

LFR

Regular Committee Meeting

Tuesday 11th February 2020

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

Cross Country Updates and Suggestions for the following Club Year (HR & NC)

Financial Updates (CT)

Races Secretaries Update (RS)

Publicity Officers Update (P&C O)

Social Calendar update (SS)

Membership Secretary Update (MS)

Club Secretary

Incidents and Accidents Report Document

LFR Volunteer Opportunities

LFR AGM

Co-Presidents

Internationals trip update

MyCrew

AOB

Chair: JK

Minutes: CBP

Apologies: RD, JKk, KFP, HR, DB.

Updates from the LFR Cross Country Captains (NC)

These are some results to share from the Metropolitan League, as to get an idea of how LFR did this year: the Veteran Men Team A won the trophy in Division 2, and the Veteran Men Team B are 2nd in Division 3, which means that we could have easily had two winning teams of Vets this year, which is actually a quite difficult accomplishment to achieve, as there is always greater competition among the Vet teams. In Division 3 the Veteran Men C Team came 4th.

The Cross Country trophy will be collected during the Metropolitan League AGM, which takes place on the 6th of April.

This year the LFR Women have gone up in numbers and we have scored enough points for a team, actually there were enough women participating as to be able to have a representation in two different categories, both in Senior and Veterans.

For the Nationals there are seven women and seven men, which is an equal representation, and it's excellent that we are having for the first time so many women. The male representation at the Nationals this year is really very low. This is possibly due to a number of factors, mainly though to the fact that a number of runners who would normally have done the National, based on their participation in previous years, this year they are running a number of marathons or other races abroad. In regards to participation numbers, in general, the number of men has been up and down throughout the whole season, whereas for the LFR women participation numbers are much better this year, as there is a definite increase, which is a very encouraging aspect to consider. Claybury, being the first fixture and, with the exception of this year, which was rainy and muddy, is the one which is the most dry, and usually has the largest number of participants.

In regards to the London Championships, the LFR Senior Women team came 26th out of 30 teams, where as last year there were not enough women present as to create a scoring team, and the LFR Senior Men team came 22nd, out of 38 teams. In regards to the SEAA races, the LFR Senior Women team came 45th out of 70 teams and the men's team came 55th, out of 81 teams.

Some suggestions for the Cross Country season of next year, as to continue stronger and in a much more coordinated way for a successful next season.

For all championship races it would be a very practical idea if everyone were to sign up in advance. We are planning to create a form and have it sent out in advance, also in this way we will avoid any mistakes with the registrations. We could easily have an active link open throughout the year and people can sign up for the next Cross Country season. In this way we may have members committing to participate in advance and we may also monitor numbers.

In regards to allocated budget of what has been actually spent, we spend £732 out of the allocated registrations budget, and we are left with a difference of £146. This latter amount

could be used for launching the participation at Cross Country relays. This is something which we would like to introduce to the Club for the next year, tentatively at the beginning and only of these races do not clash with the Met League fixtures.

As there has been organised a social event for the LFR triathlon, we would like to also organise some sort of social event relative to the Cross Country. We have noticed that a lot of new members are not familiar with Cross Country and by the time the season starts it is too late to involve them energetically into the races. This social event will also have a questions and answers session about the Cross Country season, in general and in advance of the season. It could take place sometime in September, and could be combined with a run, something like a trail run and then after the run, offer some info to members about the Cross Country season. A lot of members also do not know the difference between trail shoes and spikes, and it will be good to talk about these things, and about the price of such shoes, as there are a lot of members who think that spike shoes are costly, when they are normally much cheaper from all other running shoes.

As we have mentioned, we would like to introduce the Cross Country relays, and to form both women's teams and men's team for next season, if the events do not clash with the Met League fixtures. There has not been a budget for it, but we need to know whether there is the possibility of including this new race in the budget, so that we may know how many teams we may ultimately send. The Senior Women team costs £12 per team and the Men's costs £16 per team. There is just one per year and it usually takes place in October. We have had some members enquiring about this, so we would like to suggest this now, just to be able to think this in regards to finances.

