

The Town Hall and Annual General Meeting of the Ras Al Hamra (RAHRC) was held in the Marlin Hall on Tuesday, 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2018 at 16:30.

**Present Members:**

There were 65 ordinary and external members present

**HSE Rules: (Hamood Al Shaqsy – Social Secretary)**

The Social Secretary for RAHRC drew attention to a few HSE rules.

**Town Hall Meeting**

**Agenda – Town Hall Meeting**

1. Welcome
2. RAHRC Redevelopment
  - Sports field
  - Reflection on our new restaurant
3. Activity charges
4. New contractors
  - Tennis
  - Waterfront
5. Q & A

1) Welcome – by Hamoud Al Shaqsy – Social Secretary

**2) RAHRC Redevelopment – Iain Liversage – Vice President & Liaison RAH Development**

Welcome to the Town Hall and AGM. For the first time we are going to do a little bit more on the Town Hall element in the AGM to bring you up to speed on what's going on behind the scenes. We are working to get things done.

This is a brief overview of where we are with the development process. Last year we reported in the AGM, that we had received approval from the DRB (Development Review Board) to get a self funded development model. We looked at the funds the Club accumulated over 40 years of operation, and anticipated future income, to fund part or all of our redevelopment process.

During January/February 2018 we met with a lot of people in this room, myself and some of the UIR team to talk about what you wanted from the new development, what you needed during redevelopment and what we can do to ease that pain during the changes that are going to go on. So that was a good number of sessions, we got really good feedback which we turned into a spreadsheet that we have used with the design consultants that helped us to redevelop the site.

Only couple of months ago we appointed M/s. Cowi & Partners to design Phase 1 of the project which you will see on the plan. We are currently in the pre-concept stage, which is about

gathering all the information about the existing site, the previously approved schemes that have been to DRB committees, and seeing what's the starting point for moving forward with the concept design. We are going to look at all the feedback of the sections in that session and we have produced a report which is just a boundary condition setting point to say this is the starting point for the redesign for the Club.

One of the important things is that we keep the Club open and facilities running during development. So the statement there, is that we intend to provide facilities that are equal or better quality during redevelopment. We are going to knock down Marlin Hall and the swimming pool and we will put something back temporarily to replace that during the redevelopment period. For the swimming pool there will be the new one at the gym, for the Marlin Hall it might come in the form of a temporary structure of the same size as the existing one so that events and normal Club life can carry on. We are very fortunate to have some additional area between here and the golf driving range which allows us to fill that space to help us moving forward.

Early works packages are: the new swimming pool at the gym, temporary offices, halls and event areas to replace the areas where Kinderfeest happens on the volleyball court and Sohar Garden so we can keep on all the same services.

One of the key things we've worked very hard to plan is to maintain full beach access throughout redevelopment so with the current positioning of the buildings we are able to maintain the beach so nobody should lose access to the beach.

The current plan is we are in the design phase. We will then move into the tendering phase with the plan so that in the coming summer we will be able to start that work. Lots of the faces I see here have liaised with me over the last six months saying, can I have my event here in March, in February, in July and we are hoping we can give enough feedback and you can keep planning your events so that they are in the right place when we carry on.

This is a broad overview of Phase 1 & Phase 2 of the development:



Phase 1 is really replacing the part of the site which is the cinema hall and swimming pool onwards which is really the first part of the site to be developed. This was built in the 1970s and the main block is concrete clad and we will replace everything that's in the existing block, with new restaurants, new swimming pools in this area of the site. Phase 1 of redevelopment

literally ends at the end of the Sohar Garden, so the boat Club, the boat parking and launching ramps are not affected by Phase 1. Everything that we do in Phase 1 will relocate to new event space, new temporary offices which will probably be in the form of porta-cabins or temporary structures similar to the New Restaurant to allow functions to carry on. We've got a big space which is currently unused between the Club and the driving range which allows this to happen. Up at the gym it is business as normal, and the tennis courts stay in the same position. Obviously we've replaced the restaurants with the Clubhouse, so we are able to keep the facilities running through the redevelopment.

## **Q & A**

**Q: Mieke Koster**

Question on access: if you start building, the road gets quite close to the existing location. Do we have cranes which reach over the road, same as where we have our temporary accommodation? So I was wondering if you will have something like that here?

**A: Iain Liversage:**

We built the temporary car parking between the Golf Club and the Club a couple of years ago in preparation for the redevelopment. The access to the Club will be through the overflow car parking and there's a green gate that we installed by the substation besides the driving range. That will become the entrance to the Club. We built a road that connects to the gate by the Arts Centre, so you can access the Club in a similar way by bypassing the construction site. Because of the nature of the construction, there will probably be a tower crane which we have to contain within the site and on the extremities we will probably use mobile cranes. So I don't envisage any direct construction effects on the rest of the operation of the Club during Phase 1 as long as we plan well and put temporary facilities there to allow things to carry on. Safety is No. 1 priority.

**Q: Jackie Maskall:**

How is car parking to be effected during redevelopment?

**A: Iain Liversage:**

When we added the temporary car park a couple of years ago, we doubled the number of car parking spaces that were available at the Club at the time. If you remember we had a little overflow parking on the other side of the road where the apartments are currently being built. So we've added to the number of parking spaces. Obviously the parking directly in front of the offices won't be there, but the numbers that are available in that temporary parking space match what was previously available. So there's no diminishment in parking numbers.

**Q: Maartje Koning :**

Demolishing on Phase 1 and beach access – it's usually the area where the kids access the beach and play on the beach. How do you take care of all the dust and all the extra pollution that might come in the air and might come through to the beach?

**A: Iain Liversage:**

We hope to do the demolishing during the summer which is the quietest part of the year. General activities on site like concrete pouring, etc. will be controlled with normal construction practices, and there are a number of things that we can do and use on the

current phases to make sure that happens. But this is something that will be considered during the redevelopment so that the environment remains safe for all.

**Q: Melis Van Der Horst (Dutch committee) :**

We have a couple of containers standing somewhere in there. Do they have to be moved somewhere else in the coming year?

**A: Iain Liversage :**

I've had lots of liaison with the Dutch committee about containers. One of the tenders we have prepared is to buy a number of containers to allow storage of materials that are currently stored in this area to be put in a place that can be maintained during reconstruction. We are currently looking at getting a container park. We will certainly make space for containers and during the discussions we had with the sections we asked what storage they might need during reconstruction, so that we could procure that many containers. So hopefully we've planned for all these things and we'll see from there.

**Q: Naaman Busaidy :**

What's that channel that cuts through in the middle? (Referring to the Phase 1 diagram)

**A:** The channel you see there is a storm water channel which is designed as part of the wider Ras Al Hamra development and that looks at how storm drainage will be dealt with once the development is complete and we have to run all the storm water through a certain area. We've had a number of heavy rainfall events in the last couple of years and rain water occasionally filled up down the bottom areas. But this is something that would deal with a 'GONU' type event or something that came up in the future and it's something that we plan for as part of the wider development rather than just the Club works. It's for a wider Ras Al Hamra development project rather than specifically for the Club.

### **Sports Field:**

You might have noticed besides the Ras Al Hamra mosque, we started another construction project which is a multi-purpose sports field. This is a facility that was planned through the Ras Al Hamra development team but something that the Club is funding. This is a field suitable for football, rugby, cricket, a number of multi-sports. This will be procured and constructed by PDO but will be funded and operated by the Ras Al Hamra Recreation Centre. It's fully floodlit, meets FIFA, World Rugby and ICC standards. We are currently in the construction phase, the pre-completion will be in April 2019 but we are hoping it will be ready a little earlier than that. We are still planning the operating parameters to see how that best works to facilitate both members' uses and the use of the facility in the quieter times for non-members so it potentially provides income that covers its costs while providing additional facilities for members and sections.

Civil works and amenity works are on the way. Floodlights and pitches are now in country. Hopefully over the next six weeks we will start to see some real movement down there with some greening and some floodlights being added.

### **Q & A**

**Q: Stine Rees:**

Will that football field have security to allow only members and also will children be allowed in when there are no sports sections using the facilities like in the afternoon before the sections start?

**A: Iain Liversage:**

We've integrated the sports field with your RFID membership card, which will allow you to go in if you've got a booking so we are controlling that. There's only one issue we've got at the moment and that is only one member and thirty non-members using the pitch. That's something we'll have to manage on the new sports pitch.

