



Northern Regional Rowing Council

Draft Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting – *for approval 29-01-24*

25 September 2023, held at 7.30pm – mainly in person but with Zoom

Present: Helen McMillan (Chair), Charly Curtis (Vice Chair), Pam Walton (Coach Education), Gabrielle Moore (Masters Rowing & Regional Rep), Richard Mortimer (Umpiring), Louise Forster (Competitions), John Mulholland (Safety), Colin Percy (Secretary), Pauline Higgins (Junior Rowing & Treasurer), David Squirrell (member), Mark Hyson (member), Eddie Bryant (member), Paul Nicholson (Para Rowing), Jasper Bird (Student Rowing Rep) (part).

		Action by
1	<u>Apologies</u> Dan Lockey (LDS & Equipment).	
2	<u>Minutes of previous meeting 19 June 2023</u> These were agreed a correct record as circulated.	
3	<u>Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere</u> None.	
4	Discussion with Alan Meegan, BR liaison contact Alan said he had passed on the information he had received about the cost to juniors of preparing for and attending international and other representational events (<i>see minutes of last meeting</i>). Alan had passed the information to the new Director of Pathways at BR, Nathaniel Reilly-O'Donnell (who is an ex-GB rower, having started rowing at St Leonard's School in Durham; he still lives in Durham). Nathaniel is looking at this issue, raised by more than one region, but any actions from the centre would be medium to long term. Alan suggested more immediately that the region could perhaps do more to help, not necessarily directly, but more in the way of promoting the creation of a rowing hub in the region, with some of its work focussed on youth rowing. He would help link to us to hubs already up and running in other regions. Fund raising could be one of their functions. Alan talked about silting problems, for example at Cambois RC and in	

	<p>Durham too. He was finding it difficult to engage the Environment Agency in meaningful discussion on their rivers, despite rowing clubs and others having to pay levies for use of rivers. He would continue to do this. He also mentioned some planners not being very helpful. Richard said that at Durham the EA did not receive a levy but had a role in regulating works such as dredging. Alan said he would continue his support to clubs on such matters.</p> <p>Alan mentioned an opportunity for clubs to raise money through Clubforce, a private company which offers services to clubs on membership management, including helping them to run club lotteries. A well-regarded ex-BR member of staff worked for them now and could speak to rowing clubs about the lottery. There would be a charge of course, currently £20 a month for the lottery on its own. He had sent Colin a flyer. Colin said he would forward it on to clubs; he noted that British Rowing centrally had endorsed the leaflet and had a link online too (see https://resources.clubforce.com/britishrowing-getstarted).</p>	<p>AM</p> <p>CP</p>
<p>5</p>	<p><u>Affiliation applications</u></p> <p>As per his written report, Colin reported that two clubs are in the process of applying for affiliation to BR. The first was Infinity BC based on the Tees at Stockton and already up and running, with strong support from Tees RC. Their website said that “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).</p> <p>The club was 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 (unlike most non-academic clubs in the region), the trustees being the only actual members for governance purposes.</p> <p>NRC officers led by Helen were still discussing with the club how best to introduce clarity on governance and how to give ordinary rowers (mainly or possibly all juniors) and their parents (plus staff, volunteers, etc) a voice through the club constitution, which will sit alongside the articles. There were 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.</p> <p>The overall view of officers was that the way the club was being set up is acceptable and the overall approach commendable, 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. This was noted by members of</p>	

	<p>the committee, who agreed such issues needed to be clarified, though the calibre of the trustees was not in any doubt.</p> <p>The second application, from Senate BC at Durham University, was still in draft form and discussion with the NRC had just restarted after a pause over the summer. The club was 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 and alongside college rowing. Rowers would still probably have substantial involvement in their own college boat clubs but would do training and competing at a higher level with Senate BC as well.</p> <p>In terms of constitution, it would probably be very similar to that of a college BC, including reference across to DCR as necessary. It would be hosted at one or more of the college boathouses, with equipment borrowed from a range of colleges. A draft constitution has been received, but requires a fair amount of work. Other documents and the safety audit were still under discussion in principle. Richard said it was important to be clear on the precise relationship of Senate BC to the University and Durham College rowing.</p> <p>The meeting agreed to delegate 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 the applications to progress to the BR Board in November if ready.</p> <p>There was brief discussion on lack of clarity from BR on whether the NRC had a role in monitoring or supporting the clubs in the Chester-le-Street area following affiliation or reaffiliation. The circumstances at the two clubs were different but both might benefit from direct offers of support rather monitoring as such. Alan was asked to clarify with BR colleagues what might be needed from the region, if at all, from us. It was agreed that Colin should in any case contact the clubs and offer support. A less formal approach to the clubs from Helen as Chair for a 'chat' at forthcoming competitions was agreed as being appropriate too if feasible.</p>	<p>CP etc</p> <p>CP etc</p> <p>CP HMcM</p>
<p>6</p>	<p><u>Regional strategy</u></p> <p>There was a brief discussion on getting the regional strategy preparation back on track. This should include the investigation of a regional hub of some sort as a focus for various activities, as Alan had already mentioned in his item. Colin would discuss with Helen how to get it moving again, with a view to having a meeting outside the formal Executive to discuss this, with the AGM and more particularly the possible club development conference as targets for producing at least a framework.</p>	<p>CP HMcM</p>
<p>7</p>	<p><u>AGM arrangements</u></p> <p>Colin's written report outlined the usual procedures for giving notice of</p>	

