



Board Meeting – Approved Minutes

Thursday 15 March 2018 – The Granary: 17.00

These minutes were approved by the Board at its meeting in May 2018

Directors: Jonathan Binny; Jennifer Cardno; Jo Dytch; Avril Gall; Steve Gough; Kat Jones; David Montieth; Chris Todd; Mike Watson (Chair).

CEO & Company Secretary: David Gibson. **Observers:** Megan Griffiths (sportsotland); Stuart Younie.

Present: Jonathan Binny; Emily Bryce (Item 8); Jennifer Cardno; Jo Dytch; Avril Gall; David Gibson; Steve Gough; Megan Griffiths; Kat Jones; David Montieth (Chair); Chris Todd; Stuart Younie.

1.0 Welcome and Apologies

DM welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies from MW; he advised the meeting that EB would attend for agenda item 8.

2.0 Declaration of Interests

There were no new declarations.

3.0 Draft Minutes of the meeting of 23 November 2017

The meeting approved the minutes without amendment.

4.0 Matters arising not tabled elsewhere in the agenda

No items tabled.

5.0 Items actioned since the meeting of 23 November 2017

DG discussed the paper issued with the agenda. The action relating to the employee survey was carried forward.

Action SY

6.0 Call for AOCB

No items tabled.

7.0 Finance Report

7.1 Management accounts to 31 January 2018 and full year forecast

JC noted that there was a surplus of £74.0k at the end of January although this was forecast to reduce to £31.6k by year end; non-committed reserves were £244.7k. Income at £454.1k was 1.3% ahead of budget, with total membership income 4.8% positive to budget at £226.6k reflecting membership growth and improved retention. Individual membership income was 4.1% positive to budget and club income 7.0% positive indicating that the subscription increases had not adversely affected member intentions. Costs had been adjusted to reflect the appointment of the Access & Conservation Officer and marketing spend forecast had been reduced. In mountain safety, student courses included grants received from the Mill Cottage Trust, Scottish Mountain Trust and the bursary from Howden. The costs of £9.9k shown for St John Scotland related to student club training and would be fully recovered at year end. Architect fees incurred to date in respect of the office renovation project had been included in the balance sheet in other debtors.

Information Item

7.2 Draft budget 2018-19 submitted to sportscotland

JC stated that the draft budget showed a deficit of £10k and included a budget of £20k for office renovation. Membership income was based on ongoing marketing activity and included no assumptions related to the membership strategy tabled to discussion under item 8.4. Salaries were at current levels and a table included in the paper showed the impact of increases in salary scales at 1, 2 and 3% and ranging from £10k to £18k.

DG stated that the budget for income and expenditure was derived from a fully-costed operational plan developed by staff. Whilst this had not been circulated with the agenda it broadly reflected the operational plan for 2017-18 and included actions which would deliver agreed sportscotland investment targets.

The meeting approved the draft budget and operational plan.

Information Item

7.3 Salary scales review 2018-19

JC advised the meeting that the view of the Finance Advisory Group was that a salary scale increase of 2% was appropriate and this was approved by the meeting. In response to a question, DG advised the meeting that salary increases for individual staff were subject to a satisfactory performance review at year end, and that he would complete the reviews for staff prior to leaving the organisation.

Information Item

7.4 sportscotland investment 2018-19 targets

DG referred to the paper as issued. He confirmed that investment had been maintained at £215K for 2018-19 and discussed the targets in detail, noting specific requirements relating to GDPR legislation, effective working with the BMC, the introduction of mandatory new safeguarding standards and a review of the membership structure of ClimbScotland. Membership and other targets were based on the strategic review and investment application submitted in advance of the current 4-year funding cycle. He noted that membership would be measured at the calendar year end rather than the end the financial year, and that there had been a pro-rata adjustment to accommodate this change.

MG stated that a number of Scottish governing bodies of sport were facing challenging situations with GB counterparts and that the investment target relating to cooperation with the BMC would be shared with Sport England to create greater awareness of the issue and opportunities for, and arising from, greater collaboration.

