



**LFR**  
**Regular Committee Meeting**  
**Tuesday 3rd August 2021**

Co-Presidents: Naseem Allmomen (NA) and Andrew Corti (AC)

Club Secretary: Christos Bitzis-Politis (CBP)

Club Treasurer: James Handerson (JH)

Membership Secretary: Geoff Hicks (GH)

Races Secretaries: Erika Kulikova (EK) and Francis O'Callaghan (FC)

Publicity & Communications Officers: Jonathan Lissemore (JL) and Gareth Fletcher (GF)

Social Secretaries: Daniel Brittle (DB) and Charlie Abrines (CA)

**Agenda**

**International Trip Committee Update (CC)**

**Financial Updates (CT)**

**Races Update (RS)**

Bridges Relay

**Publicity Update (P&C O)**

Pride March (wristbands allocation)

Regional Volunteer Awards, next steps and the plan

**Social Activities update (SS)**

**Membership Update (MS)**

**Club Secretary**

- LFR changing facilities and post run venues

- Big Half Update (entries, volunteering, impact on LFR running days)

## **Co-Presidents**

Covid Monitoring Updates and Changes

## **AOB**

Chair: AC

Minutes: CBP

Apologies: FC, JH

## **International Trip Committee Update (CC)**

Introduction of CC to the Club Committee.

Update from the ICommittee on the progress and the options so far available.

The ICommittee had the opportunity to meet twice over the past few months, discuss and decide on certain subjects. With the exception of MH, who has stepped down, most of the ICommittee has stayed the same. The ICommittee is currently looking for a new volunteer that would be taking responsibility for the IC Communications.

The ICommittee went through a number of potential suggestions for the next IT, 13 in all, and it has proved to be a difficult decision identifying which ones were the most suitable and then narrowing all suggestions down to just three events. Essential criteria in the selection process were considered that the three options needed to be as feasible as possible in their organisation, including cheapest flights, a run that was interesting enough as to be able to attract runners but at the same time as accessible as possible to all abilities, a country where LGBTQ+ people would feel safe, possibly with a bit of culture so that there would be some sightseeing, with dates which would not clash with the London Marathon, the Green Belt Relay, the Cross Country and other race events that the Club is habitually and religiously attending, considering also some general practicalities as well.

The three options which the ICommittee has come up with are as follows:

A. Lisbon Eco, which is something similar to a trail run as it is running up the hills of Lisbon, but a very urban one, nothing like the one in Czechia. This event offers a 12k option where the climb is not that hilly, a Half Marathon and a full Marathon option. The event has been scheduled for the 8th of May.

B. The Athens Poseidon Half Marathon on 17 April is the second option, which is a running event with a Half Marathon, a two runner 21km relay, a 10km and 5km race. The event takes place along the coast in the south of Athens. The 17 April is Easter Sunday so members can potentially take Friday and Monday off as Bank Holidays. For this same reason the travelling costs to Greece are however going to be more

expensive and it's just a week before the London Marathon, which is well attended by many of the Frontrunners.

In regards to this future IT, based on the feedback that the ICommittee has received relative to trips of many previous years, there is a marked consideration and prevalence for visiting a warmer capital city, hence Athens and Lisbon. Athens is generally considered neither expensive nor cheap, but it is a bit more expensive compared to Lisbon.

C. The third suggestion is yet another running event in Lisbon, on the 20th of May, which offers a half and a 10K option. It is the safest alternative, in terms of race, as it is a traditional road race and this particular event is favoured by numerous runners every year, as it can have up to 35,000 participants. The only issue is that it takes place on the 20th of March, which is a bit risky, as the date is closer to winter and if there will be some return to the measures taken over the pandemic in the previous year and in case there will be a new wave sometime in the fall, March could be potentially a bit more risky, in terms of proximity to that hypothetical wave. This option may not come across as very inspiring but it is very feasible in terms of organisation.

Again, all three locations have been chosen in terms of the options viewed as more viable in respect to flights and dates.

Discussion in regards safety issues and comparison with previous IT, as the destination needs to be an uncomplicated and easy to reach location but also a destination offering an easy ability to cancel the event, if there is an outburst of Covid.

