



**LFR  
Regular Committee Meeting**

Co-Presidents: Geoff Hicks (GH) and Wojciech Panków (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  
Tuesday 11th June 2024**

**Financial Updates (CT)**

**Races Update (RS)**

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

**Social Activities Update (SS)**

Pride March Coordination/ Final Details

**Membership Update (MS)**

**Club Secretary**

Casting Call

Thistle Proposal

Volunteering opportunities in July

**Co-Presidents**

EA & Trans Eligibility in Races

**AOB**

Chair: WP

Minutes: CBP

Apologies: GR, ER

**Financial Updates (CT)**

Discussion on the two separate LFR accounts, the Lloyd's Savings account which currently has 15K, and the 97K which are saved in the everyday transactions LFR account.

Consideration on whether it might be worth increasing the amount on the Savings account from time to time, and in particular whether there is any great opportunity and/or offer for a more lucrative package.

**Action to be taken:** The CT is kindly requested to please check whether Lloyds has any good opportunities for the existing LFR Savings account, that could potentially offer a higher interest savings rate.

In view of what has been discussed above the current bank balance is £97,436.30

The total outgoings in the previous month have been £5,836.72 whereas the total income in previous month was £4,874.01. The most significant outgoings over the previous month have been analytically £1089 for the North Devon trip trains, £2,954 paid to England Athletics for membership affiliations and £820.31 paid towards the forthcoming International Trip race entries. On the other hand the most significant income over the previous month has been the membership fees from new members coming to £1,266.60 and the Green Belt Relay payments coming at £1,961.00

## **Races Update (RS)**

### Club Championships Scoring

Discussion on the point raised by HR through an email and relative to the Club Championships scoring.

Essentially how it works is that participants earn participation points, which are 10 points per appearance and also position points, with the fastest runner getting 500 points, the second fastest then will get 499 points, and so on, and thus we calculate the overall Club Championships scoring. When it came to the 2023/24, the final scoring was recorded differently to previous years, with the women's results being dependent on the men's scores, and according to this calculation, some LFR women had to change position in the Club Championships scoring, so this is not immaterial. HR is proposing that the calculations for the 2024/25 Club Championships reverts back to what it has been in previous years and the calculations are divided in male and female results.

The Committee discusses on this suggestion and finds it completely logical and thus agrees to the request that the scoring will have to revert to what is was in the previous years, by keeping two different sheets of scoring, one separate for men and another one separate for women, as the Club is blessed with lots of female competitors and we should do everything that it takes to encourage the LFR women further into races and into being involved in the Club Championships.

What is the minimum number of races an LFR runner needs to do to be included and considered for being part of the club Championships scoring? (GH)

To my understanding, it is three events, at least this is what it has been in previous years (TW).

#### Discussion on the equalisation of age among genders

A second question and request that is brought forward by HR regards whether the Committee would consider equalising the age-gap between men and women in the Club Championships, where in order to be classified as a veteran men one need to be over 40 whereas in order for a woman to be classified as veteran, she currently has to be over 35. This request is internal, in the sense that it is relevant to just the LFR Club championships and so it will be decided by the Committee just for internal use.

What are the current EA categories in regards to age?

Following the standard UK Athletics age-categories, men under 40 are classed as Male Seniors and men over 40 are classed as Male Veterans in the categories of MV40, MV50, MV60, MV70 & MV80. Women under 35 years old are classed as Female Seniors and then over that age they are divided in the Vet Categories of FV35, FV45, FV55, FV65, FV75.

I don't think that LFR women should become 'veterans' before LFR men do, in particular if this is a request relative to the Club Championships, and with this being an issue that regards just LFR, I would definitely vote for a complete equalisation. With races being still binary, in my opinion 40 feels as the right point to categorise runners of both genders as belonging to the veteran category. (CBP)

Do we know what other running clubs are doing on this occasion? (GH)

To be honest, I don't really know but I believe that each club follows their own rules, when it comes to their own club championships, as it is an internal racing affair of each club (TW)

Would the Committee be happy for the purposes of Club Championships to move to what other running clubs are currently doing and more importantly would that decision make HR and the other LFR women happy?

