

Governance Review - AGM report 2021

In the summer of 2021, it was requested that Council give permission for a review to be conducted into the *governance* of GYC – and this was agreed.

Governance is the framework of authority and accountability of how an organisation is run. For GYC, this refers primarily to the legal structure of the organisation along with the structure and work activities of the management committee.

Former Council members are a great untapped resource and their direct experience of running the club was the best place to start the discussions.

Over a couple of months, I had conversations and written correspondence with a sizable number of current and former members of Council - and sought to identify the systems, structures and processes which are actually *getting in the way* of protecting and improving the club.

In these brief comments I will not try and cover all the issues raised, but I will highlight two of the most serious:

- Going back many years, Council has found it hard to find time to discuss long term issues - such as long term financial planning and sink funds to maintain the buildings; we are buried by day to day minutiae.
- Several believed that the club does not adequately managed *risk* and they are fearful that our approach is sufficiently sketchy that a serious uninsured accident could close the club.

Furthermore, some former Council members will not stand again for reasons that we should worry about:

- They do not believe that the club itself (and others on Council) fully understood the implications and responsibilities of being a Company Director and that this put them personally at legal risk.
- They found Council meetings dispiriting, dreary and sometimes accusatory or even abusive.

This feedback is important at a time when we have large number of vacancies for absolutely critical volunteer roles.

As we move into next year, it will be important to widen the discussion to the general membership, but I think it is worth mentioning two issues that I am certain will be found in the final recommendations of the review.

Firstly, there is something close to a consensus amongst former Flag Officers that the current Management Committee has become *far too large* to efficiently manage the day to day running of the club. Furthermore, not all of the roles that are currently Company Directors *need* to be Company Directors.

Secondly, a quick win to make meetings more productive and civil would be to adopt a standard set of 'rules of procedure' for Chairing and participating in meetings. A suitable document has been identified.

As these discussions progress it is possible that changes would be required to our Articles or Byelaws. If this were the case an EGM would be called to seek ratification from members.

Richard Phillips