

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY SPORT ADVISORY BOARD

MEETING 1/2024 –14 March 2024

The minutes of meeting 1/2024 of the Melbourne University Sport (MU Sport) Advisory Board held on 14 March at 6pm in Social Space A, Nona Lee Sports Centre.

PRESENT:

Mr Ian Marshman (Chair)
Mr Tim Lee (Director)
Ms Rosemary Bissett
Ms Kitty Chiller
Ms Meezaan Dickinson
Ms Lara McKay
Mr Matt Roseby
Ms Stephanie Spence
Ms Joanna Weston
Professor Sarah Biddulph (online)

APOLOGIES:

Professor Pip Nicholson

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Sam Cato for item 1.3 (President, Golf Club)
Mr Seve Jones for item 1.3 (Former President, Golf Club)
Mr Chris Harvey for item 2.1
Ms Jo Massoud (Secretary)
Ms Toni Sutherland (Minute taker)
Mr Ken Barton
Ms Bridie Dixon
Mr Aaron McNaughton
Ms Sally Phillips
Ms Liz Tregoning

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND INTRODUCTION

1.1 Welcome

The Chair opened the meeting with the Acknowledgment of Country, welcomed everyone present including Mr Chris Harvey, Mr Sam Cato, Mr Seve Jones and the MU Sport staff.

1.2 Apologies

Apologies were noted.

1.3 Club Presentation – Golf Club

Ms Phillips introduced Mr Cato and Mr Jones, current and past Presidents of the Golf Club. Mr Cato and Mr Jones presented the club's strategic plan, purpose, opportunities, challenges and plans to utilize a funding grant received recently. The club highlighted the need to access a golf course for club activities and the provision

of a campus practice net or golf simulator which they felt would increase engagement with students and staff.

The Chair thanked Mr Cato and Mr Jones for their presentation.

1.4 Minutes from Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting (No 4/2023) held on Thursday 9 November 2023 were confirmed via circular resolution confirmed on 22 February 2024.

1.5 Business Arising/Action Item Updates

1.5.1 Strategic Plan for Sport Workshop

The summary of the November 2023 "Strategic Plan for Sport" workshop outcomes is yet to be distributed by the Secretary.

1.5.2 2024 UniSport Nationals

The Director's report on the 2024 UniSport Nationals program and alternative representative sport opportunities will be incorporated into the Director's Board Update.

2. MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

2.1 Advancement and the Advancing Melbourne Strategy

The Director introduced Mr Harvey to present on the University's Advancing Melbourne Strategy and the opportunities for sport to be supported by the Strategy.

Mr Harvey reflected on his connections to sport at the University as a student and his current involvement in local junior sport as a volunteer with his children. He endorsed that sport forms strong, often transformative connections. Mr Harvey outlined the role of Advancement across the University in developing relationships with alumni and benefactors. The University's current priorities are Narm scholarships and capital programs.

Mr Harvey noted that there was previously a staff member within Advancement dedicated to raising donations for sport, which is currently not the case. The focus has been on gifts and donations generated from club alumni with the Boat Club the most successful club having established a Club Sub-Chapter, under the Sport Foundation, with an active fundraising committee.

Discussion followed about the support required by clubs to develop and maintain giving from former members, which may include endowments, developing project-specific asks, and compelling fundraising stories.

The Chair thanked Mr Harvey for his presentation.

2.2 2023 Annual Review

The Director presented the 2023 Annual Review Report and Financial Report.

The presentation commenced with a viewing of the 2023 Annual Highlights video which, along with the electronic version of the Annual Report, has been distributed to over 20,000 students, staff, and alumni on our distribution list.

The Director outlined the six key strategic goals which were presented to the Board in early 2023. The annual review report provided an update on the significant issues and progress made against each of the strategic tasks and the Director provided a high-level summary of the two key goals.

Aided by the return of international students from China, the participation levels exceeded the goals of 10% increase from the previous year with 20,000 students and staff participating in physical activity on over 500,000 occasions. Growth was achieved through new or expanded programs, provided in part by an additional \$320k in SSAF funding, and the improved performance of traditional programs and services.

The Engagement Strategy, and the 70/30 message of 70% of students and staff connected and engaged by 2030 and demonstrating how this will increase the level of student (and staff) satisfaction has started to gain traction across the University.

Extensive work continued to build University support for sport capital projects and ongoing operational support. Success was achieved with the release of the University's Estates Plan that included the redevelopment of the Sports Precinct outdoor facilities, the first investment in sport capital development since the Pavilion in 2012.

In addition to the six higher level goals there were 16 strategic tasks of which 13 were completed or significant progress achieved during the year. This was achieved despite a range of significant issues occurring during the year including ongoing legal proceedings and a range of investigations and low-level disputes across programs, services and clubs that needed to be managed carefully. Four senior managers were also absent for significant periods of time which resulted in many staff taking on additional responsibilities or were new to the organization.

