

## BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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### Members' Council

Draft minutes of the Members' Council meeting held on Zoom on Tuesday 28 March 2023 at 7pm.

#### In attendance:

#### Voting Members

Elected Councillors

President, and Chair of the meeting (the Chair)

Andy Syme AS

Cymru North Wales

Tarquin Shipley TS

Cymru South Wales

Steve Quinton SQ

Lakes

Mike Parsons MP

Lakes

Fiona Sanders FS

London & South East

Chris Stone CSt

Who is also a Council Nominated Director

Who is also Deputy to the President

Midlands

Claudia Sarnier CSa

Midlands

Ian Wyatt IW

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

Sam Harris SH

Peak

Sean Milner SM

South West

Trevor Smith TS

Yorkshire

Martin Christmas MC

Constituency Councillor for BMC Affiliated Club members

Peter Neden PN

Nationally Elected Councillor for Rock Climbers

Steve Clark SC

Specialist Councillors

Access Management Group

Andy Tickle AT

Clubs Committee

Peter Salenieks PS

Who is also a Council Nominated Director

Training, Youth & Walls Committee

Abbi Blakey AB

#### Standing Observers

Specialist Committees

Hill Walking Group

Peter Judd PJ

Board of Directors

Chair of the Board

Roger Murray RM

Chief Executive

Paul Davies PD

#### Ad Hoc Observers

Huts Group

Lynsey McAuley LM

#### Others

Partners

Mountain Training UK & Ireland

John Cousins JC

BMC staff

Access & Conservation Officer (Policy)

Cath Flitcroft CF

For item 39

Minute taker

Tony Ryan TR

\* denotes supporting paper(s) circulated prior to meeting

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
<b>35</b>	<b>Welcome &amp; apologies for absence</b>			
35.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting; no apologies were received.			
<b>36</b>	<b>Note Conflicts of Interest</b>			
36.1	None declared.			
<b>37</b>	<b>Urgent issues for AOB</b>			
37.1	There were three requests: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update on licensing scheme for visitor accommodation providers in Wales (PS)</li> <li>2. AGM update (JW)</li> <li>3. Cover for TR until new replacement is in post (CSt)</li> </ol>			
<b>38</b>	<b>Minutes of previous meetings and Outstanding Actions*</b>			
<b>38.1</b>	<b>11 March 2023 meeting minutes</b>			
38.1.1	The draft minutes were uploaded to Teamwork on 20 March, and amended following feedback via comments on Teamwork. The revised draft minutes were approved without further discussion or amendment in the meeting.	<b>Upload signed and approved 11 March meeting minutes to the BMC website</b>	<b>TR</b>	<b>Done</b>
<b>38.2</b>	The meeting reviewed the list of outstanding actions managed as Tasks on Teamwork; see <a href="#">Outstanding Actions</a> (link only available to Council members).			
38.2.1	As a result of comments posted on Teamwork about item 33b.1 (Finance & Audit Committee update), the Chair proposed to invite Gavin Finch, chief commercial officer, to present to the next Council meeting on Membership and growth; the exact date dependent on his availability. Then Council and Gavin can discuss and decide from that presentation how the Council can support membership growth, in a co-creation approach. The Chair would also notify Gavin of Council members who can meet and agree 'state of play' on membership.	<b>AS invite Gavin to next MC meeting</b>	<b>AS</b>	<b>Done</b>
<b>39</b>	<b>Access Discussion*</b>			

