

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

177-179 Burton Road
Manchester M20 2BB

Tel: 0161 445 6111
www.thebmc.co.uk

Members' Council

Approved minutes of the Members' Council meeting held on Zoom on Saturday 11 March 2023 at 9.30am.

In attendance:

Voting Members

Elected Councillors

President, and Chair of the meeting (the Chair)
Cymru South Wales
Lakes
London & South East
London & South East
Midlands
Midlands
North East
North West
North West
Peak District
South West
South West
Yorkshire

Andy Syme AS
Steve Quinton SQ
Fiona Sanders FS
Chris Stone CSt
Stella Südekum SS
Claudia Sarner CSa
Ian Wyatt IW
Jonathan White JWh
Bill Beveridge BB
Carl Spencer CSp
Sean Milner SM
Trevor Smith TS
Philip Wilson PW
Martin Christmas MC

For Vision Event only
Who is also Deputy to the President

Who is also a Council Nominated Director

Constituency Councillor for BMC Affiliated Club members
Nationally Elected Councillor for Indoor Climbers
Nationally Elected Councillor for Rock Climbers

Peter Neden PN
Stuart Holmes SH
Steve Clark SC

For Vision Event only

Specialist Councillors

Clubs Committee
Equity Steering Group
Competition Climbing Performance Group
Training, Youth & Walls Committee

Peter Salenieks PS
Mohammed Dhalech MD
Paul Ratcliffe PR
Abbi Blakey AB

Who is also a Council Nominated Director

For Vision Event only

Standing Observers

Specialist Committees Board of Directors

Hill Walking Group
Chair of the Board
Independent Director
Chief Executive

Peter Judd PJ
Roger Murray RM
John Willmott JWi
Paul Davies PD

Not present at Vision Event

Ad Hoc Observers

Huts Group Lynsey McAuley LM

Others

	Mountain Training UK & Ireland	John Cousins	JC	
BMC staff	Mountain Training England	Guy Jarvis	GJ	For Vision Event only
	Minute taker	Tony Ryan	TR	

* denotes supporting paper(s) circulated prior to meeting

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
16	Indoor Climbing Vision Event			
16.1	Council discussed the 'vision' for indoor climbing, specifically how the BMC can help to promote sustainable, diverse communities; this session was led by SH. See Appendix A for output summary.			
17	Welcome & apologies for absence			
17.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including Ian Wyatt and John Willmott, attending Council for the first time			
17.1.1	Apologies were received from: Sam Harris, Jon Punshon and Tarquin Shipley.			
17.1.2	TR is leaving the BMC on 31 March, after 22 years as a member of staff. SC proposed a formal vote of thanks to TR for his service to both Council and the Areas.	Agreed		
18	Note Conflicts of Interest			
18.1	None declared.			
19	Urgent issues for AOB			
19.1	Staff attendance of Council meeting (Stuart Holmes)			
20	Minutes of previous meetings and Outstanding Actions*			
20.1	21 February 2023 meeting minutes			
20.1.1	The draft minutes were uploaded to Teamwork on 28 February. As no requests for amendments had been made, the minutes were approved without discussion or amendment.	Upload signed and approved 21 February meeting minutes to the BMC website	TR	ASAP

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
20.2	The meeting reviewed the list of outstanding actions managed as Tasks on Teamwork; see Outstanding Actions (link only available to Council members).			
20.2.1	On the action related to item 44.2.3 of the 6 December 2022 meeting minutes, conducting due diligence checks on potential BMC Patrons, it was agreed that CSt would contact Lucy Valerio, BMC governance & compliance officer, for advice.	Seek advice on due diligence checks of potential Patrons	CSt	ASAP
20.2.2	On completion of checks, it was proposed that potential patrons then be contacted by someone within the BMC who personally knows the potential patron, to sound out their interest before sending an official letter of invitation.	Noted		
20.2.3	On the action related to item 7.1.7 of the 21 February 2023 meeting minutes, the Chair reported that the Board had recommended SM as the new Council Representative on the Nominations Committee.	Noted		
21	Agreement of outstanding Council meeting dates			
21.1	June Council meeting			
21.1.1	The original plan, which yielded administrative efficiencies and cost savings, was to hold a full Council meeting (including Vision Event) on the weekend of the 2023 BMC AGM, which has been confirmed as taking place on Saturday 17 June, in the North East Area in conjunction with a BMC area festival.			
21.1.2	The Chair was concerned that a Council meeting on the Sunday might conflict with activities planned for the festival, which it was understood would conclude around midday on Sunday.			
21.1.3	Following discussion of options, it was agreed that a hybrid Council meeting would be held on the afternoon of Sunday 18 June, and would include only the most essential business, any other business being conducted in an additional midweek evening Zoom meeting, if needed. This decision would necessitate rescheduling of the Vision Events; the June meeting had originally included a Mountaineering Vision Event.	Noted		
21.2	September Council meeting			
21.2.1	The original plan was to hold a full Council meeting on the same weekend as the annual Specialist Committee Review meeting, the date of which had not yet been confirmed.			
21.2.2	RM wanted to schedule the review meeting alongside a Board meeting, so suggested the weekend of 23-24 September. The Chair suggested that it might be possible to run the			

