UK Fireball Association

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

7.30 pm Friday 12th August

Hayling Island SC

**Present: all attendees signed the attendance register**

**The meeting started at 19.40**

***Jez White had previously resigned from the position of Chairman so the meeting was opened by Chris Turner, co-opted member of the UKFA Committee.***

1. **Apologies for absence**

 None

1. **Confirmation 2015 AGM minutes**

The 2015 AGM scheduled to be held at Pwhelli did not occur. There were therefore no minutes of meeting to approve.

1. **2015 financial statements**

Copies of the 2014 and 2015 financial statements were circulated.

Ian Castle talked through the 2015 statement:

**Key points**

* Chris Turner cautioned that the 2015 and 2014 comparative figures should be viewed together rather than in isolation as elements of the 2014 deficit were linked to 2015’s reported surplus.
* The 2015 worlds were a financial success with thanks to Richard Anderton and team.
* Since 2007 UKFA has consistently lost money – c. £4,000 in aggregation - on National championships. Accumulated deficits have in the past been erased by occasional windfall surpluses generated from hosting international events. However this situation is untenable and UKFA must ensure it balances its books annually.
* The HISC Nationals are on track to generate a surplus.
* The Dinghy Show is very expensive and could now cost £2,000p.a. if we wish to continue to display two boats on the stand.
* Training has not been very successful; it has cost more than is recouped.
* There is currently £20,000+ cash in the bank but it needs protecting to ensure that money is ploughed back into class development without prejudicing the association’s long term viability.
* Membership is as low as it has been for many years. UKFA is not alone among dinghy associations in this but a renewed drive for new members is required. In 2017, UKFA membership will be required for Golden Dolphin events and the Inland Championship as well as the Nationals.
* The membership year is January to December but many members only renew their subscription shortly before the Nationals in August causing unneccesary work. This will be addressed in part by the implementation of direct debiting to enable UKFA to control the renewal process.
* In the future, UKFA’s Dinghy Show representatives will be encouraged to sign up members/new members on the stand.
* It is important that members feel they are getting something for their money and not just at the Nationals. In this regard, and as a first initiative, Andy Robinson will be sending out a new ‘e-magazine’ to paid-up members and there will be more on the new (shortly to go live) website that will accessible via a members-only link.

Proposal to adopt the Financial Statements:

Geoff Holden proposed, seconded by Steve Chesney.

All voted in favour bar one.

1. **Election of committee members**

Given UKFA currently did not have a Chairman, Chris Turner called for nominations for the role.

Steve Chesney proposed Chris Turner should take on the position, seconded by Nick Hurst. In the absence of any other nominees this proposal was carried unanimously.

Chris Turner apprised the meeting of the current committee position where it was not clear which current members had been formally elected and those who had been co-opted over the years. He proposed that the names he was to read out would be elected *en-bloc*.

Proposed committee members were:

* **Ian Castle**  - Treasurer and Membership Secretary
* **Rick Cornes** – Open Meeting Co-ordinator
* **Sophie Holden** – Youth Co-ordinator
* **Andy Robinson** - Publicity and Marketing
* **Vince Horey** - Technical Representative
* **Nick Hurst** – Webmaster
* **Richard Anderton** has no defined role but will be looking after international events and the organisation of UKFA committee meetings.
* **David Hall** also has no defined role but will be in charge of the organisation of the Dinghy Show stand.
* Whilst not formally on the Committee, Russell Thorne plays a valued role in his capacity of the UK’s Fireball International representative

Steve Chesney proposed the installation of the Committee as detailed and Geoff Holden seconded. The committee was unanimously voted in.

Chris Turner went on to advise that he was looking for two volunteers to join the Committee one to act as National Championship Organiser (2018 event onwards) and one be Club Fleet Development Co-ordinator. No-one present at the meeting offered to take on either role.

Chris Turner proposed a vote of thanks to Jez White for his period of Chairman and for all those who had served on the Committee during the last few years some of whom had and come and gone without any form of recognition. He particularly thanked Tim Saunders who had been on the Committee for very many years in a number of capacities, including Chairman, who was now standing down.

