



## **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)

### **Thursday 9th November Agenda**

**Trans Discussion Intervention** (Ben Humpries)

**Financial Updates** (CT)

**Races Update** (RS)

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

**Social Activities Update** (SS)

- Christmas Party Updates
- Fundraising Leader Role

**Membership Update** (MS)

**Club Secretary**

Festive Closure Dates

**Co-Presidents**

- Clapham Common Run, updates, discussion & next steps
- Pride March Feedback updates
- Trans tri meeting feedback & EA Transgender Policy
- International trip / Eurogames 2024

**AOB**

Chair: AC

Minutes: CBP

Apologies: SP, ER, NW

**Trans Discussion Intervention** (Ben Humpries)

The Club Committee is very grateful to have BH and thank Ben for his availability to join the meeting at such short notice.

On the 31st of March 2023 England Athletics released a statement and updated their policies on transgender eligibility, setting some new regulations applicable to UKA licensed competitive events. Discussion on the subject.

There have been some chats regarding the running experience of our trans members within LFR and how this relates to the positions that governing bodies in the Running and Triathlon disciplines have taken over the last months. We are definitely not happy with how things are moving nor with the direction that they seem to be taking in general over the past few months.

A discussion over the EA restrictions on trans men participation at various events is also part of the Agenda though, so some further input on the subject is completely pertinent and could prove very helpful.

I feel that a communication from the Committee is more than necessary at this point, as it is important to keep our members informed of what's going on, and believe it or not, there is still a great number of LFR members who have absolutely no idea of the situation having been enforced and valid since last April.

I am also of the opinion that a communication is somehow necessary, in order to also inform that the Committee does not happen to endorse this policy and that we will be looking into actively doing something about it. This communication will make all members aware of the new EA regulations, will clearly state that the Committee opposes these EA regulations and that in the meantime LFR will reach out to other UK FR clubs that remain affiliated with EA and following the strength-in-unity principle we intend to consult with them on how to proceed in order to impactfully influence EA on this matter.

**Action to be taken:** the P & C Officers are kindly requested to please send out an ebuletin relevant communication, informing membership of the new EA regulations and mentioning that the Committee is against these measures and is currently looking into the subject with the aim to take some further steps which will be promptly communicated.

My one and only personal suggestion would be to include at the end of the blurb the publicity email, mentioning that we are open to listen to what members have to say on the subject, as a way of launching a platform of communication between Committee and members on the subject, in order to further canvass some opinions and potentially de-escalate any tension.

It needs to be mentioned that not all LFR members endorse the above views. We have actually been in private conversations among members where this subject was brought up and I can assure you that there are LFR members who happen to fully or partially agree with the UKA statement.

These members may then have to seriously consider whether they actually belong to an LGBTQ+ running club or not.

Based on the above considerations, all Club communications on the subject need to be as inclusive as they can be, bearing in mind that we need to acknowledge the diversity of opinions and somehow if not include than at least acknowledge this diversity in a statement that is

meant to be against the UKA statement, while at the same time remaining honest and true to the principles and the moral beliefs LFR collectively stands for. If other organisations blatantly refuse to be inclusive, LFR has the duty to try and become as inclusive as possible. This does not mean that we have to deny our own principles and personal values but we also need to acknowledge other members' views, who might be completely opposite, without at the same time feeling obliged to endorse them.

It could prove very useful to get to know what other FR clubs in the UK are feeling about the above and how they have been handling the subject.

Yes, I agree to that, does anyone actually know what the Queer Runners and any other Frontrunner groups in the UK are thinking and doing over this?

**Action to be taken:** CBP is kindly requested to please reach out to other UK FR clubs and engage with them in order to find out their current perception and any plans, suggestion and actions they have taken on the above subject

I would like to know what would happen if LFR were to quit EA over this, in order to show allyship with trans women. There are other FR clubs that are not EA affiliated and there have been some which are actually considering discontinuing their affiliation with EA as a form of protest.

Firstly and in order for the gesture of quitting EA to have any further impact, there should be some external publicity and coverage of the whole affair. It is not going to promote the cause if LFR decides to discontinue being affiliated with EA and this remains an internal affair between LFR and EA, or if this is just known among the FR community. In order for the protest to have some impact, this needs to become public.

Whether we should continue to be part of EA or leave the organisation in protest is not going to bring any significant progress to the whole subject simply because it makes more sense and it is simpler to influence an organisation from within and as part of the organisation itself, then when being an outsider.

Our intentions and anything LFR will consider to do in the near future in regards to the subject will be dedicated by the ultimate aim to further improve the running quality of trans members and to make them become included in event through improving EA by rectifying this whole situation, this is not about ticking a box nor about just making a statement of protest.

Some of the consequences would be missing out on the reduced race registration fees, losing the TCS London Marathon Club Places, missing out on safeguarding, welfare and wellbeing support, public liability insurance up to £5m cover and all free legal support in the eventuality that something goes terribly wrong. There are definitely some more consequences but these are just some at the top of my head and the most serious ones.

