



## **LFR**

### **Regular Committee Meeting**

Co-Presidents: Geoff Hicks (GH) and Wojciech Pankow (WP)

Club Secretary: Christos Bitzis-Politis (CBP)

Club Treasurer: Derwin Brennan (DB)

Membership Secretary: Gwen Wright (GW)

Races Secretaries: Eliot Rees (ER) and Tom Watson (TW)

Publicity & Communications Secretaries: Stephen Tomaszewski (ST) and Chris Swift (CS)

Social Secretaries: Nick Warner (NW) and Andrew Harrison (AH)

### **RCM Agenda**

**Monday 8th April 2024**

Welcome statement (GH)

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

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

London Marathon Parameters Document

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

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

Post London Marathon Social updates

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

#### **Club Secretary**

Welfare Officer (s) election

Pride Run 10K donation

London Marathon Visiting FR programme

Letter from NKCS

## **Co-Presidents**

DEI Sub Committee

## **AOB**

Chair: GH

Minutes: CBP

Apologies: GW, ST

### **Welcome Statement-Introductions (GH)**

First committee meeting of the new club year, many warm congratulations to those reelected and many warm congratulations to those being elected for the first time, almost everyone here knows everyone else, which is a good start. This is the first Committee meeting of the club year and I will be chairing it, and we are following an alternate chairing system between the two Co Presidents with a different Co President chairing each time, and as I have been a Committee member over the past three years, it makes more sense for me to chair this one today.

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

The current LFR Bank Balance currently comes to £84,475.78. The amount of the total outgoings during the previous month has been £1,781.14, whereas the total income in previous month was £22,873.43, which is mostly from the auto-renewals and some registrations. Naturally, and although the above seems a substantial amount to have entered the LFR treasury, a large part of the above sum will go towards paying the EA membership fees.

The most significant outgoings, as in those above £500, have been very few, there was £1339.16 going towards the GBR van rental. Payments and reimbursements going towards the North Devon Trip have been in the range of £2400.

In addition, some other significant income has been the International Trip income, which has been £ £19297.50 overall but of which a large part had gone towards paying various invoices and members of the International Trip Committee that needed to be paid, as they had anticipated some hefty amounts from their own purse. In addition, I can confirm that some of

the LFR venues have been charging us correctly, and as this is a busy period with the membership renewals, and also a transitional period with paying the EA, I will be in the meantime going through the LFR accounts and once the membership renewals are more or less finalised, I will be able to send some more accurate financial notes afterwards.

#### Discussion on the AC Financial Report

AC has taken the trouble to write a very detailed report regarding the management of the Club's financial accounts and has specifically asked for this report to be circulated to the new Committee. This report contains 13 recommendations for the current Committee's consideration as to ensure that going forward, robust financial management and adequate control procedures are in place. This is in no way whatsoever a criticism of neither former or current Committee members, but rather AC reflections as a trained accountant on the accounts practices of the Club. Some of these recommendations are for the whole Committee to consider and a Committee decision will be required. A large number of these recommendations, some of which are quite complex, are mostly for the Club Treasurer and relate to management of the accounting system the Club is using, and although essentially for the Treasurer, they are for the Committee to agree and endorse in principle. I should probably state that for the moment the content of this report is strictly confidential and thus not for sharing beyond the Committee (GH)

**Action to be taken:** GH is kindly requested to please share the above mentioned document for the Committee's consideration. In addition all Committee members are kindly requested to please peruse the report in advance of a relevant discussion at the next RCM.

For the time being, it would be excellent to take advantage of this RCM and to go through just one or two of these recommendations, the simplest ones, which also need the Committee's approval. One important thing that has come out of this report is about updating access and administrative rights to the Lloyds Online for Business LFR account. This has already been actioned by AC, who has removed two former Club Treasurers (AD and RK) from having admin rights and from any access to the account, as all access and admin rights to the Lloyds Online for Business LFR account should reflect the current Committee. (GH)

The Committee discusses the above and approves the action that has been taken, in particular the removal of any ex-Treasurer's ability to authorise any payments.

**Action to be taken:** The Club Treasurer is kindly requested to please review and confirm the above, thus making sure that no one, especially a former Committee member, is responsible for something that they shouldn't be.

