

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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Members' Council

Approved minutes of the Members' Council meeting held at the Royal Victoria Hotel, Llanberis and on Zoom on Saturday 14 May 2022 at 9.30am.

In attendance:

Voting Members

Elected Councillors

President, and Chair of the meeting	Andy Syme	AS	
Cymru South Wales	Steve Quinton	SQ	
Lakes	Fiona Sanders	FS	also Council Nominated Director
London & South East	Chris Stone	CSt	also Deputy to the President
North West	Bill Beveridge	BB	
North West	Carl Spencer	CSp	also Council Nominated Director
Peak	Alison Cairns	AC	
South West	Helen Wilson	HW	
South West	Philip Wilson	PW	
Yorkshire	Martin Christmas	MC	
Yorkshire	Mick Green	MG	
Clubs Committee	Peter Salenieks	PS	also Council Nominated Director
Training, Youth & Walls Committee	Abbi Blakey	AB	
Nationally Elected Councillor for Hill Walkers	Rose Gare-Simmons	RGS	
Nationally Elected Councillor for Indoor Climbers	Stuart Holmes	SH	
Nationally Elected Councillor for Mountaineers	Aaron Hodgson	AH	
Nationally Elected Councillor for Rock Climbers	Steve Clark	SC	

Specialist Councillors

Observers

Specialist Committees

Board of Directors

Partners

Others

BMC staff

Hill Walking Group	Peter Judd	PJ	
Chair of the Board	Roger Murray	RM	
Nominated Director (Clubs)	Jonathan White	JW	
Mountain Training England	Guy Jarvis	GJ	
Mountain Training UK & Ireland	John Cousins	JC	
Black Dog Outdoors	Andy Higson		For Vision Event only
Partnerships & Events Co-ordinator	Mariella Sullivan	MS	For Vision Event only
Access & Conservation Officer	Cath Flitcroft	CF	For agenda item 23 only
Minute taker	Tony Ryan	TR	

* denotes supporting paper(s) circulated prior to meeting

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
12	Hill Walking Vision Event			
	Council discussed the 'vision' for hill walking; this session was led by CSt, PJ and RGS. See addendum at end of paper for output summary.			
13	Welcome & apologies for absence			
13.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including those joining the meeting by Zoom.			
1.2	Apologies were received from: Flavia Alzetta, Paul Davies, Robert Dufton, Sam Harris, Neal Hockley, Martyn Hurn, David Jones, Peter McCreedy, Martin Nash, Andy Newton, Mike Parsons, Jon Punshon, Claudia Sarner, Tarquin Shipley, Andy Tickle.			
14	Note Conflicts of Interest			
14.1	None declared.			
15	Urgent issues for AOB			
15.1	None requested.			
16	Minutes of previous meetings and Outstanding Actions			
16.1	Minutes of 3 May 2022 meeting As the draft minutes had only recently been uploaded to Teamwork, the Chair agreed to defer approval of the minutes to the 7 June Council meeting, to give Councillors time to review the minutes online.			
16.2	Outstanding Actions The meeting reviewed the list of outstanding actions managed as Tasks on Teamwork. See Outstanding Actions (link only available to Council members)			
17	Clubs Councillor			

