

NOTES OF ASC & LSC MEETING
HELD ON: TUESDAY 15 AUGUST 2023
AT: HAMILTON GOLF CLUB - 11.00 AM



Present

Jim Raeburn (RCCC President), Alister Asher (RCCC VP), Maureen Parker (LB President), Ann Johnstone (LB VP), Karen Jack (LB JVP), Gail Munro (LB Honorary VP), Fiona Glascodine (Aberdeen), Alison Troup (Aberdeen), Mara Lindsay (Ayr), Liz Cullen (Border), Caroline McClymont (Border), Lucy Tile (Border), Susan Morrison (Dumfries), Robin Copland (Edinburgh), Janice Walls (Forfar), Norman Ainslie (Forth Valley), Derek Young (Forth Valley), Mike Caffyn (Fife & Kinross), John Taylor (Fife & Kinross), Clare McCormick (Greenacres), Andy Cowan (Highland & Moray), Fiona McLaren (Inverness), Sheona Reid (Kinross), Pamela Craigie (Kirkcaldy), David Haggart (Lanarkshire), Fiona Moffat (Lanarkshire), Christine Ross (Lockerbie), Tom Kirk (North East), Albert Middler (North East), Isla Kinnear (Perth), Alan Chalmers (Perthshire), Jim Hogg (South), Michele Hartley (Stirling), Kate Adams (Stranraer), Angela Watt (Waterfront), Vincent Bryson (SC Chief Executive Officer), Eilidh McCall-Lawrie (SC Head of Development), Charlene Graham (SC Competitions Officer)

Apologies

Mike Ferguson (RCCC Immediate Past President), Kate Caithness (LB Honorary President), Val Saville (LB Treasurer), Sheilagh Macfarlane (Dundee), Mary Anne McWilliam (Galloway), John McGowan (Greater Glasgow), Ann Gibb (Highland & Moray), John McDermott (Inverclyde), Louise McCutcheon (Lanarkshire), Philip Ross (North East), Trevor Dodds (Edinburgh)

1. Welcome (*Jim Raeburn & Maureen Parker*)

President Jim welcomed everyone to the meeting and said it was good to meet everyone face to face. Warm welcome extended to Vincent, Eilidh McCall-Lawrie (SC Head of Development) and Charlene Graham (Competitions Officer).

2. Apologies

As noted above.

3. Previous Minutes (*18Apr2023*)

President Jim read a quick summary of previous minutes.

4. Matters Arising

Vincent advised that Scottish Curling is currently looking into the technology of the 'Owl', which is to make the Zoom meeting experience for larger meetings more adaptable for both the physical and remote attendees. The cost is approximately £1k, so would like to ensure its effectiveness for use throughout the organisation before committing to purchase. President Jim finished by saying that the best meetings are done face to face and if a Rep is unable to attend a meeting, they should send a replacement.

5. Reports

ASC report (*Jim Raeburn*) – all Reps, especially new members, should refer to the Responsibilities of ASC document which is on the SC website [here](#). Jim gave an update on all his commitments since taking up office and he was especially honoured to represent the RCCC at the thanksgiving service for the King and Queen at St Giles Cathedral. He has had various meetings with Maureen and with Vincent, and has monthly updates with Maureen, Vincent and Fraser Montgomery (Chair of the Board) via the online platform, Slack.

LSC Report (*Maureen Parker*) - Welcome to our first joint meeting of the new season I'm going to start with a Ladies Branch Remit. Welcome to Vincent, Eilidh and Charlene. Thank you for attending. Since 13th May when I took office at our AGM I have had a surprisingly busy time with curling. I was pleased to be included in a group with our new CEO and Chairperson and newly appointed President Jimmy. We have regular meetings to update each other. We are all new to our role but we are Enthusiastic, Organised, Good Communicators and we all want to share information, which has been lacking in previous years.

8th June - I was invited to attend my first Board meeting as an observer. Since then, I submitted my letter to request a place as a co-opted member onto the Board with full voting rights. I'm pleased to say I was accepted on the 24th July. I am able to convey updates from the Board to you and I have opportunities to share information with the Board from you and the membership, so our meetings are vital for sharing any information you bring forward.