The slow return of students and staff to campus continued to impact on organization with an operating deficit of \$1.5m against a budgeted deficit of \$1m due to a decrease in commercial and fitness income by \$430k. Expenditure was also \$1m over budget due to additional staffing costs, legal fees and facilities expenditure.

The financial strategy, for several years, with the agreement Advisory Board, has been to operate in deficit and draw down from reserves to keep the doors open and programs operating to support the University's return to campus strategies. This is not sustainable in the longer term and the Director is confident the necessary adjustments will be made to achieve break-even in 2024.

The Director concluded by thanking the staff, clubs, student athletes and volunteers who demonstrated extraordinary commitment and resilience in response to the ever-changing environment. The Director also acknowledged the important role of the Advisory Board.

Resolution

The Advisory Board noted the 2023 Annual Review and Financial Report.

2.3 2024 Strategic Update

The Director presented the 2024 Strategic Goals which are the major tasks and projects to be undertaken during the year that will have a significant impact on progressing the Strategic Plan for Sport.

The Director outlined the broader strategic environment for the University that frames the planning to address many of the issues and opportunities. The key issue nationally is the University's involvement in the Universities Accord. The Australian Government is undertaking a 12-month review of the higher education system with the objective to improve the quality, accessibility, affordability and sustainability of higher education.

The University, like many others, is also focused on improving the QILT Student Experience Survey, satisfaction results which remain stubbornly low. The University also announced in 2023 that it will be investing \$64m on scholarships for both Indigenous students and students from underrepresented groups. The goal is that 25% of undergraduate students are on a scholarship.

The Estates Planning process will continue in 2024 that is likely to have significant impact with a range of developments, including Parkville station and \$54 million over the next two years earmarked for upgrading facilities to meet disability standards.

The development of the strategic goal commenced last November at the Strategic Planning Workshop with the Advisory Board and Senior Managers reviewing the progress against the 2023 tasks and considering critical issues impacting on sport at the University.

The senior management team reviewed the themes that emerged from the workshop as part of the annual review and planning process and developed six strategic goals for the consideration of the Advisory Board.

Improving the experience for students and staff remains the focus for the University and the Sport Engagement Strategy will set clear targets linked to opportunities to increase participation each year up to 2030 with expanded programs, services, places, and spaces offered across all campuses.

Supporting our engagement vision are two key pieces of work: the review of Strategic Plan for Sport, and the Investment Case for Sport. Both provide an opportunity to engage with the University decision makers to ensure the long-term sustainability of sport in a university environment.

The Sports Precinct redevelopment will commence this year and the Sport Capital Infrastructure Plan will be completed to identify short- and long-term capital projects. The challenge to ensure that our activities are safe and inclusive will continue with the review of grievance procedures and club compliance requirements to ensure oversight of clubs, club members and participants.

The Chair thanked the Director for the presentation.

Resolution

The Advisory Board noted the 2024 Strategic Update.

2.4 Semester 1 Orientation

Mr McNaughton, Marketing Manager, presented on the University Orientation Program.

Orientation is a range of events that bring students onto campus to promote the range of services and amenities available. The MU Sport program is developed in collaboration with the University's Orientation Working Group.

The program is an important opportunity for programs and sporting clubs to showcase the range of recreation, fitness and sporting activities. The success of the program is measured by the impact on the level of participation over the year.

Resolution

The Advisory Board noted the Semester One Orientation Presentation.

3. MATTERS FOR NOTING

3.1 Advisory Board Update

The Director presented the Advisory Board Update.

The Director acknowledged the contribution of Andrew 'Andy' Smith who worked tirelessly as a volunteer for more than 60 years at the University Blacks. Mr Smith passed away in early 2023 and left a generous gift to the club of \$100,000 which was used to establish the Blacks Football Club Sub-Fund.

The UniSport Nationals are scheduled to be held in Canberra during teaching weeks in Semester Two. As a consequence, a range of alternative competition opportunities are being developed with Sydney and Adelaide University.

Four hundred elite student athletes will be provided with various levels of support this year as part of the 2024 Elite Athlete Program. The new Club Affiliation Agreements have been distributed and the Lifting and Unicycle clubs have been provisionally affiliated. Former Board member Professor James was presented with a plaque recently by the Chair to acknowledge his ten years of service.

Resolution

The Advisory Board noted the Advisory Board Update.

4. **OTHER BUSINESS**

5. **MEETING FINALISATION**

5.1 **Meeting Close**

The meeting closed at 8.10pm.

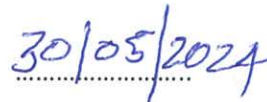
5.2 **Next meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 30 May 6.00pm

Signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record:



Chair Mr Ian Marshman



Date

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY SPORT ADVISORY BOARD

ACTION SHEET 1/2024 – 14 March 2024

Minute no.	Item Title	Action	Person/s Responsible
4/2023 1.2	Strategic Planning Workshop	Distribute to the Board a summary of the Strategic Plan for Sport workshop outcomes.	Secretary