It is a matter that definitely needs to be further discussed in a more holistic and potentially active way. After all, some purposeful determination on behalf of LFR is definitely needed, otherwise, this won't go any further.

Just a quick reminder that LFR does not have a policy on this matter, and most importantly there has not been any consultation with the wider membership on this subject and anecdotal conversations with various members make me think that it would be unwise to presume what the outcome would be if we did.

LFR has not taken any action towards the direction of object to this subject with EA therefore I don't think it's appropriate to say so at this point. It would be best to keep any communication as simple for now, all races which are registered with England Athletics have to follow the trans policy set out by UK Athletics earlier this year; this means that transgender women are not allowed to compete in the women's category whereas transgender men can race in the male category.

It's not that LFR has been totally inactive so far. LFR has already made an official statement on the subject, which was created in collaboration with Gareth F. and myself sometime in April 2022 and to my recollection it was also shared on all LFR external media, which was also approved by the then Club Committee, "London Frontrunners believe running and triathlon are for everyone and we are dedicated to supporting our trans and non-binary members to feel comfortable, confident and happy participating in running and triathlon events. As a club, we strongly advocate that all our members can take part under the identity they feel most comfortable with. And for club purposes, we're very happy for members to identify as any gender or none, as this is something that's very important to us".

LFR is an LGBT+ running club and not a gay men running club, therefore it becomes of importance that we don't hide from any issues faced by Club members who happen to be something else besides cis gay men. It is important that we all try avoiding running away from the issue and come to some conclusions as to how we are planning to move forward.

Brushing this under the carpet won't get us anywhere. I don't think that any Committee member is suggesting that LFR should start a fight with EA but being completely silent is also simply and very disappointing for an LGBT+ club and can also prove detrimental to how LFR trans members are perceiving this silence on our side.

Manchester Frontrunners went through a period of massive arguments on this very subject and surely we can all try our best to avoid all such unpleasant situations.

### **Financial Updates (CT)**

Discussion on what has already been paid relative to the Christmas Party and what needs to be paid in the forthcoming weeks.

### **Races Update (RS)**

34 runners have signed up for the forthcoming Cross Country race and we are expecting that a couple of more will sign up in the following days.

We are looking into what is going to be the last fixture of the Club Championships, a 10K race, and we will let you know, as soon as we have come across one.

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

There are no updates as the ebulletin has been coming out consistently.

## **Social Activities Update (SS)**

### **Christmas Party Updates**

Discussion on how to make the Christmas Party much more inclusive.

The Anthologist has put up its prices this year , or at least since the last time LFR used for the Christmas Party which was two years ago, though on the other hand everything else has as well, so it is something to be expected. The last time LFR used The Anthologist the minimum spend was between £10 and £12k rather than £15k they are currently requesting and we also got a £5k-£6k bar spend, which was agreed in advance.

The £15,000 minimum spend for the venue has already been agreed, plus a separate £300 for the DJ.

What are the current number of meal tickets sold and the ones just for drinks?

There are overall 130 available meal tickets coming at £60 and and there are 70 drinks only tickets available at £10 each, as 130+70 makes 200, and the venue has a 200 people capacity. At the moment there are 74 meal tickets which have been sold which means that we need to sell another 56 meal tickets whereas the drinks only tickets have already been sold out.

The low number of attendees for the seated dinner is obviously due to the price and we need the maximum volume of attendees to drive this up. The only way this can be achieved is by reducing the dinner price for members and having the difference being subsidised by the Club.

Only by subsidising the cost of Christmas party meal tickets is the Christmas Party going to become socially accessible to more Club members and thus much more inclusive.

It would prove useful to contact Charlie and Daniel and find out from them the true capacity of the venue and its potential. It seems that The Anthologist's capacity for the after dinner drinks only event was much higher than 200, which enabled LFR to increase the number of drinks only tickets and thus will enable us to sell many more drinks only tickets than the ones which have already been sold.

The Committee agrees unanimously to the suggestion of subsidising each meal ticket by £15 thus making them available at £45 each.

The platform which was used two years ago for selling the tickets was OutSavvy and not Eventbrite, and it was much cheaper, as there is an extra fee of almost £5 per meal ticket.

We should try and use a consistent platform so that all the information on the bookings is in the same place. Surely all such information will be available at the Social Secretaries Google drive and you may want to have a look at OutSavvy in order to check what were the previous meal ticket sales.

It might be worth trying to process all future payments through WebCollect rather than Eventbrite in order to be able to reduce any additional costs to members due to the transaction fees.

It might be worth offering first dibs to all those who have already purchased an only drinks ticket, asking them whether they might consider an upgrade, before opening this to everybody else, because it is a feasible difference, if they are willing to pay another £35 for a seated meal and not another £55, including the transaction fees.

