

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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REA/A/1/3

13 November 2019

President REA
Controller REA
All Group Directors
All Deputy Group Directors
All Group Secretaries

MINUTES OF THE 33rd MEETING OF THE RECRUITING COMMITTEE HELD AT THE UNION JACK CLUB, LONDON, ON WEDNESDAY 30th OCTOBER 2019

Present

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|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Mr K Kirk | Controller REA – Chairman |
| Lt Col C James RE | Chairman - Designate |
| Maj (Retd) IL George | Asst Controller REA – Secretary |
| Lt Col (Retd) F Holman OBE | South Midlands Group |
| Lt Col (Retd) J Rawlings | East Anglia Group |
| LT Col A P Roberts | North West Group |
| Maj (Retd) R C A Macgregor MBE TD VR | Scotland & NI Group |
| Maj (Retd) A Scholey | North Midlands Group |
| Mr A Buxton BEM | South Wales Group |
| Mr M Forder | Eastern Group |
| Mr K Gover | South West Central Group |
| Mr GF O'Shea | London Group |
| Mr M Payne BEM | Central Southern Group |
| Mr G Scarborough | South East Group |

Serving Corps Observers

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| SSgt Walton | 1 RSME Regt |
| Cpl Peplow | 1 RSME Regt |

1. The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming those present. He thanked those attending for giving up their time so freely and recognised that the long distances travelled by some members were often fraught with difficulties. The Chairman introduced the Chairman designate Lt Col C James RE and extended a special welcome to SSgt Walton and Cpl Peplow who were observers from 1 RSME Regt.

ITEM 1 – TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE 32nd MEETING

2. The Secretary said he had not received any observations on the accuracy of the Minutes and asked the Committee if they agreed that the Minutes of the 32nd meeting were a true record of the proceedings; the Committee agreed. The Chairman signed the Minutes.

ITEM 2 – MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE 32nd MEETING

3. Paragraph 12 – Themed Branches. The Controller updated the committee on the Themed Branches that have now been formed which includes the Football Branch, Cycling Branch and Blue Light Branch (which has members who have served in the Police, Fire Service, Ambulance Service and Coastguard). The Football Branch has already attended the REA AGM and Annual Dinner and is planning to attend the Gibraltar Weekend in 2020 and arrange some matches with the local teams.

4. Paragraph 14 – Animated Videos. The Controller briefed and showed the committee the latest and final one of the three animated videos which was completed just before the meeting and covers Benevolence and Welfare/Family. The first two videos have been well received and are on the REA website and Facebook page. The final video will be completed and then put on the social media platforms. The Controller explained that HQ REA is now making good use of the professional support from HQ RE and the new communications hub which the REA are paying towards and fully assists with getting the message across.

5. Paragraph 15 – Sapper Service Women’s Network Branch. Mike Payne briefed the committee on the Sapper Service Women’s Network event and dinner and that they were really pleased with the support from the REA.

6. Paragraph 16 – Mental Health Initiatives. Gary O’Shea asked if there was an update on the training team that could promote Mental Health, Benevolence and Welfare. The Controller explain that this would be discussed later in the meeting. Lt Col Claire James RE explained that a new Mental Health Scheme for serving Soldiers called Op Smart is being introduced fairly soon.

7. Paragraph 17 – Standardised Email Addresses. At the previous meeting Mr Bob Prosser discussed the requirement for standardised email addresses. For this meeting Mr Mike Payne has done some research and produced information that he has passed to all the committee on standardised email addresses. The Controller thanked Mr Mike Payne for the worked he had done and said he will now speak to the IT experts at HQ RE and see if this proposal is practical.

Action: Controller

ITEM 3 – BUDGET REPORT

8. The Asst Controller presented the Budget Report for 2019. The Asst Controller explained that the budget for FY 2019 was £5,000 and so far £1892.69 has been spent. Lt Col Claire James RE asked if Branches can use the Recruiting Budget and the Controller explained that the branches use the group grants for recruiting and not the recruiting fund but can bid separately to the Welfare fund for Gazebo’s, etc. Lt Col Claire James RE also observed that 45% of the budget was used on travel and not the recruiting budget. The Controller explained that limits and rules on expenses are being reviewed and that he will speak to the Corps Treasurer to see if all travel and expenses can come out of one budget or stay as it is with the fund facilitating the recruiting group and not facilitating the recruiting activities. The 2019 report is at Annex A.

Action: Controller

ITEM 4 – CONTACT WITH THE SERVING SOLDIER

9. The Chairman and the committee discussed the following ways to engage with the younger generation which included the following:

10. The Committee discussed the Branch Information card which was initially asked for by the North West Group to be used at events and was produced by Bev at the Sapper magazine. This can be used as a business card by branches and the recruiting fund will assist for paying for this. However it was discussed that more work needs to be done on the card so it can appeal to the serving soldier and veterans. Mr Mick Payne has volunteered to work on the card to get a more impact-full design.