The LSC executive had a meeting to make the draw for the Henderson Bishop local playdowns. I'm happy to report 83 teams are participating at 17 ice centres. The final for this competition will be held in Lanarkshire Ice Rink from 26th-29th February. All spectators welcome. Thank you all for encouraging your teams to participate. The Morton

NOTES OF ASC & LSC MEETING

HELD ON: TUESDAY 15 AUGUST 2023

AT: HAMILTON GOLF CLUB - 11.00 AM

sections were discussed at our Pre AGM and, though we have lost Braehead as it has merged with Greenacres this year, we are pleased Lockerbie are back into this competition and we are also delighted Ayr will continue to participate, so we have 16 ice centres participating. The semi-final and final for this competition will now be held at Greenacres on Tuesday 12 March, as Ayr is unable to host it. We were all desperately disappointed to hear that Ayr Curlers Ltd Board felt unable to carry on the business of running Ayr Ice Rink due to soaring energy costs and falling numbers which resulted in a poorer uptake of ice. I believe the Board tried hard to find the funding required to keep going and have been warning its members of cost issues for the last few years, but as many of you know the letter on the 5th July from the Board made it clear it could not go on. It had a responsibility to its shareholders and to its staff. If it's taught me one thing it is that we all need to plan ahead and think of different ways of working. We all have a responsibility to think of ways of supporting our ice rinks and share those ideas here. There are many ideas on Facebook and I would like to suggest we have a forum for sharing ideas perhaps on Slack. I contacted Scottish Curling as soon as I heard of Ayr Ice Rink's announcements to close, too little too late perhaps, but to their credit, Scottish Curling have been investigating all options and we will hear more later from our CEO. At our request, Vincent produced a letter which you all received encouraging players new and old to continue to participate in our club curling and competitions. I think that is where we can all help. We have to actively encourage and cajole players new and old, suggest new competitions, organise social games, bring a friend, offer incentives, look for sponsor, promote curling round our communities, businesses and schools, maybe even take up coaching. I know Eilidh and her team of development officers are continuously working for ice rinks so what can they do for you? I hope we will hear from Eilidh in the future. We need to think of new ways of working and Shar Ideas. Scottish Curling also has produced a leaflet which you may find useful to explain what our membership fee helps to pay for and may be helpful to those curlers a bit reticent to pay their RCCC Membership. President Jimmy and I have met and discussed future meetings and dates, which you should all now have. We are keen to have face-to-face meetings and ask if you cannot attend meetings can you please encourage someone to come in your place We have also discussed items for future agendas. Can you please send any questions you have or items you would like to discuss to Jimmy or myself to be included in future meetings. We will be attending as many national finals as we can, meeting as many curlers as we can and we will have the honour of presenting many trophies. We will be gathering information from around the country and keeping our Board informed. The Scottish Curler, our informative magazine, is always looking for articles so if there is anything interesting you would like to share, please send to Elaine or ourselves, with pictures. Scottish Curling Website is a great source of information, as is Facebook. I agree with Jimmy we need to stick to the agenda, get through the business and have time for discussion at the end. Finally, the Priestfield, a bonspiel between ASC and LSC, is on Tuesday 24th October at Lanarkshire Ice Rink. I hope as many of you as possible will attend. Last year LSC won this trophy. This year Ali will be organising and you will receive an invitation from him to confirm your availability. I look forward to working with the LSC and ASC and the Board of Scottish Curling to promote curling, especially at grass roots level, at our own ice rinks and look after our membership.

CEO Report (*Vincent Bryson*) – Vincent gave an in depth report on his commitments over the last few months since taking up office. For the first time, SC is now looking at facilities, talking to other sports such as skating and ice hockey to come up with a multi-sport solution at ice centres that are struggling. He will be meeting with the CEO of sportscotland, South Ayrshire Council and will also be talking to SIRA (Scottish Ice Rinks Association). Vincent hopes that a solution for Ayr can be found by the curlers AGM on 29th August. There are over 500 RCCC members who curl out of Ayr, which would be a great loss of membership income to RCCC. Vincent's first priority was to come up with solutions to keep Ayr ice Rink open and he has spoken with Ayrshire Clubs, but he admits the RCCC needs to also reach out to individual members with support and to find out what they wish to do with their RCCC membership and where they intend to go. There is suggestion that the RCCC membership could be perhaps extended for a year for Ayr curlers? Vincent thanks the Board for all their support and hard work to try and come up with a solution. The Board is now meeting monthly with a healthy agenda, which make meetings more dynamic and productive. The Board will endeavour to get meeting minutes posted up on SC website within a two weeks' timescale, which has been an issue in the past.

6. Area Updates

President Jim invited ASC reps to give a report on issues at their ice centres and give a flavour of the season ahead: **Galloway-Area 2** (*Gail Munro*): fortunate at Stranraer to have the support from the new hotel owners to keep ice rink open. They've been encouraged with the support received from weekend curlers and the social side of curling. Reps to remind members that Stranraer is available for weekend competitions, this takes the pressure off club curlers, who

NOTES OF ASC & LSC MEETING

HELD ON: TUESDAY 15 AUGUST 2023

AT: HAMILTON GOLF CLUB - 11.00 AM

do not want to play at weekends. Supporting Juniors and working hard to bring numbers back to pre-Covid levels as Stranraer lost 25% of curlers through the Pandemic. Receives great support from the coaching and development staff and they have good relationship with clubs and provinces.

