

ROYAL ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION



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THE SAPPER CHARITY

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MINUTES OF THE 140th MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF THE ROYAL ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION, HELD AT THE RE MUSEUM AND ON ZOOM ON WEDNESDAY 24th OCT 2023

In attendance:

Mr K Kirk CEO REA – Chair
Mr N Gunnell Operations Director - Secretary
Mr M Heffer Trustee
Mr J Allerhead South East Representative
Mr A Brown Deputy Group Director Southern Group
Mr R Bardsley Committee Member
Mr J Brown Central Southern Group Representative
Mr P Luscombe North Midlands Group
Mr M Payne Central Southern Group Representative
WO1 S Tolley South Midlands Group Representative

Apologies

WO1 S Eardley Corps RSM
Mr R Tootle Scotland and NI Representative
Maj P Marsh HQ RE Representative
Mr D Bell South Wales Representative
Mr M Facchini Committee Member
Mr I Sidebottom Corps Treasurer
Mr P Taylor National Branch Representative
WO1 (RSM) P McBride 3 RSME Regt
Col R Hawkins Corps Colonel

ITEM 1 - TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE 139th MEETING

1. Due to technical issues the Committee accepted, (post meeting using Boardable on the 25th October), that the minutes of the 139th meeting were a true record of the proceedings.

Proposed: Mr R Bardsley
Seconder: Mr J Allerhead

ITEM 2 - MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 139th MEETING

2. Confirmation of the rule changes to recognise the incorporation of
 - a. Social Groups – Agenda item 5

- b. Broaden Membership types - Agenda item 5

ITEM 3 – FINANCIAL SUMMARIES

3. The CEO reminded everyone of the importance of Branch Financial Summaries and that the failure to produce accurate summaries results in the Charity Commission scrutinising the REA. The CEO reminded Committee members that there was no requirement for Branches who have moved their accounts to HQ REA to produce an Annual Financial Summary.

ITEM 4 – PROVISION OF BANKING SERVICES

4. After much discussion on the merits of the banking services being provided by HQ REA, the committee decided that a rewording is required to reflect that it is a bookkeeping service and not a banking service that REA HQ is providing. **Action: Re-emphasise and reword banking services – Ops Director and CEO.**

ITEM 5 – FORMAL INCLUSION & RECOGNITION OF SOCIAL BRANCHES IN THE REA RULES AND THE BROADENING MEMBERSHIP TYPES

5. **Background.** Three Social branches already exist; Sappers in the City, White Horse Sappers and Stoke on Trent Sappers. The branches meet monthly and have their meetings advertised by HQ REA. These branches are proving a good way of broadening the REA message and keeping more Sappers informed of what the REA is and does. Social branches exist where there is not the capacity to create a Branch with a committee.

- a. **Proposal.** The following text be entered into the REA Rules in order to recognise the existence of Social Branches and therefore encourage further Social Branches to be created.

“Social Branches are groups of REA Life Members who meet on a regular basis but do not have a committee and branch structure. In order to be recognised by the REA and be informed of REA activity, Social Branches must have an admin / point of contact. REA members who solely belong to a Social Branch do not have a vote at the AGM, cannot sit on REA committees and are not eligible for any funding (including mileage) without the submission of a Unit & Branch Support Grant.”

Proposer: Mr A Brown
Seconder: Mr R Bardsley

6. **Background.** There are three categories of membership of the Association:

- a. Annual Membership.
- b. Life Membership.
- c. Associate Membership

7. **Proposal.** Broaden the membership types within the REA in order to potentially increase membership and therefore sustain the current structure. This proposal will result in the delegation of authority to branches to accept new members and the discontinuation of some current membership types. Proposal:

- a. **Annual Membership.** Discontinue the allocation of annual branch membership.
- b. **Life Membership.** Unchanged but to be linked to a primary branch in order to reduce the numbers in the HQ Branch (Currently 20,000)