Item	Topic and Main Aspects Considered	Decision / Action	Who	When
39.1	CF began by summarising the Dartmoor wild camping High Court case, the present situation being that Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) has been granted leave to appeal the ruling, and is now waiting to discover if the appeal will be allowed. An interim agreement (to be reviewed after one year) has been made by the DNPA with the Dartmoor Commons Owners' Association which enables people to continue backpack/wild camping on identified common land without needing to secure landowner permission first. An appeal to raise funds for the legal costs is in place, and a loose coalition of organisations is supporting the DNPA.			
39.1.1	Looking beyond the Dartmoor situation, the next General Election, which is likely to be in May 2024, provides an opportunity for the BMC and partner organisations to influence party manifestos, and we plan to launch an 'Outdoors for All' letter-writing campaign in September to push for manifesto pledges.			
39.1.2	The meeting discussed whether a push for enhanced rights to camp in the wild might put the current tolerance of wild camping at risk.			
39.1.3	JC advised that Mountain Training regards wild camping as an essential element of its delivery system, and is integral to the Mountain Leader qualification.			
39.1.4	TS noted that DNPA had purposely chosen to use the term 'backpack camping' to make a clear distinction with some of the destructive 'roadside camping' that has occurred and featured in media coverage, which has often been referred to as 'wild camping'. He felt that it was important that we should mirror terminology adopted by DNPA.			
39.1.5	On the question of engagement with members in the discussion process, it was agreed that Area Meetings and a Members' Forum should form part of the process, as well as engaging with the Access Network sessions and mobilising our contacts with clubs.			
39.1.6	FS suggested that we could also work closely with our partners to align messaging and information, and gave the Knowledge section of Cotswold Outdoor's website as an example.			
39.1.7	IW felt that we should aim to offer solutions to the problems created by some camping activity, such as the potential for a camping version of the BMC Regional Access Database.			
39.1.8	<p>In response to the questions posed in the paper for this agenda item, Council felt that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a call for a right to camp in the wild should be part of any call for an enhanced right to roam, and that we should make that call now, but that the precise timing of the call should be decided by the Access Management Group;</li> </ul>			

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• we should consult members on acceptable limitations on where and how a right to camp should be exercised;</li> <li>• to ensure that any enhanced rights and resulting behaviours are likely to be acceptable to landowners and managers, clear and widespread communication of rights and responsibilities would need to accompany the provision of any new right to camp in the wild.</li> </ul>			
39.1.9	<p>CF summarised the discussion on engagement, and agreed that the sequence of engagement would be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discussion at an Access Network session;</li> <li>2. Engagement with members via the Area Meetings, for which a briefing paper will be published;</li> <li>3. Wider engagement with members via a Members' Forum event.</li> </ol>			
39.1.10	<p>CF thanked Councillors for their input, and encouraged them to email any additional comments to her. Councillors thanked CF and PJ for the detailed paper, which had supported valuable and constructive discussion.</p>			
<b>40</b>	<b>Participation Statement*</b>			
<b>40.1</b>	<p>SQ advised that following wide consultation, the Task &amp; Finish Group had produced an agreed title, wording and way forward for the Participation Statement.</p>			
40.1.1	<p>The new BMC Participation Statement reads:  <i>Climbing, hill walking and mountaineering can provide life-long physical, social and mental health benefits through exercise and adventure in amazing environments. The BMC recognises these activities involve a risk of personal injury or death. Participants should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and impacts on others.</i></p>			
40.1.2	<p>SQ explained the consultation process, the structure of the new statement, and reasoning behind the wording. With the addition of a positive statement of the benefits of our activities, the existing title is now a better fit with the new statement; the existing statement might be considered more of a risk statement than a participation statement.</p>			
40.1.3	<p>The group would like Council to agree to the wording of the new statement, so that it can be launched at the AGM in June alongside promotion in Summit magazine, and publicity via specialist committees, partners, newsletters, etc.</p>			

