

21 August 2017

Taking forward CCCBR reform

I last wrote in late June, reporting on the intended direction of travel since the Central Council meeting in Edinburgh, and I want to take this opportunity to share an update on recent progress.

By way of a brief reminder, the Council Review and Action Group (CRAG) was set up following a vote at the Central Council's meeting in 2016. Its recommendations were brought to the Council's annual meeting in May 2017. The full CRAG report, including its scope, methodology and proposals, can be found here:

<http://cc-crag.weebly.com/>

Using the CRAG final report and its various appendices as our starting point, these are the items for action in the first few months following the votes in May:

1. Agree the Vision / Mission / Strategy (Recommendation A)
2. Appoint the "Executive" (Recommendation B)
3. Re-align Committees into Workgroups (Recommendation C)
4. Set up a team to develop and deliver the direct communications channel (Recommendation E)
5. Set up a rule-change group (the constitution piece) - with a high-calibre leader and multi-skilled team (Recommendation F)
6. Set up a decision revision group ("...permissive descriptive framework for ringing") - with a high-calibre leader and top notch team (Recommendation H)

With reference to Recommendation B, I am now pleased to advise the following as members of the inaugural Executive Team.

Christopher	O'Mahony	Executive	President
David	Kirkcaldy	Executive	Vice President, core focus on Tower Stewardship and Management
Andy	Smith	Executive	Honorary Treasurer
Mary	Bone	Executive	Honorary Secretary
Carol	Franklin	Ex officio	Honorary Assistant Secretary
Phillip	Barnes	Executive	Core focus on developing a direct communications channel (Recommendation E)
Ernie	De Legh-Runciman	Executive	Assisting with Tower Stewardship and Management
David	Smith	Executive	Core focus on Volunteer and Leadership Development
Alison	Everett	Executive	Assisting with Volunteer and Leadership Development
Caroline	Stockmann	Ex officio	Public Relations Officer

As a number of these names may not be familiar to the wider ringing community, we will shortly be putting together some brief profiles to circulate through the usual channels. The Executive team brings together an impressive range of skills, qualifications and experience, and is drawn from a broad geographical area.

Two of the early tasks of the Executive Team will be to work on Recommendation A (devise and agree a five-year strategic plan) and Recommendation C (re-alignment of Committees to Workgroups).

Although responses to my call for expressions of interest in late June were fewer than I had hoped, we have been able to move forward with other key items.

Recommendation F aims to simplify the rules of the Council, replacing them with a short statutory set of rules supported by a set of operating principles and procedures. I have invited Clyde Whittaker to coordinate this work, with a team comprising David Bleby, Dan Meyer, Pat Wheeler and Andrew Wilby.

Recommendation H relates to the development of a “descriptive permissive framework” to ultimately replace the current “Decisions” on methods – a topic that has consumed more than its fair share of airtime in recent years. I have invited Tim Barnes to lead on this work, and he is now forming a team to take this forward.

Over the next couple of months more information will be forthcoming with regard to these and other elements of our reform and renewal efforts.

The underlying motivation of the reform agenda, and the reason we’re implementing these changes, is to secure a bright future for ringing. Key areas of focus for me over these three years include:

- The need to recruit and develop new learners and new leaders
- The need to engage maturely with church and community leaders
- The need to raise positive public awareness of our art

I look forward to working with these teams to take forward the work of our central ringing organisation.

Yours in ringing,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christopher O'Mahony', with a long, sweeping underline.

Christopher O'Mahony
President
Central Council of Church Bell Ringers