



LFR

Regular Committee Meeting

Co-Presidents: Ashley Harwood (AH) and Andrew Corti (AC)

Club Secretary: Christos Bitzis-Politis (CBP)

Club Treasurer: Derwin Brennan (DB)

Membership Secretary: Geoff Hicks (GH)

Races Secretaries: Eliot Rees (ER) and Francis O'Callaghan (FC)

Publicity & Communications Officers: Stephen Tomaszewski (ST) and Sam Palmer (SP)

Social Secretaries: Nick Warner (NW) and Robin Budin (RB)

RCM Agenda

Tuesday 10th October 2023

Committee Financial Updates (CT)

Races Update (RS)

Clapham Common Run, updates, discussion & next steps

Publicity Update (P&C O)

Social Activities update (SS)

Christmas Party Updates

Membership Update (MS)

Club Secretary

Short Updates

Co-Presidents

- Green Belt Relay 2023 & 2024.

- LFR Triathlon coaching funding request
- Code of Conduct, update notification
- Pride March Feedback, updates, discussion & next steps

AOB

Chair: AC

Minutes: CBP

Apologies: FC, SP, GH,

Committee Financial Updates (CT)

The expenses accrued over the forthcoming 2023 International Trip have already been paid or better said refunded. Most of the various expenses have been initially paid by some of the International Trip Committee Members, and there has always been used a credit card payment for a number of services, in order to assure that the Lisbon Incident will not repeat itself. Nothing further to report in terms of payments or further Club finances.

In regards to what was discussed at the last RCM, the suggestion of moving a large chunk of the LFR reserves into an account with a higher interest rate, I have already made the relevant application to NatWest; my recommendation would be to keep 20k in the current account in order to be able to meet all the forthcoming expenses, such as the Christmas Party and similar in advance payments and have the remaining funds being transferred to a higher interest rate savings account. There are required two co-signatories, and I believe it would be best to have the two Co-Presidents, so I shall be liaising with the two Co Presidents in order to have them become co-signatories to the above. That is all.

The Committee is very supportive of this resolution and thanks the CT warmy for all the above suggestions and actions.

Action to be taken: as per above, the CT is kindly requested to please liaise with the two C-Presidents and have them become the new account's co-signatories.

Races Update (RS)

Clapham Common Run, updates, discussion & next steps.

The news is extremely disappointing to say the least as currently the Clapham Common Leisure Centre has stopped answering all emails, in consequence, LFR is back to square one in regards to launching the Thursday run.

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to please look into alternative venues in the area or even to explore the suggestion of launching an alternative run in Finsbury Park.

Discussion on the London Marathon Club Places Criteria

Thank you all for checking once again the marathon criteria in the document that was sent out recently, the points which have been made are easily addressed, and as you all know the intention is to make this new document much clearer, where clarifications are needed and the whole procedure even more accessible.

It is very encouraging that each year every new RS is trying to update and improve the LM document, aiming at making the whole procedure as transparent and as fair as possible.

Considering that there have been some complaints made last year at the AGM and specifically about this subject, I am very grateful to the fact that Francis and you have decided to take this on board. Many thanks for doing this, the Committee is naturally very supportive of the whole initiative and we are positively certain that the Club will be able to benefit further.

Discussion on having a cap on the volunteering points for the LM.

There is first of all a slight distinction between all the volunteering events that the Club has been engaged with in the past year and they can be divided in two main categories. Certain volunteering events are undertaken with the scope of the Club becoming the principal and direct beneficiary of the whole endeavour, such as the London Marathon, and all the London Marathon Events, whereas certain other events increase the Club's visibility but I would say that they mostly benefit those volunteering, in terms that they are awarded free or discounted entries to next year's event, such as the LimeLight Sports events. And there are certain volunteering events that have a longer duration compared than others, such as the London Marathon again, which is quite a full-on event and lasts more than half a day, so it becomes quite tiring in the end. Nevertheless of having mentioned that, please let it be known that for all volunteering events, such as the Hackney Half, the London Triathlon, the Big Half, volunteers have to wake up very early in the morning, same as for the London Marathon, and although such shifts may be shorter, as they never tend to be longer than six hours, they can be equally demanding in terms of numbers. So at the end of the day, there is only the distinction of the individual award such as the free entry to an event or not which makes the difference, as in terms of time-commitment they are all very and almost equally demanding.

