

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Candidate Briefing Document for the position of

**Chief Executive Officer, Mardyke Arena UCC**

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## Organisation Overview

The Mardyke Arena UCC and the Mardyke Sports Ground, are located on the main sports campus of University College Cork (UCC), situated at the western end of the Mardyke area near Cork city centre. The grounds and fitness facilities are utilised by the Students of UCC, including sports teams representing UCC, and by members of the public of all ages, from toddlers to senior citizens. The Mardyke Arena UCC has a significant membership and is closely aligned with the community of members and organisations it serves. It is an inclusive and vibrant location with a Team of approximately 100 (including part-time) employees, and the facility hosts in excess of 10,000 customer visits per week.

The Mardyke Arena UCC provides a wide variety of amenities including fitness studios, basketball courts, squash courts, a climbing wall and swimming pool, all of which are maintained to the highest standards. Other onsite facilities include a Coffee Shop and the Arena Clinic which provides physiotherapy, hydrotherapy and specialist rehabilitation services. The facility holds four awards for quality and excellence including ISO 14001 Environmental Management Systems, ISO 50001 Energy Management Systems Standard, ISO 9001 for Quality Management and ISO 45001 Occupational Health & Safety Systems.

The Mardyke Arena UCC is operated by Mardyke Leisure (UCC) DAC, which is a wholly owned, not-for-profit subsidiary company of University College Cork (UCC). Mardyke Leisure (UCC) DAC has a Board of Directors comprising 8 members, including representatives of UCC Students and Sports Clubs. Owing to an imminent retirement, the Board now wishes to appoint a Chief Executive Officer to ensure the continued success and development of the Mardyke Arena UCC.

For more information, please visit:

[Mardyke Arena UCC Website](#)

[Mardyke Leisure \(UCC\) DAC | University College Cork](#)

[Mardyke Leisure \(UCC\) DAC, Articles of Association](#)

## Role Overview

Reporting to the Board, the CEO will be responsible for leadership, management, operations, and the overall performance of the Mardyke Arena UCC. The appointed person will provide clear and effective direction regarding all elements of the facility and will, in conjunction with the Board, design and implement progressive strategic and operational plans for the Mardyke Arena UCC.

The successful candidate will ensure the delivery of the commercial objectives of the Company, the efficient running and maintenance of the facility to the required standards, and effective decision-making regarding future developments and investments. The CEO will ensure that high levels of Membership retention are maintained and that utilisation of the facility is optimal.

The CEO will represent the Mardyke Arena UCC in the public domain through appropriate channels and events and will further cultivate relations with key university staff and students, and with relevant local community groups.

## The Person

The ideal candidate for this position will have a significant leadership background in a member-based services enterprise, or similar. The appointed person will have a strong track record of successful delivery in terms of development, growth and commercial performance. This position requires significant leadership abilities in operations, quality, sustainability, service development, and communications.

In addition to being an excellent leader of people with significant motivational abilities, the CEO will be a clear decision-maker with excellent stakeholder management and interpersonal communication skills across all channels. He / She will have the capability to build solid, credible working relationships with the Membership, the University community, and with individuals and groups at all levels, internally and externally.

Strong commercial acumen is required in addition to a highly organised approach and the ability to prioritise and deliver on a diverse range of sometimes conflicting priorities. With an appreciation of relevant developments and initiatives in Health & Fitness, the appointed person will have an affinity for continuous improvement, with high energy levels and personal standards in terms of quality, excellence and the desire to achieve. An appropriate 3<sup>rd</sup> level qualification is required, with an additional business management qualification preferred.

## Key Responsibilities

### *Organisational Leadership*

- To provide strategic vision and leadership within the policy direction set by the Board.
- To identify and leverage opportunities to develop the Mardyke Arena UCC in accordance with the University's and Mardyke Leisure (UCC) DAC's Strategic Plans.
- To prepare a multi-annual business plan for the Mardyke Arena UCC and to ensure its on-going financial viability.
- To lead, motivate and develop employees, ensuring that those working for the organisation are focused on delivering services to the required standards.
- To ensure that appropriate management structures and systems are in place for the Mardyke Arena UCC to function effectively and safely whilst maintaining all quality standards.
- To ensure that a progressive, service-oriented culture prevails amongst employees.
- To ensure that communications within the organisation are open and transparent.

### *Operations*

- To ensure the highest levels of quality in all aspects of the services delivered and that standards compliance is maintained.
- To ensure that all assets and resources of the organisation, such as equipment, materials, and data, are properly managed and secured, and that processes are in place for improvement, maintenance, and replacement, as appropriate.
- To ensure that Membership retention and development is achieved, in accordance with Company Objectives.
- To track, analyse and monitor Key Performance Metrics relating to Operational Performance.
- To work with all employees and users to ensure compliance with all Safety Requirements and Operations Procedures and ensure that a strong culture of Hygiene, Health & Safety prevails, as the highest priority.

