



Minutes of the District Council Meeting

Thursday 2nd March 2017

Greetham Valley Golf Club

DISTRICT GOVERNOR JOHN DEHNEL

Rotary International District 1070 Council Meeting – Thursday 2 March 2017

In the absence of DG John, IPDG Geoff Blurton chaired the meeting, which was held at Greetham Valley Gold Club commencing at 7.30p.m.

There were 164 Rotarians present from 78 Clubs

C 16/17.31 Apologies and Welcome

IPDG Geoff Blurton welcomed all those present to District Council and explained that in the absence of the DG, the most recent PDG present takes the chair and that this is quite clear in Standing Orders. He asked those Rotarians attending a District Council meeting for the first time to stand and be recognized. Past DGs were also recognized.

Apologies were received from: DG John Dehnel (illness) PDG,s Iain Vernon, Margaret Morley, Simon Kalson, Roger May and Linda May.

AG Peter Berry and Rtn's Derek Wingrave, Chris Shannon and John Garley

C16/17.32 Act of Remembrance

All those present stood in remembrance of those Rotarians who had passed to higher service since the previous Council Meeting and IPDG Geoff read out the names: Rtns Ken Allen (Hon) Northampton West, Stuart Beever (Stamford), Vincent Cartwright (Hon) Kempston, Fred Davies (Hon) Stamford, George Hastings (Spalding and Welland), Alan Matthias (Rushden Chichele), Alan Mills (Kettering Huxloe), Bryce Murfet (Holbeach), Philip Stoney (Hinckley Ambion), David Woodhouse (Ashby Hastings), Bryan Cooper (Lutterworth), Peter Jackson (Hon) Stamford, Arthur Perry (Corby), PDG Ralph Tempest (Hon) Brackley, Rtns Christine Pennock (Sleaford), Ken Mold (Leicester), Jim Goodchild (Northampton.)

C16/17.33 Minutes of the Last District Council Meeting Held on 30 Nov 2016.

There were no questions or comments. A motion to approve the minutes was carried unanimously.

Proposed: Rtn Mike Warrington (Stamford)

Seconded: AG Graham Martin (Soar Valley)

C16/17.34 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising not on the agenda.

C16/17.35 District Governors Report

Take Off had been circulated to all Clubs.

IPDG was pleased to announce two RIBI Champions of Change awards; firstly in recognition of her Dementia Café Initiative an award to Rtn Janet Cooke and secondly an Award to Rtn David Wallwork for his many years work with his David's School in Africa

C16/17.36 DGE Report

Nil to add to the report already circulated.

C16/17.37 District Secretary

The DS reported that 37 Clubs from the District have so far not registered to vote at the Business Meeting at the RIBI Conference in April. He emphasised that given the discussion later on the agenda, voting is the only way to affect outcomes and effect change.

PDG Ken Billington (Huntingdon Cromwell) introduced the changes to District Standing Orders for the Assembly to approve.

Proposed: Rtn Geoff Richardson (Huntingdon Cromwell)
Seconded: PDG Richard Hyde (Ramsey)

The Revised Standing Orders were approved unanimously.

C16/17.38 District Treasurers (DT) Report

The District Treasurer in introducing his budget was pleased to report that District Capitation Fees would remain at last year's level of £30 for 2017/18. In response to a question by Rtn David Brown (Melton Belvoir) about partners' expenses for District Officers attending Conference, the DS and IPDG Geoff emphasised that such expenses are strictly in line with Standing Orders, and not a matter for the District Budget

The budget was approved unanimously.

Proposed: PDG Chris Chew (South Holland)
Seconded: Rtn Geoff Richardson (Huntingdon Cromwell)

C16/17.39 Assistant Governors' Reports

Written reports had been circulated for each Area and the following additional comments were made:

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| Area A E | Nil to add to the report already circulated. |
| Area A W | A recent Forum had raised 4 points of interest: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Implication of changes to the Rotary Clubs Constitution2. The emphasis being put on Satellite Clubs at RIBI Assembly3. RIBI Conference and voting at the Annual Business Meeting.4. Purple Ball Tickets are still available. |
| Area B | Nil to add to the report already circulated. |
| Area C | Nil to add to the report already circulated. |
| Area D | Nil to add to the report already circulated. |
| Area E | Nil to add to the report already circulated. |
| Area F | Nil to add to the report already circulated. |

C16/17.40 Foundation

Rtn Irvin Metcalf (Grantham Sunrise) reported that the Club Manual for Foundation Grants had been agreed by the District Executive. The SHARE proposal previously circulated was approved by Council

Proposed: Rtn Colin Scott (Holbeach)
Seconded: Rtn Mike Kingdon (St Neots)

C16/17.41 Project Teams Reports.

Youth Service.

DGN Tim Tucker reported that because there was just enough entrants in the Young Musicians semi final this coming Saturday to fill places in the final, this weeks semi final had been cancelled.

Rotaract:

Rtn Alan Jukes would be handing over his Rotaract responsibility to Rtn Jim Davies (Market Harborough).

Community.

Nil to add to the report already circulated.

International.

Nil to add to the report already circulated.

C16/17.42 Support Teams Chairmen's Reports

Communications.

Rtn Martin Webb (Lincoln) announced that the deadline for the Club Website competition has been extended to 1 April 2017 and judging will start on that date.

Vocational. There was no report.

Conference Report.

Rtn Bill Hill (Melton Mowbray) reported that the accounts for Nottingham are now complete and will be handed to the District Auditor. Presentation of the Golf Trophy had been omitted at Conference. This was rectified by the presentation of the trophy to The Rotary Club of Kettering.

