

Senior Common Room Chairman's Report 2024/25

It has been a very successful and fruitful year for the Senior Common Room (SCR) under the guidance of our ExCo Members, the knowledgeable help of our Club Management Team and the continuous support of the Senior Management Team of the University and our members. This Chairman's Report serves as a summary of our latest developments since last year and it should be read alongside the Audit Report.

a. Organisational Changes

There are a few organisational changes of the SCR. The ExCo passed the proposed motion of amending The Constitution Section 18 of including the Chief Information Officer and University Librarian as an Ex-Officio ExCo Member, alongside the Directors of Finance, Estates and Human Resources, in the last AGM held on 27th November, 2024. The ExCo also voted in favour of the Good Bridge (previously 'The Bridge') to be separated from the SCR, and it is now under the supervision of the newly established Campus Services Office (CSO) instead.

b. Membership Development

The total number of members has increased 21.2% (as of January – October 2024 and 2025), from 1,959 to 2,374: the majority of which are Ordinary and Affiliated Members. The ExCo has recently agreed to widen the membership base to allow more HKU staff and affiliated members to enjoy what SCR offers. The entry requirement for staff members therefore has been adjusted to Band F within the University. We have also agreed that staff members of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University could join as Affiliated Members (with conditions) for a trial period, subject to the performance of the trial, and the feedback from the staff members of the SCR as well as our own University members, who have the first priority in terms of bookings and the use of space. The number of inactive members, who have not settled their membership fees on time, has also increased from 285 to 431. These inactive memberships incur administrative costs and are being written off gradually.

c. Financial Performance

During this challenging time, our financial performance is not as strong as we would have hoped due to the universal underperformance of the Food Beverage Industry and increasing food costs, despite the overall sales figures which have been constantly increasing after the pandemic. Based on the compared figures from January to October 2024 and 2025, the total number of sales of Cafe 1951 has increased c.a. 30.4% from 4.7M to 6.1M, while the total number of sales of Ming Pavilion has increased c.a. 7.6% from 16M to 17.2M. Although the

figures of January to September 2024 and 2025 show that the overall income of Cafe 1951 and Ming Pavilion has increased by 8.6%, from 19.52M to 21.19M (excluding the income of membership fees), the deficit has increased 81.1% from minus 1.51M to minus 2.75M. These figures the result of continuously increasing actual and budgeted operational costs, including some of the accumulative expenses including electricity, carparking coupons as well as contingent maintenance. Therefore, our ExCo has agreed to have a slight increase of monthly membership fees and such arrangement will be announced shortly. We have also put our kitchen renovation plan on hold until a clearer return on such investment can be guaranteed.

d. Outreach

Our new Executive Chef Mr Rex Cheung has been working closely with the SCR Management Team to create lots of new dishes for different thematic and celebratory events, from Chinese New Year, Mothers Days and Christmas to Spanish Tapas and Hairy Crab Cuisine. In the past year our dining spaces of Cafe 1951 and Ming Pavilion are fully occupied by private and public events including welcome receptions held by various Faculties and Departments, wedding ceremonies by University alumni, private family gatherings and commercial business meetings. The total number of private and members events hosted at Cafe 1951 has a yearly increase of 67.7% from 31 to 52, whereas the Ming Pavilion has a decrease of 7.3%, from 356 to 330. Our Club Management team has also hosted lots of marketing and promotional events including wine tasting, making of rice dumplings, easter eggs hunting, and Chinese calligraphies classes catering for our wider demographic memberships.

e. Licensing

SCR is a licensed private club operating under the Cap. 376 Clubs (Safety of Premises) Ordinance of the HKSAR. The generous allocation of the SCR spaces is a symbolic support of the University to foster and nurture ideas and inspirations of academic exchanges through social networking of our teaching and senior administrative staff members. This is to remind our members that the SCR can only serve eligible members who have valid memberships under the Private Club Ordinance 2(a), including the alcohol licence. Memberships are not transferrable, and non-member guests will not be served without members' presence based on the regulated Club Licence and fairness to our pay members. Please make sure that your memberships stay active with on-time renewal, and your membership information is secured and not used by third parties without authorisation. Inactive memberships will be cancelled immediately without notification if no renewal payments are received after expiration.

f. Looking Forward

We are anticipating a lot more departmental events to be hosted at the SCR due to the 115th anniversary of the University, together with other private events hosted by our members. Since we have also adjusted the entry requirement, we have already had some more staff members joined our SCR family. We will also soon welcome some of the new Affiliated Members from The Hong Kong Polytechnic University once we have finalised the terms and conditions of the trial. We always welcome all members to send us your suggestions regarding quality of food, use of space, services, and benefits of your memberships, or you may approach anyone of us at the SCR anytime.

I would also like to thank all the hardworking staff members of the SCR, especially Chef Rex Cheung and restaurants managers Ken Wong and Sam Wong for their outstanding professional customer service; our past and current SCR management team members Tony Cheng, David Ting, Bonnie Li, Alex Lam, Mandy Li, Vivien Wong and Jack Leung for their knowledge in operations; Sam Poon from Cedars, our Ex-Officio Members Paul Choi, Paul Lee, Tony Lo, Flora Ng, Sunny Yeung, and our Vice-Chairman Dr. Chung Pui-hong for their expert knowledge in campus support services, finance, estates, commerce and business, their time as well as dedication. Last but not least – please also help refer your fellow colleagues to join our memberships or to become part of our ExCo members.

Sincerely yours,

Garfield Lam

Chairman, Senior Common Room