



**Cymdeithas Rhwyfo Mor Cymru  
Welsh Sea Rowing Association  
Executive Meeting Minutes  
12<sup>th</sup> November 2016**

**Members Present**

Carol Davies (*Chair*), **Llangrannog**; Tina Parsons (*Secretary*), Paul Parsons, Jackie Southworth, **Ynys Mon**; Elin Powell, Bethan Jones, **Caernarfon**; Chris Haines, **Aberystwyth**; Jill Gloster (*CPO*), Richard Gloster, Philippa Owen, Richard Aherne, **Porthmadog**; Barry Davies, Sharon Jones, **Llanberis**; Jeanette English, Roy English, **Baumaris**; Owen Davies, Tom Miles, Nicola Thomas, Jac Davies, **Towy**; Sue Edwards, Phil Edwards, Joanne Osborne, Dean Osborne, **Neyland**; Mike Miles, **Solva**; Tony Peters, **Barry**; Leo O'Connor, Sam English, Leane Vittle, Dominic Bromley, **Aberaeron**

**Apologies**

Andrew Richards (*Assistant to Committee*), **Wisemans**; Pete Fletcher (*President & Treasurer*), **Newport**; Dylan Evans (*Vice Chair*), **Aberdyfi**; David Thompson, **Aberaeron**; Justin Reynolds, **Shropshire**; Ian Badham, **Tenby**; Candy Tamsett, **Fishguard**; Paul Fisher, **Barry**; Rhian Rees, **Cardigan**; Jan Millward, **Llangwm**; Chrissy Canning, **New Quay**; Rhian Evans, Betsan O'Connor, **Crannog**, Chris Harding, **Llanion**

**Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed to be correct and a true record of events. Verified by Jill G and Seconded by Chris H.

**Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising, although clarification was requested on the Ultra Vets category to be trialled next season.

**Treasurer's Report**

A copy of the latest accounts was circulated to those present. In the absence of the treasurer the item was not discussed, however, a brief outline of the WSRA financial situation is as follows:

Expenditure since January 2016	£22,101.47	
Income since January 2016	£25,197.38	
Profit:		3095.91
Bank Balance as at January 2016		£15,106.46
Current Bank Balance as at November 2016		£18,202.37
Income outstanding: Boat Royalties (Still awaiting total)		
Expenditure outstanding:     Vat payment £29.04		

**Affiliation/Membership**

The Membership Secretary did not attend the meeting. Item omitted.

**DBS update and Funding proposal**

After 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 the Welsh Assembly will no longer pay the £4.50 per person administration charge for DBS checking, this cost will now need to be borne by the individual, or the individual's club. This DBS check lasts for a period of 3 years without any further checks

being required. Previously there was no reminder to the individuals to renew this after the 3 years had expired and DBS checking often lapsed. A DBS on-line update service has been created to allow a DBS check to be portable, and to instigate a yearly on-line check. The WSRA Child Protection Officer (CPO) proposed that the WSRA pay for this service at a cost of £3 per person per year, individuals can be removed from the renewal list if they don't affiliate to the WSRA in any given year. Those trained to do the DBS checking will be able to check individual's affiliation status from the membership lists and remove them. Dominic B felt that for safety reasons it would be advisable to have the yearly check in place rather than leaving the three year window.

Proposal for WSRA to pay the £3 per person/pa fee for on-line renewal. First proposer Dominic B, second proposer Richard A. Agreed by all present. Proposal carried.

**Action Jill G (CPO):** Progress the on-line renewal process.

### **Appeals Procedure**

The final draft of the Appeals Procedure was sent out prior to the meeting for review, it was agreed and approved as fit for purpose and all present were happy to adopt it. Jill requested one minor change to wording on line 2 of the draft, once completed it can be issued, circulated and placed on the website.

Proposal to adopt the Appeals Procedure. First proposer Jill G, second proposer Tina P. Agreed by all present. Proposal carried.

**Action Secretary:** Make the amendment, issue and distribute the Appeals Procedure

### **Constitution Update**

Draft 2 of the constitution was sent out prior to the meeting for review. Richard G hopes to make any final amendments arising from this meeting and send the document out again for review/comment with the intention that the final version may be ratified at the AGM in January.

The intention with the reduction of numbers on the Committee is that decisions are very difficult to make with such large numbers attending. As an example, the website/PR roles have been amalgamated as one to become a Communications Officer, it would be quite acceptable for the Communications Officer to ask for assistance in this role, if there were somebody else who may have certain expertise that the Communications Officer didn't have, however, the role on the Committee would still remain one role.

