

Minutes of the Anglia Region Council

Held at the Cameo Hotel Copdock Suffolk on June 25th 2016

Attendees :

Name	Centre	Name	Centre
Mr K. Flexman (Chairman)	N. Essex	Mr G. Potter (V. Chairman)	N. Essex
Mr A Leslie (Secretary)	S. Essex	Mr B. Clark (Treasurer):	S. Essex
Mr A. Dobson	Suffolk	Mr R.Lambert	Exec. Committee
Mr M. Finney	Ind. Member	Mr P. Maran	S. Essex
Mr N. Flowers	Norfolk	Mr R. Rice	N. Essex
Mr K. Higgins	S. Essex	Mr M. Threadgold	Nom. Member
Mr J. Kent	Mid Anglia	Mr D. Wakeling	Mildenhall

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received and accepted from Mrs J.Kent; Mr C Stammers: Mrs A.McGarva and Mr C.Wright. The Chairman welcomed Mr Lambert who was deputising for Mr Page who he reported was "making progress" following his illness

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on April 2nd 2016 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Mr Threadgold advised that there was no further progress to report regarding "Cloud Storage" at EGH

Action

Mike Threadgold

With respect to the "New Member Booklet" Mr Potter advised that this was now a "work in progress" He also confirmed that he had now received all necessary rally information from Norfolk and that it was on the website

Action

Greg Potter

4. Secretary's Report

The Secretary began his report by asking the meeting their views on publishing regional council minutes on our website. The subject has been discussed before but he was concerned that at the Secretaries meeting at the National, Martin Stringer had urged caution on the subject because of possible implications with respect to the Data Protection Act (DPA). In an extensive discussion Mr Lambert summarised the position by saying that if it was our intention to publish minutes on the web then only "finished business" should be included with items still remaining open being omitted. The Chairman requested that the Secretary prepare minutes for the April 2nd meeting on this basis for his approval before publication.

Action

Alan Leslie

4. Secretary's Report (cont'd)

The Secretary then turned his attention to the subject of record retention periods for Regional documents. At the Secretaries meeting he had asked the Executive Secretary if the Club had a definitive policy regarding this matter and had been advised that apart from financial matters where HMRC rules required a minimum period of seven years retention, the retention of other documents was at the discretion of the Region. This being the case he asked the meeting if a retention period for Anglia Region materials could be agreed. Mr Threadgold said that the Club should have a "global" policy on this matter since if information was called for under the DPA and Regions had differing policies regarding retention then this would likely constitute a breach of the act. After a protracted discussion it was agreed that the Secretary would write to Mr Stringer expressing our concerns and seeking further clarification on this issue.

The Chairman acknowledged Mr Finney's offer of help with this matter if required, but said that our initial priority is to clarify the position with EGH

Action

Alan Leslie

The secretary reported that he had found a local facility for the secure destruction of documents should the need arise, but at the request of the Chairman this should be left in abeyance until issues outlined above are resolved.

The Secretary concluded his report by advising the meeting that the Anglia Region had sent a bouquet and message of best wishes to Mrs Janet Pereira following her decision to retire from the Executive Secretary's Office at EGH. Mr Lambert advised that her replacement would be in office within a short while.

5. Treasurers Report

Mr Clarke reported that the necessary request form had now been sent to the bank to permit internet banking and that he would advise the meeting as soon as it had been approved. However, he wished to make it clear that anyone wishing to use BACS transfers for payment of expenses should be aware that it will still necessitate the submission of an expenses claim form and VAT receipt (where applicable) and that their personal bank account details will be held on his laptop.

6. Vice Chairman's Report

Mr Potter began his report by expressing his grateful thanks to the Mid Anglia Centre and to Mr Kent in particular for all of their efforts in making the Anglia Region "Get Together" the great success that it undoubtedly was. He also thanked the Huntingdon Football Club for their support and their donation of £60 raised during the race night that they organised for the event.

With regard to the 2017 Question Time he said that he had made enquiries at Colford School at Bury St Edmunds. Costs are yet to be finalised but are expected to be ca £700 for the hire of the venue including the supply of tea and coffee before and after the event. The event has been provisionally booked for March 25th 2017 and he added that the Club Chairman has already agreed that he will be in attendance.

7. Chairman's Report

The Chairman began his report with an overview of the Club Council meeting held on April 16th and distributed copies of relevant minutes. He said that compared to the Regional forum held in January, it was his opinion that this meeting was more "business based" and dealt with the way the Club was run and the way that the individual departments interacted. He then précised the points made by representatives from each area including the Director General; The Finance Director; Director of Marketing; and Director of Membership. He concluded his report by saying that if members had any further questions he would be happy to supply further information as necessary.

In response to a question from Mr Rice as to why he had to pay for WiFi on sites when many other businesses offered it for free Mr Lambert explained that as mobile telephone technology advanced (e.g 4G vs 5G) then WiFi had to be upgraded to match it which in the case of The Club meant upgrading all boxes on site which was very expensive. It followed therefore that the Club had to strike a balance between customer expectations and cost.

