

Minutes

BMC South Wales Area Meeting

13 April 2017

Swansea University

Chair: Will Kilner

Number Present: 17

BMC Officer: Elfyn Jones

1. Welcome and apologies

Will welcomed everybody to the meeting. Thanks to Swansea University for provision of venue. No apologies received

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

Due to an oversight these were not uploaded to the BMC area site. Apologies for this. Information provided at last meeting from the floor regarding youth team was not accurate as the team had been more successful than minuted! See youth report. Other than this minutes accepted as a true record

3. Access and conservation

- a. EJ informed the meeting of the “Future Landscapes for Wales” report recently provided to the assembly for discussion. The report in its current form proposes major change to the purpose and governance of National Parks in Wales with a new primary purpose to be an “economic hub for rural development”.

This would open the doors to significant development within national parks. The report did not have the input of any outdoor recreational member bodies, but, following lobbying from BMC and other organisations, a debate in the assembly on the report has been deferred for a short while.

Briefing notes on the issue to be posted on the BMC site and all members are encouraged to write to their Assembly Member to make their views known.

Action: EJ to ensure briefing notes available on website. Members encouraged to contact AMs

- b. Range West briefings in Pembroke are starting soon. These will be on 14th May, 26th May (tied in with Pembroke Festival) and Whit weekend. Details on the BMC website.
- c. Mend our Mountains has been relaunched with a target of raising £1m. Two projects have bid for funding in Wales; Cadair Idris and Hay Bluff in the Black Mountains.

- d. National Trust car park at Pont ar Daf was discussed again. Views of previous meeting that funds raised should be reinvested in the area have been fed back to NT.
- e. South East Wales volunteer access representative is still needed. Matt Woodfield has agreed to extend the area he covers to include the Neath area but anyone interested in taking on this role should get in touch with WK.
- f. Bacon Hole access. Following appointment of new National Trust warden, MW and EJ to seek meeting to discuss expanding current access arrangement.
Action: EJ, MW arrange meeting with warden.
- g. Craig y Castell area of Llangattock has had recent significant rockfall. All climbers advised to be aware and take care in the area.
- h. Cilvrough Edge, Neath. This is a newly developed crag in a wooded area. The woodland manager has attempted to make contact with climbers developing the area to discuss how to manage this appropriately for all concerned but has been unable to contact them. Climbers involved in this asked to make contact via access rep (MW) or Elfyn.

Climbers developing new areas can discuss with access reps in advance in order to reduce likelihood of conflict with landowners.

4. BMC AGM

Vote of no confidence in the BMC Executive Committee has been tabled for the AGM on 22 April. The response of the BMCs honorary solicitor Martin Wragg was discussed.

As a consequence of the motion, Sport England funding that has already been approved is currently being withheld.

EJ informed the meeting that if the motion was approved, the board would have to step down, causing issues with the organisation no longer being able to authorise any spending, in addition to trying to find an entire new board.

Governance issues raised in the motion are currently under review by National Council.

All members are asked to read the information circulated and to use their vote at the AGM. Proxy votes can be sent via email up to 48 hours before the AGM if unable to attend in person.

5. Commercial Partnerships

Simon Lee, commercial partnerships manager attended the meeting to discuss proposals for commercial partnerships and seek views of the meeting. Currently 4 months in to 12 month contract to explore possible commercial revenues, in context of estimated 40% cut in the Sport England grant with further cuts possible at a later stage.

Simon explained that current commercial partnerships tend to be on individual events, competitions etc. He recommends looking into forming strategic commercial partnerships with BMC and commercial partner promoting one another. Exclusive partnerships would be made in different areas, requiring BMC to endorse the partner.

Views taken from the meeting: 40% cut of Sport England grant is around 8% of BMC overall income – can savings be made elsewhere first? EJ advised that some officer posts are currently 100% funded by Sport England.

Concern that an exclusive partnership could reduce scope for working with other partners

Could some posts be managed alongside other organisations, e.g. the youth officer working with the Association of British Climbing Walls / NICAS? Simon attending next meeting of ABC to explore these kinds of issues.

Concern raised that partner could influence policy over time if funding were tied to specific areas rather than BMC general funds. Policy would be guided by National Council but would likely need any partnership agreements to be signed off by Executive.

Mailing list should not be shared with any partner. Simon assured this would not happen. Partner deals may be shared but these would be via the BMC, not direct contact from partner.

Vote on the principle of commercial endorsements subject to appropriate safeguards: For 12, against 0, abstained 3

6. Wales area update

South Wales is now a formally constituted area of the BMC. Some area posts will need to be filled. Proposed first AGM for the area in November in line with other areas. Posts to be filled to be advertised via social media and email list with members encouraged to discuss with people who could fill these roles.

Action: info on posts to be filled and what's involved to be circulated.

WK

7. National Council update

Governance review currently underway. This should help to clarify where policy is decided between National Council and Exec. Also under consideration is induction process for new National Council reps.

Action: WK to ask for further information regarding the involvement of local areas in policy making.

8. Clubs

Several clubs roadshows were cancelled due to low turnout.

9. Youth

a. Simon Rawlinson provided info to the meeting to correct last minutes. All 3 qualifying rounds of the youth climbing series have taken place. First young people from Pembrokeshire took place and did well. South Wales as a whole is very well represented on the Wales squad with 24 team members. 2 young people from S. Wales now in the GB squad. Congratulations from the meeting for all of the young people involved and the hard work put in by walls and staff involved.

b. AMI workshops being run to get young people involved in outdoor climbing. The courses are low priced and some subsidies may also be available if needed. James McHaffie has plan to promote the workshops. WK to discuss further how walls can get involved with this.

Action: WK to look into how walls can promote the workshops.

10. Hill Walking

Strategy document previously discussed at area is now with Hill Walking implementation group. Possibility of three posts within BMC to promote and engage with hill walkers. The current strategy is on the website and feedback is requested on this from areas. Feedback can be sent back via WK or chair of hill walking group.

11. Climbing

Action re discussion of bolting at Gilwern East. This is ongoing from last meeting.

12. Events

a. Pembroke Climbing Festival taking shape. Area meeting on evening of 26th May at Manorbier YHA. Festival based at Bosherton campsite with mini workshops throughout the weekend. Range West briefing on Saturday 27th AM. Talk by James McHaffie on Sat PM.

Thanks to all involved for efforts so far in organising the event

Action: Liz Collyer to forward info to Elfyn Jones for news item on site / Summit

b. Gower Festival needs someone to take on co-ordination. Swansea Uni Mountaineering Club to be approached for this.

13. AOB

None

14. Date of next meeting

Fri 26 May, Manorbier Youth Hostel (Pembroke Climbing Festival weekend)

Actions from meeting:

Agenda Item	Action	Owner	Progress
3a	Ensure briefing notes on BMC site re 'Future Landscapes Wales' report	Elfyn Jones	
3F	Meeting with NT warden re Bacon Hole access	Matt Woodfield, Elfyn Jones	
6	Circulate info regarding area posts before AGM in November	Will Kilner	
7	Seek further info on Area roles within governance review	Will Kilner	
9b	Promote how local walls can get involved with spreading word about AML youth workshops	Will Kilner / local walls	
12a	Forward info on Pembroke festival for news article on BMC site / Summit	Liz Collyer	