

MINUTES OF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 JUNE, 2024

Present: Mike Gunn, Michael Farthing, Mark Murrell, David Eustace, Robert Stern (chair)

1. The meeting acknowledged Peter Hornsby's apology for absence.
2. The chair updated the meeting as to recent board proceedings, including the cancellation of the board meeting scheduled for May.
3. The chair referred the meeting to the recent Finance Council meeting. There was some general discussion in relation to the meeting, both as to matters discussed at the meeting and how the meeting went in procedural terms. There was general agreement that the meeting, being Zoom only, ran into none of the difficulties that have manifested themselves in recent hybrid meetings, most notably (a) the discussion being dominated by those physically present, and those not physically present being disenfranchised in some way and (b) there being insufficient numbers of Members physically attending and so the social interaction benefit inherent in physical meetings not arising to any great extent.
4. It was recognised that it was no longer tenable to propose that meetings of Council should be physical only, with no Zoom attendance, particularly as this would lead to members, especially those living in distant parts of the country, not attending. Given a choice between Zoom only meetings and hybrid meetings, the majority view was that, after this year's AGM, future meetings of Council would ideally all be Zoom only (because of the difficulties inherent in hybrid meetings referred to in 3 above and the extra cost that they entail) but with David Eustace dissenting on the basis that the limited physical presence inherent in hybrid meetings was preferable to none at all. It was agreed that this issue would be addressed in the Committee's report to the AGM.
5. There was a lengthy discussion in relation to Regulation No.7 (complaints against Direct Members), in particular as regards the extent to which matters should, in some cases, be more appropriately dealt with locally rather than by a panel under the constitutional procedure. It was agreed that the chair would circulate some proposed amendments to the regulation for subsequent consideration by the Board.
6. It was agreed that the next meeting would be in the week commencing 5th August.