



**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)

**LFR**

**RCM Agenda**

**Thursday 8th February 2024**

**Financial Updates (CT)**

Budget 2024/25 and membership fee discussion/decision

**Races Update (RS)**

Eltham Park 5

Pride Run 10K Suggestion

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

**Social Activities Update (SS)**

29th Anniversary Party/Logistics

AGM drinks/Logistics

Post London Marathon Social/ Logistics

**Membership Update (MS)**

**Club Secretary**

EA trans eligibility FR Clubs Outreach & Survey Updates

AGM

Porchester Move Update

LFR Women Trip (subvention discussion and voting)

Official Confirmation of endorsing the International Trip Half/ discussion and voting

### **Co-Presidents**

Committee Restructure Proposal

Triathlon Swimming Coaches Budget discussion & approval

Summer Trips & Events Calendar

New Club Kit update

Thursday Run feedback / Webpage

### **AOB**

Chair: AH

Minutes: CBP

Apologies: DB, RB, ST

### **Financial Updates (CT) (in absentia)**

Budget 2024/25 and membership fees update / considerations

In regards to the regular monthly update there are no major financial incomings or outgoings to report for the month of January. In regards to the 2024/25 club year budget, this is still a work in progress, so if you have not already done so, then please send me your role budget requests for the forthcoming club year.

The main subject for discussion is the increase in membership fees. My proposal is to raise the current membership fees by £2 from £54 to £56 due to the England Athletics individual athletes' membership fees increases and inflation. The fact is that England Athletics have increased their affiliation fees by £2.

Last year the Club membership fees didn't increase even though we have seen significant inflation over the recent years. While our reserves and income are sufficient to cover existing costs and most imaginable unforeseen expenditures, I don't feel comfortable with the idea of letting the real value of membership fees decrease over time. In addition, with more reserves and flexibility we are able to do bigger events, expand to more venues as needed and take bigger risks e.g. the 30th Anniversary party and cover subsidies for events when needed, like the LFR Christmas party.

The increase seems a very logical one, as this increase is suggested simply in order to cover the EA membership fees increase whereas the Club element of the deal remains frozen.

The Committee unanimously votes in favour of the suggested membership increase for the club year 2024/25 of £2 to the existing membership fees

In regards to our regular monthly update, the current bank balance is at £36,105.37, with the total outgoings in the previous month amounting to £2,078.09 and the total income generated in the previous month being £312.22

Just to make you all aware that last year we belatedly realised that we hadn't altered the membership subscription for those who are second-claim with LFR, so as to allow for the EA costs to apply correctly, as the difference between first and second claim in the membership fees price ought to be the price of the EA membership. We are hoping to make this happen in the forthcoming club year. (GH)

**Action to be taken:** the MS is kindly requested to please liaise with the CT in regards to updating and marking the difference between the main LFR annual subscription and the one of members who are second claim, as to have both memberships in line with the current EA pricing.

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

#### **Eltham Park 5 discussion and proposal**

Have been in contact with the EP5 race organisers and they would love to have LFR back at the event. The registrations are currently open and there is already in place an early-bird discounted registration fee for the event but I have requested whether it would be possible to have an extra discount on top of the early-bird registration and will be keeping the Committee updated on that front. It would be great if we were to please vote on whether to have the Eltham Park 5 as part of the Club Championships portfolio of races and have the race become our inaugural Club Championships event, like we did last year. Incidentally, Matt Clare has again very generously offered his house to all LFR members who might want to leave their belongings at his house before the race, then have a shower afterwards and have an after the event drinks party (CBP)

Matt has been doing this for a number of years, at least three if not more, and besides his great generosity and very kind support to the Club, this has always proved a very successful event, from a social point of view, with lots of members going to Matt's house for a drink after the event.(FC)

The Race Secretaries are happy to endorse the Eltham Park 5 as part of the LFR Club Championships portfolio of events and the Committee unanimously votes in favour of the proposal, thus accepting the EP5 as the inaugural race of the 2024/25 Club Championships.

