

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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Members' Council

Approved minutes of the Members' Council meeting held by way of Zoom on Tuesday 2 November 2021 at 7.00pm.

In attendance

Voting Members	Andy Syme	AS	President
	Tarquin Shipley	TS	Cymru North Wales
	Fiona Sanders	FS	Lakes (& Council Nominated Director)
	Chris Stone	CSt	London & South East (& Deputy to the President)
	Robert Dufton	RD	London & South East
	David Jones	DJ	Midlands (& Huts Group Observer)
	Bill Beveridge	BB	North West
	Carl Spencer	CSp	North West (& Council Nominated Director)
	David Brown	DB	Peak
	Alison Cairns	AC	Peak
	Helen Wilson	HW	South West
	Philip Wilson	PW	South West
	Peter Salenieks	PS	Clubs Committee (& Council Nominated Director)
	Abbi Blakey	AB	Training, Youth & Walls Committee
	Stuart Holmes	SH	Nationally Elected Councillor for Indoor Climbers
	Aaron Hodgson	AH	Nationally Elected Councillor for Mountaineers
	Steve Clark	SC	Nationally Elected Councillor for Rock Climbers
Oli Lewis	OL	Constituency Councillor for Mountain Training candidates	
Observers	Jonathan White	JW	Nominated Director (Clubs)
	Peter Judd	PJ	Hill Walking Group
	Roger Murray	RM	Specialist Committee Review
	Paul Davies	PD	Chief Executive
Others	Tony Ryan	TR	Minute taker

* denotes supporting paper(s) circulated prior to meeting

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
1	Welcome & apologies for absence			
1.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Stuart Holmes, co-opted in July as NEC for Indoor Climbers, and attending Council for the first time.			
1.1.1	Apologies for absence were received from: Rose Gare-Simmons.			
2	Note Conflicts of Interest			
2.1	No conflicts were declared.			
3	Urgent issues for AOB			
3.1	AB requested a discussion on the Combined Liability Insurance Policy.			
4	Review of outstanding Actions			
4.1	The meeting reviewed the outstanding actions, which are recorded as Tasks on the Teamwork Projects for Council meetings and updated their status.			
5	To agree Virtual and Physical Meetings for 2022			
5.1	The Chair wanted Council to agree which of the four full Council meetings scheduled for 2022 should be virtual or physical, having already agreed that there would be two of each type, and also decide if and when a physical meeting will be a joint meeting with Area Officers and other Area volunteers.			
5.1.1	The meeting agreed to defer discussion of this item until either the full meeting on 13 November or the post-meeting on 7 December.	Add to agenda for 13 Nov or 7 Dec	AS	Done
5.2	The Chair also wished to seek agreement for CSt, as Deputy to the President, to chair the Council pre-meeting scheduled for Tuesday 1 February 2022, as the Chair is unable to attend the meeting, or to reschedule the meeting if Council preferred to do so.			
5.2.1	The meeting agreed that CSt would chair the 1 February meeting as AS unavailable	Agreed		

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6	Area Reports			
6.1	Yorkshire			
6.1.1	The Chair advised that there was nothing to report; the Area Meeting has yet to take place, and will be held tomorrow (Wednesday 3 November).			
6.2	North East*			
6.2.1	JW reported that the meeting was held both online and at the Newcastle Climbing Centre, that the hybrid element of the meeting had worked pretty well, and had contributed to the best attendance (20 members) of the past couple of years.			
6.2.2	Some vacant volunteer roles had been filled, but the Chair role is now vacant, and in the short term, an acting Chair would need to be found for the next meeting in January. Both Area Rep roles also continue to be vacant. The Chair reminded the meeting that support for the North East Area is on the agenda for 13 November. JW requested that a note of thanks be sent to outgoing Chair Mark Anstiss for his contribution to the BMC in multiple roles over many years.	Support to NE already on to agenda for 13 Nov	AS	NFA
		Arrange thank you to Mark	AS	Dec 21
6.3	North West*			
6.3.1	CSp reported that 22 members had attended the Zoom meeting, with an engaged audience and positive discussion. Excellent work continues to be done in the Area by access & conservation, clubs, hill walking, youth and walls volunteers. Emily Pitts and Paul Evans stood down as Chair and Secretary respectively; both roles were filled, with two members sharing the role of Chair.			
6.3.2	The restart to youth climbing competitions has in general been positive, but some regions require further attention, with over subscription in some and undersubscription in others.			
6.4	Lakes			
6.4.1	FS reported that a new Secretary had been elected, replacing Ron Kenyon who had undertaken the role since 2016.			
6.5	Cymru North Wales			
6.5.1	TS reported concern that the proposed retirement early next year of Elfyn Jones as BMC Access & Conservation Officer (Wales), combined with very tight BMC finances, could lead to a net loss of staff time dedicated to access work in Wales.			

