

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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LONDON & SOUTH EAST AREA MEETING

Meeting held at The Old Kings Head, London
On Thursday 15th February 2018 at 6.30pm

Minutes

1. **Welcome and apologies for absence - Attendance numbers 34**

Chaired Rik Payne (RP) Minutes taken by Lisa Payne (LP) BMC attendance Nick Colton (NC)

Apologies – Michelle Hart, Tony Williams, Julian King, Jonathan White & Jim Milledge

2. **Minutes of previous meeting held on 23rd November 2017**

Minutes could not be ratified as a member informed us of some inaccuracies but at the time of the meeting we were unaware of what these were.

3. **BMC representation on the MTE**

(RP) outlined the background and current situation with regards to the numbers of BMC board members on the MTE and the recommendation to reduce this from 4 to 1.

A member (AM) asked who the other voting members are and why the BMC had 4 reps. (RP) spoke about how the organisation has changed over time resulting in the makeup of the board now and (NC) went on to list some of the other voting organisations, the Scouts, the Guides & DofE to name some. (AM) wanted to know if reduced, would the remaining 3 voting positions be disbanded or shared out to other organisations. (RP) Unknown but likely to be disbanded.

(AM) wanted to know if there's anything the BMC does that would require it to have more voting involvement. (NC) confirmed that the BMC & MTE have the same registered office address and the BMC does their accounts (RP) stated that beyond that the BMC doesn't have a strategic level involvement with the MTE.

A vote for a reduction to the BMC representation on the MTE board was then taken.

The results as follows: - For 17 Against 0 Abstentions 0

4. **ORG**

(RP) went through the 3 page ORG briefing notes and timeline, line by line. (*Which is available to download from the BMC ORG Jan 2018 newsletter page*)

(RP) the extended timeline reflects the feedback from focus groups and members on whether there was enough time to do this properly.

There was praise for the amount of work done to date from the ORG and that generally the views of members was seen as positive.

The revised timeline gives an AGM in June.

Sherry Macliver (SM) wanted clarification on what members would be voting on, general principles rather than the whole 51 recommendations.

(RP) The national council will be working on a proposal for what members will be voting on.

He also confirmed his understanding that the legal costs for writing the AoA would be around £15k.

He reiterated that the BMC is not compliant with Companies Act 2006 as advised from an independent legal adviser. The BMC needs clarity in its AoA.

"Headlines" (AM) asked what the National organisations were in respect to the BMC Member and Partner Feedback section. (RP) said he would take to the National Council/Org for clarification.

"Corporate Structure" (RP) confirmed that the legal advice is that the BMC are not structured to be able to change to charity status and that the best fit for the organisation is a Company Limited by Guarantee.

(RP) mentioned that some have queried exactly what "independent" means when in reference to the Independent Board members, he explained that these positions were based on the useful skills and experience that they could bring to the role and that they had previously had no links to the BMC.

He briefly mentioned the 3 independent Directors and their key area of experience, Matthew Bradbury, Simon McCalla & Amanda Parshall, who between them bring a variety of skills from Legal, IT and running an Outdoor Company/Trust.

(RP) spoke about the balance that needs to be struck, the board could have up to 1 third of its directors elected by the membership and the membership need to understand in practice how it would work in terms of accountability of the board by its members.

(RP) Spoke about last year's AGM MoNC and that it was their democratic right to do this, which they are fully entitled to do, the reality is that the organisation can't have that happening every year as it's so disruptive and costly to the organisation. A huge amount of staff time was used to deal with the MoNC. It's important to get the right structures and the processes in place to ensure a grievance process can deal with disagreements without the necessity for a MoNC, but more importantly to have a process of communication to ensure the BMC understands the wishes of its members.

(AM) will the National Council agree on the timeline at the weekend (RP) Yes

(RP) asked for a reaction to the proposed timeline and the general response was positive.

5. National Council

(RP) spoke about queries members had on the implementation costs – he confirmed that this wasn't part of the ORG's remit and that the National Council will be discussing and proposing the implementation plan with feedback from the members.

He confirmed that the legal representation to the ORG is independent and brought in by the ORG and not influenced by the BMC staff or Exec.

The recommendations are unlikely to be voted on in one package but more likely to be in blocks.

