

ROYAL PIGEON RACING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the 126th Annual General Meeting of the Royal Pigeon Racing Association held at the Jury's Inn Hotel, Gloucester Road, Cheltenham GL51 0TS on Friday 25th February 2022, at 9.00am.

Present: L Blacklock-CA (Chair), D Bridges-DY, S Briggs-IR, C O'Hare-IR, D Higgins-NE, H Jackson-NE (for C Gordon), P Hammond-WM, N Darby-WM (for W Lewis), J Dodd-EM, Alistair Ewart-EM, T Gardner-WS, R Harris-SO, D Headon-DC, P Murray-NW, J Waters-WE, J Gladwin-LN, A Williams-LN, J Heague-WE, R Shirley-SW

Apologies: W Lewis-WM, C Gordon-NE, S Richards (Editor BHW)

In Attendance: Ian Evans-CEO, Lyna Zhang-Finance Manager, Julia Field-Office Manager (minutes).

Observers: Keith Blount-DY, S Reed (Reserve D&SY), S Finan-LN.

The meeting was opened by the President Mr L Blacklock who thanked everyone for attending and welcomed Councillors, Reserve Delegates, the Chief Executive Officer, RPRA staff and members of the Royal Pigeon Racing Association. Mr Blacklock asked everyone to think about their fellow pigeon fanciers in Ukraine at this worrying time.

Mr Blacklock presented certificates and medals for 10 years' service to the RPRA Council to Mr D Bridges, Mr S Briggs, Mr J Gladwin, and Mr D Headon and thanked them for their service.

Mr Blacklock asked for confirmation that Rule 46 certificates had been received by RPRA HQ for all delegates. This was confirmed.

Point of Order – Rule 45

Mr A Williams questioned whether Mr J Waters & Mr J Heague were authorised to represent the Western Region at this AGM. President Mr L Blacklock ruled that the status quo remained until the objection has been heard at the next Appeals committee meeting on Saturday 26th February.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Proposed by T Gardner, seconded by S Briggs, with 15 votes for and 4 abstentions, that: The minutes of the 125th Annual General Meeting of 25th October 2021, the

minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT

It is only 4 months since the last annual review was presented to the AGM and therefore this time around I will take the opportunity to concentrate on a few very important issues. This will include an expression of my opinions.

As a third generation and lifelong pigeon fancier I was honoured to take on the role of what was then, General Manager of the RPRA. Before accepting the role I was keen to speak to Hall associates who I knew were carrying out an evaluation and report into the structure of the RPRA. This discussion was music to my ears and was one of the reasons I decided to take the job. The recommendations within the report made total sense to me and reflected what I had learned in the previous seven years managing an EU funded project with a budget of £13.5 million throughout South East Wales. The aims of the project was to create and support existing social enterprises; making them financially sufficient and reduce reliance on external funding such as grants. For those of you that are not aware a social enterprise is a Business where profits are not generated for individuals (owners) or shareholders but where the profits are reinvested into the community. This could be a community in the traditional sense or a community of interest. The RPRA is a typical social enterprise; that exists to deliver its social aims and objectives, the racing and showing of pigeons. The businesses supported or created by the programme were based in some of the most deprived areas of Wales. Areas that scored highly on the Welsh index of multiple deprivation, so you can imagine the challenge associated with making them financially sufficient. Like any business sector, the successful social enterprises had:

- A strong Governance structure that enabled quick decision making and the ability to react to threats and opportunities.
- Suitable staff, who were empowered to make decisions.
- Good financial planning and budgeting.
- A product or service that people wanted. Supported by sound marketing, publicity and promotion.

Let's compare what we have at the RPRA to what is required to run a successful social business?

Do we have a product or service that people want? Yes of course. No matter what negative opinion individuals sat around this table may have, the fact is that men, women and children from all backgrounds continue to take up the sport. The challenge is to expose more people to the sport and thereby encourage participation. Viewpoints that adults or children are not interested are simply wrong and cannot be backed up with fact. They are defeatist opinions based on no real substance.

Do we have good financial planning and budgeting? The answer is a resounding no! Who is to blame? There are people around this table who will point the finger of blame at myself and what was the Executive committee. However, this is factually wrong, I have no control over income and I have virally no control over expenditure. The largest income generator is membership subscriptions and these are set in stone by the membership (or should I say the regions); There is no flexibility to account for rising costs. Even though Salaries have been reduced in real terms by 40% over a seventeen year period and to the value of £75,000 in the last twelve months, the level of income continues to fall and other areas of spend continue to rise, meaning we have a constant deficit in the 'budget' of the RPRA.