Regarding the North and South Representatives, the question was asked whether this would mean separate generic meetings would need to take place in the North and the South with these representatives to take the agenda items forward to the committee meetings on behalf of the clubs. Richard G stated that this might be a good idea to encourage communication. Mike M felt that the North and South Representatives would be a positive move to take points forward rather than all clubs having to attend Executive meetings.

Leo O asked how the job descriptions will be adopted. Richard G confirmed that they are only at first draft stage at present and each role needs to be expanded on initially. They can then be agreed by the current Executive committee and circulated prior to the re-election of positions at the AGM in January.

The question was asked, if the constitution is ratified at the next AGM, will it be adopted immediately following the meeting, i.e. will the new positions not be filled until the following year, or will they be filled in the January 2016 AGM? Richard G stated the solution would be to nominate for these roles prior to the AGM and prior to the constitution being approved, and then appoint them immediately following.

Leo O suggested that it may be worthwhile having the constitution looked at by somebody with a legal background to ensure we are acting in the correct way. Richard G agreed he will get the

document 'as good as' finished then send for legal review for minor terminology amendments without changing the content.

**Action Secretary:** Email the job descriptions to all Officers again.

**Action all Executive Officers:** Review the job descriptions, expand if necessary, and feedback to Richard any changes required prior to the re-election of members in January.

### **Racing Rules Rewrite – Draft 1**

Draft 1 of the Racing Rules rewrite was sent out prior to the meeting for review. Roy E had received some feedback direct prior to the meeting, and covered points raised on an email from Chris Harding. Chris suggested that Rules 13 and 14 contradicted and maybe R14 was not necessary if we abide by R13 and R15 given the definition of an overtaking boat in the Appendix. After discussion Roy agreed to modify R14 to read 'when boats on the same course are side by side and overlapped, and neither one is an overtaking boat, the boat to starboard keeps clear of the one to port'.

The term 'bucket' was requested to be changed to 'bailer' throughout the document. Change approved, no objections.

Appendix D, 2 man manning of safety boats was covered and whether this is too demanding on safety cover, it was clarified that only the helm needs to have the Power Boat Level 2 qualification, not the second person, however, it was queried whether that second person was really necessary as the first safety boat on the scene could radio for assistance. Outcome: Rule to remain as it stands.

In the last para of Guidance Notes regarding course setting, Chris Harding suggested that the direction in which to turn a mark/buoy may be better left out, as it all depended on the local considerations, on which way they would need to turn. Roy agreed to modify the notes.

Appendix E, Fixed line starts - holding on the line for 2 minutes is too long with wind and tide to contend with, it was recommended that at 1 minute before the start a flag is raised, and that 'within' one minute later the flag could be lowered and horn sounded to start the race. It should be specified in the coxes brief that after the flag is initially raised, as soon as a reasonable line is formed, the start boat can start the race.

Roy to change the wording to state 'One minute before the start a flag is raised...' and 'Within a minute later as soon as a line is formed, the flag may be dropped and the sound signal given'. Shore starts - again, change the last line to state 'within one minute a second signal is sounded...'

Rule 11, It was suggested that it needed to be stated in the Rule that the cox was responsible for checking the boat before the race. A discussion was then held as to whether the cox was the best person to check the boat, as they may not necessarily be the most experienced person. It was felt that all persons in the crew should take some responsibility, and that it should not just lie with one individual even if they were the most senior. It was pointed out that the cox is legally responsible for the safety of the whole crew, which is why it would make sense for the checking of the boat before it goes out on the water, to lie with them.

As a result of this fact, although not part of the racing rules re-write, the question was asked whether the age of coxes in races should be raised to 18 (it is currently 16), given that they are legally responsible for all persons in the boat. Decisions on it staying at 16 or being raised to 18 were split; therefore it was taken to a vote.

Proposal to raise the age of coxes in a race to 18. Proposed by Elin P, seconded by Pippa O – 11 votes for, 11 votes against, the Chair had the casting vote and agreed it should be changed to 18. Proposal carried. Roy E to include the age of coxes to be 18 in the Rules.

Rule 23, Chris H and others disagreed with the rule 'stop rowing for 20 seconds' mid race, the majority felt this would not be feasible and would not be applied equally by all clubs, therefore, clubs which did adhere to the rule would be penalised, whilst others who ignored the rule would not.

