

TARC Strategy Development

Update for Members

November 2022

John Goddard

Chair of Trustees

I want to take the opportunity of our AGM and its inclusive document circulation to bring everyone up to speed with some important early work on the development of a strategy or business plan for the club and to reassure you that we will try to give a voice to any member who is interested in contributing to this work before it is presented for approval to an Extraordinary General meeting in Spring next year.

We started our journey (in recent times) in developing a strategy for the club when Trustees agreed (May 2018) the following 'Direction of Travel'. The statement below was subsequently outlined at the AGM that year.

*"The club has been very successful in managing the transition into their new premises and in adopting their new charitable governance structure, achieving increased membership and revenues as well as success on the water. **The club now has an ambition to foster a high-performance culture alongside (not at the expense of) its strong community-based rowing.** This will require increased revenue generation to fund better boats and provide high quality performance coaching- 'developing a business which funds rowing'. The club also wants to ensure it is effectively managed on a day-day basis, address the looming capacity issues, and provides for good maintenance and improvements of the new clubhouse, sweating the asset whilst exploring opportunities for growth."*

Trustees believe this is consistent with the charitable purposes of the Club, namely: *"The promotion of community participation in healthy recreation, in particular by the provision of facilities, encouragement and instruction in the sport of rowing, for the benefits of the inhabitants of Newcastle upon Tyne and surrounding areas."*

The Charity Commission in their Governance Code recommends:

The board leads the development of, and agrees, a strategy or plan that aims to achieve the organisation's charitable purposes and is clear about the desired outputs, outcomes and impacts.

Following a period of rebuilding post COVID Trustees were keen to make progress in developing a more comprehensive strategy for the club. To make a start on what

can be quite a daunting process it was agreed that members of the Management Group together with representatives of the Rowing Committee would spend a day with an experienced independent facilitator to look at where the club is/where we might want it to be and how we might get there.

The analogy of this being a journey rather than an event is useful! The away day was very positive and demonstrated that the club is in a 'healthy state' and that the direction of travel outlined above is still very appropriate.

But we have a long way to go to get to the point where we have a useful strategy that can guide activity in the club and importantly one that is fully 'owned' by the membership.

We are currently both distilling the conversations over the away day into a narrative that can be shared and developing an inclusive consultation process with a view to presenting a strategy to a member meeting next spring.

The strategy is about being sure we are on the right path and can monitor our progress over the medium term. The away day confirmed that we are already on the right lines and can continue to drive the club forward as we have planned over the coming months.

Trustees will endeavour to keep all members up to speed with progress and particularly. Do let the Secretary know if you think you have skills, experience and particularly time to help us on this journey'