Do we have effective marketing and publicity and promotion? Over the last few years we have taken major steps towards improving marketing, publicity and promotion with the implementation of the Developments Officers project and prior to this attempts were made with the MDU. However, prior to this publicity and promotion was practically non-existent for decades. Who would take up a sport that they did not know exist? In my opinion the association cannot meet its objectives relevant to rule 4c; 'the advancement of the sport' without effective marketing, publicity and promotion. Rather than continually attacking a project that is working and meets the requirements of the RPRA rules, members of council and certain regions would be better using their time to support, review and improve it. The future of our great sport depends on it. We have a brilliant officer delivering the project in

Richard chambers. However, his treatment in recent times from some quarters has, in my opinion, been atrocious and irresponsible. What a way to treat what is one of the best assets this association has!

Having an effective PR support has assisted in gaining exposure to many of the challenges faced by our sport. Publications on BBC TV, SKY TV, BBC Radio, for example have gone a long way to compliment the other avenues being explored to find a solution to channel racing. It is a valuable, essential resource and not a luxury.

Do we have effective Governance – The answer is a resounding NO! No matter how supportive people may be or how well their intentions (or otherwise) the Governance structure does nothing to support effective running of this organisation. Let's look at some examples.

Like any employer the RPRA has a duty to protect its staff while undertaking the duties associated with his/her role. To assist the association an emergency rule 7b was proposed to provide a structure to protect staff. It is inconceivable that those who are part of the Governance structure of this association (some regions) voted against this proposal. Are these regions stating that they don't want to protect staff? Because that's the message I am getting!

The income generated through subscriptions is nowhere near enough. To get it changed means the regions voting on proposals. Setting the subscription rate in stone each February for payment due the following November does nothing to address this issue and facilitate proper financial planning/management and budgeting. We need a quick flexible solution that will help to plan and budget. Any region that votes against the proposition put forward to enable council to set the subscription rate annually is basically voting for the RPRA to make a loss for the next two years. Costs can only be cut so far.

I keep referring to the regions making the decisions rather than the membership. The reason for this is simply because no one will ever convince me that the region structure is representative of its membership. Very few clubs/organisations are represented at region level and of those represented most are probably not mandated in the purest form of the word. By this I mean how many actually discussed the proposals at club level and were told how to vote. The system doesn't work and you end up with an association that does not represent the majority feeling of its membership. As for the argument that 'everyone has the opportunity to attend', the fact is they don't; so rather than use it as an excuse for a few people to hold onto what some may perceive as power why not address it and look for other solutions to engage more and more of the membership? Someone said to me Turkeys don't vote for Christmas. Maybe they are right but it's

time to wake up and smell the coffee.

However, I don't believe it is the right time to remove the region structure. We need the regions to facilitate certain aspect of Governance but when it comes to voting on rules and the direction of the association; if we are to get a true representation then it has to be based on one member one vote. We need a set of rules for racing and a set of rules for running the business side of the RPRA; empowering a small group of democratically elected people that are answerable to the membership to run the business against a core set of agreed aims objectives and principles.

There are regions and their representatives that in my opinion have a kind of shop steward mentality. They are going to take on management and address all their failings. What they fail to realise or sometimes acknowledge is that they are the management. It is at the regions and via their representatives that decisions in relation to finance and the direction of the organisation is taken. I can only compare the current position to the Native American tribes fighting among one another while the European's come along and take their land, culture and future from under their feet. It has to stop!

When I took this job I was under no illusions that this would be a tough task but I felt had something to offer. I was aware that I would come in for criticism and that people would have opinions relating to how good or bad a job I was doing. I have no problem with opinions as long as they are backed up with facts. What I do have a problem with is lies, personal attacks and people's bitterness and ill motivated actions when you fail to become their yes man.

The writing was probably on the wall at a meeting of council I attended before I officially took up the role. Members of council expressed their disappointment that I (or anyone for that matter) had been appointed into the role. Not a personal attack but an obvious message that some did not see the value of the post. Within 12 months the hall report was thrown out in its entirety, all recommendations good or otherwise ignored and back to status quo! Rumours spread that I had been made bankrupt – absolute nonsense.

Then we come to the last two years. A period that has been the most challenging in my life. The responsibility I felt to the fancy in relation to covid, Brexit and Avian Influenza should not be under estimated and I hope everyone knows that I faced these challenges with as much determination and passion that anyone could expect. This is a time you would expect everyone or at least those tasked with serving the sport to come together in a supportive way to face the challenges ahead and get behind me and the Executive committee. However, I can only

conclude from their actions that some saw it as an opportunity to put on further pressure. For example;

A region refusing to hear a grievance I had raised; something I am entitled to as a member of the association. Followed by an invitation to the other party to attend their meeting and a subsequent publication facilitated by the BHW that assisted in spreading a lie about me.

From what I am told, a Council delegates pointing the finger of blame for the 'mess we are in' at my door and that of the executive committee – total nonsense. A call for a vote of no confidence in me at the same region without any justifiable reason. I could go on.

