

THE GENERAL COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting held at the NRA Pavilion
on Friday 8th September 2017 from 2.00pm

Present:

Chairman: Mr JGM Webster (Chairman)

Members: Mr GK Alexander
Mr GV Barnard
Mrs ID Bennett
Mr HRM Bailie
Mr JPS Bloomfield
Mr N Brasier
Mr AM Bullen
Wg Cdr DP Calvert
Dr A Cargill Thompson
Mr PAE Charlton
Mr PR Coley
Mr M Cotillard
Mr DC Crispin
Mr AJCB de Launay
Mr CES Dickenson
Mr HF Dunton
Mr DGF Evans
Dr N Fyfe
Mr J Harris
Mr DR Lamb
Mr GAE Larcombe
Miss SS Lohmann
Mr D Lowe
Mr MF Martel
Mr N McFarlane
Mr JF Miller
Mr B Ritchie
Mr R Roberts
Mr P Ryder
Mr I Shirra-Gibb
Mr D Stimpson
Mr IR Thomson
Dr JD Warburton
Mr MP Watkins

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

Apologies for absence: Mr T Bobbet, Col WGC Bowles, Mr CM Brooks, Maj R Bruce, Mr M Charlton, Maj. Gen IC Dale, Mr E George, Mr J Harper-Smith, Mr K Hocking, Wg Cdr CJ Hockley, Mr A Hunter, Mr D Kent, Mr JM Kynoch, Mr T Lehman, Mr M Magan, Mr M Maksimovic, Mr K Nash, Brig. WJ O'Leary, Mrs K Robertson, Mr AJD Saunders, Mr R Sayer, Brig J Smales, Wing Cdr M Symonds, Mr PDC Turner, Mr G Trembath, Sqn Ldr P Upham, Dr AP Wolpe, Mr MJ Wood.

CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chairman of General Council welcomed everyone to the meeting.

INDEX G488 to G502

G488 – APOLOGIES

Apologies were received as noted above.

G489 – WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

The Chairman confirmed the results of the 2017 elections.

The successful candidates were John Bloomfield, Nick Brasier, David Calvert, David Crispin and Silke Lohmann. The Chairman formally welcomed Nick Brasier and Silke Lohmann to their first General Council meeting.

The meeting also recorded that Peter Hobson, Barry Morgan and Tim Stewart were unsuccessful.

Richard Bailie and George Barnard were re-elected as Regional Members and Bryden Ritchie was welcomed as the new Regional Rep for Scotland. It was noted that the North Western region has a vacancy due to David Young stepping down.

Alex Cargill Thompson (MR), Ian Shirra-Gibb (300M) were re-elected as Discipline Reps with Ted George (GR&P) and Neil Macfarlane (Classics) welcomed as the new Discipline reps.

G490 – MINUTES OF MEETING OF GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING – 16TH JUNE 2017

The Minutes of the General Council meeting of 16th June 2017 were received.

The minutes were accepted as an accurate account of the meeting and duly approved.

G491 – MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF 16TH JUNE 2017

Peter Coley (PC) asked whether AM had managed to visit the shower blocks with regards to the broken floor tiles as reported under point G481. AM confirmed he had seen the floor and had still to action it.

Harald Dunton (HD) wanted to make an observation regarding muzzle brakes as he had overheard a conversation on a local range where someone was encouraged to shoot through an open-ended box which mitigated the blast effect on the shooters either side and also appeared to reduce the volume of noise. AM remarked that this subject was discussed at the Shooting Committee and would be reported later in the meeting.

HD also asked for clarification regarding AM's agreement with 50% of David Crispin's point on membership fees under G483. The Chairman confirmed that membership would be discussed further under the Three Year Strategic plan including how the membership use the ranges and membership as a whole regionally.

HD is pleased with how quickly the minutes are being produced and published on the website and asked whether the same could be done with the Council Minutes (Trustees). The Chairman responded that the Trustees would have to discuss that at their next meeting in October.

Nick Brasier (NB) remarked that G487 discussed leases, particularly the Artists and NLRC, and that the Estates Policy would be part of this. NB asked whether this would be discussed further. AM confirmed this would be covered under the Three Year Strategic Plan later in the meeting.

Charles Dickenson (CD) asked again whether the guidance from the Charity Commission on mixed motive investing is now available. AM confirmed again that we have heard nothing further regarding this and will ask the Charity Commission for an idea of when the publication will be.