The reason we would be considering reviewing the cap at the volunteering efforts is because it is important to give everyone equal opportunities.

If there is a cap for the races one can do throughout the Club year, then why should there not be a cap for volunteering?

Not sure whether this would be a good tactic to follow as offering members these volunteering opportunities, which would ultimately lead to them gaining a free entry is a way of thanking members for their dedication of time to the Club in terms of visibility, and sometimes it is the only means the Club has to thank volunteers. There were more than 65 LFR volunteers at the London Marathon this year, out of which only two will be awarded. We can't always expect members to volunteer without some kind of reward. They are naturally and duly thanked, cherished and I always try to find some way or other to thank them for their effort but getting

a free entry to an event may ultimately be of significant importance to a volunteer. All volunteering efforts undertaken for London Marathon Events are accompanied by small donations to the Club, which accumulated and paid out at the end of the volunteering season could amount to about £600. This is an amount which is then used by the Club for various Club activities, such as the coaches training programme or the Christmas party, etc. In my opinion there should always be some kind of incentive for volunteers, as we fully endorse volunteering, it is an essential element of the Club's ethos, as the whole LFR infrastructure is based on volunteering, so rewarding members for their volunteering contributions often acts also as an incentive to give much more to the Club in the future.

I think it is important to try and keep the parameters document as simple as possible. Naturally it should not only look but it should also be as fair a document as possible and the whole process of reviewing it has to be as transparent as possible. This is a document that needs to be made public as soon as possible and Club members need to be made explicitly aware of every change, but also be offered the time to digest any changes and additions and to come back to the Race Secretaries with questions, if in need of any clarification

Discussion on the Long Runs, on how being a leader of the Long Runs may have a positive impact on the LM Club Places point system and on how to encourage further those who happen to volunteer as leaders for the Long runs and on how to reward them for their contributions, as the Long Runs have become in the past three years a staple feature of the Club and have an enthusiastic following.

The whole way the London marathon spots distribution is being organised is money-making oriented and completely unfair compared to other large marathons, such as the New York marathon, where one can volunteer for a number of consecutive years, I believe it is three in a row, and then is rewarded a guaranteed place at the event. Here, not only has it become incredibly expensive and difficult to get a place but we have been deprived of two Club Places this year, as other clubs did not manage to use their own Club Places, meaning that LFR and other clubs are being penalised because others could not absorb their own marathon places.

I have emailed London Marathon Events vehemently complaining in regards to the above, though in order to set the record straight, so to speak, the specific sector that LFR is directly engaged with and through which we obtain the community places and the volunteering opportunities has absolutely nothing to do with the way Club Places are being distributed, as this is a specific sector of the whole affair.

It is a London Marathon policy to offer more places to charities and thus make more money.

Uncap the races seem to be the easiest way out possible.

My suggestion would be to remove all capping, for both volunteering events and races (RB)

These suggestions seem all correct and they would be certainly making the parameters document come across as fairer but the whole act of changing the parameters half way through

the Club year is going to create some controversy just like it happened last year and it might not seem fair to do it at this stage.

I agree to this and besides not being completely fair to membership, who are currently accruing points based on the current parameters, I am not sure it would additionally be fair to us as Committee members, having to go through the ordeal of being accused of exercising some kind of favouritism again. It does not make me feel comfortable and I certainly do not wish to go through this unpleasant experience once again.

I think that this could be avoided by having these new criteria becoming effective from next year. The communication could be that although we are suggesting these changes now, at this moment of the Club year, these criteria are going to be implemented from the next Club year, in addition to these changes being also much fairer.

I would also agree to this and it is important how this whole endeavour is being communicated to membership. There needs to be a specific clarification to the wording, so and so is being proposed this year, in the interest of fairness though the changes suggested are not going to happen until next year, so that members understand that the current criteria will remain the same for everything that regards the forthcoming event and nothing new will not be implemented until the next Club year, meaning that any changes will start being valid for the 2024/25 Club year and for the 2025 London Marathon.

