Operations Manager Report

Trading

Since the last meeting of the Trustee Board, significant changes have had to occur to our Licensed Trading Operation, to facilitate building works in the Union Building. We are now operating a makeshift set-up in the Activity Spaces. This however requires minimal staffing to operate. In addition, we are operating a mobile bar and a barbeque out in the Quad to capitalise on the recent good weather and the football World Cup.

It is intended that these outlets will provide sufficient cover for the additional business the generated by the BBC Proms and vacation guests, residing in Beit Hall. Clearly the reduced trading ability will have a negative impact on the budgeted figures for the bars and catering in June – September, as it was not predicted that Phase 3 of the Beit Masterplan would be taking place this year. Despite the loss of the nightclub in April, the bars in South Kensington are showing a positive variance on budget for the month of May.

As reported at the last meeting the Retail outlets are performing well, with new stock lines being introduced and a renewed enthusiasm from the staff in retail. May accounts are showing a positive variance in net surplus and it is envisaged that this trend will continue throughout the summer.

Health & Safety

One incident has occurred which is beyond the normal range of occurrences. Last Tuesday a student on a Union trip in Croatia dived into the sea, misjudging the depth of the water, hitting their head on the seabed. At the time the student felt fine. Over the next 36 hours they felt progressively worse with a particularly stiff neck, though was able to walk and swim. They attended a hospital in Split late on Wednesday and were diagnosed with three fractured vertebrae. The student was repatriated back to the UK on Friday by the College travel insurers (who were covering the trip), and remains in hospital.

Summer Ball

The annual Imperial College London Summer Ball was held across campus on 19th June. The event this year was by far the largest Ball yet, attracting some big name artists and seeing a different approach to the layout of the event, including a live music stage on the Queen’s Lawn. The event attracted around 2000 people and has been deemed a huge success by organisers, College staff and the students attending. As with any event of this scale there are lessons to be learned, however this year’s ball provides an excellent platform for the future of the event.

Invoices are still being finalised and reconciliations are ongoing, but early indications are that the Ball was more successful financially than in previous years and provided a great arena to launch the new branding for the ‘Metric’ nightclub, launching as part of Phase 3.

Building

Phase 3 works are underway and progressing well. Russell Cawberry, who have been undertaking the enabling works and pillar removal and who were the main contractor on Phase 2, have been appointed as the main contractor for Phase 3, following a two stage tender period. During the enabling works, a number of surprises were discovered beneath the Ground Floor, including a series of voids, which have delayed slightly the removal of the pillar. These issues have been overcome and it is planned that the pillar will be removed in the next ten days.

The first phase of a three phase planning application to Westminster Council has been accepted, which covers the new fire doors in the nightclub as well as the new cellar roof. The remaining two planning applications, covering mechanical and electrical installations are currently being considered by the council.

The end of RIBA Stage E was passed at the end of June, with an extremely successful TAG Review, where College maintenance and Estates teams posed no problems with continuing the programme of works. The Design Team are still confident of an opening date of October 1st, however contingency plans are being drawn up to ensure we are able to operate a Freshers’ welcome, should building works run over schedule.

Staffing

Since the last meeting, two new members of staff have joined the Union within the Membership Services Department. We now have a full time receptionist to replace the casual student staff members, with the aim of improving continuity of service. Our new Receptionist has joined us from College Catering and is called Dominika Gadawska.

In addition to Dominika, Andrew Keenan has joined us our new Representation Co-ordinator. Andrew has just completed his term as the Union President at St’ Andrews University. The addition of these members of staff is key to us improving the levels of support we can offer to the Sabbatical Team the level of customer service we are able to offer to our members.

Charity Registration

Registering the Union as a Charity will continue over the summer vacation, with a view to the Union being fully registered by December 2010. Work with College Finance and the Central Secretariat will form a major part of this work, along with external consultants Horwarth Clark Whitehill. Updates on our progress will be sent out during the next few weeks.