



The Large Munsterlander Club

Update from the Club Secretary following the Management Committee meeting – Thursday 31st August 2023

The full minutes from the above meeting will be posted on the LMC website once approved at the next meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact either Peter Disney, Karen Caile, or me, Andy Graham.

There is just one, yet very important update from the committee meeting held on 31st August regarding the Special General Meeting (SGM) that has been called for 6th October.

As you will know, the committee sent out a notice for an SGM to be held on 6th October to ratify a vote taken beforehand on the adoption of a proposed set of new rules and codes for the club. Listening to feedback from the membership, and with further clarification from the Royal Kennel Club (RKC), the SGM as proposed is not permissible under our current constitution.

The SGM on 6th October is therefore cancelled and Notice for a rescheduled SGM will be given at a later date.

The committee wholeheartedly apologises for calling the SGM without fully appreciating the commitments made to the membership and the current constitutional requirements. Whilst it may not appear so, I can say with total conviction that your committee is doing its best to serve the membership. There was and is no intention to mislead or act improperly. We are a new team doing our best.

We have been working very closely with the RKC to ensure that a rescheduled SGM will meet both the club's constitutional requirements and those of the RKC. Three key changes will be made in a rescheduled SGM. The first is to ensure the SGM can be attended in person, as well as online, and that the SGM will be structured to allow a full discussion and debate over the proposed new rules prior to taking a vote. This is what was minuted after the AGM in March 2022, so this is the commitment we need to honour. The second change is that all the voting must be held within the meeting which is required to meet our current constitution. The third is to more clearly set out and explain the changes to enable you to make an informed decision whether to vote for the changes.

The process of debate at the SGM can only allow for small amendments that do not materially alter the proposal, so we also wish to collaborate with members where there are concerns so that amendments can be prepared in advance of the SGM.

Before I set out the process leading up to a rescheduled SGM, I would like to remind everyone of the fundamental reasons for updating the rules.

- The overarching reason is that in March 2022 the membership mandated the committee to “undertake a full review of the club rules for debate and voting at the next AGM”.
- The current constitution is not up to date with RKC requirements.
- There are gaps in the rules that are essential for efficient administration of the club.
- Your committee firmly believes that maximising membership participation, and transparency, in meetings and decisions is fundamental to a healthy club. For this reason, we need to permit meetings to be both face-to-face and/or virtually and to enable voting by post or online. Our current rules are silent on this matter, and rather than relying on RKC approval, we should clearly enable this within our constitution.

In order to keep you fully informed, the process we are planning to adopt, for which we have written approval from the RKC, is set out here. The RKC approval in the form of a guidance note will be posted on the LMC website News page in addition to this report. Importantly, taking onboard members’ feedback, this process includes opportunities for discussion and debate both before and at the SGM: -

- Committee members will reach out to members who have already raised concerns to better understand their feedback regarding specific rules and/or the process.
- Where it is sensible to offer alternative wording, based on members’ feedback, we will draft alternative wording and update a Q&A document on the LMC website News page so all members can see the areas of concern and possible alternatives.
- We will host an online questions and answers session on Tuesday 26th September at 7.00pm as an opportunity for an informal discussion over matters raised so far, and any other matters members wish to raise. Zoom details are at the end of this report.
- Members not able to attend the Zoom session with questions or concerns with the rules or process can contact any of the committee via email, though preferably myself (email addresses are on the website).

The outcome at this stage of the process is vital. We need to have established a set of amended rules and codes that we can take to the SGM, where only small amendments will be permitted that clarify the proposals but do not materially alter them.

- Formal notice of the rescheduled SGM will be communicated on 2nd October to all members fully paid up on that date. This will include a full explanation of the changes as concluded following the Questions and Answers session.
- We are currently in the process of booking a hall for the SGM for Sunday 12th November. The venue will be set up for face-to-face attendance and for online attendance and voting as well.

All voting will be within the confines of the SGM, whether attendees are in person or attending online. The voting outcome will be determined by a simple majority. This means that if there are 100 members attending in person or online, 51 votes are required to carry the proposal. Abstentions are treated as a “no vote”.

I wish to conclude by saying that whilst the committee must act as a group, as your secretary, it is my responsibility to ensure the club's administration functions properly. I would respectfully ask that any issues or comments you wish to raise with the committee regarding this SGM process are sent to my LMC email address: -

secretary@largemunsterlanderclub.co.uk

I am not online 24/7, but I will endeavour to answer your emails in a timely fashion. Please note that I will not take correspondence via any other social media channel. I would also ask that commentary on social media is kept polite and respectful. Constructive criticism is fair play, but aggressive or rude narrative is simply not acceptable. I am passionate to help move the club forwards, for our dogs, and I simply ask the membership to help me and the rest of the committee on that mission.

Given the importance of communicating this to the membership as fully as possible, this statement will be posted as a downloadable PDF on the LMC website News page, and a link posted on the LMC News Facebook page. It will also be emailed in due course to members. Importantly, this email will also seek to confirm and clarify membership names and email addresses so that we can ensure complete membership communication by email in the future. Your help is much appreciated.

Kind regards

Andy Graham
LMC Secretary

ZOOM details for Questions & Answers meeting – 26th September at 7.00pm

Topic: LMC QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS RE PROPOSED NEW RULES AND CODES

Time: Sep 26, 2023 07:00 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/99703628621?pwd=SCtqRExoTzhoTENlbWgyT0FvZ3JmQT09>

Meeting ID: 997 0362 8621

Passcode: 990908