



.....Issue 20a Feb 2018.....

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Welcome to issue 20a – This will be distributed electronically to those who have an email address and in printed form at Club events. If you do not wish to receive further copies of the newsletter, please email me and I will remove you from the list.

This special edition of the section newsletter is published for the sole purpose of highlighting concerns about the management and direction of the VMCC prior to the AGM and for informing your voting choices.

We publish the following letter from incoming President Alistair Alexander entitled **“Directors Might Need to Re-think Strategy - You Decide.”**

INTRODUCTION

The VMCC is at a turning point in its development and as the incoming President I feel compelled to make my views known in advance of the AGM on 4 March. I have been on the Management Committee for five years through being the Area Rep. for Scotland. My job in my new role, as President, is to represent you, the members. I pushed for the conducting of a survey questionnaire covering the whole membership. I put together the questionnaire and fed in comments from consultation with the Management Committee and the survey was done in their name. In this way the Committee own the results. Despite not yet being in post I have managed to get into contact with every member through the medium of the Journal. You have all had the opportunity to make your views known whether you completed the questionnaire or not. I think that is vital to the future and I am committed to consulting with and listening to the

membership so expect more of the same from me.

PRESENT STRATEGY BEING PURSUED BY THE DIRECTORS

It is difficult to know exactly what the business strategy is as there is no agreed business plan and financial controls during the last year have been lax. We have a budget but it is isolated from any meaningful explanation of what we are setting out to achieve. There is no doubt that the plan is to move from Allen House and it is a major part of the current Chairman's and Directors' drive for change. There is also no doubt that the buying and selling of motorcycles is intended to play a big part in the future. Regrettably, there is no business case that has been made to argue the case for the new way forward and the Directors seem intent on just doing this regardless and hoping that it will all work out. It is not a prudent way to run our Club. We should be willing to consider any proposals to improve the Club but we should expect the case to be made and properly funded and vitally only after appropriate consultation with the membership to make sure that we want it in the first place.

THE SURVEY FINDINGS TELL US WHAT YOU WANT FROM THE CLUB

The recent survey results suggest that a completely different strategy is needed to take the Club forward. The full survey findings are available from the website and from your Area Rep. The following has been prepared to give you a summarised version of what you, collectively, told us you want and is set out in A-E below:

A. Top Reasons for Being a Member

The main reasons you gave in the questionnaire for being in the Club are the Journal, the camaraderie of your fellow enthusiasts, organised events and runs and being part of your local

Section. You also want a strong voice on legislation affecting the use of older motorcycles.

B. Future Challenges

In the survey encouraging younger members to join is the top priority along with the loss of knowledge and skills of the existing older membership. You want stable finances and a clear business plan. You also have concerns about threats from tighter transport regulations. Keeping all the age classes active was seen as a real challenge.

C. How can we improve the club for your benefit?

The top priority is to support the Sections and their members and help them to develop. Beef up our efforts on influencing transport regulations. Become much more active with articles in the media and use the internet to promote the Club. Step up our marketing efforts with Club stands at national and regional shows. Improve communications between the management and the membership. Selling motorcycles was rated tenth and selling spares 12th in your priorities to improve the Club's performance.

D. Allen House

The Directors have made much of the importance of a move away from Allen House. Through the survey you indicated that three quarters of members have not visited and one quarter have visited Allen House. Of the those of you who have visited the main reason was the Library. Eighty six per cent of members have no plans to visit Allen House or don't know if they will visit in the future. These figures do not appear to support the case for a move to new premises at the present time. The result is significant as it is donated funds that are planned to be used for the purposes of a move and a conflict therefore exists with the members having different priorities, to those of the Directors, for the use of these funds as you will see below.

E. Donations and How to Use Them

Nearly 60 per cent of members supported the concept of encouraging donations and about a fifth were against this along with a similar proportion who did not know. When asked how such donations should be used the top five were to support a recruitment drive including spending on advertising and PR, to offer a machine valuation service, to invest in the Library and in training programmes. The redevelopment of Allen House or a move to new premises were not top priorities at this time.

