

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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Members' Council

Draft minutes of the Members' Council meeting held on Zoom on Tuesday 25 October 2022 at 7.00pm.

In attendance:

Voting Members

Elected Councillors

Deputy to the President, and Chair of the meeting (The Chair)	Chris Stone	CSt	Who is also a London & South East Area Rep	
Cymru North Wales	Tarquin Shipley	TS		
Lakes	Mike Parsons	MP		
Lakes	Fiona Sanders	FS	Who is also a Council Nominated Director	
North East	Jon Punshon	JP		
North East	Jonathan White	JW		
North West	Bill Beveridge	BB		
North West	Carl Spencer	CSp	Who is also a Council Nominated Director	
Peak District	Sam Harris	SH		
Peak District	Sean Milner	SM		
South West	Trevor Smith	TS		
South West	Philip Wilson	PW		
Nationally Elected Councillor for Indoor Climbers	Stuart Holmes	SH		
Nationally Elected Councillor for Rock Climbers	Steve Clark	SC		
Specialist Councillors	Clubs Committee	Peter Salenieks	PS	Who is also a Council Nominated Director
	Competition Climbing Performance Group	Paul Ratcliffe	PR	

Standing Observers

Specialist Committees

Board of Directors

Hill Walking Group	Peter Judd	PJ	
Pwyllgor Cymru – Wales Committee	Neal Hockley	NH	Who is also a Nominated Director
Chair of the Board	Roger Murray	RM	
Chief Executive	Paul Davies	PD	

Others

BMC staff

Minute taker Tony Ryan TR

* 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	In the absence of the President, who was attending the UIAA General Assembly in Canada, the Deputy to the President chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone, including Sean Milner, Paul Ratcliffe and Trevor Smith, who were attending Council for the first time.			
1.1.1	For the benefit of the new attendees, the Chair asked everyone to briefly say what role they undertook within Council.			
1.2	Apologies were received from: Abbie Blakey; Aaron Hodgson; Oli Lewis; Peter Neden; Andy Syme.			
1.3	The Chair wished to formally record a note of thanks to those Councillors who had stepped down following the recent Area AGMs: Alison Cairns; CJ Griffiths; Mick Green; Helen Wilson.			
1.4	The Chair also wished to thank all those who had participated in the recent Volunteer Gala Weekend, which included the annual Specialist Committee Review, and record a special note of thanks to Volunteers Development Officer Jane Thompson and President Andy Syme for their work in organising the event.			
2	Note Conflicts of Interest			
2.1	None declared.			
3	Urgent issues for AOB			
3.1	Two AOB items were requested: 1. Hill Walking Strategy (PJ) 2. Specialist Committees Chair vacancies (JW)			
4	Review of Outstanding Actions			
4.1	The Chair asked Councillors to review the list of outstanding actions managed as Tasks on Teamwork, many of which are assigned to the President, and update any Tasks assigned to them; see Outstanding Actions (link only available to Council members).			

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5	Area Reports			
5.1	South West: PW reported that there had been some technical issues with running the online element of the first hybrid meeting the Area had attempted.			
5.2	London & South East*: The Chair reported that no replacement for Robert Dufton as Area Rep had been elected, but a couple of members had expressed interest in the role. The issue of the timing of the announcement about 2023 member subscription rates was raised in respect of the ability (or lack of ability) of clubs to programme the rate increases into their AGM schedules.			
5.2.1	A member had requested a roadmap for MSO (Membership Services Online). PD advised that this was on the agenda for tomorrow's Board meeting, and PS added that he was in active correspondence about the request.			
5.3	Midlands: No representative in attendance, and no report submitted, but TR did advise that he had heard from Jane Thompson, who did attend, that turnout was disappointingly low.			
5.4	Cymru South Wales*: SQ reported that no replacement for CJ Griffiths as Area Rep had been elected, and he was entering his last year. The issue of financial support for competition climbing in Wales was discussed; this is an issue which the Wales Committee is considering.			
5.4.1	The meeting was very supportive of the plan to do restoration work at Dinas Rock, and discussions with Natural Resources Wales and local climbers have taken place.			
5.5	Cymru North Wales: TQ reported that a well-attended meeting of 40-50 people had discussed bolting policy, with a focus on drilled/glued pegs, the use of which has spread on trad routes in North Wales in recent years. No consensus was reached, and the meeting acknowledged the difficulty of policing this activity?			
5.6	North West: CSp reported that the hybrid meeting had been held very efficiently, although setting up in an unfamiliar venue adds to the technical challenge. Amongst the issues discussed was a proposal to remove fixed gear from Winewall Quarry, near Colne.			
5.7	Peak*: SH reported that Sean Milner had been elected as Area Rep to replace Alison Cairns. The Area's first hybrid meeting had boosted attendance by about 15 people from the 25 or so who had attended at the same venue for the previous in-person only meeting, with a similar number attending in person this time.			