Proposal to drop Rule 23 in its entirety: Proposed by Bethan J, seconded by Leo O – 16 votes for, 2 votes against. Proposal carried.

Rule 24, Change to wording requested from 'as soon as possible' to 'directly after race completion'. Change approved, no objections.

Rule 25, Amendment of the wording slightly to state 'discussing the facts with both coxes / stroke person or crew representative'. Change approved, no objections.

Appendix C, Removal of word 'time' in the last line of first para. to read 'incident meeting may apply place penalties or disqualification'. Change approved, no objections.

### **Training – Coxing and Coaching**

Jackie S stated that she intends to put together the pre-requisite training programmes specifically for the WSRA. Currently courses arranged are not local, so clubs have to travel, it is Jackie's intention to deliver the courses at the location of the clubs. She proposes a Level 2 course at the end of February 2017 in the North to replace the one which was cancelled, with pre-requisite courses to be completed prior to this. She is currently rewriting the training presentation for the Level 2 to be more specific for Celtic's and not for River Rowing. She also hopes to set up coxes workshops to be run by the Level 2 coaches, and to run coach/cox workshops for individual clubs.

Barry D mentioned that it was difficult to attend the Level 2 courses on 2 successive weekends as this was quite a time commitment.

Dominic B stated that as Welsh Sea Rowing is so much bigger than Welsh Rowing, we shouldn't be in a position where they are able to dictate to us. It was explained by another member that because WSRA is affiliated to Welsh Rowing as an association, this entitles us to one vote, whereas if we were affiliated to them as individual clubs, each club would have one vote, therefore making us stronger. As we stand we currently have very little power, even though there are approx 1,500 Sea Rowers and only approx 800 River Rowers.

Jackie said that she would like to start attending the Welsh Rowing Meetings in future.

It was also mentioned in the meeting that there would be a Board position coming up in Welsh Rowing later this year, but that it would be competency based.

It was also noted that there is going to be a new Board in Welsh Rowing, who realise the potential of the WSRA and therefore would like us to be more involved. It was suggested that we invite the new Chairman to attend our AGM in January 2017.

**Action Secretary:** Invite new Welsh Rowing Chairman or representative to attend our AGM.

Jo O mentioned the booklet that Jackie was going to prepare on how to become a Level 2 coach. Jackie expanded that she was going to produce an on-line 'how to' booklet. She is happy to travel to run the courses, one for the South and one for the North. Nicola T offered their facilities for running the South course and also use of their safety boats etc.

Jackie clarified that the 'Safeguarding' course was a general sport one and didn't have to be rowing specific, however, it must be rolled out by a registered trainer with Sports Wales. Jackie is currently awaiting a response from them to hear if she can do it.

Sam E would like all coaches to get together to work on designing a programme they can all roll out, going into it with the same skills. As Jackie has already started writing the training Sam

and Jackie agreed to stay in contact and progress things further to a stage where WSRA training can be self-sufficient, providing the WSRA are happy with this. Jackie would just then need to let Welsh rowing know the dates of the courses they were going to run so that Welsh Rowing would register them, but all other matters could be taken care of within the WSRA. It is hoped that they could be self sufficient soon.

Proposal for WSRA training to becoming self-sufficient: First proposer Jill G, seconded by Sam E. All in agreement.

### **Ramsay Island Non-League Race**

Mike M put forward that there had been some discussion in Solva about putting on a Ramsey Race for longboats next year as a non-league event, this was raised after the Ramsay Island social row was planned earlier this year, and had several interested parties. Mike had also been promised support by a retired lifeboat cox if he had agreement to go ahead with the event. Mike asked whether those present would be happy for him to go ahead and come up with a suitable date to try and arrange it, and if clubs would be interested.

All in agreement that the Race sounds like a good idea and that Mike should progress with the plans, risk assessments and potential dates etc

### **Reduction in Number of Races and No Clashes**

Chris H proposed that we might reduce the number of North and South races to 5 or 6, leave 3 joint races as they were, but avoid any clashes. He felt this may have the affect of extending the season and increase participation in both North and South races. There was mixed opinion on this, as to whether it would make any difference in attendance levels, as often one of the main issues in clubs is the lack of people available to tow the boats, and it was agreed that the number of races shouldn't be reduced.

It was suggested by Nicola T that the 3 joint race venues could alternate slightly to allow other clubs to host a larger event, this received approval from all present.

