



**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting and Track & Field Fixtures Meeting
of the Mid Lancs League
At the Lansil Sports Club, Lancaster
On Wednesday 30th November 2016**

Member Clubs present: Blackburn Harriers & AC, Blackpool Wyre & Fylde AC, Burnley AC, Chorley Athletic & Tri, Hyndburn AC, Lancaster & Morecambe AC, Lancaster University Running Club, Lytham St Anne's RRC, Preston Harriers, Southport Waterloo AC and Wesham Road Runners (11 clubs)
Nick Hume (Chairman), Steve Armer (Treasurer), Norman Mitchell (T&F Secretary), Dawn Lock (Cross Country Secretary), Ron Scott (General Secretary).

The Chairman opened the meeting with a thanks to the Committee, clubs, officials and other volunteers for all their work in enabling the league to flourish in both T&F and Cross Country over the last year.

He also referred to the sad loss of Val Lawson, an official and keen supporter of the League and regular attendee at cross country fixtures.

- 1 **Apologies for absence:** Barrow & Furness Striders, Liverpool Harriers & AC, Liverpool Pembroke & Sefton H & AC, Wigan & Dist H & AC, Wigan Phoenix Running Club.
- 2 **Minutes of the last AGM:** The accuracy of the circulated minutes of the 2015 AGM was agreed. Alex Rowe (Wesham) proposed they be accepted as a true record. This was seconded by Helen Goodwill (Burnley) and carried.
- 3 **Matters arising:** Referring to paragraph 10, the Secretary reported that the Ormskirk meeting had to be brought forward a week due to electrical work at Edge Hill University on the original date; and the medal meeting had been successfully relocated to Leigh Sports Village.
- 4 **Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer, Steve Armer, presented his report and accounts for Y/E 30 September 2016, which had been signed off satisfactorily by the auditor. The loss over the year of £88 was about what was expected and a satisfactory outcome for the year.

On the income side, Steve referred to a concern about an unexplained drop-off in Medal Meeting income, not just in 2016 but in 2015 as well. Subscription income was up and a new, fairer, charging structure was now in place. £1,140 had been received in fines for absent officials, with one club still to pay. Only two clubs are likely to be fined for 2016 breaches so there will be a reduced income from that source. In discussion about non-payment of fines, it was confirmed that the non-paying club would not be allowed back into the League until the fine was paid. In dealing with fines, Members were content to leave decisions to the Committee in individual cases.

On the expenses side, the figures included costs for all 5 Cross Country fixtures, the 6th having been cancelled, and 5 of the 6 Track & League meetings so we are virtually up-to-date on facilities hire. A major cost during the period was the defibrillator, part funded by member donation. Without the defibrillator cost, the League would have ended the year with a surplus of over £700.

Looking to the future, the Treasurer felt there was no need to recommend a further increase in subscription levels. A question was raised about the EDM needing a costly service in 2017. It was explained that the device flags up the need for a service when due so we don't know if that will happen in 2017. The Treasurer was content that we could cover the cost if necessary.

The Treasurer announced an increase in the maximum claimable for T&F officials lunches from £75 to £100.

There being no other questions, acceptance of the Treasurer's report was proposed by George Davies (Blackburn), seconded by Ron Scott (Southport) and carried.

- 5 ***Proposal to change the Financial Year:*** The Treasurer reported that he was now receiving money in one year relating to the following year, particularly cross country subs coming in during late September. It would simplify his work if the Financial Year was shifted to run from 16th September to 15th September. This required a change to the League constitution.

The proposal "*to amend Art 7.2 of the League Constitution so that the financial year shall run from 16th September to 15th September rather than 1st October to 30th September*" was proposed by Steve Armer, Treasurer, seconded by Nick Hume (Blackpool Wyre & Fylde), Chairman, and carried.

- 6 ***Cross Country Secretary's Report:*** Dawn Lock, Cross Country Secretary, distributed a written report at the half-way point in the season. Overall, we have had high attendances, good courses and reasonable weather. Four clubs joined the League this season – Howgill Harriers, Kirkby Milers, Levens Valley AC and Riversway Road Runners - and Accrington Road Runners had dropped out.

Astley Park attracted 862 runners, Cuerden Valley Park 752 and the BA Cross Challenge in Liverpool has a record entry and record number of finishers. Preparation for the remaining fixtures was well under way.

