

District Executive Committee Meeting (Via Zoom) 20 March 2020 – Minutes



“We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence.”

Morning DEC Meeting		
Time	Item	Lead
18:30	<p>1</p> <p>Introduction District Director, Florian Bay welcomed everyone to the 4th District Executive Committee Meeting (DEC) on 20th March 2020 in the 2019-2020 Toastmasters Year. Due to the Corona Virus Outbreak The Meeting was held via Zoom.</p> <p>DEC Constitution: The District Executive Committee (DEC) comprises of the District Leadership Team (DLT) & the Area & Division Directors. Sarah Beckwith, our Parliamentarian, was also in attendance to ensure compliance with Roberts Rules of Order.</p>	DD Florian Bay
18:35	<p>2</p> <p>District Mission Helena Boden-Brewer read the District Mission, “We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving Excellence”</p>	CGD Helena Boden- Brewer

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10:37	3	<p>Roll Call & Quorum In attendance:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 20px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 30%;">DLT Members</th> <th style="width: 70%;">Name</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>IPDD</td><td>Andy Hammond</td></tr> <tr><td>DD</td><td>Florian Bay</td></tr> <tr><td>PQD</td><td>Arnaud Sartre</td></tr> <tr><td>CGD</td><td>Helena Boden-Brewer</td></tr> <tr><td>Admin Mgr</td><td>Ruth Ribeiro</td></tr> <tr><td>PR Mgr</td><td>Susan Rayner</td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 15%;">Division</th> <th style="width: 15%;">Area</th> <th style="width: 70%;">Name</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>A</td><td> </td><td>Mike Burrows</td></tr> <tr><td>A</td><td>1</td><td>Rob Dewing</td></tr> <tr><td>A</td><td>14</td><td>Tugçe Yilmaz</td></tr> <tr><td>A</td><td>46</td><td>Debs Wallace</td></tr> <tr><td>A</td><td>62</td><td>Grace Jones</td></tr> <tr><td>B</td><td> </td><td>Rupa Datta</td></tr> <tr><td>B</td><td>6</td><td>Gagan Singh</td></tr> <tr><td>B</td><td>8</td><td>Shane Snow</td></tr> <tr><td>B</td><td>29</td><td>Adam Flisiak</td></tr> <tr><td>B</td><td>52</td><td>Adolfo Tunon</td></tr> <tr><td>C</td><td> </td><td>Ken Essien</td></tr> <tr><td>C</td><td>5</td><td>Anja Eichen</td></tr> <tr><td>C</td><td>45</td><td>Richard Fallon</td></tr> <tr><td>H</td><td> </td><td>Sandra Mighty</td></tr> <tr><td>H</td><td>15</td><td>Adenola Olayide</td></tr> <tr><td>H</td><td>35</td><td>Michael Crane</td></tr> <tr><td>H</td><td>37</td><td>Mo Dawodu</td></tr> <tr><td>H</td><td>53</td><td>Vaneshen Mootosamy</td></tr> <tr><td>H</td><td>55</td><td>Ellis Byrne</td></tr> <tr><td>J</td><td> </td><td>Nikita Parks</td></tr> <tr><td>J</td><td>4</td><td>Diane Richardson</td></tr> <tr><td>J</td><td>7</td><td>Murielle Sarda-Hutchings</td></tr> <tr><td>J</td><td>11</td><td>Jackie Preuss</td></tr> <tr><td>J</td><td>22</td><td>Carrie Baker</td></tr> <tr><td>K</td><td> </td><td>Liang T Li</td></tr> <tr><td>K</td><td>13</td><td>Andrew Morgan</td></tr> <tr><td>K</td><td>31</td><td>Avni Vij</td></tr> <tr><td>K</td><td>58</td><td>Nadya Hamedi</td></tr> <tr><td>L</td><td> </td><td>Beauty Zindi</td></tr> <tr><td>L</td><td>9</td><td>Andy Blake</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	DLT Members	Name	IPDD	Andy Hammond	DD	Florian Bay	PQD	Arnaud Sartre	CGD	Helena Boden-Brewer	Admin Mgr	Ruth Ribeiro	PR Mgr	Susan Rayner			Division	Area	Name	A		Mike Burrows	A	1	Rob Dewing	A	14	Tugçe Yilmaz	A	46	Debs Wallace	A	62	Grace Jones	B		Rupa Datta	B	6	Gagan Singh	B	8	Shane Snow	B	29	Adam Flisiak	B	52	Adolfo Tunon	C		Ken Essien	C	5	Anja Eichen	C	45	Richard Fallon	H		Sandra Mighty	H	15	Adenola Olayide	H	35	Michael Crane	H	37	Mo Dawodu	H	53	Vaneshen Mootosamy	H	55	Ellis Byrne	J		Nikita Parks	J	4	Diane Richardson	J	7	Murielle Sarda-Hutchings	J	11	Jackie Preuss	J	22	Carrie Baker	K		Liang T Li	K	13	Andrew Morgan	K	31	Avni Vij	K	58	Nadya Hamedi	L		Beauty Zindi	L	9	Andy Blake	Ruth Ribeiro Admin Manager
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18:40	4	<p>Impact of Covid – 19 on Speech Contests – Continue Online or Cancel</p> <p>“Given the success of the Area Contests held online so far. It is proposed that the Contest cycle for the 2019-20 Toastmasters Year continues online all the way to the online District Level finals for the International Speech, Humorous Speech, Evaluation and Table Topics Contests. <i>(Proposed by: PQD - Arnaud Sartre, Seconded by: Division K Director - Liang T Li).</i></p>	PQD Arnaud Sartre																																																								