KF is the ICommittee member in charge of drafting an update for the ebulletin. The plan is to announce it to members in the next couple of weeks and start selling tickets early in October. The format will be like in all previous IT, departure on Friday, the race taking place on Sunday, return to the UK on Monday.

Naturally things have changed in the period of these past two years and the ICommittee needs to consider how to limit all liability, in regards to the pandemic. Instead of creating individual risk assessments for all three different options, which will be difficult considering that the situation may change so much over the period of a month, it will be better to create and ask all participants to complete a straightforward form and a disclaimer in regards to certain risks in advance of the trip. This means that we need to have in place a very clear Covid Policy and possibly communicate it beforehand so that members will know this in advance, prior to doing any bookings.

**Action to be taken:** CC is kindly requested to please share with the Committee the documents relative to the three alternative options through CBP, so that the Committee will endorse which of the options they consider as best and get back to them before the end of the forthcoming weekend with relative feedback.

Discussion on the Club reserve and on how to wisely invest the LFR profit from all previous travels. One suggestion would be to assimilate it with the wider club funds, another suggestion would be to subsidize a more robust group insurance in view of the current general situation, which could prove a very sensible thing to consider, with a portion of the available funds going towards making all members feel safer in regards to the IT.

There is already the suggestion to create a sort of reserve and subsidize the travelling expenses for those who cannot afford to go to 2022 GG HK, so it could also be possible to use part of the reserves in benefit of the unwaged members, enabling them to go to Lisbon, having as many members as possible participating to this event, making them feel as part of the Club and making this particular trip, the first after the pandemic, as inclusive as possible.

Naturally the greatest part of the LFR reserves will be kept as a contingency for future unexpected occurrences.

**Action to be taken:** AC is kindly requested to please forward to CC the WebCollect details relative to the skills Club have reported on their accounts and which could be proven as helpful and useful to the ICommittee.

## **Races Update (RS)**

### Bridges Relay

There are not going to be any type of bridges involved in any way in this event this time because of the specific location, which is going to be in Greenwich, which is a quite central location and hopefully this will make it very popular among our members as well. Thankfully the race is actually going ahead on the 8th of September and we are expecting that there will be lots of interest, both in general among the running community, and from the Club. The RS recommend that LFR should definitely participate in this event, though the question is how many teams should we register and whether there is the budget to do it, registrations are £16 for a team of four participants identifying as male and £12 for three participants identifying as females.

The River Relay is not going to be part of the LFR running schedule this year, as it has proved a really complicated task from a logistics point of view so this is going to probably be the only other relay event for the Club for the time-being. As the Club will be paying for all registration this time, we don't want to excite enormous interest and have as many participants as we are currently sending to the Big Half, but it would be encouraging to try and involve as many members as possible.

The Committee discusses the proposal from a financial point of view. In an exchange of emails relative to the subject, the CT stated their enthusiasm in entering as many LFR teams as possible, wishing also to know an approximate number of teams, so as to ascertain whether there is the possibility of having in place a relative budget.

The Club will be receiving a donation of £250 for providing ten volunteers as course marshalls to the Big Half, and this amount could be used for sponsoring 20 teams of women or 15 teams of men or a fair mixture of both. This amount could be used as the budget in mind for this specific event (CBP)

The Committee votes in favour of the RS suggestion and agrees to register as many LFR teams as possibly available, based on the above available budget.

**Action to be taken:** The RS are kindly requested to please create all the initial publicity and relative announcement for the event on the e-bulletin and liaise with the P&C Officers

In regards to the 5k race for the Club Championships, now that the ParkRuns are back, the thought is to ask members to submit the finishing time for any park run which they may do during the whole month of September and this will go towards their individual Club Championships charts.

Discussion about some of the new runners not knowing nor exactly understanding what the Club Championships are: they could be referred to the relative section on the Club Website, which has a clear explanation on the subject.

Discussion relative to the race results and how to be able to include as many as possible, submit them on time to the Race Secretaries and then have them in place for the ebulletin. The Committee comes to the conclusion that the best way to achieve all the above will be by having members adopt a very proactive attitude and email independently their individual race results to the RS promptly.