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40.1.4	The group felt that the most practical method of adding 'informed consent' to the statement would be to create a webpage hosting relevant safety resources on the BMC website, as well as guidance on how the statement should be contextualised for different environments, and include a link in the statement to the webpage.			
40.1.5	The meeting considered how to involve partner organisations in the launch, and the need to ensure that Mountaineering Scotland and Mountaineering Ireland are aware of the new statement, since partner organisations are UK-wide. FS suggested we could do this via the Partners' Assembly, and that Cressida Allwood, BMC partnerships manager would be able to assist.			
40.1.6	The Chair thanked SQ and the group for their work, and asked Council to indicate its approval for the new statement by a show of hands, which was unanimous in support of the statement. The statement should now go before the Board for final sign-off.	<b>Agreed Send Participation Statement to Board for sign-off</b>	<b>SQ</b>	<b>ASAP</b>
<b>41</b>	<b>Councillors Declaration*</b>			
41.1	The Chair thanked Councillors who had commented on the updated document on Teamwork, and sought feedback from Councillors who hadn't commented.			
41.1.1	A number of Councillors commented that they weren't convinced of the necessity for a declaration, or that they were uncomfortable about its introduction, but they would not object to signing it.			
41.1.2	JP advised that he would abstain from a vote, as he felt that the declaration had been driven by an issue which had not been shared with Council.			
41.1.3	A vote to approve the declaration was taken in item 45.			
<b>42</b>	<b>Councillor &amp; CND Succession Planning*</b>			
42.1	JW provided some background to the paper he had published for this agenda item, which summarises the current situation, and attempts to address what wasn't resolved in June 2022 when Council had previously discussed CND (Council Nominated Director) succession planning.			
42.1.1	The workload of a CND is significant, and undoubtedly contributes to the reluctance of many Councillors to put themselves forward for election. Workload and phasing of the role in			

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	relation to other roles carried out by a CND is a key discussion point, and if the current internal rules relating to phasing are not working, they can be changed.			
42.1.2	The idea of a Councillor taking up a CND role in their third year on Council (or sixth year if they do two terms) would enable them to take on roles in succession rather than in parallel and thereby reduce some of the workload issue whilst also ensuring that knowledge and experience gained on Council was not lost but actually put to good use.			
42.1.3	Another option to consider is that an Area Representative who becomes a CND might step down from their Area Representative role.			
42.1.4	FS reminded Council that one of the proposals made in June 2022 was to recruit only one CND in any one year, both to support continuity and facilitate an induction year.			
42.1.5	The Chair commented that the meeting hadn't discussed Councillor succession planning, and asked how Council wished to progress that discussion.			
42.1.6	Noting that two CNDs (Peter Salenieks, Carl Spencer) complete their three-year terms as Directors later this year, RM advised that we need to make preparations now, so that we can be ready in October.			
42.1.7	Following discussion of the need to update the skills matrix, the Chair proposed that the Nominations Committee be tasked with recommending what is needed from the CNDs, so that we can start supporting Councillors who might be interested in the role, or looking more widely.	<b>NomCom to recommend CND skills requirements</b>	<b>SM</b>	<b>ASAP</b>
<b>43</b>	<b>Revised Council Schedule and Vision Events*</b>			
<b>43.1</b>	The Chair reminded Council that it had agreed at the 11 March Council meeting to hold a full Council meeting on 23 September, which would need to include the vote to elect a CND.	<b>Add CND election to 23 September Council meeting agenda</b>	<b>AS</b>	<b>1 Sep 23</b>
43.1.1	TR suggested that the 15 August pre-meeting could be rescheduled to be closer to the 23 September meeting, as is the typical Council meeting schedule. It was agreed to reschedule the pre-meeting to Tuesday 5 September.	<b>Agreed</b>		
43.1.2	No date had been set for the post-meeting following the 23 September meeting. It was agreed to schedule the post-meeting for Tuesday 10 October.	<b>Agreed</b>		
43.1.3	PN requested that diary invites be sent out for future Council meetings.	<b>Agreed</b>		