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Those Against Continuing Speech Contests Online

Name	Reason
Div B Rupa Datta	Whilst Rupa thanked everyone for coming together and putting on a successful online Area Contest there was concern that the impact of the Corona Virus on Division B’s 784 Members might not produce a level playing field and questioned the Validity and Integrity of Running Contest, when most major Sporting Events and Contests in other Fields would not be taking place. Her feeling was that we would do well to focus on our Core Values and Mission and that Contests in the Circumstances should come second and were over and above the requirements.
L16 Monika Swiderska	Monica felt it would be a challenging and difficult experience. She did not feel it was a fair environment. Leaders and Members were unprepared and untrained for online content. She felt it would be wrong to focus on content of a dubious quality.
Div L Beauty Zindi	Beauty felt passionately that given the issues people were facing in the personal lives, now was not the time to be putting effort into contests. She felt there were technology and Broadband issues for Members and that we did not have the best equipment. She felt strongly that the District Contest would be an emotional load on people whilst also having to deal with sick families and losing jobs. Whilst there were visionaries among us one must not lose sight of moral responsibility.
L61 Nike Ogundana	Nike said that he seconded what Beauty said. Nobody is interested in going online at the moment. He said many members were not even on Pathways as they were not tech savy. His view was to hold meetings online but to postpone contests
L47 Rosy Holt	Rosy felt totally overwhelmed. She said their Area Contest fell apart. The Chief Judge and Contest Chair said no. Find someone else. RH runs her own business and said online contests were a non starter for her.
L9 Andy Blake	Andy saw both sides of the coin. From his experience members join because they want to speak face to face. Online is just not for them. They were struggling with membership retention, venues, and now online contest organization. Younger members are more tech savy in general. Some will compete and some will not. Older members are gaining valuable new skills.

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		and some do not see the need straightaway to go online.
B52 Adolfo Tunon		Adolfo felt we had had successful contests and had proved we could run online events. Adolfo’s concerns were that members would not be able to fully focus on more contests. He has family in Italy and Spain and is currently more concerned with them than with anything else. If some members are not prepared then others will need to step in. It is more of an emotional concern. Division directors and contestants are not mentally and emotionally prepared. If the majority are ok then go ahead.
B8 Shane Snow		Whilst Shane agrees in the Toastmasters community for wellbeing and in the opportunities to use new technology and resourcefulness he believes that it is a matter of respect for people looking after loved ones and suffering with bereavement. Football, Sporting Events and even the Grand National have cancelled Events. It will not be a level playing field.
B29 Adam Flisiak		Adam’s experience was that some people were not comfortable taking part in online contests. At the Area Contest 3 stated that they were uncomfortable, 1 person declined to take part at the last minute. Everything was new. It is difficult to train people to use email, whatsapp, sms. He felt we should not continue with any more contests.

