

**Strathearn Harriers**  
**Annual General Meeting**  
**7.00 pm Friday 10 March 2017**

**MINUTES**

*Present:* Gordon Morrison, Fiona McDonald, Tony Wayte, Jeff Sweeney, Mirela MacInnes, Nicola Watson, Elizabeth Mestecky, Phil Mestecky, Phil Tipping, Shelagh Wake, Tracey Oates, Andrew Aitken, Julia Greenlees, Jim Alexander, Richard Collingwood, Ruth Clark, Cathy Tilbrook, Rowan Mestecky, Andy Gallagher, Aaron Dawson, Mary O’Kane, Patrick O’Kane, Janine Grant, Andrew Brown, Lauren Fairweather, Iain Thomson

*Apologies:* Judith Tipping, Colin Tipping, Edward Elworthy, Jim McConnell, Colin Crawford, Fiona Lyle, Ishbel Dale, Paul Dale, Lynne Aitken, George Carson, Fiona Downie

**1 Welcome and review of 2016 AGM minutes**

Gordon welcomed members attending the AGM.

The minutes of the 2016 AGM were reviewed and accepted. Proposed: Phil Tipping; seconded Shelagh Wake.

**2 President’s report, including presentation of Annual Report**

Gordon introduced the Annual Report, describing it as a brief account of the club’s activities (athletic, social and financial) during 2016. The Annual Report was circulated at the AGM and accompanies these minutes. Committee members spoke to different sections of the report, so these minutes either summarise some key points from the report or record additional information given at the meeting.

*Aims and objectives*

The aims and objectives of the club are unchanged, being:

- to encourage and facilitate participation in recreational and competitive running throughout Strathearn
- to develop the running potential of all members
- to encourage competition and achievement for individual club members and for the club as a whole
- to provide related sporting and social benefits for all members.

*Club membership and local engagement*

By the end of 2016:

- adult membership was 116, comprising 57 men and 59 women (compared with 116 (59M, 57W) in 2015)
- junior membership was 58, comprising 34 boys and 24 girls (67 (38B, 29G) in 2015)

As of 10 March, membership stands at 86 seniors and 51 juniors.

The club appreciates the active support it receives from people, organisations and businesses across Strathearn, who provide time, facilities and/or sponsorship which enable the successful running of the club’s three races. As a club, we deliver value to the community, and this is reflected in the support we receive from the community.

A new online membership system was introduced, to centralise and streamline administration and payment for membership and club events.

### *Welfare lead*

The club's welfare policy follows the guidelines of UK Athletics and Scottish Athletics. All adults who work with children (coaches, coaching assistants and parent helpers) are members of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) scheme. Our coaches have a PVG update and attend Safeguarding and Protecting Children workshops every three years. Coaching Assistants are also encouraged to attend the workshops. In 2016 the Club's Welfare Lead attended an additional course, In Safe Hands, designed for child protection officers.

More detailed information and documents relating to the club's welfare policy can be found on the club website.

### *Men's captain*

In line with the overall club goals and objectives, the club captains are focused on:

- raising the level of club performance and credibility in the Scottish running community
- developing individual club members to achieve their best
- increasing participation, involvement and activity by club members

We aim to support the goals and priorities of Scottish Athletics by designating priority team events (SWCHR, Nat XC Relays, DB, Nat Road Relays) and by organising our own club championships (club champ, XC champ).

By competing in the three events which attract a national field, we can (i) measure how the club is performing in the wider context, and (ii) raise the club's profile when our teams win category prizes. It also aids transition, providing a model for juniors as they see club seniors participating at such events.

Results have been mixed: great support with lots of entries for the two hill relay events but less support for the Nat XC and Road relays.

The club's XC championship was introduced in 2015/16 in an attempt to encourage more members to commit to a small number of targeted XC races, in addition to the races nominated in the club championship.

In 2016, neither the club championship nor the XC championship was as well supported as hoped, especially by the more talented athletes, with numbers only slightly up/down on the previous year.

We need to find ways to encourage more members to compete in the events that the club identifies as important. The club championship has a revised format for 2017, so this may generate more interest and competition.

Given the apparent lack of interest in the XC events and in the Nat XC and Road Relay events, over the next couple of months the captains will review the situation, seeking input from club members as to whether the XC champs and Priority team events have a place in the club's programme for next year.

Seeing club members do well at events is a source of major personal motivation for Phil, especially as it helps to attract and retain our members, thereby ensuring a strong future for the club. At the same time, the club must cater for all its different members and their variety of reasons for joining the club.

