UK. There are also additional opportunities for SUS to run UK wide events on behalf of BUCS, such as the British University Games.

## **Professional Networks**

### ***Terms***

- SUS to provide regional workshops
- SUS to provide support and education to staff and volunteers
- SUS to provide additional member services as required
- SUS to provide conference and seminar events
- BUCS to provide UK-wide network access for major events

### ***Perceived benefits***

SUS is already delivering in this area to great satisfaction of members and it is felt that the vast majority of professional development opportunities and staff support mechanisms can be provided within the SUS network.

In keeping with the other aspects detailed above, SUS is closer to the market and therefore better able to respond to local interests through initiatives such as short-life project groups or workshops. Once again, the delivery of these services should be recognised as consistent with early thinking on regional delivery and support under BUCS.

## **Financials**

### ***Terms***

- SUS institutions to pay fees to BUCS in line with other institutions across UK
- BUCS to provide a rebate in respect of the items delivered by SUS to cover admin and delivery of quality assured programmes, encompassing
  - All team entries below tier 1
  - Regional level cups and other competitions
  - Regional level political advocacy work, involving BUCS as required
  - Regional staff support networks

In terms of current financial contributions this would translate in the following way;

- BUSA and UCS subscriptions from SUS institutions to carry on as normal
- All BUSA charges in respect of student populations, tier one team entries and individual event entries to be kept by BUSA
- BUSA team entries below tier 1 to be rebated to SUS
- An element of current UCS subscriptions to be rebated to SUS

It is expected that the above would signify something in the region of a £25 - £30k rebate per annum.

## **Concluding Remarks**

It is felt that the time is right to review and formalise the operational agreements between SUS and BUCS. SUS is unequivocal about promoting UK involvement and membership, providing the split of responsibilities is appropriate and manageable.

SUS should be empowered to deliver and modernise activities in Scotland within an appropriate, fair and accountable financial settlement for the benefit of both memberships. In so doing this may also serve to provide a useful working template for adoption by other UK regions

SUS is mature enough in its organisational development to take on these extra responsibilities at this time and this would also serve to substantially reduce the burden on BUCS head office.

We look forward to your thoughts on this matter and to moving forwards positively and to the benefit of both SUS and BUCS.

With kind regards and best wishes,

Jim Aitken  
Chair