



All-Party Parliamentary Group for Rowing

Ordinary Meeting Minutes

1800, 31 October 2016, Committee Room Seven

Meeting commenced 1802

Welcome

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting, and in particular new:

- Members: Gavin Newlands MP; Karl M^cCartney MP; Alison Thewliss MP; Oliver Colville MP.
- Organisational Associate Members: Southend Coastal Rowing Club; Barnes Bridge Ladies Rowing Club; Vesta Rowing Club; Cambridge University Boat Clubs; London Youth Rowing.
- Individual Associate Members: Tim Koch; Alison Love; Stephen Feeney; Jon Neale; Rich Mawdsley.

Apologies

Members: Dr Matthew Offord MP; Roberta Blackman-Woods MP; Jim Fitzpatrick MP; Lord Bilimoria; Jonathan Djanogly MP; Helen Jones MP; Karl M^cCartney MP

Honorary Members: Dr Haruhisa Handa; Dr Isobel Pollock-Hulf; Alan Foster

Organisational Associate Members: Jock McKerrell (Vesta Rowing Club); Dr Pat Marsh, Mike Sweeney, Cath Bishop (Cambridge Boat Clubs); Colin Middlemiss (the Company of Watermen and Lightermen); Kenny Baillie (British Rowing); Max Beverton (Lea Rowing Club); Steve O'Connor (Fulham Reach Boat Club)

Individual Associate Members (all, no affiliation): Will Pettipher; Alison Love; Rich Mawdsley; Ray Cassidy

Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous Group meeting were considered an accurate account.

The Chairman noted Lord Addington's successful efforts to secure coverage of Paralympic rowing, and that over one million people in the United Kingdom watched that part of the games.

Matters arising

- The Secretariat is looking at future meetings with Fulham Reach Boat Club, on coastal rowing, and others.
- The Secretariat will liaise with British Rowing on support that the Group can provide related to Paralympic Coverage of rowing at future Paralympic Games.
- The Secretariat is looking into the possibility of a rowing exhibition in the upper waiting lobby.
- The Secretariat will continue to liaise with British Rowing regarding issues on which the Group can support.
- The Secretariat has requested information from Scottish and Welsh Rowing and will be writing to those Members with clubs in their constituencies who are not already Members of the Group.

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Correspondence

Parliamentary Boat Race

- A number of pieces of correspondence between the Secretariat and various bodies, related to the organisation of the race.
- Invitations to book places for the race were sent to all Associate Members.
- Various emails were sent to Members inviting them to take part in the race.
- Co-Chairman Dr Matthew Offord wrote to Midori Miyazaki at ISPS, thanking ISPS for their support for this year's race, and offering to meet. **Action: Secretariat organising a meeting with ISPS Representatives.**
- The Secretariat wrote to the Master of the Company of Watermen and Lightermen, giving thanks for the Company's involvement in the race.

Other

- A letter to British Rowing, thanking them for their presentation to the Group.
- From the Office of Sharon Hodgson MP, a request for information on rowing activity at primary school level. The Group put in touch with British Rowing.
- From British Rowing's "Rowing and Regatta" magazine, a request for a quote from a Member of the Group. Lord Thomas of Gresford supplied.
- A note on the work of the AHOY Centre, a charity providing opportunities for disadvantaged and at-risk youths and disabled people to build life skills through sailing and rowing activities. **Action: Secretariat to request further information, and liaise with the Chairman on how to take forward.**

Group activity report

Parliamentary

The Honorary Secretary provided references to rowing in Parliament since the last meeting.

In an Adjournment debate on the Royal Regiment of Artillery and Corps of Royal Engineers, James Cleverly MP referenced Captain Heather Stanning, who won rowing gold in the 2012 games.

The following early day motions were tabled in the House of Commons:

- TEAM GB SUCCESS AT THE RIO 2016 OLYMPIC GAMES – congratulating Team GB on its stunning success at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.
- DEREK MCEWAN AND BARRY COOK COMPLETING THE ENDUROMAN ARCH TO ARC TRIATHLON - congratulating the pair on completing the Triathlon, which featured a row from Dover to Calais.

Public

Co-Chairman Matthew Offord MP and Lord Paddick appeared on the Daily Politics to discuss the Parliamentary Boat Race. The race was featured on the show, and a feature can be found on the Group's website.

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The Group took a stall at the Parliamentary Sports Fair. The Secretariat thanked British Rowing for their support with this.

