



Welcome - President Ali welcomed everyone to the meeting .

Apologies. LSC- Kate Caithness, Hon President, Alison Troup (Aberdeen), Mara Lindsay (Ayr), Carolyn McClymont (Border), Sheilagh Macfarlane (Dundee), Fiona McLaren (Inverness), Elaine Semple (Inverness), Pamela Craigie (Kirkcaldy), Christine Ross (Lockerbie), Michele Hartley (Stirling) Val Saville (Treasurer),

Apologies ASC - D Haggart, J Macdonald, J Stewart, A Chalmers, J McDermot, F Ross, P Davis, A Martin, M Caffyn.

ASC Present; - A Asher (President), K Prentice, (Vice President) V Bryson (Scottish Curling), MA McWilliam (A2) J Hogg (A3), C Martin (A4), J MacGowan (A7), N Ainslie (A9), D Young (A9), J Taylor (A10), Dr A Crozier (A12), P Ross (A12), A Middler (A12), A Cowan (A13)

LSC Present - Gail Munro (Hon.Vice President), Ann Johnstone (President), Ann Gibb (Vice President), Isla Kinnear (Junior Vice President), Fiona Glascodine (Aberdeen), Elizabeth Shaw (Ayr), Mary Shaw (Ayr), Susan Morrison (Dumfries), Joan Simpson (Edinburgh), Janice Walls (Forfar), Liz Paul (Greenacres), Helen Jamieson (Greenacres), Sheona Reid (Kinross), Fiona Moffatt (Lanarkshire), Trish Kennedy (Perth), Moira Foreman (Stirling), Kate Adams (Stranraer), Karen Jack (Waterfront) Shirley Jeans (Minute Secretary)

Previous Minutes

Minutes of the previous joint meeting to be posted on the SC Website and approved at the next meeting due to the late circulation of the minutes of the October Meeting.

Matters Arising- ASC Meeting minutes need to be updated.

President Updates

RCCC - Ali Asher

Since my last report in February it has been an extremely busy time. Following the Scottish Championships I returned to Dumfries for the Henderson Bishop, attended by Mr and Mrs Bishop who attend every year. The centenary of this event 2029 could well vie for the title of the 'Gin and Tonic' Olympics.

After that there was an enjoyable dinner in Inverkeithing, then a bonspiel and dinner in Kinross to celebrate Cupar curling club's 250th, an incredible milestone.

I presented the Rink Championship Trophy to Forret in Perth then attended a very successful and well organised World Wheelchair Championships at Auchenharvie, including lunch with Prince Edward who's presence on and off the ice did a fantastic job for our social media figures. After that I was at the Scottish Pairs in Stranraer then the Maxwell in Hamilton, won by Stirling.

Soon after it was Canada for the Men's World's in Moose Jaw, which I'm sure you were all enthralled by, not just World Champions now but all five Slams held by Scottish teams - a fantastic achievement. The first team to hold all five slams in one season. There was a great Scottish contingent in Saskatchewan and the party after the final enhanced our reputation for being a very sociable bunch.

This weekend I have Yester Curling Club's 175th, The Ladies Branch AGM in Dumfries in May, then our AGM in Inverness on 28th June to finish off my year.

It is disappointing that much of the activity of dinners, often celebrating historical milestones and raising funds along the way receive little or no coverage on our media channels. I know we no longer recognise courts but we must be aware that most dinners don't have courts. That side of the game, the rich history and traditions we celebrate along with the social aspect should be promoted with the same vigour with which we cover the on-ice success, so we can engage with all our membership.

There was a huge effort by Peter and the team to engage with followers and potential curlers during the worlds so it would be great to see that extended to cover all aspects of the game not just the all important medals.

Finally, a huge thank you to all volunteers, scorers, time keepers, and umpires, ACS and LSC, who dedicate many extended weekends or weeks to these events. Without you they simply would not happen. On behalf of the Royal Club I thank you for what you do for our game.