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17.1	The Chair reported that no candidates had been nominated to stand at next week's AGM for the vacant role of Nationally Elected Councillor for members of BMC Affiliated Clubs.			
17.1.1	A member had recently expressed interest in undertaking the role for one year, and the Chair proposed, subject to consent of Council, to invite the candidate to make a presentation at the 7 June Council pre-meeting.			
17.1.2	It was agreed that the candidate would be invited to the 7 June meeting, and be asked to provide a short CV so that Councillors could read it in advance of the meeting.	Request CV from Clubs Councillor candidate Send 7 June meeting Zoom link to candidate	AS TR	Done Done
18	CND Succession Plan*			
18.1	FS presented the paper on this agenda item, which included six recommendations to make it easier for CNDs to be appointed to the Board, which it requested Council approve; the recommendations covered: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Term of office on Board and Council; 2. Alteration to terms of current CNDs to align with recommendations in point 1. 3. Training provision for Councillors to support the fulfilment of roles; 4. Conduit for potential CNDs to support Task & Finish Groups; 5. CND skills matrix development; 6. Funnel of volunteers onto Council. 			
18.1.1	There was discussion of recommendation 1 in respect of a CND continuing in the role after their term on Council had ended, and to enable this, the CND will act as an observer on Council until the completion of their term as CND. In respect of recommendation 1.4, it was felt that support should come from Council as well as from the Nominations Committee.			
18.1.2	The meeting agreed by show of hands to the proposals in recommendation 2 that CSp and PS continue to the end of their CND terms which are beyond the terms of their other roles on Council.	Agreed		
18.1.3	In discussion of recommendation 3, it was noted that the Deputy to the President's (DP) term ends at the next Council meeting. The DP role can be defined annually, and it was agreed to include DP role proposals on the agenda for the next Council meeting.	Add Deputy to the President role proposals to 16 July Council meeting agenda	AS	ASAP
18.1.4	RM felt that recommendation 4.3, an annual update of the Board against the skills matrix, was high priority, and that the wording of the recommendation should reflect that by saying that the Nominations Committee must do an annual update.			

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18.1.5	Recommendation 5 should be changed to say that the Board works with the Nominations Committee (NomCom), not just with Robert Dufton, Council representative on NomCom, to explore the recommendations, with the intent of creating a soft start for new CNDs.			
18.1.6	RM and FS agreed to reword recommendation 5.1.2 to emphasise that non-executive competencies will be taken into account, and it was agreed that recommendation 5 needed more discussion.			
18.1.7	JW expressed some discomfort with the wording of recommendation 5.1.3, which proposed that CNDs would not take on a portfolio lead their first year, and was happy with the suggestion it be changed to say that a progressive approach to portfolio management would be implemented.			
18.1.8	With regard to recommendation 6 of the development of a volunteer funnel, it was noted that HW's term on Council ends later this year. FS suggested that the next Deputy to the President might want to pick this up (supported by HW), and the Chair added that a Task & Finish Group comprising not just Councillors could be established.			
18.1.9	In summary, it was agreed that the paper would be revised, incorporating the above changes, and be brought back to Council for approval; AC agreed to make the revisions.	Revise paper and bring back to Council for approval at 7 June Council meeting	AC	31 May
19	Review of Outcomes from previous Vision Events*			
19.1	This agenda item was not covered during the meeting, and instead will be added to the 7 June meeting agenda.	Add Review of Outcomes from previous VEs to 7 June Council meeting agenda	AS	ASAP
19.1.1	RM suggested that in the final paper AH was very clear and ambitious in what he was requesting from the Board.			
20a	Future Vision Event Strategy*			
20a.1	It was noted that Council under Andy Syme's chairmanship has had a very productive first year, which provides a solid foundation for the continuing implementation of Council.			
20a.1.1	Council is enthusiastic to ensure that a substantial proportion of the future meeting agendas is directed to the successful implementation of the Vision Events (VE) - now completed for Rock Climbing, Indoor Climbing, Mountaineering and Hill Walking.			

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20a.1.2	MG presented his proposal for the continuing VE programme, which combined the core VEs for the above four activities with some strategic VEs as dictated by Council's Terms of Reference, or at the Board's request, or as determined by Specialist Committee activity.			
20a.1.3	The mix of core and strategic events would be achieved via an annual plan to meet the needs of Council and the BMC.			
20a.1.4	MG proposed that the Implementation Group (IG) would now consult and plan the next 12 to 18 months of core and strategic VEs, assigning Councillors to run these events based on the Councillor skills survey and roles.			
20a.1.5	The meeting discussed the challenge of allocating sufficient time to the VEs while still managing the rest of Council business, and it was agreed that the Chair and MG would create an outline 18-month plan for approval by Council that effectively combines core and strategic VEs whilst retaining sufficient time for other Council business.	Create outline 18-month Council agenda for approval	AS, MG	ASAP
20b	Vision Event team identification & update for next two Council meetings			
20b.1	The meeting discussed options for the VE at the next full Council meeting on 16 July.			
20b.1.1	It was recognised that the July meeting might not be ideal for a VE on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) since the BMC's Equity Steering Group is currently in the process of recruiting a new chair.			
20b.1.2	Other options suggested included membership engagement and mountain training; in respect of the former, RM said that he would prefer to wait a little longer to cover that subject, and in respect of the latter, JC suggested that the subject should be broader than just mountain training and encompass all learning pathways.			
20b.1.3	The Chair noted that the Board has asked Council to report on the VEs held so far at the Board meeting scheduled for 18 June, and to make requests to the Board from the outputs of the VEs. An open forum is planned for July/August to enable Board and Council to update members on this area of work and gather feedback.			
20b.1.4	The Chair wished to speak with Oli Lewis (Constituency Councillor for Mountain Training candidates) about his potential involvement in the next VE.	Contact Oli Lewis re. involvement in next VE	AS	ASAP

