

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**MINUTES OF THE THIRTYSECOND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF BRITISH ROWING** held on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> October, at 9.30am in the Queen's Hotel, City Square, Leeds LS1 1PJ.

### **PRESENT –**

**Directors:** A. Phelps (Chairman), A. Parkinson (CEO), M. Blandford-Baker, A. Crawford, G. Harris (Deputy Chairman), J. Hinnigan, A. Johnson, N. Palios, M. Stallard, J. Vickers.

**Company Secretary:** H. Mosienko

**Council Members:** C. Anton, R. Bayliss, D. Biddulph, A. Blit, C. Callow, A. Cawood, P. Clements, J.C. Davies, C. Eales, C. Edwards, C. Harrison, N. Hubble, M. Humphrys, M. Laing, J. Lee, F. Ljubicic, R. Mallett, M. Morrice, G. Nicholls, M. Teale, M.D. Williams, S. Worley (HRSA).

**In attendance:** K. Adams (Substitute TL-6), D. Brace (Welsh Rowing), A. Cobb (Scottish Rowing), M. Orzel (Substitute TU-3), S. Dickie (Youth & Community Manager), P. Hornsey, A. Meegan, S. Palmer, P. Randolph,

**Apologies:** R. Bayliss, M. Brandon-Bravo, H. Brock, L. Dillon, Dame Di Ellis, P. Hill, L. Lion, F. McAnena, Milton Keynes Boat Club.

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### **I. CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT**

The Chairman asked Council to join her in remembering the great number of people that the rowing community had lost during the last 12 months, all of whom had contributed uniquely to the richness of the sport in their own way as athletes, umpires, journalists and officials at all levels:

Sir Adrian Cadbury – Leander & Birmingham Rowing Club, Mike Kennedy – Spitfire Boat Club, Leander & Life Vice-President Thames Region, John Fitzmaurice – Thames Rowing Club, Kevin Whyman – Royal Air Force Rowing Club & Cambridge University Cox, Bill Clarke – GB Rowing Team Manager 1970s & Kingston Rowing Club, John Northridge – Bewl Bridge Rowing Club, Mr A Paterson – London Rowing Club, Mr M Leach – Kingston Grammar School Veterans Boat Club, Janet Blogg – Maidenhead Rowing Club, Chris Gates – Cygnet Rowing Club, Dick Thompson – Walton Rowing Club, Hugh Bashaarat – Marlow Rowing Club, Ian Barr Godman – Tees Rowing Club, Timothy Wildbore – Isle of Ely Rowing Club, Dick Pryce-Jones – Isle of Ely Rowing Club, Mortlake, Anglian & Alpha Boat Club, Cambridge University Boat Club (April), David Macklin – Exeter Rowing Club & former Olympian, Peter Sly – Cygnet Rowing Club, Sheila Barrett – Grosvenor Rowing Club, Michael Hill – London Rowing Club & Latymer Upper School Boat Club, Nigel Smtih – London Rowing Club., Dan Topolski – Oxford University, Bill Grant – Durham Rowing Club, Felix Badcock – Stratford upon Avon Boat Club, Leander & Thames Rowing Club, Denis Dovey – London Rowing Club, Ray Painter – Leander, ARA Divisional Representative, Jim MacRitchie – Scottish ARA, Desmond Hampton – London Rowing Club, John Cox – Thames Traditional Boat Society (founding member), Roger Pope – National Provincial Bank Rowing Club, Christopher Davidge – Leander & Former British Rowing President, David John Veale – Sims boat-makers, Maurice Stanbridge – Star Club, Don Maddox – Ironbridge Rowing Club.

Having welcomed all to the Annual General Meeting, the Chairman delivered her Annual Report as follows:

The last twelve months had seen considerable change within the organisation and across the sport more widely. Some of this change and uncertainty, particularly externally, was still to settle down. The Chairman reminded all that there was a major Government review of the country's sport strategies that would undoubtedly have an impact on rowing. On the global sporting stage the International Olympic Committee and the International Paralympic Committee had both been

reviewing their programmes and delivering new strategies to cope with the challenges they faced. With the arrival of the Chief Executive Officer, Andy Parkinson, in January British Rowing has been able to refine and review its long-term strategy and share that with Council and the wider sport. As a result British Rowing was already a more nimble and adaptable organisation, able to identify and respond to opportunities.

During the year the regional staff have continued to deliver against our participation goals, and working with our clubs and partners we have seen a good growth year on year. The statistics look very good. A relatively dry winter and good summer meant few events suffered cancellations and there was a rise in the number of competitors at British Junior and Senior Championships, as well as the seemingly unstoppable rise of Masters rowing.

Schools rowing had gone from strength to strength: National Schools last year had a record 4,300 entries. Racing at the Junior Inter Regional regatta continued to raise its standard. British universities had a record year at EUSA topping the table and bringing home gold medals in both men's and women's eights for the first time. The first televised women's boat race on the tideway drew 4.8m viewers.

