

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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BMC NATIONAL COUNCIL

Minutes of the Interim 67.1 National Council meeting held via Zoom on
Saturday 9th May 2020
9:30am – 1:00pm

In attendance

Voting members:

President	Lynn Robinson	(LR)	Chair
Cymru North Wales	Dan Lane	(DL)	
Cymru South Wales	Steve Quinton	(SQ)	
Lakes & Council Nominated Director	Fiona Sanders	(FS)	
Lakes	Mike Parsons	(MP)	
London & South East	Chris Stone	(CS)	
North East	Jon Punshon	(JP)	
Peak	David Brown	(DB)	
Peak	Alison Cairns	(AC)	
South West	Helen Wilson	(HW)	
South West	Philip Wilson	(PW)	
Yorkshire & Deputy President	Andy Syme	(AS)	
Yorkshire	Mick Green	(MG)	

Observers:

Chair, Board of Directors	Gareth Pierce	(GP)
CEO	Dave Turnbull	(DT)
Nominated Director	Jonathan White	(JW)
Clubs Committee	Peter Salenieks	(PS)

Others in attendance:

Note Taker	Rob Bishop	(RB)
Organisational Development Group	Roger Murray	(RM)

Note: * = supporting paper circulated.

- | | Actions |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Welcome & apologies for absence | |
| 1.1 Apologies: Robert Dufton and Peter Judd. | |
| 2. Note Conflicts of Interest | |
| 2.1 No conflicts of interest were declared. | |
| 3. Minutes of previous meetings* | |
| 3.1 The minutes of the below meetings were ratified and agreed without comment:
01.12.2019 – 66th NC meeting
23.01.2020 – 66.1 interim meeting via webinar
10.02.2020 – 66.2 interim meeting via webinar
26.02.2020 – 66.3 interim meeting via webinar | |

- 3.1.1 The minutes of the 67th meeting held by webinar on 28 March 2020 were yet to be signed off. LR acknowledged that comments and caveats have been received. FS has forwarded comments and LR is waiting for other comments.

All

3.2 Matters arising

- 3.2.1 From the matters arising from the meeting on the 28th March, FS supports AC comments.
- 3.2.2 HW detailed that the consultation on the Members' Council had gone from Board to National Council (NC) with no changes to the stance. The consultation will now go out to members.
- 3.2.3 AC didn't feel as though the consultation on the GWG paper had been adequately covered and discussed by National Council. AC stated that the council should review this paper before going to the membership. JW said that there had been a 2 ½ hour webinar to which Council members had been invited, and that extensive feedback from it had been incorporated.
- 3.2.4 AC expressed concern that a number of papers are never discussed and then an assumption is made that they (the papers) have been reviewed and approved.
- 3.2.5 AS suggested a time period for people to comment, AS mentioned that the paper has been available for five months.
- 3.2.6 FS stated that council members need to hear others people's opinion regarding papers. FS explained that reading a paper in isolation may lead to a different conclusion if opinions of everyone are not heard first.
- 3.2.7 LR acknowledged these points and explained that CS has put a time plan on the ODG work.
- 3.2.8 LR noted that it was important that we were clear where papers are sent.
- 3.2.9 JW suggested a way forward. The consultation sent to the members and then brought back to the NC for final sign off. AC was happy with this proposal. FS stated that there needed to be time to listen to others and allow for questions and debate.
- 3.2.10 ACTION: GWG paper to be brought back to NC for final sign-off.

JW

4. Action log*

- 4.1 LR thanked CS for looking into online meeting facilities. LR has taken the actions from Tony's information and created an excel spreadsheet. LR requests that once actions are complete that the spreadsheet is updated.

5. Reports

5.1 President

- 5.1.1 LR gave a verbal report at the meeting. BMC work remains busy. This includes attending weekly Board meetings, ODG, R33 and working on the four membership-led workstreams.
- 5.1.2 Internationally LR has been involved in a number of online meetings with the International Federation of Sport Climbing (IFSC).
- 5.1.3 LR confirmed that it is planned that the Tokyo 2020 Olympics will now take place in 2021 and all those that have already qualified have been guaranteed places. There may also be an opportunity for others to qualify.