South-Area 3 (*Jim Hogg*): Lockerbie will open for curling in the second week in October. Numbers remain at post-covid levels. Energy contract is set for one year. Energy prices have come down and they are hoping that will continue. Dumfries entry numbers much the same as last year. Seniors are up to 18 teams.

Borders-Area 4 (*Liz Cullen*): new plant equipment is ordered and is on its way, so hopefully this will not delay the start of the season.

Inverclyde-Area 5 (*Clare McCormick*): Greenacres is busy with players coming from Ayr. Province competition numbers are down. Both Greenacres and Stranraer have been very pro-active in contacting Ayr clubs about ice requirements.

Lanarkshire-Area 6 (*David Haggart*): following the demise of the Yara at Perth, Lanarkshire is to host a competition and they are hoping 40 teams will take part. Cost £40pp. Having 40 Juniors and 8 coaches. Competitions are the same as last year. Super League entries are dropping, but they hope for teams from Ayr. They have resurrected the Development group. Ladies curling is healthy during the day.

Edinburgh-Area 8 (*Robin Copland*): building works on the new club room extension continue at pace, have fallen behind schedule, delaying the opening until 21st October. The glass panels are now in place though and building is just about secured. This means that the ice staff will be able to access and begin preparation work. The new club room will extend to the boundary of the ice playing surface and include a new kitchen and office. The original ice allocation had already been sent out. This has been withdrawn to allow for the later opening and we expect to hear from the club shortly with new proposals. Junior club numbers are on the rise again, full internal club programme with leagues and cups as well as coaching. The club will continue with its corporate, as well as coaching sessions for beginners. I will be contacting Area reps for help organising the incoming Swiss tour, scheduled for January 2024. The outgoing tour party will take the bulk of the organising work on, but we will be looking for some help in some areas that didn't have representation on the tour. We will be scheduling an area EGM in September/October to appoint two replacement reps and an area secretary. Both Trevor and I are due for replacement.

Forth Valley-Area 9 (*Norman Ainslie*): curling commencing in early September. All ice allocations have been done. Not a lot of spare evening ice left, but daytime has lots of gaps. Ice fee for daytime ice is now the same as evening ice. Stirling is Council run facility, so ice fees £92 per rink. No social space for curlers and no catering available, apart from foyer café. Hammy McMillan has issued his coaching programme for the season. There will be an on-ice catch up on 2nd September for coaches. Gateway is well subscribed. Stirling Young Curlers (not run by Active Stirling) 50 members starting on 9th Sept. Struggling to get teams to enter province competitions. Both Norman and LSC rep, Michele Hartley, are involved in Stirling Curling Group committee meetings and both involved on Competitions sub-committee to run competitions to look at ideas on how to use up day-time ice.

Fife & Kinross-Area 10 (*Mike Caffyn*): the area has two rinks – Kinross and Kirkcaldy in very different aspects of health! In order to increase the level of support which curling and curlers can provide to the sport and these rinks, we have set up the Fife & Kinross Curling Support Group, a small committee which will coordinate appropriate activities. The members of this Committee (7 persons) are: Area 10 Rep, LSC Rep for Kinross & Kirkcaldy, Area 10 Secretary, Kinross Curling Trust Director, Kirkcaldy Ice Arena (KIA) Director. The group is warmly welcomed & due to hold its first meeting next Monday 28th August. However, the lack of interest in this Group from KIA is seriously concerning. The number of curlers willing to play at Kirkcaldy is dwindling and this is likely to accelerate. The reasons for this are several: increased ice fees to £15, ice quality, curlers provide c10% of KIA revenue along with equipment for icemen, ambience) and the bar is rarely open. We have set up the group to provide support for both rinks, but so far Kirkcaldy is still "thinking" about whether they would wish to take part. Local Competition entry slightly increased compared to last year. We do not yet have the information for provinces. Kinross usual evening ice availability, some available capacity for daytime ice. The popularity of Kinross is assisted by its welcoming atmosphere and the availability of a bar for drinks and refreshments. Kirkcaldy, we do not know what bookings are like yet expect them to be reduced. Perth bookings have started to be confirmed. We do not have information from Perth yet as to status (used by one of our provinces). At the meeting, Eilidh asked Mike that Catriona Morton, Development Officer, is made aware of any meetings regarding Kirkcaldy.

