

Select Committee on the Constitution Report to National Council

The Select Committee on the Constitution is made up of:

Alan Ransome – Chairman

Alex Murdoch – Deputy Chairman

Neil Le Milliere

Malcolm Allsop

Estyn Williams

Susie Venner

Tony Catt

At the Select Committee on the Constitution meeting a concern was expressed with regard to the AGM held by Zoom on the 20th July 2024. It was felt by the Committee, who had received a number of opinions from members who attended, that this AGM was the least satisfactory from a members perspective going back many decades.

The Chairman, Nick Donald, Chaired the meeting in the best possible way, given the circumstances but, nevertheless, the views of the meeting overall were negative.

The root of the problem was the disconnect from the membership in both substance and style, and the Committee sincerely hoped that steps will be taken to ensure the contribution and involvement of the membership is demonstrated to be valued more in the future.

The way Zoom was handled where those on the top table were making their presentations with their picture visible to the audience. All non top table members were effectively blacked out and were only able to have their voice heard. This created a major 'us' and 'them' picture which is not helpful for a good meeting and cooperation.

Return to a meeting with member present should be considered for future meetings

One example, was the arrangements for discussing the Annual Report were one of the main reasons for this. In the past, the Annual Report as always been considered on a much more detailed basis, which encourages the membership to engage much more with those running the organisation. The method of just any questions was not at all helpful and did not encourage questions or debate on the report.

The system that has worked very well previously has been that each paragraph of the Annual Report has been considered separately and this was particularly helpful to the membership and should be reinstated.

In the report it is stated that 73 members were present when in fact the count we have was only 26, with some staff members either at the meeting or online. It was felt by the Committee that the fact that this is the first AGM that has been without the assistance and intervention of the Standing Order Committee, which has now been abandoned, is a negative move and that this Committee should be reinstated for future meetings in order to avoid problems and complications such as this occurring in the future.

A good point from the Committee's perspective of the AGM was the approval of the 5th Elected Director although there was disappointment that the price was the loss of the right of any

nominee to go forward to the ballot. The Committee took some comfort from the commitment by the Chair that this 'veto' would only be used in exceptional circumstances. We would like our recommendation of our proposal for the reinstatement of the Standing Order Committee to be considered by the Board.

The Select Committee are also concerned about the move away from the good standing arrangements and the potential damage that this is doing to the relationship to some important non-affiliated organisations. The Committee felt that this was more a matter for the Select Committee on Competitions and, therefore, referred our feeling to that committee.

Memorandum of Understanding

Following a meeting with Nick Donald, Adrian Christie and Don Parker representing the Board and Neil Hurford and Alan Ransome for National Council good progress with the project was made as reported to the last National Court Meeting.

It was agreed to leave further discussion until after the AGM but partly due to the Olympics no further meetings have taken place to date.

We expect that this matter will be followed up shortly and hopeful a full report will be available for the next National Council Meeting.

Alan Ransome OBE
Chairman
17th September 2024