

ACU EASTERN

(AFILIATED TO THE Auto Cycle Union)

Minutes of the 1st Session of the Board 2022 held Sunday 14th November 2021 at Gt Blakenham Parish Rooms.

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| President | Mr A Penny |
| Chairman | Mr P Armes |
| Vice Chairman | Mr A Foskew |
| Treasurer | Mr A Hay |
| Secretary | Mrs L Ralph |

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|--------------|---------------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| C Ralph | Woodbridge | P Fenn | Essex & Suffolk |
| A R Chaplin | Sudbury/VP | K Doherty | ECMC |
| Mrs K Beadle | Halstead | M Beadle | Halstead |
| A Wright | Halstead | A Kenny | Harwich |
| R Hearn | Stowmarket | K Weavers | Halstead |
| Mrs V Hearn | Stowmarket | Mrs D Blyth | Woodbridge |
| P Sewter | Norwich Vikings | J Read | Woodbridge |
| C Keeble | Norfolk and Suffolk Group | C Dopson | Wymondham |
| G Muff | Norwich Vikings | G Brace | |
| C Cook | Braintree | E Hood | Triangle |

1. Mr Armes opened the meeting.
Apologies were accepted from Mr R Greengrass: Mr A Brace: Mr R Booty: Mr P Nash: Mrs J Nash
2. **Previous Minutes** from the 1st Board of 2021 held on Wednesday 24th March 2021 via Zoom were accepted as a true record. Proposed: R G Hearn 2nd: A Kenny
3. **Matters Arising:**
There were no matters arising
4. **Election of Centre Secretary:**
There was one nominee: Mrs L Ralph – elected unopposed.
5. **Competitions Committee Election:**
Nominees were: P Armes: C Cook – both elected unopposed.
6. **To confirm the recipients of the Bill Spurrell and Dick Williams Awards:**
Bill Spurrell (Yearly Award): Mr K Weavers.
Dick Williams (Lifetime Award): Mr C Ralph
Both nominees were accepted and will receive their trophies at the Awards Presentation.
7. **To receive a report from Mr P Armes, Chair of the Competitions Committee and to adopt if thought fit the minutes from 7th, 1st, 2nd and 3rd Competitions Committee meetings (distributed prior to the meeting).**
Mr Armes reported that it had been a ‘staccato’ start to the season but things had settled down and events had been run.
There have been many discussions on sustainability of the Centre and that the next agenda item would discuss in depth the necessity of a Centre Support Charge.
Stewards had also been an ongoing discussion item, following the news from Rugby that they would no longer appoint Stewards for events under National status. Possibly as part of a cost reducing exercise as Rugby made a million-pound loss last year. Mr Armes felt that it was more important to have a Steward at Grass roots events but also expressed concern over the lack of people coming forward to obtain a Stewards Licence. The competitions committee had invited the various disciplines to decide how they would deal with this with the following outcome:

Trials – would provide a Steward for all Championship Trials and those where a club had requested a Steward, or where the committee felt that it would be necessary.

MX: MX Clubs had felt originally that they had the necessary knowledge and experience within their clubs to manage any situation without a Steward. Mr Armes had been concerned that in the event of a rider being disciplined and excluded, he/she would have no recourse to argue the case until the ACU opened on a Monday, therefore denying him/her chance to appeal. The MX revisited this and following discussion, agreed that all Centre Championship events would have an appointed Steward and on request, Stewards would be provided at non-championship event. The Committee will also have the right to appoint a Steward if it was felt necessary. This would be funded by ACU Eastern. Enduro decided on the same lines as MX, and Grasstrack will have Stewards at all events.

Mr Armes reported that from 1st June, permits via the Centre had been re-instated – Premier permits (prior to that, all permits were issued by Rugby because of Covid Rules). It seems that in future, permits for Practice events and Social Gatherings will now be issued by Rugby.

