



LFR
Regular Committee Meeting
Wednesday 3rd February 2021

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 Secretary: Daniel Brittle (DB)

LFR Coaching Team Coordinator: Matt Haas (MH)

Agenda

Financial Updates (CT)

Committee Roles Budgets for Club Year 2021/22

Membership Fees Club Year 2021/22

Preliminary Club Budget

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Club Co-Presidents

AOB

Chair: JK

Minutes: CBP

Apologies: AR

This is the current Committee's penultimate RCM.

Financial Updates (CT)

As we have mentioned in our previous meeting, the Committee needs to take a decision on the Club membership fees for the next Club Year, so that we may update the fees and have them ready and already on WebCollect this month.

There are various considerations to be made regarding the LFR changing venues, as we have no idea what will happen in that aspect, whether we will be able to return back, under which conditions will we be accepted back, will there be an increase on their part in the monthly rates, so for the time being we happen to be in complete darkness in that aspect and able to make only speculations.

It needs to be mentioned that the Club has been in the position to create a bit of surplus during the past two years, and not having had to pay for changing facilities in this past year has helped very much towards this surplus. If we are currently going to consider in a totally hypothetical scenario that we are not going to be returning to any of the previous changing facilities for the whole of the next Club Year, I believe that we could set the membership fees at £32 for those in full employment, £20 for those unwaged and £17 for those whose LFR membership is only second claim. This consideration is also proposed on the number of members that we believe we are going to have. Last year LFR had about 560 members, this year we have about 351, the above fees are proposed considering that we may be having in the new Club Year about 450 members.

CBP

Although I completely understand the thought behind this suggestion, I happen to find the proposal of £32 extremely low. If the next Club Year could be without any changing facilities, which we don't know for the moment and up to which point, then in regards to the year after, meaning in the Club Year 2022-23 how are we going to be asking membership to pay for what they used to be paying before the pandemic, meaning £50? I believe that the increase, although natural to us, as we know how things work, will seem really steep to many of the Club members. I am not suggesting to set the membership fees at £50 for this coming year, as we are naturally not in a position to be offering what we used to offer for that fee, but I find that £32 is still extremely low and that we should suggest something in the middle between these two sums, in the area of £38. Otherwise, with such a big gap between what you are suggesting to ask in the forthcoming Club Year 2021/22 and what we will be forced to ask for the Club Year 2022/23 we are just creating a problem for the Committee of the next year.

There is also the possibility that we could be allowed to return to using the changing facilities, not right now, but immediately after the summer, from September until March 2022, and these will be the months where the need for having a changing facility is more demanding and becomes imperative. In addition it will be good to start thinking of having a changing facility for Victoria Park, which has proved to be so popular, which means an additional expense, so I don't think asking for £38 or even for £40 at this point seems entirely unreasonable.

JK

When it comes to Victoria Park, I'm afraid it will have to become the poor relative to the other runs, as we will be getting a changing facility to the other runs first and accordingly the Victoria Park run may have to continue without a changing facility.

AD

If we have the possibility of returning back to using the changing facilities for six months or so, we can definitely absorb six months of changing facilities fees quite easily, by using the surplus of what the Club has accumulated in the past two years.

DB

I also agree with what CBP is saying, that it is going to be a really big jump asking for £50 in two year's time, but I think all this should be communicated in a way that is understandable to all Club members, that for the forthcoming Club Year the membership fees have dropped so much because at the moment we don't really expect to be back to using the changing venues.

AC

The aim is to get everyone vaccinated by summer and to also have the restrictions being removed by summer, so we are hopeful that by late summer we could be able to go back to operating as we used to. So there is a very distinct possibility that we could have to return to using changing facilities for about half a year.

JK

I also think that we need to communicate this in a better and more appealing way. The 2021/22 membership fees can be advertised as a Covid reduction price, with new joiners seeing this as a discount because of the pandemic. But this is something to think about for the future, as we need to let new members know of this reduction and why it is taking place now. We expect that all existing Club members will know from previous experience and will understand this jump in fees anyway, this is the price which we will be asking while we don't have any changing facilities.

The CT suggestions relative to the membership fees for the Club Year 2021/22 are presented for voting and the majority of the Committee votes for accepting the CT suggestions, namely that the 2021/22 membership fees are £32 for members in full employment, £20 for students or those unwaged and £17 for those whose LFR membership is only second claim.