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6.5.2	The meeting also discussed a range of local issues including: the lack of bus stops in the Ogwen Valley; recent attempts by hammering/chiselling to sanitise the polished scrambles on the Idwal Slabs descent and the approach to Cenotaph Corner on Dinas Cromlech in Llanberis Pass; and advanced plans by the National Park Authority to 'resurface' the bridleway from Capel Curig to Crafnant, which so far have not involved consultation with user groups.			
6.6	Cymru South Wales*			
6.6.1	No Area Rep was in attendance, but an Area Report had been submitted. As with the North Wales meeting, the issue of Eflyn Jones' retirement was discussed, and the meeting expressed its desire that his replacement would be a full-time post.			
6.6.2	Access rep Steve Quinton reported that the closure of access to MoD land in Pembroke for a large firing exercise will be raised as a concern with the MoD at the next Range access meeting. Further exercises of a similar scale are likely to occur in 2022.			
6.6.3	Policy & Campaigns Officer (Wales), Eben Muse reported that an all-party group for outdoor activities has been set up in the Senedd, chaired by Huw Irranca-Davies. The group has met once and it is hoped that the BMC can influence Welsh Government policy through it.			
6.7	Midlands			
6.7.1	DJ reported that attendance had once again been low. Andy Potter has now stepped down as Chair, and a replacement was not elected. On a positive note, the Area has been without a Secretary since November 2020, but this role has now been filled, and the Area now has three Hill Walking Reps.			
6.8	London & South East*			
6.8.1	CSt reported on a very successful hybrid meeting hosted by the Alpine Club, which worked well technically and enabled the best attendance (24 in person, 11 online) for quite a while. A message has been posted on the 'Area Meeting' Teamwork project with notes on how the hybrid meeting ran, along with a set-up schematic.			
6.8.2	No one stood for the positions of Area Clubs Co-Ordinator, Climbing Wall Rep or Social Media Rep.			
6.8.3	Council briefly discussed whether 'area packs' of equipment for hosting hybrid Area Meetings should be available. It was agreed that all Areas should have the necessary equipment, but volunteers and venues already have some equipment, so any expenditure			

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	on equipment should focus on what is not already available. RD suggested that we might also need to consider remote IT support on the day.			
6.8.4	CSt also reported on action taken at Harrison's Rock and Stone Farm Rocks to remove swaged wire backups from bolt anchors, following a review of bolted anchors on Southern Sandstone, and updated expert advice on the way these anchors are used.			
6.9	South West*			
6.9.1	The meeting was attended by approximately 30 members. Other than the Area AGM elections, it focussed on access issues, including Skeleton Ridge on the Needles, Isle of Wight (now resolved), Tintagel (ongoing), and the proposed changes to bylaws in Dartmoor National Park. The Area wished to extend its grateful thanks to both Dave Turnbull and Rob Dyer for all the help and support they have given the Area this year on these and other access issues.			
6.9.2	HW reported that the Area had decided on a mix of 3 online and 1 hybrid Area Meeting for 2022, rather than the 2+2 suggested by Council. Due to the large geographical size of the Area, the online meetings had proved popular, enabling members to attend without having to travel significant distances.			
6.10	Peak			
6.10.1	DB reported that about 25 members attended the online meeting, which was an improvement on previous meetings this year. Unlike the other Areas, this meeting did not include the Area AGM, which the Area had decided to postpone until January 2022.			
6.10.2	DB was disappointed that no Director was able to attend, particularly since there were a number of questions raised about subscriptions. It was explained that Caroline Worboys had tried to join the meeting (via Eventbrite) but hadn't been able to get the Zoom Invitation link. TR explained that all Area Meetings are now listed on the Teamwork Calendar, and Zoom Invitation links can be found on those listings, so that Council members do not need to register via Eventbrite.			
6.10.3	Much of the meeting discussion covered access and conservation issues, as is typical of Peak Area Meetings, including the Stanage and North Lees Estate, which is managed by the National Park Authority in partnership with Stanage Forum, which represents the views of the many and diverse users of the Estate. Area Access Rep Louise Hawson is secretary to the Forum.			
7	Constituency Reports			