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	Council and Board meetings simultaneously; the Deputy to the President could chair the Council meeting in the absence of the President.			
21.2.3	Following discussion of options, it was suggested that the weekend schedule could be as follows: Saturday 23 September – Board and Council meetings to run simultaneously during the day - an event to celebrate the work of BMC volunteers could be held in the evening. Sunday 24 September – Specialist Committee Review meeting, and volunteer workshops, to run simultaneously.			
21.2.4	A suitable venue would need to be found for the weekend, within BMC budgets and enabling attendance by BMC staff for the review meeting.			
21.2.5	As the June Council meeting would not now include a Vision Event, the schedule of Vision Events would need to be revised.	Propose revised schedule of Vision Events	AS	ASAP
21.2.6	The September Council meeting had originally been earmarked as an online meeting, and the December meeting in person, but the formats would now be switched.	Noted		
21.2.7	The revised schedule of Council meetings and Vision Events would be circulated.	Circulate revised schedule of Council meetings and Vision Events	TR	ASAP
22	North West Area representation on Council			
22.1	The Chair summarised the situation pertaining to CSp, who has completed six years as an Area Representative, but remains a Council Nominated Director (CND) until October 2023.			
22.1.1	If CSp continued as an Area Representative until October, this would be a breach of the Articles of Association.			
22.1.2	The North West Area Chair has requested that Council agrees to the co-option of a BMC member who has expressed interest in the role.			
22.1.3	Council agreed to the co-option of Andy Say as North West Area Representative, to replace CSp, who would still be eligible to attend Council (as an Observer) as a CND.			
23	Councillor and CND succession planning*			

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
23.1	The Chair had published a summary of actions and comments from previous meetings.			
23.1.1	The meeting discussed how to make the CND role accessible to more Councillors, noting that two of the three current CNDs will complete their terms in October this year.			
23.1.2	One observation was that Area Representatives are voted into the role without any real consideration of their potential or desire to take on the role of CND.			
23.1.3	There is also a 'sweetspot' for Councillors to undertake the role, after having first gained experience of Council, and before their term on Council ends.			
23.1.4	The Chair asked if anyone was willing to produce a discussion paper, which would summarise the current situation, and present proposals and options for addressing the challenges of succession planning; JW offered to do so.	Produce paper on Councillor succession planning	JW	ASAP
24a	Signing of Councillor Declaration and Sanctions for conduct*			
24a.1	This agenda item was taken after item 24b.			
24a.1.1	The Chair summarised the changes to the document previously discussed at the 21 February Council meeting.			
24a.1.2	Some Councillors felt that the requirement to sign the Declaration might put off some members from standing for Councillor positions, but recent newcomers to Council in the meeting did not feel it would have done so for them.			
24a.1.3	There was some discussion about linking the signing of the Declaration to completion of an induction to Council.			
24a.1.4	A vote on approving the Councillor Declaration, as well as a separate vote on signing it, was taken in item 30.1.			
24b	Update Code of Practice*			
24b.1	This agenda item was taken before item 24a.			
24b.1.1	The Chair summarised the changes, which had been highlighted in the draft uploaded to Teamwork, noting that some typos still remained in the document.			

