

The Royal Engineers Association

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

Patron: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN



REA/A/1/3

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01 November 2021

President REA
CEO REA
All Group Directors
All Deputy Group Directors
All Group Secretaries

MINUTES OF THE 37th MEETING OF THE RECRUITING COMMITTEE HELD ON ZOOM ON WEDNESDAY 27th OCTOBER 2021

Present

Mr K Kirk	CEO REA
Maj (Retd) IL George	Operations Manager – Secretary
Maj (Retd) R C A Macgregor MBE TD VR	NI & Scotland Group
Capt D Bell	South Wales Group
Mr J Hawley	North West Group
Mr M Payne BEM	Central Southern Group
Mr R Bardsley	South East Group
Mr A Scholey	North Midlands Group
Mr M Forder	Eastern Group
Mr GF O'Shea	London Group

Serving Corps Observers

SSgt J Connell	1 RSME Regt
Cpl B Watson	1 RSME Regt
Sgt A Russell	22 Engr Regt

Apologise

Lt Col C James RE	Chairman
Lt Col (Retd) F Holman OBE	South Midlands Group
Lt Col (Retd) J Rawlings	East Anglia Group
Mr P Dineley	North East Group

1. The CEO opened the meeting by welcoming those present. He thanked those attending for giving up their time so freely. The CEO extended a special welcome to SSgt Connell, Sgt Russell and Cpl Watson who were the observers for this meeting and briefed them on the procedure of the meeting.

2. The CEO noted that apologies had been received from those listed above and included the Chairman who had to attend another meeting at short notice.

ITEM 1 – TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE 36th MEETING

3. 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 36th meeting were a true record of the proceedings; the Committee agreed. The CEO will sign the Minutes.

Proposer: Mr R Bardsley

Seconder: Mr R MacGregor MBE TD VR

ITEM 2 – MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE 36th MEETING

4. Paragraph 13 – Presentation of Polo Shirts. The CEO discussed that Phase One recruits will be presented with polo shirts when the military give the all clear for Branch members to enter the barracks.

5. Paragraph 10 – Re-engineering and Group structure strategy. The CEO briefed the meeting on this matter. He discussed that the Group structures changed so that more Regiments would be involved with the REA which was a good idea. However, in practice it does not work well in certain areas with groups being too small to arrange certain activities. Requests have been received from some branches to return to the previous structure. Most of the Deputy Group Directors gave their view on the Group structure and how it is working in their area. The CEO will go back to the Trustees to discuss this matter further.

ITEM 3 – BUDGET REPORT

6. The Operations Manager presented the budget report for 2021 and explained that nothing had been spent so far this year and that £5,000 was still available. The 2021 report is at Annex A.

7. Mr Mike Payne BEM asked if the 600 cards being requested will be paid for by the recruiting budget and it was confirmed by the CEO it will be. He also asked the other Deputy Group Directors to ask their branches if they need any of the cards and inform him if they do. The CEO confirmed that if the demand is still there then keep the offer open and they will be paid for by the recruiting budget.

ITEM 4 – CONTACT WITH THE SERVING SOLDIER AND RECRUITING INITIATIVES

8. The following was discussed:

- The CEO gave a detailed brief to the committee on the Strategic Review 2021 which had been discussed at the REA AGM on the 8 October and is a 5 year plan. The CEO explained the direction the REA is going to take and gave a PowerPoint presentation. He explained the strategic review, what we do and what is required for the REA to go forward. Reaching out to all members of the Sapper family is important and there is plenty of work still to be done.
- The CEO confirmed that the following goals need to be achieved:
 - Early engagement with the serving Sapper.
 - Re-energise the branch structure
 - Team development.
 - Digital Transformation.
 - Collaboration.
- The CEO confirmed that the Board of Trustees are behind the strategic review and funding is available. However the CEO has been in contact with FiMT and there is a possibility of a £50,000 grant from them to support the changes to the website and web based app.

- The following questions were asked by the members and observers:
 - Mr Gary O'Shea asked that veterans who are assisted with benevolence should be encouraged to join the REA and be a member.
 - SSgt Jason Connell discussed welfare grants and the positive effect they have had on the soldiers of 1RSME. He felt that other Regiments need to be educated on the REA and what they do. He also asked how the REA engage with young Sappers. Phase one Polo shirts and Phase two stable belts were explained and that this is the first exposure that the young sapper has with the REA.
 - Mr Mike Payne BEM discussed welfare grants and the need for feedback if they are not accepted.
 - Mr Ron MacGregor MBE TD VR talked about awareness of the REA during service and the structure of Branch meetings need to be such that new members want to return again.
- The CEO discussed that the Corps SM is encouraging Branches to support Unit sports events or Corps level sport events which is giving an immediate connection with Units and Branches. The CEO is also encouraging Branches to invite serving soldiers to their events as well.
 - Mr Richard Bardsley discussed that the 25 members of the Medway Branch have been invited to 1 RSME Regiment boxing night.
 - Mr Gary O'Shea spoke about his discussions with the RSM of 101 Regiment and how it was difficult to engage with Reserve soldiers and a strategy to engage with them was required.
 - SSgt Jason Connell talked about attending events for those that did not drink and that events should be organised to encourage everyone to attend. Think out of the box to encourage others to partake.
 - Mr Richard Bardsley explained about the vegetable garden at Brompton Barracks that was used by serving and veterans with the produce being used for functions.
 - Mr Alan Scholey discussed how his Branch and the local Reserve Unit work well together.

ITEM 5 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9. The following was discussed:

- The CEO discussed and explained a mental health app which is clinically proven called Leafyard for veterans and has been trialled by the Fusiliers. The CEO will send out information and link on this to all the Deputy Group Directors. The serving soldiers have Headspace and Sgt Alonso Russell said he knew about Headspace but had not used it. Mr Gary O'Shea knew about Headspace and said he would fully support a mental health app.
- Mr Mal Forder asked about the presentation to recruits at Harrogate of polo shirts. He said he will speak to the Chairman of the Ripon Branch to see if the Branch presented the polo shirts in the past.
- Mr Alan Scholey discussed the lift at 106 Sqn and the CEO told him to speak to him about this later; if required an application for assistance can be completed.
- Mr Richard Bardsley told the committee that if anyone required information on the raised garden beds to contact him.
- Mr Mike Payne BEM asked Richard Bardsley to send him the information on the raised garden. Deputy Directors to remind Branches that information cards are still available.
- Mr Ron MacGregor MBE TD VR asked Mike Payne to send him the information on the branch cards.
- SSgt Jason Connell thanked the CEO for the invitation to the meeting which he really enjoyed.
- Sgt Alonzo Russell said he was aware of the REA but this meeting was a good reminder and he looked forward to the 9 November when the CEO was visiting 22 Engr Regt.

10. The CEO closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their hard work.

ITEM 6 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11. The date of the next meeting will be 09 March 2022 on Zoom and at Chatham.

01 November 2021

Secretary/Operations Manager

Minutes Approved

Date

Chairman

Annex:

A. Budget Report for 2021

Annex A to
Minutes of the 37th Meeting of the Recruiting Meeting
Dated 27 October 2021

Recruiting Budget for 2021

Income

Item	Amount	Remarks
Recruiting Budget for 2021	£5000.00	
Total Income	£5000.00	A

Expenditure

Item	Amount	Remarks
Total Expenditure	£00.00	B

Balance Remaining at end 2021 (A-B)	£5,000.00
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