

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION
THE GENERAL COUNCIL
Minutes of a Meeting
held at the Pavilion, Bisley
on Saturday 24th February 2007, from 2.30 pm

Present:

Chairman: Mr JF Jackman
Vice Chairman: Prof AR Horrocks
Treasurer: Mr MJC Haszlkiewicz

Members: Mr HRM Bailie
Mr GV Barnard
Mrs ID Bennett
Mr JPS Bloomfield
Miss MZJ Boston
Mr JH Carmichael
Mr ARK Clayton
Mr P Coley
Mr S East
Mr CN Farr
Mr C Higginbottom
Mr P Hunter
Mr CC Mallett
Mr M Maksimovic
Dr P Monaghan
Mr C Murton
Sqn Ldr RE Nott
Miss J Rankin
Flt Lt IW Robertson
Mrs KD Robertson
Mr DD Watt
Mr RHF Wills
Mr D Young

In attendance: Mr GWJ Alger - Secretary
Mr CD Law - Acting Rep. for SE. Region
Mr JEM Hartwell - Vice Chairman of the Council
Maj MG Farnan - Director of Shooting
Mr JES Staples - Managing Director, NSC
Mrs HL Webb - Membership Secretary

Apologies for absence: Mr CM Brooks, Mr. A Cargill-Thompson, Wg Cdr DP Calvert, Maj Gen AP Farquhar, Wg Cdr CJ Hockley, Mr AJ Saunders, Mr I Shirra-Gibb, Mr JD Warburton, Mr JA Watson

CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman opened the meeting welcoming Mr Cliff Mallett – Jersey RA and Sqn Ldr Bob Nott – RAFSAA. He further remarked that he looked forward to welcoming Mr Martin Watkins – Wales and Lt Col Lester Holley – ARA in the future.

G 95 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15th September 2006

The Chairman asked if there were any representations in relation to the minutes.

Mr Bloomfield made the point that he had specifically asked for one of his comments relating to the Lease Policy and the answer from the Vice Chairman of the Council to be minuted at the last meeting. That had not been done as per G84(b) of the 15th September 2006 Meeting.

It was alleged that the Chairman had failed to produce correct and accurate Minutes. As a result Mr Bloomfield stated he would be referring the matter to the Disciplinary Committee for bringing the Association into disrepute.

Mr Robertson expressed the opinion that minutes should be a complete record of the meeting and that a member's specific comment should be recorded, if requested.

The Chairman pointed out that when Minutes are circulated to the Members of the General Council if there are issues they should be notified at the time to the Secretary General. The Chairman then invited Mr Bloomfield to set out in writing what his issue is and ask the Secretary General to examine it and report back. Mr Bloomfield refused.

On the basis that Mr Bloomfield's objection had been recorded the Chairman asked for consent to sign the minutes, expressing the hope that the objections can be resolved out of the General Council meeting.

The Members consented and the Minutes of 26th September 2006 were signed by the Chairman subject to amending G 84 to read 16th June 2006 and not 25th February 2006 as had been recorded.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 15th September 2006

No matters were raised.

G 96 MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE (G 88)

The General Council received the Draft Minutes of the meeting of the Membership Committee held on 27th January 2007.

A complaint was received that the minutes referred to the Regional Representatives being ineffective.

The Secretary General pointed out that the minutes were draft and the comment was taken out of context and would be removed from the final minutes.

The meeting was informed that the discussion in question involved an expression of concern from the Committee that the current Regional structure was too unwieldy for the Representatives to manage, in that most regions were too large, thus clubs did not know their rep. and reps. did not know all their clubs.

The plan was to look at a structure that was more locally based so that relationships could be built up between our affiliated clubs and individuals representing the NRA.

A complaint was then made that nothing had been achieved for the Midlands in negotiations with the MoD so that clubs could not get their range bookings.

The Secretary General commented that agreement had been reached with the MoD in 2005. Unfortunately due to changes in military structures, Army Training Estates being replaced by Defence Estates, the MoD withdrew from the agreement. This was not the Association's fault. However since then negotiations had continued and he hoped that they were close to bearing fruit.

