

THE GENERAL COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting held at the Pavilion Bisley
on Friday 2nd September 2016 from 2.00pm

Present:

Chairman: Mr JGM Webster (Chairman)

Members: Mr GK Alexander
Mr HRM Bailie
Mr GV Barnard
Mr JPS Bloomfield
Mr AM Bullen
Wg Cdr DP Calvert
Mr PR Coley
Mr M Cotillard
Mr DC Crispin
Mr CES Dickenson
Mr HF Dunton
Mr DGF Evans
Maj SB Fraser
Mr JS Harris
Mr JA Horton
Mr JM Kynoch
Mr DR Lamb
Mr GAE Larcombe
Mr TS McDowell
Mr JF Miller
Mr J Morgan-Hosey
Mr K Nash
Mr R Roberts
Mr P Ryder
Mr R Sayer
Mr I Shirra-Gibb
Mr D Stimpson
Mr IR Thomson
Dr J Warburton (Vice Chairman)
Dr AP Wolpe

In attendance: Mr A Mercer - Chief Executive
Mrs G Thatcher - Secretary to Meeting
Mrs A Gran - Trustee

Apologies for absence: Mrs ID Bennett, Mr T Bobbet, Col WGC Bowles, Mr CM Brooks, Dr A Cargill Thompson, Mr M Charlton, Maj. Gen IC Dale, Sqn Ldr A Fox, Mr NJ Francis, Dr N Fyfe, Mr GMLN Gilpin, Mr J Harper-Smith, Mr K Hocking, Wg Cdr CJ Hockley, Mr A Hunter, Mr D Kent, Mr TLW Kidner, Mr T Lehman, Mr D Lowe, Mr M Magan, Mr M Maksimovic, Mr MF Martell, Mr CN McEachran, Col. Brig. WJ O'Leary, Mrs K Robertson, Mr AJD Saunders, Brig J Smales, Wing Cdr M Symonds, Mr G Trembath, Mr PDC Turner, Sqn Ldr P Upham, Mr MP Watkins, Mr MJ Wood, Mr D Young.

CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman of General Council welcomed everyone to the meeting.

INDEX G445 to G459

G445 – APOLOGIES

Apologies were received as noted above.

G446 – 2016 GENERAL COUNCIL ELECTION RESULTS

The Chairman thanked the following members for their service and support over the years who had decided not to re-stand this year; Tony Clayton and Bill Richards as Ordinary Members, and Steve East as the Target Rifle Discipline Representative. The Chairman offered particular thanks to Tony Clayton who has been a very supportive member of General Council for many years.

The Chairman welcomed the new members to the meeting; Charles Dickenson as the Target Rifle Discipline Representative, David Kent as the F-Class Discipline Representative and Iain Thomson as a new Ordinary Member.

The Chairman announced the following vacancies, all of which will be advertised in due course:

2 x vacancies on the Shooting Committee (one following the departure of Tony Clayton)
1 x vacancy on the Membership Committee (following the resignation of Karen Robertson)

The NRA are also looking for a new Chairman of the Young Shooters Fund

G447 – MINUTES OF MEETING OF GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING – 17th JUNE 2016

The Minutes of the General Council meeting of 17th June 2016 were received.

The minutes were accepted as an accurate account of the meeting and duly approved with the suggested amendments raised by the Chairman.

G448 – MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF 17th JUNE 2016

There were no matters raised from the minutes of 17th June 2016.

G449 – THE COUNCIL

The Chairman confirmed that the members had received the minutes of Council meetings held on 23rd April 2016 and 17th June 2016.

There were no matters raised from these minutes.

The Chairman gave a verbal report of the Council meeting held on 20th August 2016.

The proceedings of the meeting on 20th August were dominated by two topics; Real Estate Policy and an email which had been circulated via ABCAT from Robin Pizer regarding alleged inadequacies of the work streams conducted on Rule 150, primarily the Counsel's opinion and the report by the Birmingham Proof House.

Rule 150

The Chairman asked the members whether they wished to raise any questions or issues regarding Counsel's opinion and/or Robin Pizer's critique of that opinion. No questions or issues were raised.