### *Ladies' captain*

All club runs are open to all club members, regardless of speed, fitness and ability. Increased participation in these informal club runs will, it is hoped, lead to more members participating in races of all types – 5k, 10k, half-, full and ultra-marathons, hill racing and XC.

The captains' goals include:

- individuals improving their own performances
- more club members gaining club achievement awards (information is available on the club website).

The club values the social aspects of running and participating in events such as club away-days, the Ladies 10k in Glasgow and our own 5×5 relay and BBQ.

Races such as Gartmorn are a great opportunity for seniors and juniors to see each other competing, contributing to the integration of the club.

The aim is to get more members – senior and junior – participating in the club at all levels at all events.

### *Juniors*

The juniors section is going very well. Currently there are 12 active coaches/helpers; it is planned that the next coaching team meeting will be held before the end of March.

Although current junior membership at 51 is slightly down from 67 and 58 at the end of 2015 and 2016, respectively, average levels of engagement and participation are higher than in previous years. This is reflected in improved performances, e.g. at time trials.

In 2016, 72 sessions were held bi-weekly on Thursdays and Sundays. So far, 16 sessions, have been held in 2017, with a core of 10–15 children attending at least 50% of sessions.

The number of juniors participating in cross-country events has increased over the last couple of years.

Some juniors have attended local track meets, giving them great experience of track competition and a chance to set official PBs.

Club time trials have been very popular, with individuals' times constantly improving and club age records being set.

The plan for 2017 is to continue to provide a mix of track, road, hill and cross-country experience. The goal is to encourage more children to compete but at a level appropriate to each individual, and to improve all children's performances across the range of age, gender and ability.

### *Media and communications*

Many articles reporting on races and fund-raising activities were published in the local press as well as being posted on the club website.

Any members undertaking fund-raising efforts for charity are welcome to provide details to Tony Wayte for coverage on the club website and in the local press.

The club website continues to be tweaked and updated with reports and links to official club documents.

### *Social Secretary*

The year's social events were very successful. These were:

- club weekend away at By the Way, Tyndrum: a smaller group attended in 2016, but all had good fun; most ran and cycled 13 miles while some went for a big hill run; a successful social gathering was held on Saturday evening; there was no Tortoise and hare race on Sunday as the site was not appropriate
- 5x5 fancy dress race and summer barbeque: a great success, where the club conducted a DIY BBQ using equipment and food provided by Gourlays
- curling: organised by Jim McConnell, all those who attended had great fun
- mulled wine and mince pie social: fewer people attended this year (possibly due to a clash with the Comrie panto)
- ladies Christmas night: 32 ladies attended, and thoroughly enjoyed the food, drink and company
- annual dinner and ceilidh (2017): feedback regarding the catering and the band was very positive, and it was a bonus to have the use of Morrisons' fairy lights decorating the hall.

Shelagh thanked club members for the support they have given the social events. She also thanked Tracey, Susan S, Mirela and Louise for all their help through the year.

### *Treasurer*

The full accounts for 2016 are in the Annual Report.

Jeff thanked Edward for reviewing and endorsing the accounts for 2016.

Key points in the financial outcomes for 2016 were:

### Overall outcomes

The club finished the year with a surplus of £284.93 (compared to a deficit the previous year of £112.65).

*Opening bank balance:* £7184.17

*Closing bank balance:* £7469.10

(plus closing clothing stock of £1640)

### Main elements of surplus / deficit

Strathearn Marathon- net surplus after charity donation	£1109.45*
Crieff 10k – net surplus after charity donation	£1273.87*
Membership fees – net surplus after Scottish Athletics levy	£1789.08
Junior section costs	-£1579.17
Social events – net deficit	-£389.04
Clothing – net deficit	-£237.95
Miscellaneous costs	-£1786.87

\*The overall surpluses of the Strathearn Marathon and the Crieff 10k were lower than in 2015 due to the cost of the new timing and results service.

### Charitable donations

£264.80 to Muthill Pre-school

£347.30 to Research Pancreatic Cancer

£100 to the Comrie Pipe Band for their support during the Marathon and Crieff 10k

£100 to Comrie First Response for their support during the Marathon.

### *Future plans*

A priority for the club remains the need to strengthen the club's coaching resources by gaining the services of at least one more Level 2 Athletics coach.

With the assistance of an independent advisor, funded by Scottish Athletics, the club committee intends to hold a review of governance and risk management during 2017. Any proposals for significant change to the club's governance which emerge from that review will be brought to the membership at an EGM or at the next AGM.

