

# Minutes of District 71 Council Meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2020



Time	Item
10:00	<b>Introduction</b>

John Cox, District 71 Director welcomed those present on the virtual meeting call.

He told the meeting that:

- As members of our District Council, all present serve an important role in the governance of our District.

- The District Council includes the District Leadership Team (known as the DLT), Division Directors, Area Directors, Club Presidents and Vice Presidents Education.

The Council serves as the administrative governing body of the district, and as such is responsible for conducting and approving the business of our district.

- District Council meetings are formal occasions and it is his role to facilitate and ensure that each club and district leader has an opportunity to contribute to how we deliver our mission.

**John declared the meeting open** and described the platform to be used. To ensure that there were no interruptions or distractions while the meeting took place, all microphones were muted. John introduced the Zoomasters Moira O'Brien and Nik Lakhani and explained they would be in charge of transferring control of the microphone between participants as needed.

John pointed out the chat feature at the bottom of the screen and asked **participants to use it only** to raise a question with him, as chair of the meeting or to ask specific questions. Chat would be disabled the elections segment of the meeting to ensure fairness for all candidates.

To help our Admin Manager take accurate minutes, this meeting is being recorded.

## **2 Invocation**

John called on Andrea Lee, President of one of our newest clubs, Stevenage Speakers to deliver the invocation.

## **Toastmasters Mission and District Mission**

John also reminded those present of the reasons for the attending as expressed in the Mission of Toastmasters International and the District Mission.

*The Mission of Toastmasters International: We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders.*



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*The District Mission: We build new clubs and support all clubs in achieving excellence.*

## **Introduction of District Officers**

He then introduced the members of the District Leadership Team who were present:

Immediate Past District Director, Patricia O'Reilly, DTM,  
District Finance Manager, Martin Foran, DTM,  
District Administration Manager, Jane Craggs, DTM,  
Public Relations Manager, Brenda Lannon, DTM,  
Club Growth Director, Daniel Sandars, DTM,  
Program Quality Director, Gerard Mannix, DTM,  
Parliamentarian for this meeting, Phil Heath

He acknowledged other past District leaders present and **Past International Director** Teresa Dukes, DTM.

### **Past District Directors/District Governors:**

Cecil Kirk, ATMS, CL  
David Thomson, DTM  
Kevin Lee, DTM  
Red Skelton, DTM

## **Apologies**

All apologies have been recorded by the District Administration Manager, Jane Craggs and can be seen on appendix 4.

## **Moment of Reflection**

John then asked the meeting to remember Toastmaster friends who have passed away since September 2019. He asked the Administration Manager, Jane Craggs to read out their names and requested a moment of silence to remember those people who have crossed our lives and added something special to our clubs and to us personally:

**Lynsey Kavanagh DLS Communicators, Area 8 Division D**

**Chitral Stambo Club: Cambridge Speakers Club ,Member from 2011-2019**

**Anna Jeffroy-Salmon**

**Glenn Harby – Strictly Speaking Harrogate**

**Roger Abbott – Nottingham**

**Loretta Davill – West Cork**

**Ann Keating – (mother of John)**

**Dianne Ogley-Richardson from Brandon Speakers**



### Explanation of Protocol

1. Only members of the District Council were entitled to speak and vote at a virtual meeting. Members of the council are the DLT, Division and Area Directors, Club Presidents and VPEs. Proxies are not permitted. All of the aforementioned individuals must be members in good standing of a club in good standing as of the latest version of the District membership roster.
2. **Members were asked to write questions in the chat.**
3. Members who would like to speak were asked to send a message via the chat feature to be recognised by John and Jane. He would then call on the individual to speak and our Zoommasters unmute the speaker. Once unmuted speakers were asked to state their name and club officer or other role clearly.
4. He requested responses be limited to 2 minutes and be as clear and concise as possible within the time allowed.
5. Any discussion should be germane to the question under consideration and relevant to members of the council.
6. Any items requiring a vote would be resolved: a) In cases of business requiring approval, John would request a vote by Unanimous Consent, in which John would ask if there is any objection to adopting the motion or proposal. If no one objects, then the motion or proposal is deemed as adopted. b) If even one member objects, a vote will be taken.
7. Voting for elections took place using **Election Runner**. Only members of this council in attendance at the meeting, whose membership is in good standing, who belong to a club in good standing and registered before yesterday's deadline will receive email notifications to cast their votes.
8. Everybody will have five minutes to cast their votes, after which voting will be closed and results will be shared.
9. To familiarise everybody with the voting software a practice vote will be held.