- 5.1.4 LR is working with Lucy Valerio, Company Secretary, on planning the AGM. This will take place online and a lot of testing and practise is taking place.
- 5.1.5 LR is working on several publications, including the annual report with DT and GP, Summit magazine and articles for the website.
- 5.1.6 LR worked on the Equality Standard and is delighted to announce to the group that, following an assessment meeting (carried out on-line) Intermediate Level this has been achieved.
- 5.1.7 Regarding the volunteer strategy and awards, LR has been working with Mariella Sullivan and Jane Thompson in the office. LR explained how nominations closed on the 31st March and was delighted to announce the following winners:
The George Band Award: Peter Judd and Ron Kenyon.
The Rehan Siddiqui Award: Jesse Duffton.
The Young Volunteer Award: Kody Bradley.
- 5.1.8 LR mentioned that Climbing Blind will be shown on BBC Four.
- 5.1.9 Questions – FS asked if she was able to post on Facebook that Ron Kenyon had won, LR asked to wait until after the official BMC announcement had been made.
- 5.2 Board of Directors***
- 5.2.1 GP supplied a written report to the meeting.
- 5.2.2 Questions – HW raised the issue on point 3 of GP's report member retention. HW highlighted the impact of Mountain Training members and if there was any more information on membership retention. GP provided information on the three strands of membership:
- New members and those wanting travel insurance, these are very low at present;
 - Mountain Training qualified personnel;
 - Members wishing to renew.
- 5.2.3 Regarding people that wish to renew, the BMC is considering a number of options to assist people and the current offer. A proposal is going back to the board next week.
- 5.2.4 Peter Judd had raised the matter of renewals as AoB. PS gave a detailed answer about how this is being looked at. PS intention is to come up with a scheme that is fair and equitable. PS is looking at plans to include furloughed staff in the unemployed category. This is currently being developed with BMC staff.
- 5.2.5 HW questioned how status of members is obtained. PS replied that we have the option of requesting proof, although this is not something done on a day to day basis.
- 5.2.6 DL requested that the self-employed receiving help be added to the same category as those furloughed/unemployed, this was agreed and acknowledged.

- 5.2.7 AS questioned whether we were asking clubs to do the same. PS replied to say that there's a number of details to work through.
- 5.2.8 AC highlighted that is worth talking with the Climbers' Club about these ideas. JW agreed with this, however, ideas are still being worked on and they will be approached at the right time.
- 5.2.9 AC made the group aware of posts on the Climbers' Club forum regarding MHT. GP detailed the advice and assistance that has been offered to MHT regarding funding applications. MHT have now furloughed the staff member and more advice has been offered on other options. AC believed that the BMC should state its position. LR explained that this is being addressed.
- 5.2.10 JC updated the council regarding Mountain Training. Currently all courses are suspended and nine of the sixteen staff have been furloughed. One member of staff is returning soon; however, registrations and sales are nearly at zero. JC has appreciated the extra contact with Sport England via the BMC Funded Partnership group. JC mentioned that they are observing other European countries and are looking at online learning options.
- 5.2.11 DB joined the meeting at 10.45.

5.3 CEO & Office

- 5.3.1 DT spoke about the operations of staff and how online meetings have been a positive. DT detailed our current communications and how we are talking with a number of groups and leading the way on access. The office is still working well, Sport England funded staff continue to work and 10 staff have been furloughed.
- 5.3.2 The membership team is now over the backlog that was created by the virus. The membership team received more queries in one week than they would in a "normal" year. A lot of work has gone into our media streams and the work with Sport England has been positive.
- 5.3.3 FS questioned whether we were talking with DEFERA and government. DT mentioned that we had issued a plan that had gone to very senior members of government.
- 5.3.4 PW asked if Mountain Rescue had seen the plan, DT confirmed they would via Elfyn Jones.
- 5.3.5 JW asked if the Hon Medical Adviser Dave Hillebrandt had been involved, DT confirmed no but others have.
- 5.3.6 PW commented that if Mountain Rescue were involved it would avoid negative press to which DT agreed and this is why they are involved.
- 5.3.7 DT mentioned that the ABC has been in positive talks with Sport England to support them over financially for this year.