- c. **Associate Membership.** Discontinue the allocation of Associate branch membership, existing associate members remain associate members.
- d. **All Arms Membership.** Veterans and serving of any arm or service (including Cadet Force Instructors) are eligible for this type of membership. All Arms members are approved by a branch vote. The number of all arms veterans is not to exceed 40% of the branch veteran membership. All Arms members may be subject to different costs when attending centrally funded REA events for example The Corps Memorial Weekend. No fee is required by REA HQ for this type of membership.
- e. **Widow & Widowers Membership.** Widows and widowers of any former Royal Engineer or veteran (regular or reserve) are eligible for this type of membership. Widow & widowers members are approved by a branch vote. Widow and Widowers members may be subject to different costs when attending centrally funded REA events for example The Corps Memorial Weekend. No fee is required by REA HQ for this type of membership.
- f. **Family & Friend's Membership.** Open to parents, children (Over 18), partners, siblings and friends of former and serving Sappers (Regular and Reserve). This type of membership is aimed to encourage those who have had a close affinity with the Corps and wish to keep that connection going. Family and Friend members are approved by a branch vote. Family members may be subject to different costs when attending centrally funded REA events i.e. Corps Memorial Weekend. No fee is required by REA HQ for this type of membership.

Proposer: Mr A Brown
 Seconder: Mr P Luscombe

ITEM 6 – FUNDRAISING

8. The Operations Director provided a brief overview of the fundraising activity that has taken place and requested that anyone who is keen to fundraise for the REA should contact HQ REA for support in doing so.

ITEM 7 – EVENTS

9. The Operations Director gave an overview of events taking place between Nov 23 & Oct 24:
- a. Remembrance Sunday - 12th Nov 23
 - b. Plymouth - Dinner Dance - 18th Nov 23
 - c. Chilwell - Burns Night Supper - 27th Jan 24
 - d. Corps Boxing Finals - 21st Mar 24
 - e. Normandy, France - London Bridge Refurbishment, Pegasus Bridge Museum - 14th - 18th Mar 24
 - f. Italy - 80th Anniversary of The Amazon Crossing, Monte Cassino - 10th - 13th May 24
 - g. Gibraltar Weekend - 24 -26 May 24
 - h. 80th Anniversary of D-day - 6th June 24 – Members are encouraged to attend locally organised events
 - i. Memorial Service - Cpl Andrew George Mcilvenny RE 9 Para Sqn, Holy Trinity Church, Gillingham, Kent. - 8th June 24
 - j. Ripon Weekend - Standard Bearer National Event - 7th – 9 Jun 24
 - k. 75th Anniversary of the Freedom of Ripon Cathedral Service & Dinner - 26th – 27th Jun 24
 - l. Corps Memorial Weekend & REA AGM - 13th - 15th Sep 24
 - m. Annual Dinner & Sapper Sunday location and date tbc

n. Holland - 80th Anniversary of The Armoured Engineers, Ijzendijke - 19 - 22 Oct
24

10. Ripon Weekend and Ripon 75th Freedom Celebrations have initially attracted funding from REA HQ however this is being reviewed as the events are not currently inclusive of REA members e.g. The dinner is invitation only.

11. Details of all of the events listed will be published on [SapperCom.com](https://www.sappercom.com).

ITEM 8 - BADGE OF MERIT NOMINATIONS

12. The CEO reminded committee members of the process of Badge of Merit nominations. If the deadlines are not met then individuals will not be considered for this year's board.

ITEM 9 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13. **Annual Dinner.** Concern was expressed that the annual dinner discriminated against those who did not own dinner jackets and that there was a change in dress code from what was initially advertised. This was acknowledged by the Operations Director who stated that the dress code was changed and the AGM moved to earlier in the day to allow attendees to change clothes and give a break between the two events. This was done on the basis of feedback from previous years that the Dinner was a post meeting meal and not an annual dinner. The [feedback](#) from this year's event has been unanimous with attendees supporting the dinner jacket dress code and disappointment at individuals wearing lounge suits and in some instances blazers.

14. **National Branches.** Clarification was sought as to why National Branches get central funding and local Branches do not. **CEO to review and present to the committee an amendment to the rules.**

15. **SapperCom.** SapperCom continues to grow however there is currently no way of navigating from the REA website to the platform. **Ops Director to rectify.**

ITEM 10 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

16. The date of the next meeting is 10th January 24 location tbc.

Operations Director
25th October 2023

Approved
Chief Executive Officer
25th October 2023

Distribution:
Management Committee Members
Board of Trustees
Group Directors
Deputy Group Directors
Group Secretaries
Branch Secretaries
CEO REA
Corps Treasurer