Mike Caffyn is one such person and as he steps down from the ASC I would like to extend my personal thanks to him, despite recent ill health, for his service to the ASC over several years. Thank you Mike.

That concludes my report.

LSC - Ann Johnstone

Men's World Championship

Firstly congratulations to Team Mouat for winning the Men's World Championship and also for their great finish to the season winning the Grand Slam at the weekend. I'm sure the celebrations will still be going on! Since our last meeting it has been a busy few weeks packing as much curling as possible in before the end of the season for most of us. Since then we held our main competition of the year, the Henderson Bishop at Dumfries who hosted a well run event over four days. Great curling and socialising was had by all and well done to all the competitors for taking part and to the organisers. Dumfries team Layla Huntly played Stranraer for the High Road and Dumfries were the winners of the magnificent Trophy. The Cherrystone final was played between Ayr and Stirling with Stirling taking home the Trophy. Thank you Dumfries for hosting. As we finish one season we need to get entries in for next year which is soon around the corner.

A week later Dundee hosted the Morton. Borders, Dundee, Lanarkshire and Stranraer were the Ice Centres taking the stage and some closely fought matches were had. In the end Stranraer went home with the trophy. Thank you Dundee for making it a great day, you looked after us very well.

Congratulations to Team Morrison out in South Korea. Rebecca Morrison, Sophie Sinclair, Jenn Dodds and Sophie Jackson, had a very successful week and have secured our place in the Olympics in Cortina, Italy next year..

Scottish Junior Mixed Doubles Dumfries

An amazing 40 very enthusiastic teams took to the ice at the end of March. At stake was qualifying to go to Canada for first World Junior mixed doubles championship. After lots of fabulous curling over the few days. Robyn Munro and Orrin Carson were the winners with runners up Team Thomson brother and sister from Perth. We wish Robyn and Orrin good luck at the end of the month.

AGM

Going forward: our ladies AGM in May will be held at Woodland house hotel on May 13th at 2pm. Lunch is available at £15 at 12 noon and there will be a pre-AGM meeting at 10 am. I am sure you should have all received a communication for this.

An evening get together will be held the evening before, 7pm to 9 pm, for committee representatives and there new reps for next year.

Our new committee will be proposed and ratified at our AGM in May.

I would like to say a big thank you to my committee for supporting me over this past year and special thank you to Shirley who has done a fantastic job in minute taking. I don't know how you keep up sometimes!

I must admit after the changes within SC, it has taken a bit of finding different ways to adjust to the dynamics of the role, so it is not too onerous on the person at the helm. Going forward in this modern world we must make changes along the way, working together as we do so well and supporting one another.

We have to keep Women's and Girl's curling alive and strong going forward. In this difficult climate we are in just now we are all trying to support our ice rinks through all the challenges we face. And do appreciate we are all doing our bit in supporting the Sport.

Thank you

Area/Rink Updates- These are now done digitally and go to Vinny for summarising to be posted Online for all to access. This only applies to ASC reports. This facility could also be made available to LSC..

There was one correction to the Aberdeen report - it was Calvin Brest who won the International not Ross White.

Update on Structures Review and Proposed Changes - Vinny Bryson

Previously Vinny had been asked to make the future representation of the members more ice rink centric specifically round the function of the ASC. A small working group had a working session last April (2024) in Perth Ice Rink. A list of things to address were -

- How the ASC could be reformed and deployed to participate with a more effective role within the sport
- If a reform of the ASC was progressed, how could members and volunteers engage within it to provide a more integrated experience

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- How could the overall experience of engaging with Scottish Curling at all levels be improved for the individual member. One of the findings of the workshop was the multiple layers between the individual member and the SC Board was complicated. Do the layers of the Province and Area still suit the needs of the sport and the organisation.? This Question is opinion based.
- Should the ice rinks themselves form the gravitational mass for that and underpin the representative structure for members? A good example of this is the LSC who engage with branch members via ice centres hosted within the rinks.

