

Report from the Chairman of the Governance Committee

The Governance Committee has, continuing its practice of meeting every couple of months, had an active year.

The Committee has, as ever, both responded to the usual ad hoc requests for guidance and advice and also dealt with a number of specific matters including:

- Considering whether improvements could be made to the Direct Members' Representatives regime, whether by extending length of terms in office or otherwise
- Drafting updates to a number of constitutional documents including the articles of association (including widening of club membership of Council and abolition of the membership fee), the Game Fee Bye-laws, the Direct Members Bye-laws, the Procedural Bye-laws and the complaints procedures.
- Responding to a review by the Chair of the Board in relation to the role of the Governance Committee (and Finance Committee) resulting, amongst other things, in greater clarity on the role of the Governance Committee and a commitment to publish minutes of meetings.
- The practice of some meetings of Council being held on a hybrid basis (i.e. meetings where some members attend in person and others by Zoom). Here, it was recognised that holding "physical presence only" meetings was no longer acceptable, particularly because of its effect on those living in distant parts of the country or otherwise unable to attend. It was felt that hybrid meetings (a) unfortunately lead to the discussion being dominated by those physically present and thus those attending by zoom being disenfranchised in some way and (b) do not have sufficient rank and file members attending for there to be material social interaction. When account is also taken of the financial cost inherent in holding a physical meeting, it is the Committee's view that it would be best if it became normal practice for Council meetings to be held on a Zoom-only basis.

The Committee is very much aware of the lack of diversity in its membership and will continue to seek to address this issue.

The Pearce Report recommends that the annual report of each Standing Committee sets out specific recommendations for Council to endorse and for Council, or the Board, as appropriate, to implement, with agreed time limits for implementation. The Governance Committee has no items for specific recommendation this year.

Robert Stern – 2nd October, 2024

