**Birmingham Swifts Running Club**

**Committee Meeting Minutes August 2015**

Meeting held at The Malt House, 75 King Edwards Road, Birmingham

25th August 2015 – 19.00-21.00

Present:

Chair: Tommy Hill (TH)

Secretary: Jay Lamb (JL)

Treasurer: Tom Garlick (TG)

Social Secretary: Chris Pratt (CP)

Race Secretary: Paul Leonard (PL) (from 20:15hrs)

**For action: red text.**

**Apologies:**

PL delayed by work. Attended from 20:15hrs.

**Minutes of last meeting.**

Accepted as read. Proposed by TH, Seconded by TG.

**Chair's Update. TH**

Since the last meeting, I have mainly been conducting my duties as chair including meeting new and prospective members. I also prepared and presented at the Extraordinary General Meeting, where it was agreed to look to affiliate to England Athletics.

Along with the secretary, I also met with Andy Paul from Run Birmingham, where we discussed the program and if Birmingham Swifts could organise a Great Run Local event. From the meeting we also the opportunity to have two members take a Leadership in Running Fitness course for free, which we took advantage of.

**Club Secretary update. JL**

* Membership: 35 members on database. (Some new members/graduates pending.)
* Mailing List = 87 recipients.
* Whatsapp = 22 participants.
* Facebook = 79 members.
* Twitter = 269 followers (following 246) 977 tweets.
* Added notes of meeting with SocSec re: social venue / links with other clubs to Dropbox.
* Called / attended EGM, collated proxy voting & wrote up minutes for email distribution to members (email still pending!)
* LiRF course – DBS check & Licence – begun leading runs.
* Attended meeting with Sidewalk manager & CP (see SocSec notes)
* Created “Jo Swift” account for Committee use on Facebook.
* Identified a few races of interest and added Bournville Leafy 10k to Facebook.
* Discussion with TG Re: Proposed costs to put to members once affiliated.
* Minutes of previous meeting.
* Meeting arrangement & Agenda formulation.

**Pending:**

* Website training with TH.
* To add newsletter subscription tab to website.
* Response to PB re: promotion at LGBT Centre – awaiting (funding for) promo materials / postcards / posters – to be distributed once funding available / materials produced.
* Draft history on Dropbox, pending minor amendments / update and upload to website.
* To create Laces / Wristband list for Dropbox.

**Treasurer’s Update. TG**

* Met with TH & Andy from The Fox.
* Met with Secretary to generate club membership fee (once affiliated) proposal for members to agree at AGM.
* Added Kit order requests to newsletter – Awaiting responses.
* Chasing TSB online banking.
* Needs to re-distribute forms for committee to complete and sign for banking access.
* Not yet received Pride trust funding.
* Bank account balance to be communicated to committee members by TG ASAP.
* Financial policy pending - to be prepared for next Committee meeting – Action TG.

**Social Secretary’s Update. CP**

Conscious decision made to limit the organised social events over the summer, poor attendance likely with holidays etc...

Joint Social Event With Midlands Out Badminton: Not a resounding success sadly, perhaps due to me being unable to attend this one and therefore not much of a link between the clubs. Decided to rest the joint socials idea for a bit until we are more established socially.

Next social events will be post-Atherstone 10k which Paul was looking into (I'm away so can't make it). I will organise meeting for some food after the Worcester 10k.

**Wolverhampton Pride Sunday 26 September**

Still nothing from the pride organisers. Will chase up. Plan will be for parade participation followed by a social in Wolverhampton, or maybe town if people prefer. NOTE: Since Committee meeting, this event has been cancelled by the organisers.

**EA Affiliation update. TH**

* Application form downloaded. Some contact information will be required form committee members when completing this. (To be emailed to TH on request).
* TH to discuss with Stephanie (contact at EA)
* Minutes of EGM to be added to application.
* We currently have enough funds from sale of vests / tshirts to pay the administration fee to EA.
* Individual membership fees would be due between Apr & June 2016.
* Committee agreed that the name of the club to be submitted is “Birmingham Swifts”. We decided not to include “LGBT Runners” as we already have kit without this included and prefer this as a tag line.
* For purposes of this application, the Welfare Officer role would currently be included in Social Secretary remit.
* For purposes of this application, the Membership Secretary role would currently be included in Club Secretary remit.

**Pride funding bid – moving forward. JL**

We have not yet received the funds as promised from the Pride trust. Email is the only contact we have. TH will email within a week of committee meeting to ask for a timescale. If he receives no timely response, he will discuss further with Steve Bedser from the Pride trust applications review group.