As for failures to help the Midlands it was pointed out that the Association had looked at a number of range facilities and had made a bid to lease part of or a whole range from the military authorities to help relieve these problems. The NRA is aware that the MoD is considering our proposal.

There were no further comments on the draft minutes.

G 97 SHOOTING COMMITTEE (G 89)

The Chairman of the Shooting Committee presented the minutes of the Shooting Committee meetings held on 14th September 2006 and 11th January 2007.

There were no questions on the minutes for the 14th September 2006.

The Chairman of the Shooting Committee presented the key issues from the minutes of 11th January 2007 as follows:

- a) **S 367 Handloading Courses (S 347)** – It was pointed out to the meeting that due to concerns surrounding handloading the Association had stopped offering courses because of the potential civil liability issues. However, in time this position may have to be reconsidered. In the meantime advice on what not to do was being offered through the website and Journal.
- b) **S 389 MoD NRA Agreement** – The General Council were informed that an initial meeting had taken place with the MoD. During the course of which the military explained that they were having some initial difficulties with their contract department due to the insistence on Treasury Rules being complied with which had been interpreted as the need to do all business in cash. However, the cost savings to the military authorities with the current arrangements were likely to win the day and allow the negotiations to be conducted upon an “ammunition for range-use” basis as value for money. In relation to the ammunition quality issue, during the discussions there appeared to be a willingness to consider other suppliers other than RG. Whatever the decision regarding supplier, the point was made that the Association intended to insist

upon conditions being in place that ensured we got best quality ammunition for the meeting. It was hoped an outline agreement would be reached within 4 months.

- c) **S 401 Training Grants – Overseas Teams (S 379)** – The meeting was informed that due to Charity Commissioners' rules it was unlikely that the Association would be allowed to make general grants to teams out of its General Charity Funds in addition to those made out of the Overseas Teams Fund. However, the NRA is allowed to make grants to individuals who are either young or new to the sport on the basis of need and for the encouragement of target shooting. How this is to be done is currently being worked upon.
- d) **S 403 Targets Working Group (S 372)** – All were informed that the Chairman of the Shooting Committee is working on a simplified document for the Council.

QUESTIONS

- e) **S 404 Electronic Targets (S 369)** – A request was made for an update. The MD of NSC reported that following the installation of a software upgrade and a new monitor the electronic targets should be fully operational at the end of the month.

Both sets of Shooting Committee Minutes were adopted.

G 98 NATIONAL SHOOTING CENTRE LIMITED G 90)

Minutes of the Meeting 7th June 2006

The General Council received the Minutes of the meetings of the Board of the National Shooting Centre Limited held on 20th September 2006, 15th November 2006 and 31st January 2007.

There were no questions on 20 September 2006 Minutes.

- a) The following questions were asked in relation to the 15th November 2006 Minutes:
 - 1. **N 485 PPP Market** – NSC were asked who had given the advice that there was no right or mechanism for recovering minimum sums under the agreement? The General Council were advised that Mr Argent, a solicitor on the Board of NSC, had given that advice.
 - 2. **N 486 CCTV** – How much will a long range transmitter cost? The questioner was advised we were not aware of the costs at this time.
 - 3. **N 487 Torpedo Shed** – How is this being progressed? The meeting was advised that under Charity Law we are able to offer the building on a lease of less than 7 years without going to the open market. The rent proposed to Mr Carmichael reflected the cost of construction of the property together with the occupation by the NSC of approximately 50% of the building. As a result of the marketing of the property there is a second party interested in a large proportion of the property and we are looking at terms for a 21 year lease.
 - 4. **N 489 Property** – Progress with lease reviews was questioned. The meeting was informed that the Surrey Rifle Association rent review had been settled.
 - 5. **N 489 Property** - The City Rifle Club lease is close to agreement.