THE SURVEY RESULTS SUGGEST A RE-THINK OF THE DIRECTORS' STRATEGY IS NEEDED

The survey results are the most objective evidence we have to date to determine our future priorities. The conclusion is that the Directors may be going in the wrong direction to secure a better future for the Club. What the survey tells us very clearly is that the members see recruitment, development of the Sections, improving the activities and stronger efforts on transport regulations as the core issues they want addressed. A move from Allen House and the selling of motorcycles and spares are not priorities at this moment in time and the Directors need to listen to the membership and think again. Failure to do so may run the risk of rupturing the Club with the members railing against a Board of Directors not acting in their interests in the light of this new information.

HAVE YOU AS A MEMBER AN OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE YOUR VIEWS KNOWN TO THE DIRECTORS ?

Please read the survey report (*which is attached to this newsletter*) and make sure that you communicate your views to your Area Reps., the Directors and the President. Thereafter, the Directors and the rest of the Management should work together to prepare a new fully costed business plan which takes account of the Directors' current plans and incorporates the new priorities from the members. Furthermore, the AGM on 4 March provides the opportunity for you

to vote for, against or abstain for each Director you think will best serve the interests of the Club.

Please vote in person or by nominating a member who is attending the AGM to act as your proxy. Please complete your voting form or download one from the website or ask HQ to send you one. Please send your form to HQ by 28 Feb as it needs to be received at least 24 hours before the AGM.

(our emphasis – editor)

Alastair Alexander, President-Elect and Area Rep. for Scotland: Member 3096 ; 12/2/18

CHAIRMAN – ROB REANEY

The views of Chairman, Rob Reaney can be read in copies of the recent magazines. Please read them before you decide how you will vote.

STATEMENT FROM THE SECTION COMMITTEE –

Geoff McGladdery - Chairman

Roger Bibbings – Secretary

David Brand – committee member

David Jackson – committee member

It is with some reluctance that we have decided to take the unusual step of making our views public before the forthcoming Club AGM on 4th March. At the outset we want to stress that, as a Club member, your vote is for you to cast and as your Section Committee we endorse absolutely your right to vote on the issues as you see them without fear or prejudice.

For the record however, we would like you to know that on 4th March we will be voting against the election of Rob Reaney and Brian Southam as Directors of the VMCC. We believe Mr Reaney's management style to be autocratic and abrasive - a style that is wholly inappropriate for a member's club. Further, the absence of any written medium-term strategy - and the apparent lack of any concern about such absence - are very disappointing. Failure to reach any consensus on the future direction of the VMCC

leaves the membership exposed to whimsical and often contrary decisions.

Understandably, having overall responsibility for the way they are run, Directors of larger organisations wield considerable power, but only on behalf of - and with the consent of - the shareholders – or in our case the members. That consent is usually given in the form of agreement to a strategic plan with clear milestones and measurable targets. As a Director in charge of delivering the plan, succeed and you stay; fail and you go. Having studied it closely, we think that the above survey results give a good starting point for the development of a widely supported strategy for the Club. We will be voting against the election of Brian Southam as we believe he represents the same values as those of Rob Reaney. We have no knowledge - and therefore no view - on the election of Patrick Justin Harvey-Jones. Sadly, none of the three candidates have presented any strategic plan for the Club's future, so we can only vote on past performance.

Paradoxically, we do actually believe that the Club may need to find a more appropriate headquarters building for the future and we can indeed see situations where the Club could act as selling agents for the collections of members and deceased members. But all such proposals require considered and fully costed plans, which, as part of a wider strategy, would need to be put to members for their acceptance before any such decisions could be made.

Geoff will be attending the AGM and we will be happy to accept your proxy – and Geoff holds several already. We think it would be preferable however if you were to cast your own vote by post. A proxy voting form is attached. Please use it. By doing so you are helping to shape the future of your Club.”