**Velo Club Venta Annual General Meeting**

**Minutes of the AGM, held on Thursday 24th November 2022 at Winchester Rugby Club**

Present: David Martin (Chairman)

Stuart Gilmour (Secretary)

Toby Leyland (Race Team Manager)

Amy Thorpe (Women’s Section)

Tina Webster (Women’s Section)

Rebecca Gilmour (Marketing Officer)

Richard Sambrook-Smith (Go-Ride Head Coach)

Malcolm Cross (Cyclo-Cross Head Coach)

Albert Buckingham (Club Kit Manager)

Members: Matthew Gilmour, Alex Murphy, Sam Talent, Catherine Murphy, David Talent, Jonnie Talbot-Weiss, Robin Howett, Andy Bateman, Paul O’Halloran, Chris Hughes, Dave Morris, Chris Hutchings, Amanda Attwood-Hutchings, Ysarn Higgins, Brenda Hoult, Martin Pratt

1. **Chairman’s Welcome**

David Martin (DM) opened the meeting by welcoming those present before presenting a report (copy attached) summarising club activity during the previous twelve months.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Stuart Gilmour (SG) recorded apologies for absence from Crispin Quail, Tom and John Adby, Pedro and Nigel Hutchinson, Darren Lyons, William and Amanda Hart, Ben Gibbs and Andy Watkins.

1. **Matters Arising from Minutes of the 2021 AGM**

SG apologised as it appeared that the links to the electronic reports on the club website had not allowed the majority of members access. Dave Morris asked what if any outcome there had been from the focus groups at the 2021 AGM. DM advised that several initiatives had been completed or were ongoing, a good example being the introduction of a gravel ride. Larger projects including a search for a club base and training venue for CX and or road were ongoing bits of work but despite a potential financial donation from a local trust to purchase land, finding land at an affordable price near Winchester is problematic. The committee had agreed that other initiatives like the club being a development/feeder club for a development team were out of our control so not something the committee felt could be pursued.

1. **Treasurers Report**

DM thanked Sook-Yen Allen for temporarily filling the treasurer void left when Nici Ferguson moved away at the start of 2022 and also thanked Nici who had drawn the accounts together again for 2021/22 which have been independently reviewed by Bill Fleming.

The balance sheet is healthy with a surplus on club activity in the twelve months to 30th September 2022 showing an increase of £3378.65. Net current assets were £22809.77 as of 30th September 2022 with the increase this year almost entirely equal to increased income from subscriptions which rose by nearly £3k. This was a reflection on the fact that subscriptions had been suspended in 2021 for current members due to the impact of covid in 2020 significantly curtailing normal club activity and consequently the 2021/22 figure was a more accurate reflection of the expected income from membership subscriptions and a return to “normal”. Go-ride coaching had created a profit of £1k+ as did the VC Venta CX race in October 2021.

The club had anticipated some losses by selling the end of line Kalas club kit at a significant discount with the end of line items sold off at significantly less than cost price. Other expenses included £400+ on trophy engravings for the awards evening and a noticeable increase of £600 on the previous year for IT, Website and Microsoft Office fees.

There were no questions from the floor regarding the financial statement.

(SG - Although not discussed at the meeting there was no proposal from the committee to change subscription rates for 2022/23 with senior membership remaining at £25.00, couples membership at £40.00, students in full time higher or further education and junior membership remaining free).

1. **Proposed Amendments to The Club Constitution**

SG presented a number of proposals for some minor amendments to the club constitution.

1. Clarification of Membership Categories - The committee were proposing a minor revision to the membership categories in item 4 of the current constitution to reflect the membership categories available to purchase through the club website. The other proposal from the committee regarding memberships was to add an Honorary Life Membership category as the club has previously awarded this honour to some members but this is not currently reflected in the membership categories.

It was proposed that Student membership should be amended to differentiate it from the junior category. Student membership should be defined as:

“Student aged 16+ in full time further or higher education”

and consequently, junior membership should modify marginally to read:

“Child member aged 16 years or under”

A new category for “Honorary Life Membership” to be added.