Chris H proposed that when clubs submit their race dates they should indicate at that time whether they would like to / be able to host a joint league event, and for this to be taken into consideration, this was seconded by Jackie S.

**Action Secretary:** to remind all clubs of this in the email asking for race dates.

Chris H proposed that when submitting race dates, clubs should choose one date in April/May, one in June/July and one in Aug/Sept, he hoped this may possibly spread the season out and would reduce the amount of dates where North & South may potentially clash.

At present the early months are quite race loaded and the season is finishing very early. It was noted that the reason for this was to account for race days being postponed and rescheduled due to bad weather, and that all clubs were trying to leave space at the end of the season to be used if needed. It was suggested that if a race were cancelled that it shouldn't be rescheduled and should just not run, however, as the current rules state that clubs need to attend 5 league race events to be able to run one of their own, this might leave some clubs falling short of meeting this requirement, particularly in the North where there are less race events.

It was suggested by Pippa O that the rules on hosting an event be changed to state clubs have to attend 5 race events, not 5 league race events. Pippa suggested the rule be changed to attending 4 league races as a minimum, with an additional non-league race to be included if necessary to complete the 5 race entry requirement.

Proposal to change holding a race criteria to clubs entering in 5 races in total, with a minimum of 4 of those being league races: First proposer Pippa O, seconded by Nicola T. No objections, proposal carried.

(Note: The best 7 league results would still need count towards overall league points, with 3 of those being the joint league races).

Jo O mentioned the fact that some clubs have to be very careful when choosing race dates of what the tide is doing, however, it was felt that there should at least be one suitable date in each 2 month window.

Sue E also mentioned that for the smaller clubs, having available people to run the event is also sometimes an issue. Others present spoke up to say that their clubs could always be asked to help out / volunteer on race days for clubs that were struggling, and would be happy to assist.

Proposal to ask clubs to submit 3 race dates, one in each two month window, to be trialled 2017 season: First proposer Chris H, seconded by Sam E. Agreed by all.

**Action Secretary:** remind clubs of the three, two monthly windows to choose dates from in the email asking for race dates.

### **Workshop each AGM, alternate Events and Coxing/Coaching**

Alternate the events workshop with a coxing/coaching workshop which would be held before the WSRA AGM each year (e.g. year 1 events workshop, year 2 coxing/coaching workshop, year 3 events workshop.... And so on). Item from Chris H deferred until the January 2017 AGM due to lack of time.

### **Junior Points to be Capped at Maximum of 10 – Chris H**

Junior points to be reduced to 10 points for winning boat (regardless of category) down to 1 point for 10<sup>th</sup> place. This item from Chris H was deferred until the January 2017 AGM due to lack of time.

### **Minimum Age for Competitive Rowing**

Chris H recommend that ages of children be added to the race registration forms as an issue had arisen this season where children were under the age band to be out rowing competitively. Current WSRA rules state that no child under 14 should be rowing competitively, which is in line with British Rowing rules; however, they can race from the date of their 14<sup>th</sup> birthday. The Under 14's participation event had been agreed previously with best intentions, and running this category was always at the discretion of the host club, as it should be run as a separate event from the junior race, however this event had developed into something more than it should be.

Richard G proposed that the ages of every junior rower on the day of the race, should be stated on the race entry forms, this was seconded by Nicola T. Agreed by all present.

The Secretary proposed that the Under 14 participation event be taken off the race entry form and not take place, to try and eliminate persons under 14 wanting to race too soon, as this just put more pressure on clubs to try and accommodate another separate race category, and wasn't always possible due to some of the club locations and tidal considerations. First proposer Tina P, seconded by Jackie S.

Dominic O felt that stopping the Under 14s category would discourage juniors from rowing, however all others agreed that it did not stop them from rowing, only from rowing competitively. Proposal carried.

**Action Secretary:** to amend the race entry form to include the ages of junior rowers, and to take off the Under 14s category.

### **Yole Development – Objectives, Progress Report, Next Phase**

Jac is looking into the possibility of holding a Welsh Open for FISA class boats (yoles) in 2017, although ultimately an international event is hoped for. Jac needs approval from FISA in liaison with British Rowing and would also like this to be agreed and supported by the WSRA.

All present asked whether WSRA would be happy to support this event and for Jac to be able to progress it. All in agreement, no objections.