Peter Coley (PC) asked whether AM had been able to check on the £20 surcharge for the Imperial Meeting paper entries. AM apologised as he is still to check and will report back.

CD remarked that there are a number of action points throughout the minutes and asked whether a list of action points could be included at the end of the minutes so people are aware of them. The Chairman confirmed that GT would include these moving forward.

No further matters were raised.

G492 – THE COUNCIL

The minutes of the Council meetings held on 22nd April and 16th June 2017 were presented to the meeting. The Chairman also gave a verbal report of the Council meeting held on 18th August 2017.

Discussions held on 18th August were mainly around the impending real estate renewals, outcomes of the AGM and BGM which will be covered later in this meeting. The Three Year Strategic Plan was also discussed in detail.

The Chairman wanted it noted that the amendments to the Second Schedule put forward at the AGM were turned down by the meeting. The mood of the meeting was in favour of electronic voting, but to re-think the process so as not to disenfranchise any members who would not wish to vote electronically. The meeting felt a transition period from the current system to electronic voting would be better. David Lacey (Trustee) has put together some amendments, with some lay contributions from Tony de Launay (AdeL) which is now with Charles Brooks (CB) along with other suggested amendments for review as CB was one of the initial creators of the Second Schedule.

The Chairman asked for any questions on any of the minutes received.

NB asked AM for feedback on his visit to Sellafield to meet with the CNC. AM confirmed that it was a very interesting meeting and is helping the NRA think about how we can cement the CNC's presence at Bisley for the long term. CNC have signed a five-year agreement for training and use of the ranges at Bisley.

The Chairman added that there is an alignment of interests between the NRA and the CNC and there are facilities which might be made available to them on a more permanent basis with benefits for both sides. The NRA needs to make sure that any such footprint fits both the CNC, other commercial users and our membership.

John Miller (JM) asked how the new range booking system and corporate website were progressing. AM confirmed that the range booking system is still under commission and we have seen the first release of it which looks good but it needs testing before launch. The website is almost complete and the content is being confirmed prior to launching it to General Council members for their input and then going live to the membership. The new site looks very good and will have metrics on each page to be able to see which areas of the site are popular and visited regularly. We hope to launch the new site around November / December 2017.

HD asked for an update on Regional Range certification/construction and whether we would be including the regional assessors as they would have good knowledge of how a range should be constructed. AM responded that the NRA are trialling a self-assessment process, sending Frank Compton (who wrote most of JSP403) with Nic Couldrey into the regions, the most recent being a visit to the Duchy Range in Cornwall.

Results of that meeting showed that face to face discussion was much more productive than sending documents directly by post. The Duchy Range took a fair bit of persuading that the NRA were there to help and not to shut them down, as had been their initial thought.

Richard Bailie (RB) asked what the results of the meeting were with the Duchy Range. AM confirmed that they were still shooting and there were some suggested changes as to the way the range was used which was accepted with gratitude by the range operating club.

NB asked whether the NRA would be undertaking some lobbying of the smaller countries wishing to take part in shooting in the Commonwealth Games to ensure it was included, as was the case back in 2000 as without the lobbying there wouldn't have been any shooting in the 2000 games. AM remarked that as of this week the prospects of any form of shooting in any of the UK bid cities for the Commonwealth Games is very bleak. The process of awarding the 2022 Games is going to be cut short because it is an emergency bid process, so different rules will apply. Normal bids are approved by the Commonwealth Games Federation, but the 2022 bid will be approved by the Commonwealth Games Executive. The lobbying of small countries will not be as beneficial as previously. British Shooting are working on a 'Plan B' if shooting is not included.

Martin Watkins (MW) added that if the games came down to either Birmingham or Kuala Lumpur, that Kuala Lumpur would include shooting whereas Birmingham would not. Bryden Ritchie (BR) added that if shooting was not included in the Games, Sports Scotland would remove their funding of shooting.

AM added that shooting is a discretionary part of the Commonwealth Games sports sequence and has been for some considerable time. AM's concern is if the Commonwealth Games gets used to games without shooting, Target Shooting Funding will come under significant pressure. There are very significant consequences for the shooting community, not just fullbore, but smallbore and clay shooting also.

John Bloomfield (JSB) believes there would be nothing lost by asking the smaller countries to lobby the Commonwealth Games Executive, either individually or collectively.