In terms of day time use, it will have to be managed. The idea is to make it accessible as much as possible without making it overused and uncontrolled so definitely there is scope for us to manage it properly. Yes, it can be opened and used by children in a controlled environment.

**Q: Is it an astro-turf?**

**A:** Yes, it is a 4G astro turf. It's the same as Saracen's Rugby Club in the UK: it's an international standard pitch. So you can dive on it, slide on it, it doesn't provide astra burns and everything else that goes on.

### **New Restaurant Review:**

The new restaurant opened in October 2017. We certainly had some early challenges, the challenges of change as we took something everybody is familiar with and we added something new. We got a lot of feedback – some positive, some negative and it took us a while to manage that and get it going. We think it's improved to a point where my inbox is less full. The operator put some new management in place and it seems to be going well.

In terms of sales volume, we are doing more there than both the old restaurant and coffee shop in terms of feeding people on site. We're doing quite a lot worse on feeding people off site and we are just trying to work out why that is and what we can do to improve those volumes to sort of help things to work out.

Unlike the previous contracts this actually provides some income to Ras Al Hamra. Not very much, we share the profits when we get above a certain level and that helps us to pay for the things like the services, repairing of the equipment, maintenance of the equipment and investment in new equipment, which none of the previous facilities did.

Month on month we are seeing improvement in volumes, reduction in number of complaints and everything else. When we are using a restaurant it's subjective, so you please some of the people all the time and all the people some of the time, some of the people none of the time – we understand that, we really do want your feedback, because positive and negative it helps us to change and try and get better. We do take it on board when we sit with the operator every month and go through these things. Not perfect, we're hopefully working towards it. If you got any feedback please do submit it through to the Ras Al Hamra Recreation Club email address or hand in a hand written note.

### 3. Activity Charges – Paul Sanders – Sports Secretary

#### **Activity Charges:**

We talked in the last AGM (2017) about the charges that were coming and these charges have been rolled out in some areas. The area that we intended to start with was the tennis court booking and it still isn't in place - it's taken more than a year - and that's to do with the Jonas system, but it will come and that was going to be the guinea pig for the other areas. Actually as it turns out it's working very well on the water sports particularly for the boating, the kayaking, and Stand up Paddle-boarding (SUP). The divers were already paying, but now they are paying different charges so that's working very well as well.

The idea was that we were going to charge people a very small amount for activities, so that the people who were using things the most will be the people who will be paying the most and not just put the membership fees up at the Club - so we're going to keep the membership fee at the same level. When we pitch the charges we are looking at what it's costing outside of the Club, and then keeping it at a very much lower level. It's usually between 10 and 20% of what you would pay commercially outside and that's the area we've aimed at. So far that seems to be going well although we have not rolled that out across everything else yet. This year we are hoping to get the Tennis court booking charges up and running, the same for squash courts, for using the gym, for gym classes and so on. As with sporting activities, the same will be rolled out for the Arts and Crafts & language lessons as well.

One of the things we had a lot of discussion on, and thanks particularly to the sailing committee, was about how best to roll out the charges. The purpose of the Club, the ethos of the Club, is to promote sports, well being, health, etc and if we charge people we might put them off. So one of the things we've done is we've put a cap on the charges. For instance sailing: if you sailed already 4 times in a month the rest of your sailing that month is free. Then next month you start again. We've found that's being really effective, people are actually sailing more. So we'll do the same with the gym and the squash courts, tennis, etc. We are trying to implement a cap so we don't penalize. Some people go to the gym everyday and we don't want to penalize those people and put them off. The cap seems to be the fairest way of controlling the charges, but we also don't want to put off somebody who wants to use the facility once a month or once in a blue moon.

### **New Contractors:**

We've got some new contractors as discussed. One of the things that Raoul insisted on, as well as keeping the membership fees down, was if you want to charge then the members have to be getting something for their money - so we are trying to provide better services, higher quality, more professional, better lessons, etc.

The first start is with the tennis - Unique sports. The tennis only kicked off on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 2018 but the new lessons and the full first term will roll out from January 2019. The feedback I'm getting on the lessons is very positive, they are very professional coaches, people are very happy with the way it's going. The charges we implemented are the same as the members were paying before. We haven't put the price up for tennis coaching.

Mike is from Sports zone and he's looking after the waterfront, he's been on seat just over ten weeks. He's looking after the Club Safety Post and also helps working with the sailing, working with the powerboats - everything to do with the water basically - particularly the safety aspects but also supporting events like the Regatta, swim events, etc and helping us to rationalize the fleet of boats as well. One of the things that's very popular is the powerboat training.

We are looking forward to potentially working with more contractors in the future if we feel that gives members more benefits. The key area for that might be the gym. We'll look into that next year.

### **Q & A**

**Q: Nijat Hamidov:**

Question about charges applied for the kayak and the boundary conditions where we can go with the kayak. We can go with the kayak within the two small mountains (within the buoys). Paying OMR 2/ every time to go as far as the buoys doesn't seem very rational. So if you are going to charge, will you be willing to allow the kayaks to go a little beyond the buoys?

**A: Paul Sanders – Sports Secretary**

Staying within the bay is for safety reasons. That's the area where the Club Safety Post (CSP) guys can keep an eye on. If you want to go further with kayaks, I suggest you join the Kayaking Club, they do lessons, social events every Thursday where we go way out of the bay – we usually go as far as the Crowne Plaza. We go to Costa coffee, we go to the island. But for ad hoc users – they may or may not be trained, we don't know how well they can swim, it's a safety issue, so borrowing a Club kayak on a non-organized event you have to stay in the bay and this is for safety purposes.

When you join one of the Club events you don't pay, it's for free. So join the Club!

**Q: Frouke Van As**

I have a question about the membership fees because last year in the AGM minutes I read that Mr. Restucci said that he wants to keep the membership fees down for the PDO members for OMR 10/-, but what we found out that if you are an outsider [external member] or retirees, our

fees went up for 250% and on top of that we have to now pay for the powerboats and for all the extra. So why is it not put down by PDO to pay a little bit more fee and don't pay for the extras for what you have to offer and you don't have the extra administration for it. Why did you charge the outsiders 250% more? I would like to know the reason for that.

**A: Raoul Restucci – Managing Director – PDO**

The Club is for PDO staff. If you know that, then you would know the answer to the second question. We have 3,500 members and we try to maintain fees as low as possible. It's an incredibly successful Club, currently well attended and the balance between keeping the fees low but obviously covering a number of costs, we've taken the option of incremental use of equipment is offered at incredibly competitive rates, and its driven by demand. It's a personal selection but otherwise you can avail of the many services which are not charged at the Club – beach, BBQs and so forth.

For external members we are raising the fees because for them it is a privilege to be part of this Club and it helps us to cover and maintain the costs for its members. We are not here for the external parties; we are here mainly for PDO staff. We allow other members to join but on competitive prices. It's a normal market supply/demand and the reality that most other clubs will charge you substantially more than PDO.

PDO covers and has covered the Club for the last 50 years and will continue to provide the financial backing but at the moment we believe there's a commercial model that I ask the Club to progress, fund some of the expansions, not wait on the challenges that we faced in terms of funding our own programs. We've had three attempts at trying to upgrade the Club. So there is an opportunity to increase the value of the services, the example they've clarified for Tennis, but at the same time maintain a low cost structure for its members. As long as we can do that we are going to keep trying that. Whether PDO needs to top up or otherwise that will be determined by time and success. A lot of the gains the Club makes, most of the financial gains, most of the cost recoveries come from the alcohol and so forth from that side of the business. At the end of the day, if the Club needs additional funding, we [PDO] will find ways to do that, but at the moment the model it sustainable and you can see that the funds that have been accumulated have been significant in the last several years. So there's no need at this stage, but rest assured, if the Club has problems PDO will be there to back it up.

Back to your question, we are trying to keep the membership as low as possible, that's what we minuted. I'm not sure we minuted it at OMR 10/- but we will try and keep it as low as possible and for as long as possible. We are not going to quote a number, that will likely change over time. The basis is membership cost low, everybody has access, everybody loves being part of the Club and those who use various services pay a little bit more, but again at incredibly competitive rates. For third parties, we want to continue to attract them, we have many members but the numbers have to be a little bit more competitive.