I think that if HR is writing about the age boundary between senior men and senior women, and this is exactly the issue that we are called to look into, are you happy to go back to HR and ask for a specific clarification? In addition, I feel that we should apologise for last year, as obviously the Club Championships results were not correctly processed, they should have been calculated separately, but would you please reassure HR that we will do it correctly for the next year?

**Action to be taken:** TW is kindly requested to please email HR about the above

EuroGames

I know that this might sound a bit disappointing to you all but the numbers are quite low from what we would have hoped they would have been and there are seven LFR members who are certain to attend the event in Vienna.

Please be aware that this is due to the fact that some members are currently unable to attend due to their annual leave having been already scheduled, and also to the fact that Austria is quite an expensive trip to undertake, Vienna is an expensive city and in particular during the summer months.

Although we may have expected and certainly have wished for a higher number, this is definitely a higher number compared to the LFR representation in Guadalajara, which was just one athlete, and to the event in Paris, where I believe there were five LFR athletes.

The Committee has also mentioned that we are very much trying to invest for the future, using this trip to create a precedent and build a strong basis for all similar events in the near future, so we should see it in those terms and in the hope that next year there will be a larger LFR representation; last but not least, it is not always about the numbers.

The 2025 Eurogames will be held in Lyon, which is also a destination easily reachable by train, in addition to the fact that travelling by train is a much more environmentally friendly way of travel, something that the Club should also be considering, so the future looks more promising for next year. In 2026, there won't be any EuroGames but instead there will take place the 2026 Gay Games in Valencia.

I think it is also a question of how we are going to promote the event, if we have a strong and successful team, potentially get some medals, get some great photographs and some engaging videos, then these could work as an encouragement for members to be much more encouraged to attend the 2025 EuroGames, after all, and this was mentioned in the previous RCM, this year's trip is mostly an investment for the future.

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

In regards to the weekly ebulletin, the race results have been an issue over the past few weeks, so I was wondering whether we can feed the race results into the newsletter directly instead of copying and pasting. For example, I would like to see how we could enhance race results reporting, as at the moment, it's quite manual and time-consuming for everyone. I would like to understand this process better and if there's an app, whether we could include the race results on the website and then I could potentially code a web-scraping and automation to export from there to the newsletter directly, for example. I believe that there is a way, we just need to find out how we can feed the race results easily, how they are extracted, exported and formatted, understand the procedure and make it smoother for everyone through the use of a web-scraping API

**Action to be taken:** CS is kindly requested to please check the above and report in due course to the Committee.

Discussion on updating the LFR website and on the issue of coordination of efforts.

As there are several volunteers already involved in the website, Julia and Alan are the established volunteers responsible for uploading several Committee updates such as notifications, the regular Committee Minutes and generally maintaining the website, Kai and Stephen Turnock have come forward in their wish to revamp various sections of the website, and they are currently reviewing the whole website and pointing out parts that need to be updated and also taking into consideration the aesthetic presentation of the website overall, Christos and myself have had numerous discussions on various sections of the website that need to be updated, such as the Committee section, and Chris has also emailed the Committee about two weeks ago making some further suggestions on how to improve the website further, so it becomes necessary to somehow coordinate all this interest in updating the website, discussing and adding any new suggestions, so it would be best if there were to come under one person, who will become the person responsible in coordinating all these endeavours and also for acting as the liaison person among all interested parties, making sure that all communications are shared properly (GH)

This is a great suggestion and it obviously becomes so much more necessary based on the fact that we all have different exigencies to bring forward and to prioritise, and all these wonderful but different suggestions are definitely in need of a coordination. For example I would very much like to add two different pages to the LFR website, one relative to the London Marathon, called LFR and the London Marathon, and the second one called LFR and Volunteering, through the first one showcasing the Club's input in the London Marathon and the relationship LFR has been able to establish with them over the past four years and also the volunteering that the Club is doing, as part of the larger running community. We get two extra Club Places through our volunteering, this year we will be receiving three extra places, this is a fantastic Club achievement, an accomplishment that should be celebrated and made widely known. LFR is a London-based club and we have a strong volunteering presence in almost all the major running and triathlon events in and around London, a fact that also needs to be further advertised and celebrated as well. LFR is not an isolated bunch of runners but a club that actively and energetically contributes to the running community through our volunteering and has a strong presence in the running life of London. (CBP)