The final suggestion is to keep the part relative to the number of races and to the number of volunteering exactly as it is for this year, meaning 10 points for races and 10 points for volunteering, and go forwards with the intention of removing all caps for both races and volunteering efforts next year, for the 2025 event.

The Committee considers this last suggestion and unanimously votes in favour of the above.

Publicity Update (P&C O)

No updates

Social Activities update (SS)

Christmas Party Updates

The deposit has already been paid, the last drink orders will be at 1.00 am, and everybody needs to leave the venue at 1.30 am, this is also included and being stipulated in the contract LFR has with The Anthologist, so they will not be able to play the same trick they did two years ago. It is a 7.00 pm arrival, with a three course dinner coming at £60 and all those who are interested in attending just for drinks after the seated dinner, will be charged £10.

How will we know who has paid for the seated dinner and who is just for drinks, so that there will not be any mix-up? Will the venue provide any supervision at the door?

I believe they will, they always have some sort of supervision and they will be checking what type of booking each attendee has.

We have not booked the music yet but it is on our agenda for the event and we are considering spending about £300 for the dj.

The tickets will go out next week on the forthcoming ebuletin.

Discussion on the platform that will supply the tickets booking procedure and on the extra fees that are being charged.

It is unavoidable and every platform charges some small amount extra as booking fees and the percentage of that often depends on the final amount that is being paid, meaning that those buying for the seated meal tickets will have to pay a bit more than those buying the just drinks option at £10.

Membership Update (MS)

Membership is currently at 609 members

Club Secretary

Short discussion on the 2023 festive/Christmas presents to the changing venues and to eateries, in addition to awarding some LFR volunteers for their dedication.

Action to be taken: CBP is kindly requested to please liaise with DB for all the above

Discussion on the 2023/24 AGM venue

There is a slight issue with the Nunn Hall this year, the UCL venue used for last year's AGM. Due to an incident with a right-wing group, they are currently requesting the list of speakers in advance, so that they may be vetted, and they have installed electronic turnstiles, requiring ID to get into the building. All of the above obstacles would be easily removed if JMCK happens to be in London, through whose great kindness and sense of generosity LFR got the AGM venue free of charge last year, and here comes the actual issue: they happen to be in London until the week of Friday the 8th of March and out of the UK for the rest of the month, until the beginning of April. I am well aware that having an "early AGM" is inconvenient for a number of reasons and to many of us, and that some Committee members will also happen to be away on the above date but there is no alternative. In the meantime, and knowing by bitter experience how problematic finding a venue for the AGM is, it would be useful to assure the booking of Nunn Hall for Friday the 8th of March and once this venue is reserved and confirmed, then explore all the other possibilities, if anyone wishes to do so.

Discussion on the forthcoming events, such as the postponed wellness workshop, a choir workshop for January and going forward with the London Landmarks Half Marathon Pride Activation, as discussed in an email previously circulated among Committee members.

D & I Survey discussion

This survey, as every survey, has to have a specific aim, besides wishing in the first place to get to know and understand the thoughts membership has on various LFR topics, it also has the ulterior aim to collect and elaborate these thoughts in order to make certain changes, based on the survey's outcome. Once the survey is send out and let us hypothetically assume that we manage to achieve collecting the results out of 10% of Club members, then the Committee in collaboration with the D & I Officer needs to become super active in implementing the survey outcome, and very often this is not just the most important part of a survey, it is also the most demanding and time-/energy consuming.

In my opinion the survey as it currently is, has a really vast topic, we are trying to be as all-encompassing and comprehensive as possible whereas we should probably do better by picking out just one specific topic, thus narrowing down the focus to one single subject and bringing this forward in the best possible way, as for example we could get some feedback on how to make the Committee more diverse, and then focus on just that subject, without asking members about everything under the sun (RB)

Although I do see the point of what you are saying, we thought that as there is a certain amount of effort put into this whole endeavour, that we should probably try to get as much out of it as possible.

But if in the meantime this approach does not work, then why not change something in the meantime, even at this point, and be content to get some results, instead of getting no results at all.

The survey was designed with the ulterior thought of trying to get a feel of where the Club is at the moment, where do we stand as Club and how can we move forward.