### **Publicity Update (P&C O)**

Regional Volunteer Awards, next steps and the plan

The item has already been published on the ebulletin, it would be great to put some specific assets together and touch different points, get members to talk why we are a great Club, get some of the Club spirit develop further among members, have a sense of pride in what we do and achieve as Club and use these thoughts towards the two awards.

**Action to be taken:** CBP is kindly requested to ask the Circle Volunteers to promote the Regional Volunteer Awards further through the Club Circles

It would be good to put it on social media and get some attention of both members and those following the Club and above all have some clarity on the reasons why we are striving to have these two awards being won by Shane and the Club

**Action to be taken:** CBP is kindly requested to ask ES whether they would be available to please create and send Publicity a short video clip relative to their training progress and any updates which they may want to share on the London Marathon

Pride March (wrist bands)

The LFR application has been approved by Pride in London and the Club has been allocated 70 wristbands. Discussion follows on how to distribute these wristbands. The idea will be to encourage new members to apply for one and at the same time reserve a number of the wristbands for female and non binary Club members. In case there may be some complaints from established members why new members are in a certain way being prioritised this time, it is important to express this in a way that is clearly understood, that LFR would like to offer the possibility of inclusion and participation to Pride to all those runners who have never had the opportunity to march before and/or to march with LFR. On the other hand, the Club is also planning on participating in the Reading Pride as well, which could be publicised and being offered as an alternative celebration.

Reading can provide a release to the London Pride, it is really close to London, the atmosphere is very chilled, and it will be a great opportunity for LFR to show their support to a smaller Pride event.

In addition AC will be taking runners around for an LGBTQ "cultural" walk as well

The best way to manage the wrist band allocation will be to split the Pride March on Spond in three separate events, one for female identifying and non binary members, one for general members and a third for new members and make a clear communication to everyone of what is meant by new members. The MS can also somehow monitor this, if necessary, having a knowledge of who is new to the Club and by new to this Club Year it is intended for everyone who has joined LFR since the last Pride event.

It is very important to try and encourage members to participate in the event in addition to offering them two Pride Marches, one week apart. In regards to the timeline on when we are planning to have this out, the best would be to have it on the next ebulletin.

Stats provided by the P&C Officers

### **Ebulletin**

- Number of subscribers: 600
- Total bounced email addresses: 1
- Most engaged item this month: Hong Kong Gay Games

### **Instagram**

- Number of followers: 712
- New followers in last 2 weeks: 32

- Most popular post: 1st in-person social (101 likes)

### **Social Activities update (SS)**

The last in person event which took place last Saturday was very successful, we had about 22 people in total, and although there were three women who had signed up to attend, none of them actually came to the event, which frankly was a bit frustrating and disappointing, as the spots could have been allocated differently.

39 members have already signed up for the Pub Quiz this coming Sunday, we do realise that this is not a free event and probably not as inclusive as all previous, but with the price of £6 per person requested a part of the amount collected will go towards paying the quiz master whereas we hope to be able to make some profit for LFR as well. On the other hand there are some very lovely prizes to be given out and there will also be some free drinks as well, courtesy of the pub.

In regards to the picnic, there will also be a karaoke taking place on that same day at the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens, some members have asked us whether we could also turn it into a sports day with rounders and such activities, so we may bring some frisbees and rounders and such, lots of people have already signed up, more than sixty at the moment, so we are all very excited and hopefully the weather will be really good on the day.

We are also considering the Post Pride event at the usual The Crown and the Two Chairmen in Soho, but we will estimate the number of attendees and confirm with them closer to the date.

We are also going to be organising something after the London Marathon, where the trophies will be given out by the Co-Presidents and there will be short speeches. The event is now taking place on the 3rd of October and we have been contacted by a Frontrunner from Florida who is going to come over and enquired whether we were planning on hosting an event. There will definitely be again the LFR group at Mile 21 of the course which is our usual cheering point and then probably we could be going to the Retro Bar as per tradition.

After the Pride Run we are planning on going to The Glory, but without having made any specific booking on behalf of the Club, we are planning on showing up at the venue at a certain point. Last but not least, and although it may seem early, it is actually not, we are looking into making some more concrete steps towards the LFR Christmas social, mostly looking into fixing a date with a venue. The SS will be anyway keeping the Club Committee updated in the meantime.