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20b.1.5	The Chair suggested that membership engagement could form part of the full Council meeting scheduled for Saturday 12 November, perhaps even in a dedicated session on the Friday evening.			
21	Board Vision Event summary			
21.1	RM advised that the Board has scheduled a meeting on Saturday 18 June, within which two hours had been allocated to presentation and discussion of common themes and specific issues (generated) by the four VEs. The aim will be to identify the direction of travel of these visions requiring investment and support by staff and the Board.			
21.1.1	JW raised his concern about the impact on the Board's ability to function with a reduced number of Directors following next week's AGM, and asked RM to explain to Council. RM explained that one of the Independent Directors will be resigning due to having insufficient time to contribute to the work of the Board, and no nominations have come forward for the two Nominated Director roles which are being vacated.			
21.1.2	The four Nationally Elected Councillors are to draft a paper for the 18 June Board Meeting detailing the specific 'asks' in terms of resource/funding. The paper should be available for review at the 7 June Council meeting.	Produce paper to support VE presentation at 18 June Board meeting, for review by Council on 7 June	AH, RGS, SC, SH	31 May
22	Member Code of Conduct Task & Finish Group report*			
22.1	Prior to the meeting an updated draft of the Code of Conduct for Members had been uploaded to Teamwork; this draft has a more personable tone following concerns raised about some of the language. CSt thanked Councillors for their feedback on Teamwork, all of which were endorsing the new version.			
22.1.1	The Code references BMC policies and management regulations, which the Ethos & Ethics Task & Finish Group, led by SQ, is currently considering. Council asked SQ to report on the current state of relevant policies and the plan to ensure that they are visible to members. The aim is to have a page on the BMC website hosting links to all the relevant policies.	Report on state of policies and plan for visibility to members	SQ	ASAP
22.1.2	AC felt that there was no point in publishing the Code without a Complaints Procedure being in place.			
22.1.3	The Chair confirmed that the Complaints Procedure was to be taken forward by the staff (governance & compliance officer Lucy Valerio) after the AGM. The issue of equivalent			

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	ultimate sanction for club members as individual members (e.g. expulsion) still needs finalising.			
22.1.4	<p>Since publishing the updated version, JW suggested the following additional amendments:</p> <p>Clause 7 becomes: <i>We will take care of the health and safety of others who may be affected by our actions or omissions whilst volunteering or participating in BMC activities.</i></p> <p>And a new clause 8 is added: <i>We will defend the rights of participants to challenge themselves and take the risks that they consider appropriate. In supporting the ethos of mountaineering we recognise that there are many routes including interacting with others of similar or greater experience for individuals to gain genuine experience, mountain skills, and leadership abilities.</i></p> <p>Clauses 8 & 9 in the draft to be re-numbered as 9 & 10 respectively.</p>			
22.1.5	In addition, PS asked that the reference to 'club members' in the Core Principles section is changed to 'affiliated club/group members' and in clause 3 'future generations' is changed to 'current and future generations'.			
22.1.6	It was also suggested that the reference to 'new generations' in the Core Principles section should be changed to 'all generations'.			
22.1.7	A vote (Voting Members only) was taken, to approve version 2 of the Code of Conduct for Members, subject to the inclusion of the additional clause agreed in 22.1.4 and other requested amendments, and was unanimously passed.	Finalise document and pass to Chair for publication at appropriate time	CSt	ASAP
23	BMC Environmental & Sustainability Policy*			
23.1	BMC access officer (policy) Cath Flitcroft joined the meeting via Zoom for this agenda item.			
23.1.1	The Chair reported that the draft policy had already been to the Board, and suggested that it probably ought to have come to Council first.			
23.1.2	CF explained the background behind the development of the policy, and the annotated version of the policy presented to Council outlined some of the work we are already doing to support its implementation.			