We currently have no other funding sources in place but TH will contact EA and / or LGBT centre to ask if they could support us with costs to produce promotional materials (postcards / posters / leaflets) in the short term. We would prefer to have funding to generate these ourselves rather than have them created by another group as we wish to maintain a branded style. CP confirmed we have designs ready for use when funding is in place.

**Member definitions. All**

JL Proposed:

* ***Supporter*** 
  + Non-runner / mailing list – No fee. No voting rights.
* ***Social member***
  + Non-runner / Race supporter / social event attendee – No fee / No voting rights.
* ***Active Member*** 
  + Attends Thursday / Saturday runs. On membership database (completed form) Wears race colours but pays unaffiliated race entry fees. Can access training runs (Ie: HM training). No fee but has Voting rights.
* ***Affiliated Member***
  + EA affiliated – paid member. Also on membership database (completed form) Races as a Swift – claims Club Affiliated discounted race fee. Can access social runs, training runs and coaching sessions. All affiliated discounts & EA benefits. Has voting rights.
* ***Committee Member***
  + Can be Social, Active or Affiliated member. On membership database (completed form) Associated fees/benefits. Has voting rights.

As previously, this prompted some discussion. Distinction between Supporter & Social member was questioned as whether necessary. It was noted that a committee member could not be from the social member group as they would not be on the membership database.

As no agreement was made on the night, all committee members to submit their thoughts to JL by Tuesday 8th September for JL to collate and present for agreement next meeting.

*(During this discussion, PL was able to join the meeting.)*

**Race Secretary’s Update. PL**

**Run Routes**

Two further routes have been run and measured along the canal and will be added to ‘Map My Run’ along with the others and added into the Dropbox folder.

One runs through Digbeth via the canal one way and via roads back covering 5.3M, The other is a simple out and back along the Canal towards Bournville. Both start and finish at the Cube.

**Races**

BBCHM – Was completed by 2 Swifts - Jay and Tom G. BCRR – Was completed by 8 Swifts – Jay, Tommy, Geoffrey, James, Aaron, Blaine, Darren and Cheryl.

Cheryl has kindly written up a race report for the BCRR and this has been added to the Website – Some minor adjustment is required with the help of Tommy when free.

Upcoming races are both the 10K in Atherstone end of August and Worcester in September.

Already appear to have a good Swift entry for Atherstone. Will attempt to sort out a social point for meeting before and after for drinks and or food.

**Awards**

I have looked at the England Athletics Community Awards which take place every year. Some may be applicable for us next year to consider once we are affiliated particularly Club of The Year depending on how the next 12 months go. There was one award that was applicable and this was Run England Group / Leader of the year. Congratulations to Tommy Hill who I have nominated for this – Entries closed on 31 July and panel will meet in August to decide winners at both regional and national level in September and October.

**Cross Country League** – See later point.

**Sponsorship / social base:**

***Notes from meeting with Sidewalk Bar:***

* £500 cash sponsorship in 2 instalments. Payments separate. 6 monthly.
* One social shirt per member per year, “sidewalk” has to be prominent on design. We design it ourselves.
* We would need to host a social event in sidewalk 10 times a year.
* Thursday kitchen open later 'til 10pm.
* 10% discount cards for members.
* Areas shutting off would be fine and themed days. Would theme the bar around events such as Birmingham Half and London Marathon...show running events on the projector screen.
* Midday opening on weekends.
* Look to support Pride float jointly.
* 2,500 members on the Facebook group. Would link to our group.
* Link to Sidewalk on website, Twitter, Facebook.

***Notes from meeting with The Fox:***

* Venue is open Thurs-Sun but could be opened for other events on request (at no additional cost.)
* They are keen for us to use the space as required, have a garden area, dancefloor and side space.
* They would be willing to sponsor a social kit though this was not specifically defined.
* They also sponsor another sporting group (Blaze) and make no minimum requirements on attendance at social events or within the venue.
* They would offer advertising space and include us on their website, etc…
* 80%+ of clientele are lesbian but the venue is mixed.
* They would be willing to put on food post-races or for other social events free of charge (though have no kitchen at the venue.)
* They would be willing to provide a Christmas meal free of charge.

We have unfortunately received no response from Equator.

CP has unfortunately been unable to arrange a mutually agreeable time for a meeting with Cal from Eden.

While appreciative of all that Eden does for the local LGBT community, committee felt that we would like to pursue current options at present rather than delaying the decision further as both Sidewalk & The Fox have shown keen interest and CP has invested a lot of time in this process already.