6. **N 489 Property** - Another question was asked why a Section 25 Notice was not enforced when lease negotiations were being unnecessarily slowed down by clubs/individuals. The meeting was informed that there was a history of prevarication from some clubs in relation to rent reviews. In future it would be the policy of the Association to serve in all cases to reduce this happening.
7. **N 491 Sergeants Mess Dining Room** – A question was asked as to progress of letting. An advertisement was placed in the Winter Journal for the former Sergeant’s Mess Dining Room requesting expressions of interest by 31st January 2007. Two expressions of interest have been received with strong interest from the Wandsworth Rifle Club. Following discussions with the NRA/NSC concerning the possible redevelopment it was recommended that no further action take place for one to two months until a full review of the potential of the site has been undertaken.

b) The following specific questions were asked in relation to the 31st January 2007 Minutes.

1. **Chairman’s (i.e. of the Board of NSC) Opening Remarks** – Why did Mr Hossack resign? It was explained that Mr Hossack had reached the end of his tenure having served 6 years on the Board of NSC as per Council Resolution T 233 pursuant to Article 7 of the Articles of Association of NSC. It was thought that the word “retired” should have been used rather than “resigned”.
2. **Chairman’s Opening Remarks** - A follow up question was asked about the status of the employee directors. It was explained that employees who are directors are also subject to Contracts of Employment as well as Article 7.
3. **N 506 CCTV** – A question was asked why Mr. John Tuffen who had been recommended as a CCTV expert had not been contacted. The meeting was advised that Mr. Latimer, a Director of the NSRA, also a CCTV expert had been engaged, who had supplied the current system for £3,000 which was very competitive.
4. **N 508 Property** – A question was asked in relation to City Rifle Club about the ground rent rate. The meeting was informed it was charged at £2.60 to £2.73 per sq. metre.
5. **N 508 Property** – A follow-up question was asked about why the English XX Club had taken so long to settle. In answer it was explained this was due to a mistake by the club’s solicitor who responded late. Personal assurances have been received from the Chairman of English XX Club that they will settle.
6. **N 508 Property** – In regard to an enquiry regarding Richardson Lodge the meeting was told the guideline annual rent was £6,000 subject to tender.
7. **N 508 Property** – Following an enquiry on ‘break clauses’, the meeting was informed that most leases had break clauses but to ensure fairness compensation was offered if such a clause was to be instituted. the standard compensation terms are as follows:

Compensation in the new leases involves compensating the tenant for the value of their buildings in the case of a ground lease or the value of any lawful improvements in the case of building leases.

Ground Lease. Calculated by assessing the difference in rental value of the site as against the rental value of the site and building to establish rental value of the building. This is then capitalised over the remaining term of the lease and for a minimum term of 3 years.

Tenants improvements. As above, calculated the difference in rental value with and without the improvements and capitalise over the remainder of the term.

8. **N 511 Fire Safety Regulations** – Concern was expressed that no members of staff had been trained to comply with the new regulations. The meeting was informed that a member of NSC staff was attending a course within 10 days.
9. **N 522 Draft Results for the year to 31st December 2006** – The question was asked why an outstanding figure of £38k was not invoiced. The meeting was informed this was due to long outstanding rent reviews and lease renewals, which are not invoiced until resolved a number of which have already been mentioned as nearing resolution. All present were assured that such delays did incur interest payments on such delays.
10. **N 525 Debtors** – Hunters Lodge – It was revealed that Hunters Lodge had suffered some electrical damage because the supply was inadequate. Recently additional line work has rectified this situation.
11. **N 530 – Chairman of the Board** – Mr Oliver Bellasis had stood down at the last Board meeting the question was why this had occurred so quickly. The meeting was informed that Mr Oliver-Bellasis was due to retire and it had been necessary to find a replacement. The Chairman offered to make available to anyone who required it a copy of the memo on the process upon application to Elaine Buttle.
12. **N 530 Chairman of the Board** – Mr Bloomfield attacked the election of Mr Dixon as Chairman of the Board of NSC, producing copies of documents which he said were taken from Companies House that showed that Mr Dixon had been involved with some companies that had been liquidated as a consequence of insolvency. He demanded that Mr Dixon be immediately suspended from being Chairman of the Board of NSC and questioned his fitness to be a director. The meeting was informed that the appointment of Chairman was a matter for the Board of NSC. Concern was also expressed that Mr Dixon was not qualified to manage the development plans. It was explained that the role of Chairman of the Board of NSC was non-executive and that the Managing Director, a Chartered Surveyor, is the key man
13. **N 530 The Board of NSC** –Mr Bloomfield then put it forward that the Board was incomplete. The meeting was informed that there is currently a full complement of four Non-Executive Directors with commercial experience namely Mr Dixon, Mr Argent also a Solicitor, (both independent) Mr Maksimovic and Mr Oliver-Bellasis also a Chartered Surveyor (Trustees).

