



AGM Minutes 21st January 2017

Members Present

Steve Jarrett, Paul Parsons, Tina Parsons (*Secretary*), **Ynys Mon**; Chris Haines, **Aberystwyth**; Carol Davies (*Chair*), Betsan O'Connor, **Llangrannog**; Roy English, Jeannette English, **Beumaris**; Sharon Jones, Barry Davies, **Llanberis**; Andrew Richards (*Assistant to Committee*), **Wisemans Bridge**; Mike Miles, **Solva**; Helen Heaton, Janet Milward, **Llangwm**; Candy Tamsett, Robert Douglas, **Fishguard**; Paul Fisher, Tony Peters (*Safety Officer*) **Barry**; Chrissy Canning, Nigel Bowen, Dan Tomkins, **New Quay**; Mike Rogers, Dave Chapman, Ian Brown, **Aberdyfi**; Nicola Thomas, Jac Davies, **Towy**; Phil Langston, **Llanion**; Leo O'Connor, **Aberaeron**; Jill Gloster (*Child Protection Officer*), Richard Gloster, **Porthmadog**; Joanne Osborne, Dean Osborne, Phil Edwards, Sue Edwards, **Neyland**; Pete Fletcher (*Treasurer*), **Newport**; Dave Reynolds (*Webmaster*), Sarah Reynolds, **Borth**; Leanne Vittle, Sam English, **Aberporth**; Alison Seal Jones, Emma Gent, **PYC**; Helen Tan, **Welsh Rowing**.

Apologies

Jane Norris-Hill, Dominic Bomley, **Aberaeron**; Rhian Rees, **Cardigan**; David Thompson; Paul King, **Shropshire**; Richard Aherne, Pillipa Owen, **Porthmadog**; Wendy Price-Jones (*Membership Secretary*), **New Quay**.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were verified as a true reflection of proceedings.
Proposed by Richard G, seconded by Nicola T.

Matters Arising

No matters arising.

Chairman's Report

Firstly, thank you to everyone who has made the effort to attend today's AGM.

Secondly, a personal thank you from me goes to Tina who has carried on Chrissy's sterling work as Secretary. She has been my absolute rock over this last year.

Obviously last year saw a big disappointment to those who had trained long and hard over the cold winter months, in that the Celtic Challenge was cancelled. But common sense dictated that it was totally unsafe to run the event, and the weather over that entire Bank Holiday weekend proved that the correct decision was made. However, as your outgoing Chairperson, I wish all teams entered into this year's challenge the best of luck, and hope that you all have a safe crossing (weather permitting of course).

Another successful season for all clubs concerned was had in 2016, and it was pleasing for me to see new teams develop on the water, e.g. Llangrannog and Fishguard juniors. We need to nurture and look after the juniors within our clubs, as they are our future at the end of the day. Last season also saw a large representation from the WSRA attending the European Rowing Championships in Italy. I was very proud of the success they achieved, and long may you continue to do the WSRA proud.

I wish to congratulate Samantha English from Aberporth on completing her Level 3 Award in Delivering Learning. All she is waiting for now is to be assessed delivering a part of the Level 2 British Rowing Coaching Course and the WSRA will be able to deliver training courses.

Unfortunately, due to illness, Jane O'Connor has been unable to complete her Level 3, but is

hoping to do so in the forthcoming year. I'm sure you'd all like to join me in wishing Jane well during her recovery.

2017 sees another full calendar of league races as well as non-league events. I wish you all well for the season. Be nice to each other, be competitive, but most of all stay safe. Who knows I may even come back to competing, but for me at least 2017 will be a non-competitive season.

Treasurer's Report

A copy of the full accounts was sent out to all clubs prior to the meeting (copies available from the WSRA Secretary).

Pete F said there was very little to report with regards to 2016 WSRA accounts.

Income and expenditure were similar to 2015, the only item of note was the £2000 expenditure for the Welsh Team sponsorship to participate in Monaco, which covered travel expenses and boat hire.