1. **UKFA constitution**

Chris Turner advised that UKFA had survived without a Constitution document since 1962 but that one was needed for various practical and operational reasons.

Copies of a proposed constitution document were circulated. It was based on a RYA template but adapted for UKFA’s position under the umbrella of Fireball International.

He proposed that the document be adopted as presented on the basis that it can be easily amended in the light of experience if need be.

Some members commented on a perceived need to clarify membership categories within the document. Chris Turner responded that the association does not need to actually use all the categories if it does not wish to. However, this was a good example of the sort of change that can be made in the future if need be.

Nick Hurst proposed and Dave Hall seconded the proposal and there was unanimous support to adopt the constitution.

1. **Annual membership fee**

Chris Turner explained that membership fees do not currently cover the annual dinghy show and administration costs of UKFA. There was a need to simplify membership categories and to look at increasing membership fee income. This subject had been discussed at the 2014 AGM in Tenby but the debate had become protracted and ineffective.

Ian Castle advised the biggest problem was the way in which the membership fee was fragment in as much as boat-owning members are required to purchase a boat sticker for £6 in addition to paying annual subscriptions of £20. In itself this causes a good deal of confusion but members also tend not to understand that £8 of their UKFA membership subs go to Fireball International.

It was Ian Castle’s contention that it would be much easier to have one fee that includes the sticker. He would also like to see the current requirement for a non boat-owning crew to be a full member of UKFA to be dropped.

A brief debate ensued and a number of fee structures were discussed.  It was agreed that with effect from January 2017 Full Membership would increase to £30 and Junior Membership (aged under 21) will be £20 – both fees to include membership of Fireball International.  Associate Membership to remain at £10 and boat certification fee to remain at £15.

It was agreed that both helm and crew must be Full/Junior members of UKFA if they wish to compete in National and Inland championships as well as Golden Dolphin events (in instances where neither is the boat owner then the boat owner shall be a Full/Junior member).  Only the boat owner needs to be a Full/Junior member for standard club open meetings and for other club events.

Steve Chesney proposed adoption of this fee structure and Vince Horey seconded. With one vote against, the vote was carried.

1. Any other business points:
* Open Meeting attendance – Rick Cornes (not present at the meeting) will be working on this. It was suggested that a page on the website could attract comments.
* Regeneration of the Golden Dolphin Series was well received as a defined series would attract more regular attendance. It was felt there should be a good spread of open meetings around the country rather than in the south east.
* The issue was raised of event timings as sometimes open meetings clash with major events or are adversely impacted by international events (Shoreham SC’s 2016 open being a case in point). Unfortunately, some clubs do not give a choice of dates; we take it or leave it.
* ‘Mail Chimp’ can support a newsletter that is only available to members. This will be dealt with by Nick Hurst and Andy Robinson.
* UKFA may be able to benefit from discounts offered by marine suppliers. There is already a link with UK Global Insurance. It is intended that such offers will be available to members from within the ‘members only’ section of the new website.
* The issue of using twin spinnaker poles was raised. Chris Turner advised that discussions with Fireball International had already been opened. Twin poles were used in the 1970s with a good degree of success. It was suggested that this might increase the cost of the boat but David Sayce pointed out that carbon is not necessary and the fly-away set-up is an optional extra. Untapered aluminium poles are cheap and easy to set up. Ian Pinnell, who had received a supportive e-mail from the UK team who had trialled their use, will cost out options.
* Could helm and crew both wear a trapeze harness? Chris Turner advised that an exploratory proposal to allow both crew and helm to wear a harness (with the proviso that only one or the other could actually be on the wire at any one point in time) had already been put forward to FI. Steve Chesney suggested that a formal written proposal now be submitted to FI. It was noted that this would only constitute a reversion to a previous rule relating to trapeze harnesses.
* Steve Chesney advised there was currently no venue for the 2018 Worlds but France and Spain were possible options.

The floor expressed its thanks to Chris Turner for taking over the Chairman role, to Ian Castle for the accounts and Fiona Sayce for taking the minutes.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 20.44

Fiona Sayce September 2016