What you are mentioning is very important, the Club does a lot of volunteering, so we should be advertising the volunteering side of LFR, we provide most of the volunteers for the Pride Run 10K as well, and as Club we now have the Social Walk which will be launched next month and also the Theatre Group, the cultural visits that Christos is organising, these are all great activities and very relative to the broader community of LFR, and they also demonstrate that LFR is not just a triathlon and running club and this should be shared further (CS)

The issue of the coordination can be resolved if CS, who is also one of the Publicity Secretaries, would be happy to lead the team. The LFR website is part of the Publicity domain anyway and there seem to be some very sound suggestions coming from Chris.

CS is happy to be nominated the LFR website coordinator for this second phase and the main liaison person between all the Club volunteers who have ideas and are interested in updating the website, so to review and document the current website updates process, and discuss how enhancements could be made to various processes.

#### Discussion on improving the CL presence at the Circles

At the moment the Club doesn't really have any way to signal to new runners that someone is a Circle Leader and I believe that it would be very useful if we could have something to signal a coach or a CL apart. I had the awkward situation the other week at Regent's Park where I was assistant coach and had no idea who the actual coach was..This one should be an easy thing to do, one of the other running clubs I go to, also have a number of CL and their CL on the day they are leading wears an orange armband to signal they're the leader, so if there are any new runners or any questions or issues, they immediately know who to go to.

The Committee appreciates the fact that most new runners are very nervous to introduce themselves to others properly and that they may often don't happen to know who is in charge of a run, but if Circle Leaders act proactively and fulfil their tasks as they are supposed to, then this shouldn't have been an issue.

#### Brands Collaboration

I know this one is going to be more work so might be something to consider down the line but also this was a great perk with some of the other running clubs I have been with, where they have partnerships or the odd event they organise are sponsored by various brands who come along to promote themselves but also give freebies or facilitate test runs to build community and encourage cross-marketing. Could this be something we could consider and perhaps create a sub-committee?

This is something that most of the previous Committees have considered and discussed and in all previous times the subject was thought as valid put aside simply because it requires one dedicated person to bring this forward and the time commitment and effort cannot be undertaken by a regular Committee member. Nevertheless, there is a volunteering role that fits precisely the description of what you are saying and which I suggested last year and which Andrew Corti promptly agreed to include in the Committee restructure that was proposed and voted at the last AGM. This is a role of the Development and Funding Officer and is based on the fact that among the 700 LFR members that must definitely be someone who works in corporate finance and who has the right connections to assume the requirements and to bring this forward.

**Action to be taken:** CBP is kindly requested to please share with the 2024/25 Committee the relative document about the volunteering roles as stipulated from last year's Committee and relative to the above.

I happen to also have some other ideas which I would like to work through when I have a little more time, and this will hopefully happen over the summer, such as investigating the use of Heylo, which is again a community management platform, instead of Spond for comms, for ticket booking and event sign-ups. Spond is only used by the Triathlon group and from what I have been told it was used by LFR during the Covid Era but it is not used anymore, as it comes with a limit of 500 users. Also, I would like to further investigate a corporate Whatsapp account rather than the informal and unmanaged ones we have at the moment. All these suggestions are brought to your attention as we have discussed that we would have liked to replace WebCollect, sometime in the future, but also improve the use of comms, and start using an app that has no limit on the number of users.

Gwen mentioned that she would really like to substitute WebCollect for the England Athletics portal.

We will all agree that WebCollect is not an ideal system, some things are functioning adequately well, some are not. The part where one has to transfer the personal details of hundreds of people on an entirely new system though just makes me nervous.

It would be good if in the meantime the Committee has a look at Heylo, we also have a look at Heylo and then discuss it with together with Geoff and and with Gwen, and in particular what are the implications, as surely there will be some and then we can all discuss about it at the next RCM.

This move from one platform to a different one is something that has been under discussion for some time now, eventually it will have to take place, in particular as the Club is becoming larger in terms of numbers. I think it will make the whole process a bit more palatable if we are all starting to seriously think about it.

