

COVID-19 Forum – TAG Commercial Development 10.00, 19/03/20

Bryan Hill **(BH)** – Griffith University Campus Life

Drew Newman **(DN)** – CITSA

Shane Moon **(SM)** – UOW Pulse

Adrian Chua **(AC)** – Murdoch Student Guild

Sharyn Bee **(SB)** – QUT Guild

Robert Patterson **(RP)** – Griffith University Gold Coast Student Guild

General

- DN** Difficult to revert entirely to online teaching as vocational training is often face-to-face by necessity.
- BH** Rapidly changing situation is difficult to plan for and respond to.
How do we continue to support residential students who may be having to self-isolate on campus, particularly if we have depleted staff?
- SB** QUT has finally delivered a plan, with all students moving online next week.
- AC** University is moving classes online. Guild has been instructed to remain open as the last line of services until the last day of campus activity.

Staff and Closures

- BH** University appears to be resisting full campus closure to be able to support staff employment for as long as possible.
Sales have declined significantly and expects it to fall by 75% by next week when students are migrated online. This is exacerbated by already-low student numbers due to the Qld gap year adjustment in 2020. Consequently staffing, particularly casuals, have been being cut already.
Looking to redeploy staff to different campus operations.
Looking at how a sickness-depleted workforce will be able to cover operational requirements.
- SM** Staff reduced already due to gig cancellations. Next week is campus recess, so no shifts for casuals at wall. Permanent staff are being redeployed across all areas to take up the slack.

- SB** Most staff will be moved to home, to work on projects.
- AC** Guild currently has the capacity to maintain casual employment at normal levels.
- DN** Currently business as usual, although looking to redeploy staff if necessary, to other operational areas. Eg, increased demand for their CIT cleaning service.
- Looking at how administration staff can work from home, and training or project for staff without available leave balance.
- RP** Staff working from home have executed workplace agreements. Fire extinguishers and first-aid kits have been provided.
- Negative leave accruals may be a concern as the Guild has several recently employed staff.
- TAG** There is a finite availability of accrued leave for any business. What is the solution if campus closures extend for months, and available leave is exhausted? What is the organisation prepared to cover in that event? Negative accrual can pose a problem going forward, creating a liability and a possible obligation of ongoing employment for that staff member.
- How do we ensure that staff working from home have a safe work environment? Is self-assessment effective? FWA feels that employers who compel staff to undertake a self-assessment of their home working space have established concern for the well-being of staff and compliance to the law.

Event Restrictions and Cancellations

- SM** Has had to cancel events at the Unibar and restrict seating to ten outside the Unibar.
- Event tickets are through Moshtix, being treated on a case-by-case basis with punters being given the option of refunds or holding for rescheduled dates if they exist.
- Garden Party has been postponed until September; all deposits being held in credit.
- SB** Cancelled all events. Mid-year graduations cancelled.
- Most functions in the Botanic Bar are for student clubs. Have asked them to consider rescheduling, but this has not been well-received, so refunds are being offered.
- BH** All events and function business have ground to a halt.
- Offering to reschedule for forward bookings. No refunds.
- DN** Function business slowed significantly.
- Offering credits rather than refunds.
- RP** Unibar was fortunate in not having many functions booked leading into the break. Going forward restricting events to 100, and seating has been arranged to accommodate the 1.5m recommendation.

TAG Many members have cancelled events up to June.

Social Distancing in Outlets/Venues

SM Seats inside Unibar have been reduced to 100, and spaced, but continually managing the movement of those seats by students will be difficult.

May restrict to one door access, monitor with a door clicker. May encourage customers to exit with their food and consume outdoors.

SM Security guard with clicker at door, as numbers are regularly exceeding 100 despite the diminishing number of students on campus.

BH Numbers at the Unibar is also posting an upswing in numbers.

DN Large functions booked prior have been asked to reduce numbers to 100.

Is there a clear way of establishing new outlet and venue limits that take the 100 limit and 1.5m recommendations into consideration?

TAG Humans, in times of stress, need to gather and share the experience.

Operational

DN Is considering pre-order apps such as Skip or Neat the Q. Would rather pay the transaction fee than lose the entire sale.

Controlling stock on hand, particularly perishable goods.

Experiencing some difficulties with meat supply, and a tightening of bread and milk. Sanitiser and cleaning products are very difficult to source.

SM UOW Pulse looking to deliver from their campus IGA store and expanding their online Click & Collect facility.

Reduced stock ordering in preparation of a campus shutdown. When this eventuates, perishables will be cooked and given away.

BH Not considering deliveries to residential students but looking to expand grocery range in their campus store to support students having trouble finding groceries off campus.

AC Currently full levels of stock. If directed to close, they will give away perishable stock.

Also finding the sourcing of sanitizer and cleaning products almost impossible.

SB Aggressively reducing stockholding in all lines.

RP No overly dependent on perishable goods, so supply lines are not a concern, other than sanitizer and cleaning products.

Budget Impact

- RP** Rent relief for tenants will be a significant impact.
- SM** University support may be sought
- AC** Have not modelled yet, still adapting to the rapidly changing environment.
- DN** Have not modelled yet, will be difficult to forecast.
- SB** Will look at this now that the university has decided on closures.
- BH** Prediction is that it may be similar to their typical campus downtime, but this will depend on the impact of possible wider university staff reductions.