All in all the sport in was in a healthy state in Britain. The inaugural British Rowing Indoor Championships were a great addition to the calendar and were held at the iconic Olympic Velodrome with an entry of 1300 athletes from across the whole spectrum of the sport, Olympians and world champions, school children, university students, injured servicemen and para-rowers, men, women lightweight and openweight, young and old, performed in front of over 1000 noisy spectators. The event even trended on Twitter for a short while.

Many clubs report that they are bursting at the seams and struggling to keep up with the demand for coaching, equipment and membership at both extremes of the age range (37% of our members are aged 16-25) and with Rio less than a year away we are looking at a fresh wave of interest. This was a good place to be if together the Board, the Council and our clubs could encourage and facilitate sustainable growth, physically and financially; increasing the capacity of clubs in every part of the country, and retaining newcomers to our sport in the face of academic and work pressures, financial constraints and competition from other activities. The sport would have to be flexible, innovative and bold in facing these challenges if it was to retain its position in the British sporting landscape. Identifying, empowering and supporting new and existing volunteers must be a priority for the future.

It was not just the statistics that were encouraging; clubs and events around the country that the Chairman had visited were incredibly positive: people were enjoying their rowing experience and social media reflected a thriving, welcoming community. One of many highlights was the launch of the Gateshead Community Rowing club and their new boat, the Harry Clasper, built in the local shopping centre and now regularly used by local children, injured servicemen, and keen rowers.

The national team had ended another phenomenal season. The amazing system, resources and most importantly the people that underpinned this success should not be under-valued or underestimated. Our coaches and athletes were the best in the world.

The results at the World Championships in Aiguebelette did not alone serve to illustrate the team's best ever performance in one of the toughest years for Olympic and Paralympic qualification. Every crew performed to expectation, and beyond. They were fantastic ambassadors on and off the water and deserved the full support of everyone in rowing. Alongside this there had been unprecedented success at Junior Worlds and the Chairman said she could not pass up the opportunity to mention the JM4x winning gold, a great U23 Championships, Coupe regatta and total domination at the GB-France match which was further proof of the huge investment into the sport made by those involved with juniors at schools and clubs.

The Chairman was immensely proud of the work that staff and members delivered, both here and overseas to support and promote rowing in an open and inclusive environment. The work carried out to support and encourage ethnic minorities was developing but undoubtedly needed more

investment and good steps were being made to get a more even gender balance amongst junior rowers. It was now important to keep them engaged and bring them up through the sport.

The Chairman thanked the Board for its diligence and challenge, the Council and Standing Committees for their advice and guidance and for often having to juggle so many hats. She thanked the sport's fantastic and dedicated staff who ran the back office, delivered at the coal face and abandoned home and family life for long periods to travel up and down the country and across the world. Particular thanks were given to British Rowing's funding partners, UK Sport and Sport England, the National Lottery, which had transformed sport in the UK, the Rowing Foundation, Henley Stewards' Charitable Trust, Help for Heroes, Row2Recovery, London Youth Rowing, the BOA and BPA; all rowing's commercial partners and delivery partners across coastal communities, Scottish Rowing and Welsh Rowing.

The Medal of Honour for 2015 was awarded to Greg Gregory-Jones of Weybridge Rowing Club who had served the sport with boundless energy both at club level and internationally for over 40 years. He was a member of the Council of the ARA for 13 years, and a divisional representative for 11 years. He served as a member of the Executive Committee, was a founding member of Henley Women's Regatta. Among his many roles he was also Chairman of the ARA Men's Committee, was heavily involved with BUSA Regatta, with touring rowing and coaching and had volunteered at numerous World Championships, most recently as one of the games-makers at Eton Dorney during the Olympic Games. Members agreed that he was a most worth-while recipient of the award.

## **ORDINARY BUSINESS**

### **2. To approve the Minutes of the Thirtyfirst Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2014.**

The minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting and were signed.

### **3. To approve the Minutes of an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Company held on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2014.**

The minutes were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting and were signed.

### **4. The Directors' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2015.**

The Financial statements were presented to the meeting by the Finance Director, together with the reports of the Directors and Auditors.

The Chairman of the Finance Committee was invited to give some background to the report which he did, stating that the organisation was in a strong financial position.

M.D. Williams expressed concern that the financial result for the year had reduced the organisation's general reserves. He asked how the Board intended to address this to ensure the trend did not continue. J. Hinnigan said the Board recognised the need to balance the budget and had addressed this through the strategic planning process.

### **5. The appointment of *haysmacintyre* as Auditors of the Company**

Members approved the re-appointment of *haysmacintyre* to hold office until conclusion of the next General Meeting at which Accounts are laid before the Company, and authorised the Board to fix their remuneration.

### **6. Other business**

There was none.