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23.1.3	JW commented that the paper is part policy and part implementation plan, and thought that two separate documents might work better.			
23.1.4	CSt asked about the scope of policy, and CF explained that the policy needs to be embedded across the organisation, that action to support the policy is primarily the responsibility of the BMC office and staff, but that support from volunteers and the engagement of members is also vital to the implementation of some of the policy's aims.			
23.1.5	There was general agreement from Council in support of the policy.	Agreed		
24	Support for Areas			
24.1	Due to insufficient time in the meeting, it was decided that this agenda item would be carried forward to the 7 June Council meeting	Add Support for Areas to 7 June Council meeting agenda	AS	ASAP
24.1.1	CSt gave an overview of his thinking on Support for Areas to allow Councillors to consider prior to the 7 June Council meeting. This is summarised below.			
24.1.2	CSt presented some research he had undertaken on meeting attendance within three BMC Areas covering a period when some key internal and external events might have impacted on attendance (2016 rebrand, 2017 motion of no confidence, 2018 GDPR introduction, 2020 Covid lockdown).			
24.1.3	Three areas important to successful Area Meetings were identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agenda and other meeting elements • logistics, including venues and IT • marketing and communications 			
24.1.4	It was suggested that we could survey Area Officers (present and past) or arrange an online forum to define some aims and targets for future Area Meetings.			
24.1.5	The BMC's interpretation and application of GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) could also be reviewed, along with Area Meeting marketing and communications.			
24.1.6	We should also ask whether the current model of Area Meetings is fit for purpose, or whether a new model of engaging with members should be developed.			
24.1.7	A Task & Finish Group, comprised of some Councillors and Area Officers, could be asked to consider the above issues.			

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24.1.8	On a separate but related matter, it was noted that some Area Meetings scheduled for the next round in June/July take place after the pre-meeting on 28 June, which normally includes the Area Reports agenda item, so it was agreed to move that item to the 16 July meeting.	Put Area Reports on 16 July Council meeting agenda, not on 28 June	AS	ASAP
25	Board Report substantive discussion points (agreed on 3 May)			
25.1	No points raised.			
26	AOB			
26.1	No AOB items discussed.			
27	Date of next Meetings			
27.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 7 June (7.00pm start) – post-meeting – on Zoom • Tuesday 28 June (7.00pm start) – pre-meeting – on Zoom • Saturday 16 July (9.30am start) – 6th Council meeting – on Zoom • Tuesday 2 August (7.00pm start) – post-meeting – on Zoom 			
27.1.1	Zoom links for above meetings are on the Teamwork Calendar .			
	There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 6.15pm.			

Summary of actions: See [5th Members' Council Outstanding Actions](#) (link only available to Council members)

Item	Action	Involving	Target date
17.1.2	Request CV from Clubs Councillor candidate	AS	Done
17.1.2	Send 7 June meeting Zoom link to candidate	TR	Done
18.1.3	Add Deputy to the President role proposals to 16 July Council meeting agenda	AS	ASAP
18.1.9	Revise paper and bring back to Council for approval at 7 June Council meeting	AC	31 May
19.1	Add Review of Outcomes from previous VEs to 7 June Council meeting agenda	AS	Done
20a.1.5	Create outline 18-month Council agenda for approval	AS, MG	ASAP
20a.1.5	Contact Oli Lewis about potential involvement in next VE	AS	ASAP
21.1.2	Produce paper to support VE presentation at 18 June Board meeting, for review by Council on 7 June	AH, RGS, SC, SH	31 May
22.1.1	Report on state of policies and plan for visibility to members	SQ	ASAP
22.1.7	Finalise document and pass to Chair for publication at appropriate time	CSt	ASAP
24.1.8	Put Area Reports on 16 July Council meeting agenda, not on 28 June	AS	ASAP

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



Signed _____

Date 10/6/22

Andy Syme, Chair

Hill Walking Vision Event Output Summary (minutes addendum)

9:30 – 12:30, 14 May 2022

This Members' Council devoted its morning session to exploring the nature of hill walking, seeking a shared vision of the desirable scope of the BMC's interest in the activity as well as exploring trends that are likely to have significant impact upon this activity both now, and in the foreseeable future. The event concluded by seeking a shared vision of what the BMC's response to those trends might need to be.