Information Item

7.5 SMT grant conditions for landscape and access work

DG advised the meeting that the grant conditions require a report to be submitted to the trustees six months following the appointment of the Access & Conservation Officer in October. He suggested that this should be accompanied by an invoice and an application for grant funding for the following year.

Information Item

7.6 The Granary office accommodation

DG advised the meeting that he met with the architect in February and discussed works with a reduced scope aimed at achieving a spend within the agreed budget of £20k including VAT, Whilst the quotation has yet to be received the proposal would include storage facilities within the margins of the meeting room, removal of the entrance lobby walls in the main office, removal of the wall between the main and ClimbScotland offices and the removal of the door and upper part of the kitchen wall to open up the corridor to the meeting room. The quotation would be subject to consideration and approval by the Board.

Information Item

(EB joined the meeting)

8.0 Strategic & Operational Plans

8.1 Mountain safety report

DG discussed the report as circulated and noted that the MSA had achieved all operational targets and was working well with partner organisations. He had discussed expansion of the course and lecture programme with the MSA but progression had been deferred pending consideration of the membership strategy. DM stated that the MSAG was working well together and that a communications protocol was in place and working effectively.

Information Item

8.2 Team leader's report – ClimbScotland

& 8.2.1 Standards for Child Wellbeing and Protection in Sport

DG referred to section 2 of the report relating to the mandatory introduction of new standards for child wellbeing and protection in sport. Following discussion of the requirement for a director to be appointed to have oversight of the standards, AB agreed to act and her appointment was approved by the meeting.

Action AG

DG asked the meeting to note that there was a requirement for directors to receive training and to understand their role and responsibilities relating to the standards.

Information Item

DG stated that Child Protection is usually a standing agenda item but that on this occasion he had incorporated it into the Team Leader's report. He wished to make the Board aware of an approach received from the president of a ClimbScotland club who had asked for guidance concerning a relationship between a self-employed climbing coach and a 16-year old climber who is a member of the club. The relationship is perceived as close and has been questioned by some members of the club. Whilst the issue does not constitute abuse or a disclosure, the Team Leader as Child Protection Officer has contacted Children 1st which has provided guidance. The Team Leader will provide support to the club including meeting with the club president and club child protection officer to discuss concerns and actions moving forward, implement safeguarding discussions with young members and adult volunteers, establishing a volunteer recruitment process, issuing a club code of conduct to volunteers and agreement that members should attend safeguarding training.

Information Item

Note: Additional information to that circulated at the meeting including examples of good practice is available at: sportsotland

<https://sportsotland.org.uk/standards-for-child-wellbeing-and-protection-in-sport/>

Children 1st

<https://www.children1st.org.uk/what-we-do/how-we-help/safeguarding-in-sport/safeguarding-in-sport-resources/>

Information Item

DG referred to section 3 of the report and stated that following an audit of performance he had found it necessary to issue an amendment to the original report. This showed that performance was on track to achieve or exceed agreed investment targets.

Information Item

DG referred the meeting to the minutes of the BMC Training and Youth Committee and the BMC Competitions Committee and stated that he had found it necessary to reiterate to staff the importance of attending these meetings in person or by skype to ensure that our views are represented. The Team Leader is responsible for ensuring a member of our staff, or an appointed representative, attend all BMC committee meetings. **Information Item**

8.2.2 ClimbScotland strategic review

DG referred to the paper issued with the agenda and discussed the rationale for the review. He asked the meeting to note that the time scale for completion was December 2018 consistent with the investment agreement target agreed with sportscotland. MG stated that the Scottish government and sportscotland view compliance with the new standards for child wellbeing and protection in sport as essential and therefore the strategic review and consideration of the membership structure is of fundamental importance.