GENERAL QUESTIONS ON NSC

- a) **Mr Peter Hobson** – A question was asked as to whether Mr Hobson was to be thanked for his kind donation of 3 Land Rovers to the Association. The meeting was informed that there would be formal recognition of Peter and Barbara's generosity in the Journal.
- b) **Electronic Targets** – A question was asked about how many targets were available. The meeting was informed that 7 targets were working on Century and 3 on Stickle-down.
- c) **CCTV** – It was reported that a comprehensive system of cameras would be fitted over time using microwave links to secure the National Shooting Centre.

G 99 THE COUNCIL

Mr Hartwell presented the minutes of meetings held on 15th September 2006, 19th October 2006 and 14th December 2006 plus Written Resolution T465 by reading a report covering the work of the Council.

It was agreed that the verbatim report should be appended to the General Council Minutes. See Appendix

QUESTIONS

a) REQUIREMENT FOR NEW TRUSTEE

Members were reminded that the Association was looking for a member with an Accountancy background to sit on the Council to support the Treasurer, particularly with the impending retirement of the Chairman.

b) BISLEY DEVELOPMENT

The meeting was informed that the Council and the Board of NSC were looking at the future development of Bisley because the buildings and the infrastructure were not suitable for the National Shooting Centre to retain its world status reputation.

The reason why this was being driven at the moment was that because of the Olympics, there was an opportunity in planning terms for the Association to do some quite exciting things that would allow Bisley to be modernised to 21st Century standards and bring in enough income to support our sporting ambitions nationally in the regions.

Because of the Olympics, Guildford Borough Council (GBC) are giving their full support to a whole site development to ensure Bisley is either fit to hold the Olympics or to act as a Training Venue (the NRA has applied for Training Venue status). GBC are keen to include Bisley in its Strategic Plan for development for 2007. The Association cannot afford to miss this window of opportunity. The meeting was informed that the rationale for development made to the Council did not just hang on the Olympics dimension, we had also bid on the basis of needing to retain Bisley as a World Class venue and to be able to create sufficient income to support Target Shooting nationally.

To ensure that the whole site plan is appropriate the Council had agreed to employ a consultant, Mr Charles Lochrane, a partner of Strutt and Parker (at a cost of £16k over 6 months), to ensure that we could get planning and to ensure that the plan was financially viable. The cost of the development would be monitored by the Managing Director of NSC and the Finance Manager and the Council will retain overall control.

A question was asked about the status of Mr Isherwood. The meeting was informed that Mr Isherwood had come up with some exciting and sympathetic plans for the development of Bisley to include range development, accommodation, caravans, hotels, leisure facilities, restaurants and retail outlets. Those present were assured that on the basis of the master plan of the site outlined by Mr Lochrane, the Association would go to tender and that Mr Isherwood's tender would be considered alongside others.

The meeting was informed that in terms of decisions to go ahead the responsibility rested with the Council which would seek to ensure fullest consultation with the General Council and the Membership.

Concern was expressed about losing the character of Bisley. It was pointed out that most of the 80 acre site was a conservation area, so that any development had to take account of what is here already and be developed sympathetically.