Discussion on the River relay.

Although this is a really nice race, nevertheless it is logistically a very complicated one and also somehow quite expensive. The suggestion is to cancel the Club's participation for the next Club Year. It requires a lot of management and the Club only managed to participate because at the last moment there were members available who volunteered and made this a possibility, by driving our runners around. It takes a lot of planning and a lot of calculations in advance and it is not to be taken for granted that there will always be Club volunteers available to drive the runners around.

The Committee takes the decision to eliminate the LFR participation to the River Relay for the next Club Year.

When it comes to the other races which the Club usually follows, we have not heard any specific details from them at the moment, but we are confident that some of them will be going forward, such as the Bridges Relay and the Battersea relay, so the Club is considering to increase the member's participation in these races and to invest some more money in them.

When it comes to the Christmas party, we are also hoping this will go on, after all it's in about a year's time. The budget for LFR Christmas party is going to be slightly larger than what it has been in previous years, coming to £750, simply as there could be other minor expenses attached to this celebration, and it is good for the SS to already have some money to be able to calculate for these expenses in advance.

Short discussion on the LFR 25th Anniversary. Consideration of whether there is the possibility to reschedule the 25 anniversary celebrations for the next year. If there is a general consensus from membership, then it will be considered as a one-off special expenditure for the Club. If there is the possibility of something like this actually going ahead, then we may contribute in the same way, as a one off and we may also ask members to contribute.

JK

When it comes to the calculation of membership numbers for the next Club Year, we think that we are going to have a lot more of people than has been calculated by AD, as in spite of the lockdown, there have been numerous emails from people who are very keen to join the Club, there are many people who are keen to get back into physical activity, and when the lockdown will come to an ease there will be many new runners joining LFR, as people are quite desperate to come in already, although the Club is currently not operating and we are in a lockdown.

BD

We are also going into spring and summer, which is usually a much more appealing time of the year to people and they will be willing to come and join us, so we are probably going to get a higher number than the 450 calculated.

Short discussion on the Club Championships, as there has not been calculated anything in budget for this particular event, it will be delivered through zoom together with the AGM.

There is still an allowance for buying any awards and trophies.

CBP

When it comes to trophies, I believe that there is no need to buy any more trophies for the Club, as we already have a considerable number of them, unless there is something different and new for which we would like to award membership.

Discussion on the budget which is allocated to coaching. There has been an expenditure already paid for MH who has requested to do a higher level but then we have not paid for anyone else yet, as no one else has come forward. It has been discussed in the previous year that it is a requirement for SW to take this coaching.

We should also check if the LFR Triathlon coordinators need any coaching to be sponsored for a different level or anything else they might require and this is a subject which should definitely be considered by the new Club Committee, as we need to support the Triathlon Team further.

Discussion regarding EC, who has expressed the request to completely step down as the LFR website master. EC has been kindly assisting the Committee with IT matters for the past four years and has been managing and paying our invoices for the website. Naturally all payments have been reimbursed to EC but nevertheless they feel that it is time for them to step down totally. JR has mentioned that they would like to continue supporting the Committee with IT issues but it would be very useful to have a second person to take on some of the tasks.

JK

In regards to making all the payments for the website, it could be attached to the President's role, they could be doing that, it's not that one needs actual IT knowledge to do it, it's just a payment to process. In regards to having someone supporting JR, we could broadcast a shout-out for volunteers and to have another person joining the team. After all it is also an opportunity for the new person to learn some extra skills and by having another person joining that could potentially halve the job that needs to be done.

Races Update (RS)

Nothing to report.

Publicity Update (P&C O)

AC has been working on the new LFR flyers and there follows a discussion on the new LFR flyers and their design. Suggestions are to have a different picture on the front, preferably a high resolution professional photo and not a selfie. In order to be able to find such a photo, we may need to request one from membership. DB has a little stash of photos who could be adequate for the flyer. Discussion on what type of photo to use, which will dictate also the direction the Club wants to follow for the next Club Year regarding inclusivity and further discussion on the different orientation of the written part, at the backside of the flyer.

