

# Minutes of The District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15



Time	Item
10:00	<p><b>Call to Order/Welcome:</b> District Director, Florian Bay welcomed everyone to the 2<sup>nd</sup> District Council Meeting (DCM) on 02 May 2020 in the 2019-2020 Toastmasters Year. Due to the Corona virus outbreak the Meeting was held online via Zoom.</p> <p><b>Purpose:</b> "As Members of the District Council we serve an important role in the Governance of our District." The role of the District Director is to ensure that each member of the District Council has a say on such Governance.</p> <p><b>DCM Constitution:</b> The District Council includes the District Leadership Team (DLT or "The Core Team"), Division &amp; Area Directors, Club Presidents and Vice Presidents of Education. Sarah Beckwith, our Parliamentarian, was also in attendance to ensure compliance with Roberts Rules of Order.</p> <p>Having explained the Constitution and purpose of the District Council, the District Director declared the meeting open.</p> <p>Zoom Masters for the meeting were Sumir Malak and Andrew Morgan</p>
10:05	<p><b>The Toastmasters International Mission, the District Mission, Introductions, Policy, Procedure</b></p> <p>Florian Bay read the Mission Statement of Toastmasters International: "We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and Leaders" He then read the District Mission: "We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence."</p>

# Minutes of The District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15



10:07	3	<b>Introduction of the District Leadership Team.</b>	
		Florian Bay, District Director introduced the Members of the District Leadership Team (DLT)	
		<b>DLT Members</b>	<b>Name</b>
		Immediate Past District Director, DTM	Andy Hammond
		District Director	Florian Bay
		District Finance Manager	Violet Karamagi
		District Administration Manager	Ruth Ribeiro
		Public Relations Manager	Susan Rayner
		Club Growth Director	Helena Boden-Brewer
		Programme Quality Director	Arnaud Sartre
*Sarah Beckwith, Parliamentarian, 2016 National President for Junior Chamber International UK			
A moment of reflection and slience was held in remembrance of any member that had past away in the 2019-2020 Toastmasters Year.			

# Minutes of The District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15



10:10	<p><b>Review of the Meeting Agenda</b> The Meeting Agenda was displayed. No objections were raised. It was subsequently approved.</p> <p>It was explained that Polling would be carried out using Election Runner.</p>
10:12	<p><b>Credentials Committee Report</b> The Total number of Presidents &amp; VPEs in the District Council is 327. One third of those members in attendance are required for us to reach a Quorum i.e. 109 members.</p> <p>There were 164 Presidents and VPEs with registered attendance and 41 Members of the District Executive Committee, comprising the District Leadership Team, &amp; Division &amp; Area Directors</p> <p>We were therefore Quorate</p>
10:15	<p><b>Acceptance of Minutes of 21 Sept 2019 Council Meeting</b> District Director, Florian Bay asked members to accept the Minutes of the previous Council Meeting held online on 21 Sept 2019.</p> <p>No objections were raised. The Minutes of the previous Council Meeting were therefore accepted by unanimous consent.</p>
10:20	<p><b>Alignment Committee Report and Assignment of Clubs to Areas &amp; Divisions for 2020/21 Year</b> Janet Alkema, Chair of the Alignment Committee presented the Alignment Committee Report and recommendations for the 2020/21 Toastmasters year.</p> <p>The Purpose of the Realignment report is to obtain a workable number of clubs in each Area and Division and enable the Area Directors to effectively carry out liaison between clubs.</p> <p>She opened by acknowledging and giving thanks to Monika Swiderska , our Cartographer aka “Geospacial Data Expert in Mapping Technology”, for her unfailing and expert guidance in accurately mapping Clubs to help with the District Alignment process.</p> <p>Insert Alignment Report [-] Insert Division Maps [-] Insert Spreadsheet of all Pre-Charter Clubs [-]</p> <p><b>Q/A :</b></p> <p><b>Q:</b> Gbemi Akojenu, K3, “A slight typo perhaps, the proposed total (of Divisions) shows 7 instead of 8? Just to confirm there are 8?” <b>ANS:</b> Janet Alkema, Chair Alignment Committee: “Yes, there will be 8 Divisions”</p>

# Minutes of the District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15



**Q:** Marcin Tolysz,, CPres PYP B52, "Are there any contingencies for COVID 19, which happened later?"

**Ans:** Florian Bay, District Director, "The Alignment Proposal is Covid 19 Proof".

**Q:** Mary Robson, VPE NOSC, "Oxford Orators is not on the Map"

**Ans:** Monika Swiderska, "They meet in the same place, thus two points are overlapping".

**Q:** Tim Patmore. "Whitney speakers needs adding to Division J. Just chartered! ;)"

**Ans:** Monika Swiderska, " data was locked on 15/04 :) I'll add them later."

**Q:** Dan [????]. "When will this information be sent out and added to the D91 Website?"

**Q:** Richard Honeyman, VPE Lewes Speakers Club " This rationale does not take into consideration current membership dues to renewals being lower"

**Q:** Ravi Bhatta, VPE Amazon LHR14 Toastmasters. "The Club I represent, Amazon LHR14 Toastmasters in not listed in the alignment in the Holborn area. Is this because the club is not chartered yet?"