**Q: Pei Lian Wang**

Good to know that the charges will be 10 to 20% of the commercial offering.

For example if the external offering of a gym is OMR 100/- per annum for classes and everything all in, so as per your calculation the charges to the member will not exceed 10 to 20



Rials per annum for the gym including of course taking into account the Club membership. Is that right?

**A Paul Sanders:**

That's probably simplifying it too much. No, in terms of the charges we are having so far, these stay within 10 and 20% of what you see outside. For the gym we haven't assigned it yet and it depends on the offering we give. For instance, if we move to personal coaching that will be something different. It will depend on the type of class, but the charges will be on top of the membership because membership is fixed and as Raoul explained the membership is exceedingly low for the PDO members and then you have a choice – you want to go to the gym, you want to go sailing, you want to play squash, you want to play tennis. But there isn't a cap that's fixed. We are aiming for very low charges. One of the things we are finding is most of the classes get over-subscribed, so one of the areas we are struggling with is we need to make it primarily for members. When we do the booking we have to find a way of making sure the members get priority. We don't want to fill the classes with guests and non-members. So market forces will also drive the prices a little bit.

**Q Pei Lian Wang**

Before you decide the charges will you ensure that the quality of the offering is on par with the commercial offering? For instance the group classes at the gym or any other charges that you intend to levy.

**A Paul Sanders:**

Yes, we will certainly. That's why nobody is paying for the gym at the moment. For a whole year we haven't paid for the gym and the reason is I'm not happy with the quality of the offering.

**Q; Shalini Kumar (Temporary Instructor – Arts Centre)**

**A** I've got instructor membership in Arts Centre, not just me but there are 20+ ladies who have instructor membership. We do not get any e-mail. Regardless of what we pay – once we are members of the Club we ought to get e-mails to know what's going on in the Club.

In the past two years, I have attended just one function that's Regatta, because one of my friends told me to come and join, which I really enjoyed. So I would love to join many more functions. When I go sometimes the tickets are sold. It is my request that we should get the e-mails.

**A: Paul Sanders**

I agree, you should.

**Emma – Projects Secretary:**

There are two parts to this question

The first is we do send out regular e-mails and we do that from the data base e-mails address we have so if you don't get e-mails we either have the wrong e-mail address or a different e-mail address.

The other thing is that we have the website. So if you look at the website, you have the active news section there. So you can stay up to date.

**Jane Alcock – General Secretary:**

This came to my attention about a month or six weeks ago, because I didn't know that the temporary instructor member's weren't on the list. We have instructed the Front Office that everybody and it doesn't matter what kind of membership you've got, if you're a member you're a member and everybody on that list should be getting e-mails. If you're not getting e-mails then please write to the Front Desk and let them know. I've written an e-mail to them instructing them that everybody on that list should get e-mails. If that hasn't happened we need to know because then we can have another discussion as to why that is not happening. Thanks for letting us know about that.

**Claude Farhat (Chairperson Arts Centre)**

I would like to clarify that they are temporary instructors and after 3 months some of them stop teaching, so why should they be added in the Club data for e-mails? That's why the office is not sending them e-mails because they are temporary.

**AGM Meeting**

**Agenda – AGM Meeting**

1. APPROVAL OF AGM MINUTES 2017
2. MAIN COMMITTEE PRESENTATIONS
  - PRESIDENT REPORT
  - HSE
  - TREASURER REPORT
  - BAR & BANDS
  - SOCIAL & COMMUNITY SECTIONS
  - SPORTS SECTIONS
  - SOCIAL EVENTS
3. PATRON'S MESSAGE
4. Q & A

**Approval of Minutes of the 2017 AGM**

The minutes for 2017 AGM which have been posted on the web and the notice board had to be accepted and approved and this was approved by Mr. Fahim Firfiray.

**Main Committee Presentations:**

**Presentation by Mr. Khalid Khabouri – President:**

I have been repeating this message that this is a Club for the members and we should be taking part in making it most diverse and inclusive for everybody. What I mean by this is that there is no distinction between a PDO employee member, an external member, a guest member, etc. Once you are a member you become a member. It works both ways, we would expect you to help the Club and also follow the rules of the Club.

Every time I go to the front office there is a thick file of applications from people who are wanting to become members of this Club and the most common comments that I get when I ask them why they want to become a member of this Club is that because it's a prestige to be a member of this Club as this

is a PDO recreation centre and has been in operation for a very long time but most importantly they say is that it is a safe, family oriented Club. So it basically provides a very safe environment and I'm requesting everybody here that we should maintain it that way. That means we should be tolerant, we should take care of the equipment that are being provided, we should take care of the safety, cleanliness and hygiene. I don't want to make this a lecture of what happens at the BBQ areas on a Saturday morning but people who use it will know what I'm saying.

As you are seeing here over the years the demographic is changing. A lot of people are coming in and a lot of people are going out and the Club is run by the members, so we need volunteers. We need you to come in and help, run the sections, participate in events. There's a wellness feeling when you participate and everything goes well. I would like to encourage you to do that as it will help everybody.

Contribution, proactive support is required. If a section cannot maintain itself, it means it does not have people to run it so that section will be closed down. We introduce sections because there is pull from the members and we close sections if people cannot run them or cannot maintain them. It is literally for you, so that you should take part and you should enjoy and show your responsibility as a member when you give some of your time in volunteering to organise section events.. Few people are active in the section but a lot of people benefit. Keep that philosophy in mind. People come in from various backgrounds. In the past when we started this Club we had about a 142 nationalities. I have to run the sections again to see how that has changed, but it was really very surprising at what diverse membership we have got. You can imagine when you come in and during events you will be rubbing shoulders with people from all over the world. So it is a fantastic cultural part of Club.

We are discussing the improvements and you have heard about the ongoing improvement of the Club. We will be redeveloping the Club and one of the main things we want to do is not to convert it into a resort where you come in with your bag and towel, enjoy and go. That's not the idea – we will maintain and we will keep the same concept that it is for the members to enjoy themselves with their participation. All the things that we are trying to improve and what Raoul indicated, we are trying to keep everything down in the economic sense but also wherever we are putting things (costs), we are giving things so that you can improve and sailing is a very nice example. If you do a course or you get a ticket from here, it will be recognised and when you go somewhere else you can use that. Swimming too works on the same concept. We have introduced swimming which will give you a certificate or confidence that your child or yourself will be able to participate and get quality instructions and lessons to enjoy.

**(Introduction of Main Committee including RAHRC Patron):**

Raoul Restucci	PDO Managing Director and RAHRC Patron
Khalid Al Khabouri	President
Iain Liversage	Vice President & UIR Liaison RAH Development
Saniya Kharusi	Honorary Treasurer
Jane Alcock	General Secretary
Wayne Bryant	Bar Secretary
Richard Winkel	Community Member
Paul Sanders	Sports Secretary

Saleh Al Sharji  
Hamood Al Shaqsy  
Emma Goelema

RAHRC General Manager  
Social Secretary  
Project Secretary (linked to redevelopment)

### **President – Khalid Khabouri**

### **Vice President – Vice President and Liaison RAH development**

Sadly, Iain Liversage will be leaving at the end of this year, so this will be his last AGM and he will be leaving a very big hole that will be very difficult to fill.

### **Honorary Treasurer – Saniya Kharusi**

In any organisation the person who controls the finance, is the person who actually helps to make it develop and progress further. Before Saniya came in we had a very nice system but then she actually showed us what we were missing. The transparency of where we were spending money, how we were spending money and how we can improve were all shown by her as well as utilizing technology such as internet banking. Thank you Saniya!!

### **General Secretary – Jane Alcock**

She's going to Sakhalin. Interestingly, when the previous General Secretary left, there was a competition and since I'm very picky in the sense that I want to make sure people can work with me. So Emma and Jane came along and I looked at both their past experiences and I wanted both to be a part of the main committee. I told Jane that I want someone to control me. She was very nice and she has been able to put not only me but the whole committee in a straight line and as a General Secretary, she has done tremendous amount of work in a very short period of time.

The most important thing that she has done is that she has coordinated the writing of the Statues which we have been attempting for the last five years. She brought it to conclusion, it was a very good attempt and now we have something from where we can move on and help to develop. This is her final AGM.