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10:10      **3 Adoption of Agenda**

**District 71 Council Meeting**

**10:00 am Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2020**

**Online Meeting**

## **AGENDA**

- 1. Call to Order/Welcome**
- 2. Invocation, District Mission, Recognition, Introductions, Apologies, Moment of Reflection, Procedure**
- 3. Adoption of Agenda**
- 4. Credentials Committee Report**
- 5. Acceptance of Minutes - *Virtual Meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> Sep 2019***
- 6. Vacancies Filled – Appointed Officers**
- 7. Alignment Committee Report**
- 8. 2019-2020 Mid-Year Audit Report and Update on District Budget**
- 9. District Leadership Committee Report and Election of District Officers**
- 10. 2019-2020 District Leadership Team Reports**
- 11. Future District Conferences**
- 12. Speeches by International Director Candidates for Region 10 (Europe)**
- 13. Any Other Business**
- 14. Announcements and Adjournment**

**John asked if there were any objections to the adoption of the agenda. Not seeing any he declared the adoption of the agenda as agreed by the Council by unanimous consent.**



10:12 **4 Credentials Committee Report**

John explained that one third (1/3) of all Club Presidents & Vice-Presidents Education in the District. shall constitute a quorum. John called upon the Parliamentarian Phil Heath, to confirm the roll call and the extent to which the meeting was quorate.

Club Presidents & VPEs: **390**

Quorum 1/3<sup>rd</sup>: **130**

Registered to attend: **141**

DEC members registered (not included in quorum): **49**

**Note from rules:**

*"In the event that any business is transacted at any district council meeting at which a quorum is not present, the action shall be deemed as valid as if a quorum were present if it is thereafter expressly approved in writing, personally, by mail, fax, email, electronic transmissions or other reasonable means, by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members clubs in the district on the basis of two (2) votes per club."*

10:15 **5 Acceptance of Minutes of the 14 September 2019 Virtual Council Meeting**

**John asked if there were any objections to the acceptance of the minutes of the previous council meeting which had been sent out prior to the meeting.**

**Not seeing any he declared the acceptance of the minutes of the previous council meeting as agreed by the Council by unanimous consent**

10:18 **6 Vacancies Filled – Appointed Officers**

John explained that in District 71, Division Directors are elected by the District Council and the Area Directors are elected by the area councils. However, if a vacancy arises in any elective office it is filled by the district executive committee based upon the recommendation of the District Director.

The following vacancies were filled and approved by the DEC since the 2019 "virtual" council meeting.

**Area H14 Director Faye Ritchie**

**Area N15 Director Paul Davy**



10:21 **7 Alignment Committee Report - Assignment of Clubs to Areas and Divisions for the 2020-21 Toastmasters Year.**

John explained that every year, the District must review the alignment of Clubs to Areas and Divisions. This work is essential to ensure that our clubs are adequately supported by the District and their Area/Division Directors. The alignment committee headed by Avril Stringer studied the many variables and put together a report to align Clubs at the beginning of the next Toastmasters Year. He added that this had been an exceptional year and things may change once it is clear which clubs may be lost in 2020/2021. The report had been approved by the District Executive Committee and was now brought to the District Council. He thanked Avril and her team for their commitment and hard work.

The Alignment Committee Report was proposed for adoption by this Council.

He then called upon Alignment Chair Avril Stringer to present the recommended alignment of our Clubs for the 2020-21 Toastmasters year.

Division H, Bedford Speakers form Area 44 to 14

Division N: Area 51 disappears. Bradfords charters not Area 15. Elvet Speakers to Area 15 and York Eborators from 15 to 21.

**Please see link to presentation below.**

All questions answered privately or on chat. A few members stated that they had not been consulted. This could have been email error or a breakdown in the information chain.

**John asked if there were any objections to the acceptance of the Alignment Committee Report.**

**Seeing none, he declared the District Alignment proposal for the 2020-21 Toastmasters year to be approved by the District Council by unanimous consent.**



10:41 **8 2019-2020 Mid-year Audit Report and update on District Budget**

John explained that it is our responsibility as a DLT to use our members' money wisely to support our clubs and members and we will now provide you with an opportunity to see how the District has been doing with its finances so far this year. He thanked the auditors, for their contribution to auditing the District finances: Les Hodgson, John McGrath and Marie O'Gorman.

