

**Minutes of the Twenty Seventh Meeting of the Council
held on 28 January 2009**

Present:	Mr M Ward	Chairman
	Miss S Plant	President / Girls Youth
	Dr N S Wrench	Vice Chairman
	Mr M Taylor	Hon Treasurer
	Mr N Chilton	Management
	Mr B Rea	Management
	Mrs S Marlow	Management
	Mr T Eade	Bucks/Development
	Mrs F Tierney	Hants/ Women's League
	Miss C Putt	Middlesex
	Mr M Umney	Middlesex
	Mr T Hilton	Surrey
	Ms K Peters	Sussex
	Mr R Strudwick	RDA
	Mrs D Bonner	SCHUA
By invitation	Ms K Dodd	EH Non Executive Director

The Chairman welcomed Ms Dodd to the meeting. He also welcomed Mrs Bonner to the meeting representing the SCHUA.

Apologies for absence

62 Mrs K Daffey, Ms C Hales, Mr R Macer

Chairman's Introduction

63 The Chairman CONGRATULATED Sheila Plant on reaching the final three in the '*Sunday Times Sportswomen of the Year 2008 Unsung Hero Award*' which would be presented at Lords on 12 February.

64 The Chairman CONGRATULATED Chris Pickett on receiving the '*The Times Sydney Friskin Memorial Goblet for Outstanding Services to Hockey*'. Chris, President of Havant, was formerly Great Britain and England women's manager.

65 The Chairman said he would personally like to thank Tony Eade for his superb contribution in leading the work of the Development Group. Council ENDORSED the Chairman's remarks.

Minutes of the Previous meeting

66 The Minutes were AGREED subject to the inclusion of Mr Chilton in the apologies for absence.

Matters arising

a) Minute 1288 – Junior hockey bench numbers

67 This was still unresolved. Dr Wrench agreed to write to EH on the issue.

b) Minute 33 – County Representatives

68 Dr Wrench reported that Berkshire had nominated Eilish MacBean as its representative. The Chairman said he had been in correspondence with Kent regarding the need for representative.

c) Minute 34 – Level 2 coaching courses

69 The Chairman said he raised the issue with the RDM and with the Chief Executive. Mr Rea said the problem had been going on for far too long and he would see if anything could be done to relieve the problem of resources.

70 Mr Eaude confirmed the importance of the issue; the problem was that the South did not have sufficient tutors and opportunities for assessment. He was disappointed that there was no report from the RDM as there were a number of areas where the office's input was necessary. The Chairman confirmed that he had been told that no members of the South Office could attend, as they were involved in a meeting on coaching issues.

d) Minute 53 – Pitches

71 Dr Wrench said he had circulated the Chief Executive's recent note on 3rd Generation Long Pile surfaces. Members expressed concern at the potential loss of hockey surfaces. There was a great danger that local authorities in particular would be seduced by Football money into relaying time expired pitches with surfaces unsuitable for hockey. Dr Wrench said that counties needed to keep themselves aware of any proposal to lay new or relay artificial surfaces to ensure that surfaces suitable for hockey were achieved.

72 The Chairman drew attention to the problem of the surface at Hampstead and Westminster. Mr Umney confirmed that Middlesex had informed all its clubs concerning the unsuitability of the surface; its use for women's league matches had been prohibited. However it was known that the surface was still being used for London League matches.

73 Mrs Tierney said the EH advice was unsatisfactory in that although it banned the use of unapproved surfaces for competitive hockey it then went on to say that clubs should check their insurance position. She felt strongly that the first statement was unambiguous and clear. It was most important that EH clarify the issue. Counties and Regions must not be left as 'piggy in the middle' regarding inadequate EH advice.

74 It was AGREED that the Chairman would write to the Chief Executive asking for the document to be re-issued omitting reference to checking insurance as if the surface is banned then there should be no insurance risk. Alternatively reference to competitive hockey should be omitted from the paragraph on insurance and references to practicing be substituted.

75 Mr Rea updated the meeting on water-based pitches. There was no ban on their continued use or future construction. It seemed probable that the pitches for 2012 Olympics would be water-based.

e) Minute 49 – EH Directors

76 The meeting noted that Ms Sally Munday had been appointed Chief Executive and Ms Holly Woodford Development Director. Council CONGRATULATED both ladies on their appointments.