The league's defibrillator is in use at Cross Country and a further training session has been arranged for 17th January in Bamber Bridge. On a sadder note, Dawn also referred to the loss of Val Lawson who passed away just 9 days before the start of the season.

Dawn thanked the organising clubs and all the officials.

The Chair thanked Dawn for her work in organizing the Cross Country League.

- 7 ***Track & Field Secretary's Report:*** Norman Mitchell circulated a copy of his report. Despite one or two timetable clashes, and clashes with other leagues, he concluded that 2016 had been another generally successful year for the Track & Field League. We managed to complete most Field events before the 6 pm deadline.

Norman congratulated the League winners and thanked all the host clubs, all officials, Steve Armer for organising the Medal Meeting and acting as League officials' secretary, Caroline Smithson and Margaret Crompton for their invaluable work in keying results and Ron Scott for getting the results on the web site on the evening of fixtures.

The Chair thanked Norman for his work in organizing the T&F League.

- 8 ***Proposal to create a new post of Assistant Cross Country Secretary:*** In introducing this item, Dawn Lock, Cross Country Secretary, referred to the growing size of the league with average participation rising from around 400 when she took on the Cross Country Secretary role in 2001 to over 500 now. There was a need for both back-up and succession planning and with that in mind she proposed a new post which would allow an interested person to start to get involved in cross country organisation.

The proposal “to amend Art 6.2 of the League constitution to add ‘Assistant Cross Country Secretary,’ after ‘Cross Country Secretary,’ in the list of officials to be elected at the Annual General Meeting” was proposed by Dawn Lock (Lytham St Anne’s), seconded by Nick Hume (Blackpool Wyre & Fylde), Chairman, and passed by the meeting.

- 9 **Election of Officers:** The following were re-elected en bloc; proposed by Nick Hume (Blackpool Wyre & Fylde) seconded by Ron Scott (Southport Waterloo) and agreed by the meeting:

President: John Procter

Chairman: Nick Hume

Treasurer: Steve Armer

Cross Country Sec’y: Dawn Lock

Vice President: Les Middleton

General Secretary: Ron Scott

Track & Field Sec’y: Norman Mitchell

There was no nomination for the new post of Asst Cross Country Secretary. The Chairman encouraged members to see if a suitable person might be found from within clubs.

- 10 **Election of an Honorary Auditor:** Mike Coppin was willing to continue as auditor. His appointment was proposed by Nick Hume (Blackpool Wyre & Fylde), seconded by Norman Mitchell (Hyndburn), and agreed.
- 11 **Application for membership of the League:** Ron Scott (General Secretary) reminded the meeting that composite teams need to apply annually and a further application, but subject to confirmation, had been received from Team North Cumbria for the next Track & Field season. The member clubs were thought to be Carlisle Aspatria, Seaton, Eden Runners, Copeland and Kendal although no confirmation had been received.

The Secretary and Treasurer outlined some research which showed that TNC, in 2016, was the 3rd largest ‘club’ in the League and that Carlisle Aspatria, Copeland and Seaton had between 17 and 20 athletes each in at least 1 meeting and so were bigger than a number of member clubs. The Secretary pointed out that it was difficult to see why these clubs needed to be in a composite team to provide their members with T&F competition. This had been put to TNC so that they had the opportunity to make their case in advance of or at this meeting but had not done so. The issue was one for Members present to decide.

After a short discussion, the Secretary suggested that the meeting give him some flexibility to accept a late formal application from TNC but that it should be accepted only for the smaller clubs, such as Eden Runners and Kendal and not, without good reason, Carlisle Aspatria, Seaton and Copeland, clubs which can join the league in their own right. This proposal was seconded by Mike Coppin (Chorley) and agreed by the meeting.

There were no other applications.

- 12 **Track & Field dates and venues for 2017:** Outline proposals were set out by Norman Mitchell (Track & Field Secretary) and, following detailed discussion, the following was agreed, subject to venue availability.

League meetings -

Saturday 29th April @ Leigh

Saturday 27th May @ Blackburn

Saturday 17th June @ Hyndburn

Saturday 1st July @ Preston

Saturday 29th July @ Litherland

Medal meeting -

Saturday 26th August @ Blackpool

- 13 **Separate teams of hammer and discus officials:** Helen Goodwill explained that teams were often on long throws for most of the day and that there was a case to be made for the hammer

and discuss events having separate teams of officials. Norman Mitchell (Hyndburn) seconded the proposal to enable a full discussion. Steve Armer was concerned about our ability to raise another team with sufficient suitably qualified officials but he suggested that we could satisfy the proposal by teams switching events, ie the team covering hammer goes off to long jump and the long jump team moves to discuss. The meeting agreed that solution.