Boat royalties were down to just £300 due to only one boat being sold.

Membership income was still strong and up marginally to £16276.00.

Bank balance 2016 Dec end of year £18309.73 compared with £15106.46 end of year 2015.

Breakdown as follows:

EXPENSES	*2016	*2015	INCOME	*2016	2015
TRAVEL/Events	£122.62	£25.00	Membership	£16,276.00	£16,209.00
Sponsorship	£2,000.00				
Web Services		£200.00	Boat Insurance	£8,398.88	£8,702.37
Accountants	£300.00	£294.00	Boat Royalties	£300.00	£1,320.00
Civil Insurance	£7,968.65	£7,600.00	Vat Return		£69.76
Personal Insurance	£2,141.31	£2,439.00	Vat Fine Return		
Boat Insurance	£8,743.75	£8,763.07	Boat Hire	£652.50	£930.00
New Equipment			Bank refund		
Bank Charges			Dinner	£2,278.50	£2,280.85
Vat Fine / Payment			Miss		£30.00
Equipment Repair			Insurance claim		
Miscellaneous	£149.53	£25.00	New Boat Inspect		
Trophies/Prizes	£432.25	£2,051.16	Donation		
Dinner	£2,344.50	£2,465.55			
Wara Affiliation	£500.00				
New Boat Inspection		£332.00			
Total:	£24,702.61	£24,194.78	Total:	£27,905.88	£29,541.98
			Bank Balance:	£18,309.73	£15,106.46

Secretary's Report

As it's my first year in post it's very difficult for me to benchmark how we have progressed this year compared to previous years.

What has become very apparent to me, by baptism of fire, is the amount of hard work that goes on behind the scenes from all of the officers of the committee, without whom the Association couldn't function, and wouldn't be in the very strong position it currently is.

From a personal point of view, I've appreciated the help and support that has been offered to me both through the officers of the committee, and the wider community of all WSRA members.

Sometimes it's been difficult to know the right person to approach to ask my questions, but everyone I have dealt with this year has been incredibly supportive and has helped me gain a wider understanding of Sea Rowing and the work the Association does.

I'd like to give Chrissy a personal thank you here for always being so prompt in answering any emails, enabling me to act quickly as a result, having had the verification that what I'm doing is as expected, and knowing I'm not reinventing the wheel.

I feel that progress has been made in several areas this year; such as yole development, DBS on-line processes, development of WSRA training and trainers, the rewrite of the Racing Rules and the Constitution, to mention just a few.

Moving forward I feel it would be beneficial if all the officers of the committee were using the online 'drop box' storage system which has been set up for the WSRA as this has been a godsend to me in taking on this role, both for seeing what's already in place, being able to amend and up issue documents, and being able to share what I'm doing 'live' with those who use the drop box.

Despite all the hard work and some stressful times, I have enjoyed covering the role, and I would be prepared to stay in position for another year if people want me to.

Election of Officers

The Secretary had received nominations for all positions in advance of the meeting, except for the new post of Race Officer. Elected positions as follows:

Position	Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by	Carried
Chair	Pete Fletcher	Andrew Richards	Mike Miles	Yes
Vice Chair	Andrew Richards	Pete Fletcher	Jill Gloster	Yes
Secretary	Tina Parsons	Pippa Owen	Andrew Richards	Yes
Membership Secretary	Carol Davies	Pete Fletcher	Andrew Richards	Yes
Health & Safety	Tony Peters	Andrew Richards	Tina Parsons	Yes
Treasurer	Pete Fletcher	Helen Heaton	Nigel Bowen	Yes
Publicity/Development Officer (Webmaster)	Dave Reynolds	Tina Parsons	Andrew Richards	Yes
Assistant to Committee (Insurance Officer)	Andrew Richards	Tony Peters	Leo O'Connor	Yes
Welfare Officer	Jill Gloster	Pippa Owen	Nicola Thomas	Yes
Training Officer	Sam English	Jane O'Connor	Richard Gloster	Yes
Race Officer	Chris Haines	Andrew Richards	Dave Reynolds	Yes
Northern Representative	Richard Gloster	Pippa Owen	Andrew Richards	Yes
Southern Representative	Nicola Thomas	Richard Gloster	Andrew Richards	Yes

Adoption of New Constitution

Nigel B was concerned that there would be no representation at the meetings, whereas at the moment every club has the chance of two votes, under the new constitution this voting capacity would be removed from them.

