

Board Meeting – Minutes

4pm, Thurs 13th February 2025 – The Granary and online via Zoom

Directors: Anne Butler (President); Alistair Todd (Vice Chair); Ilona Turnbull; Fiona Bennett; Andrew Tait; Stephen Johnson; Andrew Walker; Pete Crane; Brendan Hughes, Hugo Allan,

CEO & Company Secretary: Stuart Younie.

Observers: Derek O’Riordan (sportsotland); Fiona Kerr, Jo Dytch

1.0 Welcome and Apologies

Present: Online: HA, SJ, BH, FB, FK, DO, JD In person: AB, ATait, IT, PC, SY

Apologies: AW, ATodd

2.0 Declaration of Interests

ACTION: SY to check if any declaration forms are outstanding

3.0 Draft Minutes of the Full Board meeting of 31st October 2024

Approved with no changes

4.0 Actions and matters arising not tabled elsewhere in the agenda.

- Safety advice for clubs: SJ noted this had been discussed. BH added a refresh was needed on the website information and legal advice which was now a few years old.
ACTION: BH will pick up with SJ.
- Future magazine options: AW, SY, HG have discussed and agreed to pause the 2 editions of Mountain Matters and this has been shared with members.
- Membership Strategy: Papers had been shared and feedback welcome to SY or HG
- Mountain Safety strategy: BH reported that MSG stakeholders had discussed the draft strategy at their previous meeting and planned an in person session for 4th March where he hoped key stakeholders would attend.
- Fire doors: SY updated that 3 business have now viewed the job and will submit quotes. The fire drill would sound in whole building so needs further thought.

ACTION: SY to continue progress replacement of the doors and implement fire drill.

5.0 Call for AOCB

None Submitted

6.0 CEO & Operational report

SY highlighted some key points from his quarterly report and more current news:

- Staffing: KM is leaving at the end of February to pursue a new career. Megan is also on pre agreed leave for all of March so SSA will provide cover during the period of shortage. Following a discussion with staff covering the office, it has been agreed to trial all staff working from home on a Friday to ease pressure on office cover. The upcoming 3 posts will also include an expectation to be partly office based.
- A staff team day took place on 5th February at Ratho.
- SY has sent best wishes and support to Glenmore Lodge following some staff being involved in a recent car accident.
- Davie 'Heavy' Whalley's health is deteriorating, and friends are looking for help and contributions on a book he was working on. SY and AB will offer support.
- FWF this weekend, HG, KM, MM and SY are attending and great to see Kev being recognised with The Award for Excellence in Mountain Culture.

7.0 Finance Report

7.1 Financial Report Q3 2024/25

FB reported on the Q3 position which is showing a surplus YTD of £62k which is a significant improvement on the budget. The current year end forecast is around £35k though there could be movement either way. Main reasons for improvement against budget include £7k in memberships and increases in Mountain Safety and CS activity income against budget. Salary costs are also reduced from budget due to significant gaps in recruitment.

7.2 Budget 2025/26

A first version had been shared which showed a surplus of £12k. There are some changes and updates to be applied but currently looks relatively balanced.

FB also noted that FAG had discussed financial reporting and how it could be adapted to show area budgets better.

SY added that if a surplus is expected some possible spends could be a new website, updated heating & fire doors.

7.2.1 sportscotland investment 2025-29

AB gave thanks to JD, JS and SY for their work on the investment request and DO for his support. SY informed the board of an in-principal agreement of a £22k increase which will go towards coaching support for the talent pathway. SY also extended thanks to DO and credit to JS and the whole CS team.

DO highlighted that 36 sports were in review and only 2 organisations received an increase with MScot receiving the bulk. The budget still has to be voted through Scottish Government later this month before full confirmation can be given.

7.2.2 Proposed Staffing Structure

SY explained some proposed changes in staffing structure. KM's replacement has been advertised as a full time Membership and Admin officer. A new post is then proposed as a new Club and Membership Development officer in HG's team which would replace CS RDO position. Once funding is confirmed it can be advertised, and also DB's replacement.

DO reinforced that SS were keen that investment benefits the wider organisation, so the proposed new role is a welcome move.

