

Report from the Governance Review Team

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Report from the Governance Review Team

In May 2014 the club committee set up a small working group to examine the way in which the club managed its affairs. The members of the group are Tony Quinn, Charles Smith, Steve Hughes and John Scruton. Tony and Steve are local Group organisers, John is the club Treasurer and Charles is from the East Midlands group.

The group agreed a number of areas, or topics to explore, the aim of which is to see whether they might bring about improvements in the way in which the club is run. Some of the topics relate to fairly straightforward procedural matters that just affect the workings of the committee; others have wider implications and may require changes to the club's governing document, the company's Articles of Association.

To date:

The topics were divided up among the group members who produced short discussion papers which set out their thoughts on their selected topics

The discussion papers were then circulated to the committee members for their comments.

The comments were summarised and circulated to the committee prior to the August committee meeting.

Due to time constraints at the August meeting it was only possible to discuss and approve some of the more straightforward topics, the remainder being held over for future meetings.

The topics and current progress are as follows:

Topic 1 – Officer tenure. We are considering the advantages or otherwise of time limiting the post of club chairman. Feedback from the committee appears to support a time limit of three to five years, but some would prefer to leave it open-ended. There will be a full discussion at a future committee meeting. Any change would require amendment to the club's Articles of Association which would require a 75% majority at an AGM.

Topic 2 – Management structure. Currently the committee meets four times a year with an average attendance of about 20. While this shows commendable enthusiasm for involvement in the club's management, it may be too cumbersome. The discussion paper put a number of options. Several committee members felt that no change was necessary, but overall the responses indicated a preference for change, but opinions were divided as to whether there should be a smaller committee, or full committee meetings would still take place, say twice a year, with a smaller management committee meeting more frequently.

Topic 3 – Code of conduct. Unfortunately despite, or maybe sometimes because of, members’ enthusiasm for their ideas the way in which they are expressed can sometimes cause hurt to others. Regrettably there have been incidents this year that fall into that category. A draft code of conduct has been circulated and reactions from the committee are mixed.

Topic 4 – Grievance procedure. Similarly there are instances where members believe that they have been wronged by the club or its officers, acting in their official capacity. The group felt it might be useful to have a process by which those grievances could be resolved. Such a process would operate only in limited circumstances, for example where informal resolution had been tried and failed. Again, reactions to this are mixed.

Topic 5 – Managing CCM business. The discussion paper contained a simple set of procedural rules setting out how committee members might bring new items of business to committee meetings. This paper was accepted by the committee at its August meeting.

Topic 6 – Executing CCM business. Similarly the discussion paper contained a simple set of procedural rules setting out how decisions taken by the committee should be carried out. Subject to minor amendments this paper was accepted by the committee at its August meeting.

Topic 7 – Definition of a Club Event. The need to define ‘club event’ arose out of a potential claim against MTWC by another club for a financial loss the other club had incurred at an event that was attended by members of both clubs. There were differences of opinion within the committee as to whether the attendance of MTWC members constituted an MTWC club event or merely a number of MTWC members who attended as invitees of the other club. This made it difficult to come to a view as to whether MTWC was liable for the other club’s loss or whether any liability was against the individual MTWC members. The discussion paper sought to clarify the definition for future reference of event organisers. Mike Guess, North West Group Organiser is taking this topic forward.

Topic 8 – Indemnity of club officials and other club members carrying out club business on the authority of the committee. It is an important principle that those acting on behalf of the club are indemnified, either by the club’s insurance or through club funds. At its August meeting the committee affirmed that, unless they have acted recklessly or illegally the MTWC will indemnify club officers against financial loss arising from the performance of their duties.

Topic 9 – Publication of CCM minutes. At the August committee meeting it was agreed that minutes would no longer appear on the club website, but that summaries would continue to be published in the club Bulletin.