### **Bar Secretary – Wayne Bryant**

I know Wayne from LEAN, from Quality, from SIGMA. When his nomination came in, I said we want someone like him. He is the Bar Secretary but please wait till you see his presentation. He actually found out so many different things and ways of what we were doing and he has applied the LEAN philosophy in the bar admin. Amazing!!

### **Community Member – Richard Winkel**

He's taken over the Social and Community. If you will remember we had changed the appointment of the main committee, so we wanted people who were already part of the Club and the sections so they would know what they are getting into. We didn't want just anyone to come in and throw different ideas not in line with how we are developing the Club. He was on the other side of the table. He was a Treasurer for the Canadian section and if you talk to the accounts people they know how he had dealt with them. The same energy he is bringing in as a Community member. Fantastic!!

### **Sports Secretary – Paul Sanders**

Paul Sanders - Sports Secretary, Saniya Kharusi - Treasurer and Iain Liversage – Vice President are the architects of the new contracts. I made a promise to Raoul that by the time I leave we will make this Club as self-sufficient as possible. When I said that the simplest thing was to increase the membership fees but Raoul said 'NO'. So we had to come up with ingenious ways of how to do it and Paul, Saniya and Iain were instrumental in doing this although the whole committee was involved these three had to bear the brunt of taking it forward. Paul fantastic job!!

### **Social Secretary – Hamoud Shaqsy**

When I took over as President, the idea was that the President would give all the presentations for all the committee members and all of everything and I told them 'I'm not going to do that'. So the work was divided. Another thing that came up was going to be the Master of Ceremony so we found a natural in Hamoud.

When I took over I did the first one of the Fireworks but then he help me, so I handed that to him. Hamoud has been organising quite a lot of events. He's the one who brings in all sorts of different dancers, events for the Club, though we do not know where he gets them from.

He introduced the rain dance which was a modulation of the beach party. We all learn from our mistakes – the first time that he did there were issues with the light switches. Imagine wet, beach and lights (electricity) – not a nice combination. He makes very interesting events and he keeps on bringing new events for the Club. He will take over from Wayne for the DJ events. Thank you Hamoud!!

### **Projects Secretary – Emma Goelema**

Emma was the second contender for the General Secretary's position when Jane came in and she has a background in Projects Management, she has appreciation working in different departments and knowing that we are going to go through this redevelopment so we thought she could help Iain, but this decision was delayed a bit, then we found her hidden talent which is communications. If you see for the first time now all the slides have a standard Club logo and they are distributed differently. She is basically bringing the Club from the 60s generation to the 21<sup>st</sup> generation. Thank you Emma!!

These were the Main Committee members but the people you deal with on a day to day basis are the front office staff.

General Manager – Saleh Sharji

Accounts – Hussain Baqer, Maryam Lamki, Anisha Pinto

Memberships – Shalini Singh

Reception – Zainab Mandhry

Admin - Nancy D'Souza

IT support – Rohan Varma, Sharifa Esry

Clearance from Ministries/Venue bookings – Bader Sulaimi

Administration/Reception (Membership cards distribution) - Sumaiya Abri

We have issued (changed) almost fourteen thousand cards.

### **HSE 2017/2018 (Iain Liversage – Vice President)**

Waterfront safety is our biggest risk – the sea and the challenges it imposes - and we have had some great work done by Robert Velberg who helped us in establishing waterfront procedures in the last couple of years.

We looked at it and we assessed this is a major risk area and so we brought on board an entity basically responsible for that safety and give us day to day detailed management of the area. Mike (from SportZone) has been there for 10 weeks and we see a massive improvement in the number of e-mails and things that Paul and I are dealing with on a weekly basis.

### **No Major Incidents in 2017/2018**

We had a few incidents here – nothing too serious.

- We had some walls damaged by some cars.
- We had a failure with grating where a car got damaged.
- One of the big things was that we had a winch bolts failure which put it out of action for a while. We looked at why that happened. Hopefully the repair works will be good until we get the area redeveloped.
- We recently had a small electric shock caused by a leak of current from a floodlight in the BBQ area and we've identify that as from a troublesome earth and we've fixed that and we were able to pick it up.

So in terms of HSE we've had a good year, nothing major to report. We meet regularly to discuss these issues. Thank you Saleh and his team who are managing on a daily basis and Mike and his support team because they are managing on the CSP if anything goes wrong.

### **Ongoing HSE issues:**

- People using mobile phones while driving in Club
- Access control: security guards continuously changing
- Swimming pool: people in pool not obeying all the rules
- Smoking in non smoking areas
- Over speeding around the Club speed limit 25km per hour
- Parking outside normal parking spaces
- Alcohol: excessive usage by some members

### **Q & A**

#### **Q: Mieke Koster**

How to report incidents? I noticed in the ladies changing room I had a small accident when I tripped over one of those mats which was actually curled up. I reported that to the swimming pool staff, but it's still there. So there must be some sort of a reporting procedure so action is taken. In this case the mat must be replaced.

#### **A: Iain Liversage:**

We do have a complains procedure which is on our website and you can access it there, but the best thing is always the Ras Al Hamra Recreation Centre e-mail [rahrc@pdo.co.om](mailto:rahrc@pdo.co.om) which goes to the general office and they will forward to the relevant person. If you don't

get a feedback you can raise that up again and it gets seen by all of us, so we can manage that.

There's an incident report form on the website, so you can write it down and submit to the front office.

**Q: Nijat Hamidov**

Smoking in non-smoking area – I notice this plenty of times in the beach area and then the cigarette butts are thrown in the non designated area. Couple of times I have approached people as gently as possible as I can, but they want to know where the sign is to indicate no smoking. Also I have noticed beer bottles and cans floating inside the sea. I think this should be regulated that the cans cannot be removed from the bar area. One time I have collected around 15 bottles at the beach near and around the old coffee shop area.

**A: Iain Liversage:**

When we talk about general HSE and they are major issues, it's not just addressed to people here, it's the general population. What we try and do is give out messages to people. Maybe we need to improve the signage to keep up the campaign saying where you are allowed alcohol, where you are allowed glass and where you're not. It's a good point and we'll take them on board.

**Q. Johannes Stammeijer**

It is good to report on safety but I am aware of one or possibly two personal incidences that happened which are not reported. Is that the part of safety not included in this summary? There was one incident during the Regatta where one lady hurt her foot on a protruding metal object in the kayak area and needed medical treatment.

**A: Iain Liversage:**

We have got that, maybe I didn't include in my slide. If there's anything that is not reported and you feel it is not reported back to you we want to hear about it because we want to address these issues. It's certainly not an idea that we are trying to hide away from this so bring it forward if you can.

### **Treasurer's Report - Saniya Al Kharusi (Honorary Treasurer)**

I will start with some highlights – what has been happening in the finance section, also build on some of the questions already asked and finally talk about how we're doing against our budget because that's something that needs to be in focus going forward. As we are now to be self funded we need to be more commercially focused, that starts with better understanding our expenses for more accurate forecasts, and then more carefully regulating and monitoring how we spend that money. Also, actively seeking opportunities to raise money or create new revenue streams.

I'll start with the fact that the financial statements for the fiscal year ended June 2018 have been completed; external auditors, Ernst and Young, recently issued a clean unqualified report.

Copies are available at the front for members who wish to view them, if anyone has any questions about any section please let me know.

A detailed annual review of financial performance was introduced for the first time. Quite a few committee members are rotating in and out and they have said it has been a helpful handover document. This would have been great for me to understand the functioning and operations of the Club from a financial perspective. It is pretty massive; we have the main centre and 46+ sections, so to get a handle on it as a volunteer is quite a task so it is always good to have a documented reference.

Something else that's been introduced is quarterly performance reviews. This is an opportunity to deep dive into the finances for a specific period and let them tell a story of how we are doing and where we need to redirect our focus to achieve targets. For Q2 we are hoping to get detailed analysis from the sections – I will get a lot of input from Paul and Richard and also Wayne to accomplish this. You do prepare a budget, you do get sponsors for lot of your events but we want some more insight and visibility on how much money is coming in to the Main Centre from section events, for example how much bar income or how many new members can be tied to a particular event. So we can see what's popular and what we need to invest in more.

Despite the new requirement to be self-funding, the Club has happily taken on assisting the Golf Club. Brett, in the audience today, is the general manager. He has been doing an amazing job of streamlining information and reporting relating to the Golf Club and contributed with a stand-alone quarterly report for Q1 of this year. Given our arrangement I have been added to the steering committee for the Golf Club which I think is important and I want to make sure this position continues for future Club treasurer.