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43.1.4	The Chair asked TR to start looking at the potential Council schedule for 2024. Given that TR is leaving the BMC on 31 March, this task will likely fall to his replacement.	<b>Draft possible schedule of 2024 Council meetings</b>	TR	<b>ASAP</b>
<b>44</b>	<b>Deputy to the President Role and Election Process*</b>			
<b>44.1</b>	PN advised that the new paper takes the form of a job description, and can stand until it changes rather than revisiting it each year, as has been the case so far.			
44.1.1	The Chair added that the original intention behind the role was to complement the strengths and weaknesses of the President, and it was up to Council to decide the process.			
44.1.2	The meeting agreed to vote on approving the role description and election process at the 23 May Council pre-meeting which precedes the BMC AGM on 17 June.	<b>Add DP role description approval to 23 May Council meeting agenda</b>	AS	<b>1 May 23</b>
<b>45</b>	<b>Votes / Agreements</b> (Vote = voting members only; Agreement = voting members and observers)			
<b>45.1</b>	<b>Item 41: Councillors Declaration</b>			
45.1.1	VOTE: The Council approve in principle the Councillors Declaration, subject to the inclusion of any amendments suggested at the meeting.			
45.1.2	RESULT: For = 8; Against = 2; Abstain = 3; Non-voting member = 10.	<b>Noted</b>		
45.1.3	Council approved the Councillors Declaration.	<b>Chair to arrange signature of Declaration</b>	AS	<b>At AGM?</b>
<b>45.2</b>	<b>Item 44: Deputy to the President Role and Election Process</b>			
45.2.1	Vote deferred to the 23 May Council pre-meeting.	<b>Noted</b>		
<b>46</b>	<b>AOB</b>			
<b>46.1</b>	<b>Update on licensing scheme for visitor accommodation providers in Wales</b>			
46.1.1	PS provided an update, and advised that Mountaineering Scotland had confirmed that all hostels (including huts) are excluded from the equivalent Scottish legislation.			
<b>46.2</b>	<b>AGM update</b>			
46.2.1	JW wanted to know about the timing of notification to members of the 17 June BMC AGM.			

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46.2.2	PD said that there is a schedule based on the notice requirements in the Articles of Association, and the Chair asked PD to inform Council of the comms plan.	<b>Inform Council of comms plan for BMC AGM</b>	<b>PD</b>	<b>ASAP</b>
<b>46.3</b>	<b>Cover for TR until new replacement is in post</b>			
46.3.1	CSt wanted to know what plans were in place to cover for TR, particularly in respect of Area Meetings taking place in April, until the new staff member who will be supporting Area Meetings is in post.			
46.3.2	TR explained that he had done as much preparation as possible on supporting the April round of meetings, including providing the communications team with information to email to members in advance of the meetings. The new staff member starts on Monday 17 April, which is when the round of Area Meetings begin. The Chair asked PD to confirm what plans are in place to cover the period between TR leaving on 31 March, and the new person starting.	<b>Confirm TR cover plan until new staff member starts</b>	<b>PD</b>	<b>ASAP</b>
46.3.2	The Council thanked TR for all his work and support over the years and wished him well in his retirement.			
<b>47</b>	<b>Dates of next Meetings</b>			
<b>15.1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tuesday 23 May 2023 – pre-meeting – on Zoom.</li> <li>Sunday 18 June 2023 – full meeting – in-person and on Zoom (BMC AGM weekend)</li> <li>Tuesday 4 July 2023 – post-meeting – on Zoom</li> </ul>			
15.1.1	Zoom links for above meetings are on the <a href="#">Teamwork Calendar</a> .			
	There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 9.15pm.			



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

Item	Action	Involving	Target date
38.1.1	Upload signed and approved 11 March meeting minutes to the BMC website	TR	ASAP
40.1.6	Send Participation Statement to Board for sign-off	SQ	ASAP
42.1.7	NomCom to recommend CND skills requirements	SM	ASAP
43.1	Add CND election to 23 September Council meeting agenda	AS	1 Sep 23
43.1.4	Draft possible schedule of 2024 Council meetings	TR	ASAP
44.1.2	Add DP role description approval to 23 May Council meeting agenda	AS	1 May 23
46.2.2	Inform Council of comms plan for BMC AGM	PD	ASAP
46.3.2	Confirm TR cover plan until new staff member starts	PD	ASAP

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



5/7/23

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Andy Syme, Chair**