I am not ashamed to say that these unwarranted attacks have and continue to have an adverse effect on my mental health and wellbeing. I am a human being after all. Sadly I am not the only member of staff whose health and wellbeing has been adversely affected by the same groups and individuals.

Rule 159b

You will all be aware that I am a great supporter of the rule. In fact I was behind the proposition that was eventually adopted as a rule through the existing process. This rule that has provided a possible avenue for genuine men, women and children to be able to race or show their pigeons may well be removed during this AGM. I now challenge those who object to this rule to come up with a solution for genuine pigeon people who cannot get into a club. For example;

A 74 year old man who has raced pigeons very successfully all his life. There is a club a couple of hundred yards from his home. However, he can't get into this club and has to travel a 60 mile round trip to enter his pigeons in a national/specialist club. Due to his advancing years his health is starting to falter and he can no longer drive this round trip and so he tried once more to join the club on his doorstep. The club refused his application sighting something he supposedly said 25 years ago! To my knowledge this person has never been suspended or excluded, so in my eyes has not been guilty of any wrong doing. The region refused his appeal and so this fancier has nowhere else to go and will simply have to walk away from what has been his hobby all his life. Is this really something the regions and council are going to allow to happen without any recourse of appeal? I challenge all regions to come up with a solution that helps genuine pigeon men women and children carry out the sport they love. Something that gets a 74 year old man out of bed each day, motivates him and probably extends his life.

Despite all its failings it is still the RPRA that provides the structure in the UK to face the challenges and facilitate racing.

However, it needs to improve and it needs to do so quickly if the RPRA and the sport is to survive.

I have recently been listening the folk song 'the king of Rome'. You will be aware that this song is about the pigeon that won the race from Rome in 1913. However it's not just about a pigeon but about the harsh reality of life in the early 20th century and how a pigeon, ambition and dreams can alleviate some of that harsh reality. The pigeon sport does and will continue to have a positive impact on people's lives but we need to do everything possible to ensure that continues. We owe it to those who came before us, the pioneers of our sport. What would Charlie Hudson, the fancier who dared to dream about winning the Rome race think about the defeatist attitude within our sport?

We are at a crossroads and we need to do everything possible to pick the right path to ensure the future of this wonderful sport that enriches many lives has a future. We cannot simply let it die or more appropriately commit suicide. We need to secure its future through the RPRA and that includes good marketing, promotion and publicity, improved financial management and Governance. The report was accepted with a vote of thanks to the Chief Executive Officer.

ACCOUNTS 2021

The RPRA accounts were circulated and reviewed at the meeting. The Auditor (Hazelwoods) reported that a 'data formatting' error had been identified in the Yearling account. This was Hazelwood's error and apologised on their behalf. The auditor also reported that while overheads were down the way forward was to increase member subscriptions as soon as possible.

Tax charge – Following the sale of The Reddings property there is a Capital Gains Tax charge which can be offset if the purchase of the new office property is completed within two years of the sale.

There was a discussion on ways to attract new members:

- Current members with lofts adding 'novice' pigeon fanciers to their lofts and become a partnership.
- Target older people who have more leisure time to spare. The 'Flying Back to Pigeons' project was launched just prior to Covid lockdown. This was designed to target this demographic of people but faltered due to the pandemic. CEO will liaise with the Development Officer regarding a re-launch.
- Pigeon lofts in schools has been successful in inspiring children to keep pigeons. School participation in the racing and One loft Racing has been very encouraging.
- Suggestion to contact the charities Mind & Age UK, if not already.

Proposed by S Briggs, seconded by T Gardner, with 18 votes for & 1 against, that:

The accounts for 2021 be accepted, with the amendment to the One Loft Yearling account.

Mr L Blacklock thanked all the councillors, vice-presidents, CEO, and staff for their support then stepped down as president of the RPRA.

THE BUSINESS FOR 2021 IS CONCLUDED

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT

Vice-President Mr D Bridges took the chair. Proposed by C O'Hare, seconded by T Gardner, and unanimously agreed, that: Mr L Blacklock be elected as President

ELECTION OF VICE-PRESIDENTS

Proposed by D Headon, seconded by A Williams and unanimously resolved that: Mr C O'Hare be elected Vice-President

Proposed by D Higgins, seconded by P Hammond and unanimously resolved that: Mr D Bridges be elected Vice-President

Proposed by J Waters, seconded by L Blacklock and unanimously resolved that: Mr J Dodd be elected Vice-President

ELECTION OF AUDITORS

Proposed by T Gardner, seconded by S Briggs, and unanimously resolved that: We retain Hazelwoods LLP, Chartered Accountants as auditors

ELECTION OF SOLICITORS

Proposed by P Hammond, seconded by T Gardner, and unanimously resolved that: We retain Rickerbys LLP as solicitors

ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

Proposed by S Briggs, seconded by J Gladwin, and unanimously resolved that: L Blacklock, D Higgins & R Shirley remain as trustees

Mr P Hammond thanked Mr R Shirley for locating the new office property in Stonehouse, Stroud and his expert guidance in the procedure

FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES and CLOCK, RING & WEATHER FORECAST COMMITTEE

Proposed by J Gladwin, seconded by J Dodd and unanimously resolved that: The committee consists of L Blacklock (Chair), D Bridges, S Briggs, A Ewart, C Gordon, D Headon, T Gardner, R Harris, J Heague, W Lewis, P Murray, R Shirley & A Williams.