From June, Mr Armes discovered that organisers can apply for a permit direct and the first he, as permit officer knows, is when an email is generated. He then has to agree the Supplementary Regulations and approve the Risk Assessment which he is not particularly comfortable with. He then has to change to a PDF document for uploading. C Dopson agreed that he would take this back to the Trials Committee and ask that Trials Clubs do not use this method. Mr Armes will mull over these changes and will contact Rugby to discuss his concerns. He feels that being asked to approve a risk assessment for a venue he has never visited is not safe. Covid Risk Assessments are generic and are being utilised but are not always suitable and fit for purpose. He did question who would be responsible if an incident occurred and the reply from Rugby was that they ‘would back him’ Mr Dopson stated that we were being asked to prepare Risk Assessment too early and that in Trials, things often altered on the day due to weather conditions and that there is more work to be done to resolve this issue.

Mr Armes also commented that clubs do not always put correct information on the supplementary regs and the correct classes on the online system and he finds himself having to make alterations. This should be the remit of event secretaries.

Mr Armes proposed that the minutes that had been previously circulated should be adopted en-bloc. Unanimously agreed by all present.

8. To debate and obtain approval for a new Centre Support Charge (levy) across all disciplines.:

A document outlining the reasons behind this item had been circulated prior to the meeting following much discussion at least three competitions committee meetings, and a great deal of costing and figure work undertaken by C Dopson and A Hay.

Mr Armes commenced the discussion with his own take which was that by increasing riders’ entries by just £1, it would cover any charge and give extra income to organising clubs.

He emphasised that if we want to keep the Centre on an even keel, we must generate income.

P Sewter asked why there was discrepancy between disciplines, e.g., 50p for MX and Enduro and 40p for Trials and Grasstrack. C Dopson replied that this balanced out for trials as there is also a 3% charge on the insurance cost per rider.

K Weavers stated that in the past, MX had paid much more and feels that MX is being penalised.

PA stated that as Chair, he had not been comfortable with this and had much discussion with Mr Dopson as he wanted to ensure that would be fair to all disciplines.

Mrs D Blyth pointed out that this increase would not be the only thing to consider with the cost of first aid rising, leases, marshals are asking for a raise in payments etc. Mr Dopson replied that Trials do have to pay for the land that they use.

Mr Ralph read out the wording on the basic permit which states only levies/additional payments should be paid to the permit issuing authority and then an amendment from the 2020 National Management meeting which allows Centres to impose such a levy/charge to clubs who are supported by their Centre.

Mr Ralph also pointed out, that Grasstrack is now run by a Promoter and therefore no income is forthcoming from that discipline but the Centre still awards 10 trophies and the added costs that entails with tickets, engraving and replicas. Mr Ralph also suggested that to save more debate, that the trials levy should be reduced to 50p per rider. Mr Ralph also made it known that he fully supports the sustainability of the Centre and was just pointing out the facts as he sees them and that it is important to come up with a balanced view.

Mrs Hearn stated that previously all riders paid a 50p levy to support the Inter Centre Team Fund and no-one had complained. The levy has recently been removed as no Centre Teams had been attending such events. She also

commented that the Gazette Funds would dwindle and that may not be able to cover costs of the website. The Centre Function has been run on a shoestring for several years and although there is now a budget, it is increasingly difficult to put on a good event when watching every penny.

Mr G Muff, spoke from the perspective of a rider and in his opinion, he believes that in contrast with practice tracks, what riders get for their entry includes a good, safe environment with excellent levels of first aid etc and feels that riders would pay an increased entry fee to ride. Mr Fenn asked if Mr Muff thought an increase would put off riders from entering, Mr Muff replied that he did not think it would.

A question arose on what would be deemed "Clubs being supported by the Centre" – Mr Sewter responded that using the Centre handbook, website to advertise events, timing etc would be included.

Mr Armes brought the discussion to an end and the following proposal was tabled:

To rebalance the contribution per rider from each discipline the proposal is to remove the current centre levy and replace it with a Centre Support Charge, this will apply to all adult and youth riders and passengers at events, with more than 30 entries (as current practice), on events of all disciplines run by ACU Eastern clubs. For 2022, to achieve the required balance, the figures are to be set at 50p for MX and Enduro and 40p for Trials and Grasstrack. It is recognised that in effect this will be a voluntary contribution and it should be understood that currently all disciplines can avoid the levy by choosing what type of permit to use and /or where to apply for the permit.