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24b.1.2	CSt suggested that a link to the Social Media Guidelines could be added to the References section, as well as being referenced in point 8 of the Standards section.			
24b.1.3	A vote on approving the Code of Practice was taken in item 30.2.			
25	Volunteer Strategy*			
25.1	CSt explained the background of the development of the strategy presented to the meeting, and asked Council if it felt anything was missing from the strategy, and what it felt should be the priorities in the list of ambitions.			
25.1.1	Council considered the safety and wellbeing of volunteers to be a priority, as are good communications between volunteers, related staff and the leadership of the organisation.			
25.1.2	CSt advised that action plans would be developed once the strategy had been approved by the Board.			
25.1.3	A vote on approving the Volunteer Strategy was taken in item 31.1.			
26	NEC for Hill Walkers report*			
26.1	The Chair encouraged Councillors to read the report submitted by Rose Gare-Simmons, and comment on Teamwork if there is anything related to the report they would like the 28 March post-meeting to discuss.	Comment on NEC for Hill Walkers report on Teamwork	All	ASAP
27	Mountain Training report*			
27.1	The Chair encouraged Councillors to read the report submitted Guy Jarvis, John Cousins and Simon Patton, and comment on Teamwork if there is anything related to the report they would like the 28 March post-meeting to discuss.	Comment on Mountain Training report on Teamwork	All	ASAP
27.1.1	PD noted the proposal to amend Mountain Training England's (MTE) Articles to increase the maximum number of directors to nine.			
27.1.2	JW noted that from the 1970s until c. 2017, to ensure mutual dependency and an aligned approach, the BMC had appointed four Directors, but this had been cut to one (not least because the BMC had not always filled all the positions).			

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27.1.3	The meeting discussed the history of BMC representation on the MTE Board, the BMC's formal level of legal accountability, and the need for representation on the Board to be commensurate with that accountability. The proposed expansion of the Board raised some concern about a potential dilution of the BMC's vote on the Board.			
27.1.4	The meeting agreed that we should support the increase to the number of Directors, with that increase coming from a reinstatement of one or more BMC appointed positions.			
27.1.5	It was suggested that PD arrange a conversation with GJ to allay concerns, and agreed that PD would produce an official statement in support of the proposed expansion, and offering to provide support to the expanded Board.	Arrange meeting with MTE to discuss Board expansion proposal	PD	ASAP
		Produce statement in support of MTE Board expansion proposal	PD	ASAP
28	CND report*			
28.1	The Chair encouraged Councillors to read the report submitted by Fiona Sanders, and comment on Teamwork if there is anything related to the report they would like the 28 March post-meeting to discuss.	Comment on CND report on Teamwork	All	ASAP
29	Youth Club membership year proposal*			
29.1	It was noted that Council had previously agreed to a Youth Club category of membership, in September 2019, to create a separate category from Student Clubs. A model is currently being developed and will soon be ready to be piloted. As part of the preparations for this, the annual 'club year' needs to be defined.			
29.1.1	The proposal is for the year to align with the school calendar, and run from 1 September to 31 August, which is different from the Account Date for Affiliated Clubs.			
29.1.2	The Articles of Association do allow for a different annual membership renewal date to be determined by the Board, after consultation with Council.			
29.1.3	A vote on approving the Youth Club membership year was taken in item 32.1.			
30 - 32	Votes / Agreements (Vote = voting members only; Agreement = voting members and observers)			

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
30.1	Item 24a: Signing of Councillor Declaration and Sanctions for conduct			
30.1.1	VOTE: The Council approves the Councillors Declaration - Update V2 , subject to the inclusion of any amendments suggested at the meeting.			
30.1.2	RESULT: For = 6; Against = 4; Defer until 28 March post-meeting = 2; Abstain = 1; Non-voting member = 9. Chair did not vote.			
30.1.3	As the President/Chair's vote could not be recorded, on Zoom, it was effectively a dead heat (if you add the 2 'defer' to the 4 'against'). The President declined to cast his vote and agreed that the document would be subjected to a further round of comment and suggestion on Teamwork prior to the post-meeting.	All Councillors to comment on changes they would like to the Councillor Declaration.	All	ASAP
30.1.4	Council was also asked to vote separately on the following, as a straw poll: AGREEMENT: Should all Councillors sign this document with immediate effect?			
30.1.5	RESULT: For = 10; Against = 4; Abstain = 9.			
30.1.6	Council agreed that all Councillors should sign the Councillor Declaration with immediate effect.	Agreed		
30.2	Item 24b: Update to Code of Practice			
30.2.1	AGREEMENT: The Council approves of the Draft Members' Council Code of Practice V2, subject to correcting any typos.			
30.2.2	RESULT: For = 19; Against = 0; Abstain = 4.			
30.2.3	Council approved the updated Code of Practice	Noted		
31	Item 25: Volunteer Strategy			
31.1	VOTE: The Council approves of the Draft BMC Volunteering Strategy being taken to the Board for approval.			
31.1.1	RESULT: For = 13; Against = 0; Abstain = 1; Non-voting member = 9.			
31.1.2	Council agreed that the Volunteering Strategy could go to the Board for approval.	Agreed		
32	Item 28: Youth Club membership year proposal			

