

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY CLUB FORUM

25 May 2022

The notes of the Melbourne University Sport Club Forum held on Wednesday 25 May 2022 at 6.00pm in Social Space A.

PRESENT:

Mr Ian Marshman (Chair, Advisory Board of Sport)
Ms Sarah Biddulph (Advisory Board of Sport)
Mr Tim Lee (Director, MU Sport)
Mr Rod Warnecke (Sport Development Manager, MU Sport)
Mr Gary Ryan (Organisations That Matter)
Mr Adrian Garvey (Rugby Club)

APOLOGIES:

Mr Shawn Ingle (Advisory Board of Sport)
Ms Lara McKay (Advisory Board of Sport)
Ms Jo Weston (Advisory Board of Sport)
Mr Tom Mullumby (Clubs Coordinator, MU Sport)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Matthew Littleson – Aikido
Mr Sandro Bisetto - Athletics
Mr Areef Barranco – Badminton
Ms Megan Kelly – Baseball
Mr Will Burrell – Basketball
Mr Joel Rimes – Basketball
Mr Sam Hoffmann - Dancesport
Mr Zi Jing Chu – Dragon Boat
Mr Zein Benjamin – Dragon Boat
Ms Stefanie Natascha Voelker – Dragon Boat
Mr Andrew Donald – Football
Ms Maddie Sheedy - Football
Mr Patrick Barry – Football
Mr Will Nack – Futsal
Mr Tanvi Kotwani – Futsal
Mr Sev Jones – Golf
Ms Amy Hsu – Inline Skating
Mr Syed Emad Iqbal – Karate
Mr Jeffery Khor – Kendo
Mr Jacob Forker-Freeman – Mountaineering
Ms Lindy Murphy – Netball
Ms Caitlin Walsh – Netball

Mr Lotu Auita – Rugby
Ms Hannah Danks – Sailing
Mr Callan Hiho – Ski
Mr Michael Owen – Soccer
Ms Angela Christian-Wilkes - Soccer
Ms Tracy Woolacott – Softball
Mr Richard Gale – Squash
Ms Amy Gibbins – Surfriders
Mr Henry Ye – Table Tennis
Ma Mia Constanzo
Ms Chen-Yu Yang – Taekwondo WT
Ms Victoria Streeton-Cook – Taekwondo Rhee
Mr Lachlan Francis – Touch
Ms Zhi Yi Lee – Ultimate Frisbee
Mr Maciej Necki - Underwater
Mr Connor McGowan – Wushu Kung Fu
Ms Amber Allen – Volleyball
Mr Anthony Williams – Volleyball
Mr Michael Lowe – Waterski and Wakeboard
Ms Koa Peters – Water Polo

1. MEETING OPENING

1.1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Mr Ian Marshman took the Chair and welcomed all present. The Chair outlined that the Club Forums is an opportunity to discuss major club issues and the strategic direction of sport at the University. The Chair emphasised the interactive nature of the workshop and encouraged all present to participate.

2. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

2.1. MU SPORT STRATEGIC UPDATE

The Director thanks all for their attendance and explained his role in outlining a couple of key strategic tasks the organisation is focused on. The Director recognised the amazing work clubs completed keeping their members engaged throughout lockdown especially when many activities were put on hold.

The Director highlighted the immediate priority work in reactivating getting students back on campus whilst looking at what the likely ongoing impacts of COVID might be on student and staff participation. Another strategic task highlighted was the review of the sport capital plan to largely engage the university in the challenge to improve the quality capacity and accessibility of our sporting programs.

Last year's significant issue involving a club coach that attracted media attention identified that there is a difficulty currently to effectively deal with the inappropriate conduct of club coaches and members that are not current students and staff. As a

consequence, The Director advised they are looking at reviewing club affiliation arrangements with the University to ensure appropriate oversight and better mechanisms to manage these issues in future.

The Director finally touched on the ongoing work to increase the level of direct and indirect support, including additional workshops and training for office bearers that will help clubs be more strategic, alongside some of the practical elements of financial and HR support.

2.2. RUGBY CLUB STRATEGIC PLAN

Mr Adrian Garvey gave some background to the Club and Rugby in Victoria, and as to how they commenced developing a strategic plan six years ago. One of the significant targets of the club was the development of a strong women's program the Club. Mr Garvey highlighted the importance of having some guiding vision, which their Club wanted to ensure they are making better experiences, better players and overall better humans. In developing a strategic plan, having a roadmap of how tactics will be rolled out was key, and when issues such as COVID arose, priorities had to change significantly and a Club needs to be adaptable.

Mr Garvey spoke to the importance of tracking against your key performance indicators, whether it be performance on the field, feedback on culture, or financial performance. Mr Garvey highlighted the need to be able to first identify your strengths and weaknesses relative to benchmarks. In the example of the Rugby Club other clubs may have juniors, but the ability to leverage the name of a top tier University was a unique draw card that if you align yourself heavily as a brand can allow you to attract new supporters and sponsors.

3. MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

3.1. SPORT CAPITAL INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN UPDATE

Mr Ken Barton thanked clubs for the feedback they have provided to date in the workshops with the consultant for the Sport Capital Infrastructure Plan. Mr Barton reminded clubs that this was for significant capital projects, and to be aware of smaller projects under \$75,000 would fit into the existing Facilities Improvement Program. The Sport Capital Infrastructure Plan intends to cover not only University owned assets, but also the relationships with have with the City of Melbourne and other significant bodies such as the state's Sports Centre Trust in Parkville.

Mr Barton outlined the foundation of the work that has been completed to date. A consultant was engaged back in December to assist with the piece of work trying to identify and articulate the type and needs of facility access that is needed, why the University should invest in sport, whilst ensuring these plans aligns with the University's broader Estate Plan. Mr Barton raised the importance of benchmarking

against the group of eight universities, as a global university we really need to be meeting these benchmarks.

Mr Barton acknowledged the ongoing concern for clubs based out of the City of Melbourne and the year-to-year unknown around ongoing allocations to facilities. Mr Barton advised that this plan will be much higher level and flexible compared to the plan in 2013 to allow adaptability for opportunities that arise, and to allow the plan to be an ongoing advocacy strategy. Mr Barton advised that a draft report will be provided to clubs for feedback that will shape what becomes the final report.

3.2. REACTIVATION WORKSHOP

The Director introduced the workshop facilitator Mr Gary Ryan. The Director highlighted some of the key themes around reactivation as a long-term activity in aligning the university's ambition, and support clubs and stakeholder to make sure there is investment in getting students and staff back on campus. The University has identified the sense of belonging that is crucial to students' academic success but also their mental and physical health, and sporting clubs play a significant role in achieving these goals. The Director mentioned some key barriers to participation why some students may be reluctant to join a program, which range from not knowing anyone involved, the cost of the activity or just not knowing it exists. COVID was recognised as an exacerbation of these issues.

Mr Ryan polled attendees on 'what words best describe the experience of students that is impacting them to engage and participate with the university'. Key responses included cost, culture and connection.

Mr Ryan introduced the first workshop question 'what your best practices have been to engage students with your activities'. Some emerging themes included social programs, social media, welcome events, beginner friendly language, trial periods, cheap cost and flexible choices.

Mr Ryan introduced the second workshop question 'what are some of the things you would like to do to engage students with your activities' Some emerging themes included increased facility access, hosting tournaments and social activities, daytime on campus activities, digital marketing with students, subsidising first trips

4. MEETING FINALISATION

4.1. MEETING CLOSE

The Forum closed at 7.40pm.

4.2. NEXT MEETING

The next forum is planned for Monday 29 May 2023