#### **Pride Run 10K discussions**

Dominic Addison has recently taken over from Minesh Patel and is currently the chair of the event. In a parenthesis I wish to inform you all that DA has been invited for a small intervention at the forthcoming AGM, to present himself as Chair of the PrideRun, to those that do not happen to know of this already, and also as an opportunity to raise further the visibility of the event among LFR and finally to express his thanks to the PrideRun 10K volunteers. Dominic has made an official proposal to endorse the PrideRun 10K as the LFR official 10K race for the Club Championships portfolio of races. As you all know, over the past three years AC and I have discussed the subject of the PrideRun a number of times and have agreed, with the

Committee's consent, to try and bring the race closer to LFR, on every possible level. It is an event that has been going on for 20 years, this will be its 21st edition, it is incredibly loved for its atmosphere, if not all, than at least most of those who are volunteering for the event are LFR registered members or have been LFR members in previous years, so there is a very strong bond between the event and LFR, it just needs some rekindling from time to time.

In the past three years I have actively tried to build a very engaging rapport between LFR and the Pride Run 10k, also as part of one of my secret pet-projects, as I managed to obtain on behalf of the PrideRun a \$1000 grant from the International Frontrunners, which went towards covering some organisational expenses of the event, last year we had the LFR gazebo over, which became a visual but also literal point of reference for all LFR members and for all the visitors, and then I organised the Sunday brunch and the visit to the Serpentine Pavilion, with an extremely engaging guided tour by Julian Wililams. This year I am again volunteering towards the event's community engagement. I happen to be greatly in favour of Dominic's proposal, thus I am warmly appealing to both your sense of collaboration and to your common sense, to please add your support into this. When the Club has already in place an established much-loved 10K race, seamlessly organised by Club volunteers, it makes absolutely no sense to me to then go and support a different club's 10K race, in my opinion it is utterly unreasonable supporting financially and numerically in terms of resources someone else's 10K race, for the sake of novelty, whereas we could and in my opinion should be supporting our own event instead. I can completely understand that each Race Secretary wants to leave their mark behind and introduce new races as their legacy and that it is also extremely important to introduce new events from time to time, as to spice the races portfolio up and to engage members further but in the long term it is a blatant waste of LFR resources and against all principles of sustainability (CBP)

Some members do not see the Pride 10K as a very competitive event, especially due to its fun atmosphere, hence they might prefer to race a different event.

It is a timed event, so it probably depends on the individual athlete whether they may choose to see it competitively or not. For some LFR members it becomes a very competitive race and I recall seeing photographs from previous years when the whole first row was taken by LFR runners eagerly positioned in that area and looking at their watches expecting for the signal to start. Other LFR members prefer to take the event in a more leisurely way and there is nothing wrong with that either, the fact which I find great is that the PrideRun 10K is an event that can cater for both preferences (CBP)

I am very much in favour of having the Pride Run becoming in the next club year part of the LFR Club Championships and the official 10K race and I think we should support that (ER)

### **Club Records Update**

You will be pleased to know that the latest spreadsheet with the 2023 updates has been found and duly sent to the LFR webteam, as to have it uploaded on the website and thus update the Club Records. All these race results have been meticulously collected from the Power of 10 and RunBritain and the process unfortunately isn't straightforward at all.

There is a very simple but very explicit proviso which has now been added to the Club records page and it reads as follows: All race results have been collected from the Power of 10 and RunBritain websites. As in certain cases race results do not appear on either of the above websites, they have been added manually. If a Club member believes their results should be included within the top 10 but they don't appear on Power of 10 and RunBritain websites, then please email your results for review to [races@londonfrontrunners.org](mailto:races@londonfrontrunners.org)

The above clause was provided by Denis Gorman who incidentally mentioned that he would be thrilled to be considered in the future as helping out with collecting the race results for the Club Records and that he would be happy to liaise with RS and actively and effectively support the RS going forwards with the Club Records (CBP)