Perth & Kinross-Area 11 (*Isla Kinnear*): LAL (Live Active Leisure) still completing their review of all facilities and Perth (Dewars Centre) is opening for curling 2023/2024 with the proviso that it is operating 'for 1 year' 'Use it or lose it'. Perth Curling Committee, including the Perth Development Group members have been working closely with LAL to

NOTES OF ASC & LSC MEETING

HELD ON: TUESDAY 15 AUGUST 2023

AT: HAMILTON GOLF CLUB - 11.00 AM

provide an exciting range of curling for the 23/24 season. Curling opens in Perth on 25th September with an allcomers bonspiel. At the time of writing, there have been an increased number of entries for the Ice Rink leagues and competition formats have been altered to provide additional games. Competition entries are still being received, but both Henderson Bishop and Morton trophies are being supported. The entry form sent out to women curlers incorporated as many individual entries to competitions as possible. Closing date for entries 31st August. More open events, different formats planned by Perth Curling Committee - all efforts being made to increase number of curling bookings. A new competition, Chuck Hay Trophy, to run in January 2024 in place of the Yara and a new format for the Perth Open competition at the end of the season. Weekend ice will be for ice skating, unless for a major competition. Perth will be hosting European B event, an EJCT (European Junior Curling Tour) event and the Perth Masters in January. Development opportunities still to be fully revealed – Ann Maree returns to curling post on 21st August. Support for coaching and time keeping roles. Perth Junior Club looking to build on its successes of last season when there were over sixty junior members. Dewars Perth has issued a newsletter and in response to curler demand, a local caterer has taken on catering as a franchise for the curling season. Langs will endeavour to run a bar on league evenings and will provide facilities during the day as well as catering during events.

North East-Area 12 (*Tom Kirk*): Provinces are generally getting good support from their member clubs with entries to Province competitions being broadly similar to previous season, showing slight increases in some competitions. Where the Province competitions are up against other ice rink leagues it may cause conflict. Feedback may be indicating that clubs/members are being more selective picking say an inter-club league rather than a Province league but not wishing to enter both. With ice allocations not being confirmed in Aberdeen and Forfar it is a challenge to know the final position, since most entries were requests based on last season without knowing the financial position for 2023-24. Also having problems getting Office Bearers and still looking for a Vice President. Dundee only has curling on Monday and Tuesday this equates to 32 days of curling in the season. The development group is well established now, hoping to get a Gateway Club going. A Ladies Centre is up and running.

Highlands & Moray-Area 13 (*Andrew Cowan*): there is increase in ice fee to £15 and £18 for non-members. Province uptake is the same as last year. Open competition league for all areas and two new teams have entered. Cancellation of ice can be done with up to 48 hrs notice with no charge. Reliant on Juniors to help make numbers up for bonspiels, so they need to look at subsidising to encourage Juniors to take part.

7. Membership and Communication

President Jim and LB President Maureen would like ASC and LSC reps to use the Slack online platform for sharing ideas instead of sending emails. Slack is conversational, so you can see and comment on conversations from others. This is a free app, which you can use on your mobile phone or laptop/computer. Scottish Curling will send an email on how to sign up. A channel will be set up for ASC members and LSC members. Download to your computer. Remember to turn on your 'Notifications' on your mobile to receive up to date messages. Liz Burton-King (SC Director) would like Clubs to put up more interactive videos via their social media to celebrate their members and activities. SC is looking to offer a few workshops to help clubs with using social media effectively. ASC/LSC reps to help get clubs engaged in promoting curling using social media.

8. AOCB

Terminology: LSC received communication of use of terminology around Women's curling. This was discussed at the LSC meeting. Eilidh McCall-Lawrie will send more information to LB President Maureen.

Board members will be invited to attend national competitions. If a Board member can't attend, then the appropriate ASC reps will be asked to attend on their behalf.

Norman Ainslie (Forth Valley) enquired about obtaining badges for the Maxwell Trophy winners. Norman is to contact Charlene or Elaine at Scottish Curling.

Eilidh McCall-Lawrie said it was good to hear each of the area reports. Reps are requested to advise her about area development meetings, where it would be worthwhile for one of the development team to attend.

9. Future Meetings

Joint Meeting - Tuesday 24th October – Lanarkshire Ice Rink. (*where this note will be ratified*)

The Priestfield Cup will be played after lunch. Alister Asher (RCCC VP) is organising the competition. President Jim suggests that a WCF rep and a SC Marketing team member could be invited to attend a future meeting.

10. Close

The meeting closed at 1.05 pm.