

## ESSEX GLIDING CLUB

### MINUTES OF A COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Monday 18th March 2024 commencing 6.30 pm.

Venue: EGC Clubhouse Ridgewell Airfield

Committee Members Present: John Whitwell (Chairman), Tony Brook (Treasurer), Dave Hertzberg (CFI) Steve Jessup (Secretary), Will Burry, Callum Hitchings, Vince Earl

Apologies: None as all present

Also Present: Rob Brown (Child Protection Officer)

Minutes taken by Steve Jessup

#### **1. Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 15th November 2023**

It was noted that (in accordance with the procedure agreed at that meeting) these had been previously circulated and approved and were on the website.

#### **2. Treasurers Report**

Tony presented his spreadsheet (appended to these minutes) indicating the club's current finances.

Whilst not causing immediate concern he pointed out a number of things that should be considered

(i) Insurance costs for gliding generally were rising due to a number of claims at other clubs, indeed one club in particular had been forced to close as they were uninsurable. Fortunately we have a relatively good claims record although we are still expecting higher premiums

(ii) Another factor re insurance is that there appears to have been a number of recent tug upsets.

We are awaiting the BGA giving information/analysis of this but it was speculated that the move towards lighter tugs might be a factor.

(iii) Our direct voucher sales are running at about only 50% of last year. There seem to be a number of reasons for this:

a. Wormingford, Rattlesden, Into the Blue and the BGA initiated aggressive marketing campaigns on social media which probably depressed our sales. We may yet benefit from the ITB campaign as some of those sold will go to us but we don't know how many.

b. There was an issue with our website caused by a Paypal popup which made it difficult to purchase vouchers particularly if people wanted to pay by other means. Callum has made alterations to the website which have now hopefully sorted this issue out.

c. Callum said that he has put a facebook advert out which although it has attracted lots of

hits there are few buyers. Maybe it is just the current financial climate.

Tony said that this financial year we have so far spent 38K more than we received but there has been significant capital investment viz:

(i) We have purchased two new gliders (red K13 and PW5)

(ii) We have purchased a new tractor

(iv) We have concreted the winch hanger floor

Current balance is (in broad terms) 116K of which 116K is allocated viz:

8.5K Pawnee maintenance

4K Glider Maintenance

12k Insurance

75K Self insurance contingency

17K Unclaimed Vouchers and Members flying credits

Tony advised that during the next year we need to be a bit more careful with our spending

### **3. Banking Update**

We currently have difficulty in accessing funds in our Santander accounts as the named directors on the account are no longer club members and we have to go through the process of amending these to current directors. This is in hand. We are also considering transferring all our banking to Santander as we are also experiencing difficulties with our Nat West account.

With Nat West we are also changing over the authorized persons on the account but there are also issues around the nature of the account i.e. whether business or charitable. Nat West had given us the wrong account and this may enable us to claim compensation

Decision

Our nominated signatories for the clubs bank accounts will be amended to be John Whitwell (Chairman) and Tony Brook (Treasurer) and that the necessary procedures for this to occur should be actioned. (Action JW/TB)

### **4. Gift Aid**

As a registered CASC (Community Amateur Sports Club) we are entitled to claim back tax paid by donors to the club. In particular we can claim back the income tax (25p in every £1) paid by members on money that they expend on club assets and business which they claim as expenses.

This might include for example

(i) Travel costs for instructors, winch drivers etc attending the club principally for carrying out those functions

(ii) Travel costs to attend committee meetings

(iii) Travel costs incurred to get to Ridgewell to carry out airfield maintenance

(iv) Costs incurred when taking gliders for ARCs

Members would need to sign a Charity Gift Aid Declaration. We can claim up to 4 years back so there is potentially a lot of money that we are due.

There is a team preparing a mechanism for identifying and processing qualifying expenditure, declarations and returns. Our former treasurer Allen Cherry has also kindly been assisting in putting together a software program to facilitate this.

Callum mentioned that the gift aid declaration will be included within the new membership form to be

signed by members each year. This is being developed by Wayne, our membership secretary.

## **5. Child Protection**

Rob Brown has recently been appointed the Club's Child Protection Officer (CPO) and was attending the meeting to present his Draft Child Protection Policy for EGC.

The policy was well received and it was clear that much good work had gone into it. Rob said that a crucial matter was the decision which if any of the club's members needed to be DBS checked. The main consideration for this was a matter of the frequency and intensity of member's one to one interaction with children. After a lot of thought he considered that most interactions were not one to

one as other members were almost always present. The closest to meeting these criteria were instructors and students in aircraft in flight and after landing and awaiting retrieval. However he felt that even these were also below the frequency and intensity thresholds laid down by the relevant legislation. A winch driver training a minor was more of an issue and the draft policy would require another adult to be present at such times.