We had a complete and independent asset physical verification as well this year. Thank you to all the sections who allowed the external parties to come in, take a look at what's been damaged, what is in our records perhaps needs to be updated. Thank you for that and especially to Saleh and Hussain who did a lot of work with them to get it updated. We will be having an auction of all those assets which were identified as redundant, so please look out for the notification early 2019.

**Internet Banking:** Khalid mentioned that we've moved into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This is one of the things that I think is critical to enhancing the member experience. We have a very lean finance team of 3 staff, so having our Finance Manager run to the bank everyday takes him away from the office and he is not able to address sometimes critical member requests and section treasurer requests. Eliminating some of that running around has helped. We've also introduced (point of sale) POS systems so members can swipe their bank cards for services which is doing great. For activity charges we shall introduce an application where gym members or sailor or arts members can sign up for classes – and pay – online or through their phones. There is a lengthy approval



process with the Central Bank of Oman before the Club is vetted and able to offer this service and we are working on that.

**Value Added Tax (VAT):** I will not dwell on this. This is just to update you that the Club is making sure we are ready with that when it does come – potentially next year - and we are working closely with our colleagues in PDO's Treasury team to ensure compliance when the regulations do come.

Paul has already covered the profit sharing that we have on our new contractors.

## **Q & A**

**Q: Gloria Gil – (Judo Section)**

First of all thank you for helping us buy more mats so we can have more kids. Last week we received a visit asking us for the old mats to sell for auction. We need them.

**A: Saniya Kharusi :**

I actually got an update from Saleh before this meeting. Before anything is auctioned, they will be double checked. We do not want to use damaged equipment. We want to make sure safe and quality equipment are being used. So we'll make sure we'll do a double check before we okay them for use.

**Q: Pei Lian Wang**

When is the VAT regulation going to be introduced and what services will be impacted?

**A: Saniya Kharusi – Honorary Treasurer**

We expect this middle or Q3 of next year. What service will be impacted is still a question mark. I do not want to mention something that does not materialize, but for anything that impacts the members directly there will be sufficient and timely communication.

**Q: Nijat Hamidov**

If you are making online systems, why not have online for auctions too, instead of coming here and leaving bids in envelopes with confusions later on?

**A: Saniya Kharusi:**

We can look into that. I'm not sure if you have seen the survey that has gone out for the beach playground equipment? There's no reason why we cannot promote more automation into things we do.

**Nijat Hamidov:**

It will be creating more transparency and visibility as well.

**Saniya Kharusi:**

I don't know if you can pay yet online, you can view and bid perhaps. There is a process where CBO needs to look into our readiness and controls, but thank you for the suggestion it will be explored further.

### **Financial Insights:**

In terms of financial insights from the past year - and to the question on external members paying more – let's start with membership income. Raoul quoted 3,500, that's only the PDO members; in addition to that we have close to 1,000 external members and a few other categories, but if you look at our data base it runs over 15,000 when we consider spouses, children, etc. PDO members are the priority. While external members only make up approx 15% of the population their fees make up over 50% of this revenue stream. When you come to the financial statements you will see that membership income represents over 60% of our income, so it would have been very easy to raise membership fees and call it a day in terms of funding redevelopment. This is something that we consciously did not do, and was a boundary condition for Raoul, to ensure that the employee value proposition is maintained.

Other insights relate to our manpower spending. As part of the feasibility study we were benchmarked against regional clubs and some international clubs of our size. It is clear we should not be paying as much as we currently do for manpower. Accordingly, next year we hope to see a change in this area. It will not affect members directly, but any improvements financially in one area spill over to other club operations.

As volunteers, Committee members can achieve only so much. For this reason, after two years of trying to get our financial manuals finalized, we are now having KPMG come in for a short period (3 months) to help us. Like the statues Jane did an amazing job with, we want to formalise and update all our financial procedures and controls. That will come out before the end of this fiscal year.

As a final insight: For the first time in many years – I think since inception – the Club is spending a significant amount of money. The controls and ways of working that were “fine” in the past need to be upgraded to meet current demand. My recommendation is that a Finance Controller (full-time position) is added to the finance organization of the Club. Hussain does a great job as Finance Manager, but needs additional support in reviewing contract terms, negotiating rates with our bankers, etc. This will be part of the KPMG's scope – to review gaps and provide recommendations for the Committee's review.

### **Performance against budget**

So this is our actual performance for the year against budget. (Note: Confidential Financial Data will not be shared as part of these Minutes)

Income: We did quite better than expected and that's primarily from the bulk store.

Operating expenses: Our forecasts were a little off on Golf Club demands, which has impacted our bottom line.

**Q: Question not audible (speaker not known)**

Can you explain why the budget shows a negative balance?

**A Saniya Kharusi**

That is because we expected to spend more than we would bring in this year. We are self-funding now so all expenses come out of our pockets. We accumulated a lot of capital, around 3.5 million sitting in our bank from previous years. We've agreed and committed to draw that down for the redevelopment works. So any future income we anticipate will be used for that purpose. We are still not there with the increase in membership income, activity charges as Paul explained have not all been up and running so once they are we expect it to be a breakeven number. Until that happens we will be operating and we know in terms of budget there will be a negative. Our fiscal year runs from June to July, so this is as of July 2018.

**Q: Mieke Koster**

Just a bit curious, the Golf Club seems to take a lot of budget. So was this the plan going forward. Is it also to be more self-sufficient?

**A: Saniya Kharusi**

That is why I introduced Brett when I started talking and pleased he came this evening. The only way this number is going to be more manageable is if we have strong collaboration and creative thinking in how to improve performance at the Golf Club. Locally golf clubs have been suffering so it is not a unique thing to our Golf Club, but certainly we do not want it to fail. It will be a reflection on PDO and our Club. In fact we want to offer more packages that allow and encourage members to enjoy both the Recreation Club and Golf Club. Please expect to see those early next year, and in this area we welcome any and all suggestions.

**Q: Maartje Koning**

Can you please clarify the rental income? Is that the Tennis and the sports?

**A: Saniya Kharusi**

The activity charges and tennis did not kick off until this year, so these are last year's figures. Those will be classified here going forward. Rental income is when people use the Marlin Hall for receptions, all the meeting rooms, etc and auction sales are reported here also. Last year we actually started charging the PDO teams for use of Club meeting rooms in the past we did not. These small fees have proven effective and resulted in the spike in this income category compared to last year. This also includes the Commission (profit-sharing) we received from the New Restaurant as part of the contract terms.

#### *Income Statement and Balance Sheet*

This is the income statement. The message to take away from this slide is that while historically we have been making profits it is clear that the support to the Golf Club and also some redevelopment works that started last year have put us in the negative. (Note: Confidential Financial Data will not be shared as part of these Minutes)

This is our balance sheet for those of you who are interested I've left some notes for people who enjoy numbers. The message here is our licence for the bulk store and alcohol sales has increased. It used to be RO 60,000 now RO100,000. So this means that we are purchasing more than we did in the past. Although what is not happening is realizing the corresponding income. Our inventory has gone up, but is not moving as fast as anticipated. That is why Wayne's contribution is going to be very exciting because we want to make sure we are actually reaching that capacity. We also want to implement measures that mean we are better managing purchases – with better forecast of demand and member preferences.

To reiterate on points from earlier slides, it would be helpful to have a full time Finance Controller sitting in the main office with the finance team and look into this sort of stuff. I review and sign off on bulk store purchases, Iain does, Wayne does a lot of review, it's helpful if someone has a helicopter view and focused monitoring of where money is going and how inventory is doing, etc. Overall it will benefit us financially. Concepts like working capital management and returns on investment are necessary at the Club.

This is a summary of our assets and capital investment over the year. Something to be proud of is the increased transparency in this particular area; we did not have this level of detail in the past (with only three categories). We clearly see the massive amount sitting in Waterfront for example. This transparency allows for focus in where we have invested and where we need a return on that investment.

Thank you to the section Treasurers and other committee members who provided tremendous support over the past year.

**Q: Melis Van Der Horst**

**a)** What about the budget for the coming year? This ended last July so for instance Golf and for this season, what's in the budget?