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
32.1	VOTE: The Council approves of the Youth Club Membership Proposal being taken to the Board for approval.			
32.1.1	RESULT: For = 13; Against = 0; Abstain = 1; Non-voting member = 9.			
32.1.2	Council agreed that the Youth Club Membership Proposal could go to the Board for approval.	Agreed		
33	AOB			
33a	Statutory licensing scheme for all visitor accommodation providers in Wales*			
33a.1	PS advised that the wording of the Welsh Government consultation suggests that the proposed scheme will encompass huts in Wales that are operated by BMC affiliated clubs.			
33a.1.1	Three BMC specialist committees (Clubs' Committee, Huts Group and Pwyllgor Cymru - Wales Committee) are supporting clubs in preparing a co-ordinated response which aims to minimise the burden on clubs as huts operators. Responses are required by 17 March 2023.			
33a.1.2	RM recommended contacting the Mountaineering Council of Scotland, where similar legislation has been introduced; initial contact should go via Stuart Younie, who will be able to direct our approach to the most relevant staff member. It was agreed that PD would decide which BMC staff member should make the approach.			
	Post-meeting note: Feedback from Mountaineering Scotland was obtained. The Huts Group reported that all hostels (including huts) are excluded from the equivalent Scottish legislation; that was then a key argument played into the consultation that Wales should take the same approach. Members of four BMC committees (Huts, Clubs, Midlands and Pwyllgor Cymru) worked collectively to respond to the 27 questions, and Eben Muse as Wales policy officer submitted the response in the name of BMC Cymru.			
33b	Finance & Audit Committee update*			
33b.1	BB suggested that discussion of the update should be postponed until the 28 March post-meeting, by which time he will have spoken with Tarquin Shipley, who is the other Members' Council Representative on the Finance & Audit Committee. The Chair advised Councillors to comment on the paper on Teamwork, and if anything needs to go to the post-meeting, it will be added to the agenda.	Comment on Finance & Audit Committee update on Teamwork	All	ASAP
33c	Staff attendance of Council meeting			

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
33c.1	In the morning Vision Event, SH had requested that relevant BMC staff attend a future full Council meeting, specifically to provide an update on the membership survey and how the results of the survey might affect future membership offers.			
33c.1.1	PD suggested that Councillors could be invited to the deep dive session on the survey which the Board is holding on the afternoon of 10 May at the BMC office.	Invite Councillors to attend Board deep dive on 10 May	RM	ASAP
34	Date of next Meetings			
15.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 28 March 2023 – post-meeting – on Zoom. • Tuesday 23 May 2023 – pre-meeting – on Zoom. • Sunday 18 June 2023 – full meeting – in-person and on Zoom (BMC AGM weekend) • Tuesday 4 July 2023 – post-meeting – on Zoom 			
15.1.1	Zoom links for above meetings are on the Teamwork Calendar .			
There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 4.45pm.				

Summary of actions: See [8th Members' Council Outstanding Actions](#) (link only available to Council members)

Item	Action	Involving	Target date
20.1.1	Upload signed and approved 21 February meeting minutes to the BMC website	TR	ASAP
20.2.1	Seek advice on due diligence checks of potential Patrons	CSt	ASAP
21.2.5	Propose revised schedule of Vision Events	AS	ASAP
21.2.7	Circulate revised schedule of Council meetings and Vision Events	TR	ASAP
23.1.4	Produce paper on Councillor succession planning	JW	ASAP
26.1	Comment on NEC for Hill Walkers report on Teamwork	All	ASAP
27.1	Comment on Mountain Training report on Teamwork	All	ASAP
27.1.5	Arrange meeting with MTE to discuss Board expansion proposal	PD	ASAP
27.1.5	Produce statement in support of MTE Board expansion proposal	PD	ASAP
28.1	Comment on CND report on Teamwork	All	ASAP
30.1.3	All Councillors to comment on changes they would like to the Councillor Declaration.	All	ASAP
33b.1	Comment on Finance & Audit Committee update on Teamwork	All	ASAP
33c.1.1	Invite Councillors to attend Board deep dive on 10 May	RM	ASAP

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

Signed  Date **13/4/23**

Andy Syme, Chair

Appendix A:

Indoor Climbing Vision Event

Output summary to be added when available.