EMERGENCY & RULES and LIBERATION SITES

Proposed by A Ewart, seconded by J Heague, and unanimously resolved that: The committee consists of L Blacklock, D Bridges, C O'Hare, D Higgins, J Dodd (Chair), R Harris, D Headon, T Gardner, P Hammond, J Gladwin, P Murray, R Shirley, J Waters.

BRITISH HOMING WORLD MANAGEMENT

Proposed by P Hammond, seconded by J

Waters, and unanimously resolved that: The committee consists of L Blacklock (Chair), D Bridges, S Briggs, A Ewart, W Lewis, J Gladwin, D Higgins, R Harris, D Headon, T Gardner, P Murray, R Shirley, J Heague, I Evans (CEO), S Richards (Editor)

APPEALS

Proposed by N Darby, seconded by A Ewart, and unanimously resolved that: The committee consists of L Blacklock (Chair), D Bridges, C O'Hare, J Dodd, P Hammond, J Gladwin, D Higgins, R Harris, D Headon, T Gardner, P Murray, R Shirley, Western Region – vacant.

BUILDINGS (formerly Reddings House)

Proposed by T Gardner, seconded by C O'Hare, and unanimously resolved that: The committee consists of L Blacklock (Chair), P Hammond, D Headon, C Gordon, R Harris, D Higgins, R Shirley.

FUTURE OF THE SPORT

Proposed by N Darby, seconded by S Briggs, and unanimously resolved that: The committee consists of L Blacklock (Chair), D Bridges, C Gordon, D Higgins, J Dodd, P Hammond, R Harris, D Headon, A Williams, T Gardner, C O'Hare.

OLYMPIAD

Proposed by J Gladwin, seconded by D Higgins, and unanimously resolved that: The committee consists of L Blacklock (Chair), D Bridges, C Gordon, R Harris, D Headon, R Shirley, W Lewis, Team Manager – J Wheatcroft.

PERFORMANCE ENHANCING DRUGS

Proposed by D Higgins, seconded by A Williams, and unanimously resolved that: The committee consists of L Blacklock (Chair), D Bridges, J Dodd, C Gordon, P Hammond, R Harris.

FEDERATION COLOMBOPHILE INTERNATIONALE

Proposed by S Briggs, seconded by P Hammond, and unanimously resolved that: L Blacklock and D Higgins (reserve) remain as delegates

STANDING CONFERENCE ON COUNTRYSIDE SPORTS

Proposed by S Briggs, seconded by D Headon, and unanimously resolved that: J Dodd and RPRA CEO Ian Evans are appointed as delegates.

CONFEDERATION OF LONG-DISTANCE RACING PIGEONS OF GB & N. IRELAND

Proposed by T Gardner, seconded by A Williams, and unanimously resolved that: D Bridges, W Lewis, and CEO Ian Evans, be delegates.

PIGEON RACING UK & EIRE (RAPTOR ALLIANCE)

Proposed by P Hammond, seconded by S Briggs, and unanimously resolved that: D Higgins, T Gardner and CEO Ian Evans remain as delegates.

PROPOSITIONS

22/1 COUNCIL OF THE RPRA PROPOSE

New Rule 7b

In the event of a complaint by an employee of the Association, who has suffered abuse of a violent, verbal, or sexual nature, or any discrimination during the course of their normal duties as an employee of the Association, then the officers of the Association should instigate an immediate investigation. If the complaint is upheld by the officers, then the said officers have the power to invoke all necessary legal procedures to protect the individuals so effected by the abuse and invoke statutory agencies as required. If the complaint is against a member of the Association that member can be suspended with immediate effect while an investigation is conducted. Furthermore, if the abuser is a member of the RPRA then the officers can suspend the privileges of the Association from that member until any legal procedure has been completed or if their investigations conclude suspension or expulsion is an appropriate course of action.

Reason - To provide an avenue to meet its legal obligations as an employer

CARRIED – 12 FOR, 7 AGAINST

22/2 LONDON REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rule 24

Each club shall pay an annual fee of £10 to the Local Region in which its Headquarters is situated. The annual fee must be paid before the last day of February. Any club which fails to pay its annual fee of £10 by March 1st shall in addition to such annual fee, pay a penalty of £10.