The group members were Isla Kinnear, Sheilagh Macfarlane, Jim Hogg, David Haggard, Jimmy Raeburn, Maureen Parker and Vinny, plus Eilidh and Suzy from the SC team. It was facilitated by the board director Jimmy Wilson.

Key themes emerging were - too many layers, current Area and Province arrangements differ, volunteer base required for activities at all these levels is getting smaller, many members have multiple roles at all these levels. The picture of Areas and Provinces is uncertain and sadly that is evident from the recent closures of ice rinks. If ice rinks are the gravitational mass, we have to keep them open.

There was an overall focus across the group that representation through ice rinks was easier to understand. A democratic structure to decide who represents the ice rink at any new forum and giving these roles and committees appropriate new titles would need to be discussed. Potentially looking at office bearer terms of office increasing inline with SC Board Director terms of office is worth exploring.

We do not have a Vice Presidential candidate for RCCC next year. Our current procedure of having an annual presidency means that after one year they do not have any further involvement. One of the elements of the proposal is that we change those terms of office to have the President lead whatever the future entity is, that the ASC could potentially morph into. They would do that over a term of office that is consistent with a Director of the Board which is three years.

Overall to summarise-

- Be ice rink centric
- Have visible and equitable representation for the members through the ice rink itself
- Clear roles and responsibilities for any committee and any role within it
- Be easy to understand from the outside looking in

So we take the next year with our development work and engagement work through Try Curling sessions, to inform members of the opportunities and pathways to go further and know what being a member of Scottish Curling can bring them. 'What does my membership fee get me?' is a fair question to ask. We have to maintain one member one vote, this would not change. Turning up to vote on a motion at the AGM would still be a right of any member. We will have to consider in line with By-law 5, any changes to Areas and Provinces and Article 6 and By-law 4 relating to elections of Presidents.

So could we create a Members Forum or an Ice Rink Committee or a name to be confirmed later? There are 21 Ice Rinks across Scotland which would still be a big committee so should we have the 21 condensed into a smaller number or is that just serving the same type of structure we already have? The new committee should replace the governance of the Areas and Provinces which will be difficult as there is a huge amount of tradition and competitions to consider. We need to protect the past and respect the history which will be a challenge.

Much of this is the thoughts of the group crystallised by Vinny to share with members present and there are going to be many opinions on this. This is not something that we want to do 'to people', this is the work of the group put together to give an overview and we realise it will be challenging but it is also aligning with our own structure that already exists. Hopefully it will allow the ASC to be aligned in a different way and value the contribution of the volunteers in a different way.

Vinny then opened to floor to questions.

PR (A12)- Any change is good, have you any thoughts on timescale ?

VB - Would like to take this to the AGM this year to evolve as a transition year so next year we could operate with whatever new entity is decided to replace the ASC as it gives us time to take considered steps regarding the history of the Areas and Provinces.. The objective of the exercise is to have a governance structure for members that is more accessible and values the volunteer contribution.

GM (Hon Ladies President) - why are we looking at Areas and Provinces when they are not the problem, the ASC is the problem?

VC- The ASC exists to represent Areas and Provinces - I'm not saying one is good and one is bad but if it has not worked for a number of years, there is an opportunity to change to make it better for the future.

MAM (A2). Having been involved in LSC we had quite a bit of business to discuss with Henderson Bishop and Morton etc since being on the ASC I have found we are not really doing anything, meeting for the sake of meeting with no real

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purpose. Historically the ASC was the committee that made the decisions because there was no Board back in the day but we need to find a way of getting members to speak to the ASC, for us to discuss things to then put proposals to the board to give the ASC a purpose. I suggested the Province Medal that was cancelled could be given to the ASC to deal with. Each member could go back and get each Province to get a team to compete as we still have that competition.

