

THE COUNCIL OF BRITISH ROWING - MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL held at 12 noon on Saturday 20th February 2016 at 6 Lower Mall, London W6 9DJ.

PRESENT AND APOLOGIES

BOARD

A. Phelps CBE, Chairman	Officer	Present
G. Harris, Deputy Chairman	Officer	Present
A. Parkinson	Chief Executive Officer*	Apologies
M. Morrice	President, Scottish Rowing	Apologies
A. Crawford	Chairman, Sport Committee	Apologies
N. Reilly O'Donnell	Athlete Director	Apologies
L. Lion	Council Director	Present
J. Hinnigan	Independent Director	Apologies
A. Johnson	Council Director	Present
F. McAnena	Independent Director	Present
N. Palios	Independent Director	Apologies
J. Vickers	Independent Director	Present

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Dame Di Ellis, DBE	Honorary President	Present
M. Brandon-Bravo OBE	Hon. Life Vice President	Apologies
M.D. Williams	Hon. Life Vice President	Present
H. Brock	Chairman Welsh Rowing	Apologies
S. Worley	Hon. Rowing Safety Adviser	Present

*CEO is a non-voting member of Council

REGIONAL CHAIRMEN AND REPRESENTATIVES

A. Blit	East Chairman	Present
C. Callow	East Regional Representative	Present
N. Hubble	East Regional Representative	Apologies
G. Nicholls	East Midlands Chairman	Present
M. Laing	North Chairman	Apologies
B. Millns	North Regional Representative	Apologies
C. Edwards	North West Chairman	Apologies
J.C. Davies	North West Regional Representative	Present
M. Humphrys	Thames Chairman	Present
A. Weekes	Thames Regional Representative TU-1	Present
Peter Knowles	Thames Regional Representative TU-2	Present
K. Phillips	Thames Regional Representative TU-3	Present
D. Biddulph	Thames Regional Representative TU-4	Present
F. Ljubicic	Thames Regional Representative TL-5	Present
L. Dillon	Thames Regional Representative TL-6	Present
C. Harrison	Thames Regional Representative TL-7	Present
M. Teale	Thames Regional Representative TSE-8	Present
P. Clements	WAGS Chairman	Apologies
C. Eales	Wessex & South East Coast Chairman	Present
R. Mallett	West Chairman	Present
R. Bayliss	West Midlands Chairman	Present
C. Anton	West Midlands Representative	Present
A. Cawood	Yorkshire Chairman	Apologies

BRITISH ROWING STAFF

P. Hornsey	Director of Membership & Rowing Community	Present
H. Mosienko	Director of Finance & Business Services	Present
P. Randolph	Minute Secretary	Present

ALSO ATTENDED

P. Sondheimer	(substitute) for Chairman WAGS
G. Lathan	(substitute) for Chairman Northern Region
A. Curnow-Care	Observer – CPGA
H. Rowbotham	Observer – Director of Innovation

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

Rowing had again suffered the effects of the recent poor weather and the Chairman wished to thank all those who had been so proactive in supporting one another to get back up and running with physical help and equipment. Some major events had been able to go ahead in recent weeks with the Hampton Head attracting a large junior entry and BUCS reporting 2500 entries from universities for its Head. Over the last months, thanks to the efforts of clubs at a local level and the communications team at Hammersmith, there had been much good media coverage of the sport. Anna Watkins had given some positive interviews following her decision to step down from the squad and Max Heron of Norwich Rowing Club had received the prestigious Torch Trophy Trust award for his services to volunteering.

There were encouraging steps to ensure the sport not only was, but was seen to be, inclusive. The University of York had launched their Rainbow Wellies campaign to promote awareness of their LGBTQ policy on bullying, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. This initiative was one that other clubs could view and adopt on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E-_FIXMMexo

Mark Hunter MBE and Sophie Hosking MBE were congratulated on their recent appointments to the FISA Rowing for All and Athletes' Commissions, respectively. British Rowing worked closely with FISA and all other rowing federations, covering matters such as the Olympic Agenda 2020 which would be addressed at the Extraordinary Congress in 2017. The Chairman said that even within Europe working with a common purpose presented challenges and work was ongoing to ensure that British Rowing played its part in strengthening the position of the sport within the Olympic movement.

It was essential for the federation to look at the contribution it made to the wider world, ensuring British Rowing's values were upheld and aligning this work with the new DCMS strategy for sport. This also formed a significant part of the work carried out by staff and volunteers.