**Martin Foran presented the report.**

**Please see link to presentation below.**

All questions answered privately or on chat.

10:56 **9 District Leadership Committee Report & Elections of District Officers**

John called upon the District Leadership Committee Chair, Kevin Lee to present the Leadership Committee Report.

**Kevin presented his report.**

**Please see link to slides below.**

All questions answered privately or on chat.

John thanked Kevin and all the members of the District Leadership Committee for their hard work - Barry Lane, Shaun Durkin, Rachael McNidder, Steve Campion, Peter Kieran, Ciara Halloran, John McFadzean and Sheila Fraser.

A test vote to familiarise everybody with the voting system was held with some problem areas as 5 attendees were not receiving the voting email. Please see link to chat. This problem was due to specific servers being slower than others, or when the member had not registered in due time.

**John stated that the elections of District Leaders for the 2020-21 Toastmasters year would begin**



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For uncontested roles and if there were no objections, the secret ballot was not used and John instructed the Administration Manager to cast a single ballot for the candidate in any uncontested office.

For contested roles, each candidate will be given an opportunity to address the members of the Council for 2 minutes. Candidates will speak in alphabetical order by last name.

The timers will time the two-minute speeches as follows:

- 1 minute      green
- 1 ½ minutes    yellow
- 2 minutes      red (microphone muted)

## Elections

**Candidates were as follows: those in red chose to stand for a different office if not elected to their first choice.**

District Director	Gerard Mannix	<b>Elected</b>
Program Quality Director	Daniel Sandars	<b>Elected</b>
Club Growth Director	Evelyn Khan-Panni Brenda Lannon	<b>Elected</b>
Public Relations Manager	Danny Banks Julian Cereceda Elizabeth Jordan Nikita Parks	<b>Elected</b>
Division A Director	Mari Manning Paul O'Mahony	<b>Elected</b>
Division B Director	Sean Dwan <b>Nikita Parks</b>	<b>Elected</b>
Division C Director	Marian Brennan	<b>Elected</b>
Division D Director	Somesh Kumar <b>Nikita Parks</b>	<b>Elected</b>
Division E Director	James Hurford <b>Nikita Parks</b>	<b>Elected</b>
Division F Director	<b>Somesh Kumar</b> Rob Partridge	<b>Elected</b>
Division G Director	Paige Skelton	<b>Elected</b>
Division H Director	John Allsop Vnette Hoffman-Jackson <b>James Hurford</b>	<b>Elected</b>
Division J Director	Michael May	<b>Elected</b>
Division M Director	<b>Somesh Kumar</b>	



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	<b>Nikita Parks</b> Philip O'Callaghan	<b>Elected</b>
Division N Director	Liz Welch	<b>Elected</b>
Division S Director	Will Feek	<b>Elected</b>

**John congratulated all those elected.**

## 12:15 **10 District Leadership Team reports**

John explained that the District Leadership Team had been working on implementing the District Success Plan over the past months. There were already some positive news and successes to share with you.

**He asked the DLT Members to present their progress:**

Please see slides

## 12:40 **11 Future District Conferences**

John called upon the Program Quality Director, Gerard Mannix to provide an update about future District conferences.

**Gerard explained that with regret the Killarney conference would be postponed and that the 2020 conference would be held online.**

## 12:45 **12 Speeches by International Director Candidates for Region 10 (Europe)**

John explained that Region 10 Europe is one of 14 regions across the world. There are 8 Districts in region 10. The three speakers are competing for the role of International Director for the 2020-2022 term. He invited the International Director Candidates up in alphabetical order to give a two-minute speech.

The timers will time the two-minute speeches as follows:

- 1 minute      green
- 1 ½ minute    yellow
- 2 minutes      red

Again, when the two minutes expired, the microphones would be muted.

**Pedro Casillas (floor)**  
**Elizabeth Nostedt**  
**Patricia O'Reilly**



12:55 **13 Any Other Business for the District Executive Council**

John asked if any committee member would like to raise any other business relevant to our District 71 Mission, for the good of Toastmasters within District 71. If so, members were asked to use the chat function to send a request to speak.

**14 Announcements & Adjournment**

13:00 John declared the meeting adjourned. The next District Council Meeting will take place online during September 2020.