The Chairman asked the members whether they wished to raise any questions or issues regarding the

Birmingham Proof House's report based on either Robin Pizer or John Carmichael's analysis of the report. No questions were raised.

John Kynoch asked for clarification around John Carmichael's input into the report as he had only received the memo from Robin Pizer. The Chairman replied that he understood that while the email was from Robin Pizer, John Carmichael had also raised issues with the Proof Master and that at least some of these issues were likely included in Robin Pizer's email to members of General Council.

The Chief Executive confirmed that the reports from both Counsel, the Birmingham Proof House tests results and the report from David Lacey and Alice Gran had all been published on the website.

John Kynoch then asked whether the Birmingham Proof House's full report had been published.

The Chairman confirmed that the full report had not yet been published.

David Crispin asked if the report could be made available to the General Council. The Chief Executive remarked that everything would be published once the full process had been completed and it was estimated that this should be done by the end of the year.

The Chairman added that the NRA is still in discussion with the Birmingham Proof House regarding the terms and the wording of a "New Memorandum", which is an update to the 1999 memorandum. Once that is approved, the Birmingham Proof Master had indicated that he would like this published together with his full report.

John Bloomfield confirmed that he had made a proposal on behalf of the NRA to Roger Hancox, regarding what the next steps should be with regards to the new memorandum and believes that it will be released alongside the full report.

David Crispin asked if General Council could see a copy of the report before that. John Bloomfield stated that it is the Proof House's report and therefore outside of the NRA's control with regards to publication. The results of the tests have already been presented to General Council.

The Chief Executive added that the Proof Master and Derek Allsopp have been sent the NRA's reports from both Counsel and David Lacey/Alice Gran and have not raised any issues from those.

The Chairman asked whether there were any further questions or issues. Nothing further was raised. The Chairman then asked the members whether, given that they had no issues or questions resulting from Robin Pizer's critique, they believe that the NRA has done everything possible with regards to this subject and we should now move on and ask Robin Pizer/John Carmichael to do the same.

John Warburton remarked that he was surprised to have received Robin Pizer's memo from a body that represents the tenants and residents of Bisley Camp. He had been minded to respond that this was inappropriate but hadn't. He is happy that ABCAT corresponds for topics relevant to their organization, but does not believe it does their standing any good providing comments on subjects that are not. Steve McDowell and Guy Larcombe remarked that they had both responded to the Chairman of ABCAT in that vein.

Guy Larcombe suggested that General Council wait until all reports and the new memorandum have been finalised and circulated prior to encouraging others to move on.

The members agreed that the NRA wait until the new memorandum is confirmed and the full report is ready for publication.

Real Estate Policy

The Chairman remarked that the NRA employs two sets of solicitors; Barlow Robbins in Guildford, and Bates Wells and Braithwaite, a London firm. The majority of charity advice is given by Gordon Reid of Barlow Robbins.

The Chairman had also discussed real estate issues with another solicitor, Julian Smith at Farrer's in London, who is well known to the Association and in turn knows it well. He acted on the NRA's behalf when there was a challenge to the NRA's charitable status in the 2000's. The Chairman had put to him a series of questions to get a second opinion following Colin McEachran's email that had been sent to General Council members regarding the policy and how it relates to clubs.

The Chairman explained that he had then put Julian Smith's answers to the questions posed to Gordon Reid of Barlow Robbins, who had seconded what Julian had said. Gordon Reid in turn had produced a letter confirming his understanding of the NRA's position with regards to the Real Estate Policy and this has been circulated to General Council members.

The Chairman commented that it is notable that the NRA finds itself in the middle of the development of new powers for charity trustees that seek to establish by statute a social investment policy to be available to charities. The Chairman continued that social investing is perhaps better understood by the more colloquial term, "mixed motive" investing, which allows a charity to legitimately have property under its ownership through which it seeks to get both a return and to follow the objects of the charity.

The learning from the conversation with Julian Smith, and subsequently substantiated by Gordon Reid, is that the NRA should seek to base its decisions, and the philosophy that the NRA employs with respect to its Real Estate, in the objects of the charity. The objects of the charity are to promote and encourage marksmanship throughout the United Kingdom and the Queen's Dominions in the interests of defence and the permanence of the volunteer and auxiliary forces.