77 Council AGREED to nominate Katie Dodd for election as a Non-executive Director.

Constitution

78 Dr Wrench introduced the revised constitution which was being recommended by the Management Committee. The proposed constitution was much simpler and more flexible than the current constitution.

79 Council discussed the proposal and made the following amendments:

- in Aims and Objectives delete 'and objectives'
- in Finance insert at 'xxx' '£250' as the amount above which cheques must be signed by two signatories.
- in Quorum and Voting substitute 'The quorum for Council shall be three officers and four representatives of Corporate Members.'

80 Council ENDORSED the constitution as amended for submission to the Annual Meeting for approval subject to any further comments that might be made at the next meeting of Council.

Treasurer's Report

81 Mr Taylor confirmed that the insurance arrangements now covered all the matches played by Association squads. It had been recommended that Civil Liability insurance cover should be increased to £10 million from £5 million and he had effected this through Perkins Slade at an additional cost of £125.

Regional Disciplinary Administrator's Report

82 Mr Strudwick had circulated his report. The new system for reporting of Red Card offences, MMOs and Disrepute charges was working satisfactorily and the expected additional workload had not materialised. He thanked the CDAs for their cooperation.

83 There had been 27 red cards (including two red cards in EHL matches), four MMOs and two Disrepute offences. The majority of these had been for verbal abuse. There had been no appeals.

84 Mr Strudwick reported a major Disrepute Charge that concerned violence by Birkbeck College players against an umpire. The incident was considered too serious to be handled by the South and it was passed to Norman Stott the England Hockey Disciplinary Officer for consideration by the National Disciplinary Panel.

85 Mr Strudwick said he had asked for at least 180 days or possibly a one-year suspension for all the people involved but all the other members of Panel had opted for 120 days suspension for two people and 75 days suspension for the third person. Mr Strudwick said he had complained to Norman Stott. Stott's view was that he should not dictate to the Panel any minimum suspension and that democratically a general consensus should be accepted. The Club had accepted the EH penalty.

86 Mr Umney said Middlesex had complained against the lightness of the suspensions given that the facts had been supported by a number of independent witnesses. Mr Ward said he was surprised that EH had not split the penalty which would be the normal practice given the mid season break

87 Mr Ward confirmed that on the basis of the facts as established by EH the South League had suspended Birkbeck College from further participation in the League this season. The Club had not accepted the League penalty but this became academic when it transpired that the Club was not affiliated, not having paid fees to any of Middlesex, the South or EH for at least two years.

88 Mrs Tierney said the decision seemed unduly lenient and the lack of a split penalty even more generous. Dr Wrench said he felt that the Association's policy on discipline had been compromised by the weak action and that an appeal to the National Appeal Panel should be considered. Ms Dodds said the penalty seemed to give all the wrong messages.

89 Council AGREED that the Chairman should write to the Chief Executive expressing the Association's concerns as to how the decision was reached and the lightness of the penalties.

90 Mr Strudwick said that his records showed that Berkshire, Kent and Sussex did not have a deputy CDA. It was essential that counties had a deputy in case of long-term accident, illness or a conflict of interest, which prevented the county responding in accordance with the Code of Discipline. Ms Peters confirmed that Sussex had a Deputy CDA. Berkshire and Kent were asked to appoint a deputy CDA and notify Mr Strudwick.

Umpiring

a) SCHUA Report

91 Mrs Bonner said Mrs Daffey had circulated a report. The new joint appointments/selection committee, chaired by Bridget Midwinter, had proved successful with a lot more cross over umpiring between the genders. The coaching and assessment of all the members was achieving some very positive results with six umpires passing their NPUA assessment. There were eight successful nominations from the Counties for Level 2. There had been 103 assessment appointments and 137 coaching appointments.

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92 There was now a formal indoor qualification at Level 2 and a number of umpires had been assessed at this grade. Five umpires had been promoted to the National programme; there were another four who would be assessed at the beginning of the next indoor season.

93 Mr Ward said the SCHUA letter regarding facilities for indoor would be discussed by Management.

94 The Report from SCHUA was NOTED.

b) HUA affiliation to EH

95 The paper from EH regarding the requirement for HUAs to be affiliated had been circulated. Mr Eaude said it was a poor paper which failed to explain the problem and to justify the rationale for the courses of action.