CD remarked it had been mentioned looking into a global ranking system and whether that would be for individuals or countries. Gary Alexander (GA) responded that for the next Games there is going to be a requirement for a ranking system. The smaller countries who do not have their athletes ranked at a certain level may not be able to compete anyway. From the point of funding, in fullbore where we don't have an annual World Championships or Europeans as the smallbore or clay shooters do, it is very difficult to persuade the funders to fund without the level required of the athletes. GA believes the NRA should be trying to influence ICFRA as the governing body for the world to produce a world ranking system.

MW added that it is more complex than that because the ranking system wouldn't accept GB as a country, but only the individual countries such as Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales. JSB added that under the quota place system used for shooting at the Olympics and which may be introduced for future Commonwealth Games should an athlete come in the top 3 of the Europeans or top 4 of the Worlds, the country wins a place, not the individual. It is then up to the country to allocate the quota place to whom they choose. There are also moves towards introducing mixed pairs of one female and one male competitor for events which have previously been divided by gender whereas fullbore shooting is not gender specific.

Paul Charlton (PAEC) had done some analysis of the competitors at the Glasgow games and of the 71 countries, 40 entered shooting events and of those 71 teams, 46 had a total team size of less than 50 and 19 of the 40 shooting countries had teams less than 50 competitors.

No further questions were raised.

G493 – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM took place on 16th June 2017 and the minutes are available on the website.

The Chairman, Treasurer and Chief Executive all made speeches to the meeting. There were a number of questions and comments from the floor which included Rule 150 and leases of two Bisley club houses (Artists & NLRC).

Questions were requested.

JSB wanted to update the meeting on Dr Robin Pizer and the statements he had made regarding Rule 150. JSB gave a presentation with AM before this meeting which saw 12 GC members attend. There was a lot of detail within the presentation. The principal conclusions of the investigation were that all the incidents raised by Dr Pizer involved ammunition problems, one of which was military issued ammo in a military issue rifle.

The second thing JSB wanted to raise was Dr Pizer's comment at the AGM that he expected the NRA to acknowledge the serious safety concerns expressed in Dr Allsop's report (Birmingham Proof House). The only place in the report that Dr Allsop mentions serious safety concerns is in respect proof cartridges and the ability of the cartridge case to withstand proof pressure. The NRA do not use proof cartridges for any purpose. Proof cartridges and proof pressures are purely a matter for the Proof Masters.

JSB will produce and circulate a synopsis of the presentation from earlier today to the General Council members.

The Chairman added that Rule 150 has occupied a considerable amount of the NRA's resources over the last 3-4 years. There have been three reports that have been presented to and accepted by General Council along with many meetings held with the Birmingham Proof Master. The Chairman believes there has been no credible evidence provided that there is any serious safety risk. In reality the NRA does need to recognise that there are serious threats to Home Office approved clubs, there are adverse changes with regards to firearms legislation and potential reduction of access to regional ranges so we need to positively promote our sport. The Chairman believes these issues demand a much greater priority than investigating unproven, tenuous claims of safety risks resulting from an NRA shooting competition rule.

Silke Lohmann (SL) stated that she believes that part of the problem is shooters saying their rifles haven't been checked for a long time which could be a potential safety issue. Therefore she suggested would it be possible to check everyone's rifles, which could be seen as proactive by the NRA. Everyone would then have a sticker to prove the rifles had been checked.

AM remarked that the NRA check around 10% of all rifles during the Imperial Meeting. In 2017 there were 109 rifles tested of which 8 failed – 4 of those passed once cleaned – so less than 4% of the rifles failed. That doesn't mean they're not safe; they are just not compliant with the competition rule. To go through the exercise of re-stickering every single rifle is a moot point. The main safety issue which is beginning to confront the world of fullbore shooting is hand-loaded ammunition. AM remarked that he has a particular interest in the safety issues as he is personally responsible for the range safety certificate and the range standing orders.

Iain Thomson (IT) asked what Rule 150 actually was. JSB responded that Rule 150 is a competition rule so that we don't end up with problems because people use rifles of unknown sizes with issued ammunition.

PAEC added that he doesn't see how re-stickering after a number of years is going to find any actions where the chamber has shrunk!

G494 – BISLEY GENERAL MEETING

The BGM took place on 19th July 2017 and the minutes are available on the website.