### **Finance and Legal Affairs**

- To be responsible for the overall financial performance of the Mardyke Arena UCC.
- To ensure that commercial objectives of the company-specific targets set by the Board and the University are met.
- To prepare an annual budget for presentation to the Board and to ensure that the budget is met.
- To seek and develop new strategies for ensuring future income streams and resources.
- When possible, to build and maintain the financial reserves of the Company to an appropriate level set by the Board.
- To manage risk for the Company.
- To ensure that the Company fulfils its constitutional, regulatory, legal and fiduciary duties.

### **Governance**

- Working with the Board, to ensure the formulation and regular review of the organisation's vision, mission, values, and strategic priorities and objectives.
- To report to the Board on organisational progress and performance in delivering objectives within the Company and with UCC, and external stakeholders.
- To provide the Board with:
  - accurate, timely and clear information to enable the Directors to discharge their duties;
  - appropriate information about the Company, including providing access to Company operations and staff members;
  - the necessary resources for developing and updating their knowledge and capabilities;
  - support in fulfilling its responsibilities for the proper governance of the Company, including compliance with the regulations set out by the Charities Registration Office.
- To support the streamlining of the Mardyke Arena UCC's corporate governance procedures to align with the requirements of UCC.
- To ensure the timely and accurate provision of requisite organisational data to relevant bodies and organisations including UCC, the HEA, the Charities Regulator, etc.

### **Representation**

- To act as spokesperson and advocate for the Mardyke Arena UCC and ensure that the organisation is appropriately represented regarding all relevant forums and partnerships.
- To ensure that the organisation forges strong and effective partnerships in delivering its mission.
- To maintain strong, positive relationships with the Board, Mardyke Arena UCC employees, University staff and students, and all other stakeholders and groups.
- To seek opportunities to expand the Mardyke Arena UCC's remit, in support of UCC's strategy.

***The above listing is not exhaustive. It indicates the main responsibilities of the CEO position and may be subject to periodic revision and amendment with the role holder.***

## Skills and Experience:

- Relevant Degree, and/or relevant professional qualification.
- 10+ years in a people leadership, supervisory or senior management role with a proven track record in leading teams in a member-based services enterprise, or equivalent.
- Strong Operational leadership experience and a proven track record of managing significant change, in a relevant setting, including the development of new facilities and infrastructure.
- Excellent financial awareness and understanding, including experience with budget formulation and budget management.
- Proven achievement in team leadership and organisation development.
- Proven experience in risk management, compliance, and governance.
- Outgoing, with exceptional communication, motivational and interpersonal skills.

## Details of the Position:

### Position Type:

This position will be offered as a permanent contract. A six-month probationary period will apply.

### Salary:

The remuneration package offered will be commensurate with the seniority of this role. The salary offered will be inclusive of payment for any work outside of normal hours – overtime will not apply.

### Holidays:

The annual holiday entitlement is 30 working days plus 3-4 “Company days” during the Christmas – New Year period.

### Pension:

A Company Defined Contribution Pension Scheme is available, following probation.

## Application Process

Mardyke Leisure (UCC) DAC has engaged Lansdowne Executive Search to manage the appointment process for this position. Candidates for this role will be sought via Lansdowne Executive Search’s own search activities and via Advertising in the public domain.

Any respondents to Advertisements will receive an acknowledgement of their application and all will be assessed based on the criteria specified for the role. Applications will be via email only.

No original certificates or references should be submitted as any part of an application.

Following the completion of the Search and Advertising processes, a short-listing process will be utilised based on the information supplied on completed applications and, as appropriate, based on initial screening interviews.

Candidates selected from the short-listing process will be invited for an interview with the Mardyke Arena UCC interview panel. It is likely that a small number will be called for second interview, in which case they may be asked to prepare a presentation in response to a possible case study or proposed business scenario.

Psychometric testing may be included as part of this appointment process.

Any offer made will be subject to satisfactory reference checks, proof of qualification(s) and Garda clearance.

**Closing Date for receipt of Applications is 12:00 noon, Wednesday, 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2023.**

**LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

**CANVASSING WILL DISQUALIFY.**

**MARDYKE LEISURE (UCC) DAC IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER AND IN LINE WITH ITS GENDER & DIVERSITY POLICIES, THE ORGANISATION IS SEEKING A BALANCED POOL OF CANDIDATES.**