The outcome of the vote was as follows:

For 15 Against 3 Abstention 1.

Mrs D Blyth requested sight of the working spreadsheet from C Dopson who agreed to forward a copy.

9. Treasurers Report: To receive a report from Mr A Hay.

Mr Hay had circulated this report prior to the meeting and ran through the summary of income and expenditure for the financial year 2021 to October 31st.

Honoraria is due to be paid. Total of £1750 as agreed in November 2016: Centre secretary £500: Secretary to Competitions Committee £250: Centre Treasurer £500: Permit Secretary £500.

MX Account now has been operative for 10 years. Reserved number scheme achieved £3750 split to £1250 for each of the three charities.

Sponsorship of £2250 was distributed to support the organising clubs.

Insurance of equipment is fairly high at £600 (reduced from £900 following negotiation).

One transponder had to be replaced at a cost of £321

There is an estimated surplus of £721 for 2021.

Mr Hay outlined the cautious budget for 2022 which included £1000 for the Centre Function. The ACU had announced cancellation of their awards presentation due to increase in the number of covid cases and Mr Hay questioned if it would be appropriate for the Centre Function to go ahead.

There were no questions from the floor and the following recommendations:

1. The Centre Board notes the current levels of income and expenditure for 2021.
2. The Centre Board considers, and if though fit, approves payment of honoraria to the 2021 Centre Officers.
3. The Centre Board considers, and if though fit, approves the draft budget for 2022

All recommendations were approved unanimously.

10. To receive a report from The Facilities Fund, Mr P Armes

Mr Armes reported that no requests had been made so there was not much to report. He reminded all clubs that the fund is open to all. The three members of the Facility Fund Committee who are not Centre Officials are Clive Dopson, Sidge Kenny and Roger Chaplin. P Armes proposed that they continue in this role for another 12 months. All three accepted and this was approved unanimously.

11. To receive a report from Mrs V Hearn, National Management Council Delegate.

Mrs Hearn had attended a Zoom meeting on Saturday 13th November and reported the following:

Some Seminars for Clerk of the Course/Officials etc will be held via Zoom. New Officials seminars will be face to face.

Board of Directors: Votes were Roy Humphrey 21 votes Andrew Summers 20 votes
MX Committee Steve Macauley 20 votes, David Edwards 18 votes. Both will serve for a term of three years.
Paul Roeton 17 votes and will serve for one year.

Insurance – several companies have stopped cover for motorcycling events therefore it is proving difficult and negotiations are ongoing. There is no doubt that prices will increase.

Finance dept: have struggled as one key member of staff left and temporary staff had to cover. Three full time members of staff are required to be able to manage the workload. There was a large loss in 2020 but no figures had been available for the NMC delegates. ACU are on target to break even in 2021. ACU ask that clubs return insurance forms and payments as soon as possible after events, and pay for consumables at the point of purchase.
Licences: Numbers are down but one day licences helped to compensate.

Handbook – changes to Kirsty at Rugby (via Centre Secretary) by the middle of December.

Some officials had been unable to access the handbook online at some events where Wifi coverage is difficult. There is a memory stick which can be purchased and connected to a phone. Seminars will include this in the technical advice.

Remembrance Sunday: A debate took place regarding the current no events rule. There were 55 motorsports events being run on this years Remembrance Day from other organisations. Whether to allow events in future will be put to the vote at the NMC in May. Mrs Hearn asked that if any delegates had strong views, to let her know.

Licences: Price will increase to £60. Day licence will remain at £15 but there is no facility for this to be taken off a full licence purchased later.

Trials registration will rise to £15.00 One day event registration £5.

Club Affiliations: a discussion topic for the next NMC.

ACU will be changing web site providers next year and will be hosted by Sport 80. Some clubs will be invited to test the new site and ACU are working to find a date to minimise effect.

ACU Events: Now running the TT, Manx Grand Prix, Southern 100 and all the event paperwork for the inaugural event on the Isle of Wight due to be held during the last weekend in April 2022. IOW government still have a lot of work to do on the safety aspect.

John Collins was made an honorary vice president of the ACU.