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

### Pride March Coordination

The entries reserved for male members have been all taken and there are just a couple remaining from the n/b and female. NW will be the officer responsible for picking up the wristbands, AH and GR will be the two officers distributing the wristband to all members on the day of the March. Unfortunately we have had a notification that DB will not manage to be there, but AH will be there, he has attended the Pride event for two consecutive years, so he will be able to help out with the coordination.

**Actions to be taken:** CBP is kindly requested to please timely unite the LFR banner with AH.

In addition NW is kindly requested to please send all the information necessary for the next ebulletin by the forthcoming Saturday at 5pm

I know it's probably too late for this year but I have seen some walking groups carrying a little trolley at the back with bags and bits, and it would be nice if we were to purchase a trolley for LFR (CS)

Discussion on the suggestion of purchasing a trolley, an item that many other walking groups have been using in the past few years during the March and which seems to have proved very practical, for those marching to be storing their personal belongings and also any water bottles.

The trolley for storing rucksacks is something that has also been mentioned by some Club members in the past as well.

**Action to be taken:** CS is kindly requested to please have a look into the above subject in terms of capacity and financial expenses and report back to the Committee

#### Walking group

The walking outing has now been postponed to Sunday the 7th July, as we thought it might be best, with lots of the members who would have attended the walk going on that weekend to the North Devon races, and with the Pride march taking place on the day before, both these events could have impacted the attendance numbers.

**Action to be taken:** AH is kindly requested to please create the relative ebulletin blurb and share it timely with the P&C Secretaries in view of the forthcoming ebulletin.

#### **Membership Update (MS) In absentia**

As of 10 June, we had 597 paid-up members, with new members joining in a steady trickle of 3 to 5 every week, though the first week of June saw a bumper crop of 11 new members.

New joiners predominantly describe themselves as male, almost unanimously so.

At the time of the last RCM, there were roughly 95 members who had not renewed their 2024/25 membership. I have written to every one of those at least once and sometimes twice, whether once or twice is slightly more random than I planned, and a number of them have either confirmed that they do not wish to renew or have indicated that they wish to renew and have taken steps to do so. However, the figure of those unsubscribed still stands at around 60.

I am planning to delete all of those who have not renewed in the second half of June though only after two reminders have been sent to everyone. I also mentioned at the last RCM drafting a standard welcome email for new members and I think that I understand enough about the onboarding process to do this now.

**Club Secretary**



### Thistle Christmas Proposal

Suggested date: Saturday 23rd November and suggested venue: The Marble Arch Thistle  
Discussions on the above.

### Casting Call

Electric Robin (<https://www.electric-robin.com/>), is a UK-based production company that has reached out to LFR as they are producing a three-part documentary sport series, aiming to explore and encourage greater inclusion in UK sports especially for people living with disabilities and/or members of the LGBTQ+ community. Each episode will feature contributors going on a journey of sporting discovery with Paralympian Richard Whitehead MBE and broadcaster-turned-record-breaking marathon runner Adele Roberts, who will be meeting inspiring individuals and organisations already driving positive change and breaking down barriers in sports. The producers are keen to feature an LFR runner who's living with anxiety and/or depression and for whom running is a big part of their self-care routine, when their condition allows it. The successful LFR will train with Adele Roberts sometime between late June and mid-July. The training session and the shooting part will only last a day at an iconic London sporting venue, quite easy to travel to and would not require any overnight stays. LFR can always use some visibility as any running club would but we certainly do not want any more visibility in terms of numbers. In consequence my own personal reason for agreeing to share the Electric Robin blurb for your consideration and discussion/decision on whether to share it further with Club members is to hopefully empower our own LFR runner, the one who will come forward, to remove the stigma overall and thus help other runners through this process. My personal opinion is that it could prove empowering and helpful to the Community, both the LGBTQ+ and the running one. Living with mental health challenges and trying to have these resolved through participation in sports becomes much more an issue for members of the LGBTQ+ community and it could prove important to remove the stigma around these.

The Committee is positive to the above presentation and agrees to have a relative blurb coming out on the next ebuletin.

### **Volunteering opportunities in July**

Tom Holmes and Stephen Turnock are proposing to ask for volunteers among the LFR members for two queer events in July 2024.