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5.7.1	The complete loss of access for climbing at Wildcat Crag, near Matlock Bath, was discussed, and the related issue of the owners having installed bolt-on holds on the crag to create an outdoor climbing wall.			
5.7.3	The meeting also discussed sustainable transport for climbers and walkers within the national park, recommending that the BMC to organise a national forum meeting on this topic, which could be used to progress the sustainable transport policy the BMC has committed to developing.			
5.8	Lakes: MP reported that the in-person meeting had been preceded by a very interesting tour of the Lyon Equipment manufacturing facilities. Fixed equipment was also on the agenda for this meeting, and the Area decided that it would hold an open meeting in future. Also discussed was the signing-in process for climbing walls and the lack of an integrated system for users of multiple walls, necessitating repetition of the process at each wall visited.			
5.9	Yorkshire: No representative in attendance, and no report submitted.			
5.10	North East: JW reported that the Area had not yet held its meeting, which was scheduled for 3 November, but given that a rail strike is now set to take place on that date, is likely to be re-arranged for 17 November.			
5.11	The July Council meeting had suggested that the Rock Climbing Vision Event for the 12 November meeting should focus on bolting, and the above Area Reports indicate that this is a current topic of interest. However, SH and SC think that a national forum event may be more appropriate than a vision event. The Chair asked SH and SC to therefore set the agenda for the 12 November Rock Climbing Vision Event.	Set agenda for 12 Nov Rock Climbing Vision Event	SC, SH	ASAP
6	Constituency Reports			
6.1	Constituency Councillor for members of BMC Affiliated Clubs			
6.1.1	Councillor not in attendance and no report submitted.			
6.2	Constituency Councillor for Mountain Training candidates*			
6.2.1	Report submitted by Councillor, who was unable to attend meeting.			
6.3	Nationally Elected Councillor for Hill Walkers			

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6.3.1	Councillor not in attendance and no report submitted, but on behalf of Rose, PJ reported on the recent Lake District group hike organised by Rose, and her work on a BMC video.			
6.4	Nationally Elected Councillor for Indoor Climbers			
	SH reported that he had attended the ABC Conference in September. The output summary on the previous Vision Event (on Participant Learning) has now been written up, and will be uploaded to Teamwork for comment.	Upload Participant Learning VE output summary to Teamwork	SH	ASAP
6.5	Nationally Elected Councillor for Mountaineers			
6.5.1	Councillor not in attendance and no report submitted.			
6.6	Nationally Elected Councillor for Rock Climbers			
6.6.1	SC commended those who had been involved organising in the gala event.			
7	Replacement Council Representative on NomCom			
7.1	Following Robert Dufton's decision not to seek a second term as an Area Representative, Council now needed to appoint a replacement for Robert on NomCom.			
7.1.1	The Chair advised that anyone interested in the role should nominate themselves by notifying the President and a formal appointment would be made at the 12 November Council meeting.	Express interest in role of NomCom rep	Anyone	ASAP
		Add NomCom Rep appointment to 12 Nov Council agenda	CSt	Done
7.1.2	After the President and CNDs, RM felt that it was the most important position on Council, and played a critical role in identifying future directors and managing the skills matrix; strategic thinking is required and time commitment is not insignificant.			
7.1.3	The Chair offered to put anyone interested in the role in touch with Robert Dufton, and suggested they could also contact RM or Governance & Compliance Officer Lucy Valerio for information and advice.			
8	Feedback from September 2022 Council Survey			
8.1	The Chair explained that the 2021 Council Survey aimed to align individual areas of interest with the work of Council, and by doing so, also identify any skills shortages that might need bringing into Council.			

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8.1.1	The Chair asked new Councillors to complete the survey, which also included the option for Councillors to give permission for their contact details to be shared with other Councillors via a contact list spreadsheet hosted on Teamwork.	Complete 2021 Council Survey if not already done so	All	ASAP
8.1.2	The 2022 survey is based on Council's priorities; so far it has received only 10 responses. The Chair encouraged those who hadn't completed the survey to do so.	Complete 2022 Council Survey if not already done so	All	ASAP
8.1.3	Links to both surveys can be found in the Council Chat project on Teamwork . (link only available to Council members)			
8.1.4	Councillors asked to be notified of who hasn't completed the surveys.	Prepare and distribute list of survey non-completers	CSt	ASAP
9	Publication of Board minutes*			
9.1	The Chair, in his capacity as London & South East Area Chair, had received a letter from a member in the Area about the lack of publication on the BMC website of recent Board meeting minutes, which the member felt was a clear breach of the provisions of the Articles of Association. The Chair asked RM, as the Chair of the Board, to give his point of view.			
9.1.1	RM said that he would like to apologise, acknowledged that minutes should have been published, and explained the process by which minutes are drafted and approved (including a redacted version, if required) by the Board, and how this process is sometimes deprioritised by the need for the Board to address more urgent challenges. RM advised that he has made a commitment to the letter's author to address the backlog of minutes by the end of the year.			
9.1.2	JW noted the importance of the minutes in enabling Council to carry out its role of 'critical friend' to the Board, and ensure that decisions are followed through, and the importance of operating within the Articles of Association, and BMC policies and procedures, so that individuals are personally protected by them in the event of anything going wrong.			
9.1.3	As well as addressing the backlog of Board meeting minutes as quickly as possible, Council felt that the Board should look to streamline the process by which minutes are approved and published.			
9.1.4	A secondary issue raised in the letter, that of visibility of minutes on the BMC website, was not thought to be an issue, as the relevant webpage can be located simply by typing 'board minutes' in the search box at the top of the homepage.			