DM asked the meeting to consider who should be involved in the strategic review and AG, KJ and JD offered their involvement; the meeting agreed to DM's proposal that he should chair the review group based on his prior experience with the ClimbScotland team and linkages with external organisations, and that the group should report back on progress to future board meetings. **Action DM**

8.2.3 Climbing Development Group

DG stated that there had been no news concerning progress and following discussion with MW it is proposed that the matter be deferred for consideration at the May board meeting. **Carried forward**

8.3 Team leader's report - Member Services and Communications

EB provided an informative commentary based on her report, from which it was clear that significant progress is being made with both recruitment and retention of members, and on a broader front through engagement with existing and potential members through a range of media and face to face activities. In response to a question concerning the status of membership registrations with university clubs EB stated that this was still an issue and that some clubs had adopted an approach of declaring fewer members than in previous years. She felt that a review of the club model for such clubs was necessary and stated that this is part of the proposed membership strategy. **Information Item**

8.4 Membership Strategy

8.4.1 Strategy 2020-2021

8.4.2 Annex 1 - Action plan

8.4.3 Annex 2 – Key survey responses

KJ and JD referred to the strategy and associated papers issued with the agenda and presented key conclusions and proposals for consideration by the Board. Following extensive discussion the meeting endorsed the strategy in general terms and thanked KJ and JD for their work in its preparation. There was agreement that it was important that the new CEO had an opportunity to consider the strategy, the proposed action plan and budget, and associated resource implications. SY stated that he would review the proposals with the team and bring back his conclusions to the May board meeting. **Action SY**

8.5 Invitation to join the All Party Parliamentary Group for Scottish Sport

DG advised the meeting that an invitation had been offered and he had requested further information, which he would forward to board members once received, when a decision could be made regarding possible involvement.

Information Item

(EB left the meeting)

9.0 Governance

9.1 BMC Organisational Review Group recommendations and implications

DG referred to the paper issued with the agenda. Following discussion the meeting agreed that he should write on behalf of the Board, under his and MW's signature, expressing its support for the approach discussed and agreed between DG and the representative of the Organisational Review Group.

Action DG

9.2 Recruitment of directors / Vice-Chair

DG referred to the paper issued with the agenda, which considered two different scenarios both of which required an increase in the number of directors.

Scenario one considered the implications of the reciprocal approach to board representation agreed in principle with the BMC Organisational Review Group. Should that approach be endorsed by BMC members at their AGM in June 2018 and provision for the appointment of a Mountaineering Scotland appointed director to the BMC Board incorporated into the new BMC articles, it would be necessary for the Mountaineering Council of Scotland articles to be revised to accommodate a BMC appointee by an increase in the number of directors by one.

Scenario two considered the need to recruit another Vice-Chair to shadow MW in advance of him demitting office at the 2019 AGM, and in view of DM's stated intention to retire as the current Vice-Chair at the same time. As this would increase the number of directors by one there would be an associated requirement to amend the articles. The meeting agreed that advertising should commence as soon as possible with the aim of recruiting and co-opting a suitable candidate in accordance with article of association 8.5 and in advance of the 2018 AGM when the individual would stand for election to the Board.

Action DG

9.3 Annual General Meeting, Glenmore Lodge 24 November 2018

DG advised the meeting that the date had been booked with Glenmore Lodge. The meeting agreed that consideration should be given to the development of a programme for associated activities around the formal business meeting.

Carried forward

9.4 Policies and Procedures Review Schedule status report

DG provided a verbal update. He noted that the Climbing in Scotland position statement would be reviewed by the Access & Conservation Officer and consider the bolting policy and a bolt fund. Payments to instructors, coaches and route setters had been considered and approved as part of the 2018-19 budget process. Matters related to fixed electrical testing and fire safety equipment would be covered by him under agenda item 11.1, and outstanding recommendations of the I.T. Strategic Review were to be considered for implementation as part of the office project.

Information Item

10.0 Directors' Reports

10.1 Landscape & Planning

10.1.1 Director's report

JB provided a verbal update concerning activity since the previous meeting, including responses to wind farm proposals; hydro schemes and working with members of The Munro Society; the Kingshouse Hotel objection; participation in a SNH Upland Path Workshop which revealed that they have no funds for path restoration work; attendance at a Scottish Planning Bill conference which demonstrated that the environment is not considered within the proposed bill which focuses purely on economic development at any cost. He had also attended the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Special Board Meeting which considered and approved the Cononish Gold Mine application. He had noted with disappointment that no other NGO had objected to the development, despite it being partly in wild land. He felt that the outcome of the meeting – approval – had been a foregone conclusion and that Park Authority officers had sought to support the proposal through references at the meeting to community benefit payments which are not supposed to be a consideration in planning decisions. He was in the process of considering whether or not to make a formal complaint to the Park Convener.