	<p>York) and Tyne Regatta from 15 June to 24 August 24 (request from club so as to try something different). These were agreed, to go to BR. The meeting also agreed the 2025 dates in the report for submission to BR. The date for the CLS autumn event in 2025 was being held back pending a resolution of the 2024 date (and noting no competition was now being held in 2023).</p> <p>Pauline said that the CLS spring regatta on 20 April 2024 might clash with JIRR, though the latter was not confirmed yet. She also said that this region's JIRR trials would be on 15 March 24. Louise confirmed Durham Autumn Regatta was disaffiliating.</p> <p><i>Umpiring (Richard Mortimer)</i> Richard reported from the Regional Umpires Seminar the day before that results of control commission safety checks at competitions would be collected and analysed more systematically. The rate of failures was far too high. He asked the meeting to support for the proposal to feedback failure stats to clubs as soon as possible after each competition, giving failures by clubs. After discussion it was agreed to undertake this naming of names but only after due warning done by a preliminary post to the NR Facebook page. Louise said that non-standard racing kit was an ongoing issue and should also be part of the warning and tightening up regime.</p> <p>John said that one specific safety/umpiring issue raised was the issue of hatch covers not being replaced as such, but gaffer tap or similar being used to seal the aperture – this would not be tolerated as acceptable in future, as per the Rules of Racing. Colin said the third (or fourth) warning should be on boating times and the need for crews to be ready to boat on time, though not easy to have very tight rules as there may be various reasons for being late boating, including queues.</p> <p>He thought yellow jackets were sorted with new ones to be ordered as needed not in bulk.</p> <p><i>Tech etc (Richard Mortimer)</i> He said storage/carrying cases for timing equipment was needed, maybe £150. Other items such as tablets would need replacing soon. Helen said that these and other relatively inexpensive routine items from Richard or Dan could just be agreed as reasonable with Pauline and reported to the next committee. He asked if the Zoom annual subscription could be renewed; this was agreed. Richard said he would liaise with Colin to publicise the various ways competition draws, real-time times and results can now be viewed via Oar-Online, plus Twitter for pdf posts.</p> <p><i>Safety (John Mulholland)</i> He had nothing to add to his report and what had been covered under umpiring.</p> <p><i>LDS (Dan Lockey)</i> Dan was not present. He had indicated he would be stepping down. There was discussion on how to seek a new coordinator and how to deal with the radios, megaphones and PA system in future. He was thanked for all his work.</p> <p><i>Recreational Rowing (Colin Percy as stand-in).</i> Colin said he had not been picking up national issues as he had not been fully plugged into</p>	<p>LF</p> <p>RM etc CP</p> <p>RM</p> <p>RM CP</p>
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	<p>the role. But he had helped run both the Great Tyne Row and the Sunday League. The GTR was likely to have a small deficit this year, but with money in the bank it was still notionally solvent, noting that its finances were now run from within the NRC's main account. The meeting agreed that both needed proper steering groups and Colin said he would progress this. A possible candidate for this post would be in touch with him to discuss.</p>	CP
9	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>(a) John said he had just found out Alan Meegan had been with British Rowing for 35 years. The meeting agreed to minute congratulations to him on this remarkable achievement.</p> <p>(b) Richard said that payment of race fees back to competitions had been very slow in some cases recently; he had personal knowledge of this at Durham Regatta. He thought BR's finance department was possibly struggling. Helen said she or Gabrielle would raise this at the next Regional Chairs and Reps Forum.</p>	CP HMCM GM
10	<p><u>Dates of meetings in rest of 2023</u></p> <p>There are not further Executive Committee meetings scheduled in 2023. Colin was to consult on 2024 dates shortly. The AGM was on 20 November 23 at DARC at 7.00pm for 7.30pm.</p>	CP

The meeting closed at 9.30pm
Thanks to Richard for arranging the Zoom.

Colin Percy

Secretary

Northern Regional Rowing Council

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Web page for NRC meetings: www.nerowing.com/nrcminutes.html