Sidewalk was felt to offer a very formal and structured offer. It was felt that this was a somewhat commercial offer but presented us a very good deal with social wear and funding for the group. There was some concern over the amount of Social’s expected to take place and whether we could definitely meet the expectation of a minimum attendance 10 months of the year but the availability of space at the venue and the eagerness to host themed events was appreciated. It was felt we would be in a stronger position to negotiate with this venue year on year as we grow as a club.

The Fox felt less defined in it’s offer but had a good ethos of club support. While not open Mon-Wed regularly, the willingness to open for events, etc… was appreciated. We recognised that while lesbians may make up to 80% of their current patronage, this may help us also to encourage more women and lesbians into running which has been identified previously as potential issue to the diversity of the Swifts (and running in general.) The offer of catering for events was much appreciated. Not having food available post-run Thursdays was felt to be a shame. It was felt we could build a long term relationship and grow with this venue.

Committee voted on whether or not we wished to select one of the existing venues offering support as a social base.

Committee voted 5:0 in favour of choosing one of these venues.

Committee voted on which venue we would prefer to approach to discuss further with a view to formalising a contract with them.

Committee voted 3:2 in favour of approaching The Fox to formalise an agreement for sponsorship / social base for the Swifts.

CP will contact Andy, at The Fox to arrange for committee representatives to meet and formalise our agreement with them.

We agreed we would like a contract drawing up for clear agreement. Clarification on contribution towards social wear and to ask regarding discount for members within the venue.

*It was noted that CP’s efforts in this process have been invaluable and committee are most grateful.*

**Swifts group runs. TH**

TH requested that as committee we agree on formally defining our current group runs.

* It was agreed that Thursday shall be our Group (social) run, free to all those wishing to join us and will utilise the loop-back system. The route will be chosen by the “leading from the back” leader each Thursday, picked from existing routes that have been checked by LiRF members for safety.
* It was agreed that Saturday will be based around Parkrun at Cannon Hill park, unless otherwise determined for a special or specific event at another Parkrun or venue.
* We agreed that Sunday Long runs (Greater than 6 miles) may well be continued into the new year but that these would be open to EA affiliated members in future.
* We agreed that we would aim to introduce a CiRF led “technical” session, most likely on a Tuesday, for EA affiliated members in the new year (when we have a CiRF trained member.)

**LiRF/CiRF. JL**

Jay suggested that we agree on a member to put forward for the CiRF course, that being TH, so we are ready to manage this when funding is in place. Committee generally felt this was a good idea. TH requested that JL contact current LiRF trained members to ensure there was no objection to him being nominated for this.

Committee discussed possible members to be LiRF trained when funding in place it was generally accepted that Neessah would make a good leader and that we could encourage her to consider this. We felt that we could hold the funds for future use for other leaders as we currently have access to five LiRF members and Penny Barber (PB) from LGBT (Activate).

**Birmingham LGBT. TH**

TH suggested we arrange to meet with PB from the Activate programme at Birmingham LGBT. The programme is currently meeting Sport England targets so funding is set to continue and PB is keen to reach out to the existing groups as previously. It was suggested that committee may be best meeting with her as a group to discuss our feelings in regards to our involvement in Pride in Sport (PiS) and other activities around running organised by PB for the Activate programme as there have been frustrations. TH to arrange a meeting with PB to discuss our issues and how we fit in to the ongoing programme.

**Promotion at Birmingham LGBT / Venues. JL**

As discussed previously, it was felt that we need to get promotional material into venues as soon as possible and before poorer weather and visibility set in, which may affect motivation from potential members.

We are awaiting funding for promotional materials.

**Website & Members confidentiality. All**

We currently have a closed Facebook group and Whatsapp is by invite only.

Names on the website (other than committee) have been kept to forename / Swift name only and we have recorded attendance at AGM/EGM by forename only on public documentation.

We discussed having a members only section on the website for promotion of socials, etc.. but had concerns that this may stop potential members from joining us.

We will continue to remain vigilant around members confidentiality.

**Minutes on Website vs on request. JL/All**

Due to the busy nature of committee outside of Birmingham Swifts, JL had some concerns that actions we agree to take but are unable to manage in the timeframe may be questioned by those not in acknowledgment of the fact that committee members give up their own time voluntarily to fit in Swifts activities.

This was acknowledged but committee felt we would be able to respond to member concerns adequately regards this and that we should introduce a section in the newsletter detailing what committee have been doing so members can see progress.

**Pride in Sport 2016 engagement. All**

PiS will take place in 2016 and will retain its competitive nature. It is aimed at established sporting individuals wishing to challenge themselves and win points. It is not deemed suitable for entry level. Birmingham Swifts will aim to participate with this in mind.