6. Organisational Development Group (ODG)*

6.1 Update on ODG work

- 6.1.1 CS mentioned he would update us all on the Communications Plan later.

6.1.2 FS gave an update regarding the ODG and plans to dissolve the group at the AGM. This won't be happening now but the plan is to dissolve after the Covid-19 pandemic. FS is providing a paper to the Board for the September meeting. However, FS clearly stated that it will not be the end of consultation with members. The ODG recommendations still need to be reviewed and monitored and thanked CS for creating the communications plan.

6.1.3 CS explained how the communications plan has been impacted by the current Covid situation. CS detailed that they are trying to get a better line of engagement with the members regarding ODG by spreading the communications out wider.

6.1.4 AC highlighted that if Area meetings are now virtual we needed to come up with a strategy about how the ODG papers are presented outside the meeting. Area meetings have expressed concern that ODG work was taking up too much time in the meeting and local issues are being missed. Maybe webinars are the way forward?

6.2 ODG Comms Plan

6.2.1 CS outlined that the communications plan had gone to Alex Messenger at the BMC office and further ODG work will be made available via social media. CS acknowledges there should be a better way of presenting ODG work at area meetings maybe through video and using more tools like Google polls for engagement. CS is looking at presenting this via shorter online videos and with a larger one at the end of July.

6.2.2 FS questioned HW and AC regarding the Peak area meetings and the fact that they would prefer to discuss local issues rather than ODG items. FS wanted to know how area meetings would be able to feed into National Council if they still wanted to be involved. AC agreed that the line should be strong but more focussed on National Council business. The Peak is mainly focussed on local issues. FS questioned that if this is the case why have two positions on National Council if they didn't wish to discuss ODG? It was agreed to take this matter outside the meeting.

6.2.3 DL likes the idea of small videos being released before the local meetings to make the meeting more fluid.

6.2.4 AS concurred with the Peak and that they experience the same issues so it would be good to signpost people to webinars with National Council members attending. These webinars can then be flagged at area meetings. JW agreed with AS but felt they should be online before so questions can be raised through area meetings to National Council.

6.2.5 CS gave an update regarding the digital strategy, he mentioned that a lot of content had been created by Paul Drew. AC asked for a status update on the digital sub group and whether this was being developed. FS confirmed that Paul Drew is working with Alex Messenger however a group was not formed to avoid adding another level. AC confirmed that she was happy it was functioning even though in an unofficial capacity but would like to see a report on its work.

FS

6.3 Members' Council ToR

HW took the meeting through Members' Council ToR which, due to the 2020 AGM planned as a virtual meeting, the implementation will now be delayed until 2021. The ToR is with the Board and ODG with a deadline of feedback being 14th May. HW urged National Council members to look at the paper. One positive from the current situation now is we have over a year to consult with the membership on the paper.

JW felt being clear on the aims and ambitions of the Board and National Council would help. For example, National Council should be responsible for the rules of the game, although he accepted that this wasn't the correct wording for mountaineering. LR requested that JW feed his comments through Board feedback.

FS felt that this is why we should debate ToR's at National Council rather than just have them as reports noting that it is important for discussion.

6.4 Articles of Association, Area ToR, and voting procedure review

6.4.1 AS took the group through the key points of the paper which hasn't been completed yet. There is however an executive summary. Ideally this paper will be a two-page document at completion. There were no questions.

7. AGM*

7.1 LR detailed how the AGM will work. If LR was unable to attend or refuse then a reserve chair would need to be in place. An unofficial vote took place to confirm that first reserve will be AS and second reserve HW. This would still however need to be officially ratified before the start of the AGM.