96 Dr Wrench said the issue had been discussed at the RCC and the problem appeared to be that in some parts of the Country HUAs appeared not to be affiliated to either a county or region. He had suggested that a local approach would have been more sensible than a national approach.

97 It was confirmed that all Southern Counties HUAs were affiliated to the Association either through SCHUA or through their county. It was AGREED that there was no need for any action by HUAs. It was AGREED that constitutional matters of affiliated bodies were solely the concern of the members of the association or club concerned. It was RECOMMENDED that HUAs should not send copies of their constitutions to EH.

Girls Youth Committee

98 Miss Plant reported on three meetings of the Committee. The minutes of the meetings of 15 September and 10 November had been circulated and the minutes of the 19 January would be available shortly.

99 The county championships tournaments were continuing. The South Rounds of the EH Schools' competitions had been completed. This was the last time they would be organised by Celia Tullett. Miss Plant thanked Celia for her efforts. Miss Plant also thanked Surbiton HC for again hosting the competitions and she thanked the midweek band of umpires who had again volunteered their efforts.

99 The major area of concern was the loss of active members from the Committee. This was partly caused by the loss of the Association's representative sides which left the Committee simply organising the domestic programme of inter county championships and the regional rounds of EH competitions. Next season could see a real shortage of volunteers.

100 There were additional problems being created by the centralised calendar which put pressure on all resources – organisers, umpires, technical officials, facilities. This was most marked in the indoor period and the problem would be worse in 2009-10 season with the EH decision to run separate indoor competitions for junior clubs and schools. With the added complications of the senior tournaments as well there was an urgent need for an indoor planning committee.

101 Mr Eaude commented that the resource problem had been identified in the SDWG and it brought into question the continued need for separate boys and girls committees. He endorsed the need for a programme committee.

102 Mrs Tierney said that reference to the complexities of indoor required her to mention that there would not be a women's indoor in 2009 unless a volunteer was forthcoming. Vicky Wright has stood down having done the job for three seasons. The SLL committee did not see it as a League responsibility.

103 The Chairman said the problem of retiring volunteers was a very serious one. On behalf of the Association he thanked everyone involved with the junior programmes.

104 The Chairman said the issues raised by the centralised calendar and the need for competitions planning committee would be discussed at the next meeting of Management.

Boys Youth

105 Mr Ward said the reason for Mr Macer's absence was that there was a meeting of the Committee the following evening. The minutes of the Boys Youth Committee, 13 November, were NOTED.

Management Committee

106 The Committee had met twice. The minutes of 10 September had been circulated. The matters discussed at the 20 November meeting included the issues of the substantial excess cost of the JRPCs, changes to the Constitution and the development of the web site. The minutes would be available shortly.

RCC Report

107 Dr Wrench gave a verbal report on matters discussed at the 2 December meeting. He said the major issues had been the outturn of the first round of the Single System and the HUA affiliation issue. Both items had been discussed at length.

108 As regards the JRPCs he had explained that the Association had lost a significant sum on the JRPC programme and he had sought to understand how the other regions had fared. None had detailed accounts available but it was probable that only the North had broken even. In some cases the other regions had benefited from free facilities. It had been agreed that as a result of the first year's experience there needed to be a national bench mark for charges to players and fees to coaches, administrators etc.

109 Dr Wrench said he had insisted on discussing the HUA paper at length as the RCC was the only representative body which could discuss such issues. He had stressed that as regards the Association's HUAs he saw no need for them to affiliate with EH as all were affiliated to the counties or in the case of SCHUA the Association.

110 There had been a short discussion on the VAT decision of the Canterbury case against HMRC that had been sent to the European Court. Although it now appeared Canterbury had won clubs should not expect the return of all the VAT paid on affiliation fees since it was imposed. EH's VAT position was complex as parts of its activities were VATable and parts exempt; this ratio would be changed as a result of the decision. The EH Annual report would explain the matter in more detail.

Development Working Group

111 Mr Eaude reported. He said the Group had met three times and he would summarise the situation.

112 There was a clear need for much tighter financial control and it was clear that other regions would be amenable to some national agreement on charges etc. Coaches and managers claims needed to be treated consistently across centres. There was a need for a director for each JRPC and he felt that a admin fee of £1,000 should be payable to anyone appointed. There was probably a need to advertise. Mr Ward said expedience elsewhere suggested that this might identify a new crop of volunteers.