**Ans:** Monika Swiderska, " This is down to software limitations, points overlap and you cannot therefore visualize it."

**Q:** Barry O'Connell, . " How many clubs are we expecting to fail as a result of COVID 19?"

**Q:** Antonia Harrison, " Shilling Speakers in Area A1 is also not listed as it is pre-charter"

The District Council were asked if there were any objections to the Alignment Proposals? Hearing no objections the Alignment Committee Proposals were approved by unanimous consent.

**Question by Tina Williams, President Camberley Speakers**

Very quickly when does this (ie the 8 Divisions & Alignment changes) come into force?

**Answer:** Florian Bay, District Director. As of 1st July 2020.

**Agreed proposals need to be submitted by the District Council to Toastmasters International by July 15th 2020.**

**Question by Tanuj Saluja, VPE Trojan Speakers Ealing.**

Is there any change to the old Education Programme cut-off (from the existing timeline of June-end? Our club is on track but checking in as this question has been posed by club members.

**Answer by Florian Bay, District Director**

There will be an extension to the obtaining of the Advanced Leadership Silver award. (ALS) Only.

**Special thanks were paid to the excellent work of the Alignment Committee, especially Monika.**

# Minutes of the District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15



## Leadership Committee Report and Elections

Andy Hammond, Chair of the District Leadership Committee presented his leadership report.

Please find attached link to Andy's slides [-].

The District Leadership Committee is governed by Toastmasters International Protocol IX and I can confirm that we have fully complied with those rules and that our final report is therefore valid.

One requirement is to have a representation from each Division on the Committee and I would like to thank the following Committee members for all their hardwork and integrity throughout this process.

All Qualified candidates were interviewed by members of the Committee. We then voted on those to be nominated, and the list of nominations is on the next slide. Those are the nominated candidates as per your council pack for each of the roles and you will be voting on those later.

There were some changes to the rules this year, particularly, with regard to floor candidates. Only candidates who have been interviewed by the Committee, were permitted to stand as floor candidates, unless we did not nominate a candidate for any particular role. There was a further change on 6<sup>th</sup> April, where Toastmasters International announced an exception to the rules for floor candidates. That is in response for this District Council Meeting to be held online. All floor candidates were required to declare at least 7 days in advance and no nominations from the floor are allowed during the Council Meeting. That is a one off exception for this year. As a result of that requirement the declared floor candidates are as follows:

Next slide

It looks a little odd, because if people want to stand for a subsequent division if they are not successful, they also had to declare 7 days in advance. So we have a number of floor candidates.

Division A had no nominated candidates so we have 2 floor candidates there.

Division D, the new Division, was only agreed a few minutes ago, so therefore we had no nominated candidates and we have 2 floor candidates there.

For Division L, the one candidate that we had nominated, withdrew after the report, so is only open to nominated candidates. We have 2 floor candidates for that division.

Subject to earlier elections, that is the status of our report and I can conclude there Mr District Director, Florian Bay.

The District Director thanked Andy and his team for all their hard work in selecting and interviewing candidates.

10:50

# Minutes of the District Council Meeting

## 02 May 2020 (via Zoom)

### 10:00 – 13:15



#### Officer Elections (Using Election Runner)

<https://d91.toastmasters.electionrunner.com>

Members voted via an email link generated by Election Runner.

2 test runs were carried out to ensure members knew how to follow the voting procedure

For the office of....	Nominees	Voting and Outcome for the Toastmasters Year 2020/2021
District Director	Arnaud Sartre	Uncontested. Admin Mngr Ruth Ribeiro cast 1 vote for the minutes. FB declared Arnaud Sartre elected as District Director
PQD	Helena Boden Brewer	Uncontested. Admin Mngr Ruth Ribeiro cast 1 vote for the minutes. FB declared Helena Boden Brewer elected as Programme Quality Director
CGD	<b>Candidate 1</b> Bob Bowes, Ace of Clubs, Toastmasters <b>Candidate 2</b> Rupa Datta, of Trojans Speakers.	Each gave a 2 min speech. A vote was held. <b>The poll was won by Rupa Datta</b> <b>Rupa Datta 103 votes</b> <b>Bob Bowes 59 votes</b>  Rupa Datta was subsequently elected as Club Growth Director.

For the office of....	Nominees	Voting and Outcome for the Toastmasters Year 2020/2021
Division C Director	<b>Candidate 1</b> Michael Crane <b>Candidate 2</b> Christoper Walker <b>Candidate 3</b> Sarita Yadav  Run Off Vote <b>Candidate 1</b> Christoper Walker <b>Candidate 2</b> Sarita Yadav	Each gave a 2 min speech. A vote was held. Michael Crane 41 votes Christopher Walker 72 votes Sarita Yadav 42 votes  As there was no majority of the votes cast in favour of one candidate a run off vote was held between Christopher Walker & Sarita Yadav.