The Chairman reported a number of comments which were made at the meeting, the majority regarding leases.

There has been a complaint raised following a comment made by John Carmichael at the BGM and the complainant has requested it be socialised at this meeting.

AM informed the meeting a complaint had been received from Rob Sanders, current tenant of Bullet Lodge. Mr Sanders was not impressed and felt insulted by the comments made by John Carmichael and has requested a letter be forwarded to John Carmichael expressing his concerns.

Mr Sanders wanted AM to convey his dismay to the General Council meeting. In summary, John Carmichael's comment that the loss of Bullet Lodge club lease to an 'occasional shotgun shooter who spends most of his time elsewhere' has been met with the response from Mr Sanders of 'I found your comments quoted above very insulting with the inference that shotgunners are from a lower species. Within my years of experience at Bisley I have always been well aware of the barriers between the various disciplines. It has always saddened me that some will adopt tunnel vision, but I consider myself simply a shooter with interests in all shooting matters'.

For a point of detail, Robert Sanders has been shooting at Bisley since 1958 and has shot target rifle, pistol, gallery rifle, shotgun and is a very active shooter now. The transcript of the letter has been forwarded to John Carmichael.

The Chairman requested any questions on the proceedings of the BGM. No questions were raised.

G495 – FINANCE

The Treasurer presented his report to the meeting.

For the first time in a September General Council meeting we have forecasts through to the year end. DL expressed his thanks to the finance team for producing those.

The forecast is for a modest surplus of c.£120k by year end, not as high as the budgeted figure of £230k. This is due to depreciation on new investments hitting earlier than expected and the Pavilion works taking longer than anticipated which has resulted in no revenues as were forecasted.

Cash generation is expected to be c.£700k which is consistent with recent years.

The NRA now operates under the policy of having a minimum cash balance of £200k so that cash is available for contingencies or fresh opportunities. This threshold may be touched later this year owing to continuing capital expenditure. The figure of £200k may well be increased as part of the Three Year Strategic Plan as the operational footprint is larger now than when the policy was set a few years ago.

NB asked if the higher than budgeted figure in July was a timing issue on expenses or are they higher than expected. AM responded that the budgeted figure hadn't factored in the amount of capital expenditure we needed. The forecast is where we expect to be by year end at c.£500k against a budget of £650k.

The Chairman requested thanks be passed to Ray Hutchings and the finance team.

G496 – OPERATIONAL UPDATE

The Chief Executive presented his report to the General Council members.

AM updated General Council on a meeting he had with the Home Office on Tuesday where the excessive fees for Home Office approved clubs were discussed. This was followed up by a meeting with the Home Office Minister, Nick Hurd, on Wednesday. The fees are currently £84.00 for renewal and the proposed fee was due to increase to c.£900. The application fee was proposed to be increased to £1,050. The NRA have been fighting quite a robust battle to seek clarification of how these costs are being reached. The reaction to the public consultation saw 5,000 responses which caught the Home Office off guard. The vast majority of those were on behalf of clubs who were expressing their concern and the NGBs were successful in 'mobilising the troops' to raise their concerns.

Three further meetings have been arranged in October, November and December to find a more equitable way of calculating the fees. The Minister has asked for a review meeting in December.

Derek Stimpson (DS) asked whether the NRA would be making a formal statement to clubs to inform them of this result. AM responded that nothing has been finalised yet so a formal statement would not be appropriate at this time. However, the message can be fed back to the clubs that the fees are being reviewed.

John Webster (JW) was surprised at the amount of steel shot which has been found on the ranges. AM responded that he has found out that skeet shooters regularly use steel shot because it's cheaper than lead and there are a number of skeet ranges which shoot over wetlands where it is mandatory. JW asked if the NRA had a policy regarding the use of steel shot. AM responded that we don't have one at the moment and we will need to think about it before producing one.

JM remarked that the decline in the number of lost members is positive and asked whether this was due to database cleansing and also whether there were any analytics as to why members were leaving the NRA. AM responded that the main loss of members in 2016 was due to the database cleanse and the figures for 2017 shows a return of less than 4% of the membership not renewing. Analysis undertaken for lost members doesn't show any specific trend or reason.