113 As regards player selection there needed to be a process of nomination and a way of bypassing JACs if a player was already at a higher stage of development. The South office would be setting up meetings regarding JACs to explain the process to parents. It was also important that cross boundary issues were resolved in order that youngsters went to the most suitable centre not necessarily the one that historically they might have attended. Miss Plant emphasised this point, in particular coaches should not 'drag' youngsters to centres or abuse their position by enticing players to clubs where they coached.

114 Mr Ward reported briefly on the meeting of regional representatives held on 24 January in Birmingham. He had confirmed that the Association was committed to the 2009 round but there was an

absolute limit of £6,000 that the Association would provide for junior development. EH had promised some level of subsidy. It had been agreed that there must be uniform charges across centres. EH had now set up a national committee with six sub committees to manage the single system. Each region would be represented on the main committee.

115 Miss Dodd asked if the first year's experience was providing better players. Mr Eade said the process was about providing the right deal at each level. Certainly the Tier 2 was a fairer process but the outcome would not be clear for three to four years. It needed to be understood that the standard required at Tier 1 was lower than the old regional selection. Miss Plant said that the system seemed to have provided a better opportunity by virtue of the fact that there were players from the South in three of the squads at the Futures Cup.

116 Miss Dodd said the South was the region most affected by the new system. There were clearly issues surrounding the East; were the current venues right and should they be continued? Mr Ward said the tendering process might throw up different options. Miss Plant expressed concern that this would still put centres on the periphery of the region. Mr Hilton confirmed the concerns about travel particularly for those in the London area.

117 The Chairman asked counties for an update on the JACs and JDCs.

118 Mr Eade said that Bucks, as a small county, had two JDCs leading to one JAC. This was not a significant change in the way the county had previously operated.

119 For Hampshire Mrs Tierney said they were holding several county JDCs in May and June as they were struggling with the centralised calendar. The county was currently funding its own development officer.

120 Mrs Marlow said Middlesex had planned to run four JDCs, in the end three, to provide entry to two JACs from which county squads were selected. There was a paid administrator funded by the County. London was a particularly difficult area with no one, particularly schools, entering national competitions which made it essential to run as many JDCs as possible.

121 Mr Hilton said Surrey had run two JDCs and one JAC. Over 800 children had been put through the centres. The centralised calendar was not brilliant and finding double pitch venues was proving difficult. As elsewhere there was a lack of volunteers. Fortunately the County had its own development officer but the contract would expire on 31 March. Discussions were taking place about how this resource might be continued.

122 Ms Peters said the organisation in Sussex was largely maintained by Malcolm McNeil. The volunteer base was being both stretched and stressed. Both junior secretaries were retiring at the end of the season.

123 Mrs Marlow observed that all counties appear to be running on the minimum number of volunteers and it was essential to enlarge the group. Mr Eade suggested that advertising might be a way forward particularly to find people to do some of the administrative work.

124 In summarising the Chairman thanked everyone involved in a difficult first attempt to meet EH's aspirations. There were many lessons to be learned not least adequate financial control. Whilst it was impossible to name everyone he would like to record his thanks to centrally contracted coaches, Richard Organ, Calum Giles and Steve Hardy for the effort they had put in.

125 Council RECORDED ITS THANKS to the organisers and coaches at all centres for their efforts in the first season of the single system.

Masters

126 Ms Dodd said she was anxious to get some more structure into women's competitive hockey to support selection for regional squads. Mr Ward confirmed that the South League was in discussion with the Wessex Masters about the future of the men's game. It was AGREED to defer detailed discussion to the next meeting.

South Women's League

127 Mrs Tierney reported that the expansion of Divisions 3A and 3B was working well. The only casualty had been Newbury and Thatcham. The club had gone into 'melt down' and had withdrawn for the League in mid November reducing 3A to eleven teams. There was increasing pressure to expand Divisions 1 and 2 to twelve teams but the resources were just not there.

Other Matters

128 Mr Rea reported that Slazenger had withdrawn its sponsorship of the EHL.

129 EH Roadshows this year would be held in London on 12 March and on 15 March at Aldershot preceding the EH General Meeting.

130 As a result of an accident it was now strongly recommended that all goal keepers wear throat protectors.

Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 18 March 2009
Thursday 25 June 2009 following AGM