



LFR
Regular Committee Meeting
Tuesday 14th September 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

2022 GG HK Committee Update (CC)

Financial Updates (CT)

Races Update (RS)

Publicity Update (P&C O)

Social Activities update (SS)

Membership Update (MS)

Club Secretary

Co-Presidents

Discussion and decision on Spond

AOB

Chair: NA

Minutes: CBP

Apologies: AC, GH, JL

2022 GG HK Committee Update (CC)

Report shared with the Club Committee by AG as Chair of the 2022 GG HK IT, previously to the RCM.

All the 2022 GGHK IT minutes and actions from the last meeting are in to be found in: https://docs.google.com/document/d/13Z3Oz1-5GqAHjypmkAtSI9NyRXEK8IK-vGRkd_4SXic/edit?usp=sharing

- The survey results have been reviewed, 67 members are interested, 60 have already pre-registered. 50% want to do the whole event as organised by the HK Committee, mix of cost options. Our reading of the results is that we need to be flexible. We do not intend to book everything but advise and have preferred options for people to use.
- We are currently writing a travel template and are beginning to engage with potential sponsors i.e. BA. We intend to offer (a) full (b) outward travel only (c) hotels with different price points (d) socials, all optional and not every day.
- We are now engaging with other FR groups to see what intentions are
- We intend to have a monthly spot in the LFR newsletter when appropriate, to highlight

Financial Updates (CT)

The Club has started paying out some money to the Wednesday changing facilities in Kentish Town but besides that I would say that we are essentially in a very good point at the moment. The Met League fee for this coming season has been paid, there is no need to pay the SEAA fees for this year, as the registration fees from last year have been carried forward until March 2022, the Club has collected £13.868 so far in membership fees, as of September the 14th, which is much better than we thought, even though the majority of this amount will be paid out to a number of standard Club expenditures. The Club kit sales have also picked up, the Club has sold about £1000 worth of kit, as sales have been boosted by the Big Half and the Pride Run coming this week, then there was a WebCollect payment which had been already budgeted, so the situation remains stable towards looking optimistic.

Discussion on the Pride Run donation.

The Pride Run donation is a once per year historic donation of £600 that the Club has been offering to Pride Run, considering that the event has been an iconic LFR event for more than the past 15 years, because LFR actively supports the event by having a large number of LFR members being engaged as volunteers every year, many LFR members are part of the Pride Run Committee and also because it has always been a platform of further publicity for the Club, as our membership registration numbers are always boosted after each Pride Run by people who mention that they saw us running in Victoria Park and now they want to give LFR a try. It has not been the best of years in regards to Club finances, but if the CT believes that we may still go forward with such a donation and finally agrees to this going forward and if the Committee is requested to vote on this subject, then I remain positive and I am voting for

the donation. As Pride Run always tries to engage a main and often several smaller sponsors for the event, it might be good to ask MP if they actually are in need of a donation from the Club this year, before making the approach in offering them one (CBP)

There has been created a Memorandum of Understanding stipulated about two years ago between MP as Chair of Pride Run Committee and the previous LFR Co-Presidents and before we make any enquiries and contact MP it would be good to check what this MoU specifies in regards to this donation and what is actually expected of the Club (DB)

Action to be taken: The Co-Presidents are kindly requested to please recover and check the above mentioned MoU and accordingly update the Committee

Last but not least AC won the £400, of which now £350 will be invested towards Triathlon coaching.

Races Update (RS)

The Bridges Relay, even without any actual bridges this year, went really well, and although we had a couple of drop-outs in the last moment, we managed to recruit some runners and to present all teams as complete as expected, with many thanks due to EK, for finding the replacements. LFR presented three Men teams and one Women team, two Men Vet teams and one Women Vet team and two mixed teams, so a really good representation of LFR runners. The race results were also really good, with AT being 3rd overall, the women did really well, but in addition to the race results the race went really well and gave every participant the feeling of belonging to the Club, as members felt really engaged. The event was really well organised, there were no pedestrians around, so it was an overall very positive experience.

