



**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 Secretary: Stephen Tomaszewski (ST)  
Social Secretary: Andrew Harrison (AH)

**Wednesday 5th February 2025**  
**RCM Agenda**

**Financial Updates (CT)**

**Races Update (RS)**

Eltham Park 5 miles & other Club Championships Races

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

**Social Activities Update (SS)**

**Membership Update (MS)**

Discussion and decision on the 2025/26 membership fees

**Club Secretary**

- LFR Welfare Officers
- Hot Yoga
- 30th AC Updates

**Co-Presidents**

**AOB**

**Chair:** GH

**Minutes:** CBP

**Apologies:** ST, WP, ER

**Financial Updates (CT)**

The Club continues as financially sound. The total amount of cash in the LFR accounts currently amounts at £104,481.16. The Current Account balance is at £59,493.51, the balance of the Instant Access Saver account amounts at £19,745.45, the 32 Day Notice Saver account balance is £15,119.83 and the 95 Day Notice Saver account balance is currently at £10,122.37.

The total outgoings during the previous month have come to £8,562.93 with the most significant outgoings of these having been £5400 to Compass Services as a 30th Anniversary Celebrations deposit for the drinks event and £1,439.21 refunded to Ashley Harwood as part of the International Trip expenses, for the bus that will transport members from the hotel to the race.

Total income during the previous month amounts at £6,236.96, which mostly comes from new members registrations and as was also mentioned previously from the £1500 which we received back from the Clermont Hotel Group. This amount has been paid towards the minimum spend required by the Thistle Hotel for the Club Christmas party and it has now been safely restored to the LFR treasury.

As you see the Club is pretty flush in terms of savings, although there are going to be several more large payments in the following weeks in view of the International Trip. You will be kept updated and also please do not forget to send me any specific requests which you may have as I will be preparing the LFR Annual Budget and also my report in view of the AGM and it would be good to take specific budgets in consideration in advance of both the above.

**Action to be taken:** All Committee Roles are kindly requested to please send to the CT in advance and at their earliest convenience the respective budget request for each role for the new club year 2025/26

You will receive the yearly financial report in advance of the AGM and the following four weeks will probably be a bit more intense than usual in terms of financial discussions through email exchanges, but the draft budget finalising the LFR accounts for this year is not going to be too dissimilar from last year. There has been some increased coaching spending this year and the largest payments are always going towards our changing facilities but there is very little new, once it will be sent around, you will realise that.

**Action to be taken:** The CT is kindly requested to please distribute the draft LFR Annual Financial Report at his earliest convenience

In the meantime, a meticulous list is being kept and updated of all events and occasions which have been partially or fully subsidised by Club funds over the course of the past club year. As mentioned the changing facilities are the Club's main expense and there is expected a slight increase of the fees at the beginning of the new financial year but we are hoping that this will be proportional to the general inflation rates. In any case, the monthly rates that the Club is currently paying towards the changing venues are still very affordable, through the diligent and successful negotiations of CBP.

## **Races Update (RS)**

What I would like for us to discuss this evening is mostly the Club Championships events for the next club year. Unfortunately I haven't had the opportunity to yet discuss this matter with

Eliot, and he will be stepping down whereas I have the intention to stand again for the same role.

#### Discussions on the Club Championships portfolio of races

My personal opinion would be to keep the 10 miler event as such, as although it happened very close to the festive closure, it actually proved quite popular, we had a few drop outs but nevertheless good feedback, all things considered. Reaching the Olympic Park and having the event taking place at such an odd date could be avoided by opting for a different 10 miles event for this year. I have been doing some research and I was thinking of suggesting the Cabbage Patch 10 mile race, which starts and finishes in Twickenham and the course follows a loop, crossing the River Thames at Kingston Bridge and Richmond Bridge. It is organised by the Stragglers who also happen to organise the Green Belt Relay.

In regards to the Club Championships we think that it would be best to keep the structure more or less the same. We would like to keep including the XC, as members really enjoy it once they try it out, it adds some variety and it also makes it fair for the overall scoring, as there are several events interspersed throughout five months.

What we could do is add a different event, thus making it 12 events overall, considering the 10 miles event already as part of the portfolio of races, and potentially offering members the possibility to choose between another event and one of the XC fixtures, as very often it is not possible to do all five of the Met League events and it would seem more fair to be able to offer an alternative event in lieu of one of the XC races.

I don't think the 10k should become an argument of contentiousness either. Repeating the inclusion of the Pride Run 10K is a decision that requires very little thought as it worked quite well for all parties involved last year and there is no apparent reason for not including it. The Pride Committee were very keen to see the event returning as part of the LFR Club Championships and it makes absolute sense supporting it, as most if not all of the volunteers are LFR members, at least those forming the Pride Run Committee are, and many of the Club members are going to be racing it anyway, so it would make absolute sense to me to keep the event as part of the Club Championships.