Chris Hutchings queried whether there was a membership fee for second claim membership which is currently defined as a separate membership category in the constitution or whether second claim could be applied to all of the current categories and if so whether there was actually a need to include second claim membership as a category in the constitution. SG confirmed that “second claim” was not a stand-alone membership category available via the club website as anybody joining the club still needed to purchase the appropriate club membership, senior, couple, student etc. Chris consequently proposed that “second claim” should be removed from the constitution as a membership category.

The proposals regarding the above changes were put to a vote and carried unanimously including removal of second claim membership as a standalone category.

1. Election of Honorary Life Members – Following adoption of the membership category of Honorary Life Membership the committee were proposing a new clause to facilitate the process of electing new life members. The proposed wording is:

“The management group may propose one new Honorary Life Membership per annum in recognition of a member or former member whom the committee consider has contributed significantly to the club. Approval of any new honorary Life Membership shall require a majority vote from members present at the Annual General Meeting of the club”

It was asked why the clause was limited to one nomination per annum. SG explained that the committee believed Honorary Life Membership would be an exceptional and occasional recognition and not an honour that should be given out frivolously. While this was generally agreed the floor still felt this was an unnecessary limitation. The new paragraph was put to a vote with the amendment that the number of new Life Membership would be at the discretion of the committee.

1. Streamlining the Process of Election of Officers – The committee were proposing some changes to the process of electing members on to the management group. There are three mandatory roles required for a club to affiliate to British Cycling, specifically chairperson, treasurer and secretary with the addition of a safeguarding officer for go-ride accredited clubs. The proposal was that the paragraph regarding the management group of the club should be revised to read;

“The Club shall be administered by a Management Group consisting of a minimum of eight members. A Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting of the club. The elected officers will co-opt at least a further five members to form the club Management Group.”

SG explained that Ben Baxter had queried the original proposal which implied that the club could in essence be run with all decisions regarding the management of the club being made by just one or two individuals hence the adjustment to clarify that the committee must consist of at least eight members. The election of the key roles at the annual meeting of the club ensures we have individuals in place to comply with the minimum requirement of our wider affiliations. the aim is to simplify and shorten the voting process at the annual meeting and to enable the committee to respond to supply and demand throughout the year.

The proposal was carried unanimously.

1. Removal of the paragraph requiring members to volunteer at club events at least once annually – SG explained that the committee were proposing removal of this paragraph which was not enforced and in reality with a membership exceeding three hundred was probably unenforceable. This proposal created extensive discussion around the difficulties in finding volunteers to run club events. Chris Huchings explained that the paragraph had been included originally exactly to try and address the problem of finding volunteers to assist at club events. DM asked what impact including the clause in the constitution had on finding volunteers and what sanctions the club had imposed on members who had not volunteered to assist with events. There was discussion around the possibility of preventing membership renewals if a member had not volunteered to support a club event in the previous twelve months but the administration around this and ultimately the outcome which would be detrimental to membership growth were considered punitive. Matt Gilmour suggested that if the club were struggling to identify volunteers to support at events perhaps we should be looking to incentivise those who support club events rather that the negative view of seeking sanctions against those who have not volunteered. Ultimately a proposal was made that the clause should be removed from the constitution but included as an advisory condition of membership replacing the word “required” with “encouraged”.

The proposal was carried with no objections but four abstentions.

1. Introduction of a new clause requiring any item of capital expenditure over a set limit to be pre-approved. The committee had expressed concern earlier this year about the lack of control over spending with no apparent approval process for members who may consider that they have discretion to make capital purchases from club funds. The new clause will read;

“Any capital expenditure exceeding £300 must be approved in advance by the Chairperson and Treasurer of the club unless it forms part of a pre-approved budget”

The proposal was carried unanimously.

An updated club constitution incorporating the above amendments will be circulated to all members within the next few days.

1. **Election of Club Officials and Management Group**

Following the adoption of amendments to the club constitution the following officers were elected to serve on the management committee in 2022/23

Chairperson – David Martin confirmed that he was happy to remain in the role and there being no other nominations was re-elected unanimously.

