

Executive Committee of the Norton Owners Club

The Kenilworth Room, The Chace Hotel, London Road, Coventry.

11am, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2018

Minutes

Attending; Tim Harrison (Chairman); Barry Owen (Vice-Chairman); Nicole Hill (Treasurer); Mark Woodward (Magazine Editor); Tony Ripley (Technical Administrator); Peter White (International Liaison Officer); Peter Scatchard (Branch Liaison Officer); Dave Catton (Records Officer, Twins); Joan Catton (Magazine Distribution and Renewals); Ian Somerville & Rose Somerville (Merchandise Managers); Colin Cheney (Secretary).

1. **Apologies;** Brian Harriss, Chris & Jill Streather, Dave Kington, David Harris, Neil Shoosmith.
2. **Minutes of meeting held on 19th November 2017;** these had been approved and placed on the website. Matters arising; **Spares Situation;** fewer issues seemed to have been raised since the meeting. Return of spares was still considered to produce problems on certain occasions. The Spares Sub-Committee had not met. **IT issues;** the secure notice on the website had been addressed; the error message had ceased to appear on certain browsers. **Wreath-laying** at the grave of James Lansdowne Norton would take place on Saturday 28th of April and not on the 14th as previously indicated. **Branch Folding Procedure;** this would be incorporated into matters for the Annual General Meeting. **Roadholder Format;** this was discussed again. A larger magazine was considered to be desirable but prohibitively expensive in terms of cost and postage. **Back issues of Roadholder on the website;** the quality of the scans was being improved. **The John Hudson Award;** this was again discussed. **September Event at Norton Motorcycles Ltd;** one of the starting points should be Plumstead and not Plumpton.
3. **Minutes of the Admin Sub-committee held on 14th January 2018;** drawings held by the Club were again discussed; the Club had secure scans of all the drawings. Records Officer charges; Dave Catton addressed this issue as some of the charges were slightly inaccurate; the £10 charge per application would be at the discretion of the Officers. This would affect Members who made multiple applications. The basic check would still be free in most cases. A **Branch Grant** was paid to the Edinburgh Branch and not the Tay Valley Branch; the event was The Scottish Motorcycle Show.

**4. Arrangements and Agenda for the Annual General Meeting to be held on 15th**

**April 2018;** The Chairman outlined the liaison and negotiations that had taken place with the factory regarding the meeting. Bookings had been made for a suitable number of chairs and tables. Food and teas and coffees would also be provided, and also a screen for the projector. Most arrangements would be broadly in line with those made for previous years. It was hoped costs would be similar to those outlined in a quote obtained for 2017. The numbers were established at 110 and the Committee would request a factory tour. It was hoped that the tour would take place before the meeting; limited numbers and strict pre-booking for the tour were considered to be desirable. At the date of the meeting no arrangements had been made for guest speakers. Changes to the Constitution would be included. The Secretary would invite the President and Vice-Presidents. The Chairman was instructed to invite Mr Stuart Garner to speak to the Members, particularly as the company were continuing to develop a new 1200cc V4 machine. JH award. Peter White proposed and Peter Scatchard seconded a proposal that the Executive Committee recommended to the Club that Stuart Garner be adopted as a Vice-President (this item will be withdrawn before the minutes are circulated beyond the Executive Committee). The Member proposed for the John Hudson award was identified and confirmed unanimously. The Secretary was instructed to draw up the amendments to the Club Constitution regarding the Branches Folding Procedure and insert them into a new version of the document.

**5. Arrangements and Agenda for the Branch Secretaries Meeting on 14th April**

**2018;** Peter Scatchard outlined the arrangements and the agenda. Approximately 18 representatives had confirmed they would be attending. It was hoped that the meeting could take place at The Priest House Hotel where the guests would be staying. Peter would confirm all the details at a later date. Various Members of the Executive Committee would also be attending. All provisional arrangements were approved.

**6. Treasurer's Report for 2017;** the Club Treasurer, Nicole Hill, gave a good presentation of the accounts for the previous year. It was hoped that there would be a full draft report from the accountants for the Annual General Meeting and that the report could be featured in the April edition of the club magazine. There were no major costs for 2017. In some areas income was down; as an example, there was a slight decrease in the sale of calendars. Overall, there was a slight increase in funds; the balance was 17% higher than at the same point in 2017. There was a request from the Treasurer that monthly accounts be returned on time in order to allow her to process the figures in a timely manner. The Committee agreed to a two-monthly rolling deadline in producing the monthly returns from the various cost centres. With regard to Club costs there had been an unexpected rise in

the cost of the location for the spares. The landlord had doubled the agreed rent. The Treasurer had negotiated a reduction of the increase for the first 12 months of the next lease-year. There was a discussion on whether the Club should adhere to the existing mileage rate or move to the HMRC rate. The Committee agreed to move to the HMRC rate from the date of the meeting.

**7. Membership trends and analysis, 2010 - 2018;** The Chairman outlined the various trends that appeared to occur during the period in question. International Memberships had shown an impressive increase. In contrast, Branch Memberships had shown a significant decline. The recruitment and retention aspects of the Membership system were appraised. Membership renewals had benefitted from a greater emphasis on Direct Debits. The demographics of the Membership were also discussed. There were a number of proposals regarding future promotion of the Club with respect to publicity and attracting new members. Peter Scatchard agreed to provide the specifications for the publicity requirements; the Committee as a whole would consider appointing a suitable candidate for the brief.