Replace with:

Each club shall pay an annual fee of **£2 per member** left to the Local Region in which its Headquarters is situated. The annual fee must be paid before the last day of February. Any club which fails to pay its annual fee by March 1st shall in addition to such annual fee, pay a penalty of **£20**. **Allocation of this annual fee shall be 80% RPRA Association, 20% Local Region.**

Reason - To increase the Associations revenue and reduce the six-figure loss of the Association.

LOST – 4 FOR & 15 AGAINST

22/3 WELSH REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rules 27 & 32

Rule 27

Each Club (including any National or

Specialist Club) shall pay to the Secretary of its Local Region.

(a) an annual subscription to the Association £7 (inclusive of VAT) for each member of the Club except any member who has paid their annual subscription through another Club.

(b) and an annual subscription to the Clubs Local Region of £3 for every member of the Club except any member who has paid their annual subscription to the Local Region through another Club.

(c) all Junior members under the age of 18 who are members of a Club will pay an annual subscription to the Association of £3 (inclusive of VAT) except any Junior member that has paid their subscription to the Association through another Club and an annual subscription of £2 (inclusive of VAT) to the Clubs Local Region except any junior member that has paid their subscription to the Local Region through another Club.

Rule 32

An individual Member shall pay

(a) An annual subscription of £5 to the Association and

(b) An annual subscription of £5 to his Local Region.

(c) An individual Junior member under the age of 18 will pay to the Association an annual subscription of £3.

(d) an individual Junior member under the age of 18 will pay to their Local Region an annual subscription of £2. All individual subscriptions shall be paid to the Secretary of the Local Region not later than 1st March each year and are inclusive of VAT. Individual members will only be entitled to the privileges and benefits of the Association when the fees for that year have been paid. Individual members may apply from 1st November for the following years membership.

Replace with

The annual membership subscription shall be set annually by the Council.

Such subscriptions shall be paid by each Club (excluding any National or Specialist Club) for each member of the club except for any member who has paid their annual subscription through another Club.

Individual members (those who are not a member of a club, excluding national or specialist clubs) shall pay their fee direct to their region. All individual subscriptions shall be paid to the Secretary of the Local Region not later than 1st March each year. Individual members will only be entitled to the privileges and benefits of the Association when the fees for that year have been paid. Individual members may apply from 1st November for the following years membership.

Reason - This will allow the Association to budget effectively and provide stability for association and its

membership. The current rule of stating a specific amount provides no flexibility in order to manage finances and is not in keeping with good governance and prudent financial control.

LOST – 7 FOR, 12 AGAINST

22/4 SOUTH WEST REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rule 27

Each Club (including any National or specialist Club) shall pay to the Secretary of the Local Region

(a) an annual subscription to the Association of £7 (inclusive of any VAT) for each member of the club except any member who has paid his annual subscription to the Association through another club

(b) and an annual subscription to the club's Local Region of £3 for every member of the club except any member who has paid his annual subscription to the Local Region through another club

Replace with

Each Club (including any National or specialist Club) shall pay to the Secretary of the Local Region

(a) an annual subscription of the Association of £12.00 (inclusive of VAT) for each member of the club except any member who has paid his annual subscription to the Association through another club

(b) and an annual subscription to the club's Local region of £3.00 for every member of the club except any member who has paid his annual subscription to the Local Region through another club

The subscription payable under Part (a) may be paid direct to the Association online or by electronic transfer, subject to notification being given to the Local Region Secretary. The subscription can be paid from 1st November each year for the following year.

Reason – To improve the Associations finances and bring subscriptions to a more realistic level.

LOST – 7 FOR, 12 AGAINST

22/5 SOUTH WEST REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rule 32

An individual member shall pay:

(a) an annual subscription of £5 to the Association and

(b) an annual subscription of £5 to his Local Region

Both shall be paid to the secretary of the Local Region not later than 1st March each year and are inclusive of VAT. Individual members will only be entitled to the privileges and benefits of the Association when the fees for that year have been paid. Individual members may apply from 1st November for the following years membership.

Replace with

An individual member shall pay:

(a) an annual subscription of **£12.00** to the Association and

(b) an annual subscription of £3.00 to his Local Region

Both shall be paid to the secretary of the Local Region not later than 1st March each year and are inclusive of VAT. Individual members will only be entitled to the privileges and benefits of the Association when the fees for that year have been paid. Individual members may apply from 1st November for the following years membership.

Reason - To improve the Association's finances and bring subscriptions to a more realistic level.

LOST – 8 FOR, 11 AGAINST

22/6 SOUTH WEST REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rule 34

Each secretary of a Local region Committee shall issue an Association membership card to each member of the Association in respect of whom the annual Association subscription and the Local region subscription is paid and shall send such card to the Club which made payment of the subscription to the Region

Replace with

Each secretary of a Local region committee shall issue an acknowledgement (**either card or by electronic means**) to each member of the Association in respect of whom the annual subscription and the Local region subscription is paid, and shall send such card or electronic acknowledgment to the club which made the payment of the subscription to the Region .

