

BMC Mid Wales Meeting

White Lion, Machynlleth 13/09/2016

Minutes

Present: Emily Groves (EG), Joanna Preybyl (JP), Mark Bramich (MB), Lei Bramich (LB), Terry Taylor (TT), Joe Dean (JD), Ian Stevens (IS), Neil Partridge (NP), Dave Turnbull (DT), Dave Williams (DW), Pete Trickey (PT), Peter Cooper (PC), Don Sargeant (DS); Tim Sparrow (TS).

Apologies: Sy Finch-Thomas (SFT), Huw Gilbert (HG), Doug Kerr (DK), Jane Lloyd-Francis (JLF), Gary Morgan (GM); Andrew Williams (AW).

Minutes from last meeting (Wiff Waff, Aberystwyth) were, unfortunately, unavailable due to theft of laptop computer from car.

Welcome and apologies

PT welcomed all, and in particular Dave Turnbull: CEO of The BMC.

1. Election of Secretary

Nobody volunteered.

2. Mid Wales Guidebook and Rhinogydd (*Rhinogs*) Guidebook

DW advised that Mid Wales guide is not yet ready for printing and Rhinogydd guide is currently on hold due to sheer volume of new-routing.

3. Cambrian Way Bothy

DW informed the meeting that negotiations for a new bothy in the Rhinogydd area are well underway. If it goes ahead it will be 2 miles from nearest main road. It was recalled that there has been a historical objection to a bothy on the Cambrian Way from the BMC.

DT enquired if it was known why there was an objection and how long ago was this?

DW replied exact nature was not recalled “before our time” but it went back to the 1970s.

DW to inform when more details known and, if possible, the nature of historical objection.

4. Llanymynech Quarry: Nomad Area

TT informed that the North Wales Bolt Fund have now re-equipped with maillons. Elfyn Jones (BMC) has been involved and asked for this information to be passed on.

5. Coed y Brennin Management Plan

DW has had meeting with Chief of forestry at Coed y Brennin, both crags in the forest were not included in their management plan. Response has been very positive to climbers accessing the crags and will be included in Rhinogydd guide.

6. Presentation by Dave Turnbull (BMC CEO) with Q&A afterwards

D^U gave an illustrated presentation to explain process which led up to this summer’s announcement that the BMC was to change name to Climb Britain.

Explained that grant for consultation process had been available to BMC at no cost, had been a very useful process to undertake and would assist in identifying how it could: grow membership, attract sponsorship and make up the shortfall of £1-1 ½ million in budget that is coming.

PT thanked D^U and read out questions emailed in from members who sent in apologies. HW questioned why membership of BMC were not consulted first, could commercial sponsorship not be sought and was there a reason as to why membership was growing steadily it was only at 4%?

TT Liked 'council' because it said what it is and what it does, adding that BMC was instantly recognisable in Alpine huts and elsewhere internationally.

DS concurred, adding that the BMC has a very powerful logo too.

PC When a re-brand is done it has to be stronger than the previous one and the BMC has spent 70 years developing this into a strong global brand. This solution does not meet the requirements.

LB Considered BMC to be a global 'gold-standard'.

It was generally Questioned "what is it for?".

DT It has to be relevant for new people coming into the sport/climbing, need to have a strong brand to attract sponsorship; which is crucial because of upcoming shortfall in grant.

DW Climb Britain may cause schism and lead to losing members yet BMC name may also lead to schism.

LB This could also lead to loss in membership/finance, which this was supposed to be about solving.

DW Naming is important, has to be all Welsh or all English (eg: Climb Cymru, mixing words, is wrong. BMC Cymru – mixing acronyms is ok, like with RSPB.). Welsh speakers and Welsh climbers (including British mountaineers/climbers) should strongly reject; it's wrong and it's weak branding. It also does not follow Welsh Government guidelines for grants backs this up.

DT thought he'd seen this done often and thought it was ok to do; now sees that it is not correct.

IS seen as old-fashioned and alienating younger generation, indoor climbers do not see the BMC as relevant. Did like Climb Britain and welcomed change.

JD BMC would be best as an umbrella brand with separate branding for sub-areas such as indoor climbing.

JP Important not to lose strong identity and trust in it that's been built over long time.

EG Targeted branding under BMC needed.

DT It would be a challenge with so many disciplines under BMC.

LB Seems that more money needs to be spent to successfully make more money.

DT Concurred, in that membership is critical for finances, no secret that rebrand is about best way of securing more sponsorship. A commercialisation manager may be needed to coordinate team sponsorships etc.

LB asked who did the final decision lie with?

DT the officers who had gone around the UK attending meetings, such as this one, would be feeding back on the upcoming weekend.

At this point a vote was taken amongst attendees

Option 1 – No change 0/14 votes

Option 2 – Full Rebrand 1/14

Option 3 – Stay BMC and find other use for Climb Britain 14/14

Option 4 – Explore other name options 5/14.

Once voting completed, DT provided range of voting results from other meetings.

Option 1 – 25-35%

Option 2 – 0-10%

Option 3 – 75%+

Option 4 – 20-50%

DT Option 3 will be taken on Executive Council's weekend meeting. Adding that with its members, committed staff and volunteers they hope to go forward successfully; implementation will start in 3 – 6 months.

TS Thought that it was good that the BMC had consulted and admitted it got it wrong.

This was supported in the room.

DT was thanked for his time.

7. AOB

TT has had an enquiry from Aberystwyth Scouts asking if they could get instruction.

IS A Scouts permit would be needed for indemnity issues.

IS Queried where information could be found to get up-to-date information on Mid-Wales climbs, he's been in Aberystwyth 6 years and didn't know because guide out of print.

DW Mini-PDFs have been taken off the web because new guide is due; hopefully by summer 2017. Sales are needed to fund next area's guide, need to sell as many as possible – 3,500 gritstone climbs in Rhinogydd. Pointed to UKC site as being of help.

PT pointed to BMC Mid-Wales group as a good way to stay informed they're very social too.

JD Aberystwyth (Uni) Mountaineering Club meets Tuesdays' 8/9pm at Ship and Castle, Aberystwyth; term-time. All welcome.

8. Date of next meeting

Early January 2017, venue to be decided.