DG is extremely knowledgeable and hugely experienced in race matters. He happens to be passionate and he cares very much for racing and he would be great in supporting the racing part of LFR (FC)

Having collaborated with DG in the previous year I would second what FC mentioned above, if yourself and the new RS do not have the time to pursue this, I would warmly recommend delegating to DG the task of updating the Club Records, as it is also very important to be able to encourage members who wish to come forward as volunteers in general (CBP)

I have liaised with SP who has been assisting me in finding a way to automate some of the race results through the use of codes and then having them uploaded on a spreadsheet. There are still some tweaks to make in order to bring this closer to perfection but once it has reached a certain state of functionality, this new system will have the potential to reduce all the relative workload (ER)

The way the race results has been collected may come across to the uninitiated as a slightly random one but this is mainly due to the fact that the Power of 10 has an output twice a week, sometimes the results come out late, some other times it misses some races off randomly, and then when it comes to LFR members, one person may email the RS with the results of a specific race, whereas another person, who competed at the same race may not, resulting in publishing the race result of the runner who proactively contacted us and shared their race result and in complains from the runner who was at the same race but did not bother to email us their race results, so it is not always as simple as it seems, a simple collection of data (FC)

Would it prove worth having a standing automatic form through which members may individually submit their race results, with this form probably having the same columns as the Power of 10, and offering the opportunity to each individual to submit their result but also by having the same aspect with the Power of 10, being able to merge both forms together?

Discussion on the Tuesday track and on finding ways to support the existing team of coaches and the Tuesday track aficionados while at the same time making the track session potentially more accessible to members of a different running pace and ability.

There are two different but important and related facts to take into consideration. Due to the increased number of participants on the Tuesday track, Shaun Whelan is sometimes struggling with the large numbers. Shaun is not complaining but he could use some help. In addition to the Tuesday numbers, the track is generally very busy every Tuesday evening, by a number of other athletes from different Clubs which makes it even more difficult when one has to deal with a large group in a space used at the same time by numerous others. The second fact is that many of what one would call less fast runners are either very interested in track, because they have never tried and they want to, but are slightly intimidated by the levels of speed achieved by the current LFR team, or they are returning after an injury and want to get back to track, literally, and in consequence this leaves us with just one option to follow, which in my opinion would be to restart a second track session, on a different day.

Discussion on the potential of restarting a second track session every Thursday evening at the Battersea Millennium facilities, having the LFR track athletes using the existing changing facilities and then after the session is over potentially attending the Thursday social in Clapham, by having the runners from the Clapham run and the runners from the Battersea track session meeting and attending it together, as after all Battersea Park is not really that far in geographical terms.

As it will always prove difficult to manage groups of different paces, the only feasible solution would be to have the moderately fast runners using the track facilities at Battersea and the faster ones to continue using the facilities at Mile End with Shaun.

Discussion on how very busy is the Wednesday coaching session, when there could be at times about 45 runners and on what could be done in regards to alleviating the Wednesday session.

This is a very good time to be thinking about the LFR coaching programme for the future as next Sunday there are at least nine LFR who are going to go through the England athletics coaching session for future coaches, among them also two women, which is incredibly inspiring as this will empower more women to come forward and become interested in the coaching and in the track sessions.

Short discussion followed by the unanimous approval of the Club Committee to officially endorse and accept both the Budapest Half and the Big Half as part of the 2024/25 Club Championships, thus facilitating those who would like to join the International Trip but also encouraging those remaining in London to take part at the London race. Both these events will be the Half Marathon event of the Club Championships.

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

Short discussion on the AGM Communications

The Saturday relocation communications are going to be finalised through an exchange of emails.

Suggestion to remove from the Ebulletin the visibility tips in order to create some more space.