**8. Commando 50th Year plans;** the Chairman outlined the major events that were linked to the launch of the Norton Commando in 1968. In addition to the existing plans, the Shenstone Branch may possibly organise an event at a company based in Staffordshire that primarily focuses on distribution of spare parts for the Norton Commando.

**9. Commemorative badge;** the Fastback design had been chosen for this initiative. An initial run of 250 copies would be produced. The Committee anticipated that the majority of sales would be among Branches and also at shows.

**10. I.T.;** Peter White noted that Dave Kington had kindly provided a report on the upgraded server that had been installed in December 2017. There appeared to be no major on-going issues. Dave had asked at the meeting of the Admin Sub-Committee in January for a significant upgrade for the Club website. The present site had been designed in 2008. The Committee felt that it had added to the success of the Club but agreed that it needed updating, particularly with regard to attracting new members. Peter White asked the Committee to note especially that the demographic of people accessing the website had changed with a greater emphasis on newer and much smaller devices. It was hoped that a system could be developed which would more closely integrate the application for mobile devices with the website. There was a clear need for a wholly translatable site for non-English speaking viewers. Peter White, representing White-Hot, had produced a proposal document regarding the significant advantages of the various upgrades and the relative costs. The Committee examined the document and agreed that the initiative should

proceed. This was proposed by the Vice-Chairman and seconded by the Treasurer subject to a ceiling of £7,000. The Committee agreed that Dave Kington should receive a schedule from the website providers with regard to the timetable of the development of the site.

#### **11. Rally reports and updates;**

- **The 2018 National Rally;** Tony Ripley updated the Committee concerning the latest developments regarding the bookings for the National Rally at the Weeting Steam Fair. There was a clear element of concern regarding whether there would be enough room on the Club section of the site for the Members who wished to book, especially if there was an expected increase in the number of motor-caravans, trailers or similar vehicles being brought onto the site. Tony agreed to liaise with the organisers regarding the development of the event, especially as the main event would be organised by the Weeting Steam Festival event team. There were also issues regarding the number of machines that would need to be on display at any point during the festival. The Steam Festival team were expecting a full display of Norton motorcycles at all times in order to generate the significant discount on entry for Members and other attendees.
- **The Scottish Event** would be wholly hotel-based. It was anticipated that this would lead to a simplified approach to organising the event. At the time of the meeting there were a very limited number of single occupancy rooms. Early booking would be strongly advised to the Membership. The Club had booked the whole hotel for the period. The Edinburgh Branch were organising a number of runs, including, hopefully, one commemorative run to the Jimmy Guthrie museum.
- **The International Rally;** preparations for this event were progressing well. There was an issue regarding the number of persons who could be allowed into any tented area (*under Austrian legislation*), leading to a possible increase in costs for the event. The Chairman expressed concern that the Club had not budgeted for this development but concluded that the Club was expecting the event to break even or possibly make a very small loss. Translations would be provided on the Club website for the rally applications.

**12. Dates of next meetings;** Sundays; 15th April (**AGM**), 13th May, 15th July, 9th September and Saturday 10th November. The May and September meetings would be for the Admin-Sub-Committee and the July and November meetings will be for the full Executive Committee.

**13. Crash Card;** Peter Scatchard reported that this initiative had been suggested by Ken Rawlinson. The basic premise was that the rider would carry a card with various medical details placed inside the lining of their motorcycle helmet. This would be complemented with a sticker on the outside of the helmet alerting the emergency authorities to the provision of the card. The Vice-Chairman agreed to examine the costing for this initiative which would hopefully include an indication of the Norton Owners Club on the card or the sticker or both. Cards and the sticker could be distributed with the Club magazine. Peter White suggested that such an initiative could be provided simultaneously with an upgrade to the Membership card system whereby the Renewals Officer would not have to hand-write the Membership cards; they would be printed automatically. This was welcomed and Peter was instructed to research the costs for such an initiative.

**14. Forks Video;** Peter Scatchard outlined the most recent developments and the desire for the viewer to see the whole process including the actual removal of the forks. A member of the Oxford Branch had agreed to supply a Featherbed Frame with a pair of forks for the filming; this was expected to begin on Monday 19th of March and be completed by the 21st of March. The film would then be edited and the finished DVD would hopefully be available for distribution or upload onto the website. Peter White agreed to research whether suitable software technology existed that would restrict the downloading of the finished version; the Committee hoped that Members could view the film on the website but that it could not be copied. Peter Scatchard hoped to have a version of the film to show during a suitable period at the AGM.

**15. A.O.B.**

- **Admin Sub-Committee Meeting Notes;** the full Executive Committee would receive copies of the minutes. Once agreed, the full minutes would be included in EC minutes; this was agreed.
- The magazine would be increased in size in terms of the number of pages on certain occasions; this would produce a modest extra charge to the Club for the larger issues.

*The meeting closed at 4pm.*