

LFR
Regular Committee Meeting
Tuesday 3rd December 2019

Co-Presidents: Kirsty Fitz-Poole (KFP) and Jamie Keenan (JK)
Club Secretary: Christos Bitzis-Politis (CBP)
Club Treasurer: Alex Darsley (AD)
Membership Secretary: Simon Mac (SM)
Races Secretaries: Erika Kulikova (EK) and Alex Rendall (AR)
Publicity & Communications Officers: Joey Knock (JKk) and Andrew Corti (AC)
Social Secretaries: Brittany Bernard (BB) and Daniel Brittle (DB)
Coaching Team Coordinator: Rob Daly (RD)

Agenda Items

Financial Updates and 2020 Club Year Budget (CT)

Races Secretaries Update (RS)
Publicity Officers Update (P&C O)
Social Calendar update (SS)
Membership Secretary Update (MS)

Club Secretary, Various Updates
Co-Presidents, Updates and items for discussion

AOB

Chair: JK
Apologies: BB, RD
Minutes: CBP

Club Treasurer: Financial Updates and general discussion over the 2020 Club Year Budget

Discussion on establishing the membership fees for the 2020 Club Year, as to be able to calculate the amount of money the Club will be losing in the next year as a consequence of this. The Club has been losing some money each and every year from its reserves, due to a number of unforeseen expenses. At the end of the last Club Year, the financial loss was estimated at about £1100, in the current Club Year the loss is estimated to be around £1000.

The main issue is not so much the amount of money which have been budgeted beforehand nor the subsidies which are being taken out of the Club reserve, as the £2000 which will be offered to subsidise the 25th LFR Anniversary celebrations; it is about the day to day expenditure.

The fact is that there needs to be a slight raise in the membership fees for the next Club Year, one of the reasons is that we are predicting that the current Club Year will not come to an end with the same number of members it ended last year, 560, as we predict that it will close on a smaller number, most possibly around 530 members. This is also going to be the very first year in which LFR will close its Club Year with a smaller number of members than the previous one. The Club is blessed with a number of around 200 active members, who come to the weekly runs, do the races and who we all see around on a more or less regular basis. Then we have another 300 persons whom we rarely see and who are mainly inactive, although they do pay their membership in full. If there was to be anticipated the possibility of losing these 300 inactive members, then the circumstances would become extremely difficult for the Club.

In consequence there needs to take place a number of cuts which will sanitise the current financial situation, terminating the Club Year with as small a loss as possible, for example proceed into effectuating some cuts in the new Club Year like cutting off the River Relay, or not including into the new Club Year the suggestion of becoming affiliated with a cycling club, which would cost the Club £100 per year, etc.

The Club has had four different fundraising events this year and there were not extremely successful, with the exception of one, and with actually one, the film projection, we had to pay back the venue a small amount from the Club reserves, though this was probably due to the wrong choice of date, as it was a Bank Holiday weekend, and we would be willing to give this initiative another try.

Discussion on the Club running kit and on the possibilities of whether this could prove to become a small source of income for the Club. LFR has had a small net profit of £194 this year, after all the other relevant costs were paid. If there was to be created an online LFR shop, then we would have to invest further not only in the creation of the online shop as a selling point/mechanism but also on having to buy and store a stock of item as to be able to supply the demand. This latter could prove to be risky, as one is not always sure whether the items will prove to be successful and will sell.

Another suggestion which has already been mentioned before and is partially in place is abolishing a number of email addresses which are not being used, around four or five of them and which are costing the Club each year money. In the future there won't be any specific addresses for Mental Health, Cross Country and Coaching and volunteers in these positions will have to use their own personal email addresses.

Discussion on the potential of raising the necessary £1000 through the LFR International Trip and/or the Pride Run. Committee expresses a certain reluctance on the latter option, due to the fact that it is an independent charitable cause, and an incredibly well-organised race which raises a great amount of money every year which all goes into LGBT+ charities; in addition the Pride Run is affiliated to LFR though a number of LFR runners who happen to volunteers for the cause but it is an entirely independent entity, it is not under an LFR jurisdiction in any way, and it incidentally provides an incredible amount of free publicity for the Club and boosts the membership numbers each year with a number of new runners who decide to join LFR each year after the race; thus the

Committee decides to have a tentative approach to the IT Committee and discuss with them any possibilities of financial support on that side.

Action to be taken: CBP is requested to please liaise and set up a meeting between MH and the Club Treasurer, in regards to a first approach relative to the above. The date should preferably be before the festive season as the CT will be unavailable with the new year.

Discussion on the possibility of obtaining some financial support by offering volunteers at races organised by the London Marathon, such as the SCGCR, which brought to the Club £200. Those volunteering get a free t-shirt and are offered a very respectable meal for a four-hours job, which is also very rewarding and upbeat, whereas the Club receives in lieu of a financial contribution, so it is a practically a win-win situation for all parties involved.

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to please liaise with the Marathon Races organisers and encourage the possibility of LFR volunteering at various athletic events, in the interest of obtaining from them some financial support towards the Club.

Discussion on reducing the membership expenses by substituting the actual paper membership cards with digital ones, which will naturally reduce as a consequence the stationery expenditures and most postal costs. Discussion on the above and on the need to also follow the demand of times and “go green” by reducing paper waste and the use of plastic. There could be a bespoke yearly membership card in PDF format, which members will be requested to store and use when necessary, mostly in order to obtain discount in shops LFR has a discount agreement with. The Membership Secretary is kindly requested to please consider this suggestion, and mostly consider the amount of time and effort which will be needed in order to make this transition towards a more environmental friendly solution, which could also prove cost effective for the Club.