# Minutes of the District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15



			<p>Christopher Walker 88 votes Sarita Yadav 63 votes</p> <p>The poll was won by Christopher Walker</p> <p>The majority of the votes cast were for Christopher Walker. <b>Christopher Walker</b> was duly elected as the next Division C Director.</p>
Division A Director	<p><b>Candidate 1</b> Mike Burrows</p> <p><b>Candidate 2</b> Antonia Harrison</p>		<p>Each gave a 2 min speech. A vote was held.</p> <p>Mike Burrows 42 votes Antonia Harrison 99 votes</p> <p>As one candidate won more than a majority of the votes cast, Antonia Harrison was declared, duly elected for the role of Division A Director.</p>
Division J Director	<p><b>Candidate 1</b> Jackie Preuss</p> <p><b>Candidate 2</b> Diane Richardson</p>		<p>Each gave a 2 min speech. A vote was held.</p> <p>The poll was won by Jackie Preuss</p> <p>Jackie Preuss 85 votes Diane Richardson 62 votes</p> <p>Jackie Preuss was subsequently elected as Division J Director.</p>
Division B Director	<p><b>Candidate 1</b> Sean Snow</p>		<p>Uncontested.</p> <p>Admin Mngr Ruth Ribeiro cast 1 vote on behalf of Shane Snow. Sean Snow was duly declared Division B Director.</p>
Division D Director	<p><b>Candidate 1</b> Diane Richardson</p>		<p>Admin Manager Ruth Ribeiro cast 1 vote for Diane Richardson. Diane Richardson was subsequently elected as Division D Director.</p>
Division H Director	<p><b>Candidate 1</b> Vaneshen Mootoosamy</p>		<p>DD Florian Bay called upon Admin Manager Ruth Ribeiro to cast 1 vote for Vaneshen Mootoosamy. Vaneshen Mootoosamy was declared elected to the office of Division H Director.</p>

# Minutes of the District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15




Division K Director	<b>Candidate 1</b> Nadia Hamedi	DD Florian Bay called up Admin Manager Ruth Ribeiro to cast 1 vote for Nadia Hamedi Nadia Hamedi was subsequently elected as Division K Director.
Division L Director	<b>Candidate 1</b> Sarita Yadav	DD Florian Bay called up Admin Manager Ruth Ribeiro to cast 1 vote for Sarita Yadav. Sarita Yadav was declared elected as Division L Director.

## Summary of District Director Elections & Newly appointed Officers.

DLT Members	Name
IPDD	Florian Bay
District Director	Arnaud Sartre
PQD	Helena Boden-Brewer
CGD	Rupa Datta
Div C Director	Christopher Walker
Div A Director	Antonia Harrison
Div J Director	Jackie Preuss
Div B Director	Sean Snow
Div D Director	Diane Richardson
Div H Director	Vaneshen Mootosamy
Div K Director	Nadia Hamedi
Div L Director	Sarita Yadav

## **“How we use our money”. Mid-Year Audit and Update on District Budget**

Violet Karamagi presented the District Budget and mid-year Audit. Please see attached slides 

### **Purpose & Key Points:**

Violet explained how the Audit Committee had goals to achieve for the District, in a number of Areas including, Marketing, Education and Communication and we have an audit committee that makes sure that the money is spent in the right way.

11:35

The Audit Committee is Independent and it is made up of the Audit Chair, Guler Cortis and 2 members who, Michelle Senior & David Scott.

The Audit Committee goes through every single transaction the District does to ensure that everything has been recorded as it should be and to ensure that we are spending the money in the right way as we have been governed by Headquarters.  
We get audited twice a year. We have a mid year audit which happens after December and that is done in January and then we have an end of year audit which is done in July. I can



# Minutes of the District Council Meeting

## 02 May 2020 (via Zoom)

### 10:00 – 13:15



report back on what happened in the mid-year audit.

All expenses were backed up with receipts and invoices confirming what the money had been spent on.

Some of the DD expenses could not be found on Concur our District expense management system and the reason for this is because expenses get approved by 2 people. Our District Director Florian Bay was our Programme Quality Director the year before so as such the approval levels had changed but it took some time for the system to change over. So we had to dig deep to find that the transactions had happened and the audit committee were happy that even the transactions that were missing on Concur had actually been recorded within the financial statements. So overall we have had a clean audit mid-year. Your money is being spent the way it should be. This is certified by the District Director and the Finance Manager who is myself, and the entire Committee.

The Finance Manager and the District Director are responsible to ensure that the District Finances are spent in the way they are meant to be spent.

#### **Audit Certificate:**

The Audit Certificate is signed by both the District Director and the Finance Manager. In addition, it is certified by the Audit Committee.

