

Dear all,

I, too, will be unable to attend the AGM next week. As such, here are my thoughts as outgoing PO on what the role has been to me, and what I humbly recommend for the future.

The last 18 months or so as PO have been incredibly rewarding. It has been wonderful to applaud the achievements of our individual members, and the club as a whole, on so many platforms. One need look no further than the men's recent promotion to Division 1 in XC; the elite finishing positions held by many of our members; the exponential growth in numbers due to the nurturing of new/returning runners by our Couch to 5k courses; seeing those C25k-ers go on to conquer marathon distance and more; and our membership waiting list to acknowledge the success of our club in the North East running community.

It is slightly bittersweet, therefore, that for those very successes (in addition to several onerous personal issues) I have been quieter on the publicity front as of late. Implementing the cap on our membership was a difficult decision to make for all involved. In doing so, it also raised questions regarding the purpose of the PO role. Our club has excelled in self-promotion, and whilst the PO role is not specifically about recruiting new members, it comes with the territory. As such, it became difficult to knowingly continue to reach out to promote the club further, only to have to turn down those who were attracted by the nature of our club, simply because we are full.

With this in mind, I would like to raise for the Club's consideration a "stripping back" of the role. In sum, this would entail no longer being a full committee member, but an Officer of the club. In doing so, this would partly reduce the time the incoming PO would have to dedicate to the role. For high-profile club events, such as the upcoming XC North-Eastern Championships at Aykley Heads, the Clamber and the summer charity relay, the PO would be drafted on to the committee for meetings and liaison for press releases.

Overall, the PO role is very much what you make it. You may (and I did) spend entire weekends chasing up results and reports; alternatively a synthesis of the Captain's round-ups could suffice for publication on the Local Hero's section of the Northern Echo website. In fact, anyone can register and submit.

I am happy to provide guidance, log-in details, contacts, a box of flyers and a giant cheque to the incoming PO.

Run strong,

Steph