Sustainability: The ACU has formed a sustainability committee who are preparing a document for the Government. Comments from the NMC delegates included: Running a generator to charge your electric bike; Driving 300 miles to ride your electric bike: Practice tracks are not necessary: Fuel use: methanol is ok fuel:

ACU are to push forward paperwork to show we are engaging in climate change.

World Trials: We have nowhere suitable to run this event with the present FIM regulations- too many conditions. A new Motorcyclists Council has been formed which includes the ACU, MAG, AMCA and manufacturers to provide a one-point lobbying facility.

Mr Dopson questioned why the Trials seminar booked for December had not been organised via Zoom. Mrs Ralph had asked Rugby if this was possible and been informed that the Trials and Enduro Committee were insisting on face-to-face seminars at present. Mr Hay confirmed that most MX Seminars will be via online.

Mr Hay commented on insurance declarations – the Centre owes £4000 but he is in negotiations with the accountants as they are holding some Centre monies and he is loath to pay over funds until such time as agreement has been reached.

12. Eastern Centre Gazette:

a) To receive a report from the Gazette Editor, Mr P Armes.

Mr Armes reported that the Gazette had kept going although some clubs had been going direct to Rugby so income had been reduced.

PA stated that the Board seriously has consider the future of the Gazette in its printed form.

It is not being used for what it was intended, publishing of entry forms and regs as now the majority of events are online. Mr Armes and Mr Sewter had worked hard to keep it going and articles from Sidge Kenny, Charlie Ralph and Roger Chaplin had contributed to sustain the Gazette and made it more readable but if content is not provided, this cannot be sustained. Mr Armes will consider a proposal on the future of the Gazette ready for the next Board.

The Trials discipline have not contributed for quite some time. Mr Dopson will take this comment to the Trials Committee. Nothing has been forthcoming from the Grass Track side either, Mr Foskew asked if he could provide some photographs/ reports.

Mr G Muff commented that there are lots of clips uploaded to You Tube, and that interest is there. The Centre needs to tap into that.

b) To receive a report from Mr Ron Greengrass on the Finances and Distribution of the Gazette.

Mr Greengrass had sent apologies as he was unable to attend. He had provided a spreadsheet for the period 1st January to 31st August 2021 which shows a deficit for the period of £2117.45.

Current Account balance is £17,476.94

Reward Account balance is £37,107.86.

Mr Greengrass sought approval for £250 donation to the Benevolent Fund. This was approved unanimously. Also noted: Recent discussions on the future of the Gazette but found no mention of the loyal support given by the advertisers over the years. He comments that despite falling sales of the paper version, the advertisers value the exposure of their adverts online. Mr Greengrass expresses the opinion that he questions what purpose a quarterly or bi-monthly publication would serve.

PA confirmed that all cheques have now been presented. Mr Armes will discuss with Mr Greengrass the figures produced, as he is uncertain that they are correct.

13. Eastern Centre Website: To receive a report from Mr P Sewter.

When I originally took over the responsibility of the Centre website more than 15 years ago its purpose was to give an online presence both to the Centre and its affiliated clubs, the majority of whom did not have their own sites. Over the years I have somewhat naively attempted to overcome the parochial nature of both the clubs and sporting disciplines, by creating a central point of communication. The growth of social media, and the ease of setting up club pages on platforms such as Facebook has seen the majority of clubs choose this as their preferred method of promotion, mostly without also notifying the Centre website of information they are posting on their pages so that we can help spread the message to a wider audience. I have recently learned that the Competitions Committee may also be using their own Facebook Page, thus undermining the Centre website's position even further. This brings into question not just the purpose of the Centre Website, but even if it is required at all.

Probably the most useful potential functions of the centre website are as a first port of call for those wishing to find out more about getting involved in off-road sport in the region and giving contact details for local clubs. It should also act as a central repository for up-to-date information and documents that clubs can access - a role it has served well during the current Covid-19 pandemic, and which should, I believe, be expanded upon. It also serves as a valuable archive for the future. It also facilitates the online management of the reserved number scheme together with online renewals and reservations.