JSB wanted to comment on the negotiation of ammunition costs made by AM as the trend in the market is showing an increase in the cost of Sierra bullets of c.15%, European propellant by 10% and CCI primers have recently increased by nearly 100%. So AM had done extremely well being able to negotiate an increase of 6% on the GGG ammunition.

DS asked whether the recovery of lead shot is affected by mixture the steel shot and therefore impacts on the price we get for it. And also the rusting of steel shot has some effect on the lead and increases its toxicity. AM remarked that the mixture of lead shot and steel shot will affect the price. AM has seen a report regarding the rate of oxidising lead shot when mixed with steel shot which was quite worrying and AM will be doing some more research and find out the potential consequences.

DS added that there is a recent initiative in Europe against lead again. AM remarked that there are parts of the European Commission who are trying to remove shooting and are trying this by initiating a unilateral ban on all lead ammunition. DS remarked he is awaiting news from FESAC who raised the issue with him and DS will be happy to feedback to General Council with anything he receives from them.

JSB has found and sent a report to AM commissioned in the US which specifically examines the effect of leaching of heavy metals from rifle ranges into the environment. DS remarked that when shooting on a range in the US a few years ago the range owners made the comment that every two or three years a number of inches of top soil are removed on the whole range so they take it very seriously there.

No further questions were raised.

G497 – THREE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

The Chairman began the discussion by stating what needs to be achieved with regards to the Three Year Strategic Plan which has been presented to the meeting. The first is to get feedback on the content of the plan as submitted in outline and secondly is to agree the process.

The Chairman has also discussed with the Vice Chairman of General Council and Vice Chairman of Council the opportunity to go wider than this body for input into this process, particularly with regards to regional ranges and camp tenancies, and the approval of the General Council to that part of the process is important as General Council is the body that is constituted to give advice to the Council.

AM informed the meeting that the report hopefully highlights the main issues, priorities and matters which need further discussion such as developing relationships with affiliated organisations, developing a Bisley range master plan, the issuing of competency cards, expanding NRA activities into supporting regional ranges. All these matters need a considerable amount of work to finesse and finalise and the input of General Council is very important.

Alex Cargill Thompson (ACT) welcomed the review and said there are some very good points made therein. The overarching comment he would like to make is that the report feels a little too “bottom up” rather than strategic. It would be useful to have a summary at the beginning of where the NRA would like to be in 5-10 years with the content backing up the process of how they intend to get there.

AM and JW appreciated that and the NRA will look to include a statement of intent.

HD is encouraged by the frequent mention of improvements to access and operation of regional ranges. One objective is to recruit three professional NRA representatives by the end of 2019 and HD asked whether they would be Nic Couldrey (NC) type people. AM responded that they would be working under the management of Nic Couldrey on a more localised, regional level. HD would like to pay tribute to NC and say how well he is doing ‘pushing water uphill’.

HD then asked whether the objective to appoint a head TR instructor to deliver NRA courses in 2018 would be to deliver all courses or just target rifle courses. AM responded that it would be target rifle courses initially because it is believed to be the discipline which most urgently needs it. HD remarked that it is the largest discipline at Bisley but not in the regions where it is Gallery Rifle.

HD also added that regional members do not see the benefit of NRA membership apart from insurance and that the NRA should take that on board. AM responded that the NRA are aware the relationship of the NRA and regional clubs needs to be addressed and strengthened in the right way moving forward.

HD then asked about the creation and delivery of regional courses and how that would work. AM responded through the ability to use regional ranges as locations for courses, such as the range at Frome & District range, where the NRA have assisted in the creation of the range and has the option to use the range on an agreed number of weekends a year where training can be held.

HD wants the NRA to ensure they include all shooters in the UK and not just NRA members. JW responded that is where the NRA are moving to as part of the strategic plan but that Bisley is the NRA’s principal asset for generating the surpluses to be able to invest in the regions for all members. It is therefore very important for the NRA to continue to generate income at Bisley through increasing target rifle income to be able to create those surpluses for the regions.

CD remarked that he has a vision that every club will have a qualified club coach for all disciplines across the country and he is currently working with Peter Cottrell and David Camp on re-establishing the club coach qualification with modular elements to bring all disciplines on board for training. HD remarked that the majority of his members are not interested in entering competitions, they just want to come and shoot at the club.

