

BMC North West Area Meeting

19th November 2018, The Oak Royal Hotel, Withnell

MINUTES

Attendance – 22 (18M: 4F)

BMC Officer in attendance – Dave Turnbull (DT); John Roberts - Vice President (JR)

Chair – Carl Spencer; Secretary – Andy Say

Area Members –

Les Ainsworth (LA)
Robert Aspland
Bill Beveridge
Andy Cairns
Chico Cheetham
Paul Evans
Duncan Frost
Cathy Gordon
Tim Greenhalgh
Stuart Igoe
Philippa Maye
John Roberts (JR)
Andy Say
Jim Symon
Carl Spencer (CS)
Mike Spooner
Jenny Underwood
Mark Underwood
George Wostenholme
Gareth Williams

Observers: Alison Cairns

1. **Apologies.** Apologies reported to meeting: Andy Blackwood, Lyndon Gill, Jim Gregson, Stuart Holmes, Crag Jones, John Shaw, Emily Pitts, Andy Stratford.
2. **Annual General Meeting**

Chair's Report: CS gave a report on the last year. He outlined a/ the re-organisation of the governance of the BMC, b/ The outstanding weather enjoyed: dry crags and a lot of local activity and c/ The continuing success of the Wilton Fest under the great care and organisation of Tim Greenhalgh.

Before commencing the election of officers and representatives LA pointed out that the NW area need a Lancashire rep. on the Guidebooks committee. Anyone interested should contact Ian Carr of that Committee.

Election of officers/ reps.

CS announced that he would not be contesting the election for Chair as he had always said that if anyone else wanted to take over he would step aside. Emily Pitts was duly elected as Chair with votes 12 For and 1 Abstain.

AS standing down as Secretary and Paul Evans proposed by LA and seconded by CS was duly elected with votes 12 For and 1 Abstain. AS was thanked for his work over the last two years.

National Council Representative. CS standing for re-election. Re-elected with votes 13 For. One National Council Representative position remains vacant. Stuart Holmes happy to stand in when necessary but could not make next meeting.

Access. LA reported to the meeting that he was willing to continue to work on Access for the climbers of the NW area but was unwilling to attend further meetings. With this clarification he was re-elected with 12 votes For and 1 Abstention.

AYC and Walls Representative. Stuart Holmes was willing to stand for re-election and was duly re-elected with 12 votes For.

AS pointed out that the Area does not have a Clubs Representative nor a Hillwalking Representative. These are both area where the Area has been lacking of late. LA suggested that the Area clubs be circulated to seek a Rep. and DT asked if CS and AS could write an article highlighting this lack and seeking volunteers. Mike Spooner indicated that he would be willing to help with Clubs communications but would not be able to take on a full Rep role.

3. Minutes of the last meeting.

Accepted as an accurate record.

4. Matters arising from the minutes

3. Both AS and CS had followed up on the issue raised by David Xiberas – resolved.

4d. There had been discussion at National Council regarding support for volunteers.

4. New Independent Director has just been appointed to head BMC Board.

AOB. Suggestion that all meetings (NC and Board) be recorded made at NC

5. Area Rep reports.

a. Access. Nothing to report on Access. LA reported that the supplement of new routes and First Ascent details had been completed and would be freely circulated.

b. Youth. SH had submitted a written report. Development Squad selection had received better feedback than in the past. The Youth Climbing Series has been redeveloped in format for 2019. SH felt that Zoe Spriggins at the BMC office was to be commended for her hard work.

c. Walls. Highlighted concerns about reported failure of Fixe anchors.

6. Wilton Fest.

This continues to be the biggest such BMC event. Attendance was again around 450 with support from various sponsors and exhibitors and masterclasses available for members. Plans are already being developed for 2019 with the weekend of 31st of August pencilled in as the date. JR proposed a vote of thanks to Tim Greenhalgh for all his hard work and this was endorsed by the whole meeting.

7. National Council and Communications

AS reported on problems arising from the request that Area officers do not communicate directly with members. Had been unable to get an email sent out with document links as it had been 'covered' by an Area Newsletter. LA asked how an Area Newsletter was produced with no input from the Area. AS further reported that, again, we were having an Area meeting with no sight of the National Council Agenda. This makes it very difficult for NC reps to canvass opinion on topics for discussion.

8. BMC Strategic Plan and Organisational Development Group

DT gave an overview of the need to develop a review of the BMC Strategic Plan given the changes to Governance brought about by the requirements of the Organisational Review Group. LA queried whether all of the recommendations were to be implemented. DT responded that costing and evaluation of the recommendations was still needed.

JR introduced the current developments with an emphasis on the need for member communication. It was anticipated that there would be a BMC 'sub-site' developed for Area use. AS pointed out the current difficulty for members in having to 'dig out' documents that were requiring feedback.

There is currently a twin focus on both Governance and Operational issues with several groups starting to work on: the future structure and role of the National Council; the Board of Directors; the BMC Strategy Review; the issue of whether Wales should have an 'arms-length' subsidiary body; the role of BMC Partners and a possible Council for them to feedback to the Board (and how they relate to NC) and Member Engagement. Feedback on all of these issues is sought from members as some will need to go to the BMC AGM in March leaving little opportunity for discussion.

DT reported that Sport England funding had finally been agreed in principle but not yet received. It has been a very difficult two years for the BMC and at times the organisation and staff have struggled. The demands are still high and staff may simply not have the capacity to undertake all that the membership hope for Nationally; whilst many members want to focus more on Local issues.

It may be possible for the BMC to request extra funding but the likelihood is that in the near future either subscriptions will need to increase by £3 or £4 or priorities will have to be limited. DT felt that currently 30 staff and innumerable volunteers were at capacity.

Meeting concluded at 9.45pm

Next meeting: Tuesday 29 January 2019 – venue TBC.

Further 2019 Meetings: 19 March; 4 June; 10 September; 26 November.