On balance Rob felt (and the committee agreed) that only he and Cathy Dellar (Deputy CPO) needed to be DBS checked

There was also considerable discussion re children (in particular under 16's) who have a degree of autism or similar issues, (of which the club has had some experience) and to what extent the club should accept responsibility for them unaccompanied. It was suggested that there should be some

sort of probationary period where parents or guardians would need to be present of flying days and this would be eased only once the club had been able to observe the child to adequately assess the risk. Rob said he would try to incorporate this into the relevant section of the policy (which already broached this matter).

It was also thought that no under 18's should be permitted to stay overnight at Ridgewell unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.

#### Decision

- (i) The committee accepted that Rob's assessment of frequency and intensity was reasonable and would be adopted within the policy
- (ii) The Child Protection Policy was agreed subject to amendments (iii),(iv) and (v) below
- (iii) Rob Brown and Cathy Dellar to be DBS checked (Action RB)
- (iv) The policy would be amended to exclude all under 18s from staying overnight unless accompanied by a parent or guardian (Action RB)
- (v) Draft CP Policy to be amended re probation period for child members as discussed(Action RB)
- (vi) An amendment to the new membership forms would be made drawing attention to the child protection policy that had to be ticked and signed. (Action JW/CH)

Post Meeting note. (27.3.2024) RB has amended the Child Protection Policy as required by this decision and the amendments confirmed as correct after circulation to the committee. The Policy is therefore now adopted.

#### **6. Field Readiness**

- a. The field was still too wet to use and will not realistically be ready for several weeks yet. The airfield team will keep this under review.
- b. Hedges have been cut today along the perimeter track under Nigel's supervision
- c. Steve had increased the track width in the Pawnee hanger by about 4 inches and this should now accommodate the wider track of the Pawnee. Although time consuming this was easier than expected and if more width was required this could be achieved
- d. Dave asked if there was any possibility that the windsock could be relocated onto the adjacent farmer's field, perhaps in the ditch (which divides the field in two) so that it does not affect crop growing. (Action JW to speak to farmer)

## **7. Fleet**

KRU at Wattisham and ready for use at Ridgewell

EOE at Wattisham. ARCD to June

KRX with Les at Swindon for ARC

HZB has got to go to Aston Down for some glassfibre work. Rebecca is organizing this

HVW Rebecca is still working on this

## **8. Tug**

Matt (Tugmaster) had provided an extensive report on recent works and a comparative analysis about the pros and cons of replacement.

The recent work had identified that the wing fuel tanks had been put in the wrong way around (probably on a previous refurbishment) and this was the likely cause of unbalanced fuel use which had caused some handling difficulty. This has now been rectified and fuel use on subsequent flights appears normal

A tentative date for April had been made for a demonstration of a Eurofox as a potential replacement

but it seems unlikely that the field will be ready. Eurofox will be contacted to push back the demonstration date (Action JW)

## **9. Other Urgent Matters Arising**

(i) It had been agreed to lend the tug for a junior event at Tibbenham last week. Tony had been pressed into authorizing this at the last minute. We were paid a £500 fee. The committee endorsed this decision in retrospect but concerns were raised around how members would feel if we lent the tug to another club and as a result it was damaged and unavailable to us. On the other hand there is advantage in the tug being used in winter as lack of use affects engine life adversely. Loan of tug in summer would not have this mitigation.

Decision

Future tug hire requires prior committee decision

(ii) The gas struts on the PW trailer had been bent during either the loading or unloading of KRX.

This was discovered after delivery to Swindon.

Decision SJ to investigate and order suitable replacement struts

The meeting closed at 9.05 p.m.

**Essex Gliding Club Committee Intermediary Decisions made following meeting of**

**15.11.2023**

**15.11.2023 - Decision made at meeting but added to this list because of short term confidentiality, Child Protection Officer Steve Rhenius is no longer a full member but he is listed as our Child Protection Officer. He now rarely visits. Also we now have so many juniors it is felt essential to raise the profile of this position. Rob Brown has emerged as having good knowledge of the law in this respect and is willing, if required, to take on the role of Child Protection Officer at the commencement of the new season at Ridgewell.**

**Decision: Rob Brown to be invited to take on the role. Actions: JW to advise Steve Rhenius and Rob Brown of the decision**

**5.12.2023 - Agreed on a non-negotiable figure of £2650 if another club wanted the simulator.**

**17.12.2023 - As other club not willing to accept our bottom price then agreed that we keep the simulator until such time as it irretrievably breaks down**

**5.1.2024 - Confirmation that our field team has authority to purchase a used replacement tractor if suitable. The tractor was subsequently purchased**

**2.2.2024 - EGC committee agrees that Allen Cherry, Mike Harris and Paul Regeli are removed as signatories from EGC bank accounts and that henceforth two signatures will be required for changes to accounts, viz. Anthony Brook and John Whitwell**