In direct response to one of the points raised by Colin McEachran, regarding Section 117 (3) (d), which states that a charity can dispose of property for less than best terms to a beneficiary, Julian Smith had confirmed that in the case of the NRA Section 117 (3) (d) cannot apply, and Gordon Reid also agreed with this position in his letter. This is because most of the donations that the NRA receive as a charity are from members of the Association who also benefit from those donations. The NRA does not operate as a 'normal' charity that collects money from one group of people and channels it through to another group of people. Were the NRA to offer "less than best" rents to members under section 117 (3) (d), it may look like those members were trying to 'feather their own nests'. Julian Smith felt that in his experience this was not the purpose of 117 (3) (d) and that the Charity Commission would take a dim view were they to discover that we had invoked it in such a way. Gordon Reid had also advised against invoking it.

The Chairman commented that Gordon Reid had advised that CC Guidance on "mixed motive" investing is currently being drawn up but is not yet available. It seems clear however that there are appropriate ways of setting rents which, when taken together, can both generate a return to the Association, and fulfil the objects of the Association. By way of example this means that the NRA can effectively work down from the best possible rent by some form of acknowledgement of the costs that a particular club would have to undergo to deliver against specific elements of the objects of the Association the NRA wants it to undertake.

The Chairman commented that the Trustees already recognise that there are covenants that broadly apply to the NRA's buildings in that they should all be let out in the interests of shooting. What the new advice enables the NRA to consider is to draw difference gradations of the benefits required of the occupiers of its buildings and the Trustees will seek to implement those fairly considering the position of all NRA members. Ultimately however the situation still boils down to landlord versus tenant and there will almost certainly be different views as to what those gradations are worth. Nevertheless the philosophy behind the approach can now be well understood.

The Chairman asked for any questions either on the Real Estate Policy or Colin McEachran's letter and addendum.

In answer to a question, the Chairman commented that The Charities Act does not distinguish between a new lease and a renewal – it would be a new lease to either the same tenant or a new tenant.

David Crispin asked how a renewal is viewed under the Landlord and Tenants Act as he understands that a lease governed under that Act is a renewal. The Chief Executive responded that in terms of the Charities Act a new lease is a disposal.

DC responded that under the Landlord and Tenants Act, a lease is seen as a renewal when it is the same tenants for another period of time.

The Chief Executive responded that the NRA has to comply with both sets of law. Some tenants have an automatic right for renewal under their lease terms and some do not. The current Real Estate Policy that the NRA adhere to states that wherever possible the NRA offer the current tenants the opportunity for a new lease, irrespective of whether there is a right to renew or not.

DC remarked that he felt that the Trustees are following a policy and receiving advice from solicitors that they wanted to hear so that it could be tailored to fit with the NRA's established view. He believes that Colin McEachran has shown how to take a different view and has raised some extremely good points. The only time all this legal advice gets proven is when it goes to court which costs the Association thousands of pounds and should be avoided. Both sides need to see a compromise to avoid expensive court costs.

Steve McDowell agreed with DC. SMcD offered an observation having attended an ABCAT meeting, the heart of this issue is lack of communication. He also felt that there needs to be more transparency. At the end of the day, it is the NRA's money and should be spent on the furtherance of shooting and not legal issues.

The Chairman remarked that in the last several weeks the NRA have completed a number of lease renewals without any dispute. It is clear that the causes backed by ABCAT are not the majority of what is going on. He confirmed that the NRA would always endorse discussion between tenants and the Association upon renewals, but that it is not unusual to apply to the courts when the two sides cannot agree.

SMcD added as a codicil to his comment, as a matter for the General Council to consider, whether it would make sense to have an elected member of ABCAT on the General Council representing the tenants. A lot of time and energy could be saved if ABCAT's views could be discussed in the open. The Chairman responded that the General Council is a body that represents all NRA members and that ABCAT's views on various matters had been fully aired at past meetings even when the tenants in question were not members of the NRA. The constitution of the General Council is prescribed in the NRA's governing documents and representatives typically represent shooting interests.