The Nationals next years are going to be taking place in London, so we want to naturally assume that we are going to have a greater interest among members,

The Cross Country AGM is in April and HR will probably be able to attend it, it will be good if someone else could accompany HR. EK agrees to accompany HR at the event.

Discussion relative to volunteers. Some clubs are not requested to have any volunteers, but it all depends on numbers, and with LFR being one of the largest Clubs participating, we will definitely need to push the call a bit for volunteers. In addition we got some really good feedback for the volunteers, we provided this year.

As mentioned, we have had fewer men this year simply because a lot of members are doing marathons this year, and they are in training. Some members mentioned that they did not participate because they don't have the right shoes and spikes etc. We need to remind membership that as members of LFR we have discounts with shoe shops.

Financial Updates (CT)

A discussion follows on whether the Membership fees for the coming Club Year should be set on £51 or £52. Based on the calculations provided by the CT, the Club could have a surplus of about £500, if membership fees are set on the former amount. Nevertheless, the Committee feels that such a surplus could be easily pulverised by a mere trifle during the course of the Year and that eventually there has to be an increase in the Membership fees, as there has been an increase in the fees paid to EA. There has been an exchange of opinions on FB in regards to the Club not being able to provide a small subsidy towards races, in order to be able to benefit those interested to participate, and from these discussions it became obvious the membership would be willing to accept a minor increase, as this could potentially provide them with some benefits. The subject is brought to votation.

Committee votes and decides unanimously to have the full membership fees for the Club Year 2020/21 set to £52, which tantamounts to one pound per week of the calendar year. Accordingly, concessions will be £26 per Year and Second Claim runners will be paying £36. In this way, the expected surplus will be potentially larger and we could thus accommodate the extra subsidy for a number of events.

Discussions over having a number of Club emails substituted by Google accounts. Committee recognises the potential saving which could come out of this suggestion, as Google email addresses are free of charge. The Committee agrees for the proposed email addresses closures and consequently votes for the motion to go ahead. In consequence there will be a number of existing email addresses which will be substituted by new. These new email addresses will contain LFR as part of the wording, for example LFRCrossCountry@gmail.com and they will make it look more formal, with signatures, etc.

Action to be taken: JK is kindly requested to please create all the addresses suggested for replacement with Google and in consequence inform the respective LFR officers who will be using them.

Budget for Club Championships trophies is a one-off, so we do remove this items from the costs as well, and we wont have it around with the new Club year.

Discussion on the approval for invoice payments.

The limit of approval has been established by Club Constitution. In order to have this changed, this particular part needs to be discussed and submitted to votation by membership during the AGM. There are a number of Committee members who do not agree with the suggestions of the CS, mainly because the Club Committee as a committee elected by membership is ultimately the one and only responsible for all financial matters. Without wishing to diminish the importance nor the role of the IT Committee, in case there is any failure, of any kind, it is only the Club Committee which will be responsible.

AC suggests to have two or three Committee members to ultimately check these allowances to payment.

The Club Committee will be able to pre-approve a significant number of set payments which are regular throughout the Club Year and we all know that they are going to happen anyway, such as the monthly invoices for paying The seymour Centre. On such occasions we are able to proceed in making an approval for the whole year, per 12 months, instead of having an incredible number of emails going around for weeks.

To the question of whether it would prove practical if we were to have a draft budget from the IT for the whole year, and whether this would resolve the payments issue, the Club Committee agrees and decides that the CT needs to continue authorising all payments; based on the current financial limitations as imposed by the Club Constitution, the CT will be receiving a schedule of payments from the IT Committee, whereas the Club Committee will need to approve this, all in one go, as we do for other similar cases, as per above.