**A: Saniya Kharusi:**

Our income forecast – where we were RO1.3mln for this year we are forecasting 1.5mln. We are anticipating actually a greater loss and that's only because the new Sports Field is five hundred thousand, the Golf Club is less – it's about a hundred thousand this year. We also have Construction of Phase 1 Redevelopment which is another five hundred thousand. All that money is coming out this year without the corresponding income yet to offset it. We anticipate in the coming year when all these initiatives come up we will see more breakeven and positive numbers.

**Q b)** So what do you estimate then the total profit and loss for the coming year?

**A** It is RO1.1 mln loss and if you want to see it in detail I am happy to share that with you.

**Q: Questions were not audible, Peter Bedson from PAEW Electricity Holdings**

**A: Saniya Kharusi :**

The budget is used primarily as an internal document and to facilitate strategic discussion at the Committee level. For that reason I have shown not only the operating expenditure, but also the capital expenditure in the budget. Yes this will not appear in our P&L but it will be a cash outflow, and a work in progress item, until it is “ready for use”. It is helpful to see that outflow when making plans and decisions of what to focus on for the coming year. For example, it became clear as part of the Q1 Performance review this year that we shall not meet our income targets if we do not invest in more marketing largely due to expenditure that will not be capitalized until 2020. In the same way, we cannot effectively determine how much we need to generate to cover all expenses if we do not also consider the PPE. All money going out will come out as cash expense out and for decision making that rules.

### **Bar Secretary Report – Wayne Bryant**

Everyday has been a learning experience for me as a Bar Secretary. I had no idea how much of a big role it actually was. Everyday there’s learning about the bars. There’s main bar, sports bar, events bar, sponsorship, suppliers, running monthly events, liaising with the different sections and I’ve been learning as I’ve been going along.

I’d like to try and promote some compliance and I fully appreciate there are more than 3500 people out there.

- Please don’t bring alcohol into the Club or BBQ areas or
- remove glasses from the Club. Did you know we lose OMR 100/- worth of glasses every month? It’s a lot of glasses considering the cost of a glass. This is money going out of the Club that could go towards something else. We are the first line of defence against this. So if you see this happening please let us know. I know it’s a small thing but it’s a 100/- Rials, that’s 1200 Rials a year going out the Club. HSE, pilferage these are some of the things to be looked at.

If you look at the demographic bulk store stocks found a little bit but not a lot is that we got a lot of wine that is high value but not a lot of people want because the demographic of the Club has changed over time. Wine traditionally is the western drink of choice – not as many western people here anymore therefore we have a lot of this stuff on the shelves that we need to work out on. That’s why we are trying to use that stock.

### **Communication**

- Keep BS Bits email active, advertising bands, information on bar/bulk store closures etc.
- Promote HSE, no smoking, driving safely etc. Non-alcoholic beer is available especially for drivers among us.

### **Bands:**

- Over this year we’ve had 13 different bands same as last year.

- We will have bands performing on 36 different dates compared to 39 last year (due to summer session & Ramadan)
- Starting to track income per band – When a band plays how much income we get on a night because it's our call, we pay these bands. So which ones are giving us the greatest revenue. We invite the ones back, the ones who are giving us the greatest amount of money. In a commercial sense why wouldn't we do that?

## Entertainment

- So far we've arranged bands on Thursday evenings, posters, sound/lighting, guest list, payment – Going forward Shaqsy has ever so generously volunteered to take that off my plate.
- We organise wine tastings, Beer tastings and other Activation events.
- We have an e-mail list, if you want to be added to that e-mail list then please let me know.
- DJ plays on Friday evenings

## Sponsorship

As far as sponsorships goes because there is a requirement to sponsor so many events with beverages - New Years Eve Party, RAHADS, Sailing Regatta, Kinderfeest, Section matches, Tennis, Badminton, Golf events, Canadian Stampede, Hispanic Section, Charities, Arts and Crafts, PDO School Choir, etc. This isn't all, it's just probably about 50% and there's also help with organising section events.

Anyone been in the bulk store over the last week or two? Have you seen the change? Better, worse, different?

There was a lot feedback when I took over and we've taken that feedback and looked how we could improve to feel customer experience. Some of the biggest is the pricing, there was no pricing on anything and it was guess work on how much to pay. So over the year we've taken 850K to date. Note that this doesn't run in the same year as yours. This is January to December. so we're going to exceed a million Rials.

Where does it come from or where does it go?

- 54% comes from our bulk store sales.
- boat bar 39%
- clubhouse bar 4%
- Falaj bar 1% and Sohar 2%

Q: ??? (speaker not known)

If the fiscal year runs from July to June why does it show January to December?

A: Because when I asked for the data from the bar staff, that's how I got all this.

One of the ways I've used it, I've started to analyze the spending across the bulk store and believe it or not, it is absolutely constant. Month in and month out we take roundabout within a couple of hundred Rials the same amount. That was enlightening as far as analysis goes. So what can we do to increase the sales and one of the models we are

actually looking at is people look on Amazon, they then order what they want to order and then it gets delivered. We cannot stock everything that every supplier has to offer but what we can do is to give the opportunity to purchase everything that every supplier stocks. We'll have pictures of these for example, you can fill in a chit and then you can order and a little bit after that it will turn up and we'll let you know it's here. So that's what we're looking to do over the next six months to give it a go. If we are looking to increase sales then why aren't people buying what's actually in there, because people want something else. So we can try to give you something else that may lead to increase in sales.

### **Social and Community Sections by Richard Winkel Community member)**

I took over from Jorn about two months ago.

All Social and Community sections run off volunteers. So these are people who have vested interest in making things go and my job is really to help them break the barriers they hit or help them to understand where the lines are on the roads and procedures as well.

When I started as a Treasurer (Canadian Section) there was a lot of learning and there were some challenges as well. One of my goals is that new Treasurers and Chairs learn from my mistakes as well as not make any of their own.

In terms of total active sections we have 19 and last year I think probably was the most number of big events in one year.

**Mega events:** Diwali, Kinderfeest, Spring Festival, Stampede, Dutch Night, Mega Night with Stars, Wahiba Challenge

This shows that if people want to do events we can really put on big and successful events.

Another thing that I really like is that a lot of these events are family friendly.

It's easy to come up with a concept that is adults only. It's much harder to do family event and that's something that I would encourage people to come with ideas and we can try these things, get off the ground and find a way to make them work. We all come here with families and it's important to build community that way.

These are the ones that had a really good year:

#### **Going strong:**

- **Astronomy Section:** Trips to the mountains to camp and view deep space objects
- **Arts & Crafts Centre:** 43+ classes & workshops on a weekly basis
- **Bridge Section** organized tournaments and weekly sessions
- **Dance Section** with 100+ children dancing every week and a big end-of-year show
- **Holland Committee:** 5 main events this year with 100 volunteers – lots of family events
- **Indian Section:** 7 events this year with many family events
- **Library** lent out 10.000+ books with increased opening times
- **Music Section** had several concerts. Using PDO Old School to practice in.
- **Oh Man Adventure Group:** snorkeling, fishing, off-road trips and Dimaniyat Islands Cleanup
- **RAHADS:** 2 unique performances every year
- **Marah Tots (Toddler Hut):** Open all year even during the summer

As far as challenges are concerned, the key challenge is all about community and how we can be involved. We are all far from home and so waiting into getting keyed into something is to start or to join a committee. I got keyed in with Canadian section and it's made my time here a lot more rewarding. All the activities here are made possible by hundreds of volunteers and supported by the Club staff and sponsors as well.

I'd like to thank all those people who are involved.

**Q; Nijat Hamidov**

Some of the sections, I'm seeing for the first time – such as Oh Man Adventure Group. I think it will be good if you do more advertisements on the sections so people know what you do have and how we can join them.

Another point - I'm 4 years now in PDO and all these 4 years I've seen that Wahiba Challenge and Fireworks are on the same date. It's not only the Fireworks, but it's going with the family and I'm not able to be with my family because I'm at the Wahiba Challenge.

**A: Richard Winkel – Community member**

This is how the calendar comes – all the section Chairs are contacted (this year by me) to set the calendar for the following year. We'll take that on as something we need to be mindful of

**Emma Goelema: Projects Secretary**

Just a quick addition! In the New Year we are also about to update our website. Basically all the different sections will have a page with detailed information about how to contact them and what they do.

**Paul Sanders: Sports Secretary**

This year we had planned the Fireworks on another weekend, but it just got moved back a week at the last moment, which is why there was a clash.