Discussion on the implementation of a dual authorisation, that requires two Committee members to sign off any payments over a certain amount.

A dual authorisation for payments of small amounts is already endorsed and has been taking place for some time now. What the Committee needs to consider for the next time is how applicable this would be from a practicality point of view. Undoubtedly the 1st recommendation is a tad complicated but it is important from a security point of view. (GH)

The Committee agrees that due to the complexity of the matter, that it needs to be left for the time being and to be considered again at the next RCM and after the Committee has carefully read the report, its rationale and the recommendations suggested.

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

The list of Club Championship races is almost similar to the one of last year, we are just introducing the Pride Run 10k as the official 10k race of the Club and there are two half marathons to choose from and compete this year, the Big Half and the one in Budapest. We wish to propose the following Club Championships portfolio of events for the current club year:

Eltham Park 5 miles 16/06/2024

Battersea 1 mile relay 30/07/2024

Kangaroo hop 5K – 09/07/2024

Big Half or International Trip half 01/09/2024

Pride run 10K – date TBA

Any Full Marathon

Claybury XC – date TBA

Wormwood Scrubs XC – date TBA

Uxbridge XC – date TBA

Welwyn Garden City XC – date TBA

Trent Park XC – date TBA

The new addition for this year would be a 10 mile race, on a date TBC, which would be interesting to have, as based on discussions with members, we believe that there would be appetite and appreciation for such an event.

There will be the same scoring for participation points, with the top seven performances scored for participation points and ten participation points will be awarded for each race that members participated in. So the scoring will remain the same and if members just do the XC races, they still get the points and they can get the points from other fixtures.

We would like to ask for the Committee's content in our proposal to apply Club funding to the Battersea 1 mile relay and to the Kangaroo Hop 5K again for this club year, which would come to £7 per athlete per race. Last year 41 LFR athletes participated in the Battersea relays and their participation cost the Club £287, whereas 63 LFR runners participated in the 5K, which was funded by £441 from the Club. We estimate a cost of approximately £750 for these races this year.

We intend on publicising the above races in the ebulletin, Instagram and on the website as soon as they are confirmed, as to attract the largest number of participants possible.

We also intend on having the winners of previous years Club championships published on the website as well as the current years live results This is going to happen through a .live spreadsheet so that members may be able to see their position and thus they can also flag up any omissions through the year.

When it comes to the race's budget, we would like to please be allocated the same funding as last year.

#### TCSLM Club Entries

Further to last year's allocation a slight modification to the wording of the guidance document is proposed and If approved, we intend to make this available ASAP.

**Action to be taken:** all Committee members are kindly requested to please dedicate some time and read carefully the London Marathon Parameters Document, and to send back all feedback and comments comments by Wednesday the 17th of April, so as to have the revised version coming out on the ebulletin of Monday the 22nd, a day after the London Marathon.

#### Euro Games

We have received 12 expressions of interest for participation in the Euro Games. At the December 2023 RCM it was agreed LFR would either affiliate to the EGLSF or subsidise LFR athletes the equivalent of the discount they would receive on registration if the Club were affiliated, whichever is cheaper. Given the relatively low numbers of interested athletes the latter would be the more economical option, coming at 240 EUR.

We intend on finding a suitable hotel and to recommend to all interested LFR athletes to book into and also arrange a programme of socials / dinners, potentially involving some of the other London LGBTQ+ sports clubs who might be in Vienna for the event.

Discussion related to the benefit of signing up with EGLSF

Comparison between the offer of an official LFR affiliation to EGLSF which would cost the Club 650 euros per year and thus get discounted entries for the event, compared to allowing every participant the discount of 20 euros per head instead.

The current list of people being interested in participating at the event is around ten to 12. If the Club becomes affiliated to the EGLSF, this could act as an extra incentive and it could bring the number of potential participants up, thus making the affiliation becoming the more economic solution overall from a financial point of view, in addition the affiliation with an international sports governing body will also appear on the LFR website and it would be yet another affiliation adding to the Club's prestige.

Discussion on the offer of events and the races available, which are just a 5K and a 10 k.

In order to make the affiliation get its worth in money and a return for the investment of the 650 euros spent on it, we would need to have about 33 LFR members participating at the event, of which we are still far but which is also quite feasible on the other hand.