Although I would tend to agree with what is being said on the utility of the survey, I am not sure that we are approaching the subject from the right point of view, as this survey is intended to reach out to those who are already members of the Club, whereas we should be getting some feedback from those who are not joining the Club, from those who have tried out one or two runs with LFR and then have ultimately decided not to sign up. Their point of view could be very useful in assessing how certain things work, or not, and addressing any issues that apparently do not really seem to be functioning as they should. Why did they decide not to become club members in the end? What was the reason which contributed towards making such a decision?

The survey though might bring forward something that we don't happen to know about at all and this could prove very useful in the long term.

There is also the possibility that it could also bring something forward that we might not be able to sort out at all as well.

We are currently at the stage where there is no progress, we have not been moving forward at all for several months. If we would really like to make some progress on this, then we should propose that someone should take the whole subject over and bring it forward. And this someone should be a Club member that above all else someone that has the time and the will to bring this forward, in addition to having experience of any such projects and has a relevant professional background.

Co-Presidents

Green Belt Relay 2023 & 2024.

Some administration leftovers for you from the 2023 event, when we finally managed to wrap things up, we discovered that there has been a bit of a cock-up from the hotel in pricing the accommodations, so we finally ended up getting a surplus. In consequence, this means that we will not be requesting the Committee for a GBR subsidy for the coming year, as the surplus will be put into the 2024 event and will be used where the subsidy would have been used had we requested one, probably towards accommodation expenses.

In addition, the 2024 GBR registrations are now open and we are currently considering registering four teams. Just to let you also know that this year the GBR happens to coincide with the Hackney Half, they are on the same weekend, so although the Club has now more members, I don't think that we should be aiming for five teams.

This is a bit unfortunate in terms of timing, and I certainly would not want to have these two events be seen as antagonistic to one another. There have been more than 45 members which volunteered at the Hackney Half last year, between pacers and those volunteering at the water station, and the pacing programme proved to be really popular, as besides all the perks, it also gave members the opportunity to run the Hackney Half free of charge for two years in a row, the year they volunteered as pacers and the next year, meaning 2024. The positive thing is that the GBR has a very enthusiastic and loyal following, with some new members joining every year and giving back enthusiastic feedback, so I don't really think that there should be any problem in regards to filling up these four teams. After all four teams means 44 runners, with potentially 40 LFR members running the 2024 event with the free entries they got this year and another 40 volunteering for it, Goeff mentioned that we are now at 609 registered members, so I believe that in the end there is a pool of available candidates large enough to be able to afford these two events taking place on the same weekend and having enough runners for both.

LFR Triathlon coaching funding request

BH got in touch in regards to the proposal of funding FH to achieve the Level 1 triathlon coach qualification. The Committee considers FH an excellent candidate for this role and unanimously agrees on subsidising the coaching qualification.

There will be a trans triathlon group discussion scheduled for the beginning of November, and I will be very willing to participate and positively engage with them. This is a very positive outreach.

Discussion on the updated Code of Conduct, as the notification has been sent out with some members having already received it properly, as in with the notification reaching their inbox, whereas many other member's notification ended up in their spam folder. This is a very important subject, as it also contains the England Athletics additions, so there should be a notification coming out through the next ebulletin, letting members know that a notification to read the updated CoC might have ended up in their spam folder, with the admonition to please go and check their spam folder and then read the updated CoC..

Pride March Feedback, updates, discussion & next steps

AOB

Discussion on the International Trip.

There are 125 members officially attending the event, the racing options are 5k, 10k and a half marathon.

There will be a free bus tour of the city, offered by the Greek Office of Tourism, who have been extremely helpful.

As Dewrin mentioned earlier, everything that needed to be paid has already been paid by credit cards. There is a financial intention which would be to gradually create the International Trip new reserves, as any reserves would constitute an important financial buffer for the whole endeavour. The 2023 IT is currently within budget, so everything in terms of expenditure is going much better compared to previous years, and any money that is left from this trip, will constitute the beginning of the IT reserves for the years to come.

There are going to be a number of lovely surprises for members, with the final surprise being on Sunday evening.

The IT subcommittee has again put a lot of effort into the whole endeavour and the Club Committee is truly thankful to every member of the IT subcommittee for their contributions.