The Chairman welcomed Sallie Lawrence, attending for N. Hubble, Gillian Lathan for M. Laing, Anne Curnow-Care from the CPGA and Helen Rowbotham, Director of Innovation.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Noted and recorded above.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Non pecuniary

Dame Di Ellis : Sporting Equals, British Olympic Foundation, Torch Trophy Trust

G. Harris : Coupe de la Jeunesse President

A. Phelps : BPA Vice Chairman, BOA Board

M.D. Williams : FISA Executive

Pecuniary

G. Harris : Coach Educator

F. Ljubicic: ErgStick and Rowe.rs

G. Nicholls : Assessor

S. Worley : Coach Educator

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on Saturday 28th November 2015 were agreed to be an accurate record and signed.

4.1 MATTERS ARISING

There were none.

Anti-Doping: It was confirmed that there had been immediate suspension for the athletes involved in the recent anti-doping cases and that neither rower competed while suspended.

Olympic Trials: There was a move to make Olympic trials more accessible to members of the public. However at this stage Caversham was not seen to be a suitable venue for an open event.

5. MATTERS FOR DECISION

5.1 ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

[G. Harris left the room for this Agenda item.]

On 15th December nominations for the role of Deputy Chairman had been sought in writing from Council. G. Harris had been nominated and seconded by R. Mallett (West), G. Nicholls (E. Mids) and C. Anton (W. Mids) by the required date.

G. Harris was elected by a unanimous vote for a second term of office, to run from 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2020.

5.2 SUBSCRIPTIONS 2016 / 2017

In line with the increase in the Retail Price Index which had grown by 1.0% in the year to November 2015 it was proposed that an increase of 1% (rounded to the nearest £) was applied to all rates with the exception of Life Members. The impact of rounding meant that some categories would increase by more than 1% whilst Student and Junior fees would not increase at all.

After a brief discussion, during which Council expressed the view that British Rowing subscriptions were not expensive, the proposed figures were agreed. However, H. Mosienko was asked to note Council's wish that the fees for J14 registration and Regatta affiliation should be frozen for the 2017/18 season, given their recent year on year rise.

5.3 AFFILIATIONS & RESIGNATIONS

To Note:

Council noted the following, approved by the Board on 02.02.16:

Club Affiliation:

Queen Anne's Boat Club – QAS (TU 2)

All required documentation has been approved by the Chairman of the Thames Regional Rowing Council. The club will boat from Shiplake College.

Junior Racing Name:

Oxford High School – Junior Racing Name for Hinksey Sculling School (TU 1)

The application had been approved by the Chairman of the Thames Regional Rowing Council and support from of the Regional Representative was also recorded.

(Note: Hinksey Sculling School is an open club and not a school club).

Council approved the following:

New Club Affiliation:

Brampton Manor Academy BC - BMA (TSE 8)

This school club would boat from the London Regatta Centre. All required documentation had been approved by the Chairman of the Thames Regional Rowing Council.

Two new Competitions had been approved by the National Competition Committee:

- Boston Regatta (East Midlands) from August 2016
- West Midlands Regional Championships - a closed event restricted to West Midlands clubs which would select the crews for the JIRR on 13th March 2016.

Change of Region:

Following the division of Lakeland Rowing Club and the formation of Windermere Rowing Club (currently applying for affiliation) Lakeland RC had asked to move from the North West Region to the Northern Region. The Chairman of the Northern Rowing Council and of the North West Rowing Council had both indicated their support for the transfer. This was approved.

Associated Organisations 2016

The list of Associated Organisations recorded below was approved for 2016 / 2017. However, Council was pleased to note that P. Hornsey planned to review the current arrangements in order to clarify the relationship and status of an Associated Organisation, and the expectations from both sides.

- British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS)
- Cambridgeshire Rowing Association (CRA)
- Cornish Pilot Gig Association (CPGA)
- Cornwall Rowing Association
- Guernsey RC
- Isle of Man Rowing Federation
- Jersey RC
- London Youth Rowing
- Marine Society & Sea Cadets
- River & Rowing Museum
- Scout Association
- Skerries for Schools
- Skiff Racing Association
- Thames Traditional Boat Society
- Thames Traditional Rowing Association
- Trafalgar Trust 2001 Ltd
- United Kingdom Surf Rowers League (UKSRL)
- Whitby Friendship ARC

Other Rowing Associations

Coast Amateur Rowing Association

Hants & Dorset Amateur Rowing Association

West of England Amateur Rowing Association

5.4 COUNCIL APPEALS RECOMMENDATION

The Rules of Racing (2.7.6) currently outline the appeal procedure for disciplinary action taken by the Chairman of the National Competition Committee, stating that any appeal should be made to Council.