BR remarked that he believes the NRA needs to see their capital as being the shooters in this country and although Bisley is the ‘cash cow’ for the organisation, we do need to focus the NRA as the national governing body for fullbore shooting and start to recognise the contribution that clubs make to shooting and not alienate them. JW agreed with that statement and the recruitment of NC in the regions has been very good for the organisation, and to be able to increase that footprint in the regions is positive for the organisation.

SL wondered whether it would be worth questioning the membership about what they do and do not shoot as well as where they shoot to be able to garner more information in the regions and whether this could be done as part of the renewal process this year. SL would also be interested to find out how much money the NRA give as a charity to support the regions, teams, Bisley Camp and the sport overall.

NB would like to see the NRA summarise the importance of recognising the clubs both at Bisley and in the regions and the part they play in coaching, training, running competitions enhancing marksmanship, etc.

NB then remarked on the range utilisation and the problems with access to the different ranges at Bisley, particularly the use of Butt Zero which cuts out a large number of targets on Stickledown for long range shooting and whether an alternative range could be found on site to replace Butt Zero to relieve the pressure on Stickledown.

James Harris (JH) remarked that a good article on range utilisation will be published in the next journal. JW added that weekend availability for target lanes is becoming more pressing and the NRA need to recognise there is a premium for this time which doesn't exist on other days so the need to maximise the utilisation of the ranges is very important. Therefore the NRA will be looking at how ranges are used, such as Butt Zero, and the improvement works to Winans has created an additional facility to relieve the pressures elsewhere. The area to the left of Stickledown may have some scope to create an additional range, but this is a long term view.

AM added that the ranges are extremely complicated and different shooting on different ranges affects all the ranges. Membership and demands on the ranges are increasing and the NRA are looking at utilising the ranges in the most effective way to increase the available capacity.

JW remarked that the process moving forward would involve a number of consultation meetings with the group to create proposals for agreement.

JSB asked for a breakdown of the investment made on Winans range and return to date of bookings. AM confirmed that £110k had been invested in the range and to date around a third of the weekend shooting which would have taken place on Butt Zero in the past has migrated across to Winans which frees up availability for long range shooting on Stickledown.

ACT added that having electronic targets on Stickledown will effectively increase the capacity on the range, as shots are marked instantaneously, and being able to rent the targets out by the hour should further increase flexibility and utilisation. JW agreed that using electronic targets provides a lot of efficiency gains.

HD asked whether club chairmen would still be responsible for the allocation of SCC cards. AM responded that club chairman would still be responsible for signing off and certifying the competency of their members, but the NRA would produce the cards directly.

MW wanted to thank the NRA for the assistance provided over the last year with helping to try and secure a new range in Wales, despite it being unsuccessful. MW would also endorse and work with any potential club coaches/trainers who come into the region in the future.

AdeL is pleased that the NRA have produced a plan and believes the media coverage needs to be improved to help promote fullbore shooting and AdeL would be happy to assist in any way he can. One way could be to offer sports media personnel the opportunity to come and have a go at shooting to help promote the sport. JW believes that could be considered in the future.

CD would like to see the regional clubs included as part of the process and how the NRA believe they could help deliver the NRA's strategic plan as well as the assistance the NRA can give to the clubs to help deliver the plan. AM doesn't believe that is going to be in this strategic plan as that is a matter of debate for agreement by the General Council before involving the regions.

IT asked whether there was a longer strategic plan available beyond the three years in this report. AM confirmed there wasn't as it's very difficult to realise a 10-15 year plan. IT would like to see the vision. AM agrees with that and will look at including that in the revised plan.

The Chairman then sought approval from the members present as to whether the process is the right way forward and the consultation process should include outside influences on both regions and tenancies.

AM has listed the key headings and proposed timetable for implementing the priorities of the plan and AM would like to have the seven key dates agreed for further discussion and debate within this body to be able to update the plan before implementation.

BR would like to see the regional reps included in the process. AM agreed.

JW added that this would be an information sharing process with General Council as well as using it as an advisory body. AM confirmed that the NRA would look to include General Council in the amendments and updates as a work in progress document so that they are informed at all times.

NB asked whether all Bisley tenants would be included as part of the process. AM confirmed it would be all those who have a tenancy or lease at Bisley including caravan owners, club houses and hut licencees.

HD asked whether all regional clubs would be included in the process. AM confirmed that a selected number of clubs would be invited to a regional meeting, recommended by Nic Couldrey following his visits into the regions, as well as a couple of Bisley based clubs.