HA agreed he was also supportive of the move and while it will affect CS it is positive for the wider organisation. IT also noted the benefits in reaching under represented groups.

8.0 Governance

8.1 Strategic Review – Updated Slide Deck

AB summarised that layout and wording have been broadly agreed but welcomed comments on this final version.

Several positive comments were given and BH felt it just required some final graphical design.

Everyone present confirmed they were happy to sign off the strategy in principle subject to final design. There was a discussion around whether a consultation with members was required and it was agreed following DO's advice that since it is not a major change in strategy a full consultation is not required. Another form of member engagement may be more appropriate such as roadshow type events to share thinking and get people on board.

8.1.1 UIAA Climbing toward 100

SY noted for info that with Paul Ratcliffe taking over at BMC it has provided a much more collaborative feeling across the home nations. The BMC are the representatives for UIAA and PR is sharing updates which is good to see and the paper had been shared for information. BH noted with interest UIAA's plans to create a centre of excellence for Mountain Safety and the relevance to the MSG Mountain Safety strategy work.

8.2 Mountain Training UK & I – Organisational Review

SY informed the meeting that all the Mountain Training bodies are in early stages of scoping out an organisational review. MScot, BMC and MI have written a paper sharing some thoughts and SY asked if directors were happy he engaged in further discussions with MT to take this forward.

A discussion followed around training, qualifications and coaching and it was agreed SY could proceed with approaching MTS and engage with the review as appropriate.

8.3 Appointment of Chair and Commercial Director

AB explained that following a trial it was now proposed that the roles of Chair and Director are formally split. A paper had been shared detailing the roles and changes required and AB welcomed comments. BH questioned Article change 662- stating a 2 year term of office. SY responded it was intended to align with the President term which allows a 4 year director to then take on 2 years as Chair or President. HA felt the ability to have a director hold the Chair would keep options open in future.

All directors confirmed they were happy to progress action to formally split the roles

AB then outlined and summarised previous questions or concerns around the potential new Commercial Director position. There was some concern around being able to fill the additional role. SY pointed out that the articles would allow flexibility on the 12th director role and it would not specify it had to be a commercial role or that it had to be filled.

AB added a smaller group would be required to work on the articles with AB, SY and IT willing. There was full approval in principle to increase director number with the addition of a commercial director.

ACTION: SY, AB and IT to finalise details and send articles to Harper McLeod with aim to approve amended articles at May board meeting.

8.4 Policies and Procedures Review Schedule status report

SY advised there were no significant changes, and the 2 outstanding actions were a review of HR policies, which help would be sought from AAB to do this. The other current requirement is the creation of an IT and cyber security policy.

9.0 Standing Agenda Items

9.1 Risk Register

An updated Risk Register had been shared with changes noted. SY reminded the meeting that it had been previously agreed that the FAG would pick up the Risk oversight to allow more time for scrutiny.

ACTION: SY to speak to FB in advance of next meetings.

PC questioned Risk D1 around Covid 19 – should it come out or be amended? SY agreed

SY also noted OATS have agreed to develop 'heads of terms'.

BH asked if insurance risk still needed to be red? SY advised the big increase next year was still uncertain but expected could be £72k.

9.2 Health & Safety

9.2.1 Incidents and near misses

None reported.

9.3 Child Wellbeing

9.3.1 Update on ongoing inquiry

SY gave a brief and confidential update noting that a report was soon to be released, produced by the investigating subcommittee.

SY also reminded all directors that the online child protection training was mandatory.

ACTION: SY to email reminder to those still to complete it.

AOB.

HA –Reported that JS is required to submit a paper to UK Anti-doping and the necessary updates were being made to ensure compliance. Board level awareness was required and this was formally noted for the record.

IT extended ongoing thanks to all the staff.

10.0 Future meetings 2025

- 8th May FAG

- 15th May Board
- 7th Aug FAG
- 14th Aug Board
- 30th Oct FAG
- 6th Nov Board
- 29th Nov AGM
- 11th Dec Board & Staff Christmas social

Minutes Approved 15th May 2025