In order to expedite the appeal process and ensure that all appeals were in line with British Rowing's own guidance, Council was asked to consider delegating its function as appeal panel to the Disciplinary & Grievance Panel, until such time as any formal recommendations for updating procedures are proposed.

Council approved the delegation of the Rules of Racing appeals to the Disciplinary & Grievance Panel.

5.5 TRANSGENDER & TRANSSEXUAL POLICY

In the light of recent reports regarding the IOC guidelines for participation by transgender athletes, the Chairman of the Medical Panel had reviewed British Rowing's policy and proposed some amendments. All members of the Medical Panel had been consulted and no further recommendations had been received.

Council approved the updates to the policy.

It was noted that if Council members received queries about how to apply the policy at a local level these could be addressed to David Zideman, Chairman of the Medical Advisory Panel, through P. Randolph at HQ.

5.6 APPOINTMENTS

FISA

Council approved the Delegates for the Ordinary Congress to be held on 29th August 2016 in Rotterdam as follows;

- Annamarie Phelps, CBE
- Andy Parkinson
- Sir David Tanner

National Olympic Committee

Council added its approval to that of the Board for the re-appointment of the Chairman as British Rowing's representative on the NOC.

5.7 SPORT COMMITTEE MATTERS FOR APPROVAL

Rules of Racing 2016: There had been some corrections to note since the version circulated with the agenda. It was also noted that Rule 4.1.2 should refer to processional and head races for consistency but that correction would not be included for 2016.

The HRSA undertook to ensure that the requirement for shorter heel restraints was communicated to the sport and would emphasise that this was a change that affected all rowers, not only those who competed.

The handling of gender neutrality would be addressed across all British Rowing documents. The standard of quality control for communications from HQ was raised by M. Humphrys. The Chairman said that the Communications team was aware of recent concerns and steps were being taken to ensure a more rigorous system of checking before circulation. It was

also noted that there was a lack of consistency with regard to use of the logos and the photographs of squad members of the website.

Para-Rowing points were not awarded in para-rowing competition but it was anticipated that a system of ranking would be introduced as this area of the sport grew.

Committee Membership: The updated membership of the National committees was noted.

6. MEMBERSHIP PROGRAMME PRESENTATION

Director of Membership and Rowing Community, P. Hornsey, introduced the draft principles of a review that focused on growth and improving the membership offer for individually registered members.

According to figures published by Sport England only 12% of those taking part in the sport were members of British Rowing. There was therefore opportunity for growth and exploration of new markets. The key drivers for change were; improved member satisfaction; reaching out to new members; acceleration of growth; improved online services.

These four principles had been arrived at following conversations with the Regional Chairmen, Representatives and surveys of individual members. The current offer was not contemporary, the sport had some excellent assets and could offer 'money can't buy' opportunities.

In order to attract indoor and coastal rowers it would be necessary to tailor the current offer and provide meaningful options for these significant groups. This was likely to be one of the most challenging areas to of the programme. Another key aim was to retain members, the greater the number of members the greater the appeal to commercial partners.

Council welcomed the proposal to review the possibility of day tickets or 'pay as you row' schemes. Rowing should be affordable for all and the membership structure should also be aligned with the competition structure. P. Hornsey did not believe that this could be a simple day ticket as there were a number of economic factors to be taken into account, but he would endeavour to find a cost effective solution.

Online services had to ensure it was easy to join and to manage memberships. Insight and CRM had shown it was important to focus on the digital offer but P. Hornsey said he appreciated that any 'off the shelf' solution' considered must be flexible enough to fit with the wider offer and requirements of competition.

The requirement for senior volunteers, such as umpires, to become members was raised, and whether this was penalising them for giving up their time and expertise. P. Hornsey said membership must not be seen to be a tax or a barrier to participation. A similar problem arose with the Volunteer awards which was currently open to registered members only. This effectively excluded a wide group of parents and other school and club volunteers and supporters who gave freely of their time.

Dame Di Ellis hoped that telephone calls would not be entirely replaced by digital options as she believed this would incur loss of goodwill with some members. P. Hornsey said his aim was to avoid unnecessary calls by improving the member experience on the website.

