

The Royal Engineers Association

(Registered under the Charities Act 1992 and a charity registered in Scotland)

Patron: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN



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All Council Members
All Management Committee Members
All Group Secretaries
All Branch Secretaries
Controller REA
Corps Treasurer

08 May 2018

THE MINUTES OF 72nd MEETING OF ROYAL ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION COUNCIL HELD IN MOD MAIN BUILDING, LONDON ON TUESDAY 01st May 2018.

PRESENT

Lt Gen Sir Mark Mans KCB CBE DL	President REA
Maj Gen A S Dickinson CBE	Chairman REA
Brig M Bazeley	Comdt HQ RSME
Col M Quare MBE ADC	Corps Colonel
Brig (Retd) A S Craig OBE	Deputy Chairman REA
Col (Retd) C M Davies MBE	REA Hon Treasurer
WO1 (CSM) S Webster	Corps SM
Lt Col (Retd) L Inge	Retired Officer
Maj (Retd) P Gill MBE JP	South West Group
WO2 (QMSI) S Tolley	South Midlands Group
Mr E Hargreaves	North West Group
Maj (Retd) P Luscombe	North Midlands Group
Mr E C Prosser BEM	North East Group
MR J R Bell	Scotland & NI Group

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Kenneth M Kirk	Controller REA and Secretary
Maj (Retd) I Sidebottom	Corps Treasurer

APOLOGIES

Lt Col M Heffer RE TD	Reserve Army Officer
Lt Col (Retd) A J Bunting	Central Southern Group
Mr B Simm	East Anglia Group
Mr W A L Thomas	South Wales Group
Mr G Owens	South East Group

The President opened the meeting by reminding all of the trustees of their responsibilities and importance of their role as trustees in the governance of the Association. He welcomed the appointment of a new Controller Ken Kirk and Assistant controller Iain George.

The President stated his aim was that the Council should consider a more strategic role in future, setting the direction and developing a strategic plan to deliver our objectives, and examining the governance of the Association, particularly now that REA HQ is fully manned.

ITEM 1.0 - Declaration of conflicts of interest

1.1 The President explained that Charity Commission expects all charities to have a standard agenda item at the start of all trustee meetings asking each trustee to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest. This procedure should, at least, ensure that conflicts of interest are identified at the earliest opportunity. He asked the trustees to declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

1.2 The President declared three possible conflicts of interest. He advised that he was a patron of The Royal British Legion charity in Hampshire, a patron of the Veterans in Action charity and a champion for the Defence Medical Welfare Services charity; these interests would be entered in the Conflicts of Interest Register held by the Corps Treasurer. Council members were advised that the President would not participate in any decisions where his supported charities would stand to gain.

1.3 There were no further conflicts of interest, actual or potential, declared by any of the remaining trustees.

ITEM 2.0 – To confirm the minutes of the 71st Meeting

The President emphasised that they were only dealing with the accuracy of the Minutes for the record. No comments or proposed amendments have been received and he asked the meeting for their approval as to their accuracy. Council accepted that the Minutes of the 71st Meeting were a true record of the proceedings. The President signed the Minutes.

ITEM 3.0 - To consider matters arising from the proceedings of the 71st Meeting of Council

Corps website – The REA Controller is to discuss with Corps Col the policy and plan for the use of the web and the links between REA website and Corps Website.

Corps WISMIS Policy to be distributed to all Groups and branches to ensure that all branches understand their role in in the Corps WIS and Bereavement Policy.

Action: Corps HQ /Controller date by 31 May 2018

QGEA relationship to REA Proposed terms of association (associate membership) and support from REA HQ to be presented to next Council meeting –

Action Chairman/Controller by 30 Nov 2018

ITEM 4.0 - To take note of the proceedings of the 128th meeting of the Management Committee

The President confirmed that everyone had seen the minutes of the 128th management meeting and suggested in future only points raised by the management committee to council need be included in the Council briefing pack.

ITEM 5.0 - To note the Report on Benevolence

The President asked Brig Craig to give a brief update on benevolence; he explained the current trends are stable in terms on numbers of cases and expenditure.

