

**Minutes of the Northern Ireland Orienteering Association AGM held at
The Pavilion, Ulster University, Coleraine, Co Londonderry
on 1 June 2019**

The meeting commenced at 12:30. 40 members attended.

Apologies

Billy Fyffe, Stephen Gilmore, Eibhlin Largey, Richard McCourt, Philip McGoldrick, Gordon Stephens.

Previous Minutes

Acceptance of the minutes of the last AGM held on 12 May 2018 were agreed on the proposal of Philip Baxter, seconded by Mark Philpott. There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report.

Interim Chairman Anthony McGonigle explained that he had only recently been appointed. David Blair had taken over as interim Vice-Chair replacing Philip Baxter who had in turn been appointed as interim Hon Treasurer, releasing Susan Lambe to whom thanks was due. Cara Lavery is taking lead with publicity particularly focusing on NI Colour Series. Some committee meetings were being held over Skype coordinated by Cara.

Thanks were due to NWOC for the Sprint and Middle events with officials Planner Des Fletcher, Controller Ross Walker and Organiser Rachel Reid and to all clubs and officials staging NI events during the past year with each club hosting 2 NI Colour Series events. NWOC had hosted the NIOC Long Distance at Pomeroy, a tough event on a truly wet day, Fermo the NI Score and Night at Seskinore and Ecclesville and recently the IOC by Fermo with assistance from LVO at the Relays at Parkanaur. Sharing out the days for IOC is the only way to go in the future.

A Sporting Pathways document has been prepared making it clear that athletes from NI can choose to be considered for representation for GBR or IRL.

Active/Sporting Clubs Coordinator Juls Hanvey returned from maternity leave and is making continued good progress with hubs and the role change from Active Clubs to Sporting Clubs. Susan Lambe provided excellent maternity cover.

Workshops have been held as an opportunity to upskill our officials and volunteers covering the topics "Beat the Sprint Middle Planner" and "Beat the Forest Planner". Thanks were expressed to Philip Baxter for encouraging and promoting these evenings. An "Event Safety for Coaches in Open Areas" workshop was also held. These workshops and courses have helped to improve quality and safety at events.

Peter Hart, new CEO of BOF, attended the committee meeting in November, with additional representation from clubs. We had useful input on many issues, but no change on levy for low-key/midweek events.

A new fixture list which draws details of both NI events and activities from the BOF fixture list has been provided by Geoffrey Collins. This is the definitive list for all orienteering in NI and clubs are requested to point to this list and not create other lists.

Discussions with Forest Service have concluded with agreement that there is no charge for access for events with less than 100, but notification is still required. Events for over 100 will require a licence payment. NIEA (also part of DAERA) are now requiring 10% of event income to be paid. Items of ongoing committee business include: Access agreement with National Trust, Land and Property Services data licence, military land access and home international rotations. We are providing pdfs of all maps to Community Rescue Services to facilitate searches for missing persons.

Our next major event is the British Sprint and Middle Distance Champs in 2022 with Sprint in Omagh or Craigavon and Middle in Gortin Forest.

Thanks were expressed to the coaches for all their time and effort over the year. Daniel Earnshaw, Meadow McCauley, Peter Reed, Daniel Vasey and Matthew Vasey were selected for the Hawkshead training camp. International Selections included Andrew Elwood and Peter Reed at the European Youth Orienteering Championships in Bulgaria, Paul Pruzina in the World University Orienteering Championships in Finland and Andrew Elwood and Rachel Collins selected for EYOC in Slovakia. A team of 9 went to JIRCS in Derbyshire and there was a good representation of NI members on JHI, SHI and VHI teams.

Membership figures had shown a healthy increase: 2018 - 348, 2017 – 292, 2016 - 314, 2015 – 232, 2014 – 228. Thanks were expressed to Conor Fadian and Juls Hanvey for their contribution to increasing membership and to Lyle Fleming for all his work on membership.

Anthony finally thanked Richard McCourt for his six years as Chairperson and the committee members for their support during the year, noting that it was good to have some younger members on the committee. Thanks were also expressed to the volunteers who have contributed so much to the sport during the year and this includes members like Ursula Meehan who do so much to raise funds for the Junior Kitchen and to Stephen Gilmore for the administration he does behind the scenes

Financial Report.

Accounts yet to be audited were circulated and the interim Hon Treasurer Philip Baxter presented a report. The fund distribution chart showed that NIOA funds were divided into a General Fund, a Development Fund, money held on behalf of LVO hubs and a Reserve Fund. He explained:

- The General Fund is the working fund from which NIOA supports mapping, athletes on representative teams, publicity and the running costs of the Association. Member subscriptions and event levies are the principal income for this fund.
- The Development Fund exists to provide support to specific development related projects, including the maintenance of the NIOA Development SI equipment; it does not cover event map costs. Bids for support are considered by the Committee. The fund has been created exclusively from development work undertaken by Development Officers over time; no member subscriptions or event levies go into the fund.
- NIOA currently holds money on behalf of the hubs established through Sport NI funded programmes. Currently both hubs are satellites of LVO, but the next hub is planned in NWOC's area. The plan is to devolve the accounting and financial oversight to the parent clubs in time.

- The Reserve Fund exists to provide assistance in times of major financial shock.