VB - I'm not saying that is wrong but looking at information gathered through electronic reports refers to a lack of engagement with the Provinces and Areas and giving the ASC a particular job or competition may not solve the problem. The ASC or the future generation of it - could be a Members Forum or other name. Vinny has terms of reference which are all up for debate - would make the group of volunteers smaller and underneath that sub groups could work on competitions and heritage. Areas and Provinces are not 'bad' but just not as functional as they were previously. The governing body also has a duty to engage and work with these new structures. When he hears from the ASC Reps the message is that it is not working.

MAM (A2)- The LSC system of having Ice Rink reps is probably the way we need to think about going.

VB- That was the remit that the group were asked to address.

JM (A7) - Due to the closure of Braehead we now have multiple Provinces all trying to work out of one place and Glasgow Province competitions were down to very low numbers with 5 Provinces playing out of Greenacres they were all experiencing the same problems. If we don't restructure the areas and provinces we need to look at reshaping the borders of the Provinces and Areas to accommodate the Provinces who played out of Braehead. They tried to run competitions between the Provinces but this was not a great success.

VB- So competitions seem to dominate these discussions.

AM (12) - Pre Covid all ASC members were allocated a committee to serve on but this has not happened since.

GM (HLP) - 'This happened before Covid and I fought against it then'

KP (VP) - Do we actually need Provinces or do we just go down the Ice Rink route?

JM (A7) - We need to merge

AA (President)) Some Provinces are stronger than others and would like to keep their competitions.

VP - Keeping some and not others would muddy the water. What we have now is not working well so how do we make it better for the curler? We have to be open to change - to encourage more people into the sport and send a more consistent message to the outside world. Make the ice rink the 'Hub' for the Sport.

KP - (VP) Greenacres - do they really need 5 Provinces?

JM (A7) Some are surviving and would like to carry on.

PR (A12) With 2/3 Provinces playing at Forfar, volunteers are getting harder to find. How do we present this to the members ?

JM (A7) - We are not getting Area reps to step up.

KP - (VP) -We have to be looking forward and try not to say - 'it's aye been'. We have to move forward and think outside the box.

AB (A13)- Our Area AGM was very poorly attended - only the women's clubs were supporting it. Inverness covers 6 Provinces and has no President or Vice, and we are having to take decisions ourselves. There are 4 good strong Provinces but they cannot get office bearers. They are struggling and the membership is getting older rather than younger. If the Provinces cannot get them the Area are not going to get volunteers.

VB - Vinny then stressed the input he has given today is from discussions within the Structures Group and focuses on reports they are getting from the rinks that we need to be:-

- More Ice Rink Centric
- More membership involvement
- Have a leaner system
- More volunteers available

AC (A12) Will people still be keen to take on the Role of President if the term extends to 3 years?

AA (P)) The current system of having 1-2 years in post as Vice President then President does not give enough time to get acquainted with the working of the Board of Directors. The nature of the change in the Structures may result in a change to the Presidents role.

AC ((A12) Why not do it over 3 Years as the LSC ?

KP (VP)) When he joined the Board it was well though the first year until he got a feeling for what was involved.

JM (A7) - Would this change to 3 years create a financial and emotional barrier to people?

VB That is the office you apply for - same as the Board of Directors.

JM (A7) What is the current financial support for Presidents of the ASC and LSC ?

VB The budget for this year was £4500

KP (VP) - A 3 year term would give more time to really get to know the staff.

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VB International Curling moves glacially slow in making any changes. Scotland has an opportunity to change but WCF takes years to implement any changes. The minutes from one Congress to the next are almost a year apart so things do change very slowly. The next Congress is in Australia and all International events (Worlds) are outside Europe next year.

DY (A9) If we do not have a President next Year - what will happen?