Suggestions of creating a signup sheet for race entries, so members can see who else is planning on participating at the event, as an extra incentive.

There is no deadline for signing up for the 2024 Vienna events.

**Action to be taken :** CBP is kindly requested to please try and promote the above event through the Club Circles; the exact same is kindly requested of CS through the Club's official publicity channels

Short discussion on the actual percentage of funds that is being spent by the Club every year in supporting races.

During the last club year the Club paid for the registration fees of all participants at the Met League XC, the registration fees at the SEAA XC events, the Club paid the entry fees of 41 LFR runners at the Battersea Mile Relay, and the entry fees of 63 runners at the 5k Kangaroo 5K, the Club stepped up and successfully negotiated a 10% reduced entry fee on top of the Early Bird for the Eltham Park 5 Miles through CBP, and CBP also got the Club the community entries for the 2023 Big Half, which means that the Club fully paid for ten events and managed to get reduced entries to two more events, 12 racing events overall. Not a bad amount of events and also quite a good variety, as far as races are concerned.

I am of the impression that the amount of funds provided by the Club towards racing has not actually registered with everyone or is completely unknown to the majority of members, otherwise members wouldn't have requested at the last AGM for even more funds to be released towards funding races, had they been aware of the above (CBP)

This is something which has also crossed my mind, and very often, and I think it has been a mistake from a communications point of view not to have an actual report being delivered by the Co-Presidents of the last two years at the last two AGMs, as members complained about things which the Committee has already thought about and provided but of which members obviously had no idea (GH)

Suggestion to present at the next AGM a record of all the events that the Club had paid for its members.

It would be good to have such a record also coming out on the ebulletin prior to the AGM but from personal experience I have come to realise that members do not really read any reports that come out on the ebulletin, almost at all. I have also decided to break the tradition of many years of having my own role's report coming out on the ebulletin, as I realised that members do not read it and have thus no idea what I am doing for the Club over the period of 12 months. (CBP)

I agree. Reports are never read and if the Club decides to pay the hefty affiliation fees and become affiliated to the European Gay & Lesbian Sport Federation, then the Club should include that on both the ebulletin and on the final AGM report. I am of the opinion that it is preferable to become affiliated to EGLSF then looking to subsidise individual Club members for the event in Vienna (GH)

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

There is nothing new to be said on the Ebulletin, as all is as usual.

The only thing we would like to focus more this year is on improving the way Mailchimp is being used, in terms of efficiency.

Question relative to the number of members that are currently receiving and opening their ebulletin. 669 members are currently subscribed to receiving the ebulletin and the percentage of those actually opening it can be estimated to an average of 61%,

Discussion on the issue of permanently deleting members when they don't register with the Club and the issues of re-adding them on the ebulletin mailing list, once they decide to become members again.

Discussions on the way the information is put into Mailchimp and whether the platform is the optimal for this purpose and whether it is being used to its full potential by the way that the Club is currently using it.

Discussion on finding an easier way of getting through the race results.

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

Post London Marathon Social updates

Discussion on the London Marathon weekend and on what could LFR potentially offer to the IFR visiting London for the event. 5k shake out run and brunch in Hyde Park, the post LM social on the upper floor of the Comptons, etc.

**Action to be taken:** ER is kindly requested to please create a short blurb relative to what LFR is offering to visiting FR over the LM weekend.

**Action to be taken:** CBP is kindly requested to contact IFR through using the above blurb on the IFR portal whereas ER is kindly requested to please do the exact same for the IFR FB group.

### **Social Walk Suggestion**



One of the new things which I would very much like to launch is the idea of a monthly meetup and walk. This could be a walk by the Thames or a walk in a park, mostly as a way of getting to know people who are new to the Club but also as a platform of introduction for those who are too nervous to join the Club by coming to their first run.

This would be an event which would not evolve around drinking, something like a gentle introduction to the Club, signposting new people to a run, have leaflets and drop them around London cafes, it will be open to whomever is interested. Naturally we would look into boosting women and non binary participation but without having a very specific group target. It would be an extra event that does not involve drinking, along the ones that CBP is organising, and it would be good for new members (AH).

How are you planning to direct your marketing in regards to this walk?