As the website of ACU Eastern I have always felt that any rider competing in a Centre championship should be able to access the current championship positions within days (or preferably hours) of a championship round taking place. The fact that, with the exception of adult motocross, I have never been able to achieve this is one of my biggest regrets. Thankfully, in recent years clubs have become very good at supplying me with provisional results from individual events, but there is an almost total lack of information from recorders in the Centre. In most disciplines no information is forthcoming until the end of the season, except maybe for the occasional mid-term spreadsheet from the trials or enduro recorder. In order to improve this situation, I would be happy to investigate setting up online systems for the recorders to enter results, but only if they feel this would be of use. Although it would be unfair to pick out any particular contributors for praise, I would like to thank Paula Day, Charlie Ralph & Richard Blyth for supplying race reports and photos which not only graced the website, but also enabled Phil & myself to continue producing the gazette despite all events being online entries from ACU Head Office. I was most disappointed to hear of a suggestion that the website favours some disciplines over others. This is simply not true as, unless libellous or inappropriate, I always publish content that has been sent for inclusion. The reason some sports feature more heavily than others is that I receive more submissions from them. For example, I cannot recall more than one report from a trials event in the last decade, and nothing at all from a youth motocross.

Historically, the website has always been hosted and maintained on a commercial contract basis, initially by Seastar Software, then PA Promotions, and in recent years on my own server. At the moment this contract runs for 12 months from April to April. As I shall be retiring in July 2023 and shutting down my server the Centre will

need to make arrangements for alternative hosting no later than April 2023, and preferably by April 2022. This could also potentially reduce the cost of running the website. I do feel it is important that the Centre has control over both the domain and hosting, and I will of course work with you to make this transition as seamless as possible.

14. Access, Environment and Rights of Way Matters: To receive a report from Mr Ray Booty.

Mr Booty reported that he had attended the following meetings during 2021:

Essex Byways Working Group (4 per year)

Essex PROW User Group (3 per year)

Essex Local Access Forum (4 per year)

East of England LAF Chairs & Vice Chairs Meetings (2 per year)

It is expected that Suffolk will also create a Byways Working Group which I will apply to become a member of.

General Feedback: There has been a large increase in public use of PROW during lockdown leading to increased damage from all forms of usage. Apparently, no additional budget for repairs which could potentially lead to temporary closures.

Land owners are reporting additional problems due to this increased access over lockdown including crop damage, issues with dogs and antisocial behaviour. Not confined to motorised users but illegal motorcycle use is causing issues in some areas, the Kings Forest and the Brecks have been particularly affected. Police action has been targeted in those areas.

Solar Farms - large areas of land to be turned over to solar arrays in Essex and Suffolk. Not yet impacting on PROW but must be monitored.

ELMS (Environmental Land Management Scheme) is being developed by central government but the goal posts keep moving. Will continue to monitor but is ACU head office involved through LARA? It would be very good to know.

Byways & UCR's (Unclassified County Roads)

Suffolk - Icknield Way (Thetford) has been repaired and reopened.

Essex - Several byways in Essex have been repaired this year and a few more are on the capital expenditure list for 2022. Byway Shalford 13 (the one Bob Drain spent so many years campaigning to have reopened) is closed to four wheeled vehicles and horse drawn carriages due to surface damage.

Norfolk - Local residents still requesting a UCR at Themelthorpe be downgraded to Restricted Byway status. This is not an isolated case within England, we are seeing a number of areas where this is being actively proposed. In the unlikely event that this is successful then we could see the loss of many green lanes in Norfolk.

ACU Feedback

LARA - There has been a total lack of any feedback from ACU Head Office and no request for information. As a full member of LARA, I had expected feedback from head office on meetings held and information from Government contact. I would also expect a request from head office for feedback from Rights of Way Officers to inform their discussions. In my view we need to have input to government on ELMS (see above) among other topics.