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7.1	Mountaineering / Mountaineers			
7.1.1	AH advised that there was little to report at the moment, but he would be able to provide more information at the 13 November Council meeting. He will be attending the Kendal Mountain Festival (which runs 18-21 November) to engage with members and potential members. The NECs and Constituency Councillors now have BMC email addresses, which will make it easier for members to contact them directly. Plans for the Mountaineering Vision Event at the February 2022 Council meeting are developing.			
7.2	Indoor Climbing			
7.2.1	SH reported that planning for the Indoor Climbing Vision Event on 13 November is progressing, including ensuring that the technology required to run the meeting as a hybrid is available and that the set-up has been tested.			
7.3	Rock Climbing			
7.3.1	SC also reported that he will be attending the Kendal Mountain Festival.			
7.4	Mountain Training			
7.4.1	OL advised that the role is still developing, and that he has had discussions with John Cousins (Mountain Training UK) and Guy Jarvis (Mountain Training England).			
7.4.2	OL acknowledged the need to develop some form of online forum or discussion platform, in lieu of Area Meetings, to facilitate engagement with the MT candidates/BMC members. At the moment the role will begin to function with an "open door policy" through the new BMC email address for the Constituency Councillor role.			
7.5	HW added that the Implementation Group was running meetings every two weeks with NECs and the CC to develop their roles.			
8	Council to confirm Lord Greaves Award in 2022			
8.1	The Chair explained the error in publicising the award on the BMC website as being permanent from 2022, since Council had not yet agreed to this extension following instigation of the award in 2021 by former President Lynn Robinson after the death of Lord Greaves in March 2021.			
8.1.1	It was felt that Council needed to know what discussions had taken place between Lady Greaves and Lynn Robinson and Jane Thompson (BMC Volunteers Officer), and what had	Confirm what said to Lady Greaves	PD	Done

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	been agreed, before a meaningful vote could be taken on whether to continue with the award.	Add to agenda for 13 Nov	AS	Done
8.1.2	During the meeting, TR deleted the web article's reference to the award being permanent from 2022, and removed the section about the nomination process.			
9	Board Report			
9.1	CEO*			
9.1.1	PD noted the Membership (Data as of 1st October) was incorrect and graphs actually included 1 Nov stats.			
9.1.2	<p>PD summarised the report he had submitted for the meeting, which covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing – furlough has ended; increased office capacity managed by rota. • Recruitment – Gavin Finch starts as Chief Commercial Officer on 6 December; internal recruitment of Head of Specialist Services (previously Head of Development) is underway. • Strategy – day to day delivery is being driven by the Strategy Action Plans (SAPs) and these are being aligned with the 2022 budgeting process. • Sport England – phase one of the submission will be completed this month. • Membership – growth has now continued for each of the past six months. • Travel insurance – sales are currently at 70% of normal values expected, but with a strong upward trend. • Finance – furlough income, combined with cost saving activity has reduced down the forecast year-end deficit, bringing us in considerably under the budgeted amount. 			
9.1.3	DB thanked PD for the financial information, and felt that it was quite an achievement to get the forecast year-end deficit below £100k. He also asked whether there had been any progress on capital expenditure on the BMC website. PD replied that expenditure had mainly been allocated to the back end / database, and that a consultation on the design and content of a new website would be conducted before we settled on a specification and went out to tender.			
9.2	Chair of the Board*			
9.2.1	Paul Drew was not able to attend, but a brief report had been submitted highlighting the work of the Board since the 16 May Council meeting, during which time the Board had met on five occasions.			
9.2.2	Work undertaken included: appointment of a new Chair following recruitment campaign by the Nominations Committee; support to the CEO in recruitment for the new post of the Chief			