It will have to be through the website for all new members, whereas the Club's own members could be reached through the ebulletin. I have not thought through all the logistics at this point, this is still an idea forming in my head but I would guess using a bit of both. I think that a walk outside of a running day would benefit new people who don't know anyone in the club, while at the same time we could also try and target minority groups.

The Committee is overall very encouraging and supportive to this new idea, of having a monthly get-to-know-us-better walk.

**Action to be taken:** AH is kindly requested to please come with a proposal for the format of the social walks next around the time of the next RCM

General discussion on the subjects of diversity and inclusion.

The Tuesday track has the reputation for being more difficult and for more advanced runners, whereas Thursday very much seems to be attracting also lots of beginners, which is very encouraging. Sometimes trying out new things can seem very daunting and it would be excellent if both track groups progress but at the same time new runners feel empowered to come and try the Thursday one.

The fact is that the Club currently has many more coaches than before and just by having a large number of coaches it is enabling LFR to offer one session per week which is considered a less challenging session, and by having two coaches in each session, is also a huge progress as one of them is also supporting a few of the beginners. So having more coaches has helped the Club immensely, and in just the space of two weeks, to be able to become much more inclusive. This type of coaching could prove very encouraging to new runners and it definitely makes a great difference to a lot of people.

Nottingham Frontrunners do little profiles of their new members on their instagram account, which is a way of introducing new members to their own club, but also a way of promotion to the club in itself, and it also underlines how welcoming the club felt to them and how they felt. They are using their instagram account much more than LFR does and in quite a different way, as it often includes links with equality and diversity subjects.

Discussion on using different mediums such as short videos towards reaching out to underrepresented groups, and the pros of employing a different medium to reach out to people.

Instagram, cam runs it, publicity need to liaise with him, andrew and w need to liaise with him to increase visibility and engagement,

Action three different chris, w and andrew liaise with cameron on different things

Incidentally there is an £800 minimum spending for Comptons but we are confident that the Club will be able to reach this easily on the day.

**Action to be taken:** Committee members are kindly requested to help GH locate the LFR Maraton Trophies for the post LM social.

In addition to the LM trophies, there will also be the Male Veterans Trophy presentation to DG, as he was not present at the Club Championships.

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

As Gwen is not present I will be offering a very short report on Gwen's behalf but as you all know it is impossible to provide any definite membership numbers at this point, as first all the payments need to go through, of which only a handful just have. The auto renewal this year went quite well, there have been a couple of small issues with a couple of members but nothing really worth mentioning. 80 members did not auto renew, whether this has been a conscious decision on their side or whether they have forgotten, or they have chosen not to renew with LFR for any other possible reason, I am unable to say again at this point. Theoretically 534 previous members have auto renewed successfully, when it comes to the remainder of members, just watch this place for more information to come in the following weeks.

Do we know how many they auto renewed last year to be able to compare with the numbers of this year? Although this is a very good question I am unable to offer an answer at the top

of my head. The auto renewal numbers could be somewhere between 560 and 600 but we cannot know yet.

### **Club Secretary**

#### Welfare Officer (s) election

The current candidates are CBP and NW, who have been WO over the previous club year and who are happy to continue this year as well.

Both CBP and NW are unanimously voted by the Committee members present and are reconfirmed as the LFR WO for the 2024/25 club year.

#### Pride Run 10K donation

For those of you who might not happen to know, which I am assuming is most of you this evening, the 2023/24 Club Committee voted for the amount of £250 to be donated to the 20th edition of the Pride Run 10K. For reasons which completely elude me and on behalf of which I am unable to provide any explanations, sufficient or otherwise, this amount was never transferred to the PR10K coffers. Thus I would like to ask the current Committee to please confirm and honour this decision, in addition to matching the amount donated by the previous Committee with another £250 as the 2024/25 Club donation to the event.

The Club Committee votes unanimously for the amount of £500 to be donated to the PR10K

**Action to be taken:** CBP is kindly requested to please notify the PR10K Chair of the above, copying the CT.

#### Big Half Update

Only 30 entries left at the moment. Liverpool, BHFR and Manchester have already been invited to the event and depending on the number of new entries which I will receive once these are gone, I will also invite Bristol FR.

#### Payments & Donations

International FR affiliation, EA affiliation and SEAA affiliation have been paid for the new club year.

New Saturday Run Risk Assessment has already been on the website for some time now. I am not very technical and I would like to please have some assistance from one of you with the map accompanying the RA as I don't know how to do it on Mapometer.