It was pointed out that development of a new museum on site could draw down lottery funding of up to 70%. **It was agreed that this should be considered as part of the plan to store our history and trophies.**

A comment was made that the only way that this development could progress is for everyone to be kept constantly informed. **It was agreed there needed to be a publicity strategy including regular updates to the members.** However, to date not even the Trustees nor the Directors of NSC have seen a plan.

c) NATSS

A question was asked about the progress of NATSS. The meeting was informed that there had been some 6 meetings to date to discuss forming a single National Governing Body to represent all Target Shooting in the UK. Currently the Associations are largely in agreement and are pushing ahead. In the meantime we are working together jointly in those areas where we can, such as trying to negotiate a single insurance.

At present NATSS is trying to negotiate funding from Sport England via the CCPR to cover the costs of employing a consultant to oversee the project. The meeting was informed that we had had a positive response to our application and the move to form a single body representing the sport.

d) CHARITY COMMISSION COSTS

A question was asked about costs associated with having to comply with Charity Commission requirements. The meeting was informed that there were costs connected with having to get lease advice and having the annual accounts audited under the SORP. These however were far outweighed by the advantages gained from gift aid and rate relief received.

e) CLUB INSURANCE

A question was asked about when the club renewal would be sent out. The meeting was informed that the insurance conditions had been agreed and the renewal packs would be sent out within the week.

G 100 CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL (G 91 c)

The Vice Chairman of the General Council raised the question of needing to find a new Chairman of the Council as Mr Jackman retires on 14th September 2007.

The point was made that the essential thing was to find the right person. A discussion took place about whether a new Chairman needed to be a shooter or not. It was agreed that there might be advantages to someone who was not a shooter being Chairman. The essentials are experience of corporate chairmanship, a knowledge of Charity Law plus a vital understanding of the sport of target shooting.

General Council were asked to assist in the search for candidates.

It was agreed that to find a candidate with the correct credentials that the Association ought to place a public advertisement as soon as possible.

G 101 150TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS (G 93)

The meeting was informed by the Vice Chairman of the General Council that he had formed an Action/Planning Committee but he still needed 2 volunteers to undertake the roles of:

- Co-ordinator for regional events
- Sponsorship and Finance

General Council members were asked either to volunteer or identify those willing to serve.

It was reported that as a result of the Chairman's invitation, the HRH The Prince of Wales has stated his intention to visit Bisley in 2009.

G 102 COMMONWEALTH GAMES

The meeting was informed by the Vice Chairman that there was a currently an attempt by the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Games to limit the shooting at the Games to Olympic disciplines plus full-bore target rifle, but removing full-bore target pistol as a consequence. It was felt this would have a detrimental effect on the Games, potentially reducing the number of countries taking part.

The Vice Chairman reported that Shooting had been downgraded to a non-core sport. However, in spite of shooting fulfilling five with the exception of the media criteria it registered in the top three in all the qualifying categories. CSF was currently presenting a case to raise shooting from its proposed "optional" position to a core sport under the CG Executive Committee's own criteria and to resist the cutting of the number of competitions with the exception of the badge matches.

It was pointed out that if we had a closer relationship with the ISSF this would potentially assist our case because of its strength within the Olympic and Commonwealth Games communities. 300m rifle was the only ISSF rifle discipline currently supported by the NRA and so this provided the link for developing this relationship.

The Vice Chairman concluded that inclusion of 300 rifle during the Annual Meeting might strengthen the NRA's attempts to cover all full-bore rifle disciplines.

G 103 PROCEDURE FOR THE GENERAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2007

The procedure was circulated to the General Council in accordance with Rule 6 g iii. Members of the General Council not wishing to stand in 2007 for 2007/08 were asked to notify the Secretary General as soon as possible.

The meeting closed at 5.15 pm

Chairman

DATES OF THE NEXT MEETINGS.

Date	Time	Venue
Friday 15 th June 2007	2pm	Bisley (followed by the AGM at 5.30pm)
Friday 14 th September 2007	2.30pm	Bisley

Appendix: The Report of Mr JEM Hartwell, Vice Chairman of the Council