### **Membership Update (MS)**

There are 435 members currently, and we are at the point of deleting some members who have not renewed their membership although they may have to be reminded before doing so.

Besides this thorny subject, there are a number of changes which need to be implemented so as to make the role more efficient and also for finalising certain things in favour of the Club. It will become important to start with the preparation of

these plans shortly and have them in an advanced state already before Christmas, and then launching them with the new Club Year. One of these innovations will be to introduce Direct Debit, as it will be simpler, easier and more practical for members, and we will be able to retain more people as members with direct debit, in addition it will save an incredible amount of time for the MS of having to chase people for renewing their membership. Another Important measure will be removing the option of Paypal. What needs to be done is communicate all these changes to membership not in advance but communicate them all in one and present them already as a fait accompli. There are going to be some complaints, unavoidably but the important thing is to offer an efficient alternative to such complaints, they are anyway going to be complaints mostly because it will be a change from the routine and for having things working differently, as members will realise soon enough that all these changes will benefit them massively as well.

**Action to be taken:** CBP is kindly requested to please remind some former members to renew their membership.

JL has had some very good suggestions to share with the MS and now there should take place a meeting between the MS and the Club Treasurer, so as to start planning these changes.

### **Club Secretary**

- LFR changing facilities and post run venues
- Big Half Update (entries, volunteering, impact on LFR running days)

#### Vitality Big Half

Registrations as of Tuesday 3rd of August: 197 runners, of which identifying as male: 175, of which identifying as female: 22.

Volunteers: ten (and three in reserve !!!)

#### Impact of The Big Half on the LFR weekly running schedule

21st August Hyde Park Run, just one officer for the Circle and it's their first time ever

21st August Victoria Park Run, Nas and John Peter for the Circle

23rd August Battersea Park Run, just Gareth for the Circle

Suggestion: monitor number of attendees on Spond, take final decision on Friday the 20th

In regards to the 21st of August in Hyde Park, GH could be available to lead on the day.

### **LFR Changing Facilities**



a. Issues with The Castle and The Kentish Town Leisure Centre

Both the above venues are still monitoring patrons through personal/individual membership cards and are using specific time-slots for groups.

Both venues are trying to resolve the issue of having LFR entering as a group during a slot that does not clash with other groups.

This is slightly at odds also with what LFR members are used to until now, meaning entering the venue individually between 6.30 and 6.55 and not as a group.

It is also proving a logistical problem at the end of each run, as members do not return to the facilities as a group, considering that there are different running abilities and keeping people waiting in the cold outside after a run, so that they may form a group, is, in my opinion, out of the question.

On the antipodes, both The Oxford in Kentish Town and The Three Stags are willing to have us back and waiting for our green light.

Discussions have been initiated with both venues for a reduced LFR menu.

b. Issues with The Seymour

Facts

As of March 2020, Seymour rates were for Thursday £40.08 per run, for Saturday £72.10 per run

If LFR starts using The Seymour from September 2021 onwards, calculated at a slight increased rate of £41 for Thursdays and of £73 for Saturdays, we have as follows:

**September 2021**

5 Thursdays: £205, 4 Saturdays: £292, Total Cost: £497

**October 2021**

4 Thursdays: £164, 5 Saturdays: £365, Total Cost: £529

**November 2021**

4 Thursdays: £164, 4 Saturdays: £292, Total Cost: £456

**December 2021**

3 Thursdays: £123, 3 Saturdays: £219, Total Cost: £342

**January 2022**

4 Thursdays: £164, 4 Saturdays: £292, Total Cost: £456

**February 2022**

4 Thursdays: £164, 4 Saturdays: £292, Total Cost: £456

**March 2022**

5 Thursdays: £205, 4 Saturdays: £292, Total Cost: £497

Currently The Seymour has been pushing for a payment of £ 2,80 per runner

## Hypotheses

If we were to consider that LFR accepts the Seymour demand of charging £2,80 per runner

