

Agenda Item 13 – Proposals for Restructuring in the Men’s Division

There are three areas where clubs are invited to consider changes to the Constitution.

Decoupling the President and Chairman Roles

Currently the Division operates with the President acting as Chairman of the Management Committee and Delegates’ Meeting. As the President changes from year-to-year, this means a substantial lack of continuity and great difficulty in producing and carrying forward longer term strategic and business plans for developments. This can and does lead to proposals from clubs for constitutional changes which can take more than a year to bring to fruition to be lost as they might not be seen by the President as one of their priorities for their single year term of office. The GBA/Division needs to be looking for a three-year strategic plan to establish priorities and developments for the future if it is to advance.

Additionally, the post-holder can see their priority as the public/bowls role (understandably as this is likely to be the reason a candidate sought the post) rather than the chairmanship role which leads to the chairing of meetings being effectively taken over by another person, dangerously locating too much authority in one person. Being, for example, both Chairman and Secretary of a meeting means that there are no checks or balance in the allocation of power and meeting outcomes.

The Presidential role is important as the external and public face of the County and is a substantial bonus and recognition for members who have given years of service to the County in various ways. Chairmanship of the two meetings is equally important for the GBA/Division to function effectively, and for clubs’ voices to be heard.

It is proposed that the chairmanship of the Management Committee (plus Delegates and other meetings) be separated from the Presidential post and a **Divisional Chairman be created**. This not to downgrade the Presidential role, rather to recognise that the two roles are distinct and separate, requiring different skills. In practice, this mirrors what happens in most Clubs and would enable the establishment of a better and more cohesive management structure. This would be achieved by the creation of a new officer post of Division Chairman, **to be elected annually at the October meeting** as for all other officers/officials.

Changes in the JEC Membership

Should the change be made to an elected Chairman, it would be anomalous if this post/person were not a member of the Joint Executive Committee. The Division is restricted to five members in the Constitution. One of the current members would have to be replaced to achieve this. The current JEC members are the Division and Fixture Secretaries, Treasurer, the JEC Representative and the BE Representative (the latter two elected by the Delegates’ Meeting). The Constitution (7.8) defines the Deputy and County Administrators as the designated contacts with BE (except over finance where it is the County Treasurer).

The suggested way to achieve the Chairman as a member of the JEC is to recognise that the positions of the BE Representative and Division Secretary (as Deputy County Administrator) are completely irregular, The BE Representative not being an executive officer of the Division and with no day-to-day contact with BE over business matters but attending BE meetings where future policy is discussed and set, and the Secretary the complete opposite with all functional responsibilities but excluded from the crucial BE meetings.

It is therefore proposed that the **post of BE Representative be removed** from the JEC, with the **Secretary** being defined as the **BE contact** and the **Chairman being a member of the JEC**. **All five members of the JEC would still be subject to annual election as currently.**

Changes to the Divisional Delegates’ Meeting Membership

There are currently some **176 people/posts entitled to attend the Delegates’ Meetings for 59 clubs** who are the only members entitled to vote on any matter. There is a real danger that the voice and interests of the clubs will be (and has been in the past) lost in discussions.

It is therefore suggested that the **Management Committee undertake a review of the membership** with a view to reducing it so that **it includes only the essential, executive non-club members**. The review will report back to the next meeting with subsequent consultations with clubs about the Constitutional changes necessary.