The Chairman then turned his attention to the National by offering huge thanks to all the people who helped – especially the RBM's and their partners for making the Anglia Region's contribution to the event an enormous success. On reflection he said that he thought all aspects of the event went very well and were well coordinated, although he did feel that the reception/flagpoles on Sunday went on rather too long for which he took full responsibility and said that it was a lesson to be learned for the future.

8. Centre Reports

- **Mid Anglia** : John Kent reported that since the last meeting all Rallies had been well attended although two had been cancelled – one because of price, the other due to lack of attendance.

They had had 21 outfits attend the National including some members of the various working parties who had been there for more than five weeks. He added that more families had attended this year enabling Mid Anglia to participate in virtually all activities to such an extent that he was proud to announce that they had won The Presidents Cup. He thanked South Essex in particular for their support on the days of the various events.

He congratulated all Centres for their participation in the Anglia "Get Together" Rally which he said was a great success and that he thought that the five day format had worked well

Mr Kent concluded his report by saying that to date they had only one person interested in standing for committee at the 2016 with the result that at present they would be short of a Chairman, Vice Chairman and several other members. He added however, that in the event that the situation did not improve he would stand for a further year in office, and was confident that others would stand with him.

- **Norfolk** :.
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Mr Flower reported that in 2017 the Norfolk Centre would be running a foreign rally aimed primarily at members who had little or no experience of caravanning abroad. The Rally would be run by Alan Rogers and would cost £620 for 14 nights.

8. Centre Reports (Cont'd)

- **Norfolk (Cont'd)** In closing his report, Mr Flower stated that the new treasurer had discovered some inconsistencies with VAT reporting on rally costings. Through a series of meetings and workshops these have now been rectified and he was happy to report that the Centre's finances were now in a much better position than hitherto
- **Suffolk :** Mr Dobson reported that their rally programme had been suffering with two rallies already cancelled. Additionally people offering to marshal rallies in 2017 has been very slow

Mr Dobson also raised the matter of mis-information about the Caravan Club banning barbeques appearing on the Camping and Caravan Club Facebook page. Having contacted the Club for advice he had been advised to bring it to this meeting. Mr Lambert commented he knew nothing of such a ban and that mischievous "spoof postings" such as this, were almost inevitable in these days of social media activities and felt that the Club would not waste their time and members money in reacting to them.

- **North Essex :** Mr Rice commented that North Essex were becoming concerned about the fact that like Suffolk the same groups of people were running rallies year over year with very little new people taking on the task. He added that whilst they rewarded ralliers for *attending* rallies there was no similar scheme for rally marshals *running* rallies, As a result they intend to introduce such a scheme in an attempt to encourage new marshals. Mr Kent commented that Mid Anglia had tried it but it had made little or no difference.

Since the last meeting North Essex had run 24 rallies of which 5 had been cancelled (3 due to weather, 1 due to land being sold and 1 due to low numbers). The remaining 19 had been well attended with an average of 20 outfits per rally. They have noticed, however, that mid week rallies are becoming more popular but that this tended to reduce attendance on weekend rallies at either end,

North Essex had recently revised their web site to include on line bookings which, after a slow start, had now become very popular. This view was echoed by both the Mid Anglia and South Essex Chairman whose Centres have had the system in place for some time. As a next step they may explore the use of prepaid rallies via the internet but recognise the difficulties associated such a move.

Concluding Mr Rice said that he had already been advised of several committee members who would not be standing next year which may lead to difficulties for the 2016/7 season.

- **South Essex :** Mr Maran reported that rallying had been going reasonably well although two rallies had been cancelled this weekend due to waterlogged fields. On the committee front he reported that one member was seriously ill in hospital whilst another had suffered a tragic family bereavement both of which had left the committee slightly stretched at the time. He added that although he was standing down in October he was confident that the Centre would still have sufficient nominations for a good sized committee next year.

August Bank Holiday will see the Chairman's Charity Rally combined with the Centre's 5000th rally. To date 65 outfits have booked in which is lower than he had hoped but may well improve as the time draws closer.

Mr Maran concluded his report by thanking Mr Kent and Mid Anglia for their efforts at the Get Together Rally which he had thoroughly enjoyed.

9. Nominated Member Report : Mr Threadgold reported that the London Experience has gone really well and that plans were already in place for next year's event which will be held at a London Gin Factory and take place in April 2017.

10. Independent Member Report : Mr Finney said that he had attended that Club Council meeting and that it had brought home to him what a broad spectrum of members interests had to be dealt with. He now recognises the difficulties the Club faces in trying to balance its activities and direction in order to try and please the entire membership. This view was endorsed by the Chairman

11 Mildenhall Report : Mr Wakeling reported that the site is going very well and that the two week period for which he had earlier reported had no volunteers has now been covered. He continued that Mildenhall would be quite happy to take midweek rallies running from Sunday afternoon until Friday morning. South Essex had held such a rally although he did not have any feedback as to how it went.