Action: Mr Mike Payne

11. Mr Mick Payne asked for animations to be sent out to Group Secretaries to be played in units especially to recruits if the facilities are suitable. The Controller will send the animations to the Group Secretaries.

Action: Controller

12. It was discussed that recruits are briefed on the REA at the beginning of their course and for another 30 minutes in the programme so they are briefed at the end of the course. Lt Col James said that it is difficult to change the programme but showing these animations in military establishments will help promote the REA. The serving soldiers at the meeting said using the Soldier Space at Chatham to show the videos and having posters would help to inform the soldiers of the REA. Face to face with REA members at certain functions would also assist.

ITEM 5 – RECRUITING INITIATIVES

13. The Controller also discussed how the REA has taken over funding from the RECCT and the REA now has a direct link to the serving soldier with funding (£130,000) to assist the serving soldier with Adventure training, stable belts, and polo shirts for recruits, prizes at the Sapper games and supporting the elite sports men and women. The REA are comfortable taking over this funding as it helps the serving soldier and promotes the REA. The Controller also spoke on the REA membership and how to activate your membership and when issuing the stable belt to recruits then the membership should be activated at the same time. Benefits of being an REA member would include entry to the RE museum and a net to support serving soldiers and veterans with benevolence if things go wrong and they need help. The message should be what we do and the awareness of what the REA is about and to reach out to the vulnerable.

14. The Controller spoke of his proposal and presentation on the 12 days of Christmas which ties in with the animation video. The proposal is all about outreach to contact with branch members, veterans who are not branch members and the serving soldier. The controller will send the presentation out to all Deputy Group Directors and it will be on the REA website and Facebook page. Lt Col Claire James RE suggested that before the campaign 12 days of reflection should be promoted to look back and show what's been achieved and then the campaign to go forward.

Action: Controller

15. Lt Col Claire James discussed about female officers and the Controller discussed that females did hold appointments in the branches and he is keen for other members to be brought into the fold. Associate members are active in many branches and should be welcome by the branches.

ITEM 6 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

16. The Controller spoke about an offer from Jaguar Land Rover on significant discounts which he will promote to branches.

Action: Controller

17. The Controller spoke about the REA articles in the Sapper Magazine, REA annual report and REA membership. Mr Mike Payne also spoke about the errors in the Sapper Magazine which should not happen. The Controller will speak to the Corps Secretary.

Action: Controller

18. Mr M Payne spoke about Rule 11.16. which is about names of branch delegate's for the national AGM. This topic was discussed and this rule will be changed to a more reasonable length of time.

Action: Assistant Controller

19. Mr Glenn Scarborough brought up the subject of Gift Aid which the branches are currently not able to claim. The Controller was aware of this and will speak with the Corps Treasurer to discuss the way forward.

Action: Controller

20. Mr Gary O'Shea asked if a survey had been sent to the serving soldier to ask them what they wanted from the REA which would shape the way forward. The Controller discussed that a survey did happen a couple of years ago but this would be revisited.

Action: Controller

21. Mr Mal Forder brought up the subject of luggage straps in Corps colours which he had discussed with Steph at Corps Enterprises but she said it would not be commercially viable as she was not convinced they would sell. The Assistant Controller will speak to Steph.

Action: Assistant Controller

22. The Controller discussed the future of the Corps Weekends. The Controller did not want to discuss this now but wanted groups and branches to think about this and come back with any thoughts on the future of the Corps weekends. This will also be discussed at the Management meeting.

23. Lt Col (Retd) John Rawlings explained about the location change of the Colchester Branch and how often they now meet.

24. The Controller handed over the Chairmanship of the meeting to Lt Col Claire James RE.

This was proposed by Mr Mike Payne and seconded by Mr Gary O'Shea. All the committee were in favour.

ITEM 7 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

25. The date of the next meeting will be 11 March 2020. The meeting will be held in the Union Jack Club, London commencing at 1230 hrs. Coffee and tea will be available from 1200 hrs.

13 November 2019

Secretary/Assistant Controller

Minutes Approved

Date

Chairman

Annex:

A. Budget Report for 2019

Recruiting Budget for 2019

Income

| Item | <u>Amount</u> | Remarks |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------|
| Recruiting Budget for 2019 | £5000.00 | |
| Total Income | £5000.00 | A |

Expenditure

| Item | <u>Amount</u> | Remarks |
|------------------------|---------------|---------|
| Travel Expenses | £549.85 | |
| Meeting Room | £460.00 | |
| Senate Media Animation | £837.84 | |
| Total Expenditure | £1892.69 | B |

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|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Balance Remaining at end 2019 (A-B) | £3107.31 |
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