Action to be taken: EK is kindly requested to please liaise with the CT and seek refund for the No Bridges relay expenses. In consequence, the CT is kindly requested to refund what is due to EK

In regards to the Club Championships, and before we become fully immersed into the Cross Country season, there is one last race left, the 5km, and it would be better to do it sooner than later, as we don't want members to have to choose between the Cross Country events and doing the 5k, so the ideal would be to do it over two Saturdays between the end of September and the beginning of October. Again, the event will be split over two different days, offering members the opportunity to have more flexibility and time at disposal, without feeling much pressure.

Publicity Update (P&C O)

We are in the process of updating the Web content relative to the Cross Country, mostly to make our new members become aware of the Cross Country events and boost their confidence in participating. It is done in the format of questions and respective answers, what is Cross

Country, what should one wear, what is the Met League, etc., which could prove really useful if you are new to the Club, also adding photos of people looking happy, as to promote the events further and be helpful at the same time.

The video by the Co-Presidents went really well, there is no pressure for creating a second one anytime soon, but it would be great to have another one, a good many members clicked on the link for the video which was provided by the ebulletin, and there was excellent feedback in general about the idea and the delivery of the message.

If LFR becomes shortlisted for the Regional Volunteer Awards it will be necessary to have in place some good ideas and a number of options on how to publicise this achievement and on how to take the best advantage of the situation for the Club, as to promote it further. We also thought that it would be really useful and engaging, also for those who are not yet members, to launch a "latest news" section on the LFR website. This new section can then be shared on the ebulletin, for Club members, the general idea would be to share some more personal stories amongst us, to portray and underline the positive parts of the Club, and also to make everybody aware of what is going on and of what is to come in the near future, in terms of activities. Without wishing to appear critical, the website does look a bit static from that point of view, so it could become more engaging if we were to bring a more personal touch to it, which will be updated in due course.

The suggestion for a "latest news" section is welcomed enthusiastically by the rest of the Committee members.

Members nowadays seem to connect much more to the LFR Instagram page, there is always much more activity on Instagram, the photos which were taken by DB and CH from the Big Half event were very much liked by a great number of people.

There is the possibility of linking the LFR Instagram account to the LFR Website, and this might also make the Website become more engaging (JH)

Action to be taken: The P & C Officers are kindly requested to please liaise with the LFR IT Team, taking into consideration the idea of both linking the LFR Instagram Page to the LFR Website and of revitalizing the Website's content and aspect

We have also been able to monitor the number of members who have clicked on the Regional Volunteer Awards link that was provided by the ebulletin, and the number of people that clicked were over 100 in total, about 60 members clicked on the nomination for SC and about 40 members clicked on the link for nominating the Club. Of course we are not in a position to monitor how many of these members actually filled in the nominations, we can just count the clicks on the link

If we really wanted to know, this information could be provided in a simple way through the number of emails which entered the inbox of the LFR Info account, as every time there was submitted a nomination relative to the Club, the Info account received a notification that a Club member had just voted nominating the Club (NA)

Social Activities update (SS)

The LFR Picnic was really successful and everybody seemed to have had a really good time, the Pub Quiz went also very well and was well attended, we managed to sell 48 tickets at £5 per ticket, so we made about £240 of which £150 went towards the venue.

Have had the opportunity of chatting to a number of members and have received really excellent feedback on this event, members really enjoyed themselves and the atmosphere, were very appreciative of the effort and will be looking forward to a similar event sometime in the future (CBP)

Truth being told, in the end we didn't sell as many tickets as we had expected to but then, through lessons learned, the next Pub Quiz could very possibly take place at a different venue, as the Cock Tavern has a bit of a weird shape in form of an L, so people who are seated on one side, are not able to see who is on the other end, and that affects communication and the sense of feeling together.