Those In Favour of Continuing Speech Contests Online

Name	Reason
Div J Nikita Parks	Nikita felt that we are defined at Toastmasters by our ability to adapt. If we shrink away we risk devaluing the community. She felt we owed it to our Members to progress to the District Finals in all 4 contests.
Div A Mike Burrows	MB felt that Division and District Contests should go ahead online. Half the contestants had been briefed and showed enthusiasm for continuing. If contestants carried on and got through to the District, they would be videoed in the Quarter Finals anyway. He felt that giving a speech in an online meeting was not as different as people believed it was.
J4 Diane Richardson	Diane acknowledged that resources were not perfect but said that people with the best video equipment did not win contests. Those who took the time and

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		made an effort to take part felt they wanted to continue. It helps build a sense of community. In the last contest some just wanted to take part to see what would happen and all enjoyed it. Those willing and able to, want to carry on, and welcome the opportunity to socialize, especially at times of social isolation. She pointed out that for Judges J11 from J4 was 150 miles away, so there were obvious benefits attending online.
B6	Gagan Singh	Gagan was in favour of leading the change. He said they were one of the first areas to run their online Area Contest. We are told not to give in to fear and to try new things. Contestants are paying members and a competitive spirit brought a lot of joy to members. We should lead the change and show how it is done.
Div H	Sandra Mighty	Sandra felt that we should go ahead with the contests. She said the situation was not going to go away. People are at home and out of work. Contests allow people to have a focus. An opportunity for us to take advantage of learning. She said it was a different playing field. With support we can guide members in how to compete online. We can adequately prepare for contests. We have got together a technical team to practise. It eases discomfort for some and is a great opportunity
C5	Anja Eichen	Anja feels contests are special events. Many are feeling overwhelmed. Contests provide a positive sense of community of the wider community beyond the club. The skills that she is acquiring at Toastmasters online give her the confidence to use online skills at work. One can build and reshape a bit of fun. If we have club winners we can create area winners etc.
Div K	Liang T Li	Support the motion. Ling T Li's view is that our lives have changed a lot. Keeping some elements of our life /work as usual can help overcome anxiety and fear. If we do not help others continue life as usual then depression and mental health issues can set in. We need to support and help each other. Liang believes we should continue the contests. Let's inspire every club. This is something we can do. It is something that is possible.
K31	Avni Vij	Avni is all for the motion. 100% yes. It is the way to go forward. In a club with someone diagnosed of Corona Virus one has to be less stringent on the number of functionaries for each event.
H37		Mo said these are difficult times. The key take aways

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Mo Dawodu	over and above contests, is to put things in place for members and clubs that are struggling. Meetings presented struggles and opportunities. Opportunities to attend overseas clubs and have overseas members participate in ours. A great deal of planning is required. While challenging it is beneficial for us as a group to move forward with opportunities.
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Neither for nor against

Name	Reason
K58 Nadya Hamedi	Nadya is working longer hours in the health service and is not able to attend contests. If online contests do go ahead then one has to consider back up support for functionary roles. Individuals wellbeing is paramount. We are talking about emotions/depressions. There are hearts and minds here. It is fine to do this for people’s wellbeing but show support. Some work within the health service and may be part of the Corona virus Care team in very demanding circumstances, working very long hours.

Outcome of the Motion following a Survey Monkey Poll

25 votes were cast in favour of continuing Speech Contests on line and 15 votes were against.

This being a majority. The motion was passed to continue club contests online.
Members were thanked for their support.

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Q1 Customize Save as

Do you support the motion?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 0

A horizontal bar chart showing the results of a poll. The x-axis represents percentages from 0% to 100% in 10% increments. The y-axis lists two options: 'YES - Continue with contests' and 'NO - Cancel the contests'. The 'YES' bar is green and extends to approximately 62.5%. The 'NO' bar is blue and extends to approximately 37.5%.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
YES - Continue with contests	62.50%	25
NO - Cancel the contests	37.50%	15
TOTAL		40

Leaders were told that support to build and set up online contests would be provided. Everyone was encouraged to ask for help and to reach out to nearby areas and divisions.

Leaders are encouraged to log into the District 91 Website where the team have compiled a large list of videos in order to help run successful contests.

Arnaud voiced that he is currently impacted with looking after young children out of school, whilst his wife works 24/7 as a nurse helping with the Corona virus so his time is severely limited now. He will do his best to stay involved but it would have to be late at night when the children are in bed.