He concluded his report by reporting that Mildenhall now has its own Facebook page

The Chairman thanked Mr Wakeling and commented that having visited the site he was impressed by how well organised and well run the site appears

12 Caravan Club Forum Questions: There were no further questions in relation to this item

13 National Feedback & Washup: Mr Kent began his report by thanking all the RBM's and their partners and also the siting working party for their assistance in marshalling the Anglia Region block and for making the whole experience so enjoyable.!!

At the wash up meeting it was agreed that at future National's the Senior RBM should be permitted to arrive on Wednesday in order to have time to sort out any problems over siting and pitches before the main bulk of members arrived.

With regard to speeding Mr Kent felt that more 5MPH signs were required since RBM's had, on several occasions, to call out to drivers to slow down. Additionally he requested that Motorhome owners be clearly requested to fill water tanks before arrival because of causing long delays at water taps

With regard to Sports Mr Potter felt that due to time constraints with other activities it would be beneficial if they could begin at (say) two o'clock on Saturday afternoon rather than at eight o'clock on Sunday. Mr Lambert said the Events Committee would look at this.

Action

Rodney Lambert

The Chairman thanked Mr Kent and asked that he forward a copy of his reports to both himself and also to the Secretary.

Action

John Kent

13 National Feedback & Washup (Cont'd):

Mr Lambert closed this item by offering his very grateful thanks to the Anglia Region for their considerable help and effort at this year's National, particularly in respect of support at the Queen's Birthday Party and in communicating to EGH with information about RBM's. He would be writing a report regarding this year's National for review at EGH in the coming week.

14 Correspondence

The Secretary said that he had no new correspondence to report but did advise that at the next meeting he would have nomination forms for the Regional AGM. Anyone wanting a copy earlier should contact him by E-Mail.

Mr Potter reported that he was still receiving updates for rallies on the website and thanked rally secretaries for their support

15, Any Other Business

Mr Dobson requested information regarding next year's Inter Centre fishing Rally. Mr Higgins replied that South Essex would host it at Homestead Caravans and the date would be around September 19th.

Mr Lambert said that as a member of the Club's Strategy Group he would like to solicit the meetings views on how it sees the Club in five to 10 years time particularly relating to towing habits given impending changes in automotive technology e.g electric/hybrid cars vs petrol/diesel; general downsizing of cars: do we actually want to tow at all? Etc.

Mr Clark asked if electric cars could actually tow a caravan? My Lambert replied that the current Tesla can do so and the new Tesla due in 2018 will do so and will have sufficient weight to do so by virtue of the lithium ion batteries.

Mr Potter added that he felt that we need to consider how to attract the younger generation to do what we do as our hobby given rising costs and the need for additional licences etc. Mr Flexman agreed with Mr Potter and felt that the Club should take the lead in getting better information out to people about rules and regulations regarding towing.

Mr Finney raised the issue of motorhomes and their increasing popularity. Mr Lambert replied that even these are limited to 3.5 tonnes before you need an HGV license. He also added that the Club also has some 555 tent pitches available and also even a number of holiday cottages on some sites so is already moving in ways to address these issues.

The Secretary commented that Mr Lambert's question may have been better directed to the SMMT since they would likely have data indicating what direction the global auto industry is pursuing. He added that it was likely that it may well be a case of not what the Club *should do* but more a case of what *it will be allowed to do* by future conditions like leaving the EU, the influence of the internet etc.

Mr Maran raised the point that these days young children have so many opportunities for activities at school over the weekend that it is likely to dissuade parents from weekend towing. After further extended discussion without any definitive answers the Chairman closed the discussion by commenting that regardless of the outcome, that as caravanners we would find ways to adapt and overcome because that was inherent in our nature.

On a separate matter Mr Kent asked what was going to happen to the Regional Marquee because the roof was very dirty and mouldy. Mr Wakeling said that when it was next erected at Mildenhall he would get a team to clean it and ensure that it was only put away if completely dry.

Mr Kent also asked if this marquee had been purchased solely for use by Centres or was Mildenhall included. He was advised by the Chairman that it had been purchased for Regional use and that as such this would include Mildenhall.

In a subsequent discussion it was agreed that Mildenhall would use four dome tents instead of the Marquee for their event and that the Marquee would go to Mid Anglia who would then assume the responsibility for cleaning.

The Chairman requested that Chairmen let him know soonest about whether they wanted to continue with Friday night entertainment at the Regional AGM so that he can make any necessary arrangements with Seacroft when he visits the site shortly, Information should be passed initially through the Secretary.

Action

Centre Chairman, Alan Leslie

The Chairman asked Centre Chairman if any of them would be prepared to take on the “Anglia Region Get Together” in 2018 and to please report back their decision at the next meeting

Action

Centre Chairman

The Meeting closed at 13.54 p.m

13: Date of Next Meeting : September 24th At the Copdock Hotel at 10.30 (Tea & Coffee from 10.00)