John Warburton (JWar) personally applauded the initiative to go out and consult with the members and in doing that we need to be able to adapt our actions and plans based on the feedback. It must be a two way process. AM agreed.

The Chairman asked for agreement from the meeting that the NRA move forward with the consultation process as laid out in the strategic plan.

The meeting agreed.

G498 – SHOOTING COMMITTEE

The minutes of the 19th May 2017 were presented to General Council. No questions were raised.

James Harris (JH) then gave a verbal report of the meeting held on 7th September 2017.

The Imperial Meeting was successful, despite the poor weather on Queen's Final. Scrutineering was undertaken on a number of rifles during the meeting with 4 non-compliant rifles out of the 109 tested. Comments received by competitors and attendees were positive and thanks were given to the professional staff.

CD observed that the TR entry was down by around 5% on last year's figures. CD is working on a questionnaire for approval which includes questions on who shoots what, the events they like to enter, or not as the case may be, to help the NRA understand how we can increase attendance at all events.

The main discussion in the meeting was the proposed changes to target dimensions which CD and the TR working group are developing. CD confirmed that the draft report would be attached to these minutes for circulation. The proposals are that the 300 and 500 yard bull would move to the ICFRA bull dimensions with a V bull of 0.6 of the bull as opposed to ICFRA's 0.5. These would be implemented on the 1st January 2019. The 600 yard target and the Long Range target will remain unchanged at this time.

The impact of the change will be assessed over the following two years. Thereafter consideration will be given to amending the target sizes of the entire suite of targets based upon the data gathered with a view to implementing suggested changes in 2022.

Consultation will be held by professional staff with the MoD and regions including an understanding of target stocks, prior to implementation.

PAEC asked that any new targets which are agreed and produced have a different marking on them to show they are the new target size for future competitions and events. It was agreed that would be done.

Further discussion was held for the special anniversary 150th Meeting in 2019 and the majority of disciplines have made suggestions for events. Any further ideas for ways to celebrate should be emailed to JH in the first instance.

The Bisley handbook has been sent out for review and any changes should be sent to Iain Robertson by 31st October.

It was agreed that long range shoots will be increased in the Imperial Meeting TR Grand Aggregate to two 900 shoots and two 1000 shoots and these will be published by the year end.

A request had been made for permission to send Great Britain Sporting Rifle teams to Norway in 2018 and South Africa in 2019 which had been agreed by the Committee.

The NRA had received an invitation from South Africa to send a GB Veterans team to South Africa in 2018 and it was agreed by the Committee that the Veterans Team Captain for the World Championships in 2019 would be asked to recruit a team for 2018. The current team captain is John Webster who declared an interest.

The NRA professional staff are carrying out a review in to the use of muzzle brakes and will produce a proposal for agreement by the Committee prior to implementation. HD asked that his early comment about shooting through an open-ended box be considered. BR remarked that this method had been used successfully in Scotland for a number of years.

No further questions were raised.

G499 – MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Committee had not met since the last General Council meeting so there was nothing to report at this meeting.

G500 – ELECTION OF MEMBERS

The Chairman reported to the meeting that two Trustees, David Lacey and Alice Gran, were due for re-election to the Council and requested agreement from General Council that both be re-elected on the recommendation of the Council. The proposal was agreed.

The Chairman then informed the meeting that as per the Second Schedule, Rule 7g(xi), nominees for the casual vacancy of CivSR/Practical Rifle Representative had been sought following the resignation of John Morgan-Hosey. One nomination, Mark Bradley had been received and the Chairman asked the meeting for acceptance of Mr Bradley's nomination. The position would be available until the 2018 elections. The proposal was agreed.

G501 – APPROVAL OF DATES FOR 2018 MEETINGS

The following dates were agreed for the 2018 General Council meetings:

Saturday 17 th February 2018	2.00pm	NRA Pavilion
Friday 15 th June 2018	3.00pm	NRA Pavilion
Followed by the AGM	6.00pm	NRA Pavilion
Friday 7 th September 2018	2.00pm	NRA Pavilion

G502 – OTHER ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

NB brought up a number of items for discussion. Firstly a memo which had been received by the Secretary General from Colin McEachran for circulation to General Council regarding Bisley rents. However it came in too late for circulation to the meeting as the Second Schedule stipulates that a minimum of 5 days is needed for the circulation of paperwork. It has been decided that the contents would be discussed at the Bisley Tenants meeting as it is relevant to Bisley tenants and not the membership as a whole. It was agreed that the memo would be shared with General Council next week for their information.