The Secretariat met with:

- The Clerk of the Company of Watermen and Lightermen, to discuss their involvement with the Parliamentary Boat Race.
- Representative of ISPS, to discuss preparations for the 2016 Parliamentary Boat Race.
- The Parliamentary Authorities, regarding the Boat Race.

The Group sent out press releases on:

- the first clubs joining the Group;
- the announcement of the 2016 Parliamentary Boat Race, and ISPS's continued support for the race;
- the naming of the Parliamentary Boat Race trophy after the late Robin Hulf;
- the announcement of British Rowing as a supporter of the Group;
- the announcement of crews for the 2016 Parliamentary Boat Race;
- the Group's involvement at the Parliamentary Sports Fair;
- the £10,000 raised for charity by the Parliamentary Boat Race;
- the first women's club to join the Group, Barnes Bridge Ladies Rowing Club.

At the time of the meeting, the Group had 210 followers on Twitter. The Group's twitter name is @ParliamentRow.

Parliamentary Boat Race

The Chairman thanked all those involved with the 2016 Parliamentary Boat Race, including: Members of both Houses; all crews and clubs involved; marshalls, umpires and all involved on the water; London Youth Rowing; the Company of Watermen and Lightermen; the Secretariat and their team; and ISPS.

The Chairman noted that feedback from the event has been very positive, £10,000 was raised for charity, and the event was featured on the BBC's Daily Politics Show.

Options for an expanded format were briefly discussed. **Action: Secretariat to look into and present paper to Members.**

Parliamentary Rowing Group Apparel

The Chairman asked for an indication of interest in Group apparel including blazers, caps, scarves and ties, and there was interest. **Action: Secretariat to investigate.**

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Annual Dinner

The Chairman asked for an indication of interest in a charity Group Dinner in Parliament, and there was interest.

Action: Secretariat to investigate.

AOB

An issue regarding the possible relocation of Hillingdon Rowing Club due to HS2 was raised. The club had been offered another site, but concerns were expressed that this might not materialise.

It was noted that a forthcoming meeting might resolve the problems. **Action: Secretariat to liaise with British Rowing and the club and write if necessary.**

The Chairman encouraged associate members to raise issues with the Group.

There being no other business, the Chairman brought the main business of the meeting to a close.

Main business concluded: 1830.

Presentation: Richard Sinnott, Warrington Rowing Club

The Chairman welcomed Richard Sinnott from Warrington Rowing Club

Sinnott made a presentation focusing on the history of the club, and also on the successful junior and women's squads that the club runs.

In particular, Sinnott focused on Oarsome Progress, a scheme funded by the pupil premium and being rolled out in eleven schools in Warrington, involving over 80 students. This scheme is targeted at children who would never otherwise be involved in rowing.

Sinnott noted that the coach for the programme was funded by Henley Stewards Charitable Trust, and also that Lord Nash had recently visited the schools taking part. The club hopes that the programme will go well, and that capacity can be increased in the future, to reach more young people.

Issues that the club faces include the cost of competition, to volunteers, and for international selection. Sinnott noted in particular that the movement of the National Schools Regatta from Nottingham to Dorney was particularly problematic.

It was noted that this regatta was organised by an independent committee, rather than British Rowing, who are trying to keep competitions in Nottingham wherever possible. The National Championships is circulated to Strathclyde. Access to the National Schools Regatta was raised, particularly relating to accommodation and transport costs. **Action: Secretariat to look into.**

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Sinnott raised the cancellation of AASE, which impacts high performing athletes. **Action: Secretariat to liaise with British Rowing.**

Evaluation measures for Oarsome Progress were discussed. Sinnott noted that one organiser of the programme is a headteacher, and determined to promote the scheme to other schools.

Funding streams from sources other than DCMS and Sport England were discussed, and it was suggested that the club look at funding for Oarsome Progress from the likes of the Department for Education. The government's sport strategy was raised, and it was noted that departments were meant to be working together as part of this strategy.

It was suggested that if measures for the impact of the scheme on academic attainment and the benefits of rowing on school life could be taken, these would provide evidence in support of the scheme that could support the sport elsewhere. It was noted that elsewhere there is research ongoing with the University of Leeds.

Access to rowing for state schools was discussed and the work of Fulham Reach Boat Club in London was also raised. Anecdotal evidence supplied from schools was that rowing has a positive impact on young people at school.

The Chairman thanked Sinnott on behalf of the Group before closing the meeting.

Meeting closed at 1918

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