See slides for further information. [-]

#### **End of Quarter 3 Report as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.**

The Financial year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020

**Revenue:** We were expecting to have £74,840 of revenue but unfortunately we have only had £70,887. The reason for this, which as you are all aware, we have had the Pandemic, which has affected renewals but then also Toastmasters extended the renewals deadline to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020, so although we have the figures up to March, we have had more renewals coming in during April.

**Fundraising income:** We had a budget of £3000 but unfortunately we have not achieved this and that is mainly because most of our events were meant to take place in the second part of the year, and thanks to the Corona Virus, everything has been put on hold.

**The District Store:** We had a plan to have a district store whereby we would have supplies from Toastmasters International being held within the District rather than having them shipped from the USA. Unfortunately that has not happened either. That is why we have not had any revenue from that.

**Speech Contest Revenue:** That refers to all the Speech contests that were held at Division Level so the revenue that is showing in the numbers is for the Division contests that took place in November. Most of the Divisions has speech contests whereby they charged a fee

# Minutes of the District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15



to help cover those expenses. As you can see we have a speech contests expenses line, so having a revenue generating event helps reduce expenditure on that particular event. Expenses: Fundraising expenses, we have not had any because we have not had any fundraising activities.

**TLI Expenses:** We budgeted to spend more. The figures that show were for events that happened between December and January so that has come in as less than expected.

**Marketing:** This is pretty much as budgeted for.

**Communications and PR:** This is a little bit lower than what we budgeted for.

**Training and Education:** We spent a little bit more than we had budgeted for. That is because we have had more District, Division Directors and Area Directors turning up at training events.

**Admin Budget:** This has been a little bit higher than expected because we held additional meetings as a District to get on top of all the unanticipated challenges that we have faced, and that is why our admin budget is higher than budgeted for but this will be less by the time we have finished the year.

**Travel:** This is a lot less than was budgeted for, but this is down to a reduction in travel, resulting from the Pandemic. Furthermore many of the London based Area Directors tend not to claim for their travel and that is because it is very easy to use your travel card to jump in and out of the trains. Many just do not bother claiming for travel expenses.

**Other Expenses:** ie Everything not listed above in slides, we are at Par.

Overall we have a shortfall of £3,827. This shortfall will be covered by the surplus that we have been building up over the years.

Secondly, looking at the coming year, as we are progressing, we hope to at least achieve a more positive figure than what we have at the end of March.

**Q/Ans:**

**Gbemi Akojenu, K3** Where is revenue from the District Conference shown?

**Florian Bay:** It is not yet shown into that report because the Conference had not yet taken place before 31 March.

**Richard Honeyman, VPE Lewes Speakers Club:** Did today cost less or more compared to if not online? Any cancellation fees?

**Florian Bay:** This will be covered in the Slide no 2.

**Nick Westall, President Excalibur Speakers,** "Do you expect the end of year figure to be non-loss making?"

**What has been the impact of Covid 19 on our District finances?**

As anticipated our March income was £11,000 lower than what we had budgeted for because we were not sure what was going on. The Deadline extension of renewals til end of April also affected March income.

The good news is that our April income is at least £2,400 more than expected. People are gradually getting used to the fact that this is our new normal and people are meeting online. So income is coming in and will not be as low as before.

Overall our income is mainly driven by the late renewals and we will soon have more information now that we are going to close April. Hopefully by the time we close the year we will have a more solid figure of where we stand.

Just to clarify, although we have the information regarding the numbers, we work with HQ

# Minutes of the District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15



to close the financial statements so our figures are not in real time exact. We have to go through a month end closing process with HQ. So as much as April has just ended, we will need to wait another 2-3 weeks before we have the final figures.

**The District Conference:** The Conference has actually done pretty well, in that we are expecting a net Conference income of about £7,000. So overall, our income shortfall against the budget, is likely to come in at about £4,000.

So what has been the impact of Covid, on our expenditure?

We have some unused expenses, so within our travel budget, we expect to have at least £7,000 less than expected, because we have all moved on line and travel is not an expense right now.

We have also saved on the attendance of District Executive Committee members, which we had planned for had this been in person.

We had budgeted for about £3,000 but as we met online, that has been saved. We have also saved another £2000 on room hire. So it has all been balanced out and we should finish the year in a strong position to carry on next year.

**Q/A**

Any questions regarding where we are financially?

**Zariya Lufu, President Spirited Speakers,** "I have just paid in some money last week so the amount should be higher.

We shall have better figures at the end of the year when we know exactly what has been going on.

**Q:Simon Toon, VPE Berkhamsted,** "So we expect to have £8k suplos at end of year?"

**Ans: Florian Bay, District Director** "Simon, it is not like we have a surplus of £8,000. It is just we will probably break even rather than have a surplus. We have been building up reserves , so we should still be in a good financial position. "

So I will use this opportunity to explain more of what has been happening in the world of finance.