I am also of the opinion to leave the Eltham Park 5 miles as part of the Club Championships as it is a very popular event, it works really well as LFR is supporting a smaller event, Matt Clare makes the day even more special by being a very welcoming host by offering his home for the after the race party, it has been well established in the collective memory of the Club and it ticks all the right boxes, so it would be a real shame to discontinue including it. Unnecessary alterations could potentially introduce issues and/or disrupt a stable situation, so why change something that is not broken?

My suggestion is that instead of swapping the Eltham 5 miles for a Battersea Park 5 miles event, why can't we have both these events as part of the Club Championships? Based on what was suggested earlier, this would be the perfect opportunity of including 12 events overall, out of which members will have the possibility to choose to do just ten, which ten will then count towards their Club Championships results and scoring. The Club is currently at over 700 members, there are enough runners to do all these races, my opinion is to retain all the races from the portfolio of last year, plus the 10 miles event, whether that be the Run

Through one or the new Cabbage Patch, and have a second 5 miles event in Battersea Park, for those who are unable to attend the one at Eltham.

Battersea Park is part of the LFR weekly normalcy, most members are familiar with the venue through the Monday run and the Thursday track, the Kangaroo Hop and the Mile Relay also take place there, it would be good to have some events not taking place in Battersea Park for the sake of variety, so I would also go with the existing 10 plus two new additions.

The Big Half does not clash with the IT half marathon in Elche this year, which is a very positive occurrence, as the Club will probably receive the 100 community places and we may not get any additional ones. My personal opinion would be to include both these events in the 2025/26 Club Championships as both events attract over 100 Club members and it is good to be able to attract through these two events more members to the Club Championships, which is exactly what we are all aiming at and wishing to achieve. Including both these races would be an excellent opportunity, it worked well for last year and we could adopt it as an option for this year as well, due also to the fact that I won't be able to get more than the 100 community places for the BH. Please bear in mind that it is not always guaranteed that a community group will receive the number of places they have applied for as the organisers strive to utilise these places to provide access to groups and individuals that struggle to afford full priced places or might otherwise be marginalised from running events. So the Club should be cherishing its luck if we manage to receive the 100 spots requested.

-I am very much in favour with what CBP is suggesting though how about if the Club were to subsidise some of the race entries for the Big Half?

-Thank you for the suggestion and it is a very good suggestion Derwin, though I fear that the costs are going to be exorbitant for the Club, Each entry comes at £56 and if the Committee decides to subsidise each entrant with £25, and spend £1000 of Club funds on the event, the the Club could get 40 members more to the 2025 event.

-Unfortunately and based on their website, general entries for The Big Half are currently sold out and the only way to participate in the 2025 event is through a charity place.

-Oh well, it was a good dream while it lasted

-The most important thing that comes out of this is that those of the Committee who may become re-elected should keep in mind this subsidy suggestion for next year's event.

We don't really need to make the final choice about any of the events now but it seems that we all agree that we can have 12 races overall in the forthcoming Club Championships and then review how it went, as we have more or less decided that we want to keep Eltham Park, the Pride Run and a 10 miler. Besides that we may leave to the RS to finalise the communications on the races portfolio of the 2025/25 Club Championships.

**Action to be taken:** The RS are kindly requested to please finalise the races for the 2025/26 Club Championships and sent out the relative communication and have it become public through the ebuletin

-Is the Eltham Park 5 miles the first event of the new Club Championships?

-Yes it is

-May we leave the communications for this event to you again, Tom?

**Action to be taken:** The RS are kindly requested to please create the communications relevant to the Eltham park 5 miler event and have them published on the ebulletin.

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

There have been a number of challenges with the Club communications lately and we hope that these will be promptly resolved after the election of the new Club Committee.

**Acton to be taken:** as a priority for the new Club Committee, the whole procedure for adding new members to the ebulletin mailing list should be reconsidered and streamlined, in order to become consistent, dependable and effective.

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

The Firebird theatre outing proved a really lovely and a successful one, there were 23 Frontrunners that finally managed to attend and we can repeat such events in the future. There is always the Theatre WhatsApp chat, where members organise theatre outings and other kinds of similar events but it would be really nice to have some theatre outings coordinated through the official channels, it was such a lovely experience.

Everything has been prepared and is ready and in place for the LFR Pizza party.

Discussions and considerations on hosting the London Marathon event at Compton's as DB found the manager at Compton's very helpful and their minimum spend is extremely reasonable.