Treasurer – Jonnie Talbot-Weiss had expressed interest in taking over as treasurer and was nominated by DM and seconded by SG. There being no other nominations, Jonnie was elected unanimously.

Secretary – Stuart Gilmour confirmed that he was happy to remain in the role and there being no other nominations was re-elected unanimously.

Other members of the management group will subsequently be co-opted but will hopefully include those responsible for core club business including but not necessarily limited to the race manager, go-ride head coach, CX coach, safeguarding officer, womens section, rides officer and marketing.

1. **Election of a new Honorary Life Membership**

Following the change in the club constitution, DM made a proposal that Michele Ward be elected as an Honorary Life Member of the club. Chris Hughes made a short presentation about Michele’s contribution to the club prior to moving down to West Sussex at the beginning of 2022 in support of the nomination. The meeting voted unanimously in favour.

1. **Junior Race Team Introduction**

SG introduced to the meeting the proposal to support a Junior road race team in 2023. The club currently have a group of approximately ten riders who are categorised as juniors, at least five of whom should be capable of competing in the National Junior Road Series in 2023. The club have never had a group of juniors with this depth competing in this age group previously and speaking from his experience of Matt competing as an individual in 2022, it is really evident that lone riders are disadvantaged when competing against teams on the road. To maximise the potential of the juniors in 2023 the objective is to provide a support network around the riders competing at a high level both on and off the bike. Two group rides have already taken place with a support vehicle on the road with the intention of perhaps a two day training camp in early 2023. If protected sponsorship could be found this was being explored, Toby and SG having met with Peter Hargroves of Hargroves cycles the previous day. Martin Pratt suggested that St Piran were keen to extend support to clubs and particularly perhaps VC Venta where Oscar Pratt started his racing. There may be some opportunity to approach them for practical support in the form of spare parts or kit. Toby explained that additional support was being provided through some coaching input but also through a partnership with University of Winchester to hopefully undertake some physiology training and lifestyle mentoring. It was asked if this was a project specifically aimed at road racing. SG explained that there is probably a greater emphasis on tactical team riding on the road than perhaps there is in other disciplines, specifically CX but that it was also determined by numbers competing at a high level in the discipline. There was a query around this being a junior boys team but Stuart explained that we do not currently have a single female junior rider in the club so this was dictated by need rather than being particularly gender focussed. The challenge of retaining girls within the club and the wider sport was probably a different conversation as we probably have a 50/50 split of male/female riders participating in go-ride but then lose the majority of those female riders as they get older. The support for the project was encouraging, Chris Hutchings though suggesting that perhaps the vision was perhaps too narrow. Toby explained that the benefits of supporting the junior squad would actually have potential impact on the senior race squad as well with the majority of races that juniors are able to enter being open to senior riders as well. There is a hope that the team will be able to secure a place to ride at the Junior Tour of Ireland with provisional acceptance already received from the organisers alongside some opportunities to hopefully do some races in Belgium and/or France as well.

1. **Questions/AOB**

DM invited any questions or comments from the floor.

Social Events were discussed including the awards evening and pizza night that had taken place in 2022. It was unanimously agreed that the South Downs pizza social had been a great event and the venue was ideal for the numbers that we generally attract to social gatherings. A suggestion was made that the club should host some themed evenings at SDS in the New Year. The awards evening needed to be reconsidered as it only attracted members who thought they might win an award. Although the Running Horse was not an ideal venue, the fact that the awards evenings there were linked in to a Christmas meal meant it probably had attracted a wider audience.

CX training venues were confirmed at Strawberry Lane and Hunter Park for the immediate future but Malcolm explained that the club are seeking some land that we can potentially purchase for a permanent training venue. Richard Sambrook-Smith attended a community consultation last weekend regarding the Bushfield regeneration at Badger Farm. VC Venta are already a preferred partner for the project with developers keen to consider including some cycle facility in the project although Richard explained this is more likely to be an on-road rather than off-road facility.

There being no other business DM closed the meeting at 8.56pm