



THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION (SCOTLAND) DUNBAR & DISTRICT BRANCH

**MINUTES OF THE BRANCH A.G.M.
HELD ON SUNDAY THE 16TH JANUARY 2022 AT 1100 HRS.**

SECRETARIAL NOTE: In compliance with social distancing guidelines, those present were each provided with written copies of all remarks, reports and previous minutes. All reports and remarks are appended to this record.

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The President, Mr. David Bolton opened the meeting and welcomed the members present, he then asked for a moments silence when Binyan's lines were read.

He then asked for the appointment of scrutineers, this was duly done and Mr. Michael Kaszuba and Mr. Simon McGlinchey were appointed. The President then asked for a count of members present and the count was returned as 25. The President then handed over to the Chairman.

Chairman's Opening Remarks – see appendix 1.

The Chairman then read the previous A.G.M minutes. The minutes were accepted for adoption on the proposal of Mr. Robert Gilbertson, and seconded by Mr. Alastair McCredie.

Treasurer's Report – see appendix 2

The Treasurer was asked why no Income and Expenditure breakdown had been publicised. The Treasurer pointed out that, as we now operate under Legion Scotland SCIO, these details were available for public examination online.

Members felt that a paper copy would be better as some could not access online resources. The Treasurer agreed to post a copy on the foyer notice board.

The Treasurer's report was duly accepted, Proposer Mrs. Anne Herkes, Seconder Mr. Simon McGlinchey.

The Chairman thanked the Treasurer.

Pipe Band Report – see appendix 3

The Chairman thanked the Pipe Band for their efforts to continue tuition and playing events during recent restrictions.

Remuneration for Services – See Appendix 4

Members present were asked to read the report. A vote to approve the sums detailed in the report was called for.

24 attending members approved. 1 electronic 'approve' vote had been received. 1 attending member did not approve.

The recommendations in the report are approved.

Appointment of Branch Officers and Committee

Branch Officers and Committee appointments were put before the meeting. Appointments are at appendix 5

Nominations for Club Executive

The meeting was asked to approve nominations to form a Club Executive. These persons would be considered a co-opted Club Committee until the Club AGM in April 2022 when each nomination would be put before the membership in an election vote.

All nominations were approved – see appendix 6

AOCB

A general discussion took place regarding the procedure and policy changes that would be expected in bifurcation of Branch and Club. The need to incorporate clubs as a FCA regulated Mutual Trading Society governed by the membership was explained. Members were advised that much more information on this subject would be supplied in the run up to the Club AGM.

Chairman's Closing Remarks - see appendix 7

The Chairman presented a memorial gift to Mr. David Bolton as he completed his term as President. The Chairman, on behalf of all Committee and members, thanked Mr. Bolton for his support and dedication to Dunbar Legion over many years, including 23 years as Chairman and 6 years as President.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked the scrutineers and all present for attending and declared the A.G.M closed at 11.57 am.

Chairman..... Secretary.....

Appendices:

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks
2. Treasurer's Report
3. Pipe Band Report
4. Remuneration for Services Report
5. Appointment of Branch Officers and Committee
6. Nominations for Club Executive
7. Chairman's Closing Remarks

Chairman's Opening Remarks

Due to Covid, 2021 has been a year of stops and starts but we have managed most of our anticipated Branch activity targets.

Thanks to our Benefits of Membership campaign plus starting a monthly veterans breakfast club, our membership has shown a healthy increase and currently stands at 255, which is up from 191 last year, and more 2021 renewals can be anticipated from those yet to visit us post-Covid.

We were proud to return to our traditional parade and service at the War Memorial on Remembrance Day. I thank all involved for ensuring that this event was well organised and attended by so many on the day.

As mentioned, Veterans' monthly breakfast meetings have proved popular and we plan to continue these throughout 2022 welcoming all veterans in the area to attend.

Our Welfare Team continued to reach out to members following illness or hospitalisation and to extend our condolences to families of members sadly now deceased. We recently attended one veteran's funeral with a salute by the Legion Standard.

Our Memorials Team have liaised with the Dunbar Heritage Trust and the War Graves Commission. Their work was evident in the recent event to mark the 100th anniversary of the War Memorial and they are involved with efforts to research additional names to be added to that memorial.

Dunbar Army veteran Mike Watson's son Darren attempted to swim the channel to raise funds for Combat Stress, the UK's leading charity for veterans' mental health. Dunbar Branch supported Darren with a bar top fundraiser which raised £101 for the charity.

Branch, as landlords to Dunbar Legion Club, have committed considerable time and resources to fire and electrical safety throughout the building. I am pleased to report that we are now fully protected by a modern fire alarm system, emergency lighting and new electrical distribution panels.

Treasurer's Report

Having joined the Legion Scotland SCIO, we were able to get our Annual Accounts approved by HQ and submitted to the charity regulator OSCR free of charge. We also saved money being covered by HQ's Public Liability insurance for our Remembrance Day parade.

