

Notes on the VMCC Area Reps Meeting of 30/06/20

These notes cover 4 connected documents:

- A) Attendance list; Richard Thirkell being both an Area Rep and Director; these notes were prepared by 3 Area Reps; Bullet points on issues agreed from Mike Larcombe.
- B) Area Reps meeting with the VMCC Board 30/06/20
- C) Meeting between the President, VMCC Board & Area Reps 30/06/20
- D) Record of agreed bullet points for the report offered by Mike Larcombe.

These documents are straight forward to read, none controversial, and to a degree overlap so the following comments treat them as one.

Comments.

These reports show the President and the Area Reps using By-Law 4.6 to seek reassurance from the VMCC Board with regard to the issues raised by a number of members including those which were the subject of the Board meeting on 29th June.

The points were deliberately specific and there is a discernable softening of the tone of the responses forthcoming from the Directors – explanations were given and consideration of modification of implementation were agreed.

Notably Club assets were to be identified in a register and any change in their status subject to review with the Area Reps, etc

There would be no zero hour contracts for employees.

Financial information would be more readily available.

There would be no investment for investment's sake of Club funds.

Support for major events such as Banbury would be reconsidered.

The issue of censorship of information, including the VMCC Forum as raised by DG in his 21/06/20 Letter to the Area Reps was not raised as such, but an agreement on the need for improved transparency in Club management was forthcoming.

DG
170720

Postscript: The concern about secrecy and in the above mentioned instance of deliberate censorship and control of the Journal and Club Member's Forum as shown by the Chairman's reported remarks is so serious that my letter to the Area Reps is printed overleaf for the membership to draw its own conclusions. It remains unanswered.

See Over:

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Memo to the VMCC Area Reps:

Gentlemen, In compliance with our VMCC Bylaws if I have a substantive issue I should raise it with my Area Rep. But as the post for the Midlands is currently vacant, I am addressing it to all of you so that it may be taken into account at your forthcoming Area Rep Meeting.

Recently Pat Robotham's communiqué entitled 'What is happening at the VMCC?' was circulated amongst the membership. My entirely independent response enumerating my own findings and concerns on the matter under discussion was similarly circulated and I have received further queries/concerns of which I think you should be made aware.

There does not appear to be any records (Minutes) of the 'Covid 19 sub committee' available to the membership. Yet this appears to be the source of the decision to restructure the services and staffing of Allen House.

That the 'restructuring' is taking place with notification of redundancy to the staff is a well known fact, but any attempt by individual members to ask quite legitimate questions on a matter of considerable significance has been repressed. Any such questions have been removed; they have been censored – with grave implications for the trustworthiness of any further communications between the 'management' and the members.

There are multiple examples of the above having taken place; including the following excerpt sent to Pat Robotham. He says: 'The quotation below dropped into my email box last night. I can verify the source but will not disclose it to you. It is the contents of an email sent to members of the Special Covid Committee of the VMCC Directors concerning limiting discussions on various aspects of their plan'.

The e mail says:

"The Forum Admins, in the form of Ian Goodhall in this case, have the matter in hand. The same member posted on the Forum in straight rejection of the "sticky" which says that the subject of the AH restructuring is closed to discussion at this stage. That post has been removed, and he has been given a "cease and desist" notice through the Forum covering Facebook as well. Were he to repeat the offence on the Forum, he'd get a ban and, I suggest, should be blocked from Facebook.

Through the Forum Admins, who are 100% in agreement, I have been clear there that in due course - mid July, when we are ready to make a full statement - discussion will be open. But for now, everyone out there needs to keep quiet because at this stage they have too little information to be form any conclusions.

Through history, we learn that the first step in the revolution is to seize control of the radio station! We did that some weeks ago in the context of the VMCC, and without anyone noticing.

Bob"

This is written evidence of an intention to manipulate and mislead the membership of the VMCC until a covert and irreversible plan for the future of the club is in place. By mid July it will be to late it will be a 'done deal'.

Gentlemen, I do not think you can ignore this.