15. Sustainability: To receive a report from Mr P Armes.

There are 32 clubs affiliated to the Centre and the fact that there are only 26 representatives of those clubs, with several members from two clubs, says a lot about the way the Centre, as a body, is viewed or perceived. The title to the meeting is Sustainability, which is one word that covers an awful lot topics and will mean different things to different people. You will all have a different perspective on what you feel sustainability really means for the future of off-road motorcycle sport in general, and in the eastern Centre in particular. One thing I think we can all agree on though, is if we don't face up to the increasing challenges facing the way we run our sport, both nationally and locally; embrace the opportunities offered by digital technology; engage with a younger audience; and put into place initiatives that meet the growing environmental concerns of our ever-increasing population, there will be no need for the Centre, and/or the National Governing Body. And if you

think that this is overstating the situation then you might like to consider that Belgium, who we all recognise as one of the leading motocross nations in Europe, have lost over 50% of their tracks in the last few years. One of the questions I am prepared to ask is do we really need a Centre? In this digital age where events can be organised online, and publicised without using the Centre gazette why do we need another layer of red tape?! I actually put that question to Peter Gregory, the Chairman of the ACU Sustainability Committee recently and this was his reply:

“You ask if the Centres have a future in the ACU, five years ago I would have said no, but now I have changed my mind. One of the problems that we face is that the ACU make Rules and regulations, the organisers are very good at following the "competition bits" of the rules but sadly have little idea to apply the safety and sustainability elements to their events. Sadly, the local governments regulatory bodies are now investigating the application of these elements and in some cases refusing permission for the events to take place. A case in point is the Weston Beach Race where we are currently working the District Council on both the Clubs and the ACU's sustainability credentials. I think that the role of the Centres is to instruct organising clubs on the application of these important elements of any event, and the Centre has the added benefit of knowing what the local issues are.”

While environmental issues, and keeping abreast of local authority safety requirements is of paramount importance, we are here primarily to make it as easy as possible for people to enjoy off road motorcycle sport; whether that is as an organiser, official or of course a competitor – **and that is what I see as the primary function of the Centre** – it’s just a case of how do we do all that in 21st Century Great Britain?

Background & Current Status

So, the Centre will celebrate its centenary next year, and any organisation that can last 100 years can’t have got it all wrong in the way that it operates.

Historically all communication was either by letter or phone, and it was necessary to hold regular committee meetings to plan and run the sport and the various disciplines across what is one of the largest Centres in the ACU, covering Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk. Now, of course we have email and more recently Zoom or Teams online meeting applications which have negated the need for spending hours travelling to and from meetings. As an example, since I became Chairman of the Competitions Committee, we have reduced the number of meetings from 11 to 6 per year, and the aim is to hold at least 4 of them online.

At the hub of the Centre is the website. It is the one place that you can find nearly all the information you are looking for; from an up-to-date calendar of events, club and licenced officials contact info, Centre championship conditions and rules for all the disciplines, up to date Covid information as promulgated by ACU head office, motocross number scheme, and the online version of the Gazette; plus, a whole lot more.

As you know, the Centre can issue Premier Insurance permits, which in the main are for Trials as most, if not all speed events are now run under Basic Insurance and are issued through ACU head office.

There has been a lot of debate about the requirement for stewards recently, especially in the light of the ACU deciding not to appoint stewards to any event lower than National status; as a Centre we have only recently agreed to change our policy and will now only appoint stewards to Centre Championship events; unless a club/organiser specifically asks for one. Slight variation for Trials in that as a discipline they have also included the option to appoint a steward to a chosen event on an ad hoc basis.

As the Centre has developed, and to a certain extent embraced the use of digital technology, none more so than in the last 18 months, it has become inevitable that most of the information, be it rules & regs, permits issued, handbook & gazette content, affiliated club contact information and so on is held right across the Centre on a variety of different personal computers, and other than the public facing website there is no central document storage facility; so if one of those people steps down or passes away trying to retrieve the information could be difficult.

To go with all this there are inevitably financial implications. Anyone who runs an off-road motorcycle sport event is all too well aware of the costs involved. Through good management, and true collaboration across the Centre between clubs and the various different disciplines and/or types of events the Centre is in a fairly good position financially, but this could easily change if we fail to face up to the challenges that we face and fail to implement any changes that are needed to overcome those challenges.

