



## Minutes AGM Wednesday 18th October 2017

### 1. Apologies: 80 members and the meeting was quorate.

### 2. Matters arising from the Minutes 2015

See items 5 & 7. There being no other matters arising the minutes were considered to be read and accepted.

### 3. Election of Officers

There being 2 candidates for the role of Chair a secret ballot took place at the meeting.

Members unable to attend were able to vote in advance by e-mail.

The other officers were elected unopposed

Secretary – Pam Kirkup

Treasurer – Stephen Lumsdon

Male Captain – Gareth Pritchard

Male Vice-Captain – Mike Hughes

Female Captain – Catherine Smith

Female Vice-Captain – Kerry Barnett

Membership Secretary – Karen Byng

Publicity Officer – Kerry Barnett

Coaching Co-ordinator – Anna Seeley

Web Officer – Dougie Nisbet

Deputy Web Officer – Anita Wright

Kit Officer – Lesley Hamill

XC Captains – Geoff & Susan Davis

Track & Field Captains – Katy Walton & Lesley Charman

Transport Officer – Mark Foster

After the meeting closed the result of the election for the role of Chair was announced. The total votes cast were 123 – 46 by e-mail, 77 by paper vote on the night. Jonathan Hamill was elected Chair with a clear majority.

### 4. Officers' Reports

**The Chair** – opening comments

Jonathan thanked everyone for a successful year – the committee and all volunteers, all the members and the outgoing officers:

Anita Clementson as Treasurer replaced by Stephen Lumsdon

Lesley Charman as Vice-Captain replaced by Kerry Barnett

Joanne Patterson as Kit Officer replaced by Lesley Hamill

Anita Wright will be replacing Jonathan as Assistant Web Officer

Andy James as Transport Officer replaced by Mark Foster

Welcome to all new club officers,

The Chair's report will be published separately on the website

### **Treasurer's report:**

Accounts provided separately. Owing to an increase in EA's affiliation fee, club fees to rise by £1 with effect from April 2108

All Officers' reports will be published separately on the website – Chair, Treasurer's accounts, Captains (joint), Publicity Officer, Coaching Co-ordinator, XC Captains (joint), Track & Field Captains (joint), Web Officer, Transport officer plus accounts

### **5. Structure of the Committee:**

Paul Evans proposed that the office of Publicity Officer should be abolished for the following reasons;

- It was created for expansion – which clearly has worked – and as a service to non-runners
- The role has changed – not needed for the newspapers. Print media is not read so much now – social media and the website more appropriate.
- Kerry is to be Female Vice-Captains so the publicity role does not need a separate person to do it.
- While supporting Paul's proposal, Jonathan felt that the function remained essential albeit with a different distinction. We need to convey the achievements to the local community and other interested stakeholders. Jonathan proposed that while abolishing the role in itself, the tasks would be distributed across the Committee. Proposal carried.

### **6. The case for a Social Secretary**

Tim Skelton proposed this. In view of the size of the club, the diversity of running options and the wide range of speeds at which members run, the potential for members meeting and mixing on club nights is limited. A social secretary could organise social events to bring people together, to get to know each other. These events would be club-wide rather than a specific group of friends, so all-inclusive. This would complement the role of the Vice-Captains. This role was approved by the meeting; sub committees could be formed to organise such events. However, it would not be a committee role. Tim Skelton was elected as Social secretary.

### **7. Size of the Club:**

Dave Robson proposed that decisions on the numbers of members of the club should only be taken at the AGM, or after consultation with all members.

Denise Benven/Sue Jennings queried the increase of member from 400 to 450.

Dave was encouraged by the enthusiasm of new members however he had concerns about the process by which an increase in numbers was approved. Such a decision should have come to the AGM or by some other form of consultation of members, who should have a say on whether the membership should rise, fall or stay the same. Empowering members. In future, members should be consulted before any % increase agreed. A large increase considered not viable.

Jonathan explained that he was grateful to MC for acknowledging that they dealt with ES differently from other groups/clubs, in terms of imposing a membership cap and he extended his gratitude to MC for increasing the cap by 50 places at no additional cost, which in turn, allowed the club to deplete its waiting list. Further, based on feedback received, those new members were extremely grateful to the club for permitting them to take up membership.

To what extent does the Committee need to consult the membership on any issue? A small increase should be doable.

Denise referred to the AGM decision of 2015 (when she was membership secretary) in which members were consulted re club size. In addition, in view of the timing of the decision to increase the membership, could the Committee not have waited until the AGM – only a few weeks later?

It was suggested that an optimum number or % should be agreed by which the membership could be raised without an AGM. But what would be the time span to which this number or % would apply?

If numbers rise it will increase difficulties in managing numbers – providing appropriate run leaders.

It was pointed out that most committee roles were appointed without opposition which suggests a level of trust in the Committee.

Jonathan asked whether the Committee can make decisions about the number of members of the club – the consensus was in agreement. He further asked if members were of the opinion that there needed to be a limit to any increase or decrease of the membership requiring consultation of the members.

The majority of the members agreed that the Committee should exercise its judgement and consult members if the Committee felt that a threshold had been reached which would benefit from consultation.

Dave Robson felt that he had been provided with a suitable platform to air his proposal.

#### **8. London Marathon Club Numbers:**

Paul Swinburne's proposal was that the club's LM numbers should be offered in the first instance to those members who have never previously run the race. This proposal was rejected by the members and other possible criteria were suggested. Firstly, applicants should have at least 2 years membership of the club – this was rejected. Secondly, that anyone who had previously gained a club number should not be able to access the club draw – but for how long? Two years? "For ever"? Thirdly, we all pay club fees and so should all have equal rights to access the draw. It was agreed that there should be some restriction to those members who have previously been successful but this would not apply until the next round ( i.e LM 2019) since the current process is already underway. The details of any restrictions could be revisited at next year's AGM and before starting the application process.

