



Organisational Development Group Update to Areas

August / September 2020

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Organisational Development Group Update

The impact of the national lockdown caused by COVID-19 on the BMC, its members and the entire outdoor community was and continues to be significant and unprecedented. It is affecting all aspects of our lives and impacting on all of the activities we love, and will continue to do so for some considerable time.

The Organisational Development Group (ODG) has continued to work hard with staff and volunteers over the past few months to continue to review, consult and provide further recommendations in response to the work by the Organisation Review Group (ORG).

The greatest impact on the ODG was caused by the changes to the 2020 AGM and the move to holding it online. No resolutions in response to the work of the ODG were taken to the membership for approval meaning these have been deferred to the 2021 AGM. In particular this affected the approval of the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Members' Council (the reconstituted National Council), recruitment of Nationally Elected Councillors and the anticipated Article changes that would have been presented if the meeting was held Face to Face.

Having worked out the implications on what and how we would continue to deliver against the ORG recommendations in the context of COVID-19 the team have still been able to complete a considerable amount over the past four months. An interesting time with some rethink about timelines, methods of engagement and issues raised about working virtually with members has impacted our work on the future Article of Association.

There are currently two papers out for members consultation related to the work of the ODG; the Members' Council Terms of Reference (available [here](#)) and proposed voting procedures for AGM's and GM's (available [here](#)). We would like to hear your view by Friday 11th September.

Summary of work that has taken place between May and August:

1. Pwyllgor Cymru y CMP (BMC Wales Committee) has now formed. The first meeting took place on the 27th May with the following on 13th July. The group has already contributed to the organisation and members by supporting the work on COVID-19 and access in Wales. Further updates will come directly from the committee.
2. The consultation with Clubs and club members on the Clubs Strategy was completed and we are pleased to say that most of the feedback was very positive. Thanks to Mike Spooner and the rest of his team for all their work on the development of the Clubs Strategy. The full paper will be discussed at the next Board meeting 30/8/2020
3. Work by Roger Murray, David Brown and Jon Garside on the review of specialist committees continues with all the Chairs of committees having now been interviewed. The report is currently being prepared for initial consultation with the Specialist committees, National Council and the Board which will occur in September before being more widely consulted on with the members.
4. The hard work of the work stream led by Helen Wilson on the reconstitution of the National Council which will become the Members' Council now sits under the National Council and reports to them and the Board (as required) as they progress the consultation with Members. The Members' Council ToR has been to National Council and the Board for consultation and has now been issued to the members for consultation (**see page 4**). We are grateful to everyone who attended the member's webinar in July to hear about the proposed ToR and provide feedback. The full ToR document along with a summary of the proposed structure and aims of the Members' Council is available on ODG Website. Following the consultation period, updates will be made with the final version of the ToR being shared with members ahead of the November area meetings.
5. ToR for areas have been out to consultation with Area Chairs and Secretaries and will be going to National Council on the 19th September before being shared with the membership ahead of the November area meetings. National Council is in the process of establishing a Task & Finish group which will carry out a more detailed review of areas.

6. The Governance Working Group (GWG) was formed in August 2019 to further evolve and consolidate the changes instigated in 2018, and to provide some of the checks and balances that are still outstanding in ways that satisfy governance requirements and meet the expectations of the majority of our members. The report is being finalised and will be issued to members shortly.
7. The paper on the Future of the ODG (**see below**) was explained at the AGM supported by the Board and National Council and sets out how the ODG will evolve to a bring it to completion and carry out an evaluation of the changes that have been put in place.
8. We have disbanded the subsidiary work stream due to complexity of the varied relationships and funding arrangements and this work has passed to the Board. The Board has started working with individual trusts, holding a strategy day held with the BMC Access and Conservation Trust in June with the potential for similar events with Mountain Heritage Trust, Mountain Training Trust and Land Management Trust which will be based on a short paper from the ODG on areas of focus. Further we have included this as a priority for the Board in the 2021 strategic This included Future of the ODG.

It is recognized that there is an increasing degree of ODG fatigue in terms of membership consultation on, the often, complicated papers to deliver aspects of ORG recommendations. Further the actual implementation of the changes is not what ODG is about and we need to move responsibility to those who can now deliver on our behalf, allowing ODG to move to its final stage of organisational change.

A lot of work has gone into the ODG work both by staff and volunteers and the increase in membership fee last year was in part to fund ODG recommended changes, therefore we have a duty to demonstrate to our members the benefits accrued as a result of the changes undertaken.

A paper on the Future of ODG was debated by the Board and the overall approach agreed, which National Council subsequently approved. This paper proposes a way forward to enable us to address these issues with the following two-pronged approach.