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Motion: To Extend the Deadline of Area Director Elections

It was proposed that the deadline for the Area Director Elections be extended to give people time to focus on their loved ones, on jobs, & Area Activities. It was felt that there was not time to think of the Incoming Area director role. Toastmasters has changed. Allow an extension to give people time to think through the role and evaluate whether a director role is something for them.

Those against extending the deadline

Name	Reason
H35 Michael Crane	Michael was against the extension. His feeling was that it was critical to provide Area Directors that would succeed their roles and provide an effective handover. He strongly suggested we did not extend the deadline and handed over as is, according to current circumstances.
H15 Adenola Olayide	Adenola was against the motion. He felt it should go ahead as planned. This would give sufficient time for outgoing Area directors to be around and support the incoming Area Directors. These are difficult times and it would just delay the inevitable. Just go for it. Provide support by showing how to log in to online meetings and committee meetings.

Those in favour of extending the deadline

Name	Reason
Div B Rupa Datta	Rupa was in favour as seconder of the motion. For those who have already elected the incoming Area Director, it would create a fluid state for the incoming District Director.
IPDD Andy Hammond	Andy was in support of the option to delay the deadline for Area Director Elections if circumstances require.

28 votes were cast in favour of the motion to extend the deadline to 1st May 2020 and 11 votes against. This motion was therefore carried.

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	<p>Q1</p> <p>Do you support the motion?</p> <p>Answered: 39 Skipped: 0</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>ANSWER CHOICES</th> <th>RESPONSES</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>YES - Move deadline to 1 May 2020</td> <td>71.79% 28</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NO - Keep current deadline of 17 Apr 2020</td> <td>28.21% 11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>39</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Kindly note that existing Area Director Roles will still terminate on June 30th 2020.</p> <p>Q: Can Area Director Elections take place online? Ans: Yes the can.</p> <p>Area Council Meetings are also possible online.</p>	ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	YES - Move deadline to 1 May 2020	71.79% 28	NO - Keep current deadline of 17 Apr 2020	28.21% 11	TOTAL	39	
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19:10	<p>Impact of Covid – 19 on District Conference – Move to Online Conference</p> <p>PQD Arnaud Sartre Arnaud laid out his plans following Instructions from Toastmasters International & the UK Government regarding social distancing to convert the in person District Conference originally organised over 2.5 days from 1st to 3rd May and convert this into an ONLINE DISTRICT CONFERENCE OVER 2 DAYS ON 02nd and 03rd MAY 2020. During those 2 days, the plan is to hold 4 District Finals & also to provide workshops. He said the conference team were looking forward to the challenge.</p>	PQD Arnaud Sartre								
19:30	<p>Possible Impacts of Covid – 19 on Renewals and Educational Achievement</p>	DD Florian Bay								

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	<p>Largely unknown at this stage. The Renewals deadline has been extended to 30 April 2020. The exact message from World Headquarters is available on: http://www.toastmasters.org/covid19</p> <p>Division Director Florian Bay reminded us that Safety, Health & Wellbeing come first. Many people are still looking at where they can achieve a sense of community. When one can attend a club meeting online, it provides a level of normality.</p> <p>New Incentives (Helena Boden Brewer) As a reward for the 20/80 challenge, in place of the £50 Pizza Award, the District is proposing that clubs can put the money towards a paid Zoom Subscription.</p> <p>Club Mentors and Sponsors Q: Will the 30th June 2020 deadline be extended for club mentors and sponsors? Ans: The question has been posed to World Headquarters and Regional Directors however as yet there is no reply.</p> <p>Area Director Visits: Q: Can Area Director visits be carried out online if clubs stop meeting? Ans: Yes. Please let the Division Directors and the District Leadership Team (DLT) know if clubs stop meeting. Area Visits can now be carried out online. There will be some differences. The structure of most points is still valid in online meetings. Key elements are valid in an online environment.</p> <p>Voting during Club Meetings: Survey Monkey is a good option.</p>	<p>Helena Boden-Brewer</p>
<p>19:50</p> <p>7</p>	<p>Possible Impacts of Covid -19 on District 91’s Finances Arnaud would need to liaise with District Conference Venue for a refund. If the Government announced Pubs, hotels and restaurants to be closed then it would be a case of force majeure. We may need to get legal advice if we still have to pay for the venue.</p> <p>In many respects, there would be fewer claimed expenses, due to less travel as people stay home and switch to online meetings.</p> <p>How district expenses are affected long term will largely depend on renewals. There is likely to be an impact on future years due to the financial impact of not running an in person District Conference as it is</p>	<p>DD Florian Bay</p>