David Evans wanted to correct a point of misunderstanding raised by David Crispin. The Trustees do not have a position with regards to 'hearing what they want to hear' from legal advice received. The Trustees simply wish to apply the law in the best interest of the charity. The advice the Trustees have been receiving has been telling them what the legal position is.

SMcD added that he is neutral as an elected member of the General Council and is concerned for the health of the overall direction of the charity which is to act in good faith in the interest of the constitution.

Rob Sayer asked for clarification surrounding discussions held at the last meeting where the line was taken that the NRA had to get the market value and had no choice in it. It seems that the NRA are now back-tracking on that and there is some room for further negotiation. RS asked if that is the case are the NRA going to get into more discussions with tenants before going any further.

The Chief Executive responded that the NRA is trying to rationalise the Bisley rent 'bubble' that we all sit in. There are effective three strands to the rents at Bisley; commercial rents from commercial tenants, a lower level for residential rents and then club rents. The NRA needs to make sure that we understand why we accept substantially lower rents for club houses compared to residential, and compared to retail.

If the NRA accepts and rationalises that it should accept a lower rent for club houses, this will be because they are greater contributors to shooting activity at Bisley in line with the charity's objects. The NRA can make sure that the user clauses and covenants in clubhouse leases more clearly define what the NRA wants that building used for which in turn yields a lower rent. There is a market for the different levels of rent depending on the use of the buildings and these are assessed through tendering and comparable rents.

RS remarked that there are market rents but if 'mixed motive' investing is allowed and the NRA recognise that the club houses add to the objects of the charity, the result is a discounted rent, but that isn't what was being said at the last meeting. This seems like a new idea and therefore should there be discussions with the clubs.

The Chairman remarked that the NRA has already recognised the three different levels for some time. The Real Estate policy suggests as much and this is now being articulated clearly in Charity Law. The actions that the NRA have taken have put the Association in a position to be able to offer different levels of rent for properties on camp that are defensible to all members of the Association while also noting that properties outside of the camp charge a considerably higher level of rent than those within the camp boundaries. Commercial tenants pay more than the residential tenants, who in turn pay more than the club houses, and as all these are in line with the charity's objectives, no one is disadvantaged.

The Chief Executive added that every property on Bisley Camp is used to help further the NRA's charitable objectives. Successive generations of Trustees have taken the decision to apply the use of all freehold properties and all the tenanted properties to deliver shooting activity and marksmanship at Bisley, through restricted covenants. One of the issues which the NRA has been wrestling with is to offer up a building when it comes up for re-tendering. An example is the exercising of a break clause by the English Twenty Club, so that clubhouse will be coming up for re-let. The NRA is looking at how we form the user covenants for that building. It can either be let on standard terms with standard clauses and be offered as a building which could become a residence, or it could have restricted covenants to make it a clubhouse building. This will drive down the rental expectation and we would have to justify to Strutt & Parker why we are accepting a lower rent because of the restricted covenants. This is all part of the process the NRA is working through. Everyone is focusing on rents which is understandable, but the NRA must be focused on the totality of the conditions and the clauses and undertakings within the lease, as well as the rent.

Ultimately, it is the Chief Executive who is charged by the Association to negotiate with the tenants and do the best appropriate deal in totality for the NRA. The terms are then presented to Strutt & Parker who are obliged to produce a Charity report, and only then is that submitted to the Trustees for their approval.

DC remarked that there appears to be a change as he is hearing words he's not heard before such as giving consideration to clubs and helping them which is a step forward and a change.

John Miller asked whether given the information from Barlow Robbins and the revelation that there is a three tier policy, the NRA would go back to the tenants whose leases are in negotiation and revise their terms. The Chairman remarked that the three tier policy has been in action for some time, and in essence, rents are set by either a) the market, or b) Strutt & Parker who look at comparables from the market, and set rents based on the market that prevails at that time. To revisit past deals would not be appropriate.

The Chief Executive confirmed that club rents are set at the same rates as other *club* properties, not residential or commercial.