Within the aim of trying to make all approval of payments and in particular all refunds a much more flexible affair, the question of whether creating a £500 limit of transactions within 24 hours would possibly offer the Club Committee a bit more of reassurance is presented. In such a case there will be a limit of £500 pounds per day, utilised exclusively for refunds, and the payment will also be checked by two persons.

In addition to the above we could create specific forms which will then have to be signed by the Treasurer, as well, meaning that they would also become accountable. Though the thorn remains the same, as per Constitution only members of the Club Committee are ultimately accountable over financial matters.

Currently the Club Treasurer tasks are numerous already as they are. The IT finances also require a great amount of effort and time on top of that, especially with refunds, which require a lot of time. At the end of the day, it is a few hours of work. If the role of CT does not become less taxing and demanding, we will be having problems recruiting new CT in the future, as naturally the number of members could also increase, thus becoming even more burdensome.

The current process is a bit cumbersome and leads to delays, such as waiting for approval and generating extra email traffic. The CS proposes that the the current limits are doubles, and thus in order to make a payment over £500 it will need approval from a Co-President, whereas if there is a payment over £1000 then it needs a vote.

Currently the limits are £250 which will change to £500, and the Presidents will have to approve, and from £500 to £1000, which could then change into being approved by one of the Co-Presidents and from another committee member.

Discussions continue on the risk if something goes wrong, coming again for the same reasons to the same conclusion, namely we have been entrusted as members of the Club Committee with membership's vote and we have in consequence been entrusted with managing the finances of the Club. The Club Committee feels very uncomfortable at the idea of passing some of the tasks currently undertaken by the CT to the IT Treasurer, especially to giving them permission to make their own payments. Most payments under £500 in relevance to the IT are refunds to members. Efficiency in such cases is a very important factor, we need to have though some form of control. There should definitely be a limit for the IT in regards to payments and authorisation, as there should be a final limit to the total amount of money that the IT will be able to take from the LFR bank account.

Overlooking something is easy and accidents may happen, and every IT transaction is actually a Club payment. The IT Committee is not part of the Club Committee, by Constitution we are not allowed to hand financial responsibilities off to someone else. Discussion in regards to payments and whether they may be effectuated through an app, such as Outsavvym where there is a fee for the software and it is much cheaper to do it, as it is just a payment per transaction,

Also we currently do allow members to pay by installments but is this actually allowed and can they continue to pay by installments through an app, it is a question which needs to be further researched.

Committee believes that it is important to have installments as an option. A discussion follows on whether to actually have installments or to abolish them completely. In regards to many of the Club events, such as the IT, the communication goes out to membership very early, so they do have time to save some money for this purpose. Also if the fees to be paid after each transaction to the app are not that bad, then members may still go with the installments option. In addition, Outsavvy is considered as a really good suggestion, though there needs to be in place an appropriate wording and let members know beforehand about that, that if they choose to pay by installments, they will have to pay the individual fee every single time they pay.

Much relative to the method of paying by installments the discussion continues, coming to payments in regards to the LFR25 Anniversary. Although the Committee fully realises that the offer to have installments is part of the inclusivity and accessibility policy of the Club, after some discussion, we think that creating installments in regards to the LFR25

Anniversary individual payments, will create only complications, as it implies so much administration and we would warmly discourage it from happening.

Actions to be taken: AD is kindly requested to send the amended wording of the Club Contribution relative to limits of payments to the Committee for feedback and approval. In addition, AD is kindly requested to please liaise with the IT Treasurer and have some more information on what has been discussed above.

Races secretaries

There isn't much happening this time of the year, TC has been rather busy by collecting the Championship results and there still exists the relative blurb on the ebulletin, offering membership the possibility to present their race results until Saturday the 29th of February. In addition the RS have been looking into suggestions for the next years races.

Publicity and Communications Officers

An update on the GBR, as this year we are entering only four teams, because there has been a much smaller interest from members for this year than the last. Consequently, there will be a slight increase in costs. We have enough runners to create two entire men's teams over 48 years of age but we don't have enough women as to create an exclusive women's team, so we will have to with mixed teams.