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9.1.5	It was agreed that the Chair would draft a reply to the letter and share it with Council before sending.	Draft response to 'Board minutes' letter and share with Council	CSt	ASAP
9.1.6	The Chair thanked RM and the members of the Board for their commitment to improve and accelerate the process.			
10	Board Report			
10.1	Chair*			
10.1.1	RM had provided a written summary of Board meeting activity since July.			
10.1.2	Some key points from the summary included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The BMC has a way to go in order to achieve its strategic aim of being a sector leader, and a step change partnership working is vital to achieve this aim; The appointment of a full-time CFO in May has made an immediate and positive impact on financial reporting; The process of moving from the award of a grant from Sport England to the BMC and its partners has been slow, and we need to improve this process going forward; 			
10.1.3	The Chair invited PD and the CNDs to report.			
10.1.4	JW asked about the progress being made in the recruitment of new directors to fill the current vacancies. RM advised that NomCom has made recommendations for the third Independent Director who will be appointed at the next Board meeting. Neal Hockley has been co-opted as a Nominated Director leaving one vacancy outstanding. The other Nominated Director vacancy may not be filled at this point in time.			
10.2	CEO			
10.2.1	PD advised that the CEO Report needs to be presented first to the Board at the 26 October meeting, and can then go to Council.	Add CEO Report to 12 Nov Council meeting agenda	CSt	Done
10.3	CND			
10.3.1	FS advised that the CND Report would follow the same process as the CEO report.	Add CND Report to 12 Nov Council meeting agenda	CSt	Done
10.4	The meeting briefly discussed how the Board might address the challenges of sector leadership and working with partners and stakeholders.			

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
11	Votes / Agreements (vote = voting members only; agreement = voting members and observers)			
11.1	None held during the meeting.			
12	AOB			
12.1	Hill Walking Strategy*			
12.1.1	PJ had uploaded to Teamwork the latest version of a draft Hill Walking Strategy, and invited Councillors to comment on the document (by close of business on Tuesday 8 November) in advance of a final discussion and invitation to endorse the strategy at the 12 November Council meeting, after which the strategy will be presented to the Board for approval.	Comment on Hill Walking Strategy on Teamwork	All	8 Nov
		Add Hill Walking Strategy to 12 Nov Council agenda	CSt	Done
12.2	Specialist Committees Chair vacancies			
12.2.1	JW advised that role descriptions for chairs of Huts Group and Technical Committee, both of which are currently without a Chair, have been drafted but not yet circulated.			
12.2.2	In response to FS confirming that no role descriptions were on the agenda for tomorrow's Board meeting, JW requested that FS raise it as an AOB issue. FS asked JW to send the relevant documentation to Lucy Valerio, Governance & Compliance Officer.			
	Post-meeting note: a process for Council to comment on the Huts Group Chair role description before it went to the Board for approval, and for that approval to occur before the Huts Seminar on 19 November, was agreed.			
13	Date of next Meetings			
13.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday 12 November – 7th Council meeting – BMC office, Manchester and on Zoom; • Tuesday 6 December – post-meeting – on Zoom. 			
13.1.1	Zoom links for above meetings are on the Teamwork Calendar .			
	There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.00pm.			

Summary of actions: See [7th Members' Council Outstanding Actions](#) (link only available to Council members)

Item	Action	Involving	Target date
5.11	Set agenda for 12 Nov Rock Climbing Vision Event	SC, SH	ASAP
6.4	Upload Participant Learning VE output summary to Teamwork	SH	ASAP
7.1.1	Express interest in role of NomCom rep	Anyone	ASAP
7.1.1	Add NomCom Rep appointment to 12 Nov Council agenda	CSt	Done
8.1.1	Complete 2021 Council Survey if not already done so	All	ASAP
8.1.2	Complete 2022 Council Survey if not already done so	All	ASAP
8.1.4	Prepare and distribute list of councillors who have not completed the surveys	CSt	ASAP
9.1.5	Draft response to 'Board minutes' letter and share with Council	CSt	ASAP
10.2.1	Add CEO Report to 12 Nov Council meeting agenda	CSt	Done
10.3.1	Add CND Report to 12 Nov Council meeting agenda	CSt	Done
12.1.1	Comment on Hill Walking Strategy on Teamwork	All	8 Nov
12.1.1	Add Hill Walking Strategy to 12 Nov Council agenda	CSt	Done

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

Signed Stone Date 27/11/2022

Chris Stone, Chair