



LFR
Regular Committee Meeting
Tuesday 1st February 2022

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)

RCM Agenda

Financial Updates (CT)

Races Update (RS)

Publicity Update (P&C O)

Social Activities update (SS)

Membership Update (MS)

Club Secretary

Numerous Updates

Co-Presidents

- BBC documentary,
- GoodGym opportunities
- GBR update
- IT update

- Website updates
- LFR Merchandise

AOB

Chair: NA

Minutes: CBP

Apologies: GH, JL, CA,

Financial Updates (CT)

Discussion on the 2022/23 Club Year membership fees.

Suggestion by the CT to have the membership fees return to the previous pro-pandemic level, thus £54 for those waged. Besides this suggestion, membership fees for the first half of the new Club Year will be pro-rata, according to what was previously done, but this will be just during the first six months, whereas during the last six months of the new Club Year new members will be paying half of the membership fees, £27 for the 2022/23 Club Year, meaning half of what the full membership fees will be set at for each Club Year. The logic behind this measure is that the EA registration fees are fixed irrespective of how long the member is registered for and the Club finds itself at the disadvantaged position of a complete financial loss in the few months towards the end of each Club Year, by offering a pro-rata LFR fee down to below of what the EA fees are.

The Committee expresses their sincere thanks to the CT for preparing the next year's budget, which shows that the next Club Year, in the absence of any surprises, could possibly end with a slight surplus.

It is always good to be able to work based on the security of a surplus, even when that does not really amount to much, as there has been a moment when between the International Trip hotel payment and the payment in advance for the LFR Christmas Dinner Party, the CT had to pay out about £7000 from the Club reserves.

Members may not always realise this and there are always members asking what are we doing with all that money and most importantly what are we planning on doing with all that money. As it has been reiterated in all the previous years, the LFR reserve is an active reserve, which has always been used to pay for one or the other of the Club expenses throughout the year, and gradually it does get smaller by using it for the payment of one thing or the other, there is always a small decline of the original amount, so it is always good to have a reserve as a buffer to be used for payments and in case of an emergency, and equally positive to have a small surplus every year. (CBP)

Races Update (RS)

The 2021/22 Cross Country season is coming to an end, we have two more races in February, the last of the Met Cross Country events and the National Cross Country Championships, and then we just need to organise the LFR Club Championships event and the relevant party. We are considering hosting it on an evening in the first or second week of March, so as not to clash with the AGM, and in the meantime we will be looking for finding an appropriate venue.

Discussion on the LFR Club Championships venue.

Suggestion of using the Duke of Wellington, as LFR has used this venue numerous times for other Club events in the previous years, or potentially another similar LGBTQ venue, as to also to actively demonstrate our support to the community. (CBP)

CA has been in contact with the Duke of Wellington and has organised the Pub Quiz due to take place in about two week's time. I will talk to them about this subject and consider the option of hosting the Club Championships event in that venue (DB).

As it was mentioned during the last RCM, from the next Club Year the Club will need to actively make our non-binary members feel much more welcome to the racing events and to the Club Championships by changing the wording for the awards (CBP)

What we may need to do is change how we label each of the trophies and replace the existing labels on the trophies with new ones (EK).

The exciting news is that AT has taken on board and has decided to organise the LFR ParkRun of the Month, which was very popular in previous years and which we are confident will become a very popular occasion again, for members to run and meet. It will follow the format it had in previous years, moving around London, trying to encompass as many Club members as possible and there will be a social afterwards as well.

SW has offered what we consider is a really good suggestion for the next Club Championships, the suggestion to include a five k race in Charlton. The RS are still keeping the race locations open and they are very flexible to receiving suggestions regarding new locations and new races, so members should send their suggestions to the RS.

After a tenure of three years, EK has decided to step down from the Committee.

The Committee expresses warm and sincere thanks to EK for their contribution over these past years.

Action to be taken: The Race Secretaries are kindly requested to please check the budget of the LFR racing activities and relative to the next Club Year, as allocated by the CT.

Publicity Update (P&C O)

The Facebook Races Board is up and running again, we are receiving races for a specific period of time which then becomes gradually extended, so in the very near future the Board will be updated by having included the races for April and May.

We are in the final process of drafting the news stories which we want to have on the LFR website and we will be sending them to the WebTeam very soon.