1. Extension to the ODG for four areas

That the ODG should continue with a smaller group to September 2020 to complete the initial reports on the following recommendations to go to the Board and NC:

- Clubs Strategy
- Digital Strategy
- Specialist Committee Review
- Articles of Association changes

Further that we disband the Subsidiaries work stream due to the complexity of the individual relationships with the various organisations and request that the Board to take on this work, some of which has already being initiated. This includes ACT, MHT, MTT and LMT and will be based on a short paper from ODG on areas of focus.

We will allow time from September to January 2021 for work to continue to embed, along with any other actions that need to be initiated by DT, GP, LR.

2. ODG assurance stage

During the embedding time we agree with the Board and NC the Terms of Reference for the next stage of ODG life – the assurance/evaluation stage. This stage will review the actions taken in order to deliver the ORG recommendations and assess the return on our investment. The process will start with considering those actions taken in the early stages of our change process and continue via an agreed plan.

The process of carrying out the work on assurance/ evaluation to begin in January 2021 in order to inform the Strategic review later in the year, and then be completed by the 2022 AGM.

There is a need for the members of this group to have some degree of independence from the current work stream leads to ensure a fair appraisal. Further it should include the membership engagement Director in order to ensure that we share and celebrate the success stories along the way.

The full paper can be read [here](#)

Members' Council Terms of Reference

The British Mountaineering Council (BMC) is a membership organisation. The Members' Council (the Council) is the representative body of the BMC's members (the Members) in accordance with the Articles of Association (AoA) and these Members' Council Terms of Reference (ToR).

The Council is the custodian of the views and priorities of the Members under the leadership of the President. Its aim is to ensure the views of the Members are fully and transparently acted on by guiding the BMC on policy, on the Strategic Plan (Strategy), and ensuring the effective use of Members' subscriptions. To achieve this aim the Council has set itself four primary Ambitions:

1. Effective engagement with Members:

- a. Councillors to engage with and encourage feedback from their own constituencies, in order to gain a clear understanding of Members' wishes, issues, and aspirations.
- b. Where a matter is agreed to be significant, it will be taken to Council for development and resolution and passed on to the Board or where action is warranted.

2. Effective engagement with all parts of the BMC:

- a. Councillors will interact and encourage discussion with all parts of the BMC to identify the business and the activities in which Members should be engaged.
- b. Key issues will be identified, discussed and developed within Council. Council will then direct feedback to the most appropriate part of the BMC organisation - which could include Board, Committees, Areas and the wider membership.

3. Role of "Critical Friend to the Board":

- a. Council to oversee, support and scrutinise the Board's performance against the Strategy and ensure that Members' interests are represented.
- b. Work in partnership with the Board to ensure that all reserved matters as defined in Schedule One of the AoA are clearly and transparently delivered (See Appendix 1).
- c. Scrutinise and critique the performance of the Board against the approved Strategy, which encompasses Specialist Committees and Partner organisations facilitated by the appointees - Council Nominated Directors (CNDs), to Finance & Audit Committee (FAC) and Nominations Committee (NomCom) aided by the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

4. Outreach beyond core BMC business:

- a. To both learn from and to influence the sector, and also to increase membership, in particular by engaging with under-represented groups.
- b. To consider the wider environment in which UK mountaineers and the BMC operate and provide guidance to the BMC Board & senior leadership to enhance the Strategy.

The Council realises that it is a challenging task to deliver the Four Ambitions and thus there is a need for good organisation and communication whilst also respecting Members' aspirations. Council will be a creative, collaborative and enjoyable environment, where volunteer time is most effectively used and valued. The BMC ethics and ethos are vital in all that the Council does.

The full Member's Council Terms of Reference and a presentation on the development process can be found [here](#)

Please send any comments, questions or feedback to MembersCouncil@thebmc.co.uk by 11th September

Proposed Voting Procedures

The BMC has used a number of voting methods over the last few years and the Governance & Compliance Officer, and Andy Syme (Deputy President), felt that standardising the approach would be beneficial for staff and members.

This was discussed at the Governance Working Group and the paper was agreed with the proviso that it should eventually be incorporated into the 'Director's Governance Manual' and that sections of this would be available to members.

The paper was discussed by National Council in June and a document was approved for release to the membership with the caveat that options on edge cases need to be considered.

Key Points of paper:

There are 2 methods which are considered fair, rigorous and able to be implemented by staff on the day and through electronic voting platforms.

These apply to all voting at AGMs & GMs.

Areas may apply these procedures if appropriate but are not mandated to do so.

This document will eventually be included within a wider governance manual which will be available to members.

This would result in a change to the AoA whereby any current description of voting processes would be updated to refer to the Voting Procedure document.

Action Required

Members are asked to:

1. Provide their views on the proposed Election Voting Procedure as a process to be adopted post the next AoA update.
2. Provide their feedback on the 2 'edge case' processes and any preferences they have between the 2 proposals.

The full paper can be viewed [here](#).

Feedback should be sent to Lucy Valerio (Governance & Compliance Officer) - lucy@thebmc.co.uk by 11th September.