**Action to be taken:** after having gladly volunteered to support CBP on this request, ER is kindly requested to please liaise with CBP if in need of any further details on the route.

#### Trans Matter

Have contacted BH, Liverpool and Manchester FR, as per our last communication, and whether they have had any “networking” approaches to other FR clubs regarding the matter. Will update you on this subject in a separate email.

#### LM

There are 68 LF who have registered as volunteers at the moment and there are 14 members in reserve, which is a very healthy reserve to have, we have never had so many volunteers available. I am having a meeting next Wednesday with the LM organisers to try and convince them to have these 14 people become officially absorbed by the event as volunteers.

#### The Three Stags

The venue will be closing from Monday the 22nd of April until Sunday the 2nd of June. Though it might take longer. They don't actually know themselves and are unable to make precise predictions on the closure period.

Does the Committee feel comfortable in confirming the Mercato Metropolitan as the alternative suggestion? It's the simplest option, it has been tried before, no bookings are required and it is large enough and offers enough variety to cater to everyone.

The Committee is happy to go with the suggestion and unanimously confirms.

#### **Co-Presidents**

##### Discussion on the diversity and inclusion subcommittee.

The ebulletin proposal has to be a short and straight-forward text. For the moment this feels like the right approach and the most sensible thing to do, as in replace the D&I Champion. Before the last AGM a Club member came forward in their will to help out the Club on this subject, then during the AGM there was the suggestion of creating and coordinating a D&I subcommittee, so hopefully the person that came forward as the D&I Champion will still want to be part of the subcommittee. It needs to be emphasised that if there are new initiatives to be taken forward, then the D&I subcommittee must be prepared to show leadership and implement these suggestions, whatever these ideas and initiatives are going to be, the D&I subcommittee must agree to do it in collaboration with the main Committee.

Diversity has been largely conflated with just female members, the Club and the Committee in particular has tried to do quite a lot but there are several other underrepresented groups about which the Club has done very little, and there are other forms of diversity which are more complicated and will also have to be taken into consideration.

It is also a question of interest from the Club, as in how many members will actually come forward, and the number of members sitting on the D&I subcommittee will also be a criterion on how the new subcommittee will be able to operate.

I am of the opinion that for reasons of practicality a member of the Club Committee should be the person liaising with the new subcommittee, the new subcommittee will have to elect a chair of the subcommittee . which they may come to speak to the Committee, as some guidance will be needed. The Committee member who would like to act as the liaison person between the two committees will be keeping both sides posted and there doesn't need to be a formal report.

Andrew Harrison, comes forward and would like to be the liaison person.

I think this is an important issue and it is also a big deal and a big opportunity for the Club and I believe that I can contribute in becoming the liaison person between the two committees.

The Club Committee is very happy to confirm AH as the D&I liaison person.

It would be beneficial if the D&I SC could produce an action plan in consultation with the Club Committee, ideally it would be great to start with some practical initiatives, using smart targets and taking deliverable measures, and steer the D&I SC towards practical suggestions. Everyone is very keen to see this happening, and we also need to see who will come forward as a volunteer, and how many there will be.

### **AOB**

The last AGM did not go as bad, on reflection it would be great to be able to secure and deploy Daniel Brittle as the time keeper, he did an excellent job and it would be great to be able to repeat the same format in the next year. Only this time there is going to be a proper Presidents report, as there are a lot of positive stories that did not come out,

Discussion on the voting system and the suggestion to use Mentimeter.

Discussion on improving attendance at the Club Championships event.

We didn't have a good turnout to the Club Championships and this was not just this year but also last year as well. There was a great attendance to the LFR birthday party, a great attendance for the AGM and then just a handful of members for the Club Championships.

We can't have it too early in the year, as we need to wait for the last XC fixture to go by, this is the last event of the season.

What if we were to move it then forward in time and celebrate it before the London Marathon which is in April?

The last Club Championships event was not well attended, and in all honesty only one of these events was well attended, the very first after the pandemic. I think it is also a question of publicity and engagement.

There is a convergence of opinions to push the event back into April and to potentially hold it the week after the London Marathon, with the intention of attracting many more members..

Short discussion on the 30th LFR anniversary.

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