Action to be taken: the P&C Officers are kindly requested to please share the news stories with the rest of the committee for some constructive feedback

In regards to the LFR Instagram account we have been able to recruit a very competent and experienced volunteer, CH, who is very positive and keen to take the LFR account further and to a different level, engaging more with members and creating more occasions for visibility.

GF in their capacity of P & C Officer has had the opportunity to have an informal chat with ST, who is both keen to present themselves for election in the above role at the forthcoming AGM and also to take on board the LFR Twitter account.

In regards to Spond there will be a decommissioning blurb, explaining to members the reasons why it is not really working for the Club anymore.

Social Activities update (SS)

The Pub Quiz promises to be very successful as tickets have been currently sold-out, we have in place a waiting list and on the positive side 60 Frontrunners have signed up to attend; after paying the Quiz Master and all the relative expenses, we are confident that we will also have made a small profit of about £100 for the Club.

After a tenure of four years DB has decided to stand down, there is a female identifying members who would like to present themselves for the position, EK, DB has had the opportunity to meet with them in their capacity of SS and to brief them in regards to the role and they are very enthusiastic at the prospect of offering their commitment to the Club.

The Committee expresses their sincere thanks to DB for their commitment to LFR during all these past years.

Membership Update (MS)

We are currently at 550 registered members, hoping to get some more in the next month.

The record of Club members is 566 and although it is not a competition, we hope that we will manage to surpass it this year.

Club Secretary Updates

Club Championships medals

There exists a stash of medals which is kept by me for occasions of “emergency” and which given the current financial situation I have decided to share and have them used for the forthcoming Club Championships event, and in order to save the Club even some more funds I have decided to “recycle” two of my own medals from previous years. In consequence the funds necessary for the purchase of medals for this year’s event amounts to £66, instead of the usual £120 from all previous years.

This is the last year that the purchase of medals is part of the CS role competencies, as I have the intention of passing the purchase of medals to the RS. The organisation of the Club Championships sits entirely within their domain and with them, so everything that has to do with the event, including purchasing of the medals, should become a part of their own role competencies. I will be passing in a very meticulously detailed way all the information on the medals the Club has been purchasing, code numbers and such, so as to facilitate their purchase for the next Club Championships event.

Finally, there should be some kind of announcement relative to this year's awards, as they are still to be presented divided in male and female categories. As the Club is strongly moving on in inclusion, I think that it is important to share with members that we are considering making some changes toward this direction, and in consequence I think it is important for the Committee to announce their intentions on this, while at the same time there could be some valid suggestions on the subject coming from Club members on how to address and better handle this.

I agree with what is said and what we may need to do is simply replace all the labels on each of the awards, with new labels that are more inclusive and non-binary (EK)

SEAA Cross Country Events

The next point I wish to bring to your attention regards the SEAA Cross Country events and the fact that many Club members fail to appear on the day of the event. And although failing to turn up for an event is not a reason to cast any blame whatsoever on the absentee, I happen to disagree with the way Club treats this whole issue by not requesting a full refund of the registration fees for that member. Accordingly my suggestion is that from the next XC season onwards, the Club may need to change its attitude towards members who register but not turn up to a SEAA event, requesting them to refund their entry fees to the Club.

We may need to remind everyone and make it much more clear to all members that the Club is paying in full and for every participant's Cross Country registration, as this may not be known by all nor is always presented in a very clear way or members may not realise that this is happening. (AC)

Especially in regards to the SEAA events, where the entry fees are much more costly, we need to change the existing wording from "you may be requested to refund your race registration", to something along the lines of "in case you fail to turn up for a SEAA event, the Club will request of you a full refund of the registration fees".

I know that by following this LFR may come across as a bit strict, especially compared to the leniency of previous years, but on the other hand it could increase commitment among Club members to present themselves on the day, as for the time being, knowing that the Club is paying for their entry, many member enthusiastically sign up at the beginning but then don't really seem to care very much when it comes closer to the day of the event. A very important argument to add is that the Club is losing a great deal of Club funds from the way this is handled, as there have been numerous drop-outs at the last fixture.

In addition to the above, I have had relative conversations with two other Club Secretaries in regards to this subject, asking them what their Clubs' policy was on the issue and they have both confirmed not only that they request from those who don't turn up at a race to refund their respective clubs, but that they also chase them up individually when it comes to this matter.

So a change in the wording in regards to making everyone realise that the Club is paying for everyone's Cross Country fees, as currently AC pointed out and suggested, and also the process of changing the wording when it comes to refunding the Club by those who fail to attend a race should be taken on board in the next Club Year.