I managed to collaborate with Brad Revell, and we had a webinar. Sadly it was not that well attended, but the training is available, as an evergreen webinar, and this was to support clubs in how to manage club finances. What tools are required. What questions one needs to ask. How does the Treasurer role interact with the rest of the Committee? And how the finances of each club should be managed, because this is one of the areas that gets ignored. So Brad and I got together and asked how best we can support the clubs and hence why we created this resource and that's available for anyone who needs it.

Another success for finance this year was on how Concur has been de-mystified. Concur is our expense management system and I have been blessed to do the Financial Manager role for 18 -20 months now. When I started Concur was very much a new resource. Many Area and Division directors struggled with how to use the system and there are still some people who struggle with it but overall, the number has been decreasing over time and that has really made me happy. It is a success in itself because people are able to claim back the expenses that they incurred rather than just leaving money falling down in the wind.

# Minutes of the District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15



	<p>As previously mentioned we completed our mid-year audit successfully, and in time, so that was great.</p> <p>Our relationship with WHQ is also a lot better so when I started 18 months ago and first took on the role, HQ had moved its offices to Denver and pretty much all the support team in Finance was new so calling the Finance team was new. The HQ Team were finding their feet, trying to find out how things worked and getting to know everyone, things used to take a lot longer, but now over time, we have managed to overcome those challenges. The relationship between the District and WHQ is a lot better now.</p> <p><b>UK Bank Account:</b> We opened a UK bank account. That has been a huge issue because, it is the first time that we have had a UK bank account. All our funds have previously been held in the US, which means expenses took a little bit longer and most importantly we incurred exchange rate fees, because our money was held in US dollars however our transacting was in pounds sterling which had let to our expenses growing more than we had wanted to. So having a UK bank account has allowed us to 1)Cut back on our exchange rate fees but also to pay our UK suppliers faster, because we use local suppliers for promotional materials. Or even the suppliers we use for conferences and being able to pay a supplier on time allows that relationship to thrive. Furthermore, having a thriving relationship in itself gives us an opportunity to negotiate discounts.</p> <p>We now also have a stripe account. Stripe is a payment platform which allows us to take card payments. Initially we used to rely on eventbrite for all our paid events and eventbrite fees were huge. On top of that you have to wait until an event has ended before you are able to get your money. With Stripe the fees are a lot lower. Moreover Stripe pays out every 3 days. So that has also been a big success. So it has been a great year and that is thanks to every one on the team and down to the clubs because at the end of the day no one is an island and it takes a team effort at the end of the day.</p> <p><b>Any Questions?</b></p> <p><b>Rober Granville, Malvern Speakers,</b> “So I assume that TIWHQ has invested; in a licences for Concur?”</p> <p><b>Ans: Florian Bay, District Director.</b> The Concur Licence: is held by World Headquarters (WHQ). We use it as a District and all the other District use it too.</p> <p>We do not incur any expenses for it. WHQ pays for it.</p> <p><b>Q: Zariya Lufu, President, Spirited Speakers,</b> “Where can we find the training for clubs for Club Finance?”</p> <p><b>Violet Karamagi, Finance Director</b>“I will have to send you a link. I will collaborate with Susan Raynor our District VPPR and we will send it via newsletter.</p> <p>[ - ] Can clubs use local suppliers?</p> <p><b>Florian Bay, District Director,</b> “Yes they can. There is the Hello Print partnership for locally produced marketing materials.</p> <p><b>Nieal, President GSS,</b> “Can you send everyone the finance training?”</p> <p>Yes Nieal, we will send the link to the finance training to everybody.</p> <p>Insert Link: <a href="#">[-]</a></p> <p>That concludes the finance report.</p>
11:50	<b>“How are we doing?” District Team Leadership Reports.</b>

# Minutes of the District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15



**Ruth Ribeiro, District Administration Manager** presents the District Administration Report. Good afternoon to the District Council. I should like to start off by explaining some of the things that I have go out of this role. Firstly Toastmasters is a place where we choose to learn and refine the core values of Toastmasters International, “Respect, Integrity, Service and Excellence” in collaboration with others. These core values spell RISE. Rise up into Leadership Potential.

Before joining the District Leadership Team, I was President of Riverside Communicators. That lit a spark in me and showed me my best self. I also attended two International Conferences in Chicago and Denver and Florian Bay, said that he saw something in me and he wanted me to be part of his team.

One of my strengths outside leading a club, is the ability to scribe. Whenever I am listening, I find myself writing. So what better task to do that be the District Administrator. As part of my role, I have been a part of the District Executive Committee, the District Council and the District Leadership Team.

As part of the District Leadership Team, we not only met 4 or 5 times in Person in different locations around the South of the UK, we also have virtual Sunday evening telephone calls, or Zoom Meetings, where we check in with each other and plan ahead for the next week.