In addition, the venue is very central and large enough if they will let LFR have the first floor once again. It would prove useful to remind members closer to time that they will need to place their order and purchase their drinks at the upstairs bar, so as for the Club to meet the minimum spend.

The Marquis Cornwallis has again been booked for the occasion and all is ready for the post AGM drinks event, they will be expecting us from 8.30 pm and we are all very hopeful that the AGM will have been done and dusted by then.

Discussion on handover notes.

Discussion on the rolling booking of the first Thursday of the month drinks

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

The Club currently has 708 registered members.

In addition, and based on the phishing saga of last month, all passwords have been duly changed on the google mail account.

Discussions on platforms of members registration.

-Registering LFR members with England Athletics is the largest, most onerous and time-consuming of all the membership tasks, and moving to the EA website for our membership registration would completely resolve all the issues.

-Transferring to a new membership platform the 700LFR members would be excellent but also a huge task to undertake.

-Eventually the Club will have to go down that road, as the Club is becoming increasingly larger and this solution would resolve a huge amount of issues, the problem is when to take the decision and how to bring this whole operation forward.

An email relative to the auto renewal process will have to go out a month before the actual auto renewal takes place, and WebCollect is an easy platform for that purpose because it has the capacity to generate emails. The autorenewall process will also come out on the ebulletin and there will be send one email individually to all members through WebCollect

Discussion on increasing the Club membership.

-The England Athletics increased fees is the only difference in terms of membership registration. The Club could increase the fees by one pound and have those fully waged paying from £56 to £57. I am very much inclined to leave the unwaged fees as it is and members that are second-claimer are very very few and do not create an issue. This is one option; the other option is that the Club does not consider having an increase at all and instead swallows the £700, which would have been the amount that could have entered the LFR funds through the one pound increase.

-The simplest way to facilitate a decision on this would be to hear what the CT has to say on that and whether the second option is something that the Club could afford to do.

-The Club currently has a surplus. Membership fees were raised last year, from £54 to £56 and in my opinion we are giving something to everyone in the Club if we keep the membership flat, in particular as the Club has plenty of reserves at the moment. The Committee may consider having a raise this time next year, over the 2026/27 membership fees.

-Although I do agree with has been said, I wonder whether it is better to have small increments of one pound per year than having what seems to be a large jump, as probably the Committee will have to decide on a raise of two pounds the next year, going from £56 to £58

After further discussions on the subject, the Committee votes and decides not to go forward with any increase in the membership fees which will remain at the current levels, also in view of the general financial situation, thus continuing to maintain the Club as affordable to most people.

Discussion on setting out the ways that the Club displays its diversity and how we may manually though with greater efficiency collect members data relative to their country of origin, the levels of social and ethnic diversity etc

Discussion on a stronger collaboration at the level of working together on the strategy that the I&A subcommittee are working on.

## **Club Secretary**

**LFR Welfare Officers** Just to remind everyone that the England Athletics parameters when it comes to welfare have completely changed compared to what they were a couple of years ago and now all welfare officers have to take and successfully complete a relative course as coordinated and issued by EA. Gwen and I have both gone through that course and we are now also officially and registered with EA as the LFR welfare officers. I have some ideas on how to make our role much more proactively exciting for us two but also at the same time how we can become more visible among our members, and how we may try and empower them to feel comfortable and confident to consult with us and to speak to us, when and if they need to. I am thinking of making a short two minute video of Gwen and myself together, presenting ourselves, sharing our pronouns and talking a bit about the role of the Welfare Officer and what inspired us to become a Welfare Officer and what we are passionate about

to achieve through the role. It's not going to be a mega galactic Hollywood production, just a very short amateur video but we will make it uplifting and engaging, as the choice of platform will also help towards and it will hopefully feel more actual and interesting than a word document and a photo on the website. The only thing that changes when it comes to the whole concept of the LFR Welfare Officer role is that the forthcoming Committee will not have to elect them again among its newly elected members. If Gwen and I are again elected to be part of the 2025/26 Committee or if we are not elected to be part of the Committee, we will still continue being the LFR Welfare Officers, for the time being and for the foreseeable future, as we are the ones that have gone through the required training and have the EA clearance.

**Elephant & Castle HotPod** As mentioned through the exchange of emails on the subject, there is this offer of a free session sometime around the end of March and also the suggestion of an LFR ongoing discount, and as there is a very strong LFR presence in the Elephant & Castle area, this offer could prove beneficial and work well for both sides involved. Many thanks for your support on this and for letting me know that you are happy to have the subject brought forward and to have it advertised on the ebulletin.