2,80 X 15 members: £42

2,80 X 25 members: £70

2,80 X 35 members: £98

2,80 X 40 members: £112

2,80 X 45 members: £126

3 Thursdays, at 15 members per Thursday: £126

5 Thursdays, at 15 members per Thursday : £ 210

3 Thursdays, at 25 members per Thursday: £210

5 Thursdays, at 25 members per Thursday : £350

3 Saturdays, at 35 members per Saturday: £294

5 Saturdays, at 35 members per Saturday: £490

3 Saturdays, at 40 members per Saturday: £336

5 Saturdays, at 40 members per Saturday: £560

3 Saturdays, at 45 members per Saturday: £378

5 Saturdays, at 45 members per Saturday: £630

September 2021 (conservative estimate)

5 Thursdays X 15 members each: £210

4 Saturdays X 25 members each: £280

Total Cost: £490, as opposed to £497

September 2021 (amplified estimate)

5 Thursdays X 35 members each: £490

4 Saturdays X 45 members each: £504

Total Cost: £994, as opposed to £497

LFR has historically provided changing facilities for the Thursday and Saturday runs and continuing to do so, definitely enhances the experience of running with the Club on both these days.

Hyde Park is a great park, it is central and a well-known landmark of London, it would be a shame to abandon it.

On the other hand, nothing has to remain the same forever and LFR is one of the very few Clubs among the FR family that provides changing facilities for its members.

Some suggestions on my side would be to please check in different areas around Hyde Park (Paddington, Kensington, Mayfair, etc) for a venue that offers changing facilities through the local council, charities, getting in contact with other LFR members, leisure centres, academic institutions, religious institutions, etc.

One of the Club's responsibilities is to provide changing facilities for as many Club members as possible. If we are able to provide extremely affordable changing facilities for the other Club runs in the week, even for the ones in Victoria Park and Greenwich Park, then let us please do that, while at the same time we may continue the search for our Thursday and Saturday runs in Hyde Park.

**Actions to be taken:** CBP is kindly requested to please get in contact with the changing facilities of the Tennis Courts in Hyde Park, the Imperial College in South Kensington and BB and report back to the Committee

## **Co-Presidents**

### Covid Monitoring Updates and Changes

Based on the latest guidelines offered by EA and relative to the Covid restrictions, the Club is no longer responsible at all to monitor members nor to make any official suggestions in regards to isolation, all responsibility has now passed to the NHS and it's test and trace responsibility for every individual. Accordingly all relative references were removed from Spond and the LFR Website, and now all activities, social and running, which are appearing on Spond do not have a limit of attendees. When we will gradually start returning to using the changing facilities, we may also need to go back to using Spond so that we may monitor numbers better.

Naturally certain issues relative to the pandemic could be directly reinforced at the runs and ask members to use Spond, so that we may know how many runners are going to show up and this is also very important for the coaching sessions, so that the coaches may know how many more or less to expect, so that they may plan their session accordingly.

On the one hand we want members to keep using Spond, on the other hand we are trying to get people off Spond. The whole app is based on having just 500 members and we are going to have a clearance as we have already reached this limit and we are now unable to register any new runners unless we have removed those you are not interested in coming to run with us anymore. We need to remind members that they need to sign up with the Club after about a trial period of a month and that they will be deleted after that period. We currently have about 65 people registered as trialists and we are going to hit the point of 500 anyway, with fully registered members, so these are just temporary solutions. The only viable action for the time being would be to contact the Spond development team and ask for a solution. In

the end, we might have to stop using the app altogether and go for a different app that does not offer a limit of users.

**Action to be taken:** AC is kindly requested to please make all the necessary contacts with the Spond development team and report back to the Committee.

Discussion on the track on the Battersea Millenium and on Mile End and the difference in options for payments of the sessions.

Discussion on pacing people with other runners who have different performances and make sure that new runners always have someone to run with. The range of Club members is vast and between the more focussed and the more sociable runners, there will always be someone at their pace.

In regards to encouraging members and also making them more conscious of their running abilities we could offer a specific run which could enable newcomers to be more paced and to experience more their own pace.

**Action to be taken:** CBP is kindly requested to please send out the Doodle Poll for the next RCM