

BMC Cymru: An Options Paper

Context

The intention of this paper is to stimulate discussion in order that member perspectives emerge that can inform the direction in which the concept of BMC Cymru should be developed. Nothing in the paper should be taken to have any status other than being a stimulus for discussion: hence the paper is phrased in terms of “options”, of which there may be more that emerge through this discussion. In terms of timeline, there can be advantages if this can be aligned with the BMC’s strategic planning process, hence firm intentions will need to have been established by mid-September.

1. Purposes

Options in terms of what might be included within purposes for BMC Cymru include:

- being a representative voice for BMC members and affiliated clubs in Wales
- working with partners in Wales (including possibly Sport Wales – see **Annexe below**)
- responding to the BMC on matters of policy and delivery where there are impacts and implications for Wales that need to be considered, taking into account the interests of members within Wales and those who visit Wales
- providing representation for Wales in contexts where the BMC also engages with Scotland and Ireland.

2. Ways of Working and Resources

2.1 Working relationship

Options for the working relationship between the BMC and BMC Cymru might include:

- for all strategy/policy/development themes and initiatives, the BMC would always proactively consider implications and solutions for Wales alongside the implications and solutions for England
- one way of achieving this would be to refer all relevant matters of the above kind to BMC Cymru on the basis that the BMC would not reach any decision concerning Wales until the matter had been considered and reported on by BMC Cymru
- the BMC could be enabled to delegate its powers on any matter to BMC Cymru (noting that an arrangement of this kind existed for Scotland during an earlier period)

2.2 Partnerships

There are also options in terms of the partnership contexts in which BMC Cymru might choose to work. Even with limited resources, the BMC is already active in some partnerships in Wales (e.g. in north Wales, within Partneriaeth Awyr Agored / The Outdoor Partnership; in the south-west with the Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum, and across Wales through Adventure Smart), but there are also partnership contexts in Wales from which BMC may be currently absent.

2.3 Capacity

Two key factors impacting on the capacity of BMC Cymru would be: a. the extent to which the BMC is able to commit additional resource for deployment in Wales [currently one 0.8fte post] and, b. the extent to which access can be gained to funding streams within Wales.

3. Status

There would appear to be two main options for BMC Cymru:

- BMC Cymru as a defined **section** within the BMC, with its budget defined as a “restricted fund”
- BMC Cymru as a **subsidiary** of the BMC, with its own set of audited accounts which would also be included within accounts for the “BMC group”.

Sport Wales has been asked for advice on this in the context of a possible partner submission in the autumn, and a discussion is being arranged shortly.

Both options would require technical consideration and consultation with National Council, with the creation of a subsidiary requiring approval of the Council and or referral direct to Voting Members.

4. Governance

4.1 BMC Cymru will need to be seen to be drawing together the three regions (North, Mid and South), so its committee (if a section) or board (if a subsidiary) could, as an example, be comprised of 4 BMC members from the North, 2 from Mid Wales and 4 from the South.

4.2 Election onto the BMC Cymru committee or board could be either a. by appointments from the area meetings or b. by a nomination and voting process for BMC members based in Wales.

4.3 There are options in terms of requirements/expectations set regarding composition, e.g. that each of North and South appointments should include at least one club member or that each of North, Mid and South appointments should include at least one from each gender.

4.4 In terms of co-ordination, it may be helpful if those formally representing BMC Cymru on partner bodies are themselves members of the BMC Cymru committee or board.

4.5 Initial terms of appointment might be varied, so that not all members of the committee or board have their terms ending at the same time (e.g. half the members could have an initial term of 2 years, with the other half having an initial term of 3 years – thereafter all have 3 year terms).

4.6 The committee or board would need to consider whether to appoint both a chair and vice-chair in order to provide a sustainable basis for managing the meetings. Secretarial services would be provided by a member of the BMC staff.