It was pointed out that the 70,000 members that clubs 'declared' annually (ie those with club membership rather than British Rowing membership) were all people who already had a relationship with the sport and should be a priority for a refreshed membership offer. K. Phillips said the current system of cards was not user-friendly and pointed out that members of British Canoeing printed their own cards.

C. Harrison said that it was a requirement for a CASC club to demonstrate the number of its members who were active across the club. A category of membership for the volunteers would be very helpful.

It was noted that the British Rowing membership included cover for all rowing activity undertaken with a club. It was one of the major benefits of membership and should be more of a selling point.

A. Cawood said that Rowing & Regatta was an excellent benefit. He hoped that as many as possible would continue to receive the magazine.

The link to insurance information <http://www.british-rowing-insurance.com/home>

C. Harrison and P. Knowles cited associations where the entry fee was paid directly to the events and participants received a reduction if they were members of the NGB. An incentive to joining might be to be given a discount for each event entered.

K. Phillips said membership should be about more than just a licence to race. S. Worley agreed that it was important to increase members not just competitors. G. Lathan believed a proposal for a three event racing licence would be appreciated by para-rowers as the opportunities to race were currently limited. P. Hornsey was also asked to consider family membership.

The Chairman thanked PH for his excellent and thought-provoking presentation. Council would look forward to further feedback in due course.

In turn P. Hornsey thanked all for their helpful input and would come back to Council when he had more information about the proposed model.

7. REPORTS & INFORMATION

7.1 CEO AND DIRECTORS' TEAM REPORT

The Chairman invited comments or questions on the report.

Infrastructure Survey: With hindsight the infrastructure survey had been sent out to clubs at the wrong time of year and with no advance briefing for the Regional Chairmen and their representatives. P. Hornsey said that he had learnt from the experience and looked forward to working more closely with the regions in future. M. Humphrys thanked P. Hornsey and appreciated his acknowledgement of the confusion that this had caused in certain areas. It was understood that this was an important piece of work for the sport.

Staffing: An organogram was not yet available and as an interim measure an updated staffing list had been circulated, showing the current arrangement of staff within the new directorates.

Regional Get Togethers: A series of workshops was in hand with events attended by British Rowing staff and senior volunteers being held across the country. P. Hornsey said that as above issues around the timing and information circulated in advance to the Regional Chairman were acknowledged and noted. However he hoped that they would be well received and cover areas of interest and benefit to the wider sport.

Nathaniel Reilly O'Donnell joined the meeting at this point.

Partnership Principles: The list of companies that British Rowing considered unsuitable did not include alcohol or betting. The Chairman explained that this had been discussed by the Board and given that the UK Lottery was the sport's largest funding body, it had been accepted that potential sponsors would be looked at on a case by case basis. A number of British Rowing events were sponsored by alcohol companies and the NGB did not wish to be too prescriptive. It was noted that Clause 6 referred to the additional responsibility where young people were involved.

The Chairman said she would ask K. Baillie to respond with regard to the decision to ban Religious companies.

With regard to news of a major sponsor the Chairman said a number of avenues were being followed but it was generally accepted that the days of achieving a single major sponsor were in the past and that future sponsors were likely to be at a lower level.

The policy was intended for the whole organisation and could be used as guidance for all, including events, but it was not meant to be overly prescriptive. If members wished for clarification they should contact K. Baillie.

Membership Analysis: The slight increase in figures was noted. P. Hornsey had undertaken to review the format for the presentation of information as soon as a new insight analyst had been appointed. The Regional Chairmen said it would be most helpful to have a breakdown of the monthly figures by the clubs within their regions in order to identify where clubs may need support or recognition, or to consider other regional factors, such as the weather.

DCMS Strategy: The CEO had summarised the paper, highlighting areas that might be of most interest to the sport. Dame Di Ellis said that the suggestion made earlier that the sport should have a free level of membership for volunteers might help provide a more accurate picture for Sport England of the numbers actually involved in the sport.

7.1 Management Accounts

Council noted the accounts which were broadly in line with the budget.

7.1 Budget

H. Mosienko provided a brief introduction to the 2016 / 2017 budget, explaining that a new format had been introduced in an attempt to standardise systems across the new structure of directorates. It was confirmed that there was a commitment to driving down costs wherever possible.

M. Humphrys expressed concern at the continuing deficit which seemed to be due to the lack of sponsorship and his worry about the depletion of the organisation's reserves. H. Mosienko said that UK Sport had indicated that it would be adopting a new approach to

funding and in future sports would be able to propose a contribution that they could afford.

