



Imperial College Union Finance and Risk Committee

Date

AGENDA ITEM NO.	15
TITLE	Summer Ball Update
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The Summer Ball is on Saturday the 22nd of June 2019. We aim to deliver a successful ball on time and on budget. We are in the middle stages of planning the ball. We have highlighted a few key risks in the attached paper.
PURPOSE	For information / Discussion
DECISION/ACTION REQUIRED	

Summer Ball Update

Jess Harrison

1. Summer Ball Goal & Objectives

Goal: Produce and deliver an event for 1700 students which is safe, includes production, entertainment and an after party.

Objectives:

Devise and implement a security operations plan and crowd management system.

Confirm crisis management plan alongside communications policy and method.

Update event plans and risk assessments in regards to the ball's activities.

Break even budget.

2. Ticket Sales

Flash sale tickets sold out in record time (16 minutes) and sales were strong within the Earlybird period for ball and after party tickets. However, we have seen a decrease in ticket sales uptake, which typically takes place from March to April historically. There were 54 unsold tickets for Earlybird ball only, 232 unsold tickets within Standard ball and after party, and 118 unsold within Standard ball only. These remaining tickets have been pooled into the third ticket category called "final tickets", which will sell at our highest price point. Compared to last year, we've sold 96 more ball and after party tickets in total, but 612 fewer ball only tickets. We hope to see an increase in ticket uptake before the end of term once our headline acts have been announced.

3. Break Even Budget

This year we are working with a compact budget, as we have incorporated the Summer Ball Project Coordinator's salary into the cost of the ball, which had never been taken into account before. To make the Coordinator's fixed cost balance within the budget, we have cut the fairground rides down from 3 to 2, we have shortened the fireworks from five minutes to three minutes, and we have cut the acts budget, which incorporated student DJs and student bands as well, from 16,489 to 3690. This means for 2019, we will have a headline act, a support act, but there will be no act performing at the after party and we will be utilising Spotify within Metric. To save money we will not be paying big band or wind band to perform, therefore, they may not wish to par-take this year. Compared to last year, we will have 6 DJs rather than 12, and 6 student bands rather than 8. We will not be able to donate money to the Motor Club for fuel this year, therefore, the vintage cars may not be present at the ball, depending on what the committee would like to do. We have moved the opening time of the ball from 7pm to 8pm, to decrease the costs by an hour for the security and stewards needed. In terms of recognising and rewarding the students and staff par taking in the ball, we have cut our food vouchers down from 213 to 52 and drinks vouchers down from 1424 to 433. We've cut having any roaming performers at the event and we also decreased our marketing budget, therefore, we won't have a photographer or videographer at the event, and we have reduced our printing costs.

Cause for concerns at the moment is the lack of volunteering to help run the ball on the night, therefore, we intend to put budget back in for agency staff to run the ticket scanning stall on the night. As the Sales and Sponsorship role is vacant at the moment, the previously budgeted £2,000 from advertising sponsorship also looks unlikely in terms of an income revenue.

Whether we are able to break even is too be confirmed, as at the moment, even with decreasing services available on the night, yearly inflation has meant some fixed terms costs have been non-negotiable and we have been unable to acquire at a significantly cheaper price i.e. the fireworks and the carpet.

4. Crisis Management Plan

Utilising the College's form, previously used last year for the Fresher's Fair 2018, the document will be updated and adapted for the ball, along with the specific hazards the event contains. Beit Venues will be collecting and reviewing the Union's and College's insurance cover, in regards to the event, which will help during the planning process to map contingencies and design plans for emergencies. It is the intention to liaise closely with Julia Cotton / Alastair Lee whilst the crisis management plan is being formulated. The crisis management plan will then be reviewed and tested using a table top approach to see if the model works for the event. Once the procedures are decided, a full communications plan will be incorporated alongside the crisis management plan.

5. Security and Crowd Control Management

The crowd control and security operations will change alongside the plan for the new egress method. There will be a review of the security and steward positions within the ball, limited resources means that efficient security plan will need to be in place and robust incident procedures for specific operations.

Crowd control for the ball will be evaluated beforehand, to the competency level and experience held by the event organiser. A basic analysis of crowd behaviour and the risks involved will be utilised to aid incident planning and evacuation procedures. There will be a higher probability of risk due to the larger number of people attending and the demographic. The plans produced will highlight the risks which are reasonably foreseeable and mitigate them to an acceptable standard.

6. TOIL – The true cost of the Summer Ball

It has been unclear from previous years what the cost of having ICU staff help and volunteer on the day and night of the ball is. Reviewing who helped with the ball last year, which should be noted is essential in regards to successfully delivering the event, I have drafted a minimum cost of what TOIL could be valued at for the Summer Ball 2018. The cost estimated below incorporates the positions who help on the night, calculated using the lowest spine point within the grade, therefore, this is a minimum estimation.

Volunteering times were from 6pm until 12am (6 hours minimum shift) but there were individuals who came earlier to help and some shifts were much longer than the 6 hour minimum, but for this example, the final cost utilises the 6 hour minimum as the standard shift.

3x Level 2a (16.59 per hour) = 149.31

4x Level 2b (18.14 per hour) = 290.24

1x Level 3a (20.44 per hour) = 122.64

3x Level 3b (23.76 per hour) = 213.84

2x Level 4s (30.09 per hour) = 361.08

1x Level 5 (36.37 per hour) = 218.22

Total calculated is 1454.33 for the bare minimum lost in regards to TOIL – this is not including the event organiser's time.

My time as a co-event organiser for the event last year included an 18 hour shift.

7. Proposals for Summer Ball 2020

Last year we made a £6,600 loss to the Summer Ball 2018 and this does not incorporate the cost of having three permanent members of staff (Events and Conferences Manager, Licensed Trade and Venues Manager and Entertainments Coordinator) working on the event over a six month period. This year we have incorporated the cost of a Summer Ball Project Coordinator to run the project, however, we still have a team of three working to make the ball happen (Events and Conferences Manager leading, Entertainments Coordinator, and Bars and Catering Manager). This paper proposes three options for the 2020 ball.

1. Keep the Summer Ball as it is

This is largely seen as unfavourable for multiple reasons. This year to hit a break even budget, we have cut down on the entertainment and celebration services provided substantially and, it could be argued that the Summer Ball, due to budget constraints, is no longer a student experience piece. The Ball is a six month project which pulls resources from multiple Union staff positions, and stakeholders over at the College can be difficult to get a hold of and work in a partnership. As the ball is not seen as a high importance event because it takes place at the weekend.

2. Take the event external

There is the option to run the event externally at a different venue. This would mean that we would be unable to provide fireworks and fairground rides at future balls. The event management side of the event could predominantly be handled by the venue, therefore, less resources would have to be utilised at the Union. However, as acknowledged by most event organisers, the first year an event is moved or started afresh in a new location, ticket sales will be substantially hit. It would be the Union's decision whether or not we could take the financial hit for 2020, during this five year period of stabilisation. If the Union would like to pursue this option, Beit Venues would need to book a venue within the next 2 – 3 months.

3. Bring the ball to the Union

There is the opportunity to no longer hold the ball over at South Kensington Campus and instead run the entire ball at the Union, utilising the stages within Metric and the Concert Hall. This would mean a decrease in capacity in terms of 200 tickets, however, this would eliminate the need to work with College stakeholders, utilising the budget to completely transform the building for the ball and hopefully booked higher quality acts, instead of spending money on fencing, and large security and steward operations This could be delivered in a much shorter time frame, within a smaller planning group, as we already have our in house system to manage carnivals of the same scale.