David Calvert asked, notwithstanding the legal discussions surrounding Sections 117-119 of the Charities Act, and looking at Colin McEachran's memo as a whole, whether it would be useful for the Trustees to understand the level of support the General Council members present have for Colin McEachran's sentiments in his memo. DCal asked if would be possible to get a show of hands as to how many warmly support the suggestions in CMcE's memo. The Chairman replied that while not against that idea, he wanted those present to be reminded that professional advice the NRA has received suggest that some of CMcE's sentiments are wrong. The Chairman added that he is unsure what he would do with the results of a show of hands, as it may not change behaviour.

DCal added that many things can change in the coming months of discussion but in the meantime it would

be worth understanding the views of the General Council members here today, as representatives of the NRA membership as a whole. It may be worth taking note and may change attitude and in turn behaviour.

The Chairman remarked that the Trustees do not have discretion as to how they can behave and they do have to act in the best interests of the Association.

DCal added that he believes the Trustees do have discretion. This sentiment was echoed by Robert Sayer. The Chairman replied that as a Trustee, he has signed a declaration which states he must act in the best interest of all members of the Association, both current and future members, and not support partial interests. This clearly limits his and other trustees' discretion.

DCal remarked that the General Council members are representing the 8000 members of the Association and therefore their views should be taken note of in that respect. DCal is not suggesting they endorse any of the legal comments, just simply to get a feel for whether there is a majority or minority of representatives who support CMcE's sentiments and suggestions.

Harald Dunton remarked that he is not qualified to give an opinion on behalf of several thousand members in his region as he has never asked them.

DCal replied that he has been elected by his region and if he does not wish to vote, he can always abstain.

James Harris commented that as some of the details in CMcE's document are incorrect and inaccurate, voting on that is awkward. He also questioned whether the members within HD's region know that their membership fee is going to support a club house which they do not have access to or use.

Alice Gran remarked that there are too many conflicts of interest in the room, both as members of the NRA and as members of individual clubs. One must properly declare an interest for every membership in every club before this can even be considered.

John Warburton observed that one of the purposes of General Council is to give advice to the Trustees. DCal has raised a particularly good point and JWar believes it is the responsibility of the members of General Council to give that advice. JWar asked the Trustees to listen to what the GC members have to say. The Chairman remarked that notwithstanding the conflicts issue, he is happy to listen to the advice of GC members but is unsure of what he will do with it once he has heard it. The Chairman added that he has spent an enormous amount of time personally on this particular issue and is not sure what he is meant to do if the members say to do something when all the legal advice states the NRA needs to head in the opposite direction. That is the only sensitivity the Chairman has with this proposal.

DCal remarked that is why he has offered to state the sentiments of the memo, not the legalities. DC would like the Trustees just to take note of the feelings of the GC members. John Kynoch then proposed a balancing motion as to how many of the GC members present support what the Trustees are trying to do with all of the difficulties they are faced with.

Reflecting the mood of the meeting, the Chairman responded that he would be happy for both motions to be put forward.

Reg Roberts commented that he felt there was a difference in the energy from Trustees compared to the last General Council meeting to this one. They seem to have softened slightly, taken on board more of the arguments and he felt that their approach is more reasonable than it was before. The Chairman responded that there had been a key date between the last meeting and this one, July 2016, which is when the 2016 Charities Act started to make the powers to use 'mixed motive' investing more concrete. The NRA are still awaiting the guidance which can inform them how these powers work.

David Crispin added that the Trustees are working on behalf of GC and it would be good for them to know whether they are acting for the benefit of the majority. The Chairman corrected DC; the Trustees do not work on behalf of GC. GC is only there to advise the Trustees.

DCal has every sympathy with the Chair and the Trustees in this torturous issue and would be happy to add a phrase in his suggestion for a motion and proposed that whilst recognising the considerable efforts by the Trustees, do members of General Council support the sentiments and suggestions, not the legal arguments, outlined in CMcE's memo.

The Chairman asked for two shows of hands – one for the motion put forward by David Calvert and one for the motion put forward by John Kynoch.

The first motion put forward was for the general support for the sentiments and suggestions in Colin McEachran's letter and addendum. 12 members of General Council voted in support of this motion.

The second motion put forward was for the support of what the Trustees are trying to do. 16 members of General Council voted in support of this motion.

The Chairman thanked the members of GC for their input.

Guy Larcombe asked who had submitted apologies for the Council meeting on 17th June 2016. GT confirmed that James Harris was the only Trustee who did not attend that meeting.