Reason - To reduce secretary's work practices and encourage use of electronic means

LOST – 5 FOR, 14 AGAINST

22/7 SOUTH WEST REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rule 42

Each Local Region with a membership not exceeding 1,500 shall be entitled to appoint one Councillor. Each Local Region with a membership numbering not less than 1,501 and not more than 2,500 shall be entitled to appoint two Councillors and each Local Region with a membership numbering more than 2,500 shall be entitled to appoint three Councillors. Appointments of Councillors shall be made at the AGM of each Local Region. Councillors will hold office from the date of the AGM at which they are appointed until the conclusion of the next following AGM of

the Local Region and shall be eligible for re- election

Replace with

Each Local Region shall appoint one Councillor and one Reserve Councillor who shall represent the Region on the Council of the RPRA. As such, Councillors will hold office from the date of the Region AGM at which they are appointed, until the conclusion of the next following AGM of the Local Region and shall be eligible for re- election. Any Councillor un- elected at his respective Local Region AGM, shall not be entitled to attend as delegate to any meeting of the RPRA Council other than as an ordinary member.

Reason – To encourage more democratic voting procedure, and also equality of each of the Regions .

LOST – 5 FOR, 14 AGAINST

22/8 SOUTH WEST REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rule 49

An annual general meeting of the Council shall be held on the last Friday in February each year and other general meetings shall be held as often as may be necessary.

Replace with

An annual general meeting of the Council shall be held each year on or before 1st February and shall be held at a recognised show.

Reason - To try to involve members in the running of the Association, and also reduce costs

WITHDRAWN – Concern that if the show does not go ahead, then AGM does not go ahead.

22/9 SOUTH WEST REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rule 54

Each Councillor shall have one vote, in the case of an equality of votes, the Chairman of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote. Voting shall be by a show of hands unless any Councillor demands a secret ballot either before or on the declaration of the result of a show of hands. The declaration by the chairman of a general or special meeting that a resolution has, or has not been passed, whether on a show of hands or on the result of a secret ballot, shall be final

Replace with

Each Councillor shall have one vote, in the case of an equality of votes, the Chairman of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote. Voting shall be by a show of hands, or alternatively, by electronic

means unless any Councillor demands a secret ballot before or on the declaration of the result of a show of hands. The declaration by the chairman of a general or special meeting that a resolution has, or has not been passed, whether on a show of hands or on the result of any secret ballot.

Reason –To allow voting electronically

LOST – 3 FOR, 16 AGAINST

22/10 LONDON REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rule 59

The Association shall pay or reimburse Councillors for the cost of second class return railway fares or if travelling by car an allowance of 45p per mile, hotel costs will be paid for by the Association. In attending meetings of Council or any Committee of the Council the following sums by way of expenses will be paid.

(a) When necessary for a Councillor to arrive for a Thursday evening meeting - £20

(b) When necessary for a Councillor to arrive Thursday night - £10.

(c) In respect of any Saturday - £20 irrespective of what time the Meeting finished.

(d) In respect of any other day - £40

Replace with

The Association shall pay or reimburse Councillors for the cost of second class return railway fares or if travelling by car an allowance of **20p** per mile, hotel costs will be paid for by the Association. In attending meetings of Council or any Committee of the Council the following sums by way of expenses will be paid.

(a) When necessary for a Councillor to arrive for a Thursday evening meeting **£10**

(b) When necessary for a Councillor to arrive Thursday night **£5**

(c) In respect of any Saturday **£10**

(d) In respect of any other day **£20**

Reason - To show Council is willing to cut costs at every level to save money.

LOST – 4 FOR, 15 AGAINST

22/11 LONDON REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rule 60(a)

The President of the Association shall be paid an allowance for personal expenses of £2,000 per annum.

Replace with

The President of the Association shall be paid an allowance for personal expenses of **£1,000** per annum.

Reason - To save money for the Association and to show this starts at the highest levels.

LOST – 9 FOR, 9 AGAINST, 1
ABSTENTION (STATUS QUO REMAINS)

22/12 LONDON REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rule 65

The Accounts shall be kept at the offices of the Association or such other place as the Council may determine. The Council shall determine to what extent the accounts of the Association or any of them shall be open to inspection by members and the members shall have only such rights of inspection as are given to them by the Council.

Replace with

The Accounts shall be kept at the offices of the Association or such other place as the Council may determine. **All accounts of the Association shall be open to inspection by any member or members of the Association.**

Reason for change is to show openness and transparency which is at present severely lacking.