In that meeting we check in with each other and we ask how we feel and what is going on for each other. That support has been absolutely incredible and I really treasure that. I love that about Toastmasters.

One of my roles is to take minutes of our meetings and you will know that those meetings are not always short. Some of them last 3-4 hours. So when your meeting finishes, my role carries on and for anybody who has ever done minutes before, often they can take much longer than the actual meeting. This year, Florian Bay, our District Director, has taught me the value of Excellence and I want to thank him whole-heartedly for his mentoring.

One of the things that I learned when delivering speeches in my club, was, *“Do or do not. There is no such thing as try”* and I would always motivate myself by saying, *“By the end of the meeting my speech will have been given.”* In doing Minutes, similarly, I have learned to look forward, to the calm space at the end of the task.

I’d like to thank my team whole-heartedly for their support and it has been an absolute privilege, being part of the District Leadership Team. Thank you.

## **PR Manager, Susan Rayner**

Good Afternoon. I have skillfully presented the importance of branding, and how clubs present themselves both online and in communication. One of the biggest challenges clubs face is how to take that Toastmasters brand guidelines and how to incorporate them. How to know when something is acceptable and when it is not.

# Minutes of the District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15



Over the last couple of months, I have looked at how we can help clubs better understand those guidelines and how we can provide them with a clear framework to follow. We have taken some of the existing content and looked to refresh this and make it less staid and less dated. Fewer blocks of colour, to create more engaging and interesting designs, using motivational images with big headlines and simple, single-minded messages. We have looked at how we can use these messages and how they would look in different formats, or how they would look with different images in different styles, to inspire and to create more impactful messages. How we can utilize them for our District 91 incentives. How different formats and styles can really help stand out. How one recipe can create 5 Pizzas. We shall be finalizing these designs in the next coming weeks and we shall be creating a module for the club officer training. I hope you can see from the designs you have seen today, how we are trying to re-energize and really engage with our audience in a much more updated and inspiring way. Please remember, it is important to keep to brand guidelines. We work within the framework of Toastmasters and in all our communications, our aim is to drive club growth, club retention and club quality.

#### **Club Growth Director, Helena Boden-Brewer.**

District Council, this has been a fantastic year. It has been challenging and we have been adaptable. As you will see from my report in the Council pack, we have had plenty of club growth activity this year. I'd also like, at this stage to thank, my club extension chair, Bob Bowes, for all of his hard work this year, particularly in supporting and chartering some of the London clubs.

I am not a London based person myself, and Bob has stepped in to represent me on a number of those occasions at Demonstration meetings. Thank you very much Bob. Going forward, you may have seen in the Chat, someone has already mentioned about Whitney speakers. They voted to Charter in their virtual online meeting the other day and have decided to go ahead and charter. We have now got 3 clubs that have chartered during the lockdown period. Fantastic, so well done to all of those clubs. You know who you are, Didcot and Burnham as well. Thank you very much for your continued support. That is what it is the continued support of you the members. We are putting things in place to help you. We have got demonstration meetings online. We have tested the pilot. Thank you to everyone that took part in that and they will be rolled out into May and June. There are also the Open house meetings. You can still claim £100 towards your marketing for that event. So please continue with that too! As we go forward, we have quite a lot of other things that we can do as we go into next year. Re-booting the trainers bureau. Let's get that up and running again and start providing online webinars to really help our members. We have embraced Webinars so far, and I would really like to thank Susan Rayner, our District PR Manager, for stepping in to help me, put together the surviving in online interviews webinar. We put that together in a week with the assistance of Theresa Dukes, to turn that around, to support our members that were going for online interviews, in the last couple of weeks. So thank you very much. Good luck to all of those who have gone to interviews so far, we will look to do more to support you and hopefully this will be our new norm. Good luck everybody. We will see you soon.

# Minutes of the District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15



## **Programme Quality Director Report by Arnaud Sartre.**

Good afternoon everyone again. Good afternoon District Council and everybody else watching us online. First of all let me take a moment to thank you all for the trust that you have put in me over the last few years and again earlier this morning during the elections.

As Programme Quality Director, this year, many activities have been taking part, but I will focus on only a few that have been extremely positive, and also demonstrating the breadth of activities of our District. First of all recognizing that over the last couple of months, we have been extremely successful in moving, not only our clubs, but also our contests, and we have also delivered an online club officer training for the very first time. So thank you everyone, who provided so much effort, in the background, and in the front line to deliver these activities. Thank you again so much for this.

The role of the Programme Quality Director is also to oversee conferences, and I am very pleased to report that this year is absolutely fantastic and I very much want to thank once again, our conference team and dozens of volunteers running behind the scene to make today and tomorrow happen. Thank you again so much.