VB - will have to go to the Articles to see if there is a precedent for this. It will need to go to RCCC Board for discussion. Vinny then invited people to give feedback on the Structures report either by comment individually or a portal set up by SC. It will take some time to set in place but he thinks that next year will be the transition year. There will be opportunities to comment on the governance side and sports developments like Project 2026 which will be online as well.

KJ (LSC Waterfront) When you talk about Area Provinces and Ice Rinks would that include the LSC?

VB - As mentioned at the last LSC Meeting there are no proposed changes to the LSC. It is fit for purpose and should not be touched.

AB (A13) Is it the intention to keep the Provinces within an Area or just have one Province?

VB There would be no Provinces or Areas there would just be an Ice Rink for member representation.

AB (A13) We cover a large area which would be very difficult to manage.

AA (P) There is a difference between the structure and all the competitions that take place. They would still be organised by the ice rink - the history of these should not be lost. These competitions could be integrated into Ice Rink competitions.

AC (A12) - Why will changing the structure make the standard curler think they will get more representation than they do through the current system?

VP - It should make it easier to go to the rink rep if they are looking to engage with SC with a more streamlined structure.

PR (A12) The three Area reps in A12 are already in line with this in Aberdeen, Forfar and Dundee Ice Rinks.

DY (A9) The members in Stirling are only really interested in what is happening in Stirling.

VB Members may not care or wish to be involved but we still have to clarify what is best for Scottish Curling. This is the same in many sports but we still need to take the opportunity for change when we can.

Grand Match - To be held on 15th November 2025 which is World Curling Day. This will be an indoor Grand match. Thirteen rinks have applied to be venues. Teams wishing to play should apply through their own Club Secretary stating home or away.

Comments

- Have Inverness volunteered to take part? Answer - Yes
- Murrayfield may play depending on Rugby matches
- Stirling do not know if there will be catering available but will contact Suzy.
- Dundee do not curl on a Saturday but members could request an away game. Surprising how many request to play away.

Rinks currently entered to host are -

Border, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Dumfries, Forfar, Greenacres, Inverness, Kinross, Lanarkshire, Dewars, Lockerbie, Moray and Waterfront.

Calendar for Women's Local Competitions - This has not yet been constructed for Season 2025-26

AOCB

PR (A12) Some Competition results are hard to find on the SC website e.g. The Asham Slam results- difficult to find the actual winners.

Charlene (SC) Look at the info on the Final Game of the Slams Page.

(Area Rep). Is there any progress with the "Come and Play with an Olympian" programme?

VB We have a lot to talk about with Project 2026. We will have a couple of online sessions on 30th April and 1st May to underline and highlight what we will deliver with the rinks. This will be online sessions for all members.

MAM (A2) Ayr has been closed for coming up to 3 years, when it will cease to exist. What is the position in playing for the Maxwell and the Morton as 'Ayr'.

VB This would have to be through a change to the governance in the Articles so someone would need to propose it and have it agreed.

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PR (A12) I gather 4 Bullet Friday had been well accepted but do you have figures of how many people actually read it?

VB Yes we do. Since last September we have sent out 440,000 emails and 53% have been opened.

MAM (A2) It has been raised at her Ice Rink that they would like 'Our Curler' to be accessed outwith the 4 Bullet Friday.

VB It has always been available on the website. It is not being sent out by email as this is at a cost.

GM (HLP)- To follow on from Mary Ann's comment - If you log into Your Curler on SC webpage it tells you that you are being rewarded with a direct email link to 'Your Curler' and those who don't link directly have to wait a month to get it. A lot of people looked forward to getting "Your Curler" and have not engaged with 4 Bullet Friday.

VB The problem having both is the cost- £10 for every 1000 people it is sent to.

GM (HLP) The cost of sending one 4 Bullet email to everyone every week instead on one 'Your Curler' once a month is surely greater.

VB We made a change to try to communicate regularly with the membership on a range of changing topics every week and attract interest from sponsors like Ambassador. None of the data says we should revert back to the old system. E.g since January 1st we have had eight and a half million engagements on Facebook.

