

BMC North West Area Meeting

4th June 2018, Manchester Climbing Centre

MINUTES

Attendance – 19

BMC Officer in attendance – Jon Garside

Chair – Carl Spencer

Secretary – Andy Say

Area Members:

Les Ainsworth
Bill Beveridge
Laura Collier
Paul Evans
Julia Fry
Nick Galpin
Lyndon Gill
Jim Gregson
Stuart Holmes
Trevor Lowe
Crag Jones
Emily Pitts
Andy Say
Carl Spencer
Emma Timms
David Xiberas

Observers: Alison Cairns, Andy Cairns, Lynn Robinson,

Apologies. Apologies reported to meeting: Andy Blackwood, Ian Lonsdale, Paul Dewhurst.

1. Welcome. Alison Cairns, Andy Cairns, Lynn Robinson attending from the Peak Area. Lynn Robinson is the BMC VP with responsibility for NW Area. Also welcome to those members attending their first Area meeting.

2. Minutes of last meeting (18th April.)

It was pointed out that the date of meeting was wrong on minutes.

Stuart Holmes pointed out his name wasn't Steve.

LR pointed out that the current Mend our Mountains is not a crowdfunding campaign. LR also asked for the minutes to be changed as the 'Code of Conduct document was not 'hers' but was being worked on by a group of BMC staff.

In Agenda Item 5 a 't' had been missed from the word 'to' and Siddiqui has been mis-spelled.

You just can't get the staff nowadays!

3. Matters arising from the minutes.

AS asked for any progress on First Ascents list. Ongoing.

Jon Garside referred to concerns at BMC office regarding GDPR and Area officers being asked to route all Area communications through the office. AS and CS to discuss with Jon Chittenden (BMC Communications Officer)

4. Area Rep reports.

a. Access and guidebooks. LA reported:

Egerton. The bridge is now blocked and around 8 routes lost.

Brownstones. No action on access agreement. Drainage issues on hold till then.

Houghton. Peregrines chicks hatched. Relations still good with all parties and renewed access is expected at the end of June.

Stanworth. Difficulties persist with no concrete access agreement.

JG asked if all were aware of the BMC RAD app.

b. Clubs. No report.

c. Youth. Stuart Holmes reported that Roefield in Clitheroe and the Youth Zone in Chorley were seeking to recruit staff. There were also plans to create a new bouldering wall in Ellesmere Port on the recent loss of two AYC's from the local area and other resignations (to be raised at NC).

d. Hillwalking. LR reported on the recent event on Lose Hill – Mam Tor ridge, photos of which were on sale to support the Mend our Mountains campaign.

e. Youth. SH reported on a very successful Youth Series Final in Edinburgh. Area results had not been as good as in the past but there were still some highly creditable performances.

5. Role of Secretary and NC Rep. AS explained that he was not sure if he should continue in the role of secretary and NC rep, given that he is opposed to the Option A BMC proposals and firmly in the Option B camp. This has caused some personal pressure and a fear that NW Area might not get a proper hearing at NC. He asked the room to make a decision this and left the room to enable frank discussion.

EP asked if both NC Reps were acting in line with members' views. She felt they might have been pushing their own personal agendas. CS explained how things had happened at the National Council (NC). The NC meeting was extremely lively and that he and AS had tried as far as possible to follow instruction given by members at the previous area meeting. CS felt they were asked to vote on items that were beyond the ORG, but after much discussion, a consensus was reached. There were no ORG reps at that meeting, but there were lawyers and people left generally happy with the outcome, however after the meeting, the recommendations they had come up with seemed not to follow the spirit of the agreement. Further long and drawn-out discussions followed culminating in an Open Forum. Carl indicated his withdrawal of support for Option B during this process, as he felt Option A had changed considerably.

SH sought further clarification about whether the NC members were specifically acting in line with member views; Carl stated that both he and Andy had remained impartial in the sense that they represented members' views and interests at NC in spite of their own views possibly being different.

Members asked whether Andy still wanted to remain both secretary and NC rep, so it was agreed that he should be asked this. A show of hands was taken on the two separate items - remaining Secretary and remaining NC rep. Both items passed with a significant majority, although a count was not undertaken.

A member commented that he felt that often the National Council directs local areas, rather than the other way round, which should be the way things function, as a members' organisation.

AS returned to the room and assured members he was willing to continue as Secretary and NC Rep. for the time being. My thanks for these notes by EP.

Prior to discussion of the AGM member asked how it was possible for issues to be raised at NC. He has been involved with Competitions for 18 months and has a son in the Competition Squad. The BMC seems no nearer to having a parent representative on the Competitions Committee and is this an issue that could be raised at NC. He felt that the Comps Committee should seek to involve volunteers and stakeholders. He felt that many parents were unwilling to push this as they feared that it might affect selection chances. He emphasised that he felt this was more perceived than real. He did say, however, that there were real concerns about the nature of the selection process. AS to action.

- 6. AGM.** There was discussion around the current proposals to go to AGM. CS outlined the progress made at the Open Forum and the proposed development of a Memorandum of Understanding between NC and the Board if Option A is passed. CJ suggested that there needed to be a clear communications policy formulated on how to present both sides of the debate and their objectives. It was emphasised that a toughened procurements policy was needed so that members could see that Directors were not profiting from their positions. There was some debate about the selection of Directors and how members could evaluate those that were nominated and presented to AGM for endorsement.

It was pointed out that the whole voting system was based upon the availability of current emails. LR informed the meeting that 8,000 letters had been sent out to members with no current email address. AS commented that it was a departure for the BMNC to not send out a pack of papers to members. JG commented that it was all on the website.

AS informed the meeting that an 'abstain vote' would count towards the 'voting population' when percentages were calculated. Both AC and LR said that he was wrong and that in the middle of the voting process the proxy form had been changed which meant that 'abstains' would no longer be counted although some Areas had been told they would. There was further discussion about the importance of voting and the way the proxy system worked.

One last comment was about the pejorative comment attached to Item 9b on the Agenda with a query about why this was felt to be necessary.

Les Ainsworth and Lynn Robinson – both candidates for the role of President of the BMC then gave a presentation to the meeting about their positions and policies.

Our thanks to Manchester Climbing Centre for hosting the meeting and not throwing us out even though we ran on a bit.

Subsequent to the meeting (5/6/18) John Roberts contacted AS asking that his apologies be recorded; although as he had never attended a NW Area meeting this was not strictly necessary.