

Northern Rowing Council

Meeting of Executive – 25 September 2023

Report of Secretary - Colin Percy

Affiliation to British Rowing of new clubs - Infinity BC and Senate BC

Two clubs are in the process of applying for affiliation. The first is **Infinity BC** based on the Tees at Stockton. To quote their website *“Infinity Boat Club is a registered charity aiming to bring the sport of rowing to underserved communities of school children in Teesside. Our mission is to use rowing to help school children realise their full potential both on and off the water.”* See <https://infinityboatclub.com>.

The club is a limited company with articles of association and is a registered charity. It has six trustees/directors, all with links to rowing, but also some with strong commercial backgrounds. Most have local connections too. The club will not be member-owned or member-led in the wider sense (as are with most clubs in the region), the trustees being the only actual members for governance purposes.

We (NRC officers led by Helen) are still discussing with the club how best to introduce clarity on governance and how to give ordinary rowers (mainly or all juniors) and their parents (plus staff, volunteers, etc) a voice through the club constitution, which will sit alongside the articles. There are some more detailed issues within the constitution to iron out as usual. The constitution as redrafted to our satisfaction should be adopted formally by the club before we approve the application as a whole. This should be possible at relatively short notice given there are only six trustees to bring together.

The overall view of officers here is that the way the club is being set up is acceptable, but as it is somewhat different from most clubs in this region, the implications of having control by the six trustees needs to be clear and that the articles and constitution are entirely consistent. The experience and commitment of the trustees, staff and volunteers seems very strong and the club is already up and running on the ground (and water); a visit may be arranged on the day of the Tees LDS and SBH; I think they may be having an open day.

The **Senate BC** application is still in draft form and discussion with us has just restarted after a pause over the summer. The club is not yet fully active. It would be, in effect, a performance club for college rowers at Durham University, sitting below the elite rowers at DUBC. Rowers would still probably have substantial involvement in their own college BC, but would do training and competing at a higher level with Senate BC as well.

In terms of constitution, it would be very similar to that of a college BC, including reference across to DCR as necessary. It would be hosted at one of the college boathouses, though I suspect equipment might be borrowed from a range of clubs in practice. A draft constitution has been received, but requires a fair amount of work. Other documents and the safety audit are still under discussion in principle.

It is recommended that the meeting delegates the final decisions to approve the above applications for affiliation at regional level to the Chair with the involvement of the Vice Chair, Secretary, Richard Mortimer and John Mulholland. This would

allow one or both applications, if ready, to go to the British Rowing Board meeting in early November. John has already signed off the safety audit for Infinity BC.

There has been no further advice from BR on monitoring of Chester-le-Street ARC and Lambton Rowing Club. I am asking them this week for comment. I have not contacted the clubs to offer support and to suggest a meeting with each, as discussed at our last meeting, but will do so shortly.

AGM arrangements

The NRC AGM is on Monday 20 November 2023 at Durham ARC. It is down at the moment to start at 7.30pm with refreshments at 7.00pm. In person attendance would be encouraged but a Zoom option offered. Can we check at the meeting that DARC is geared up for this?

I would like us to give formal notice as soon as possible but no later than six weeks before, i.e. by 8 October. The draft AGM notice letter with agenda is attached with this report. I will consult again on the wording with you all after this meeting, but it is pretty standard. I would need to have up-to-date club secretary info before it sending out, so will work on that now. Can I remind you that you all need to be (a) appointed as a delegate to the AGM and (b) also be nominated for re-election (except that Helen as Chair and Gabrielle as Regional Rep are not up for re-election as they stand for three years).

We can give informal notice via social media much sooner, which should include date, venue and a warning that club delegates and nominees for posts will be needed. We can emphasise the currently known vacancies. **I recommend we formally agree to advertise and fill a Social Media Officer post at the AGM.** This does not need a change to the constitution.

Lastly, can I ask if we are thinking of inviting a guest speaker and, if so, can we discuss who it might be. It could be a top end rower or coach, a British Rowing person to speak more on processes and procedure, a motivational guru or something else. Ideas? On reflection, we should probably add the Regional Strategy to the AGM agenda - we could get a guest speaker on that subject, if not too dry.

Regional Strategy

No discussion, workshop or meeting has taken place as far as I know. We should agree a date now for an informal discussion for all Exec Committee members before the AGM.

Club Development Conference

If we are to organise a CDC in January, we need a sub group to start planning it now! Some ideas for topics have been floated, e.g. again the Regional Strategy or elements of it.

25-04-23

CP