AJ (LP) Out of all these views, how many new curlers are we getting?

VB Digital media drives people to Ice rinks and the experience there is important. Eg Try Curling.

JM (A7) People now tell me they are watching curling - sending WhatsApp messages at midnight !

VB - Thanks to everyone sharing the information about the World Championships being on TV and where to find it generated 60,000 viewers. We are trying to add a bit more humour to the posts on FB and make it fun, without losing our core members. When we focus on the international success of our teams we always get new members. The Olympic moment is 10 x more impactful than our digital impact.

KA(LSC) As our membership is getting older could we send out an email explaining how to access it on 4 Bullet Friday as many of them think it is just not available now and has been discontinued.

VB The best solution to that is for all the reps to show and tell people where to find it. Some people have ticked to not be sent emails.

KA(LSC) Why not send out a simple email just saying 'Your Curler' is available by - clicking 'here' and show them how to do it. The website is very difficult to navigate.

VB Vinny agreed with this and said the website was next on the list to be updated. Please send more content for 'Your Curler' and tell everyone how to find it. He also said he and Peter would look again at the access to 'Your Curler'

KA (LSC) Asked why the Henderson Bishop and Morton bids were not discussed and agreed at an LSC meeting this year. The entries go into the Royal Club and get passed to LSC for discussion among the reps who take this back to their centres so that the centres decide where the venue is best to be. It is an LSC decision where the competition is to go.

AJ (LP) Ann responded to clarify the situation for this year- 'I will clarify that the executive committee made the decision on this occasion as time was of importance, Ice rinks that hold the finals have a lot of organising and fundraising to do to hold the event. Due to matters outwith my control the bid for the HB was not available until the beginning of that week. I have asked the competitions committee that the bids will be 18 months in advance as within our guidelines going forward and as discussed at the last meeting this was unprecedented. I do hope that you support our decision in these circumstances.'

The bid for The Morton next year ; We had 4 bids-

Perth £100, Dumfries £128, Hamilton £120, Dundee £80

I understand that the decision to award Perth The Morton next year was out with my control. However, I am aware that we also had a similar situation last year. But although the process was not in line with our committee agreeing on the venue, it does bring certain advantages that Perth can offer excellent facilities, and I want to ensure you that going forward that competitions must improve on communication regarding our 2 main competitions and have asked competitions that HB and Morton are not included in other SC bids.

AG (VP LSC) This year was an exceptional circumstance as we did not have the dates due to 2026 being an Olympic year. It also says in the manual that under exceptional circumstances the Executive can make the decision. Next year we will be discussing it in Ladies Branch.

SM (LSC Dumfries) when Dumfries put there bid in we were not two years in advance either. It was in September, I only found out the week before we were discussing it at Hamilton, The competition bids do not go in at the same time as the other bids.

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GM (HLP) Formerly the ladies competition bids went directly to the Ladies Branch. That no longer happens as we are aligned with Scottish Curling now so it depends how up to date SC happen to be with their bidding process. Going forward it is desirable that we know two seasons in advance.

KA (LSC) Also added that the Morton should be an annual bid- not for two or three years.

AJ (LP) Yes, agreed, the bid had got in amongst other bids which are offered to bid for multiple years. I do apologise that I have maybe not done it the way it states in the book but we did it to the best of our ability and thought we were doing it right at the time.

CM (A4) Colin requested that the minutes of the meeting be distributed earlier as the minute of the last ASC/ LSC Joint meeting only arrived in his in box last night. Also can Vinny open the window for the Area reports to be uploaded earlier so they have time to read them before the next meeting.

President Ali Asher closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance and attention today.

Meeting closed at: 3.25pm

FUTURE MEETINGS - Ladies Branch AGM 13th May
Woodlands House Hotel , Dumfries
Pre AGM meeting 10am
AGM 2pm

- RCCC AGM - Saturday 28th June