We have clearly also had some challenges. There is no question about this and the next few months will certainly allow us to put greater plans in place to find a way to get back to a more normal place. Now on the Educational side, let me talk about Pathways for just a moment. Pathways enrolment has always been a key metric and month after month we are continuing to see an increase in our Pathways adoption. We are currently standing at just over 73% of our members. Not 100% as we would love to be and will have to be by the end of June, but certainly a move in the right direction. We have many clubs where all club officers are enrolled and I would very much continue to encourage all clubs to ensure all members, new and old continue and participate in the Pathways programme. This is essential for the continuation of our activities in the clubs.

Now talking of club activities and member recognition, we are as of only a few days ago, well over 1,300 educational awards. This is a tremendous achievement. We still have a number of legacy awards being credited to our members but the majority, about 2/3 of these awards are Pathways awards and I thank you all for your dedication to our current programme. With that in mind, we are probably on track to go slightly over 1,500, or 1,600 educational awards so far this year, which I believe will be another record breaking number, so thank you all for your time here. That concludes my report.

Thank you very much Mr District Director.

## **Florian Bay, District Director Report.**

I will not deliver a short report on what has been happening during the last 10 months. Covid 19 has been quite an interesting challenge. To me it is the quintessential definition of a black swan event. If you told me maybe two and a half months ago that we, when I first got back from Poland and started to see people with face masks on in the airplane, you are going to be district director during a Pandemic, and it is going to hit your District hard, I

# Minutes of the District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15



	<p>would have probably shrugged it off. Even at the end of February when we had our District Executive Committee (DEC) Meeting, it is something that was on the horizon but we were optimistic, that it would not necessarily become big. Yes, yet, however, it did! And what has been happening in the past few weeks and in the last 2 months has, for me been pretty amazing. It almost epitomizes one of my favourite quotes, which is, "they did not know it was impossible so they did". "You did not know it was impossible so you did it! " And you being all of you on this call, the leaders of our District. There was skepticism about online meetings, about recruiting guests online, about renewing members and yet we had virtual victory. We carried on, business as usual, by meeting online. Why because Toastmasters is a community and we are now a community that meets online, we're joining hands online. I have had virtual dinners with friends recently. I'm playing a game called Mafia with some fellow toastmasters that are based in another district now and it is really good fun. We are still building these links and cherishing making new friends and building our community online. This is simply amazing. Let's carry on doing this. Over the next few weeks, let's really keep calm and finish the year strong. There are 2 months left in the Toastmasters year. There are still plenty more renewals to come through. We have the beat the clock campaign that is starting soon. There are a few things that we need to be mindful of in the next two months. Let's innovate. For example, some clubs are starting to introduce new roles such as Zoom Master or Quiz Master to engage people in online meetings. A break out room at the break. Keep inviting guests. In most of the clubs where I have been recently, there were guests. I do not mean fellow toastmasters coming from another country, I mean people that are not yet toastmasters, dialing and joining into the meeting. If you have a past member that has moved to another country or another part of the country, now is the time to contact them and say, "Hey we are meeting online, come back and check us out". If you have Pathways members who have completed a Pathways level, remember to submit these awards. The Pathways progress awards there are still two more months to win plenty of things and don't forget our district incentives are still there. If you want to run an open house online, just do it and you can reclaim £100 from the District, towards your Face book advertising, Linked in advertising, whatever method you use to get the word out there. Let's do it! Let's all finish strong together.</p>
12:10	<p><b>Future District Conferences</b> <b>PQD, Arnaud Sartre, and PQD Elect Helena Boden-Brewer.</b></p> <p>There are three points from my perspective to cover on this topic Covid 19 has been an inconvenience and has caused us all sort of troubles. We have managed to pull of an event that was world class as defined by the District Council Meeting way back in September, but something that is truly appealing to the vast majority of our members, not just in our district but also showcasing what we can do across Europe and across the world. So thank you again to the Conference team for making this happen. Recognising many of those changes, we have had challenges around organizing the contests, organizing the speakers and other areas. I am happy to answer any questions later today or separately by email at a later date.</p> <p>Clearly, like many events that have happened all around the world, it has been always challenging to schedule those events. One of the things that I'd like to announce today is that rather than completely cancelling our London 2020 Conference, we will be returning to</p>