**APPENDIX 1: TIME MANAGEMENT**

If the allotted time for the council is exceeded, according to Roberts' Rules you are at risk of someone doing a "call for orders of the day" and as the meeting time has been exceeded, all of the council's decisions have just been undone. So, you need to make sure that if you are running out of time you put forward a motion to amend the completion time of the council meeting *before you run out of time*. One tip is to make sure there is contingency time after council, that way you can explain how important it is that the business is completed, and that you built in contingency in case it ran over because of the important business to be done, etc..

If there is objection, you will need a vote and a 2/3 majority.

If the allotted time for any section is exceeded, without objection, I now "call for orders of the day". We will **resume according to the schedule and move onto the next agenda item**.

It takes a vote of 2/3 of the council to set aside the orders of the day.

**Appendix 2**

Link to slides:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/t2p0m7qvpywg31e/District%20Council%20Meeting%20Final%20Master%20May%202020%20THIS%20ONE.pptx?dl=0>

**Appendix 3**

Link to chat: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/7cs5ehvqoi1i7n1/ZOOM%20CHAT.docx?dl=0>

**Appendix 4**



Link to registered attendees Y and Apologies/Not eligible N:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/f3c98g8xfracplp/22ndMayDistrictCouncilMembersList-District71-FOR%20QUORUM%20FOR%20MINUTES.xlsx?dl=0>

## Appendix 5

### District Director – John Cox’s final report:

I came into my year with high hopes – lots of new clubs in the pipeline, membership growing and Pathways creating many, many more member awards.

I’ve also always recognised that we are all volunteers, still learning in our roles, and that to many, Toastmasters is a part-time hobby.

Many of you will know that I also champion excellence. It has been a large part of my working life, seeking out what it is that differentiates the best from the rest?

Excellence features a lot in Toastmasters – what makes the best speakers, the best evaluators, the best officer teams and the best clubs?

If we are striving to be the best in what we do we should seek out the best and try to emulate them.

Toastmasters is all about our members. If we put members first, look after them, help them meet their personal goals and grow we will have a far better chance of retaining them.

So I condensed these various thoughts and focused my year on:

- Putting members first
- Aiming to help every member achieve at least one education award in the year
- Member retention and growth
- Club excellence

I also believe in cause and effect. Focus on improving the causes – all the things that impact on performance, and the results will follow.

Thanks to my DLT colleagues and our district officers we have focused on generating better data to help highlight good practice and areas for improvement. Moments of Truth has been used to enhance club quality, and Open House Guest Nights have brought more new members into our clubs. We have aimed to enhance officer education through better targeted subjects and monthly webinars. And we have raised the profile of Toastmasters in our communities - although I believe we are still a best kept secret.

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Excellence features in the Toastmasters and District Mission. It is one of our key values, but often a misunderstood subject - meaning different things to different people.

In an effort to raise the excellence banner we looked at creating a Club Excellence Award and helping to define the activities, actions and processes that would enable and drive continuous improvement, and identifying the results that demonstrates a level of excellence.

Then coronavirus struck and everything changed.

Leadership always comes to the fore in a crisis and didn't our clubs, area and divisions react and respond rapidly and effectively to the coronavirus crisis?

In no time at all many clubs began meeting online. New meeting roles were created – including Zoom masters, members were learning about online meetings and how to operate Zoom, and clubs were reaching out across the world to share ideas and create new Toastmaster friends.

The crisis also came at a sensitive time – contests were starting. But in the usual Toastmasters tradition we rose to the occasion and started running contests online

I can't thank enough the hundreds of members that have contributed to making that happen. We truly are an organisation "where leaders are made."

So here we are, nearly at the end of another Toastmasters year. Many of us can start to relax, think about our summer holidays - but now with less choice of where to go.

Sadly it will be some time before we celebrate our successes and victories at a face to face conference - we should now have been in Killarney meeting up with friends old and new – many thanks to the conference team that saw all their hard work fail to come to fruition. But conferences will return – we trust – and that gives us something to look forward to.

We come to the last few weeks of the Toastmasters year not in as good a position as we were in late February, but fortunately not in as bad a position as we could have been. Most of our clubs are back in good standing, membership payments are creeping up and many clubs are Distinguished status or better.

But let's not rest on our laurels. Let's do all we can to get those last few clubs back into good standing, charter those clubs that are close to chartering, encourage those last few members to renew their membership and find new ways to convert online visitors into members.

Can I thank you all for helping to put our members first and for helping me and the rest of the DLT to serve our members and meet our district goals.

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In 2017 when I stood for the role of Club Growth Director – I let the District Council into a little secret about my age and I asked that they help to make an old man very happy. I'm pleased to say that you have.