**30th Anniversary Celebrations Updates** A very short update from me in regards to the date of the drinks event, which has now been set for Saturday the 26th of July. The 30AC team fully appreciates the fact that on the same weekend some LFR members will be participating at the James Herriott trail race in the Yorkshire Dales and some other will be competing at the EuroGames in Lyon, which is from the 23rd to the 26th July, but this was the only available date, and as we have moved the event forward more than once, due to the previously selected dates having coincided with the Hackney Half, Mighty Hoopla and a number of other events. In the end the 30thAC team felt that a date had to be set at all costs, as there was risk of losing the venue all together and having to start anew once more. I do understand that the date currently suggested might not seem ideal to everyone but we need to take into consideration that this is a date that was still available for the venue and that LFR is a large club and that not everyone would have fit into the venue, so it is best to have in the calendar some alternative options taking place on the same date that members may choose to attend. The 30th AC team wasn't obviously aiming for this clash to happen but as it will and these events are now all happening at the same weekend, we might as well see the positive side of it. In addition, the Club is offering such a large number of events, and also such a variety of different events, that it actually becomes an almost impossible task avoiding the clashing of events. So, with apologies to anyone who might feel inconvenienced by having to choose between two separate events but this is what had to be done and the date has now been set.

The Committee wishes to have formally minuted its expression of thanks for the very successful 30th Anniversary Celebrations launch. Daniel Brittle, Andrew Corti and Michael Cotton did a brilliant job in coordinating the long runners, Stephen Turnock took some great photographs, the brunch and the cakes at the Thistle went really great, the post-brunch drinks were great, everything was well organised, members seemed to have a lovely time, we have received some very positive feedback, so many thanks to the 30th AC team and to all those who supported the successful coordination of that day.

## **Co-Presidents**

### **Data Protection**

I have written to a number of Club members reminding them of data protection, as the incident of the past month was an excellent warning to all officers of the Club, and we have been very lucky this time that the data concerned was already more than five years old and

that the hackers were trying to have access to the member's bank accounts. This is again a reminder to us all that we need to be extremely careful and also an encouragement to please delete everything that is relevant to members data. Obviously the roles which are handling members personal data and could be mostly affected by anything similar happening again are the Treasurer and the Membership Secretary but all of us do collect member's data at times, the Race Secretaries, the Cross Country Captains, the International Trip subcommittee, Conor for the vests, etc. and it is extremely important to delete anything irrelevant from the past. It could have been quite a messy situation and both the Club and everyone else involved has had a lucky escape, as names, home addresses and passport details are not the sort of information that could be easily exploited and it is extremely unlikely that the hackers were interested in these details, as all they wanted was the affected person's bank account detail, they were not really interested in LFR data from five years ago, we had a lucky escape but this is a warning to us all.

-So can we all please, if you haven't done that already start deleting members data and get into the habit of changing passwords regularly and if you need to delete any data then please do and promptly, in particular of members who have already left the Club.

-The golden rule to always follow and abide by is to never start using your private email account for any Club matters and in particular in regards to everything that has to do with finances.

-Andrew Corti has proved very helpful in these circumstances as he spoke to someone who has a very good understanding on data protection.

-The Co-Presidents received an email from a former member with thanks for letting them know so it all went as unproblematic as it could go but we shouldn't be pushing our luck any further.

-The Club needs to find ways of becoming much more robust and better protected in terms of data protection and it would be great if the Club could have a Data Protection Impact Assessment as to identify and minimise the risks when processing personal data.

**Action to be taken:** GH and GR are kindly requested to please liaise with Andrew Corti in regards to potentially having a data security audit for LFR.

**Action to be taken:** GH and CBP are kindly requested to please look into the possibility of creating a data security policy. In particular CBP is kindly requested to please check beforehand with EA if they happen to offer a policy on the subject of maintaining security on data protections.

Discussion on the WhatsApp community guidelines and also on how to circulate these among members. The obvious and immediate suggestions are by uploading the guidelines on the LFR website and also through the ebulletin.

**Action to be taken:** GH is kindly requested to please liaise with Stephen Turnock in regards to the above subject.

Based on the many difficulties of the current Committee in procuring a centrally located and free-of-charge venue for its monthly meetings, there is a discussion on how to move forward on this complicated subject.

Although having a hybrid type of meetings would potentially facilitate offering a solution to the issue, the choice of platform will not promote team-work nor the sense of integration, especially with those who will be newly elected to the Committee.

**AOB**



-Just one small item from me. I would like to suggest having the Committee consider the proposal of purchasing with Club funds and presenting one of the new vests to Mark Forrest as a gesture of acknowledgement for his continuous support to LFR and for having been the Club's founder.

-That is a very considerate and warm suggestion and I am very much in favour of what CBP has just suggested.

The Committee also agrees to the above suggestion.

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