David L. Giles
Member 42637
21/06/20

Comment on the Draft minutes of the Board meeting of 29th June 2020:
(and then the subsequent Draft Resolution of 30th June)

This was a Zoom conference meeting called specifically to address the concerns raised by Pat Robotham, David Giles and Mike Coxon. Pat's concerns were raised by a memorandum entitled 'What is happening at the Vintage Motor Cycle Club?' supported independently by the observations of David Giles which was widely distributed.

The Draft Minutes here purport to be the record of the findings of that meeting. However, it has been written under headings of the Board's own choosing and in a truncated style which does little to illuminate any examination of the concerns raised. It simply records the summary dismissal of all of the concerns (later called allegations in the Resolution document) as 'not having any foundation in fact'. That is simply not true.

Furthermore, contrary to what the draft Minutes says 'that the Covid 19 sub committee did not take decisions that affected the main business of the club' – they did – they made the decision to restructure staffing (via redundancy) and a future restriction of services. If the membership was unaware of this it is because no Minutes were made available to them at the time.

On this issue of Secrecy they say ... that there were no secrets as ... 'the board papers will show when released'. And later: 'the ongoing restructuring and employment law have caused a delay in releasing the documents'. Quite! So had the Board not been challenged the membership would learn of the fundamental changes only after the event.

If one examines the Draft Minutes offered here with the issues of concern raised by PR & DG one can see that they were neither misinformed nor inaccurate, but timely and necessary.

The Elephant in the room here is that the VMCC Covid-19 sub committee has very little to do with the Pandemic emergency, but is an opportunistic smoke screen behind which a cabal within the Directors is determined to force (rather than lead) its perceived plan for the future on the membership; and they have given themselves quite extraordinary powers (see the VMCC web-site) as the basis for their actions.

The hiding of its far reaching restructuring plans for Allen House staff behind so called Employment Confidentiality is equally dubious. While it is true that the negotiation of the terms of an individual's severance terms are a matter for the employer and the employee; the proposed wholesale restructuring of a public company, i.e. the VMCC, is of the greatest importance to its shareholders and should be openly discussed as such. But it hasn't been, and nor does the Covid sub-committee wish it to be: This Draft Minute is intended to shut down any further such discussion.

What it also doesn't record is that the meeting effectively finished when Bob Clarke abruptly abandoned the meeting saying he was resigning from the chair, the Board, and possibly the VMCC itself.

continues

Comment on Minute of Resolution 30/06/20
(This is a separate but connected document)

The 'Draft Minute of Resolution' dated 30th June 2020 concerns the attempt to get Bob Clark to withdraw his resignation'

In the 'Brief Background' given there is an attempt to reinforce the reported outcome of the Board meeting of the 29th i.e. that there is no case to answer. However, any review of the original concerns raised by Pat Robotham and myself shows that not to be the case.

This Minute states 'None of the key allegations were considered by the Board to have had any foundation in fact'. Really? Which parts were incorrect? They had all occurred, or were in the process of occurring.

This report does try to put a caveat on the above by saying: 'Or if they did (i.e. have the facts correct), it was due to the umbrella of confidentiality arising out of Employment Laws'. Indeed, that is the cover they have assumed. The statement continues 'or matters arising from historic failures in Allen House' – whatever that may mean?

We have rejected this argument as incorrect use of Employment Law to provide a smoke screen behind which to proceed with far reaching changes to the organisation of the VMCC itself.* This is what we call secrecy; if reorganisation is necessary – and it may be – then the arguments for its implementation should be put before the Club, not become an imposed, irrevocable 'Done Deal'.

The reporting (in this document) of an exchange between PR and BC during the 'invitation to comment' session, where PR is reported to have: 'continued with unsupported allegations concerning BC's personal integrity, motivation and competence'. Is not true' it simply did not happen. It is a fabrication to excuse BC storming from the meeting – as he did, and to set the scene for his statement of contrition.

David Giles
150720

J Towards the end of PR's original memorandum he summarises his concern by saying: 'it seems to me that the club as it is currently known and recognised would be changed beyond all recognition'.