Then there is the event at The Glory, after the party at the People's Tavern, and already more than 40 people have signed up. We are expecting that this event is going to be equally successful and also the post race event. Naturally, in regards to the latter, the weather on Saturday is going to play an important role, and members are going to stay out for a longer period of time if the weather is good and it's not raining. So, if the weather is good, people will very probably stay for the whole of the afternoon in Victoria Park and then as a certain point go directly to The Glory.

Coming now to what you have all been waiting for, the LFR Christmas Dinner Party, we have had a very positive meeting with the Anthologist, the venue of two years ago, and they are very keen on having us again. We have already had a meeting with Casa Frango close to London Bridge, but there is an unavailability of the venue for the date we want to host our event. We are considering having the LFR party on the 27th of November, and The Anthologist is available for that date. We would need to reserve that date also very very soon, sometime in the next couple of days. There is also another venue that we will be visiting tomorrow, the York & Albany, close to Regent's Park, who also happens to be available on the date above suggested, and after that we will need to make a prompt decision. The Anthologist is offering us a £4 discount per person based on the November date, and the date works really well for us too, so there are good probabilities that we may go with them in the end. There is a Christmas budget set up from the previous year, we are planning on sending out to the Committee a list of all the expenses for our Christmas event, what will the total cost be, what are we expecting the ticket per person to be and such, so that you all can go through and approve them, and this will have to take place through emails, we cannot wait until the next RCM to decide, it is important that we move quickly as we really want to get the venue down quickly, as well.

After the Committee has agreed to a venue, then the deposit payment will have to go in advance on behalf of the Club, to be able to secure the venue and then the greatest part of the expenditure will be subsequently covered through members paying for their tickets. Based

on calculations from previous years, this payment will be around £7,000, possibly a bit above £7,000, and then we need to make sure that we try and exceed the minimum spend limit on the night of the event. The minimum limit for the whole evening is £10,000, which does seem a great deal of money but we have always managed to go above this, as it will be about £7,000 paid through the selling of the tickets and the remaining £3,000 will be covered by individual drinks on the evening, coming at about £20 per person.

There is a subsidy of £675 for this event, which will establish the final price for each ticket. There could be a slight increase from the last event, but that would only be natural, as this was two years ago.

We are very confident that all costs will be covered in full, as last year there haven't been any Christmas celebrations in general, so this year people are much more looking forward to Christmas and the spending quota will match this festive enthusiasm.

The last event for this season, before the Christmas Party, will be the Post London Marathon event at The Retro Bar. We have booked the venue and we will be expecting members to start arriving from 3pm onwards, and we can host the award ceremony there as well, just like in previous years. Before that we will be meeting and gathering at Mile 21, our usual cheering point, from around 11 am, so that we may cheer our runners.

The only point that we would like to discuss is how we may manage to get some more female members coming to the general Club social events. We know that the LFR women have their own events, and we are naturally more than happy for this to go on, but it would be great to have a larger female participation to the LFR events as well, in addition to the women-only events going on.

It would be great having this, and this could be achieved if we have some key people stating beforehand to the women-only communication platforms that they are going, this could probably make other women follow them.

Discussion on the above.

We have had quite a few new female runners who are showing up at the LFR events, and we are hoping that this will continue.

Another way of facilitating the above to happen is to share the women-only social calendar of events with the SS, as to make sure that there aren't any events which clash with each other.

Club Secretary

Updates and discussion on the LFR changing venues and post-run venues

Co-Presidents

Discussion on Spond

The options as per AC's previous email are:

- a. Multiply the LFR Spond groups under one Spond Club umbrella, which is pretty much how team-based sports clubs function, with separate groups for each team, all under the same general club umbrella. Accordingly we may have an unlimited number of groups in the LFR Spond page. This means that we will be forced to separate LFR Spond members into two different groups and then create every event separately for both groups, which creates a lot of administration. Members in one group would not be able to see who is attending an event from the other group, and we all know that for so many of the events, members choose to attend simply because their friends or running-buddies happen to be attending.
- b. A second possibility would be to temporarily cease using Spond, until we hear back from the providers. In the meantime, we could still encourage those who are already on Spond to continue using it but it makes very little sense, as all new runners will not get the same information as those already on Spond, they will not be able to attend events, they will not be able to see who is attending events and runs on Spond, so they might feel a bit isolated, which is not actually what we would have wanted for all our new runners to feel. We may naturally start using other platforms for just our social events, the Club was using MyCrew previously, and a similar app can be used for all such limited-number events.
- c. The third solution, which may seem a bit more radical compared to the other two would be to cease using Spond permanently and return to the pre-pandemic state, when the Club used to function without tracking attendances at each run. Of course this becomes problematic once again, if any track-and-trace requirements return to be imposed. The really positive thing from the Spond administrators point of view would be that there will not be any administration anymore but this will remove the ability from the Circle Leaders to check who is attending, and especially from the Club Coaches to see who is attending and then prepare a relevant coaching session in advance based on that number.

It is very practical to know when everyone has signed up for an event or a run on Spond but it has been extremely time-consuming for many of us involved having to take people out. It is naturally a great interaction with Club members having to write to each and everyone and informing them that they will be taken off Spond shortly but it is really incredibly time-consuming (NA)

It could be a good idea trying to find alternative service providers (EK)

Unfortunately when it comes to the type of functionality that we need, something similar does not exist in Eventbrite (DB)

There are other such apps, like Teamo and Pitchero, who are especially designed for sports clubs and teams management, perhaps we could check and try out these platforms (JH)

Action to be taken: The Co-Presidents are kindly requested to please check the above two apps and whether they could potentially function for LFR

As you said before, the Club has functioned for a good number of years where members would just turn up and it all went really unproblematic. It might be a solution to return to this and inform new members that they may turn up for a run without having to register beforehand,

if they cannot access Spond. Which means that we should stop directing people to Spond for runs and events

Although this is a solution that we may follow, it will be confusing by having some members using Spond and some not.

Spond is also used for late minute communications, and it would be practical to continue communicating to members, especially to new runners.

What was the previous way of communication with trialists?

There wasn't any other way of communicating to new runners and trialists, new runners got to hear events relative to the Club and to Club activities only through the CL at the Circle. Only after a new runner became a registered member would they be able to receive the ebuletin and become accepted to the FB group.

It could be practical to try and explore the different ways which exist for communicating with the trialists, is there any other way to communicate with new runners?

The only way that we may communicate with new runners is through the info account, when they write to the Club requesting for info.

What if we were to split our Spond groups up in two between members and trialists? (JL)

This means that we will have to be duplicating stuff but potentially it could work (NA)

I don't really see this as a viable option, meaning that the issue are the trialists up to a certain extent, then the trialists become full members and then we will be facing again the same issue, as according to the latest update by the MS we are at 467 members, which means another 33 trialists can become members, until we hit the 500 members limit. And it is one of the Club aims for every Club Year to try and reach as many members as possible.

I think it would make sense to put some pressure on the Spond people, if they say that we are the largest club that they have for the moment and they want to keep us on Spond, then they should make something about it and show us that they want to keep us through actions, not just words (CBP)

Paying for events through Spond could make them change their opinion, they could be something like a 20p commission per person, so this could make them try harder to come up with a solution. If they want us they can keep us but they should also try to accommodate what we are asking (DB)

At the end of the day, what we are asking will be beneficial for them as well, not just from a financial point of view but also because they could start engaging with sports clubs with more than 500 members.

I will also check with AC what their preferable solution is and then we will report back to the Committee. So, we have come to the conclusion that there needs to be some more pressure on the Spond people and see what we could obtain from their side before we explore all long-term different options with other providers. In the meantime, we continue using Spond, those who are registered remain registered and all new runners will just have to show up to the runs as previously.

Discussion on the date of the next RCM Thursday 7th october

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to please send a Doodle Poll for the week 4th to 8th of October

8.30