Action to be taken: AC is kindly requested to please update the GDPR policy

The deadline to the Pride march registration is this coming Sunday, the 16th of February. The Pride March is the most important publicity which we may have for the Club. The Committee fully supports the LFR participation at Pride and decides to choose the option for 125 wristbands, thus paying £125. Various discussions follow on how we should present ourselves this year, coming to the conclusion that Pride itself, regardless of all the organisation never runs smoothly, so the Committee agrees that the IFR participants are going to run again this year.

In regards to the membership renewal process, it has been decided that it will go forward automatically this year for all existing members.

No feedback has arrived from anyone who could come forward and potentially assist us in designing the new LFR leaflet. It is a case where graphic designers are desperately needed. We would like to make it visually much more interesting, adding more and different photos, as currently it is slightly a bit too verbose and it could benefit from having a bit less text.

Action to be taken: JK is kindly requested to try and find someone from his place of work who could assist us in designing the LFR leaflet, or even better, design it from scratch for us, and then please contact AC.

Discussion over having some type of media from the LGBT+ community over the participation of LFR at the Vitality Big Half. It is a big event, we are sending more than 200 runners and it is an occasion which we should be able to use for the Club's benefit and capitalise on its potential.

Action to be taken: JK and CBP are both kindly requested to look into the above matter and then contact AC

Social Secretaries

We have had a very successful end of dry January event, although it did not take place at the end of January, and it has been very well attended. The visit at the Houses of Parliament for LGBT+ History Month was really amazing, the tour was long and interesting and all participants were really very happy about this. We still have another event for LGBT+ History Month, at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, called Out At Sea, on Saturday the 22nd; incidentally this last event is sold out,

In regards to the Club Championships celebration we have been looking into organising the event at the Bethnal Green Working Men's Club. We have been looking into available Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays in March, in all possibility it could take place on Sunday the 15th of March. The only costs which need to be paid are the Security for the event, as the venue comes at £16 per hour and we could take it for two or three hours, and if the Champs events comes to an end long before that, membership may still stay behind for the social. The security cover is £20, so if we hire the venue for three hours, plus the security, it will be less than £100 in all, £86.

There will be an award ceremony, during which the Championships awards will be given out and we will also have the chance to have some speeches about the Club Champs, with some photos of members in the background taken from the Champs races. The reason we are having some different non-competitive awards and a separate ceremony came out from the feedback form, from the Club review we have had last year, where it was suggested from membership to include some further recognition to membership, not necessarily related to race results. So have taken these suggestions on board and we are doing this for our members (AR)

The City of Quebec is also a venue option, as we have used it before for Club events and we have already had a relative initial conversation.

Action to be taken: BB is kindly requested to please check whether the fees required for the Championships Event is £20 or £200 and then come back to the Committee.

Membership Secretary

We are currently at 480 male members and 51 female members; male members are 90.4% of the total membership, where as female are about 9.7%, in total that is 531 members. From the current 531 members, those who have renewed their membership are 416, 78.8%, whereas those completely new to the Club are 112, thus 21.2% of membership. In regards to the current month, we are 94% (531) of the way to reach the 562 members that we had last year.

We have about one and a half months of the Club Year still to go and we still need 31 members to match last year. On average, we would have needed 34 members to join or to renew, as to be able to match last year.

Considering the number of new members only, we have had an average of ten members per month, over the past eleven months.

Historically (based on the last seven years) and realistically speaking:

For February 2020, we can expect to gain between 6 - 18 members, with the average being closer to 11.

For the month of March 2020, we can expect to gain between 5 - 11 members, with the average being 7.

Additionally, based on the average new members per month, we can expect to reach 539 members by the end of Club Year 2019/20

This means we will end up 96% of the total members of the last Club Year.

Club Secretary

The Incidents and Accidents Report Document has been circulated and the Committee agrees on this, as to have it uploaded on the Club website.