4.7 Options for size of quorum might be a. 4 or b. 5 members. A further option would be whether the quorum should state at least one present from North, Mid and South (or at least one from North and South).

4.8 The Chair of the BMC Board and any BMC directors based in Wales could be invited to attend as observers at meetings of BMC Cymru.

5. Communications

A micro website would need to be developed to cover BMC material relating to Wales, designed with a “toggle” facility between Welsh and English language pages.

A Welsh language policy would need to be implemented for BMC Cymru. Translation services would need to be employed (possibly alongside volunteer contributions).

BMC Cymru would be able to communicate by email with members based in Wales through the means already available to the BMC office (as already happens for communications relating to area meetings).

6. Next Steps

Initial responses to the above would assist in determining the appetite for next steps. In line with the approach mapped out by the Organisational Development Group (ODG), it might then be possible to proceed as follows:

Phase 1 might comprise the following, providing essentially a SWOT analysis:

- compile a matrix highlighting areas of work the BMC is involved in Wales and how effectively this work is being carried out

- analyse the matrix, capture the information to propose specific recommendations in order to identify options
- research the corporate structures available to allow the BMC to take advantage of funding opportunities from bodies, including the Welsh Assembly, that hold requirements for a specific presence by a body in Wales in order for that body to receive regional specific funding from them.

Phase 2 might then comprise:

- examine resource allocation, providing the evidence needed so that the BMC can set priorities and make informed decisions that reflect the importance of Wales to climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers who live in or visit Wales
- carry out a full cost / benefit analysis of whether it is of benefit to create a sub-group for Wales / Cymru and should any proposals be made articulate a clear business case for any recommendations of any such a structure.
- if required, define corporate structure and supporting rationale; make recommendations on its governance and operations.

Gareth Pierce, 21 May 2019

Annexe

Working with Sport Wales

The earliest opportunity to make a partnership submission to Sport Wales is in November 2019, potentially based on a three-year plan (details of submission requirements will become available over the summer months).

Working with the Sport Wales strategy (BMC attended a pre-launch briefing in April) will require recognition that the contextual framework for the strategy includes the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act; the “five ways of working”; the vision for sport in Wales; prosperity for Wales; the Equality Act and the Welsh Language Act. The focus within the strategy will be on the conditions that are required in order to deliver the outcomes (rather than placing an over-emphasis on quantitative outcomes). The “guiding lights” for the strategy include a clear purpose and role; clarity of directions and intent (focus); a shift in approach; partnership and collaboration; future generations.

The Sport Wales **ambition** is to be a “pioneering organisation that enables sport in Wales to thrive – whenever, wherever, for ever (for life)”. The **purpose** is to enable sport in Wales to thrive. The **approach** will reflect a shift to working in a different way, developing strong relationships and understanding what does partnership working look like from both sides. There will be a new **investment** strategy and new decision-making processes.

The strategic **intent** is based on being person-centred; giving every young person a great start; ensuring everyone has the opportunity to be active through sport; bringing people together for the long term; showcasing the benefits of sport (to make the case for further investment). **Investment principles** (relevant for the deployment of resources as well as money) are prioritisation, long-termism, integration, collaboration and involvement. **Priority areas** are described as communication; participation (provision of opportunities); progression; performance; success.

The “**progression**” stage is seen as recognising that individuals don’t go straight from “participation” to “performance”, the progression stage being the one where retention is important and includes involvement with clubs, etc. “**Participation**” can be recreational and there is a need to recognise that individuals go back to earlier stages when taking up a new sport (e.g. in later life after reaching a “performance” stage in a previous sport). The “**communication**” stage is seen as including parental communication, including for early years. There is a recognition that people who are active need opportunities that are not just within competitive sport, including in “non-traditional” sports.

There is an option for BMC Cymru to engage with Sport Wales within 2019; the other option is to defer this, accepting that it could be 2022 (assuming a three-year cycle) before a further significant investment round occurs.