

Financial Motions

Questions from one or more Regions

Can you confirm that Management Committee and non-management members are able to claim actual expenses incurred in the execution of their position? (as has been suggested in Liz Hickey's report and explained at previous meetings).

Re Honoria: How did the Branch set the specific levels for the Honoria, in particular how were the differences between levels established? We were pleased to see the music advisor included in the list of Honoria, but wondered about the thinking behind this figure.

Summer School: To what extent is it in the power of management to cover more than 50% of the accommodation if needed and was this considered when setting the level at 50%? For example if the Education and Training need attend Summer School if examination classes are held or a youth or teaching forum is not on one of the Management Committee meeting days.

Also will management committee need to pay to attend social/evening events? The accompanying explanation indicates that the branch doesn't bear the cost of social events as these are for private benefit.

While we understand this in principle, we wonder how it might work in practice. Management Committee are expected to attend some events such as Hogmanay, the President's Ball and opening night. The Youth Co-ordinator would be expected to attend the Youth night etc.

Is the expectation that the school simply allow the Management Committee to attend free of charge? Some schools would no doubt do this. However, some schools may not. While the motion relates to a specific year, these motions are often rolled over from one year to the next and so precedent can be set.

Response from the NZ Branch Treasurer

By way of background, the motions are trying to ensure that no-one is out of pocket from having volunteered to do work for the Branch while keeping the time and cost of management meetings in proportion to the benefit they give.

A key principle from the 2016 report is that actual reasonable cash expenses will be reimbursed. This was endorsed as the guiding principle by the Management Committee at its July meeting. So wherever a role with the Branch requires the holder of the position to incur a cost it will be reimbursed (so long as it is reasonable and within policy).

The time (and associated cost) of meetings has, as you know, been a recurring argument at the AGM for some time (longer than I have been attending certainly). It has also been a subject at MC meetings and interestingly was the first comment of both the management consultants who facilitated our discussions – by way of explanation David Taylor who was initially approached and agreed to help became seriously ill and died before our July meeting, he had however asked a

former colleague of his at Morrison Low to take over. Both of them separately and independently expressed surprise and interest in the extent of the summer meetings.

With the experience of regular virtual meetings over the past few years now and a desire to work more efficiently the MC have agreed that work of the summer meetings can be achieved over fewer days. This is the base point for reimbursement of accommodation. The meeting work of the MC will be carried out over fewer days, the estimate of the number of days was 4. Where there is a need to undertake other work at Summer School – say E&T for exams then that will be reimbursed under the principle of actual reasonable expenses. A side benefit of this will be that MC members will be able to spend more time not in meetings and thus available for those serendipitous encounters with fellow dancers that are so beneficial.

The evening events question is an intriguing one in that it is a point that has not been covered by NoM in previous years – when presumably “dancing” MC members paid for themselves since at most the Branch would pay/reimburse the non-dancer rate and for non-dancing MC members it was covered by the School if they were admitted without further payment. Having not been an issue before, I think it will be handled in the same way.

The approach to the Honoraria started with an examination of the purpose. As mentioned in the explanation accompanying the motion the best analogy was the “potted plant” sort of gift. The time committed in most, if not all roles, is to a fair extent dependent on the enthusiasm, energy and availability of the individual. However each role also has an element of “responsiveness” that bears on the degree of intrusion into other life. Thus some roles can determine when and how they do their work, others have to meet what is imposed or required from outside. Crudely the MC positions were allocated into 1 of 3 categories based on the assessment of the occupant and their peers. The Music Advisor has not previously been given an honorarium and rightly or wrongly was allocated into the “low intrusion” group. The other 2 honoraria are for non-MC positions and the amounts are historical (during my time the bookshop/shop keeper has not claimed it). To be frank I had neither the energy nor the motivation to consider these so they remained as they were, this might have been a mistake if it is felt they are out of line.