We can email all people with a drinks only ticket tomorrow and allow them to upgrade their only drinks ticket to a seated meal ticket if they pay an additional £35. We could do this tomorrow giving them a couple of days for that, let's say until Sunday evening and then on Monday morning we can release all Club subsidised meal tickets and any newly available drinks tickets to members through the ebulletin. Those who have already bought the meal ticket at £60 will be reimbursed or they can have these £15 go towards their drinks in the evening.

Those who have already bought a meal ticket could be offered the option to either have the £15 refunded to them intact or to have them put towards other people's tickets as well. I am sure lots of members would agree to doing that.

It would be much more simple if we were to send out a Google form on which members can tick themselves whether they want a drinks only ticket or a meal ticket and submit their email address and then we will send out the WebCollect link to those who responded to the form, or alternatively, we can still process any new tickets meal tickets through Eventbrite.

If we get more responses than we have tickets available, then we can create a waiting list on purpose, in case there are any members who may want to resell their tickets.

### **Fundraising Leader Role**

The LFR Fundraising Leader Role is a suggestion related to creating a new position within LFR which would coordinate fundraising efforts for the Club.

For some people and especially some younger people participating in some of the Club social activities can be quite difficult from a financial perspective, for example joining for food and drinks at the post run socials, joining the Christmas Party, or even attending the International Trip. It would be great if we could lower the financial barrier for joining these activities for Club members who currently can't or find it very difficult to do so. LFR has a large number of Club members who work for companies who regularly sponsor charitable events and as well as several Club members who would be in the position to donate a small amount to the Club. My initial idea is to make this a Committee position to recognise the hard work such a role would obviously require, but all of this is really more an idea I'm hoping to develop together with the other Committee members.

The only difficulty that would be presented with what has been said, which is a great suggestion by the way, would be to know who are those who would be eligible for a sponsorship.

It is also a very delicate subject, not everyone would be feeling very comfortable in discussing their financial situation or having their financial situation being discussed, you may have people who would rather not attend an event than having to admit that they might be in need of a bit of a financial support, it is something which has to be approached with great sensitivity.

**Action to be taken:** CBP is kindly requested to please bring Robin in contact with Anastasios, who has previously come forward with a similar sponsorship suggestion

### **Membership Updates (MS)**

We are currently at 630 registered members, which is a very good number and very promising for the future, we will definitely have reached the 650 members on before the end of the club year.

Again and due to incredible workload, as this is a very busy period for me, there is a slight backlog in the registration process of all new members with England Athletics, this accumulation will be dealt with in the following weeks, as we are going towards the Christmas period I will be able to find the time and process all the new members. In case you happen to be approached by anyone who is in an urgent need for a URN, please bring them in contact with me, I will do my very best and prioritise them accordingly.

### **Club Secretary**

#### **Festive Closure Dates**

In regards to the dates of the forthcoming festive closure, I would suggest ceasing all Club activities on the 20th of December, which is a Wednesday. The next running Club day would be Saturday the 23rd.

It's a bit too close to Christmas, members might be away or departing on that day.

Please be aware that following the historic tradition of all previous years, the changing venues of Kentish Town and Greenwich may close much earlier on Wednesday the 20th, resulting in the immediate cancellation of both runs on the above dates.

**Action to be taken:** CBP is kindly requested to liaise with the above venues and investigate on their closing dates and times

### **Co-Presidents**

#### **Clapham Common Run, updates, discussion & next steps**

The Clapham Common Sports Centre people are alive and they have finally replied to our emails, all communications seem to be a bit sketchy at the moment as the person who should be handling this is on a sick leave until the end of the year.

Discussions over the date of launching the new run.

The Committee unanimously agrees that it would be most suitable launching it with the new year, instead of being able to squeeze two runs before the festive break, then having to stop for two weeks, in order to resume afterwards.

In the meantime it would be great if we could manage to do a couple of trial runs, first just Committee members and then Committee together with the Circle volunteers, in order to work out the logistics of the run before we launch to the wider membership. The dates we are looking at holding these runs are Thursday the 23rd and Thursday the 30th of November and then Thursday the 7th December, as potential options for these trial runs.

## **Pride March Feedback updates**

### **International Trip & Eurogames 2024**

The Eurogames 2024 are taking place from the 17th to the 20th of July in Vienna and the suggestion would be to have the 2024 Eurogames coincide with the International Trip.

For the record, the current International Trip subcommittee did consider Vienna for the 2023 trip but it was found to have really expensive accommodation.

I think the above should be suggested to the IT subcommittee in order to check whether the proposal ticks all the right boxes as to be considered for the 2024 IT.

**Action to be taken:** CBP is kindly requested to please contact AS in regards to the D & I Survey and the role overall

### **AOB**

This is a proposal connected to what Robin suggested earlier, with the Club becoming larger and larger as we speak, it would be good to know what support do Committee members feel that they need in their roles. Are there parts of each role that could be shared and given to another volunteer to competently deal with? Do you think that it will be necessary to open up the current Committee to more people, thus creating any new roles and what will these roles be? (AH)

**Action to be taken:** all Committee members are kindly requested to please give the above suggestion the required thought and come up with suggestions to be discussed at the next RCM in December.

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