At this point (NC) brought attention to an email from Julian King (JK) which on his request was read out. Also the corrections of the previous meeting minutes we'd been waiting for, were confirmed.

(JK) Raised concern about who will be implementing the recommendations of the report.

(JK) Has concerns that the revised timeline still doesn't give adequate time for the members to consider the final version before an AGM in June. (JK) also questioned why we are dealing with the ORG recommendations at an AGM and felt that such matters should be dealt with at an EGM or perhaps two EGM's.

For clarity on (JK's) last point below is a copy of the text from his email

"What I see is a change process being driven by a nameless 'inner circle' within the BMC, who have little regard for the current due process of this organisation, all centred on a single aim, to acquire money from Sport England. To do that it would appear this group is consciously or unconsciously prepared to alter the BMC so fundamentally it will never be in the future what it was created for, a council of members democratically managing the world of climbing on their behalf."

(RP) responded to the issue of implementation that (JK) raised confirming that the ORG was put in place by the National Council and therefore its recommendations and implementation will be dealt with by the National Council

The discussions then continued.

(AM) concerned that due to the legal exposure that we could run out of people willing to be involved especially if the BMC isn't compliant. (RP) National Council and Chairs of specialist committees could currently be held legally accountable, this is what the ORG is trying to get right.

6. Reports from Area Representatives

6.1 Clubs (SM) L&SE has the largest number of clubs in its region and was sharing the Clubs rep role but unfortunately Colette has had to step down so we are looking for another rep to help Sherry.

Clubs seminar planned to be on the same weekend as the AGM (June)

GDPR – Data protection coming into effect in May – they will be trying to organise a workshop in April, all Clubs have been advised of the new requirements.

Rumoured to be a discussion on subscriptions at the National Council (RP) would report back if there was a discussion.

(SM) & (RP) informed the room about the Mend our Mountains (MoM) "Make a Million" official launch at the SHaff film festival in March.

There are discussions with Carey Davies and the Clubs Committee to look at ways that Clubs can get involved in fundraising and publishing the campaign, could be very exciting for Clubs.

6.2 Youth (RP) attended the YCS at the Reach this year and was pleased to see 131 young climbers competing.

6.3 Hillwalking Chris Stone (CS) spoke about last month's walk in the Chilterns, despite the weather as great day was had by all, the walk was joined by Nick Kurth (BMC acting President)

The next walk is on the 17th March, start time 10am at the South Downs, Devil's Dyke.

A reminder that there is MoM Merchandise on the BMC shop website to help support the fundraising.

The staff of the South Downs will be doing an event to raise awareness for the area and the work to be done in the South Downs and BMC members are invited to join. Also spoke about the upcoming "Dark Skies" festival.

Also the BMC TV has some great videos particularly the "women in adventure film" of which there are around 30 films on there to view. The winner will be announced at SHaff.

6.4 Access (RP) reported on the decision the HRMG came to regarding access to the Isolated Buttress and that a Bridge would look to be installed.

(AM) Queried the type of bridge (RP) Likely to be 1m wide with handrails

(AM) would planning permission be needed? (RP) likely yes, and I'm sure the BMC are looking at this.

(AM) would the general public have access? (RP) in all likelihood yes

7. **AOB**

7.1 (NC) informed the room about an email from a member regarding the Crystal Palace National Sports Centre and the hope that the current Climbing wall could be modernised and expanding the facilities. (RP) we weren't able to attend the last round of consultations.

Andrew Bone (AB) is local to the area and has volunteered to look at this and see if he can attend any consultation dates and report back to the area. (LP) to forward him any relevant information.

7.2 Before the meeting was called to an end (RP) read out corrections to the past minutes from (JK) All corrections were accepted by the room, except for his last point, a statement that (JK) thought should be attributed to the (ORG) - (RP) read this particular statement to the room, it was opened up for discussion and the room agreed that the statement was attributed correctly to (RP) and accurate in its recording.

The members then voted and ratified the minutes based on the corrections and the agreement that the above statement was accurate in its relating and attribution.

8. **Date and location of next Area Meeting**

April 19th 2018 7pm - Guest Speaker Mary Ann Ochota

Following the meeting, there was an excellent presentation from Dan Mazur and a raffle prize of a fingerboard from Entre Prises.