8. Area Meetings*

8.1 CS presented a paper regarding area meetings. Further details are on Teamwork. Zoom will be the platform used for the next round of area meetings and a guide for how to use Zoom was detailed.

8.1.1 CS outlined that registration will be through Eventbrite. Details will be sent to members and displayed on the communications page.

8.1.2 Following the area meetings, a SWOT analysis will be completed. **CS**

8.1.3 AC shared their concerns around security of Zoom. CS mentioned that Zoom are constantly updating their app or you can go through your browser.

8.1.4 DL shared concerns about members sharing the link. CS expressed a view that he hoped they wouldn't however, area meetings are open to non-members.

8.1.5 HW questioned how many licences we had and whether the BMC has enough. CS confirmed that the BMC does have a licence and the Peak Area have run some test meetings which CS supported. CS is happy to run tests with others.

9. Forward Plan for National Council meetings

9.1 LR gave a verbal update. Currently the Board is looking at a forward plan for agenda items, these included:

- BMC strategy;
- BMC communications;
- BMC equality plan.

9.1.1 LR requested any items to be emailed to her. **All**

10. Any Other Business*

10.1 The South West paper was displayed for everyone to see. LR explained that James Mann was the Chair and Mark Kemball the Secretary. The Chair had resigned and therefore the proposal was that the Secretary co-opt the Chair role until the next AGM. It was also proposed that PW become the Secretary until the next AGM.

10.1.1 A poll was taken and the motion was carried.

NOTED

10.2 JP updated the group on his own work regarding communications from Board downwards. JP concluded that the communication was poor. JP thanked AS, LR and MG for their great input. GP confirmed that the Board do provide an overview of what is discussed including items such as the webinar to discuss the membership proposal. It was suggested that Council and Board need to have a two-year agenda. JP thanked CS for moving things forward.

10.2.1 HW questioned JP regarding IT requirements and what the National Council needed to get going. The question to the group was “what did everyone else need?” JP acknowledged the need to get together about that. HW will discuss with CS.

10.3 PJ AoB regarding membership was covered earlier.

10.4 LR mentioned that she was finalising the Peak District Grit Wired Guide which will soon be published.

10.5 LR mentioned volunteer week. LR had a very productive meeting with Jane Thompson and Mariella Sullivan with regards to getting some focus on the BMC website on volunteers during the week.

11. Next steps, close of meeting, and date & venue of next meeting

11.1 LR proposed 20th June.

11.1.1 FS questioned what the schedule for interim meetings is until June and how long will they last. LR said there was no plan yet but is looking into evening meetings between 7pm and 9pm.

11.1.2 FS questioned if we were looking to a return for face-to-face meetings. LR confirmed yes, within government guidance and law, but the use of online meetings is a good way to get things done for now.

11.1.3 AS mentioned as part of R33, they are looking at online and face-to-face in the future.

11.1.4 AC felt that a meeting regarding the digital strategy and membership were required.

11.1.5 PW felt that there is a need for face-to-face meetings and expressed concern at too many smaller online meetings.

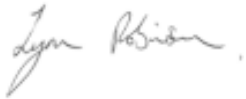
11.1.6 DL felt that a combination of face-to-face with people dialling in could be the way forward.

The meeting finished at 13:00.

Summary of action points from the 67.1 meeting:

Ref	Action	Who	By
3.1.1	To forward comments to LR re: 28.3.2020 meeting notes	All	ASAP
3.2.10	GWG paper to be brought back to NC for final sign-off.	JW	Dec. 20
6.2.5	FS to request a report on the work of the Digital Sub Group.	FS	20 th June
8.1.2	SWOT of Area meeting via Zoom	CS	After completion of the area mtgs
9.1.1	LR requested any agenda items to be emailed to her.	All	On-going

The above was accepted as an accurate record of the meeting:



Signed: Lynn Robinson, President

Date: 19th September, 2020