LFR Constitution Update and the use of non-binary friendly terms

This is a task which has to be forwarded for the next Club Committee, and there is not very much to do but the phrasing in some part needs to be reviewed. There is for example the phrase relative for the dual roles "ideally of a different gender", which could be better expressed in a more non-binary friendly way as "ideally of different gender identities". As mentioned there is not much but I think that we should make an effort to update certain parts, thus demonstrating also in this way our support for being more inclusive and politically correct.

Last Sunday Patrick Gale joined the LFR Book Club which was also on his birthday. It has been a very successful zoom event with about 16 attendees and it was really a wonderful opportunity to have the author of the book present. JKk would like to send Patrick a thank you LFR merchandise, a Club vest, as he also happens to be a runner himself. An email needs to be sent to CD with and kindly request to have a vest sent to Patrick.

Social Secretary Update (SS)

As you know and based on the suggestion and generous allowance of our CT, I have contacted Sheila Simmonds who will be coming to our zoom screens for a special Frontrunners edition of Busy Lady Bingo on Friday 26th February at 7.30pm. This event is going to be free for members and it is promising to be well attended and members may register by using a Google form.

There is one female Frontrunner who is interested in standing and becoming the female SS, NA; they have already contacted CBP, who has replied back accepting their candidature.

Membership Update (MS)

A very short update on my part, with registered members being currently at 354.

Club Secretary

LFR 2021 AGM

The date has been set and the Club's AGM will be taking place on Thursday the 18th of March. The medium we are going to be using will be the same as with the previous AGM, and as it has been discussed during the previous RCM a month ago, if we are not going to have any contested positions for the Committee roles, then we may still use the LFR zoom account as it is and in such case we don't need to pay for any additional costs. In case of Committee positions being contested, then there will be an increment of about 50£, which will be a one-off but which will enable us to conduct the voting procedure in a fair and unproblematic way.

Action to be taken: JKK is kindly requested to please look into the technical matters of the forthcoming AGM and to please report back to the Committee if there are any inexpensive alternatives which could be used for the LFR voting process

Discussion on the general reluctance of membership to come forward for the available Committee positions and on the Committee roles which are potentially going to be available. Only two Club members have come forward and presented themselves as candidates, for the time being. It would be great if we were to have some more members coming forward in the next week and to have something from all potential candidates posted on the next e-bulletin

In regards to the Club awards which are usually presented during the AGM, I would like to suggest to not assign them this year, based on what I would call very obvious reasons. The Cross-Country Male Award and the Cross-Country Female Award simply because the whole Cross Country season has been cancelled, the same for the LFR Parkrunner of the Year Award, as there haven't been any parkruns throughout the year, the Trail Run award for the exact same reason, and also the LFR Coaches' Award and Triathlon Award. In regards to the Newrunner Of The Year Award (NOTY) and the Frontrunner Of The Year Award (FOTY), I am also of the same opinion, that they shouldn't be presented this year, but I would like to bring this to the Committee's attention, as to please have a collective decision in regards to these two awards.

The Committee considers and votes to not have these two LFR awards presented this year, as due to the pandemic, the Club was forced to operate for only a short period of time, which has been deemed by the Committee as totally insufficient for the plurality of Club members to be able to interact and to get to know each other in a thorough manner, relevant to assignment of the above awards. We have had new runners in the Club, but the majority of Club members don't really know who these new members are as they haven't had enough opportunities to get to know them.

Short update on the LFR Archives & Oral History Project

Club Co-Presidents

AOB

Discussion on the Green Belt Relay.

The organisers are very keen on having this race going forward and they have tried to create a number of different plans where runners may reach their respective starting points by using trains and taxis. It might seem as a logistic nightmare but it also seems to be feasible up to a point. There is though currently a different problem ahead, that the organisers are having great difficulties in obtaining insurance from the different landowners for the parcels of land on which the race is taking place. The landowners cannot give permission to the organisers until the lockdown restrictions are going on, and they don't really know for how long these restrictions will be going on, so this has become a vicious circle and a rather complicated issue. We believe that by the end of this week they will have come to a more or less conclusive decision. Needless to say that the organisers, and numerous of the runners, are extremely keen on doing something, as there hasn't been any race taking place for such a long time. It could be a series of virtual events, it could be just one team from each club, again, they are unwilling to take a final decision until they know what is going to happen with the current situation. JW and AC will be keeping the Committee updated and they will also communicate any decisions by the GBR organisers to membership.