The Committee agrees to what has been suggested above.

Victoria Park changing facilities

Following AC's suggestion at the last RCM, I have contacted VPH again in regards to using their club house in Victoria Park. Their Committee is meant to be meeting sometime in early February, probably next week, and from the exchange of emails with their Race secretary it appears that their committee will be responding in a positive way to our request.

In regards to the possibility of organising a racing event between our two clubs they replied that a mob match on a Tuesday or Thursday evening, from 19.00 pm, when the days become longer, might be worth exploring later in spring and easier to accommodate. The VPH will organise the event, I guess a five or a ten km race and potentially we could suggest organising the social part of the event, by booking a pub afterwards or by organising a picnic. I think it would be something really positive to explore this possibility which will get LFR in contact with another club, and it will be definitely something different and the launching of fostering a collaboration with them, as it will get LFR closer to VPH and to our aspiration of using their clubhouse on a Saturday.

Opening Doors

Again following AC's suggestion, I have chased up Opening Doors, sending them a large document where it explains everything they need to know in regards to the Club walks launched in December. The person whom I happen to be in contact with found this a great idea and said that they would be discussing this with Adrian Beaumont, Head of operations and Communications of ODL, about sharing the LFR Walk with ODL members in the next Members Newsletter.

I have registered to receive the ODL Members Newsletter and there was no mention at all to the LFR Walk. Nevertheless I would like to present to the attention of the Committee the following:

ODL are looking to recruit runners to run the Hackney Half Marathon on their behalf with the purpose of raising some money for them and wondering whether this is something the LFR would be able to promote to membership on their communication platforms and feels comfortable to endorse. The Hackney Half this year falls on Sunday the 22nd of May, the Sunday immediately after the International Trip and the GBR. ODL doesn't have any charity spaces allocated to them yet, as charity spaces haven't gone on sale by the event organisers, but they would be purchasing their charity places based on interest gathered. Hence their asking LFR for support. They are looking to raise a £250 target from each participant and ODL would be covering the registration fees for them. For the 2022 event the actual price for each athlete is £54 for registration plus £6 booking fees.

Knowing that the Club has a very strict policy in regards to promoting and supporting charity events in general, I am bringing this to the Committee's attention for your consideration.

As LFR is very positive about launching a partnership with ODL, as we are seeking to partner up with them on our Saturday walks, it would make sense to support them in this endeavour. LFR has a very tight policy when it comes to all types of charity events, as we do not wish to be submerged in petitions to support charity events, even if these are LFBTQ+, but on this occasion an exception can be made.

Committee agrees to the above and the proposal is accepted.

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to please send the relative blurb to the P&C Officers on LFR supporting ODL at their fundraising goals.

Updates on a potential AGM venue are very few and all of them negative.
Suggestion to have the search for an AGM venue being put on the e-bulletin.

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to please send a relative blurb to the C & P Officers

Short discussion on Committee positions, on who from the current Committee has decided to step down and whether any Club members have come forward for any of the Committee positions.

Short discussion on the FOTY and NOTY awards

LGBTQ History Month

I have a list of events which I would like to share with members, but prior to this I want to make sure that the SS would agree to this.

I am also planning a visit to the London Mithraeum on a Saturday, possibly the next one, and I am in contact with the RIBA Equity, Diversion and Inclusion Manager to organise a guided visit of their premises in Portland Place, as it is an iconic building to visit.

Finally an exhibition by the archivist of the Bishopsgate Institute will be taking place at the Barbican and for a whole month in March. This will be an archival installation of objects, ephemera and media which are meant to highlight 40 moments and stories in London's LGBTQ+ history, with a presentation of numerous objects, some of which have never been seen by the public. It is going to be an installation that includes items documenting areas of pride, protest, performance and art, from the gay rights movement to the everyday celebrations and struggles of LGBTQ+ Londoners, and it promises to be an exciting event for the Club to visit.