This is another primary aim where I see the Centre being important, in that we **should be facilitating measures and providing a central resource that helps clubs keep their costs down**; not necessarily cash, but simple online solutions which make running an event easier. *A good example of this would be the ACU online entry system, which has seen many previously concerned organisers having to use it over the last 12 to 18 months, and realising that it makes the Sec of the meeting's life so much easier.*

Guidelines & Processes

ACU Environmental Code in the ACU Handbook is being rewritten.

We need to have a clear idea of what we are trying to sustain.

If we aim to make sustainable something which is unsustainable then it is likely we will waste effort and not achieve the optimum solution.

Also, it is often better to concentrate on something smaller which is 100% within our control. We do not want to reinvent the wheel, or find that the ACU already has a policy change in progress which will contradict any work we have done. And we're not here to make things more complicated – quite the opposite. Let's make things as simple, clear, and efficient as possible.

Challenges Facing the Centre

Embrace the opportunities offered by digital technology; not just administration but use of online pre-event ticket sales, cashless ticket sales at entrance to venues, payment of prize money

Use of social media – official Centre Facebook or Instagram presence which compliments and works in conjunction with the Centre website, and maybe individual club social media platforms

Engage with a younger audience so information can be delivered into the palm of their hand!!

Put into place initiatives that meet the growing environmental concerns – in conjunction with ACU Environmental Code

Centralisation of document storage and communication

Welfare of marshals and officials – especially in inclement conditions

Most important, and pretty fundamental looking after the long-term security and availability of our venues. Re the earlier comments about Belgium and the Weston Beach Race – local authorities are taking far greater interest in how they exercise and publicise their 'climate care credentials', and there are fewer easier targets than motorsport!

16 ACU Benevolent Fund: To receive a report from Mrs D Blyth ACU_E Benevolent Fund Officer:

This year has been quiet for the Ben Fund, the people claiming from the fund in this Centre was 2, now down to 1, and they will finish shortly due to no ongoing paperwork submitted.

We would assume that they are fit again and back to work,

Debbie tells me that claimants are not always going through the Centre, they are being referred other ways, or straight to the ACU.

Donations have been better this year, but still down on what they were before the Pandemic, hopefully next year will see an improvement, on the backside of that in recent week the ACU have received quite a few claims from recent events.

The Eastern Centre have sent in the money from the riders numbers, some fines and stewards expenses, which is great.

Finally there is a zoom meeting on the 22nd, if anyone has any questions or concerns.

17. Centre Function:

Mrs Ralph reported that the function will be held at Needham Market Community Centre on Saturday 19th February 2022. Mrs Tammi Hubbard has agreed to provide catering which will be a buffet.

Following a brief discussion on whether it would be appropriate to go ahead with the function in light of the ACU cancelling their Awards presentation, it was felt that as the venue was large and social distancing could be maintained, that unless Covid numbers became higher, the event would proceed. Mrs Ralph will invite all prize winners.

18. Any Other Business

Mrs V Hearn announced that the Norfolk and Suffolk Group will be closing down once the period of notice had concluded. Monies held at the time of closing will be given to Charity. Mrs Hearn asked for clubs to let her know

if they had a charity of preference. There is approximately £20,00 to be distributed. Mr Armes had found some Norfolk and Suffolk Group tee shirts at his father's house and offered them to anyone who would like a souvenir.

Mrs D Blyth commented that the proposed dates meeting due on 17th November would be a waste of time as the MX National and International dates were still to be announced. The same is true for Enduro. Mr Armes agreed that a postponement would be sensible but did say that he would be looking to run up against some of the British Championship dates if necessary, such as those in Ireland and Scotland and maybe Landrake. Which will give more flexibility when setting dates.

Mr Armes is keen to reschedule this before Christmas and integrate it with an organisers meeting. A Hay has offered to provide a demonstration of the online system. Stewards passes, free gazettes and sponsorship would be among items on the agenda.

Mr Armes stated that he felt that holding so many Centre positions was not appropriate or sustainable, and after six months would be looking to reduce his remit to Chair of the Centre plus one other position, and his other roles should be taken up by other personnel.

Mr Kenny responded and thanked Mr Armes for his frankness and thanked him for what he had done over the last few years making sure that the Centre is in a strong position with good officials.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 15.55pm. Date of next meeting – to be advised