### QRC Transcend

The first event is organised by the Queer Running Club and it is a running/walking 'race'/ event with a distance of 5k/10k at the Hackney Marshes and advertised as "Hackney's first queer and trans-only walking and running event". This is scheduled for Sunday the 21st of July. Stephen proposes reaching out to the QRC and offering them to support the event though volunteering, to help them marshal the event or organise a water station. The Club will not gain anything tangible out of this volunteering but it will be a really lovely and

supportive gesture and this volunteering opportunity could however open us the doors to engage with QRC and become the beginning of conversations on how our running clubs can together support all the LGBTQ+ people across the board. It also creates further exposure for LFR, in addition to tackling some of the preconceptions about LFR and that it is not a club just for cisgender, white men.

### 2024 Trans Pride

The second event is the 2024 Trans Pride, with Not a Phase are looking for volunteers at the event for their hydration station. This is taking place on Saturday the 27th of July in Trafalgar Square and it is not a running event, but many LFR members have previously attended Trans Pride in support and we are sure that they would like to show their support this year as well. The idea is again to reach out to Not A Phase and offer to support the event through volunteering. Tom Holmes happens to have a contact through which we can get more information on how many volunteers they need.

I am personally very much in favour of both these initiatives and naturally of actively showing our support through volunteering to the two events, and as Stephen correctly stated by being present at these events it will increase the LFR visibility and it will also start to challenge the perceptions of who we are as Club. In addition, both Tom and Stephen are members of the DISCo and I am in favour of supporting this, as it also shows that the Committee is actively listen to what the DiSCo is suggesting, as from my point of view, I am considering these suggestions as the first actual proposals by the DISCo, as besides the four questions to be answered, there hasn't been anything else yet.

The Committee discusses and finds both suggestions as very sensible and unanimously agrees to show support for these volunteering initiatives.

**Action to be taken:** CBP is kindly requested to please contact ST & TH and communicate to them the Committee's decision in regards to both the above events.

### **Co-Presidents**

#### EA & Trans Eligibility in Races

The letter has been redrafted by CBP implementing the suggestion that the letter to EA should come from the whole Committee and not just from the Co-Presidents.

Although it reads well and we are all very grateful to Christos for taking the time to write it and make some amendments, I feel that it is missing something, as in the reason of why we are writing, and I am wondering whether we could suggest something tangible to EA, in addition to being clear in what we want from them.

How about if we were to be updated on the open category, there has been this proposal that there could have been launched an open category, I think it would be a very logical beginning of a conversation whether there has been any update to the open category consultation.

We also need to realise that this is a subject where the Committee might unwillingly make some some members feel less inclusive with our approach, or even not feel included at all in the Committee's approach but we all need to face the fact that we will never be able to make

everyone happy on this subject, what we can at least try to do is trying to make our approach to the subject a bit more meaningful for some of the Club members.

The Committee hasn't something tangible in the meantime, and we don't really know how far this will get us. By not doing nothing at all and through all this procrastination we have lost some of our trans members. The trans members that left the Club left the Club not because they were unhappy with the Club itself but because the Committee did not do anything, there was not even one communication about the trans eligibility issue.

#### New Club Kit Update

There have been many discussions also among Committee members of when do we get an update on the kit, what it looks like and when do we get to see it. Nick Jobbins showed me the new design. Nick mentioned that the Kit Subcommittee are keen to try and nail down a couple of aspects, a couple of details that need to be shifted around and that once this is done, they will have a kit which they will be more or less happy with it, actually very much happy with it, as the Subcommittee seems to agree on the fact that this is a really good design.

I need to tell you that the timeframe still remains slightly unclear, in my opinion it is going to be autumn when we will see something much more concrete, as although there have been discussions about the suppliers, I am under the impression that this aspect of the endeavour is still far on the horizon.

Is the design simply about the vest or is the Subcommittee considering some other merchandise as well?

We only talked about the vest and we may have to ask directly the subcommittee person that will come to update the Committee on that.

**Action to be taken:** CBP is kindly requested to please invite the NCKSC to the next RCM

**Action to be taken:** CBP is kindly requested to please send the Doodle Poll of the July RCM (week 8th to 12th July)

#### **AOB**

Update of the Committee page on the LFR website