There were no further issues raised.

G450 – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Chairman noted that John Kynoch had raised a point that the comment made by the Chairman that the need for the three Rule 150 work streams were unfounded given the results would be more accurate if changed to state they were "largely" unfounded.

There were no questions raised from the minutes of the Annual General Meeting on 17th June 2016.

G451 – BISLEY GENERAL MEETING

There were no questions raised from the minutes of the Bisley General Meeting held on 20th July 2016.

G452 – FINANCE

The Chairman presented the Treasurer's report to General Council in the Treasurer's absence.

The NRA management account headlines for July 2016 show the Association on budget and in a strong cash position. The cash balance continues to meet the minimum threshold of £200k. The Chairman signalled that the Treasurer had pointed out in his report that as the NRA's activity levels increase, the minimum cash balance should also increase and the suggested increments should be £50k each time.

There were no questions raised.

G453 – CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

The Chief Executive presented his report to the General Council members and asked for any questions.

David Calvert asked for an update on the financial situation of the NSRA and the hotel complex planned for Site 103. The Chief Executive replied that he was unable to comment on the financial health of another organisation. The annual accounts of the NSRA are available on their website.

Ken Nash added that the financing of the hotel complex is a private external issue and not for discussion in this forum.

SMcD asked about the proposed Chobham Ridge range and where the access to the range would be.

The Chief Executive confirmed the access would be from Red Road and the plan is to have reactive targets at multiple distances with chaperoned access.

Charles Dickenson noted with regards to the hotel complex that the NRA had submitted a response highlighting the importance of restricting the use of the building to those associated with shooting activity and asked if there was any reason why a hotel has to be restricted rather than the open market for better commercial gain.

The Chief Executive responded that there is no reason why a hotel operator would not wish to have the hotel for any paying customer it may wish to have. The general policy at Bisley is that the estate is used for the support of shooting services and the NRA are keen to see that continue.

CD then asked for a distinction between people viewing Facebook and the views on Facebook as they are two completely different things and can be misinterpreted. SMcD believes that a better way of imparting the information would be by stating 'unique' visitors. SMcD asked for the visitor numbers to the NRA website to be published.

The Chairman commended the work Paul Deach has done as the NRA's media consultant during the Imperial. He is a great enthusiast and hard worker. The members agreed. Special mention was made of the Cadet Imperial medal ceremony, the film of which was shared with over 1,000 other cadets through social media, thanks to Paul's interaction with the cadets.

Simon Fraser added that the Cadet Meeting had been a great success and CCRS are currently working on producing a report for Cadet Branch to approve future events. Priority for entrants will be given to 14 year olds who are new to the meeting.

SMcD wanted it on the record that the idea of creating a Cadet Imperial is a brilliant one and completely in line with the NRA's objectives. JB stated that it was an idea put forward by Peter Turner to the Trustees who approved the idea. It was Simon Fraser who developed the idea into the successful meeting it was.

G454 – SHOOTING COMMITTEE

The minutes of 5th May 2016 were presented to the members.

Derek Stimpson asked for Australia, South Africa and the USA to be included under the Sporting Rifle Report of the minutes of 5th May 2016.

There were no other matters arising.

A verbal report of the meeting held on 1st September was given by JB.

There were six incidents during the Imperial of firearms being left unattended on the ranges. These have all been dealt with by the Chief Executive.

An incident occurred earlier this week with the failure of a sporting rifle on Century Range. The incident is being investigated.

Two youngsters fired shots during the preparation period of their Imperial Meeting shoots, and this was dealt with by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman of the Disciplinary Committee.

The staff will be looking at various firing points over the winter period with regards to improving them.

Some complaints have been received regarding the lack of cover on the 25 yard firing points on Melville and plans for covering the points are being developed and actioned.

1200 yard bookings on Stickledown have been incorporated into the range plan for next year which should see improvements in planning.

The draft calendar of events has been provided and published on the NRA website. The 2017 Queen's Final will take place on Saturday 22nd July 2017. The Intercounties will be held on 17th-18th June 2017.