The Income vs Expenditure chart and account sheet illustrated from where income was derived and where it had been spent. He pointed out:

- The outgoings on juniors, athlete support, admin costs and trophies were only just balanced by the income received from membership and levies.
- The hubs and development incomes were not matched by equivalent spending. The hub funds were being held on the hubs' behalf and there had been no bids for development support.
- The largest expenditure from the General Fund was mapping support to assist with the NIOC and IOC map costs. The amounts disbursed were in accordance with the budget policy that has been running for the last 6 years.

The Treasurer also circulated a draft budget, yet to be discussed by the Committee, which showed the effect of continuing with the current budget policy. Membership and levy income would continue to roughly balance expected routine expenditure while the mapping policy could be continued for a further 6 years or so on the assumption that there was a major events income boost from the proposed British Sprint and Middle Championships to be hosted in 2022. After that the surpluses that had been built over time would be exhausted and fresh sources of income would be required if the mapping grant expenditure is to continue.

In summary the overall financial position is balanced, the development fund is underused and the current budget policy will need to be revised as the General Fund continues to reduce.

Juniors Report

Stephanie Pruzina presented the Juniors Report.

Peter Reed and Andrew Elwood were selected for EYOC 2018, and Paul Pruzina at WUOC (World Universities). The Pruzina and Murphy families and Andrew Elwood attended an IOA family training camp in France prior to the OOCup.

A junior training weekend was based around the Colour Series event in Garvagh with contour exercises on Portstewart dunes.

A great NI team went to the JIRCs at Chatsworth Estate and Carsington Pastures where our women's team deserve special mention for finishing in 8th place overall despite only having 3 runners - Rachel Collins, Meadow McCauley and Hannah McMullan.

The JHI was in Pitlochry area (Errochty and Bonskeild) with 5 NI runners in the squad and we were pleased to return with the Judith Wingham Trophy for the subsidiary Ireland vs Wales competition. Thanks to Donal O'Kane who accompanied the team and rearranged transport when a flight was cancelled.

Meadow McCauley had an opportunity to travel with an international group of 16 year olds to China for a fabulous cross cultural experience with challenging orienteering.

The Junior Regional Orienteering Squads organized a Hawkshead training camp which Daniel Earnshaw, Meadow McCauley, Daniel Vasey and Matthew Vasey attended. There was good NI representation at the various selection races for the Irish squad events: a Time Trial, the JK, the Leinster Champs, and the Irish Champs For

2019 Andrew Elwood and Peter Reed have been selected for EYOC. The teams for the JIRCs in Yorkshire and JHI hosted by LVO have still to be decided.

Andrew Elwood has been rewarded with a place at the Gothenburg training camp, following travel to various selection races. Junior training camps in conjunction with IOA are planned for September 2019 in Killarney and in January 2020 in Glendalough .

Active/Sporting Clubs Report

Juls Hanvey, Sporting Clubs Coordinator reported. SportNI has changed its focus from new members to overall membership growth. The hubs have continued to be successful in bringing in new members but still struggle with the transfer of these new members into the more mainstream events of the sport. Moving forward membership wise there will need to be a much stronger push on membership renewals across hubs and clubs.

Tollymore Orienteers are in the midst of their first standalone summer series with minimal support from Sporting Clubs. The hub now has 8 planners (to light green level) and 6 members event safety trained.

Thanks were given to Graeme Francis for his work in promoting Orchard County Hub and the current urban series.

Juls is due to complete a 2019/2020 plan for Sport NI by July and will do this in consultation with hubs and clubs.

A maternity cover for Juls will be advertised in July with interviews planned for August and a handover in September.

Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults.

Fred Corscadden reported that no issues had arisen during the year.

Prizegiving

Presentations for the NI Sprint Championships were made. Thanks were expressed to NWOC for staging the event, particularly planner Des Fletcher and controller Ross for both Sprint and Middle Distance Championships.

Presentations

The Coach of the Year Award was presented to Stephanie Pruzina.

The Volunteer of the Year Award was presented in absentia to Stephen Gilmore

A Services to NI Orienteering Award was presented in absentia to Richard McCourt.

Elections of Committee and Officers

Rachel Reid took the chair and expressed thanks to the outgoing committee.

Chairman. Anthony McGonigle had been co-opted as chairman during the year.

Anthony McGonigle was appointed as Chairman.

Vice Chairman. David Blair had been co-opted as Vice Chairman during the year as Philip Baxter had taken the role of Hon Treasurer. David Blair was appointed as Vice Chairman.

Honorary Secretary. Stephen Gilmore was appointed as Honorary Secretary.

Honorary Treasurer. Philip Baxter had been co-opted as Hon Treasurer during the year. Philip Baxter was appointed as Honorary Treasurer.

A minimum of 8 additional members were required. The outgoing committee was Philip Baxter, David Blair, Michael Burton, Raymond Finlay, Lyle Fleming, Des Fletcher, Wilbert Hollinger, Stephen Gilmore, Eibhlin Largey, Cara Lavery, Anthony McGonigle, Dee Orwin and. Gordon Stephens.

The reappointment of the committee with Teresa Finlay to replace Eibhlin Largey was agreed.

Discussion of levies & membership fees

Philip Baxter presented 3 options which could be implemented for 2020:

Firstly that the current system remains unchanged with both a membership fee and NI levy.

Secondly that NI levies cease and membership increased accordingly.

Thirdly that membership remains unchanged, levies cease and clubs pay an annual fee to NIOA based on size of each club's membership.

By a show of hands from those present option 1 was overwhelmingly the preferred choice. The NIOA committee will consider.

Any Other Business

There was no further business.