**Future training plans / race requirements. PL**

PL suggested that Post-Birmingham Half marathon, we may want to aim for an additional Half Marathon for Swifts to train for. Coventry in February was felt to possibly be too soon post-Christmas but PL will seek out an appropriate local Half Marathon march 2016.

It was noted that a race had been added to the Facebook group without discussion, although it had previously been agreed that this may be a race suitable for the Swifts to promote. It was agreed that all races should be discussed with PL before being promoted on Facebook / Website.

It was agreed that we will promote the first race of the Centurions 5 mile series to encourage members to be aware of the series. PL to create Race event on Facebook / Wesbite.

We have yet to generate the Race calendar but hope to have official Swifts target races on here soon. JL additionally proposed that we try to have a section for members to add the races they are attending for interest of others, even if not officially being promoted by the Swifts.

**Cross country league. PL**

Admission to the Cross Country league costs £95 / year. This covers four races, hosted by local clubs. There are four divisions that clubs race within this, dependant on rankings. A valid scoring team must have a minimum of six runners. Teams are single sex. Races are usually between 5-7 miles on various terrains. Not all running clubs are accepted into the Cross Country league.

It was agreed by committee that we have an interest in this and will further investigate this in March/April 2016 depending on numbers of affiliated members and interest from the membership.

To be added to the agenda by the new committee for 2016/17 post-AGM.

**Update/Progress on SWOT – Objectives. All**

JL suggested that we visit the objectives each committee meeting to determine progress and encourage actions as required.

Currently:

1. **Increase membership to 50 people by the 2016 AGM.**

*Membership stands at 35. We have additional members from Starting Out to capture.*

1. **Affiliate to England Athletics by October 2015.**

*As discussed previously in the meeting.*

1. **Create a running calendar by July/August committee meeting (including races, training plans and Starting Out).**

*TH/PL agreed to meet and establish this by next committee meeting.*

1. **Increase attendance at Birmingham Pride to 30 people for 2016 parade.**

*For action 2016.*

1. **Deliver a second weekday session by March 2016.**

*AS discussed previously in the meeting.*

1. **Increase attendance for Great Birmingham series: 15 people for half marathon 2015; 25 people for 10k 2016**

*Eight people currently “accepted” the event on Facebook. Committee to encourage this with members to gauge interest and participation. To “bump” the Facebook event as appropriate.*

1. **Agree a social base for the club by end of August 2015.**

*Aim to have venue agreed by end of August 2016 – The Fox as prime contender.*

1. **Have eleven or more people attend each social event in 2015.**

*Further social events in planning to gauge participation effectively.*

1. **Attend four different Parkruns per year as a club, and to volunteer as a club once per year.**

*Pending racing calendar – as above.*

1. **Hold an event celebrating achievements of the club by the 2016 AGM.**

*To be addressed once we have a social venue to host this event.*

**AOB:**

**Webmaster:**

JL suggested we appoint a Webmaster who can manage the Birmingham Swifts website for us, ensuring accuracy, up to date information, proof reading and uploading of information for committee members who may be less familiar with the software.

It was agreed that this would be a good idea but that it should be a non-committee role.

Committee would remain in charge of the information to be added / removed and any Webmaster would not make decisions without seeking a member of committee’s approval.

TH to approach suitable member/s to ask if they would be willing to take on this role.

**Swifts online shop:**

JL suggested we investigate the usefulness of an online shop, selling appropriately branded items to generate club funds, Ie: Mugs, water bottles, etc…

Committee felt that this might be a productive idea but wanted to maintain some control over what items could be purchased with our branding – Ie: relevant items to our club and aims where possible.

JL to investigate this and present back potential sites, products and incomes next committee meeting.

It was noted that EA affiliated clubs can encourage members to use a “portal” for online shopping that generates a small amount of income to clubs. This will be investigated once affiliated.

**Membership Costs once affiliated:**

TG presented a spreadsheet detailing club outgoings and potential costs to members to break-even / generate a small amount of profit from affiliated members. Costs reduce based on the number of members choosing to affiliate although we may be unable to predict this. The costs per run can be calculated as an incentive to potential members as well as the accumulated savings per race.

We noted that membership to Birmingham Bulls costs £120 annually. And Bournville Harriers currently £56 annually. It is believed that the Atherstone badgers charge £35 annually. TG / All to investigate costs to join other sporting and running clubs to help determine best value for money for Birmingham Swift members.

**Date and time of next meeting to be determined – 4-6 weeks.**