The 2018 Queen's Final will move back to Saturday 28th July 2018, which fits with the decision that future Queen's Finals will be held on the 4th Saturday in July.

The production of the 2017 NRA Handbook is underway and JB asked for any items for inclusion to be emailed to Iain Robertson by 1st October 2016.

The Imperial Meeting was successful and there were few problems or complaints raised. The revision to the F-Class competition worked well and will therefore be incorporated again next year.

JB announced a review to target rifle target dimensions for competitive shooting has commenced which will also affect Match Rifle at long distance. Charles Dickenson will be conducting that review and has produced a number of points to his thinking process. Any comments from GC members should be directed to Charles. An official notice will be placed in the NRA Journal advising of the potential changes from 2018 onwards, giving the required 12 months' notice.

Charles Dickenson added that there are a significant number of options open to them at the moment. Club shooters may not welcome target dimension changes which are geared at elite shooters and one of the options could be that we go to a two-tier target option – one for clubs and one for elite shooters. We are conscious that we do not want to reduce the size of the bull and lose shooters in droves because of the lack of scores. However, it has been proven that shooters can obtain the same high scores with new target dimensions as proven in 1994/1995 where scores were higher despite changes to the target dimensions. Current scores are near perfection and therefore leave little room for error making it very difficult to win the Grand Aggregate if you get one bad shot.

Charles Dickenson will send his report for circulation with these minutes.

G455 – MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

There was no update at this meeting.

G456 – ELECTION OF MEMBERS

A vacancy on the Board of Trustees has been advertised and there were three nominations for the position; Harald Dunton, Steve McDowell and Reg Roberts.

The Chairman announced that Reg Roberts had won the election and welcomed him to the Council. The Chairman thanked the other applicants for their interest.

The Chairman announced that the Trustees had elected David Evans as their Vice Chairman for a further year, following his agreement to re-stand.

G457 – REAL ESTATE POLICY

This topic has been discussed extensively during this meeting. The Chairman would like it noted that the Council will revise the Real Estate Policy, in light of the learning regarding 'mixed motive' investing to help clarify some issues within the policy. This will be discussed at the next Trustee meeting and the amended policy will be forward to General Council for their input prior to release to the membership.

David Lamb asked for an update on the publication of the methodology from Strutt & Parker on how proposed rents are arrived at.

The Chief Executive confirmed that a draft paper had been circulated to the Trustees and will go to Strutt &

Parker to comment on, so it is work in progress.

G458 – APPROVAL OF DATES FOR MEETINGS IN 2017

The following dates were confirmed for General Council meetings in 2017

Saturday 18 th February 2017	2.00pm	NRA Pavilion
Friday 16 th June 2017	3.00pm	NRA Pavilion
Followed by the AGM	6.00pm	NRA Pavilion
Friday 8 th September 2017	2.00pm	NRA Pavilion

G459 - OTHER ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

John Kynoch invited the Chairman to inform the General Council what the Trustees are intending to do with the seven recommendations raised in David Lacey and Alice Gran's report.

The Chairman confirmed that the Trustees were taking those under advisement and will conclude on those recommendations at their upcoming meeting.

JB remarked that the projected new Proof Act, which is under discussion between the Proof Masters and the Government, may impinge on what the NRA can do in respect of the inclusion of CIP regulations into UK domestic law. The opinion from Mr Doherty makes reference to the fact that the Proof Houses can currently allow dimensions other than CIP because CIP is not a legal requirement in the UK. If it is written into UK domestic law it could affect target shooting in the UK.

Charles Dickenson asked whether there was any further update to the proposed Home Office club renewal fees. The Chief Executive reported that the NRA have made vigorous representation to contacts within the Home Office and have offered a solution as well as complaint.

As this is his last meeting, Simon Fraser wanted to thank the General Council members for their support over the last 24 years. His successor is arriving in October and SF knows he will help support the NRA.

The Chairman thanked Simon Fraser for everything he has done for cadet shooting. SF has achieved a fantastic outcome for cadet shooting over the last 24 years and it is gratefully appreciated. All members present wholeheartedly agreed.

No further questions were raised.

The meeting closed at 16.00pm

Chairman

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Saturday 18 th February 2017	2.00pm	NRA Pavilion
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