The President emphasised the importance to highlighting the REA benevolence work to the wider REA and serving Corps. Encouraging branches to reach out to individuals and bring

cases to the attention of the REA/SSAFA/TRBL. It is important that REA branches reach out to individuals and we link up with other organisations to widen the net. Publicising of our benevolence assistance in an anonymised form through our website and social media on a regular monthly basis.

Action REA HQ/Controller ongoing review at next Council

Brig Bazeley highlighted the need to ensure that we link to SNL where we identify unemployment as a factor in the benevolence assistance provided.

Action REA HQ/ Benevolence Committee by September 2018

It was agreed that SNL will be invited to attend and address the REA AGM

Action REA HQ/ Controller by 11 May 2018

Association to highlight to branches and groups the procedure for requesting benevolent assistance and the criteria applied to improve outreach to individuals. Report back to Council on the process required to identify methods of more effectively getting funds to clients.

Action Benevolence Committee/Controller by 01 Sept 2018

It was proposed that a guide to benevolence and report be created for a future Sapper Magazine edition

Action REA HQ/Controller 01 Sep 2018

The President thanked Brig Craig for his update and for the work of the Benevolence Committee.

ITEM 6.0 - To note Minutes of REA Recruitment committee:

The President asked the Controller to give an update on the work of the Recruitment committee.

The President emphasised the importance of publicity through social media, events should be a focus for the REA, use of Mail chimp, short video/animation. Look at how we can learn from branches that have grown to assist other areas

Revisit the membership review and include

Action: REA HQ – Sep 2018

The President supported Mr Prosser's suggestion that a review of current prizes and awards by the REA to serving sappers is to be carried out and proposals for the new awards to be identified and presented to the next Council meeting.

Proposals for prizes and awards are being explored by RSME.

Action: Corps Col /Management Committee/Controller by 01 Sep 2018

ITEM 7.0 - To note the Minutes of the 119th REA Finance Committee and to consider and approve the following:

The recommendations of the REA Finance Committee –

It was identified that RE Museum grant for £75,000 is still being held and is expected to be drawn on in the next year. Discussions regarding additional individual grants from the REA to the Museum for specific projects are underway separately.

Proposed amendment to Kitchener Trust rules

It was agreed that the Kitchener fund should now cover from birth to the age of 25 and include assistance of funding of nursery education through to university education. There is no amendment necessary to the Trust rules. It is a widening of the interpretation of the rules to encompass the full spectrum of current education costs.

Proposer W02 Trolley
Secunder PJ Gill

The Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Royal Engineers Association for the year 2017 number of amendments were requested by the Chief Royal which was to be adjusted before submission of the TAR for signature and the Charity Commission. In particular it is critical that the Objects of the Association are correctly listed.

Action: Corps Treasurer/Controller 31 May 2018

Trustee Letter of Representation was agreed for signature by the Corps Col

Auditors for FY 2017

As our reserves are continuing to grow, it is proposed that the financial reserves be reduced from the £10-£11 million level to an £8-9million level over the next 5 years. This calculation of the financial reserves is based on a 100% safety margin over 4 years operating costs.

It was agreed to reduce the reserve by £2million over a 5 year period.

Proposer P. Luscombe
Secunder Corps SM

ITEM 8.0 - Update on 2018 Budget (FOO) and Valuation of REA (AFCIF) Investment

The Corps Treasurer drew the committee's attention to the Trustee Letter of Representation

The Corps Treasurer advised on the status of the FOO and REA (AFCIF) Investment. The charity had total funds of £12.6million at the end of the year (2017)

The President thanked the Corps Treasurer for his report and highlighted that despite having distributed an additional £1million we had maintained our level of reserves.

ITEM 9.0 - REA Welfare Fund Sitrep and proposal for future major grants

The President invited the Honorary Treasurer to update the committee on the progress of the 2017 Welfare Grant. He outlined the spending so far which is £850000, however the timescale for the submission of the Marne Bks project for 32 Engr Regt (£270,000) has been extended to 2018. Corps Col advised that CO 32 Engr Regt has this as a priority and should be able to report back in 3 months.

It was noted that only one REA branch had applied for a grant.

In addition to the 2017 grant Project Anemoi and the REA Nottingham band were supported. All units are to submit articles to the Sapper Magazine to promote the work of the REA.

