

Welcome to the second General Council (GC) newsletter of the 2016/17 Rotary year. The aim of this communication is to bring you up to date on the decisions made by your District Governors (DGs) during the meeting. We hope that by communicating in this way we continue to encourage openness and transparency throughout Rotary International in Great Britain & Ireland (Rotary/RIBI) by informing members of the decisions which have been taken.

Your DG will be able to inform you in more detail and you can also refer to the meeting minutes [here](#) (sign in required). Below are the brief details of the key points which were discussed:

BUSINESS PLAN TO HIGHLIGHT AREAS FOR CHANGE

The General Council supported the creation of a business plan by the officers of the Association with projections for the next three years in order to demonstrate that the Association's finances are under control.

The business plan shall reflect likely membership trends and identify areas for cost reduction and be completed by 31st December 2016.

To complete the plan the areas of highest risk and cost shall be examined and less expensive options will be sought including possible radical changes to how the Association operates. The draft business plan will propose options and alternatives for the General Council to decide.

MAJOR REVIEW AHEAD – FEEDBACK FROM DISTRICTS SOUGHT

Further emphasis is being given to strategic planning, with a special General Council webinar taking place to focus solely on the change process needed to ensure the structure of the Association is fit for purpose.

The General Council members were committed to ensuring a change management plan was implemented with specific focus on communication as well as thorough planning and involvement with districts.



Your DG will communicate a three-page structure discussion paper to the continuity group (Immediate Past District Governor, District Governor Elect, District Governor Nominee, District Governor Nominee, District Secretary and District Treasurer) within the district in order to obtain feedback regarding any future change to the structure of the Association.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS – ACTION BEING TAKEN TO REVERSE DECLINE

A number of ongoing and upcoming plans were discussed to address the current membership losses facing Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland. In total there was a net loss of 1,503 members with analysis reporting that losses were static, bereavements remained stable, however recruitment was in decline.

Membership profiles for every district were being produced by Assistant Rotary Coordinators to be shared with each DG and district leadership team.

Profiles are designed to spot trends, areas of excellence and areas for improvement across the likes of retention rates for established and newer clubs, the number of very small clubs and the number of male-only clubs.



In addition, a special membership meeting was held in October with three main objectives; reviewing the present position and how we got there, agreeing a membership development strategy and action plan for 2017-20 and to address plans for redeveloping Rotary in urban areas.

At the meeting a number of case studies were reviewed to identify where clubs had enjoyed success by collaborating and joining together to further the Rotary presence in their area.

It was recognised that some clubs may lack the knowledge or confidence to undertake these kinds of collaborative projects or other service programmes and therefore they should be exposed to other clubs who had experience and could offer guidance.

Further topics including using social media to promote clubs, targeting those experiencing a change in circumstances (divorce, house move, etc.), reconnecting with previous Rotary Youth Leadership Award participants and Rotary Alumni were discussed and a further meeting scheduled for December 2016.

Clubs who have successful membership success stories are encouraged to contact their DG and RIBI Membership Committee Chairman Cath Chorley.

LEADERSHIP ASSEMBLY – TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES EXTENDED

In order for districts to make best use of training opportunities on offer, the General Council decided incoming District Governors have the ability to send substitutes to attend the Assistant Governor training at the RIBI Leadership Assembly in Birmingham.

To better align with the RI strategic plan, content on membership and public image is to be increased.

CUSTOMISABLE PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS COMING SOON

The Public Image Committee, in collaboration with Rotary Support Centre staff, had drafted promotional material, including items for the 2017 Conference and brand new promotional postcards were shared.

Clubs will have flexibility to order physical copies through the RIBI shop or access digital resources which can be personalised to add in club details before being sent to professional printers. Home printing was discouraged in order to maintain a high standard of product.

Communication about the availability of these resources will be sent to Rotarians through the Members' newsletter.

FINANCE COMMITTEE ACT TO MITIGATE RISK, REDUCE COST AND ENSURE EQUALITY ACROSS DISTRICTS

To reduce financial risk of cash exposure held with a single bank, the General Council approved the setup of an additional bank account to function as an "overflow" account during cash-rich times.

To ensure equality over all districts with island clubs, the Finance Committee removed a historic standing decision which awarded a larger grant to the Isle of Man.

To ensure greater clarity to all relating to expenses and to achieve a minor cost saving, reimbursements for attendees to the Rotary International in Great Britain & Ireland Conference were amended.

ELECTRONIC VOTING GIVEN GREEN LIGHT

The use of electronic voting for District Council meetings was approved, meaning email or internet technology can act as an alternative to a show of hands vote, in addition to postal voting.

In the event of a District Council not being quorate, the decision allows District Councils to be able to conduct essential business.

CROCUS CORM ORDERS SMASH TARGET

Over seven million crocus corms had been sold, far exceeding initial forecasts, meaning that hundreds of communities will have green spaces transformed, all to highlight Rotary in Britain and Ireland's Purple4Polio campaign. Television presenter and celebrity gardener Alan Titchmarsh has agreed to be a Purple4Polio Ambassador and has spoken positively about Rotary's campaign.



Since the General Council, Paralympian, polio survivor and broadcaster Ade Adepitan has also become a Purple4Polio Ambassador. He is a keynote speaker at the RIBI Conference in Manchester from 7 to 9th April, 2017.



ROTARY IN THE NEWS

Further national press coverage is planned for the end of the year, with hundreds of pieces of regional coverage for Purple4Polio being achieved by clubs across Great Britain and Ireland.

FUNDING FOR INTER-COUNTRY COMMITTEES GRANTED

The General Council agreed to grant £200 to the Inter-Country Committee initiative to cover a fee of \$100 and a small allowance for administration costs.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It has been a great pleasure travelling across Great Britain and Ireland over the last few months for events and District Conferences. Meeting you and hearing about some of the outstanding activities clubs have been getting involved in has been terrific.

I would like to take this opportunity wish members a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eve Conway".

Eve Conway
President of Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland 2016/17