Branch income has been from our £5 per member share of the Capitations fees, some donations and a small surplus from our veteran's breakfast clubs. Branch expenditure included a Building Survey Report by Ogilvy Chalmers, kitchen equipment and posting notices to members for the EGM and AGM. Mandated by the previous AGM to recruit more members, a 'Benefits of Membership' campaign was instigated which illustrated how membership fees are used to support the Legion Scotland charitable purpose and we also offered members a discount on bar prices. Consequently, membership has increased to 255.

It was agreed at the AGM that due to our financial position, and despite the high level of commitment by Executive Officers, no Honorarium payments were to be awarded at the time. We now have the funds to consider paying Honorarium for this year and the previous year. Being conflicted, the Executive Officers have referred the matter to a Remuneration Sub-committee who will make their recommendations separate to this report.

Following instruction from the National Board of Trustees to incorporate social clubs as a FCA regulated Mutual Trading Society governed by the membership, an EGM mandated the Executive Officers to run the business on a day-to-day basis until the Special General Meeting which is required to mandate incorporating.

As instructed, the Branch is required to provide the Club with a Lease for use of the licensed premises and this was put in place.

As mandated, a Business Development Plan was created and approved by the Committee. We now operate monthly Management Accounts which track business performance for revenue, cost-of-sales, staff costs, running costs and maintenance. Business is picking up but Covid is likely to continue to impact the rate of business recovery. Nonetheless, to be financially viable, the business must generate around £215,000 per annum. However, recent experience indicates that with regular hall filling events, the potential of the business is in excess of £385,000 per annum. As long as sensible business decisions are made, the business will survive and should thrive.

With the requirement to run the Club business at arms-length from the Branch charity by two separate committees, the next step is to ensure the Officers running the club are not also officers of the Branch. Comprehensive notes have been prepared to enable any computer literate person to be Treasurer, and he/she will also be supported by the service contract we have with our accountants. After the financial year end (31st March), our accountants will prepare annual accounts for the AGM.

Dunbar RBL Pipe Band Report

2021 has been a very quiet year for the band. Covid-19 and its associated restrictions meant that the majority of band activity remained in an online fashion. With restrictions easing in June we were able to start some get-togethers/practices, albeit all outside. Tuition for learners at this point was a mix of online and in person outside.

As things progressed through the summer some of our younger learners/members played their debut performance at a lower key Lifeboat Day, having only got their own pipes a matter of weeks before. September, and the easing of more restrictions, meant we were able to start practices again within the club. The members helped to clear and clean out the room downstairs, formerly the office, and it is now in a condition where that space is a very useable small practice facility and multi-purpose meeting room. November and December saw performances at the annual Remembrance Day parade and the rescheduled Christmas lights switch on.

The band members always remain committed to volunteering their time to teach kids in our local community to keep the band alive. New learner's classes started in October 2021 and with an influx of players for the big band there will be over 50 members in the band from young learners of primary school age right up to fully fledged playing members. The band are very grateful to the club for continued use of facilities, that enable our activities ranging from teaching, right up to preparing for what we hope is a competition season in summer of 2022. The financial expenses of the band continue to be met in their entirety by band members.

Remuneration for Services Report

Following guidance provided by RBLs, the Remuneration Subgroup proposes retrospective payment of honorarium for years 2020 and 2021 as follows. Note has been taken of reductions in workload in some areas re COVID and consequent increased work in other areas.

2020	2021
Secretary: £200 Treasurer: £250 Vice Chair: £150	Chair: £500 for extra work reopening business, maintenance work Secretary: £400. Increased workload for business reopening and implementing significant changes to charity law at branch level. Treasurer: £400. Significant pressure on finances, post Covid. Welfare: £150. For work in the veterans community. Sports: £100. Additional work regenerating role across area.

Appointed Branch Officers and Committee

Post - Chairman
Duncan Laing
Post - Vice Chairman
Iain Maddox
Post - Secretary
Vacant
Post - Treasurer
Vacant
Members - Committee
Alex McCredie
Alastair McCredie
Anne Herkes

Nominated Club Executive and Members

Robert Gilbertson
Tom McMullen
Linda Gilhooly
Ryan Barson
Chris Empson

The above will be considered a co-opted Club Committee until the Club AGM in April 2022 when each nomination would be put before the membership in an election vote.

CHAIRMAN'S CLOSING REMARKS

I want to mention some people whose contribution to the RBL Dunbar Branch deserve recognition.

I am grateful to Robert Gilbertson for his work and support as Vice Chairman and I look forward to his contribution on the new Club Committee.

I thank Iain Maddox for his work as secretary and latterly for undertaking the additional workload of Treasurer.

Congratulations to Sharon Kaszuba who has led a successful Poppy Campaign, in her first year as Poppy Convener.

Thanks to all committee, members and supporters, past and present.

And finally, many thanks to David Bolton who is stepping down from Committee work after many years of valuable service to Dunbar Legion, including some 23 years as Chairman and 6 years as President.