It was proposed that REA Welfare Grant scheme would continue and will be £250,000 per annum from 2019 and will last for three years until 2021, split into two annual funding periods considered at the May and September REA Council meetings. The policy and process to be followed will be published.

This would be part of the process of the reduction of the reserve, an annual welfare grant of £250,000 for the next 3 years which would be advised to qualifying units and branches who will then be able to apply through REA HQ and the Finance Committee for grants towards

suitable projects which then would be placed before Council for consideration. This would not exclude applications for extraordinary opportunities should they occur.

It was agreed that it would be essential to ensure that the Grant opportunity was widely publicised on the web page and social media promoting the work of the REA in supporting serving personnel and REA branches.

Proposer B Prosser
Secunder L Inge

Action: Finance Committee

The Honorary treasurer advised the Council that the SCRM project was now going ahead, finance and annual costs having been previously agreed. Discussions regarding additional individual grants from the REA to the Museum for specific projects are underway separately.

Action Finance Committee/Controller

The Finance Committee having rejected a recent request for funding from SNL for annual funding for an additional employee, it was then agreed that the REA would discuss with SNL to establish a closer and supportive working relationship going forward.

Action Corps Col/Controller REA

The contract for the maintenance of the Corps Memorial at the NMA has now been agreed.

The President thanked the Honorary Treasurer for his very thorough report and the work of the Finance committee.

ITEM 10.0 - Review of REA Group Structure

The President highlighted the importance of linking REA Groups to all units in order to promote the REA and associated membership. The aim should be to review all REA Group boundaries with a view to creating slightly smaller groups so that all RE units (regular and Reserve) have a group responsibility. The controller is to submit a revised proposal for agreement at the next REA Council in Sep 18.

Action Controller

ITEM 11.0 - Annual Welfare Grant allocation

The President handed over the Chair of the Meeting to the Chairman for this item. The Chairman then asked the controller to present a proposal to for a grant to Veterans in Action.

It was agreed that a grant of £3000.00 would be made to Veterans in Action in recognition of their ongoing support to Serving and Veteran Sappers and their families across a wide range of activities including sports facilities, in particular boxing coaching, support with mental health issues through practical projects and expeditions. Support of families through events and outreach.

Action Controller

It was agreed that each Council meeting could consider applications for a Welfare Grant Allocation. The policy and process will be addressed before the next Council meeting in Sep 18.

Action: Finance Committee

The Corp Col proposed the purchase of four additional silhouettes for £3000 from "There but not there" The President directed it is be considered by the Finance Committee under delegated authority.

The Corps SM made a proposal to provide a grant to "The Poppy Factory" The President directed that this should first be submitted to the Finance Committee for consideration and then onto the Council

The President proposed that Council should consider Annual Welfare Grants at each Council meeting.

Action: Corps SM Sep 18

ITEM 12.0 - Amendments to REA Rules of Association

The President asked the Controller to present the proposed changes to the Rules of the Association these were accepted. The President proposed a change to the period of tenure for the President and Chair should be 5 years.

The President was further suggested that the rules should define the aims and output of the branches, Groups and Group Directors and that further changes should be considered as part of the Strategic Plan.

Action Chairman/Controller

ITEM 15.0 Corps Update

The President requested that the Corps SM provide an update on Corps activities, a slide pack has been distributed to all Council members. The Corps SM highlighted that the Corps leads way in providing welfare and career support to our soldiers in comparison to other branches of the Army.

The President thanked the Corps SM for his report.

ITEM 16.0 - Any Other Business

The future plans for the NMA are attached with these minutes.

It was agreed that the Controller will send out guidance for the implementation of GDPR legislation to all branches by 14 May 2018.

Action: Controller May 18

The Chairman led a vote of thanks to the President for his outstanding work as both a trustee and President of the REA over the past 5 years as he steps down from the role of Chief Royal Engineer and President of the REA in September.

The President thanked the Council for their support and in particular the work of the Chairman of the benevolence committee and the Honorary Treasurer

ITEM 17.0 - Date of next meeting

18 September 2018 it is proposed to hold this meeting at the Victory Services Club