Another cost efficient solution which should be definitely tried is to substitute WebCollect, towards which we pay an annual fee, with MyCrew, as to process all membership registrations and payment of membership fees. MyCrew is completely free and we have already had four members who processed their registration through MyCrew, which shows that this system functions and the only way which needs to become resolved before putting it in place is the transfer of the membership fees into the LFR account.

The Committee discusses further on the above and agrees on having a trial period, during which there needs to be assessed how this transition will look for membership and whether there are any difficulties passing from one system to the other and the general feasibility of MyCrew in relation to the LFR needs which have hitherto been provided by WebCollect.

Action to be taken: JK is kindly requested to please liaise with the MyCrew administrators and update the Committee at the next RCM, with any suggestions on their side relevant to what has been discussed and suggested above.

Two are the main subjects on which the Committee agrees in regards to the Club Budget for the new Club Year: based on the annual increase of the England Athletics annual fees per runner, which is a large extra cost to be undertaken entirely by the Club, the unavoidable and consequential slight increase of the LFR membership fees to £52 per year, and the attempt to approach with a small number of suggestions the IT Committee.

Races Secretaries Update

In connection to what has been discussed above, the Races Secretaries, considering the success which the River Relay has had this year, and the fact that it went surprisingly smoother than predicted, will be considering the option or whether to maintain this race or to

discontinue it in the following months, having considered other such racing options in advance and whether, depending on the amount of effort needed to organise it, they are still happy to organise it for the forthcoming year, thus it is not for the time being a guaranteed expenditure for the Club.

Currently the Race Secretaries are reviewing the criteria relevant to the LFR London Marathon places and last but not least they are considering to increase the budget requested for the Battersea One Mile Relay as opposed to the budget for the River Relay, as the One Mile Relay is also part of the Club Championships and last year we have had an increased number of participation requests, which we ultimately were unable to fulfil, and this should not be happening to an event which is promoted and publicised as being an integral part of the LFR Championships.

Social Secretaries Update

Feedback on the LFR Christmas Party, which went really well and we have had lots of positive feedback in regards to the venue (cloak-room, enough loos, great open space, centrally located, etc) and in general to the food and the entertaining evening. The raffle tickets, although there was at a certain point a lot of background noise and the Co-Presidents could not be heard properly, went really well, with the Club raising the amount of £392. This has actually been the only truly profitable and financially successful fundraising event from all the previous ones throughout the year and we are considering in repeating it.

The LFR Book Club event for December is postponed into the new year while the SS are thinking of the organisation of the January social event.

Membership Secretary Update

The Club has currently reached 495 members, of which 450 identify as male, which is in percentage 90.9% of the total, and 45 which identify as female, a percentage of 9.1%.

Of these 495 members, 409 are previous members who have renewed their membership, a percentage of 82.6%, whereas 86 are entirely new, a percentage of 17.4%.

Based on the membership numbers for the month of November 2019, the Club is 88% (495) of the way to reach the 562 members that we had last year and we still have four months of the Club Year to go, during which we need to recruit 67 more members as to be able to match last year. Based on these numbers, on an average the Club requires 17 members to join/renew each month as to be able to match last year. If we were to consider the influx of new members only, we have had an average of ten members per month over the past eight months.

Additionally, based on the average number of new members per month, we can expect to reach 530 members by the end of Club Year 2019/20. This means we will end up 94% of the total members of the last club year.

Club Secretary Updates

Brighton Marathon registration updates, with nine members having already registered, and just one place available left.

Vitality Big Half registration updates, with 215 members having already registered, of which 30 are women.

The use of pronouns during the Circles, feedback and relative discussion. It is our intention to neither single-out people nor to make them feel uncomfortable, and even less to make them feel scrutinised and as being put on the spot. Circle Leaders will use their preferred pronouns on their own individual discretion and only if they happen to feel comfortable in doing so. The most important thing which we would like to bring forward out of this attempt is the opportunity to share pronouns, by those who feel comfortable to do so, as an important subject for people for whom others often use the wrong pronouns, because it helps to prevent misgendering.

Publicity & Communication Officers Update

Discussion on the Members-Only FB posts and the criteria already in place, relative to the posts received from membership. Over the previous months there have been fewer and fewer requests by membership of posts which were completely irrelevant or had very little to do with either LFR or running. In general and per average, the P&C Officers have to delete one post per month and do not approve of a maximum of two postings per month, some of which are relevant to LGBT+ issues in general, such as health and well-being.

Action to be taken: KF-P is kindly requested to please contact MD and communicate to them what the Committee has discussed in regards to the FB posts.

There is the necessity to listen to membership and most importantly to also commemorate important LGBT+ events and dates relevant to our community's history and fights, as to raise further awareness and celebrate and/or commemorate important remembrance dates. Suggestion of creating an LFR LGBT+ Calendar of important dates and events, whose dates will pop up automatically on the Members Only FB page and where membership will thus have the possibility to accordingly make a comment if they wish (CBP).

Action to be taken: JKk is kindly requested to please create the above suggested calendar, incorporating various important LGBT+ events and dates.

Presentation of the LFR pom pom wooly hat, with very positive feedback on the design, and it is very warm, which makes it ideal for Cross Country. It has been created in Scotland by a small local manufacturer. Discussions relative to the potential selling price.