For practical reasons, there will be a change to Junior training days. From March 26th 2017 we will be operating a Summer and Winter timetable, with Summer training on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at 5.30pm and Winter training from October onwards reverting to Thursday evening / Sunday morning.

For 2017 a relay event has been added to the Strathearn Marathon, but apart from that there are no current plans to make major changes to the club's three races.

The position of Social Secretary has become vacant, as Shelagh preferred not to continue with responsibility for the complete social programme and therefore did not stand for re-election.

The social event programme involves a considerable amount of work, so we are now looking for:

- volunteers to be part of a more formalised social events sub-committee of at least three people; Shelagh has offered to be part of that group, and to be lead organiser for the Annual Dinner and Ceilidh and possibly other individual events
- one volunteer to take on the role of Social Secretary, which would involve chairing the social sub-committee, coordinating the programme as a whole, and reporting to the club committee

Unless /until we find someone to take on the full Social Secretary role, other member/s of the club committee will join the Social sub-committee and keep the club committee briefed.

We want to foster an integrated 'One Club' atmosphere and experience for the benefit of all members – seniors and juniors.

### **3 Questions on reports**

On behalf of club members, Cathy thanked the committee for the work it does in running the club.

In the light of the healthy state of the club's finances, Cathy asked whether is there a minimum recommended balance, whether the healthy balance could adversely affect the club's ability to receive grants, and are there any projects, courses, equipment, etc. we could spend club funds on.

Gordon responded that the previous AGM agreed to add a clause to the constitution relating to holding reserves at year-end equivalent to at least two months of operating expenditure.

Mary asked about the impending club's review of risk management and what this implied about the club's capacity to cover injury claims.

Gordon responded that all the club's activities (running, racing, social) are covered by the insurance provided by Scottish Athletics to affiliated clubs. We are aware that we could improve our risk assessment practices, and that will be part of the forthcoming review with the independent adviser.

Gordon also explained that Scottish Athletics have a modernising programme which often recommends that clubs become Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations (SCIOs), whereas we are an Unincorporated Association (UA). Not all aspects of their guidance may be appropriate to our club, so again independent advice will help inform further decisions. A significant difference between the two types of organisation is that office-bearers of UAs are personally liable in the event of a claim, whereas office-bearers of SCIOs are not personally liable.

In relation to the club's need for a bigger pool of qualified coaches, Patrick asked about the L2 Athletics Coach course. It was agreed that we should publicise this need again (having done so several times in the past couple of years). We could also put a link to information about Scottish Athletics coaching courses on the club website, and generally provide information to club members about the commitment required in undertaking the L2 AC course (e.g. likely time involved and duration), as well as information about personal criteria such as minimum athletic ability.

Patrick also asked whether email or Facebook is the club's general method of communication. It was confirmed that email is the default method of communication, as this method reaches all club members. Email is used for all important and/or official communication. Facebook is also used for announcements, but is also used for informal communication. The club website is used as a repository for any information that needs to be recorded and available for any length of time (e.g. race calendar, results, reports, training, social events).

#### **4 Election of officers and committee**

The following were elected to the main committee, based on a show of hands:

- President: Gordon Morrison (Prop. Tony Wayte; Sec. Fiona McDonald)
- Treasurer: Jeff Sweeney (Prop. Nicola Watson; Sec. Shelagh Wake)
- Secretary: Iain Thomson (Prop. Gordon Morrison; Sec. Fiona McDonald)
- Men's captain: Phil Mestecky (Prop. Iain Thomson; Sec. Maddy Watson)
- Ladies captain: Nicola Watson (Prop. Jeff Sweeney; Sec. Shelagh Wake)
- Media and communications: Tony Wayte (Prop. Julia Greenlees; Sec. Sonja McFadden)

Six roles are also co-opted onto the committee; they are:

- Crieff 10k organiser: Nicola Watson
- SWCHR organiser: Kerry Sweeney
- Strathearn marathon organiser: Phil Tipping
- Welfare officer: Mirela MacInnes
- Junior section representative: Nicola Watson
- Club coach: Phil Mestecky

#### **5 Any other business**

Gordon thanked outgoing committee members Fiona McDonald and Shelagh Wake and welcomed Iain Thomson in his new post as the club's Secretary.

Gordon informed the club that Run4It has decided not to continue its support by providing race numbers, vouchers, etc. If anyone has contact with an organisation that could provide similar support, please contact Gordon.

Gordon thanked members for attending and contributing to the AGM, and closed the meeting.