- 14 ***Classification of clubs and field duty teams for 2017:*** Proposals were set out by Steve Armer and circulated at the meeting. This will need to be adjusted to reflect the decision at Item 13 above but was otherwise noted and will be posted on the web site in due course.
- 15 ***Proposal to limit non-counters in Field events:*** Helen Goodwill (Burnley) argued that the number of non-counters was causing pressure in the Field programme and that event officials didn't always enforce the current rules. She proposed that we "*limit non-counters in field events other than high jump to two*". This was seconded by Lancaster & Morecambe.

Arguments were made for and against the idea. On the one side we don't want to limit competition and there is no evidence of any difficulty with the current rule and, on the other hand, some clubs seem to come with maximum numbers leading to long competitions. On a vote, the motion was lost on a majority decision.

- 16a ***Proposal to bring the T&F meetings forward by an hour:*** This proposal was put by Preston Harriers and seconded by both Blackburn Harriers and Lancaster & Morecambe. It was stressed that this was not intended to make the meeting longer but rather to ensure we finish earlier, eg the track events would run from 12 noon to 5 pm (max) rather than 1 pm to 6 pm (max).

Our technical officials are key stakeholders in these meetings and, on a vote, the proposal was carried subject to the proviso that the T&F and General Secretaries would consult with our technical officials before the next season and take account of their majority view.

- 16b ***Proposal to add sprint hurdles for U13s and U15s to the programme:*** The proposers felt that there was a wasted hour on the track whilst the hammer competition was under way and that this could be used to provide competition for young hurdlers who didn't get many options to compete from 11am.

This proposal would, however, increase the length of the meeting and many felt that they did not want the Track running any longer than it did currently, particularly for such a relatively small number of hurdlers. There was an added difficulty in that there was often a lack of personnel to set out and adjust hurdles.

The League, of course, has a reputation for development so people were keen to find a compromise. The General Secretary suggested that it might be possible to fit in a few hurdles races at the end of the meeting, if there was time, rather than the beginning so as not to extend the length of the meeting. Following a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that he would explore with the Start team a trial for 2017 where we would run U13/U15 sprint hurdles either during or following the 3000m at meetings 2 and 4 which are at Blackburn and Preston. Both host clubs would provide a team for setting out and adjusting the hurdles. The track would still only be 5 hours long maximum and at these two meetings there would be no relays (where again very few take part). Like the relays currently, there would be no hurdles if they couldn't be completed by 5pm. We would review how the trial went at next year's meeting. On that basis, Preston agreed to withdraw their proposal.

- 17 ***Proposal to extend hammer competition:*** Helen Goodwill (Burnley) pointed out that a number of Under 15 Girls were regularly acting up to Under 17 in the hammer competition and so she proposed that we "*allow Under 15 Girls to have their own hammer competition rather than acting up to Under 17.*" The proposal was seconded by Lancaster & Morecambe. The throwing weight for Under 15s and Under 17s is the same and there was an argument that we

needed to recognise these young throwers in the league and give them their own competition as we do for Under 15 Boys.

It was understood that the change would open the door to Under 13 Girls acting up to Under 15 but it was not thought that the numbers would cause any problem. On a vote, the proposal was carried.

18 ***Consider the need for further change to the Track & Field programme:***

Steve Armer indicated that he had been doing some further work looking at average event times and had developed a tool which could prevent overlapping events for all age groups. This will be tested in 2017.

- 19 ***Participation by veteran and disability athletes – a discussion item:*** Steve Armer explained the background to this, where a vet high jumper had persuaded officials to let him compete at a lower opening height than specified in the Rules. At subsequent meetings it was confirmed that this was not to be allowed. There have been other examples of smaller weights for veteran and disability throwers and the item gave members the opportunity to comment on current policy. It was argued that league competition should be just that and that we should not offer non-league competition. In summary, the meeting was content to maintain the current senior Rules, although there may be cases where it is reasonable to exercise a discretion and allow a smaller non-competition weight in very exceptional circumstances.

Ron Scott
General Secretary