Update on SB

Coaching Updates

Finally something completely new and possibly exciting: after a consultation with SW and an email to Sports England to which they never replied, have got into contact with EA and LFR has great possibilities of becoming included in an EA programme called Club Run where experienced coaches are linked with clubs via an application process. The window for this round has already closed, but an exception has been made for LFR and the person who leads this programme has allowed LFR to be involved. The supportive role of this programme consists in identifying a suitable coach who will then deliver a coaching session to Club members, run leaders and LFR coaches with the aim to improve everybody's technique and skills. It is especially designed for road running clubs and it will be free of charge. To be more precise there will be a series of three coaching sessions delivered in the period of three weeks, geographically spread in two different locations, as to be able to share something new and refreshing with as many Club members as possible but also aiming at supporting the Club Coaches in the sense of developing further their own coaching skills. I have requested EA to have two different phases of this programme to be delivered in two different periods of time and in two different locations. For the first location I have chosen Greenwich Park, as I think it

is important to encourage and support more members taking part in this run and these sessions could boost the number of attendees, besides including many members of those who happen to live in the south of London. I did not believe that having a session taking place in Battersea Park would have been a good idea, in terms of long-term results, simply because of the usual number of runners on Monday evening, which is far too elevated to allow everyone to fully enjoy a coaching session and also it could prove to be overwhelming for the coach, having to deal with so many runners. The second phase I have requested to have it taking place in Hyde Park on a Thursday, as the location is very central and accessible to many Club members and this will also boost attendance numbers of the Thursday run. In my attempts I have tried to make the most of these sessions, in terms of advancing both these two running days together with advancing, improving, alleviating and supporting the LFR coaching team. I have had many and fruitful conversations with the CT, and I take this opportunity in thanking them not only for preparing the next Club Year's budget but also for their great collaboration and support throughout the past months, in addition to listening attentively to my petition of creating two different budgets for coaching purposes, one, which will be recurrent every year and which will be for covering the expenses of the EA coaching training in order for members to become a Club coach, the basic level of qualifications, as we need to replenish and support our existing pool of available coaches, the second is the allocation of a one-off budget of £500, which will be used in support of the coaching team for further development of their existing coaching skills. In regards to this last point, I have requested EA to please offer us some additional support, in order for the Club to be able to retain in a more constructive way the existing LFR coaches through a practical delivery of sessions exclusively for the Club coaching team, focusing at their further development through a series of meetings and sessions, in person. I am at the point of hearing back from EA and as soon as this happens, I will update the Club Committee and the Coaching Coordinator.

Co-Presidents

BBC documentary

The Co-Presidents have been contacted by a previous Club member who is currently a well-known film-maker and they are at the point of introducing a new series of documentaries, relative to the sense of belonging, and they would like to dedicate an episode to London Frontrunners. This is a great opportunity for visibility and what we could do is ask Club members whether there is anyone who would be interested in participating, as they need to be filmed for about a whole afternoon.

Action to be taken: AC is kindly requested to send all the information available on the above subject to the P & C Officers so that it can be included on the next bulletin

It would be great to include members and very possibly try to engage as diverse a mixture of members as possible.

GoodGym

The Co-Presidents have been contacted for a potential collaboration with GoodGym, who is a voluntary group that motivates others to exercise, they run, swim and walk, all activities that

LFR engages with as well, and they have been contacted by their LGBTQ+ sports connection for the purposes of potentially launching something together with LFR.

GBR update

There are currently four teams with just a couple of members available to spare on the waiting list, as the interest has been particularly diminished this year due to the IT. The GBR organisers are currently at the point of allocating the runners in four different teams between the mixed ability team, the veterans, the competitive team, etc and in a second phase they will be allocating the respective legs. Naturally priority will be given to those who are volunteering to drive and we are planning on having more drivers this year.

IT update

The positive news is that the IT has been sold out and that there will be a waiting list established.

Weekly Runs Updates

The Greenwich Park run is going a bit better, now that there is a leisure centre to use for changing facilities and a regular post-run pizza venue for the social afterwards, so it is setting down quite nicely.

The track numbers are getting higher again and there is going to be a post-track social this evening, organised by TC.

In regards to the social event of Victoria Park it has currently moved to The Crown, as there were some issues in the quality of services provided by the previous venue. The Crown has very fast service, the people are very nice and it is good value, although some members still prefer going to The Pavilion (NA)

Website Updates

There have been numerous updates on the website and there has been a continuous stream of items to upload.

Have finished updating the Risk Assessments, have emailed the updated versions to the Web Team (CBP)

Out for sport

The Committee agrees paying the annual membership fee which has been established for this year and comes at £15

Club Merchandise

There is the need for a volunteer in order to be taking this on board, with AK having generously offered to take the lead on this. The Club Committee is already overwhelmed as it is so this project has to be led by a different Club volunteer.

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