LFR Volunteer Opportunities are a number of volunteering opportunities which are offered to the Club by the London Marathon Events team. The Club offers volunteers for a number of specific races and as a reward receives a financial donation in return. This could be an excellent way for raising some money for the Club. On the other hand, all those who would volunteer for these events and thus offering their active support raising money for the Club, could be rewarded with some extra volunteering points, which could be accrued towards the scoring points for the four LFR London Marathon Club Places.

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to create a relative blurb for the ebulletin, informing membership of these volunteering opportunities and what will be offered to membership in return as reward for their assistance

These specific races are: the Vitality Big Half, on Sunday the 1st of March, where we have been requested to provide ten volunteers as race marshals and from which race we would get in return £200. Then on Sunday the 24th of May, to provide again some race marshals for the Vitality Westminster Mile and on Monday the 25th of May some volunteers again for the Vitality 10K.

Finally some race marshals will be required for an event called the Standard Chartered Great City Race, SCGCR for short, which is a 5km corporate running challenge, taking place around the closed off streets in the City.

In relevance to this last volunteering opportunity, I would like to suggest that it would be a good idea for the Committee, at least for those of us who will still be part of this Committee, if re-elected, to lead by example and to have all available Committee members volunteering together for this event, also as a sort of group-bonding experience. This last event will take place on Tuesday the 21st of July 2020, from 18.00 pm to 20.30 pm, so please pencil the date down, and volunteers will be receiving a t-shirt, some food and a drink at the end of their marshaling and the Club will receive a donation of £200. EK volunteered for this event last year and the feedback provided was very positive.

Finally there will be a last request for volunteering on Sunday the 16 of August for the Prudential RideLondon Surrey where the donation payment to LFR will be above £250, depending on the number of volunteers we will be able to provide.

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to send an email relative to his suggestion over the SCGCR to all Committee members, with the link for registering as volunteers.

For the LFR 2020 AGM, the two potential dates are Thursday the 19th and Friday the 20th of March. The venue will be the same venue as last year, between King's Cross and St. Pancras, and we are in discussions about all relative payments and the organisational aspects of the evening. Ultimately, we might not be able to avoid the security person's fees for the evening. With the Club Championship awards presented on a different occasion, we are very hopeful that the whole procedure will not last more than one and a half hours. Of course the duration of the whole evening depends entirely on whether any of the Committee roles will be contested and whether we have to have separate voting.

Co-Presidents

We would like to request, if possible, to be given three dates for the IT. In addition, the IT Committee needs to please look at the Race Calendar and work around the already established race dates.

MyCrew

There has been a meeting and to the question of whether it will be feasible to change the membership management for this year, and reverse it from WebCollect to MyCrew, the answer is no. MyCrew does not currently have the same facilities as Webcollect has, and regardless of the fact that the MyCrew staff were very accommodating, and collaborative, to all our requests, they are still not ready for such changes, nor are they ready for such large clubs. In the meantime they will check what changes they can make and there wouldn't be any costs incurred for the Club. As we have been using WebCollect also for our vest orders, we have to remain for the time being with this provider, so we are back to where we were. We will go back to MyCrew with further suggestions and explaining to them exactly what we need and how this that we need has to function. MyCrew works really well for small groups of runners, we could end up giving them advice on how to make their platform ideal for big clubs too.

In regards to WebCollect, there are the following issues which need to be acted upon:

Actions to be taken:

Check whether the text for text for the automatic payments for this coming Club Year is in place

Check whether WebCollect has been modified for the correct membership fee, as there will be an increase of the amount to £ 52 and

Check the GDPR current terms and conditions

Next RCM will take place on **Tuesday the 10th of March.**

Actions to be taken: JK is kindly requested to please circulate the email which was sent by SOC to the rest of the Committee members, relative to the UK Athletics initiative on LGBT+ Inclusion, and CBP is kindly requested to please invite SOC to the next RCM.

8.52 pm.