Prior to the event the event working group consulted the Hill Walking Group (specialist committee), some Area Hill Walking Representatives, Mountain Training, the BMC CEO and the Chief Commercial Officer to help shape plans.

Those present on the day included Council members, observers, BMC staff, staff from Mountain Training and Andrew Higson, director of charity Blackdog Outdoors, who joined us by virtual means and kindly also spoke a few words of introduction to the meeting too.

The event began with a presentation by vision event working group member and Nationally Elected Councillor for Hill Walking, Rose, who described the evolution of hill walking as a recreational activity, then presented a range of statistical evidence (drawn from Sport England's Active Lives Surveys, the recent Your Movement Matters Survey and the BMC's own Organisational Review Membership Survey 2017) all in order to demonstrate hill walking's rapidly growing popularity (and the opportunities so offered), that participants appreciate the significant physical and mental health gains available and also to highlight the large proportion of the BMC's membership that engages in and values this activity.

Vision event working group member and Hill Walking Group (specialist committee) chair, Peter, then led a series of discussions that were conducted in small, self-selected sub-groups, examining particular questions posed. In addition to those in the room there were also a small number of attendees who joined via Zoom who formed their own virtual discussion group, led by a vision event working group member Chris, who was himself present in the room. Each session of break-out discussions ended with a member of each sub-group providing feedback to all attendees by summarising their group's key discussion outcomes.

Discussion topics included:

Session one addressed the questions:

- **How do we define hill walking? (What is it?)**
- **How wide should the scope of the BMC's interest in hill walking (as so defined earlier) be?**
- **What do we call it? Is hill walking the correct term?**

When discussing the definition of hill walking attendees preferred inclusive and broad descriptions. Similarly, most preferred the scope of BMC interest to be wide. While most activity relevant to the BMC takes place above cultivated land, it was recognised that hill walkers often start and develop their skills in terrain that doesn't always meet that criteria and it's important that the BMC engages with such walkers early in their journey into our activity for purposes of education. Most agreed the top end of hill walking's scope for the BMC is where it becomes mountaineering and recognised that there is considerable overlap. Many descriptive terms were mentioned and it was recognised that their use depends on audience and context.

Session two addressed the questions:

- **What are the current trends (both positive and negative) impacting on hill walkers and the hill walking community?**
- **What might future trends be?**

Many interesting trends were mentioned and discussed. Five key trend areas were identified that became the focus of the following session.

Session three addressed the questions:

- **Using trends that were identified from the previous discussion, what impact will this trend have on the work of the BMC and its priorities?**
- **How should the BMC respond?**

For this session sub-groups were re-formed, each addressing a particular trend area listed above, with participants choosing to join the group discussing the trend area they found most interesting.

The five areas discussed were:

- a need to counter unhelpful behaviours in the uplands requiring more and better **education**;
- the growth in **participation** and the opportunities and threats it presents;
- **climate change** and mitigation of its consequences;
- trends in **social media** and the importance of more effective engagement;
- trends impacting on **access**.

The event concluded with a plenary session where the assembled company reflected on the discussions so far and key messages arising.

Particular messages included:

- the importance of the BMC grasping the positive opportunities offered by growth in participation;
- the importance of effective engagement and education plus the need for more and better communication (including about our campaigns);
- the need to better understand participants (research) in hill walking, especially those who are presently wholly unaware of the BMC and see none of its messaging.

The working group will now take information gathered from the meeting, in the context of the latest strategic plan, and discuss this with relevant Specialist Committee chairs, in order to produce a summary planning document with next steps that build on strengths, identify weaknesses and gaps. If necessary it will make recommendations for adjustment to the BMC strategic plan.

The Hill Walking Vision Working Group is: Rose Gare-Simmons (NEC for Hill Walking)
 Chris Stone (Deputy to the President and chair of London & South East Area)
 Peter Judd (chair of the Hill Walking Group – specialist committee).