**SPORT Sections – Paul Sanders (Sports Secretary)**

There are so many things going on in sports and I'm really proud of all the sports sections.

**Sailing:**

- Working closely with SportZone Oman, reviewing the health and size of the various fleets and working towards providing international standard certifications for the sailing training.
- Increasing interest in sailing activities for all boat classes and age ranges: Current Optimist course is full, long waiting list for upcoming Laser novice course. Topper kids are moving on to Laser sailing. Hobie 16 courses and refreshers ongoing.
- Sailing Training RIB arrived in March 2018, but needed modifications to both engine and transom to make it safe to operate and should be available from December 2018. Thank you Robert Velberg who's been pushing that and getting the new engines sorted out.



- Variety of sailing events planned including Annual Regatta, team racing, monthly mugs, Nationals, Commodores Cup, camping trips, and special races

#### **Paddle Sport:**

- New section formed to cover Kayaking and SUP.
- Weekly social trips, weekend day-trips, races, trips to Musandam, Damaniyats and Bandar Khayran, night paddles, coastal paddles, providing support for B-2-B swim, Fahal swim, biathlons, etc.
- Kayaking lessons started in November.

#### **Golf:**

- RAHGC won the interclub Captains Summer Series, hosted the 45<sup>th</sup> Muscat Open and OGC Oman Senior Open, and organised a members night with Paul Lawrie (Open Champion)
- Opening of new artificial driving range bays.
- Numerous weekly/monthly/annual Club Events throughout the year.
- Planning new Pentagon Pairs competition, hosting the Alfa Romeo Interclub finals (10 best players from each Club), Ras al Sifah 2 day competition and 46th Muscat Open.

#### **Judo:**

- New judo mat area, catering for large group attendance and allowing split of older/younger players.
- A 100% success rate with players receiving their next belt, including 8 blue belts.
- Identified a preferential supplier for judo uniforms and belts.
- Planning to form a team to enter a tournament in Dubai.

#### **Fun Run:**

- Celebration of the Run 1111, and 21 years of continuous Thursday runs.
- Creating Paul Vlaarkamp trophy (male and female runner with most runs in a year).

#### **Badminton:**

- 7 weekly playing sessions and separate weekly coaching sessions for children.
- 2 annual tournaments, with impressive participation levels.
- Planning an additional coach for children and promoting more ladies participation.

#### **Rugby:**

- Undergoing a renaissance in 2018 and fielded a strong team at the Oman Rugby World Cup Touch Tournament (losing narrowly in their final game to the winners).
- PDO Pirates Family Day at RAHRC with BBQ and touch rugby on the beach.
- Planning to play as a Pirates team in a Gulf Touch tournament and in the Oman Rugby World Cup Touch Tournament.

#### **Darts:**

- Playing on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and organised a number of competitions.
- Improved AC!

#### **Swimming:**

- Fahal Island and B-2-B Swims safely organised with over 130 swimmers each.
- Bay swims introduced to give weaker swimmers sea swimming experience.
- Other swims held regularly (e.g. Round the Island), and swim training sessions.

**Tennis:**

- 5 Adult competitions and 6 Junior competitions.
- Regular social and competitive sessions.
- RAHRC courts resurfaced and new LED lighting coming soon. New fences to follow next summer.
- Working closely with new Coaching Provider (Unique Sports) from November.

**Motorbike Club:**

- 3 Group Rides completed in 2018 and a Bikers BBQ Night.
- Planning a motorcycle show for early Q1 2019 and some more Group Rides.
- Budget for some training and other activities.

**ORAC:**

- Successful Extreme Wahiba in February 2018 with 20 teams.
- Annual Wahiba Challenge remains very popular and successful, 2018 was hardest yet!
- Off-road theory training and practical training.
- Planning more mountain trips, family camping and 'Wahiba Lite'.

**Windsurfing:**

- New classes since September 2017, with more than 60 people trained.
- First year of participating in the Sailing Regatta and planning to beat the Hobie sailors' fastest 'Round the Island' time.

**Fishing:**

- Angler of the year annual competition with multiple rounds.

**Childrens' Football:**

- New section for all RAH children (boys and girls).
- 5 volunteer coaches but Section is expanding rapidly.

**Diving:**

- 1029 Dives with the Club with no safety incident.
- New Committee members in 2018 (Chair, Treasurer, Dive Officer and Secretary).
- Special events such as Dive Section family dhow trip, Round-the-Island-Dive-In-A-Single-Tank and a number of section-community barbeques.
- Planning to reinstate Nitrox filler to make for advanced deeper, longer dives.

**Snooker:**

- Snooker and Pool tournaments.
- Coaching sessions for junior players.

**Fitness:**

- Average 75 people per day in mixed gym and 60 per day in ladies gym.
- Nearly 120 people registered in the annual Wellness Challenge, with impressive results.
- New weights, smith machine, treadmills, upright and spinning bikes and audio equipment.
- Turnover of some of the fitness training staff.
- Planning to introduce personal training in 2019.

**Other Sections:** Squash, Cricket, Volleyball, Basketball, Biathlon, Karate, Hockey...

All these sections are run by volunteers and we need more volunteers. So please come out and help.

### **Social Secretary's Report – Hamood Shaqsy (Social Secretary)**

#### **Objective:**

Organizing Club events and attracting members to attend Club functions;  
Advising others sections on request (if required) on organizing events in the Club.

#### **New year party**

- Last year the New Year's Eve party was well attended. Attendance over 600 members & guests, international band from Europe and international entertainers, catering by Muscat Holiday Inn, Security over 24 nos. were mobilized, event was sold out.  
This year will be different so please watch out for the adverts for the New Year's Eve party
- We also organise some local bands at Boat Club, Sohar Garden & Cinema Hall.
- Local DJ at the boat Club on Fridays
- Latino nights and back to 70s and 80s
- Eid Events, well attended by Omanis as well expatriates
- Beach Party
- Rain dance party

#### **Wayne Bryant:**

Request – We are looking to run a quiz night in January 2019 but we need a quiz master, so if you know anybody in any sections who's got this sort of want or need to be a quiz master then please step forward.

Fahim Firfiray agreed to be the Quiz master.

I've also got a Scotsman's events night and finally got an opportunity to run Oktoberfest in spring for around 600 people but we need any organising committee to do it.

### **Announcement of Winners - Main Committee Award**

This is where we recognise some of the good work the sections are doing

We would like to show our appreciation for all this hard work.

3 awards for Social Sections & 3 awards for Sports Sections

1<sup>st</sup> Place : 500 OMR

2<sup>nd</sup> Place : 300 OMR

3rd place: 200 OMR

## **SOCIAL & COMMUNITY SECTIONS:**

### **Third Place – Astronomy Section**



This was one of the pictures taken by the Astronomy section with the Club gear and they do camping trips.

#### **Valerio (Chairman – Astronomy section)**

We organise these trips every month and I would like to take this opportunity to ask for new volunteers for this section. Like everybody else we have a shortage of trip organizers, equipment officers, astronomers and photographers. If any of you are interested please step forward.

We do off road activities with camping and some social moments for families where we switch off all the lights around 8 O'clock and then we start with our astronomical activities with laser. We have started showing documentaries of objects we are going to see. We have big telescopes at the same time we have some fancy equipment. It's quite exciting and it's a no profit trip therefore we cannot ask money from the members. It's only a loss, but we gain by knowledge so that's good.

### **Second Place – RAHADS**

800 attendees – significant percentage for just one section. It takes a lot of people to sail that ship so lots of opportunity with a lot of different skill sets to take a production off the ground.

### **First Place – Indian Section**

7 events and reaching over 1700 people and a significant were family based events. Most of them included opportunities for children.

## **SPORTS SECTION:**

Sports sections award for the ones who made a special effort and have done something out of the ordinary.

### **Third Place - Rugby:**

They took it from almost dead to back up to a really popular section, involving children too, and there's also a lady player which is great.

They're also putting in a strong team in a Gulf Touch tournament and in the Oman Rugby World Cup Touch tournament. They're planning to go to Dubai for the Rugby Sevens.

### **Second Place - Diving:**

They had an enormous number of dives all of them very safe. They also spend a lot of time training and they give up their own time to train people to get better at diving and to learn better techniques. The diving section is a huge supporter of the other sections. So when we have a swim, when we have some of the events they help to drive the boats, they help look after things, they provide safety support and they've been really great for the whole Club not just for diving.