Richard G explained that at the moment there are potentially 66 representatives to vote on matters, which makes a decision on anything almost impossible.

Nigel B Suggested clubs being able to send one representative instead, however, Richard G still felt that at 33 people this was still too many.

It was explained that if a person from a particular club feels they want a proposal put forward and would like to explain the proposal themselves, they can attend the meetings, but they would not have a vote. It was clarified that any WSRA member would be welcome to attend the meetings to contribute to discussions or listen in, but just wouldn't have the voting capacity.

Sarah R asked whether this now meant that meetings would need to take place separately in both the North and the South, so that clubs could put forward their feelings on agenda items and give their votes to their North or South Representative to be brought to the meetings. Chrissy C added that these meetings would need to be structured and minuted for issues to be raised and voted on for the Representative to be able to take them forward, and how would they take forward everyone's opinion? It was confirmed that this was up to the individual clubs if they

wanted to participate in North/South meetings, or whether they just wished to email their representative with their votes on any issues which were of particular concern to them. The point was made that 'big' decisions should/would be passed back to the full WSRA membership for consideration, and should not be decided by the Executive Committee alone. There was a discussion about what a 'big' decision is with no real resolution or definition. This must be borne in mind for future meetings, and if clubs feel any particular agenda item is a matter for an AGM rather than an Executive Meeting they should say so. Chris H suggested that we trial the new constitution for the day to day running of the league for this next year, and if it doesn't work and changes are requested, it can be looked at again for the 2018 AGM.

Helen H added that clubs should be responsible for getting information to their members so that they can be voted on, but then if half the clubs in the South vote yes, and half vote no, how does the Representative carry both votes equally?

Richard G maintained that a committee which is too large will always struggle to come to an agreement, therefore, sub-committees could be formed in both the North and the South. These sub-committees would consist of non-elected members voting on matters.

Jo O observed that many items voted on in previous meetings regularly end up back on the agenda, as they are put back on by clubs who haven't attended the previous meetings, and therefore have missed out on the opportunity to vote. The items shouldn't end up back on the agenda for this reason, as if they wanted to vote on them, they should have attended the original meeting in the first place.

Chris H agreed that this was partly the point of having a smaller committee.

Roy E said that a lot of work had gone into the re-write of the constitution, it had been sent out to clubs on multiple occasions for comment and discussed at previous meetings, and none of these matters were pursued previously. He proposed that it be put forward now to either adopt, or not adopt.

Concerns were raised again about the size of the Southern area and that one Representative may struggle to serve them all. Nicola T reminded all that she had initially suggested a 'mid Wales' Representative as well as the North and South to try and split this area down, and that this suggestion had been sent out to all clubs, but there was nobody as yet put forward to do this. The concerns for the Southern Representative wasn't a workload issue but a balance of equal representation for clubs at Exec meetings. It was suggested that Nicola co-opt somebody outside of the meeting to be able to help her with this.

Sarah R asked what happens in the case of items that crop up on the day during discussions, where members won't have had chance to give a prior opinion.

Leo O stated that there are enough checks and balances in place for people to trust that the right decisions will be made.

Each club should vote on their own issues and take their votes to their representative.

Pete F was happy to vote to adopt the new constitution but requested that a change be made to the statement about when the financial year of the association ends. This was not contested.

Action: Secretary to amend the master copy of the constitution to reflect the year end prior to first issue, and ensure it is circulated and replaced on the website.

Proposal to adopt the new Constitution for the 2017 season: Proposed by Sharon J, Seconded by Robert D. Votes for adoption 28, votes against 7. Proposal carried.