LOST – 9 FOR, 10 AGAINST

22/13 SOUTH WEST REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rule 65

The accounts shall be kept at the offices of the Association or such other place as Council may determine. The Council shall determine to what extent the accounts of the Association or any of them shall be open to inspection by members and the members shall have only such rights of inspection as are given to them by the Council

Replace with

The accounts shall be kept at the offices of the Association or other such place as Council may determine. The Council shall determine to what extent the accounts of the Association or any of them **shall reasonably be** expected to be open to inspection by any members.

Reason - To allow members open access to the finances of the Association

LOST – 4 FOR, 15 AGAINST

22/14 SOUTH WEST REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rule 83

(2) upon receipt of any notice of appeal the Secretary of the Local Region shall inform the relevant Organisation of the appeal and the grounds of appeal and request any written evidence which it may wish to submit. If the appeal is against or concerning a decision made at a meeting of the Organisation the

secretary of the Local Region Committee shall request a copy of the notice concerning that meeting sent to the appellant. The secretary of the Local Region Committee shall give not less than 10 days notice of the date and place appointed for the hearing of the appeal to the appellant, the relevant Organisation and all members of the Local Region Committee. Any such notice shall be sent to the parties concerned by recorded delivery postage and shall be accompanied by the particulars of appeal.

Replace with

(2) Upon receipt of any notice of appeal the Secretary of the Local Region Committee shall inform the relevant Organisation of the appeal and the grounds of appeal and request any written evidence which it may wish to submit. If the appeal is against or concerning a decision made at a meeting of the Organisation the secretary of the Local Region Committee shall request a copy of the notice concerning the meeting sent to the appellant. The Secretary of the Local Region Committee shall give not less than 10 days notice of the date and place appointed for the hearing of the appeal to the appellant, the relevant Organisation, and all members of the Local Region Committee. Any such notice shall be sent to the parties concerned by recorded delivery post and shall be accompanied by particulars of the appeal. **At the same time the Local region Secretary and, or Chief Executive, shall confirm a timetable for any appeal hearing to the appeals Committee, as follows:**

(a) exchange of evidence in chief must be made within 28 days of receipt of notice of appeal

(b) comments by either party to the appeal within a further 14 days

(c) the final decision of the appeals committee to be given within 14 days after receipt of any final comments.

Reason to ensure appeals are dealt with quickly and not postponed indefinitely.

LOST – 5 FOR, 14 AGAINST

22/15 EAST MIDLANDS REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rule 155

155. (a) Any member of an organisation wishing to alter or add to the rules of the organisation may propose such alteration or addition to the rules of the organisation by giving not less than 28 days notice in writing to the secretary of the organisation prior to the organisation's annual general meeting. Such notice shall specify the alteration or addition which the member wishes to propose. The secretary of the organisation must notify each member of the organisation of the proposal to

alter or add to the rules not less than 7 days before the date of the meeting. (b) Should an organisation by virtue of Rule 182, undertake a postal vote of its members then the number of days notice may be extended from 28 to 42 days. Organisations shall declare the final date for receipt of proposals

Replace with

(a) Any member of an organisation wishing to alter or add to the rules of the organisation may propose such alteration or addition to the rules of the organisation by giving not less than 28 days notice in writing to the secretary of the organisation prior to the organisation's annual general meeting. Such notice shall specify the alteration or addition which the member wishes to propose. The secretary of the organisation must notify each member of the organisation of the proposal to alter or add to the rules not less than 7 days before the date of the meeting.

(b) Should an organisation by virtue of Rule 182, undertake a postal vote of its members then the number of days notice may be extended from 28 to 42 days. Organisations shall declare the final date for receipt of proposals, **with the exception of National and Specialists Clubs, the secretary shall make available the proposals and voting forms to download on the Club's website prior to the meeting, any member wishing to receive paper copies should contact the organisation secretary direct.**

Reason - Implementing efficiency and cost saving, embracing existing technology and drastically reducing the cost of meetings and postal expenses for National and Specialist Clubs to the benefit of their members

LOST – 8 FOR, 11 AGAINST

22/16 DERBYSHIRE & SOUTH YORKSHIRE REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rules 159 and 159b

Rule 159

Any person wishing to become a member of an Organisation must apply to the Secretary of the Organisation in writing accompanied by any entrance fees required by the Rules of the Organisation. Each such application shall be notified to the members of the Organisation or to the Committee of the Organisation as specified in the Rules of the Organisation. The application shall be determined by a simple majority of those attending and voting at the next meeting of members or the Committee, as prescribed by the Rules of the Organisation. The application shall not be dealt with at an Annual General Meeting of the Organisation.

Rule 159b

Any RPRA member who is refused membership of a Club in accordance with Rule 159 shall be notified in writing. Such notification shall include a reason for the refusal. The applicant then has 14 days to object the decision to his/her Local Region. The Region shall determine whether the reason is justifiable. If the Region find that the refusal for membership was not justifiable then the RPRA member will be granted membership of the Club.