### **First Place - Badminton:**

They do so much and they get on with it and they do it. So they're running things all the time in the background. They are running training sessions, they are running tournaments, there's a massive focus on youth, on getting people involved in the game, and they have special ladies sessions. They are really promoting the sport and the family aspect.

#### **Shashikant (Chairman – Badminton section)**

We are eager to have more players on court. We have a lot of players but run short of volunteers.

### **Special Award – Windsurfing (Johannes Stammeijer):**



This year we have a special award for windsurfing and this is for Jan. Jan took windsurfing which wasn't happening, he trained 60 people to windsurf. He's out there every weekend. We've seen a lot of use of the windsurfers, we are buying more equipment.

It's single handed effort.

**Johannes Stammeijer:** If you see this picture anyone would expect Oman and particularly the Club to be the place for windsurfing. When I arrived it wasn't there so I thought maybe I could change it and so far it works but now the challenge is of course to keep it working. But there is sufficient new growth so I think it will be okay for a while.

### **Message from Raoul Restucci – PDO -Managing Director and Patron - RAHRC**

Request for show of hands – members, volunteers, trainers, coaches nor otherwise. That's more than 80% of the attendees. It's always quite surprising how we have 14,000 direct and indirect members and on the night of the AGM in a Club that satisfies the wants and needs of so many people we are having 20% of the audience is not actually actively, daily involved in running it. Can the 20 please join

me in thanking everyone else in the room, because if it wasn't for them we just wouldn't have the value proposition that we have today.

I've had the privilege to see various teams, but Khalid and this current committee have been the strongest, most committed, most professional that I've had the privilege to work with. I really want to thank Jane and Iain who will soon be leaving. They've been really outstanding.

The rigour, the discipline, the intent of unleashing the PDO Club is very much to avoid the financial constraints that PDO has. We spend around 8 billion dollars so it's a large investment running the business but I can assure you that to secure one of those dollars is a major challenge and it will continue to be an increasing challenge because the economics are very much challenged in Oman at the moment and many exporting countries.

What you actually see as you unleash the Club, you don't determine, we've had 3 presentations on the redevelopment of the Club and PDO was actually constraining the ability to go forward, so we had to go around those plans about 4 or 5 years ago before the oil prices collapsed. We had to hold them back. Originally the intent was to have a guest house in the first plans, an incredible design, but we had to step back, we had to become a little bit more efficient we had a second go, now we have the third one. The third one has a real chance to progress because we are unleashing the Club. We'll always be there to back them up, but actually the commercial mindset will drive more efficient, more responsible, more active and more exciting Club going forward. Paul was giving example that we are not going to charge for service until it is professional. So that commercial mindset is helping us to drive a step change and also the quality of the services of the offerings that the Club will have. There's a win-win. The same applies to Ras Al Hamra, you see the quality of development, but we had to slow it down when the oil price collapsed until we said can we fund it differently? And we sort of unleashed RAH redevelopment by essentially getting the pension fund which we still back up so we're still there as the foundation, to essentially fund the capital investment. It's a win-win, because they get a good return from us, it's cheaper for us then it would be for us to secure external leases on external rentals. Very sustainable, we are now doing the rest of the entire redevelopment.

So the next Phase will be RAH, we are looking at can we upgrade and developed golf Club not just for the golfers because the intent is to have fine dining, we will have sports bar, we'll have other facilities that are critical to ensure that the Club can survive. Golf Club will rely very much on F&B support to the actual memberships. The added value of the golf Club beyond the value proposition it provides is that more and more members are coming in actually to join the Club. We gain on the alcohol and so forth, so there is a win-win on a lot of fronts. But it is about upgrading these services both within this Club and at the golf course will materialise in the next few years.

Fantastic team! The 'A' team, really committed. Great volunteers, great examples left, right and centre. Personal time commitment, if it wasn't for you we would really struggle, irrespective of how flashy the Club was. So thank you and very well done!

### **Question and Answers:**

We have received some queries by e-mail which we would like to answer now:

Q 1: Can external members have the privilege of utilising the bulk store?

A: **Iain Liversage:**

If you work for other organisations in Oman, the government provides you a little blue book (permit) to buy your alcohol. The way PDO does for the Club and that's why it's only for employees. So external members cannot get access to the bulk store they are unregulated through their employer.

Q 2: Can the OMR 2/- entry fee be waived off for guests who would like to use the facilities like restaurant or attending an event? Guest fees may be charged for usage of swimming pool, beach, etc.

A: **Khalid Khabouri:**

This question has been asked several times and the answer is definitely a 'NO', because it is to do with the management of how you are going to record this.

Q3: **Jacobus Croese (by email)**

External individual (single) or family membership costs the same. So for those who do not have their families or are single can they be allowed to get in to the club at least one guest with them for free?

A **Khalid Khabouri:**

My straight answer to that would be to have a family (get married), but we cannot enforce that. How do we regulate that?

**Jane Alcock:** The family members do get extra benefit, so it must be discussed in the committee whether there should be a difference between family membership and single membership.

**Khalid Khabouri:** This was discussed in the past committees and it was very difficult. It is more to do with regulation and for new members who are applying we ask for marriage certificates. What was happening was that people when applying were showing someone as their spouse and it's a different one every time. It's seems easy, but if you don't know the history then one must know that this is what has been happening in the Club. So it's difficult to accommodate this request. 50 rials is a fantastic offer.

#### **Questions from attendees:**

Q: **Pei Lian Wang :**

Suggestion to the Bar Secretary: If glasses are going missing how about charging a deposit when somebody takes a glass and refunds when someone returns the glass?

A: **Wayne Bryant:**

We are all looking at different ways and how we can do this. From suggestions coming from different people is use plastic glass (one use plastic glass), should we allow these or can we have paper cups. We are all looking into this. All ideas are welcome. Some of the considerations are how we can police them and how we can make this happen. This is some of the thinking that we need to do, so we need to go through this to make it work a little bit more.

**Q: Valerio**

Recruiting of volunteers for the different sections – What can we do in the entire community to advertise the needs for volunteers?

**A: Khalid Khabouri:**

We actually give memberships for volunteers, like instructor memberships/volunteer memberships to people who we actually feel are going to contribute their services. If you look at the external membership application, there is a column for ‘your contribution’ to the Club and that’s where the membership committee looks. And the membership committee will not take a decision whenever we get something from the external applicant and if they are from Exploration and Production (E & P), we give them membership but we also take into account what they can contribute.

The contributions could be for example, coming from a business house, then they contribute in terms of sponsorships or supporting Club events, but more importantly we pay particular attention to volunteers for sections either in the community or in sports.

**Emma Goelema:**

That is exactly why we took on the project of communication. We’ve started a daily newsletter that’s in a more newsletter format so at the moment you require volunteers please send us a little footnote or something and we can send it in with any daily newsletter. With the update of the website ideally there should be something where there’s a list of these sections that are looking for volunteers.

And we are also going to introduce social media, we’ll probably start with Facebook, so that’s another platform where we are little bit more, less intrusive way to communicate with members and to give out dates for what we’re doing and we’re looking for.

**Q: Johannes Stammeijer :**

I would like to make a practical recommendation for opportunity for improvement. A lot of events have to be pre-booked and the tickets have to be pre collected. At the moment this is only possible during working hours which creates problems for people who are working and thanks to Saleh’s efforts I have never missed an event because there was always an out of rules solution. I would like to recommend a structural solution to this issue to be developed.

**A: Emma Goelema:**

Eventually what we are aiming for is that our system will allow members to book tickets online. So you will receive an e-ticket and continuously setting what is the best way to operate the Club, whether we should have extended opening times for front office.

Khalid Khabouri: Once we get this e-commerce sorted out then you’ll be able to book, pay and print.

**Q: Patrick Liesker**

Can we make the entire Club smoke free?

**A: Khalid Khabouri:** We are trying to do that but we have to take care of everybody’s needs. One external member actually cancelled his membership because we would not allow him to



smoke in the boat Club area. There is an area designated for smoking. We did facilitate ash trays the big ones that are on the sides but I really do not understand them. They will smoke in the designated area, but they will stamp out the cigarette with their feet.

**Vote of Thanks –Hamood Shaqsy**