#### **9. Screening of New members:**

This process was questioned by Denise Benven and Sue Jennings. How can we ensure that this process is fair and without discrimination? What are the criteria for admittance – or otherwise – to the club? Is there an appeals process?

However, it was pointed out that this process applies to all potential new members and is cited in the constitution (section 4b). In addition it was considered a huge responsibility for the Membership Secretary to individually make such decisions. Therefore the committee review the names of those applying and on the waiting list. The Chair pointed out the benefits realised to date with this approach in terms of making an informed decision.

Denise asked if those rejected should be 'ostracised' for life. Does the Committee ask for references, DBS or police checks? Is there formal screening – or just opinion? Denise has concerns over how the process is applied. Jonathan referred to the Constitution section 4b which states that the Committee is required to make a decision on any contentious application. This is in line with legal advice received from the EA legal advisor.

Melanie Hudson asked about an appeals process. Is the rejected applicant offered the opportunity to appeal? At the moment there is no appeals process, however Jonathan

confirmed that the Committee would consider an appeals process, which Melanie undertook to draft. Ian Spencer proposed that we do have an appeals process. However, an appeals process was rejected by the members. It was confirmed that only one individual had been refused membership.

#### **10. Number Swapping:**

Catherine Smith outlined the club's position on illegal number swapping. Any e-mails/FB posts offering numbers for races which don't have a transfer policy will be removed. The rules are clear – EA insurance does not cover runners who have gained a number in an illegal swap. In addition they could be disqualified from future entry to that event or future competition. The information required on the back of the number could lead to unnecessary distress for families, should a runner with problems during the race be wrongly identified. The club does not endorse unauthorised swapping of numbers.

#### **11. Changes to the constitution:**

Pam proposed a couple of changes to the constitution for clarification.

Firstly, that the word 'personally' should be added to the first sentence in section 4b – 'Individuals who wish to become members of the club must apply **personally** using...'.  
Secondly, in section 10d the time by which members should make nominations for club officers should be increased from 7 to 14 days before an AGM. This is to give candidates time, in the event of an election, to prepare and publish a presentation in support of their candidacy and to give the club secretary time to collect & collate e-mail votes from those not attending the meeting. In addition, in the sentence commencing "In the event of more than one person standing.." the phrase 'candidates may wish to write a presentation to be published by e-mail', it was suggest that 'by the club secretary' should be included. This ensures that all presentations are published at the same time so that no candidate has any advantage.

Thirdly, in Section 10e, the phrase 'Voting shall be by a show of hands' should be replaced by 'Voting shall be by a secret paper vote'. This is in the interests of discretion and accuracy. If the voting is close, then paper votes offer an accurate count/recount. In addition such a voting process is less embarrassing for candidates. However, show of hands voting should continue when deciding on issues and club policy. Changes agreed by the members. The Chair endorsed the changes only in respect of election of officers. For all other votes, as per the constitution, the method is at the Chair's discretion. This was unchallenged

#### **12. The Committee:**

Denise Benvin and Sue Jennings raised agenda items and input of members to committee meetings. It was felt that certain agenda items had been ignored or rejected for discussion at committee meetings. However, Denise said that she could not speak for Sue in her absence so the item was noted. The Chair provided his assurance that the Committee did not avoid topics raised but if this related to the particular issue relating to a declined membership application, he has already made it clear that he had provided as much information as was possible, and the matter had therefore been closed.

#### **13. Runners of the Year/Most Improved Runners of the Year:**

Jonathan proposed a change to the previous voting system. There had been less than 10% response to the e-mail nominations for RoY/MIRoY – possibly because of lack of information or familiarisation/knowledge of the process. It was suggested that mini profiles be prepared for those nominated in each category and then a second poll could follow – possibly a survey monkey poll. This could involve more members. Profiles could be written by the nominee, one of their nominators or by the Committee but any profile not written by the individual would be authorised by that individual prior to publication. More time was given for members

to make nominations – deadline extended until Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct. at midday. Proposal accepted by the members.

**14. Items from the Chair:**

- A) Adoption of Tier 1 of the Sport England Code for Sport Governance. Members had had the opportunity to read the details of this in a paper presented by Jonathan prior to the meeting. This was accepted by the members and the constitution will be amended accordingly
- B) The Creation of President roles – The feeling of the meeting was that only one such person was needed. David Shipman was proposed by Jonathan & seconded by Pam. Carried by the members. The constitution will be amended in line with the proposal agreed.
- C) Code of conduct – a ‘three strikes’ policy was proposed but members heard input from Catherin Smith to revise the proposal made in line with employment law. A first transgression would incur a written warning which would be in force for 6 months. A subsequent transgression would incur a further written warning valid for 12 months. A third transgression could lead to expulsion – subject to the discretion of the committee. Clearly, incidents of gross misconduct could over-ride the first 2 steps. The Chair explained that in contemplating this change, advice had been received about appointing a disciplinary panel, and his recommendation was that the Committee fulfilled this function. Carried by the members. The Code of Conduct will be amended accordingly.
- D) Appointment of Life/Honorary members – this is applied to long serving members who have made a considerable contribution to the club. Those to be included this year are Jan Young, Carole Seheult, David Shipman, Barrie Evans and Allan Seheult.

**15. AOB**

CDAN – we already have it but to pay the additional funding of £100 would be an investment  
Club Age grade Park run – results to be announced by e-mail. Winner Roz Layton, 2<sup>nd</sup> Gareth Pritchard, 3<sup>rd</sup> Jean Bradley, 4<sup>th</sup> Stephen Jackson.

Date of Christmas Handicap – 17<sup>th</sup> December

Meeting closed at 10.45