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

Discussion on whether to move the Social Thursday from the Village to the Two Brewers and have just one Thursday LFR social

This suggestion will find some hesitation for those for whom TTB is not a convenient place to go, and often difficult to reach, as they are working in the centre or are not living in the south of London. In my opinion, it might prove useful to have a look at numbers of attendance for the time being and then see how we may move forward based on the number of attendees. It might be worth considering having the March social as normal, taking place at The Village, and accordingly decide whether to merge the two socials or not, because if there are lots of members attending the social at The Village and lots of members attending the social at TTB, then it might be worth keeping them both for the moment (GH)

The Two Brewers are always going to be busy on the first Thursday of the month, as there are other events taking place in the venue, so it might be worth to keep a separate LFR social event happening at the Village. Let's not make any decisions right now but give it a month, and then we may see where this goes.

There is always the option of keeping the first Thursday of the month with the social at the Village and then go to Heaven and watch Porn Idol, thus we don't need to make such a decision of paramount importance on this right now (ER)

## **29th Anniversary Party**

In regards to the Saturday 29th Anniversary celebration, the entertainment has already been booked in the form of Carla Bear and we are getting pizza from Papa Johns.

## **AGM drinks confirmation**

The AGM venue is also booked, there will be no minimum spend on the evening, and I am going to bail from AGM a bit earlier in order to get to the venue around 8.30pm.

Club Championships event is set for Friday the 15th of March, discussions on the communications relative to the Club Championships.

Discussions on the London Marathon social.

Is the Club planning on having a pasta dinner for the London Marathon or are we planning on hosting one for visiting runners?

This is not an LFR custom, throwing a pasta dinner before the London Marathon for visiting FR but we may certainly invite all visiting Frontrunners to attend the Saturday brunch the day before the event

Discussion on the intention of hosting a group mix-up event before the International Trip so that members will get the opportunity to know other members in advance of the International Trip, especially as the Club has had a large influx of new runners, some of whom might be attending the International Trip.

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

The Club is currently at 661 registered members, with members pending their registration to be processed.

### **Club Secretary**

Reminder of the Committee nominations and of the annual updates for every role.

### **AGM planning**

Discussion on the questions which are going to be asked during the AGM.

It would be wise to try and avoid having such a long AGM this year, like it happened last year, we went about 40 minutes over the scheduled time and this becomes extremely unproductive in the long term, as members tend to consider the AGM as a very long and a very dull event, and then they stop attending. Attendance is obviously important not just because it is an important event and members need to be interested in Club affairs but also from a point of view of racing the requested quorum of 60 attendees.

In my opinion it needs to be made clear that the Committee welcomes questions but these questions need to be submitted in writing and prior to the AGM. In order to maintain transparency these questions and their respective answers will be shared publicly with all members through a specific file which will be made available through the ebulletin. In addition we could say if you happen to have a question, please send it in advance to the appropriate Committee member and on the night of the AGM we will reply to it.

I think that the format should also have to change, instead of having questions being asked after each role, it is better to have all the annual reports in one go and then have all the Committee taking and answering questions, together as a group on the stage but each role replying to the questions pertinent to their role.

I am of the opinion that we should be taking some questions on the night of the AGM especially if these questions have been generated as a result of the annual reports announced prior to the Q&A session. We can't just say, no sorry, there is no time, we won't be taking any questions.

In that case the whole session will have to be strictly limited to five minutes. It might prove useful to have someone who is not part of the Committee acting as the official timekeeper and the person that comes to mind is Daniel Brittle.



The AGM communications need to be altered and reflect what has been discussed this evening, saying that the Committee invites questions on the night of the AGM and that all questions will be answered at the end of the annual reports session, by the Committee. There will definitely not be a Q&A session after each role.

As it was discussed during the last Committee meeting LFR has been invited to participate at an England Athletics-funded survey on trans athletes. The survey is being conducted by researchers at the University of Gloucestershire and although one never really knows what the true intentions behind such a survey maybe, considering the fact that EA did not bother to consult with anybody in regards to the ban on trans athletes previously, at this point it should be considered as some form of interaction with EA on the subject. Manchester, Brighton & Hove, Edinburgh and Newcastle FR and some other clubs have been invited and will probably be participating in the survey, and although everyone realises that it is probably another empty gesture with the intention of buying EA some time and to probably just tick another box, we have to start from somewhere. And if a platform to express one's opinions on the matter is being offered, I think it is better to take advantage of the opportunity and express an opinion than not express an opinion at all.