# Minutes of the District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15



	<p>London in 2021 as a post Covid 19 event. I am sure there will plenty of information coming out in due course on this particular topic.</p> <p>I would like to finish very simply on recognizing some of the points and some of the activities that took place at the Council Meeting last May. We had 2 of our members that raised their hands and put themselves forward to lead our 2021 and 2022 conferences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Andy Hessey 2020/2021 &amp;</li><li>• Guler Cortis &amp; 2021/2022</li></ul> <p>Given the ongoing situation, it is very difficult to provide further information at this precise stage, but I will be inviting and I am sure our Programme Quality Director Elect will follow through in the next few months as well, to invite formal leads to be presented at the September District Council Meeting (DCM).</p> <p>At this point I would like to pass over to Helena to talk a little bit more about her conference review plans.</p> <p><b>Helena Boden-Brewer, Conference Review Committee.</b></p> <p>We are looking to do a major overhaul to looking at what we do in our conferences. This year is a test case. We have had to try and adapt. We have worked very hard in the background. We are trying to make sure that we learn our lessons and can take this forward. We are putting in place a conference review committee to that will be reporting from this particular conference and may reach out to previous conference team members to get some feedback and lessons learned so that we from running this years Online Conference. It is hoped that previous District Conference organisers would also provide feedback and lessons learned so that we can take that forward. So by the time we come to September, we shall have a complete picture of what we can do to support the Conference in London in 2021 Thank you.</p> <p>If interested in joining this Committee, please approach Helena Boden-Brewer directly. The purpose will be to look into the questions raised and build a report to learn from for the future.</p>
12:20	<p><b>Speeches by International Director Candidates for Region 10 (Europe)</b></p> <p>As a District we are part of Toastmasters International and each District is part of a Region. We are part of Region 10, which is Europe and has 8 Districts.</p> <p>This year we have an election to elect our International Director for Europe to represent us on the Board of Directors and very kindly two of the Candidates have agreed to join us today to deliver a short speech to tell us more about their candidacy.</p> <p>Elizabeth Nostedt Patricia O'Reilly Pedro Casillas</p> <p><b>Elections will take place in August 2020 for International Director for Reigion 10 on the International Board of Directors</b></p>

# Minutes of the District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15



12:25	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Setting up new clubs in a social distancing world. Even if measured loosened people may be reticent to meet in close quarters in large groups. Way forward perhaps Hybrid Clubs, where some meet in person and other dial in or Alternation of In-person meetings with virtual meetings. Worth looking into. The next District Leadership Team will need to consider this and create strategic work on what the District will look like in terms of Corporate and Community Groups. Helena will be taking this on.</li><li>2) Tim Patmore. To contacting World HQ to create a Story Telling Path &amp; a Learning Language Path. FB happy to put in a formal request to help WHQ to come up with new content for our members. Open to more suggestions before approaching WHQ.</li><li>3) Online Area Training. Will Club Officer Training in July be online so as to start planning. Helena Boden Brewer PQD elect will be planning and liaising on this but most likely yes.</li><li>4) Could we consider creating more rules to encourage club members to step up and help at that level.</li></ol>
12:30	<p><b>Announcements and Adjournment</b></p> <p>The Next District Leadership Team will be meeting towards the end of December. This will be for the next District Leadership Team to decide and agree on and liaise with.</p> <p>Final words. The Current Toastmasters year still has two months to go and there is still a great deal that we can achieve in the next two months. We started the year really strong. I remember people playing the D91 Club Board Game over District Officer Training and learning excitedly about the incentives and everything we had planned for the year. The team could see the numbers creeping up and up and we were saying to ourselves this is going to be an amazing year and our best year ever as a District and then at the end of February Covid 19 started to rear its head and initially it started with no more handshakes and took hold by the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of March. I will never forget Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> March 2020. A day when I was due to visit spirited speakers and instead of the handshakes they did the bum shakes that day. That night Arnaud and I had a 4 hour long phone call and this was when we made the decision to ask all of you to move your meetings online. It was the hardest decision I have ever had to make as District Director. When the emails were sent, I knew what it meant. I knew that all the hard work that we put in at the beginning of the week could potentially disappear. I knew that there would be challenges over renewals. I knew some members would be really challenged in the new circumstances. There was a time towards the end of March where I felt really close to resigning as District Director. My thinking was really negative. I was telling myself that I was a failure. I had a phone call with Lark Doley my mentor that day that changed my mind. And after this, I gave myself some stern talking to and said, Right Florian, this is a problem. We are going to sort ourselves out of this problem and so far we have. Nearly all of our clubs have moved online. We moved our contests online. We moved this Conference online. This Conference is attended by 800 people! We are doing amazing work as a District. Renewals are looking pretty healthy. I am</p>

# Minutes of the District Council Meeting 02 May 2020 (via Zoom) 10:00 – 13:15



convinced we shall be renewing more members now that we did in October. Go back to your club and tell the story of the Organisation that carried on meeting when even McDonalds was shutting down. Tell us the story of the people that said yes we can! Tell us the story that said Covid 19, we will beat you! Tell us the story of the District that Could. The 1% of Toastmasters that said, "Yes we can" and carried on meeting online. Tell your members now has never been a better time to carry on with your membership. To carry on with your journey and be with us. We have 2 more months. Let's make them count! Let's finish the year! And in 2021, we will be in Paris as a District in the Hall of Fame for being a Distinguished District once again! We have a job to do. Let's finish it. Onwards and Forwards! We will grow forward together. Some of you have asked me already, what are your next steps Florian? More about that another day. God be with your all and let's carry on growing forward together. We are the District that said, "Yes we can" Good job everybody and thank you for being there!.

That concludes the District Council. We have a 12 min break before the commencement of the District Conference.