Post Meeting Note: If anyone would like any further information regarding the event, please contact Nicola Thomas from Towy on [nictowy@gmail.com](mailto:nictowy@gmail.com)

### **Potential Purchase of another WSRA boat**

This item was not covered due to lack of time and will be deferred until the January 2017 AGM.

### **Proposed date/plan for Montford Challenge**

Shropshire ARC proposal for the Montford Challenge taking place on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2017. This item had to be deferred due to lack of time.

**Action Secretary:** Email all clubs with the proposed date and ask for any objections to be fed back, as Justin needs to book the facilities ASAP.

### **Welsh Sea Rowing Championship – Menai Straits**

Information read out by the Secretary on behalf of Ed Curtis from Plas Menai.

Ed and a local sea side venue in North Wales are keen to gauge interest for organising and running a Welsh Sea Rowing World Championships for the North and South Leagues to come together for a long weekend of racing. Something along the lines of the Gig worlds in Scilly. An end of season bash for everyone to have some fun and celebrate sea rowing as a Nation. The venue is on the Menai Strait so the options for racing a pretty good in terms of places to race to and being able to avoid poor weather conditions. Tide is the main consideration but this can be worked around with good planning and execution of the event.

**Action Secretary:** Email Ed to say idea was well received and to keep the WSRA informed of progress and suggested date for the event.

### **Year of the Sea Event 2018 – Milford Haven**

Richard A related that whilst talking to John Wassell of Walk The Plank (who were in charge of the pageant in Cardiff), the idea came up of a festival of rowing to showcase our sport and allow us to focus on Wales. If it was open to international teams then it may also solve the dilemma facing some of the clubs who would like to reciprocate the hospitality of the Italians. It would hopefully also involve Scottish, Irish, Cornish, Breton and Portuguese clubs i.e. the Celtic trading routes, which could form part of the theme.

It is envisaged that somewhere like Milford Haven would be the best location as it provides the scope for both short sprint races and longer marathon rows.

Sam E suggested that Cardiff Bay could also be considered as a possible location, this suggestion was well received.

Although Walk The Plank would like to play an active role from the outset to help coordinate the various bodies, in order to achieve maximum publicity and promotion of our sport and Wales, this would ultimately be a WSRA enterprise. Richard asked whether the WSRA committee would be happy to support this event if he were to progress it. All those present were in favour, therefore, Richard will continue communications with John.

### **Coastal Row – Dublin to Cork 2017 (extra agenda item)**

Richard A provided details of the planned 4 day event and stated that other clubs were welcome to join them on this challenge, but on the understanding that they arrange their own safety cover, accommodation and transport. As the challenge will need adding to the WSRA insurance it needs to be put to the underwriters, Richard confirmed it will be supported and fully endorsed by Madoc Yacht Club (rowing) and any of their participants will be fully paid up WSRA members, but he would also like it to be supported and endorsed by the WSRA committee, as it falls inside the current WSRA Declared Activities and could be added to the current policy. The question was asked to all those present whether they would be happy for the event to be endorsed by the WSRA. All present agreed, no objections.

### **Celtic Challenge Info - 2017**

Andrew Richards had provided information that the Celtic Challenge weekend had been scheduled to take place between the dates of 28<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> May 2017.

The current personal accident cover through WSRA is more than adequate, however, every club intending to take part who insure their equipment through the WSRA must pay an additional £50 per boat to enter. The WSRA equipment policy also includes marine insurance in the event of an accident and this is something that all entries should consider as part of their policy.

Any clubs not covered by the WSRA will have to ensure that their insurance provides cover for the event.

Chris H reported that any clubs registering this year, who had entered last year when it was postponed, would get a 50% discount on their entry. There are no refunds available for clubs who are not re-entering again this year.

Chris H also mentioned that the Celtic Challenge Committee were also looking for a WSRA representative and that he would be happy to take that role. This was approved by all present.

### **Use of WSRA funds for our Coaches to attend and run training courses**

This item was not covered due to lack of time and can be deferred until the January 2017 AGM.

### **Annual fee for use of Aberystwyth Boat Club**

This item was not covered due to lack of time and will be dealt with by the WSRA Executive Officers before the January 2017 AGM.

### **Date of next Meeting:**

AGM & Executive Meeting 21<sup>st</sup> January 2017

### **Future Proposed Meeting Dates for 2017:**

Executive Meeting 8<sup>th</sup> April 2017

Executive Meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2017

Executive Meeting 21<sup>st</sup> October 2017