As one of the newly elected members, NB would like to get up to speed on how the NRA works and would like some background information made available to help him contribute better to General Council. NB asked for sight of the Risk Register, annual budgets, management accounts and the Enduring Decisions of Council document. AM responded that there are some confidential documents which he is unable to release such as the Risk Register which has some sensitive information contained therein.

AG commented that she had advised Council that most of the Risk Register could be made more publicly available.

NB also asked about the document which discusses how the NRA works with the NSC. Alice Gran (AG) remarked that the relationship between the NRA and NSC are no longer relevant as they have been amalgamated in terms of the way the association is run and the NSC is really now the commercial arm of the NRA only.

With regards to the Enduring Decisions of Council document AM confirmed that the document does exist but is not relevant. JSB remarked that the document was created by a previous Chairman of the NRA which hasn't been updated since 2009 and is believed to have been created in an attempt to prevent changes to previous Council decisions being made by future boards.

The Chairman stated they would look at all the documentation requested by NB as to whether any could be shared with the General Council members accordingly.

ACT asked whether the Risk Register could be summarised with the sensitive information removed to help the General Council members be aware of the risks facing the Association.

NB also asked whether other documents could be made available such as the Heritage and Landscaping report, the Bisley Master Plan, the Real Estate Policy including mixed motive investing, and the methodology on how rent renewals are considered and reached.

Reg Roberts (RR) asked whether consideration is being given to the new data protection act which is coming into effect in May 2018 and how that will impact on the information retained by the NRA. AM confirmed that Ray Hutchings, Head of Support Services has been tasked with this subject on behalf of the organisation and the NRA will implement this in due course.

No further questions were raised.

The meeting closed at 17.00pm

Chairman

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Saturday 17th February 2018

2.00pm

NRA Pavilion

REVIEW OF ACTIONS

Action Point & Date	Ownerships	Action Required
G491 – 8 th September 2017	AM	AM to action the repairs to the floor of the shower blocks next to the Target Shed following a request from Peter Coley
G491 – 8 th September 2017	Trustees	Harald Dunton requested that Council Minutes be agreed and circulated to General Council within two or three weeks of a meeting in line with the GC minutes to keep members up to date in a timely manner. Trustees to agree at October meeting.
G481 – 8 th September 2017	AM	AM to request an update on mixed motive investment from the Charity Commission and report to the GC members.
G491 – 8 th September 2017	AM	AM to look into the £20 paper surcharge fee for Imperial entries following a request by Peter Coley.
G491 – 8 th September 2017	GT	To create an action list for all General Council minutes for reference by GC members.
G492 – 8 th September 2017	AM	To send link to GC members for the new NRA website for their review and input before being finalised and launched.
G492 – 8 th September 2017	Trustees	Amendments to the Second Schedule are being reviewed and an updated version will be presented to General Council for their review in February 2018.
G492 – 8 th September 2017	Trustees/AM	The Trustees and AM have been asked to approach ICFRA to assist in the production of a world ranking system for shooting in the Commonwealth Games.
G493 – 8 th September 2017	JSB	JSB will produce and circulate a synopsis of the presentation on Rule 150 presented on 8 th September to the General Council members.
G497 – 8 th September 2017	AM	To update the Three Year Strategic Plan to include a statement of intent for the organisation and will include the Regional Reps in the process for their input.
G497 – 8 th September 2017	AM	To organise a regional meeting to be held in Birmingham for selected clubs with Nic Couldrey for consultation on the Three Year Strategic Plan.

Action Point & Date	Ownerships	Action Required
G498 – 8 th September 2017	ALL	Any ideas for special events to be held during the 150 th Imperial Meeting in 2019 to be sent to James Harris (Chairman of Shooting Committee)
G498 – 8 th September 2017	ALL	Requests for amendments or additions to the Bisley Bible 2018 to be sent to Iain Robertson by 31 st October 2017 for inclusion.
G498 – 8 th September 2017	AM	To produce a review of the use of muzzle brakes for consideration by General Council and Council prior to implementation.
G502 – 8 th September 2017	AM	To circulate a memo received from Colin McEachran regarding Bisley rents and tenancies for their information.