M.D. Williams reminded Council that he had raised the matter of deficits at a previous meeting. In response the CEO had said the deficit would continue for this year and if after that the sport was faced with another deficit budget costs would be cut. He believed that the CEO should be allowed the time to fix the problem. He confirmed that many organisations did not wish to be associated with sports in the current climate, even well run sports and sponsorship was not easy to come by.

A Blit asked if the budget prediction that there would be two significant reductions in overheads was not achievable. H. Mosienko advised that there had been a significant cost in providing the new website which was a one-off cost.

7.2 SPORT COMMITTEE REPORT

Council received the report and questions were invited.

Mentoring: R. Bayliss asked who was going to carry out the mentoring for the National Coaching Committee. G. Harris advised that this was a long-standing aspiration but that in reality it was harder to find people to come forward. It was hoped that R. Mayglothling, in her new role as Director of Pathway Development, would be able to address in due course.

NWSC – Holme Pierrepont: C. Callow asked about progress with a User Agreement. The Chairman said that the CEO was in contact with SERCO and that although progress had been slow a settlement remained a high priority for the sport.

7.3 NATIONAL PARALYMPIC REPORT

The report of the meeting held on meeting on 15th November 2015 was noted.

The Chairman said that she would seek clarification on the size of the Paralympic village - 3,300 Km² would appear to have been written in error.

Declaring an interest the Chairman asked all to promote the Supercharge campaign. <http://paralympics.org.uk/>

7.4 NATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE REPORT

Council noted the Chairman's report on matters discussed at the National Olympic Committee meeting on 27th January 2016.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Junior Inter-Regional Regatta 2016

M. Humphrys said that traditionally the regions were asked to contribute £750 - £900 towards the running costs of this event. However a number of factors now had an impact on this cost; the NWSC had raised its prices and the facility was now as expensive as Dorney Lake, it was also levying a charge for each car and trailer; a contribution from Rock the Boat now came centrally to British Rowing.

To cover costs the regions should be charged £1500 this year, however many regions could not afford this. British Rowing wishes to see the event continue which now benefits from venue sharing with the Start Programme but the increased costs of the NWSC were making it extremely difficult. Council was asked for support in considering ways to fund the deficit. The situation with SERCO and the NWSC was extremely worrying. The JIRR was the first event of the new season but these costs would apply to other events, national and otherwise.

N. Reilly O'Donnell said the JIRR had been an important milestone for him and believed it

should be a priority for the sport to support and promote it. It was important to remember that not all rowing took place in the Tidal Thames area. The danger was that young people would miss out on national competition.

Dame Di Ellis said there were two elements, dealing with the NWSC and funding the event. She asked the Chairman to consider the use of some of the bequests to see if they could be used for the good of the juniors. The JIRR was an event that was a benefit to so many aspiring young rowers.

M.D. Williams also suggested an approach to the Stewards' Charitable Trust.

K. Phillips expressed similar concerns on behalf of Masters Rowing. The Championships had just expanded to a two-day event and a 20% increase could be catastrophic. At the moment competitors entered several events which raised costs would deter.

The Chairman said that SERCO had reassured British Rowing that it was not their intention to drive out the sport. However, it was vital to work out a coherent approach and a strong strategy. She would discuss with the CEO and would also investigate the various funding strands raised.

DME asked if Sport England might be willing to support British Rowing on this. They had originally been keen that the NGB made full use of the facility. PH noted and would follow that up.

A Cawood asked if Caversham was a feasible alternative and was told that it was not.

Online payments through BROE: The question of payments and refunds was raised by P. Knowles. The cancellation of events resulted in a huge administrative burden for event organisers. He asked if World Pay could be prevailed upon to hold money until the day of the event before processing. This may incur an administrative charge but it would also ease the huge amount of work that the clubs currently had to do.

H. Mosienko would investigate to see if this was technically possible.

Dredging in Durham: G. Lathan (M. Laing's substitute) said that the river at Durham badly needed dredging but the local Environment Agency appeared not see this as a priority. She asked if British Rowing would be able to support local efforts in any way. P. Hornsey advised G. Lathan to raise the matter with James Andrews and copy him in so that he could follow up. M. Humphrys said that unfortunately the EA was severely under-funded. The Thames Region had a strong relationship in their area and he hoped that it might be the same in the North. However, money was likely to be an issue.

The Chairman thanked all for attending.

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of Council would be held on Tuesday 7th June 2016 at 1.30pm. Venue to be confirmed.

The meeting ended at 2.20pm