Information Item

10.1 2 Letter to Cabinet Secretaries on tourism impact of wind farms

DG referred to the letter sent to Fiona Hyslop and Keith Brown on 26 January, subsequently acknowledged by the 'Public Engagement Unit' on 1 February, and to which no further response had as yet been received.

Directors agreed to write to their MSPs to ask for support to obtain a response, subject to receiving a copy of the original letter in word format.

Action ALL

10.2 Access & Conservation

10.2.1 Director's report

CT stated that as he had been overseas he had little to report but he had had a constructive initial meeting with the Access & Conservation Officer.

Information Item

10.2.2 LLTNPA byelaws

DG stated that it was clear that the Park Authority had used the expedient excuse of alleged public nuisance as a means of bringing in measures which effectively rationed camping provision through the imposition of the byelaws. The Scottish Outdoor Recreational Alliance intended to continue its work to lobby for the byelaws to be removed although Park management clearly view them as a permanent measure. Members of SORA are to meet the Park Convener in the last week of March to continue their lobbying, when we will be represented by the Access & Conservation Officer.

Information Item

10.2.3 National Access Forum representation

DG outlined his views on the value of participation in the NAF and that he believed the incoming CEO should attend the next meeting on a joint basis with the Access & Conservation Officer. A decision should then be made concerning future representation which should be by a single, permanent delegate to ensure effective continuity.

Action SY

10.3 Mountain Safety and Training

10.3.1 Director's report

DM stated that he had little to add to the MSA's report other than the Board should be aware that MTUK are in the process of reviewing their articles of association following feedback from Sport England.

Information Item

10.4 ClimbScotland

10.4.1 Director's report

10.4.2 Climbing festival

AG referred to her report and provided a positive update concerning participation in competitions especially by children in the north, which had seen record numbers, whilst the south had been static.

Referring to the proposal for a second ClimbScotland festival, she felt the 2017 event had been well supported and hoped the Board would support a second festival in 2018. She advised the meeting that Ratho was unlikely to support the festival as a full partner and there were fewer cash sponsorship offers on the table this year, although some equipment offers had been received. Following discussion the meeting agreed to underwrite any shortfall in revenue against expenditure, noting the potential loss of £1k included in the proposal and on the basis that 2017 festival achieved a surplus.

Information Item

10.5 Human Resources

10.5.1 Director's report

SG referred to his report and stated that he considered the Employee Handbook had been a significant improvement and that it was already demonstrating its value. He suggested that we approach Brodies to confirm that the update process was in place.

Action DG

10.5.2 Staff year-end performance reviews

Covered under item 7.3

Information Item

10.6 Equality

10.6.1 Director's report

SG referred to his report and asked the meeting to note that it was now less than 2 years until it would be necessary to apply for the Intermediate Level of the standard. He proposed that he meet with the incoming CEO to discuss the developments required to achieve the next level and the meeting endorsed this approach.

Information Item

10.7 Membership

10.7.1 Director's report

Refer to item 8.4

Information Item

10.8 Clubs

10.8.1 Director's report

JD stated that much of her time had been spent on the strategy and consideration of club responses to the survey monkey research, and that she hopes to go on some club meets in the near future.

Information Item

11.0 Standing Agenda Items

11.1 Risk Register &

11.2 Health & Safety

DG referred to the risk register and advised the meeting that fire extinguisher testing had been arranged for 5 April 2018 and fixed electrical testing for 2 May 2018. Other updates were in the report.

Information Item

11.3 General Data Protection Regulation

See paper at item 8.3, section 4.6

Information Item

12.0 Information Items

12.1 Contact list update March 2018

12.2 BMC Training & Youth Committee Minutes 14 November 2017

12.3 BMC Competition Climbing Committee Minutes 6 February 2018

12.4 National Access Forum draft minutes 7 February 2018

12.5 Mountain Training Scotland Members' Meeting summary minutes 22 February 2018

13.0 Future meeting dates confirmed by the meeting:

2018 - 17 May; 30 August; 29 November

2019 – 7 March

Draft by David Gibson, 16 March 2018