

Deputy President (Clubs & Societies) Report to Union Council – July 2021

Given this is my last council report of my tenure, I thought I'd go a bit off script. I want to provide everyone with an update on projects that you elected me to deliver, and some reflections from the year.

Objectives Update

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1. Overhaul Training for CSP, MG & CU Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All training articles on eActivities have been remapped, and refreshed so that they are more easily accessible and provide quicker access to more digestible training. • Welcome booklets for incoming officers created (specific ones for Pres, Tres and CU/MGs) and sent to all incoming officers (both last summer, and straight after elections this year) • Volunteer training week (VTW) introduced instead of officer academy. All training sessions delivered in <1 hour online, recorded, and made available for all officers after the session. 2nd VTW to be run in September. • All milestones met.
2. Increase accessibility and inclusivity of our CSPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is obviously an area of work that requires close collaboration between the DPCS and DPW to make any strides, especially when both elected officers include statements like this on their manifesto. Under the original project outlines I had set myself, my intention had been to pick this project up in January. • This became part of a bigger project that Shervin became project manager of in February due to the EDI element of this work. • What I failed to do was to set mutual expectations between the DPW and DPCS for this project. As a result I haven't been involved in this project since the DPW became project manager in February. I'm disappointed in myself that I was unable to contribute effectively to this project.
3. Setting a long-term trajectory for CSP space and storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This was delayed so that it was incorporated into the building and space review. The building and space review is underway as per paper to board here. Hoping I can get most of a final paper written up ready for TN and my successor to finish once the commercial review has concluded. • A space audit has been fully completed for all spaces within Beit Quad. This audit has included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access type ○ Space function/type ○ Urgent H&S issues ○ List of CSPs using that space ○ NET Area ○ Any other relevant details • Storage spaces have been made safe, tidied, and cleaned. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Underwater Club Storage (West Basement, Beit) ○ Caving Club Storage (West Basement, Beit) ○ Laundry & Cleaning facilities (West Basement, Beit) ○ ICRPC Armoury (West Basement, Beit) ○ West Basement Cages (West Basement, Beit) ○ Canoe Store (East Basement, Beit) ○ Dramatic Society storeroom and workshop under the stage Beit) ○ Musical Theatre storage (behind Union Gym, Beit) ○ Society Storeroom (behind Union Dining Hall, Beit)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Society Storerooms (behind Union Gym, Beit) ○ Club Storage room (Basement, Reynolds) ○ Music & dance storage cupboards (Dance/Music room, Reynolds) ● None of these storage spaces pose a health and safety hazard any longer, and a full inventory of the equipment stored in each space is available through eActivities inventories. Equipment belonging to deceased CSPs has been distributed, disposed of, or sold as per the CSP equipment policy. ● Additionally, waste disposal was organised for all CSPs to dispose of the build up of broken, and unusable equipment.
<p>4. Support our CSPs by reviewing the most broken processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3-year CSP Development plan produced in October 2021, developed in conjunction with DPFS, SODM, and DoMS. Update on this include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A tender has been sent out looking for a long-term lease of minibuses ready for the start of next academic year. ○ Created a staff wiki to capture internal knowledge so that staff share knowledge with the wider team and is accessible in times to come ○ Volunteer training addressed as per other objective ○ Sponsorship process reviewed by DPFS. ○ All CSPs now have ability to take part in online elections ● We developed this early on in my time as DPCS, and I wish I'd put more time into student consultation. This plan's main weakness is that it wasn't co-created with students. Developed out of term time, and very quickly, I saw the elected student hat as an excuse not to consult and had a mindset that "I know what the most broken processes are". We should have surveyed, and focus-grouped this development plan as I'm sure students in different management groups would have identified areas of concern that needed rapid intervention that we did not spot.

Solving Sport

You've seen the Imperial Athletes update paper I've brought to council, so I won't dwell on it here. But I wanted to provide some reflections.

Delivering student sport at Imperial has been problematic for many years. Given the transitional period we find ourselves in coming out of the pandemic, and with greater roll out of Imperial Athletes, I have concerns that the current way of operating does not work well, and a reassessment of roles and responsibilities within sport at Imperial would be beneficial. It is time to consider a change to create a sustainable, satisfactory offer of sport to Imperial College students.

The current situation where two bodies are attempting to deliver one service is inefficient; it is clear from recent surveys that students are not satisfied, and opinions published in Felix and online forums express concerns by students.

Running sport from two bodies leads to various issues:

- Lack of student decision-making regarding student sport
- Lack of student influence over decisions
- Lack of transparency of decision-making processes and financial structure
- Lack of communication between the bodies
- Slow communications to students to solve problems

Given that the students are the end-user to the student sport offer, it is my opinion that Imperial Athletes must fix these issues to be a success, otherwise it will be a pointless exercise.

My suggestions to solve these issues are not particularly radical but will have a huge impact on the student body.

One place/One team
Student-led
In the Union

I am not precious over who line manages whom, where budgets lie, where responsibilities ultimately lie between College and the Union. If we follow through with the three suggestions above we will radically reform student opinion of our commitment to improving sport and garner a huge buy-in to the sports strategy, whilst also tackling the problems that have caused friction in the past.

On the student side, this needs the governance of the Sports Exec sorting out and on the staff side, meetings would be required after each Athletics Board meeting to implement actions arising from the student-led discussion and to discuss sports strategy progress.

In terms of student buy-in, we have the Imperial Athletes brand, we just need to show students how sport will be different. One joint team will enable the delivery of sport efficiently and smoothly with students getting involved in how the Athletics Board would function, with students helping write new policies on funding; then we launch a new sports strategy. This is possible to achieve next year given that we have extended the sports strategy until the end of next academic year, and a new sports strategy will be developed next year.

I expand on these reflection's in my board of trustees reflection paper, available through the Union website.

Conclusion & Thanks

I have developed personally and professionally a huge amount this year and I'm grateful to all those who I have worked with, to the staff that have supported me, those that have mentored me, and to those who have contributed to such a fulfilling year.

I also want to say a massive thank you to all of the volunteers I have worked with this year. It can't have been an easy year, and it must have been particularly difficult to stay engaged with CSP activity and dedicate the necessary time to your degrees. This year wouldn't have been possible without the commitment from MG and CU leaders – students who I have worked most closely with. Hopefully we've been able to recognise our thanks to those that have gone above and beyond through Union awards.

I also want to say thank you to CSP volunteers whom I may not have worked with directly, but who have led activity from the front. All of us at Imperial College Union are grateful for your selfless dedication to your members, and this Union would not be where it is today without members such as you – Thank you.

Lastly, I hope no future DPCS ever has to cancel all in-person activity, and I wish all volunteers and OTs, those remaining and incoming all the best for the future – the Union is in an exciting time of growth and you all have the ability to shape it's success.