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	usually a great income generator. We shall be seeking informal legal advice.							
	<p>AOB – Questions raised by DEC Members</p> <p>Question: Do we have a single source of truth with links to information etc</p> <p>Answer: Yes the District 91 Website https://d91toastmasters.org.uk/d91-coronavirus-update/</p> <p>Question: What are the possible impacts of the situation on clubs and their day to day operations?</p> <p>Answer: All clubs must liaise with their venues regarding refunds and cancellations. Impact on renewals & educational achievements largely unknown at this stage.</p> <p>Question: What are the impacts if leaders or their loved ones are affected by the disease and can't perform their roles?</p> <p>Answer: Safety first. Self isolation and follow all NHS guidelines. Acceptance that Toastmasters will not be High on everyone's agenda.</p> <p>Question: Possible impacts on renewals and education</p> <p>Answer: Largely unknown at this stage. Renewals deadline extended to 30 April. Exact message from WHQ available: http://www.toastmasters.org/covid19</p> <p>Question: Possible impacts on District Finances</p> <p>Answer: Ultimately dependent on renewals though fewer expense claims are likely.</p>							
	<p>More Questions and Answers</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="347 1928 614 1966">Name</th> <th data-bbox="614 1928 1355 1966">Questions</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="347 1966 614 2042">Div J Nikita Parks</td> <td data-bbox="614 1966 1355 2042">Will TI honour refunds if requested and Members already paid?</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="347 2042 614 2080"></td> <td data-bbox="614 2042 1355 2080">Don't know. Suggest liaising with World Headquarters</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Name	Questions	Div J Nikita Parks	Will TI honour refunds if requested and Members already paid?		Don't know. Suggest liaising with World Headquarters
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L16 Monika Swiderska	What practical help will be offered to those who cannot perform their roles in the new online environment. Whether that be due to health? Physical availability and/or Technical Problems?
B6 Gagan Singh	Clubs in general meetings are sticking to the traditional Agenda. There are some tweaks to be made for the online meeting. Things do seem to take longer in online meetings, especially as we are all learning to get to grips with online technology.
Chair District Leadership Team Andy Hammond	Nowhere when we took on our roles, did it include dealing with a Global Health Pandemic and I would just like to say that the team are doing a marvelous job.
Florian Bay	Florian thanked Andy for his kind words. If there are Areas that do not have enough Clubs or there are not enough Areas feeding into Divisions we could look at pooled Areas. We will need to ask the Board of Directors to find an answer.
Div C Ken Essien	Following the motion to continue with contests online Division C will be holding their online contest at 10am tomorrow morning. (21 st March 2020). You are all welcome to join. There is a D91 Calender registration link to the Division C contest Saturday Morning.
K31 Avni Vij	Since many people have backed down from online contests, what is the minimum number of contestants according to the rule book? If there is just one contestant, should the judges still vote?
Ans	We see no reason why not.
Q	If nobody steps forward to take an Area Director role what will happen next year?
Ans	If nobody steps forward for an Area Director role then the incoming District Director will nominate for next year.
H 37 Mo Dawodu	How and where can we find support for members and clubs.
	Speak up and Ask. Check information and links on the D91 Website.
Div J Nikita Parks	Nikita felt current challenging circumstances were a test of mindset. Their Monday club has reached Charter strength. Due to club coaching they have got 10 out of 10 DCP points. She reiterated, we have the skills and abilities to do this.

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	Div H Sandra Mightly	Sandra said thank you and well done to all those working in these challenging circumstances. It is a difficult time for many. Speechcrafts can happen online. We just need to think outside the box. During break times we can put people into breakout rooms for discussions. We can help deal with isolation. We have the opportunity to make a difference in people’s lives during these difficult times.
	L16 Monika Swiderska	Monika saw a lot of positivity and said that she was super glad for those people. She emphasized, however, a need to respect people’s boundaries and not to put people down. Some are not looking for company in isolation. For some it is an opportunity to learn new skills and things are playing out well for them others are suffering and things are not going well.
	DD Florian Bay	Monika was thanked for her much needed perspective. FB thanked everyone for attending the meeting. “Stay safe and lets keep looking after one another
20:10	Meeting Adjourned.	

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