Replace with

Any person wishing to become a member of an Organisation must apply to the Secretary of the Organisation in writing accompanied by any entrance fees required by the Rules of the Organisation to be paid to the Organisation. Each such application shall be notified to the members of the Organisation or to the Committee of the Organisation as specified in the Rules of the Organisation. The application shall be determined by a simple majority of those attending and voting at the next meeting of members or the or the Committee as prescribed by the Rules of the Organisation. The application shall not be dealt with at an Annual General Meeting of an Organisation.

The decision of the members or the Committee is final.

Any person refused membership cannot reapply for a period of twelve months.

Reason - Membership of clubs should be determined by club members not Regional or Council committees who have no knowledge of local conditions. All applications for membership are from persons who are members of adjoining clubs, most cases in the same Federation therefore reducing birdage and income to the detriment of the parent club.

CARRIED – 10 FOR, 9 AGAINST

22/17 EAST MIDLANDS REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rule 159 & 159b

159. Any person wishing to become a member of an organisation must apply to the secretary of the organisation in writing. The application must be accompanied by any entrance fees required by the rules of the organisation to be paid to the organisation. Each such application shall be notified to the members of the organisation or to the committee of the organisation, as specified in the rules of the organisation. The application shall be determined by a simple majority of those attending and voting at the next meeting of members or the committee, as prescribed by the rules of the organisation. The application shall not

be dealt with at an annual general meeting of the organisation.

159 (b) Any member who is refused membership of a club in accordance with rule 159 shall be notified in writing. Such notification shall include a reason for the refusal. The applicant then has 14 days to object the decision to his/her local region. The region shall determine whether the reason is justifiable. If the region find that the refusal was not justifiable then the member will be granted membership of the club.

Replace with

Any person wishing to become a member of an organisation must apply to the secretary of the organisation in writing. The application must be accompanied by any entrance fees required by the rules of the organisation to be paid to the organisation. Each such application shall be notified to the members of the organisation or to the committee of the organisation, as specified in the rules of the organisation. The application shall be determined by a simple majority of those attending and voting at the next meeting of members or the committee, as prescribed by the rules of the organisation. The application shall not be dealt with at an annual general meeting of the organisation.

Reason - Membership of clubs should be determined by club member's not regional or council committees who have no knowledge of local conditions. All applications for membership are from persons who are members of adjoining clubs, most cases in the same Federation therefore reducing birdage and income to the detriment of the parent club.

LOST – 9 FOR, 10 AGAINST

22/18 EAST MIDLANDS REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rule 175

175. Every Organisation shall keep accurate and full records of all income and expenditure and shall cause an audited and signed annual income and expenditure account and balance sheet to be prepared once each year and sent to each member of the Organisation at least 7 days before the annual general meeting of the Organisation. In the event that the audited and signed annual income and expenditure account and balance sheet shows a deficit, the Organisation or its committee, as appropriate, shall be empowered to make a levy on each member. The total sum of any such levy shall only be sufficient to discharge the amount which would otherwise remain outstanding after all the funds of the Organisation are completely exhausted. If the Organisation or its committee, as appropriate, considers it necessary, any such levy may be made on any

member who has resigned from the Organisation since the date of the preceding annual general meeting

Replace with

Every Organisation shall keep accurate and full records of all income and expenditure and shall cause an audited and signed annual income and expenditure account and balance sheet to be prepared once each year and sent to each member of the Organisation at least 7 days before the annual general meeting of the Organisation. **With the exception of National and Specialist Clubs who will be given special dispensation to publish their accounts and balance sheet on their website to download. Any member wishing to receive paper copies should contact the organisation secretary direct.** In the event that the audited and signed annual income and expenditure account and balance sheet shows a deficit, the Organisation or its committee, as appropriate, shall be empowered to make a levy on each member. The total sum of any such levy shall only be sufficient to discharge the amount which would otherwise remain outstanding after all the funds of the Organisation are completely exhausted. If the Organisation or its committee, as appropriate, considers it necessary, any such levy may be made on any member who has resigned from the Organisation since the date of the preceding annual general meeting.

Reason - Implementing efficiency and cost saving, embracing existing technology and drastically reducing the cost of meetings and postal expenses for National and Specialist Club to the benefit of their members

LOST – 13 FOR, 6 AGAINST

22/19 LONDON REGION PROPOSE

Delete Rule 159(b)

Any RPRA member who is refused membership of a club in accordance with Rule 159 shall be notified in writing. Such notification shall include a reason for the refusal. The applicant then has 14 days to object the decision to his/her local region. The region shall determine whether the reason is justifiable. If the region find that the refusal for membership was not justifiable then the RPRA member will be granted membership of the club.

Reason for deleting this Rule, is that it is does not list justifiable reasons to refuse applicant and is confusing to many clubs.

LOST – 5 FOR, 14 AGAINST

The meeting closed at 11:00am