Discussion on DIE champion

Candidates for forthcoming Club elections & 2024 AGM

### **LFR Women Trip, subvention discussion and voting.**

An important point to consider is that the Club subsidises events which are open to everybody and through which events every Club member can benefit, the risk is that not everybody can benefit from such an event, it is giving something of the Club to a part of the Club that is not accessible to all.

I believe it is important for the Club to subsidise its diversity, especially as we can decide on the level of the funds the Committee wishes to give.

A comparison is being made to the subsidies the Club has given to other events and subject to the Treasurer's agreement, the Club will subsidise £20 per runner and up to 25 women, maximum 30.

The options to choose from for the Saturday venue currently are the Academy sport, Torquay Street, W2 SEW, the Little Venice Sports Centre, 10 Crompton St, W2 1ND, the Queen Mother Sports Centre, 223 Vauxhall Bridge Road, Pimlico, SW1V 1EL and the Church Street Community Leisure Centre, 1 Fisherton St, London NW8 8BF.

Unfortunately and regardless of all my attempts, the Porchester management has vehemently refused to have LFR at the venue as they remember the Club very well from five years ago.

I am going to visit all the above venues, discuss with the management of each and will update the Committee in due course.

### **Co-Presidents**

#### **Summer trips and events calendar.**

Discussion on the Isle of Wight events and the request to let everyone know that plans on whether the trip will actually go forward are still under consideration, as the event takes place one week after the International Trip and there is very little time to organise it.

### **New Club Kit Update**

The NCKSC will have a meeting this weekend and there is much progress being done on the design side, one designer did not follow the guidance and what was specifically requested of them after the first submission, so they have now been eliminated, and apparently the NCKSC currently have got some really good designs from the designer who has been chosen. At the same time they are very much looking at potential suppliers for the kit so we are very hopeful that by this coming summer the new Club kit will be ready. It would be good for the new Committee to invite them over to the next Committee meeting in April and get a direct update.

An update on the International Trip as the tickets reserved for male identifying members have currently sold out, the tickets reserved for female identifying members have sold 14 out of the 26, the remaining 12 are open and will be available to female identifying members until this coming Wednesday. There is a waiting list in place and if these 12 tickets are not being taken by Wednesday, then they will completely cover the number of the members on the waiting list. The payment link will go out this week as well and members who have lived in Budapest are very much helping the International Trip subcommittee with the trip's organisational logistics.

### **Triathlon Swimming Coaches Budget discussion**

Following the very successful swim training events in November 2023 and January 2024, the LFR triathlon section has been doing some planning on the number of coaches available to maintain, for as far in the future as this is possible, their weekly swim training events.

These sessions have been really successful but at two sessions per week and each coach doing a block of four is naturally proving too challenging.

There is one coaching position for which the triathlon section has already got the funding for, then one of the coaches has already got their training from a different source, the Windrush Club, so the triathlon section would like to ask for funding three further coaching spots, bringing the base quota of coaches to five.

There are already three Club members who are very much willing and keen to do the coaching, BH is one of them, as this could prove to be a valuable investment for the Club.

The funds requested are about £300 per coach, as the pricing for 2024 has not yet been disclosed, so there might be a minor inflation, so a total of c. £900 between the three candidates. BH is happy to turn up and chat on the subject for ten minutes if the Committee thinks that this would be helpful.

After some discussion on the subject, the Committee feels that in view of the amount of funds requested, it would prove helpful to have a better understanding of the background context, and would thus decide to extend an invite to BH for the next RCM.

**Action to be taken:** AC is kindly requested to please respond to the triathlon request in addition to inviting BH to the next RCM