Preparations for Conference at Llandudno this year and Torquay next year are going ahead smoothly.

Leadership Development and Training.

Nil to add to the report already circulated.

Membership.

Rtn Robin Green (Northampton West) asked that all clubs who had not yet undergone visioning to please include this for next year's plans.

Minor Sports.

PDG Chris Chew would be handing over Minor Sports at the end of this Rotary Year to current AG Les Aldrich (Ashby Hastings).

New Club Formation

PDG Dick Parsley (Wellingborough Hatton) briefed about the emphasis being put on Satellite Clubs and how successful they are. He is happy to come out and speak to Clubs about it and to help the process along.

C16/17.43 Club Presentation Slot

Rtn Nic Merrett (Uppingham) gave a short brief about the Mango Tree project which empowers orphans through communities and which Uppingham supports. He emphasised how the charity, supported by Rotary, works and made a plea for Clubs to support the project.

Rtn Barry Hackett (Ashby de la Zouch) briefed everyone that there would be a leaflet in the Club baskets about an End Polio Now Bike Ride. This would also be run next year

C16/17.44 To Confirm the Venue and Dates for the Next District Council Meeting

The next District Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday 18 July 2017 at Greetham Valley Gold Club commencing at 7.30p.m.

C16/17.45 Any Other Business

Special General Council Minutes and Associated Paper.

In light of the Minutes from General Council that had been circulated, the DGE emphasised how important it is for Clubs to register to vote at the RIBI Business Meeting, which will be held at the RIBI Conference in April.

In light of the Minutes of General Council that highlighted significant financial issues and concerns, IPDG Geoff called upon PDG John Hockin (Woodhall Spa) to start the discussions. He emphasised that Rotary must change not just in management but also in attitude. Currently 75% of membership is over 60 with few below the age of 30. Of those over 60, a great many are over 70. It was noted that in the 1970s when there was a similar level of membership, RIBI ran with 19 Districts, the argument being that reducing the number of Districts back to that level could save money. However, to do so would mean dealing with some strong vested interests. On the other hand, General Council is manned by District Governors who have little training in Financial Governance and budget control. This in turn can lead to money being wasted in grandiose, self-promoting projects and schemes. There is a clear need for Clubs to take back control of Rotary and in particular RIBI.

Rtn David Brown (Melton Mowbray Belvoir) reported on the results of discussions that Clubs in his area had reached as a result of the GC Minutes:

1. In its present format RIBI is not fit for purpose.
2. There seems to be no transparency about financial matters. The Audit Committee appears to meet in secret and Minutes of their discussions do not appear to be circulated outside of the Committee.
3. As a result of financial issues, costs of Rotary are not appreciated and as a direct result recruitment suffers.
4. Instead of increasing fees, can some of the reserves be used to fund the shortage and then let there be a requirement to run a balanced budget.

5. The Chair of the Audit Committee should be removed.
6. Whoever booked and signed the contract for the Torquay Conference should, at best, be heavily censored.
7. The magazine has lost a lot of money this year. (Note: GC had changed the provider and elected to publish it themselves without the support of the advertising base that the past provider had access to. This has clearly been a costly error.
8. What is the role of the President of RIBI and in reality “do we need one”?

The DGE noted that the debate about RIBI had gone on for years but care does need to be taken that the “baby is not thrown out with the bathwater”. The RIBI Secretariat is very professional, helpful and effective. There are some arguments that it is too big, but it has proved very useful and helpful in the past. Even if RIBI were to be dissolved, some way of keeping the services of the Secretariat would have to be found.

It was noted that, as in many other organisations, Brexit has had a part to play since hedging was not put in place in a timely manner. (Note: Hedging is now in place but seems to have been at a cost by not doing it earlier)

Rtn Geoff Richardson (Huntingdon Cromwell) made the following comments in response to some earlier parts of the discussions:

1. When GC finally agrees a budget, **normally** hedging is put in place on the day so that dollars are in place at the exchange rate at which the budget is agreed.
2. He continued with a detailed brief about how reserves are calculated and noted that GC has a policy of holding 85% of general expenditure as reserves.

Rtn Nigel Adams (Market Harborough) asked whether abolition of RIBI has been considered. There was some support for this but it was also noted that the President Elect of RI seemed at ease with the concept of RIBI, although AG Graham Martin did note that at RIBI Assembly, whilst acknowledging some benefit for RIBI, he did not give unqualified support.

Rtn Bill Martindale (Spalding Kesteven) had also noted an issue about VAT for the RIBI Conference. This was deemed to be an unacceptable omission in the budget.

PDG Dick Parsley (Wellingborough Hatton) noted that Districts outside of RIBI pay significantly more in dues than those within RIBI. The difference is about 40%.

Rtn Mike Kingdon (St Neots) thought that time was needed to digest all of the issues around the topics that had been discussed. He felt, however, that the situation was entirely unacceptable and felt very strongly that a motion to that effect should be sent to RIBI GC. The format for doing this could not be wholly agreed and all Clubs were again advised to register to vote on line at the Business Meeting at the RIBI Conference.

Rtn Barry Hackett (Ashby de la Zouch) remarked that it is difficult to reconcile the paper information with the financial details that have been discussed. His thought was that if RIBI has not been able to get it right up till now, what confidence can we have for them to get it right now.

Vote of Thanks

Although DG John was absent from the meeting, this being the last District Council of this Rotary Year IPDG Geoff proposed a Vote of Thanks for the way in which the DG has conducted meetings of District Council. This was heartily agreed by all present.