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	Commercial Officer; agreement of a plan for subscriptions for 2022; agreement of a portfolio structure for Board members to support/oversee BMC activities, and assignation of Directors to support individual specialist committees and other posts; and ongoing work on third party liability insurance, reserves policy, safeguarding, and anti-doping.			
9.2.3	The key focus for the next couple of months is agreeing and approving the budget for 2022.			
9c	Director Portfolios*			
9c.1	This paper was to advise Council of the new approach agreed by the Board in order to effectively discharge its legal and moral duties to oversee the organisation. Within this broader context, the Board will support Specialist Committees by giving them clearer lines of communication and making fuller use of the expertise that they are best able to provide. The approach is based upon the appointment of individual Directors to the new roles of Portfolio Holder and Allocated Director.			
9c.2	The Chair proposed that anyone wishing to comment should do so via the Comment feature for the paper on the Teamwork Project.	Add to agenda for 7 Dec	AS	Done
10	Vote on item 8 – Lord Greaves Award			
10.1	No vote taken following discussion of agenda item 8.	Add to agenda for 13 Nov	AS	Done
11	AOB			
11.1	Combined Liability Insurance Policy			
11.1.1	AB wanted to alert Council to discussions by the Training, Youth & Walls Committee (TYWC) on the issue of potential impact of significant claims resulting from accidents at indoor climbing walls, like the one in 2019 which resulted in a significant increase to member subscriptions. TYWC wanted to know what actions to mitigate against this risk were being undertaken.			
11.1.2	JW said it was on the radar of the Insurance T&F Group, which includes Jon Garside (BMC/MTE Training Officer) and Dan Middleton (BMC Technical Officer also responsible for Climbing Walls), who both sit on TWYC. PD added that discussions were ongoing, with the aim of finding solutions.			

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11.1.3	DB referenced a paper on Combined Liability Insurance which is going to the Board, and asked whether it could be circulated more widely. JW advised that it is currently in draft form, but once it has been finalised, he will ask the Board to circulate it Council	Board to provide paper to Council	JW/PD	TBC
12	Date of Next Meeting			
12.1	The next Council meeting will be a full-day meeting on Saturday 13 November 2021, at the Bredbury Hall Hotel in Stockport.			
12.2	The follow-up to the full meeting will be on the evening of Tuesday 7 December 2021 on Zoom.			
12.3	In between these two meetings, an extra Zoom meeting has been scheduled for the evening of Tuesday 23 November, to cover two specific topics: Members Code of Conduct T&F Group Report; and Presidential Review T&F Group Report.			
12.4	All the meetings are listed on the Teamwork Calendar.			
	There being no other business, the Chair closed the meeting at 21:25.			

Summary of actions:

See [3rd MC Outstanding Actions](#) (link only available to Council members)

Item	Action	Involving	Target date
5.1.1	Add virtual/physical 2022 Council meetings decision to 13 Nov or 7 Dec agenda	AS	Done
6.2.2	Support to NE already on to agenda for 13 Nov	AS	Done
6.2.2	Send note of thanks to outgoing NE Chair Mark Anstiss	AS	Dec 21
8.1.1	Find out what discussed and agreed with Lady Greaves re. the Lord Greaves Award	PD	Done
8.1.1	Add Greaves Award paper to agenda for 13 Nov	AS	Done
9c.2	Add Director Portfolios to agenda for 7 Dec	AS	Done
10.1	Add Greaves Award vote to agenda for 13 Nov	AS	Done
11.1.3	Request circulation of Combined Liability Insurance paper to Council once it is finalised	JW/PD	TBC

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



8 December 2021

Signed _____ Date _____

Andy Syme, Chair