Adoption of New Racing Rules

Steve J queried Rule 13, the passing Port to Port rule, as this is not always possible dependent upon what the local course constraints dictate.

Nigel B suggested the addition on another line to cover the instances when this rule cannot be abided by.

Much discussion was had on this subject, without any ground being made, although a number of those present felt that the rule might be better removed in totality.

Roy E maintained that the rule should stay as it stands, and that if a course could not run with port to port crossing, that this should be notified in the coxes briefing on the day and should not require an amendment to the rules.

The subject of responsibility in the boat was also covered, with respect to this lying with the cox rather than a senior person in the boat. It was confirmed as fact that according to Maritime Law "The Cox is Master of the Vessel under maritime law and can be held legally responsible in the event of a collision or accident".

Chris H also added that the wording 'legally responsible' should not be taken lightly, and should be given adequate consideration when decisions are made about who is coxing a boat. All persons coxing boats should be experienced enough to do so before being put under race conditions and this statement applies to coxes of all ages.

Proposal to adopt the new Racing Rules for the 2017 season: Proposed by Sarah R, seconded by Richard G. Votes for adoption 21, votes against 0, Persons who voted to abstain 8. Proposal carried.

Action: Secretary to issue the rules, circulate and ensure they are replaced on the website.

Ratification of Race Dates 2017 Season

The Secretary explained that there had been 6 clubs who had asked to host a Joint League event this season; Porthmadog, Aberdyfi, Aberystwyth, New Quay, Aberporth and Fishguard. As two clubs were located further North, two more Mid, and two further South, it was decided to do a random pick from each of those areas, to avoid ending up with a situation where all three races may end up either in the North or the South. If the same 6 clubs wish to hold a Joint League race in the 2018 season, those clubs who didn't get picked this year would have priority next year.

It was noted that no clubs had asked for races in April at all, and that May was heavily loaded to the North and June and July heavily loaded to the South. It was asked why these dates weren't spread out better throughout the season. The Secretary explained that she had attempted to allocate everyone dates using their first or second choices, however, although clashes in the North hadn't been too much of an issue, there had been lots of clashes for Southern Clubs. In total 7 clubs had requested the 16th July and 6 clubs had requested the 18th June. This was also a problem as several clubs had only submitted two race dates, limiting the choice even further. It is inevitable that most clubs will ask for the same dates as they will be looking at the optimum tide times and heights, so consideration had to be given to those clubs who may not be able to launch out of harbours, may clash with yacht club events, or may not be able to use beaches on certain dates. All factors were considered. Chrissy C asked why Northern Saturday non-league events weren't scheduled on the same weekend as their league events, however, it was explained that these non-league events were all first choice dates for the clubs concerned, and that it actually worked better for North league competitors to have them on a different weekend than the league races, so that they could attend both events and not have to choose one or the other, or to have 'save' rowers for league races.

As many conversations were taking place, Nigel B proposed that all present should go through the list of fixtures one by one, and agree to those which were acceptable, and look at those which may need to be changed.

All dates were approved, with the exception that it was noted both Ynys Mon and Llanion had requested their league races on the same weekend as the Ocean to City Race, therefore several clubs may have crews over in Ireland and unable to participate in the league race. Ynys Mon agreed to change the date of their race, however, Llanion were unable to change as there were no other suitable dates available. Borth may also be revising their date.

Action: Secretary to amend the race calendar as dates are confirmed, email to all clubs and ensure the new version is provided to Dave R for the website.

AOB

Andrew R reminded all present that there was an additional equipment insurance contribution to be paid for those clubs taking part in the Celtic Challenge of £50.

Carol D asked that all clubs send back their affiliation returns and paperwork prior to the 31st March 2017. The new affiliation season commences on 1st April 2017, the same date as the Return of the Cleddau Race, so clubs taking part in this race need to be re-affiliated before that date.

Tony P volunteered his services as a spare rower should anybody need one at the last minute to fill a rowing seat in the Celtic Challenge

Date of Next Meeting

TBC