



MOUNTAINEERING SCOTLAND

The Granary
West Mill Street
Perth PH1 5QP
Tel: 01738 493947
email stuart@mountaineering.scot

Board Meeting – Approved Minutes

Thursday 30 August 2018 – The Granary: 17.00

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

CEO & Company Secretary: Stuart Younie. **Observers:** Megan Griffiths (sportsotland); Alistair Todd, Nigel Clark, Shaun Roberts (Glenmore Lodge)

Present: Jennifer Cardno; Jonathan Binney; Avril Gall; Steve Gough; Kat Jones; David Montieth; Mike Watson (Chair). Stuart Younie. Megan Griffiths (sportsotland) Alistair Todd, Nigel Clark, Davie Black, Shaun Roberts Glenmore Lodge.

1.0 Welcome and Apologies

MW welcomed everyone to the meeting and particularly to Alistair, Nigel and Shaun Roberts. Apologies had been received from JD.

2.0 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

3.0 Draft Minutes of the meeting of 17 May 2018

The meeting approved the minutes without amendment.

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

Actions noted which were not already on the agenda:

- **8.1** SY had read the guidance in relation to the lobbying register and was not pursuing this as a priority at this point in time but this could be reviewed in the future with advice available from sportsotland.
- **8.3** SY confirmed that there is a process in place for evaluating and prioritising support for climbing wall projects under the existing strategy. Improvements were needed in communications with parties interested in obtaining support to clarify the position at an early stage in the project. This would help to avoid any misunderstanding about whether the project was eligible to receive formal backing from MS.
- **9.2** SY confirmed that the update to the board induction procedures was due to take place in Q3 in accordance with the Policy and Procedures report and it was expected to have completed this by the Nov board.

5.0 Call for AOCB

MW asked to discuss appointments to the board.

6.0 Presentation by Shaun Roberts, Principal Glenmore Lodge

SR provided a background to the history of Glenmore Lodge (GL) which was celebrating its 70th year of operation as Scotland's National Outdoor Training Centre. He explained its position within the family of sportscotland supported national centres and how public funding was allocated to support the activities of GL through sportscotland. GL has a very strong brand and particularly in the winter enjoys a high occupancy rate attracting people from all over the UK and abroad. Shaun explained his role as Principal and as well as the core functions of the national centre how the balance of economic and non-economic activities was achieved particularly in supporting sports development, compliance and NGB awards. GL works with a wide variety of partners and a key message was how GL and Mountaineering Scotland can make the most of their shared values for the benefit of the organisation and also the membership. Following questions from the board MW thanks SR for his presentation and looked forward to the AGM which GL was supporting and to developing the partnership with Mountaineering Scotland.

7.0 Finance Report

7.1 Management accounts to 31 March 2018 and draft financial statements for year-end

JC provided an update on the management accounts which show a surplus of £180k for the 3 months to 30/06/18. This is due to the timing of sportscotland and membership income and the related expenses and it is expected that this will even out over the course of the full year. Although performance has been strong and membership income is above budget in all categories in the first quarter, the full year projections currently show a £21k deficit. Given the surplus generated last year and the strong reserves position, this is not a significant cause for concern. Additional costs include the Carnoch Bridge donation, legal costs relating to the Glenbrittle hut and an increase in staff expenses which will be monitored. The year-end accounts have been completed by Johnston and Co and will be submitted in advance of the filing deadline (31/12/18).

7.2 The Granary office accommodation

SY tabled a paper recommending that due to the changes in staffing and the business commitments up to the end of this calendar year the office refurbishment was delayed until Jan 2019. This would allow further time to put in place a business continuity plan and also look into future IT options for the office. SY confirmed that the project had been initiated with applications submitted to planning and building control. The recommendation to delay the project to Jan 2019 was approved.

Action SY

8.0 Strategic & Operational Plans

8.1 CEO Report

SY tabled a report which provided a summary of his activities over the last 3 months which had a continuing focus on networking and introductory meetings alongside support meetings for staff and progressing projects across the business areas which would be covered in more detail under the relevant agenda items. A key priority had been the recruitment of a new Membership and Communications Manager and following interview Helen Gestwicki had been offered the position and subject to finalising contracts she was expected to start on 2nd Oct. SY noted thanks to Glenmore Lodge and their Communications Manager Vicky Smith who had supported the interview process.

Action SY

8.2.1 Directors report Mountain Safety

DM had nothing further to add to the operational report.

8.2.2 Operational report Heather Morning

SY confirmed it had been a very busy and successful summer training programme with courses full to capacity. The courses had also provided also opportunities for aspirant leaders to gain more experience and 8 trainees had been involved. It had been noted that there had been an increasing trend in participants presenting for courses who were over weight and / or not physically fit enough to cope with the demands of the course. This had been particular challenge with the Arrochar based course due to the terrain and presented challenges for instructors when dealing with groups of mixed ability. As a result, a new boot grading system had been introduced on the website to try and help participants select courses appropriate to their ability. SR confirmed that this had also become more of an issue for GL particularly in the winter. It was also noted that there had been a complaint from one of the students on the Arrochar course which was an unusual occurrence. This had been investigated and dealt with and no further action was required.

8.2.3 Review of Delivery Model for Mountain Safety

As a result of a request by HM to reduce her hours to 0.8FTE SY tabled a paper following a review of the service which had identified risks to the business due to single person dependence and also looking forward a need to consider succession planning to ensure the continued provision of the programme which was a key member benefit. A business case was presented in support of creating a new 0.4 p/t post to support the delivery of the existing programme and also expand into new areas which would generate additional income. There were risks around the income however the status quo was not an option and these would be mitigated by entering into a one-year pilot to establish the viability of the proposal. Following comments from the board the recommendation to appoint a 0.4 Mountain Safety Advisor on a temporary one-year contract was approved.

Action - SY

8.3.1 Directors report – ClimbScotland

AG provided a detailed written report on the Youth Climbing Series and competition results from the British, European and World Cup competitions. An update was also provided on the changes to the GB youth Climbing series which had been highlighted at the last board meeting as the new format being introduced in England would have been operationally difficult to deliver in Scotland. It was noted that there have been ongoing discussions with the home nations on the subject. There were also ongoing discussions with the BMC on the team selection process.

8.3.2 Operational report by Jamie Smith

SY provided an update on the development of a participation pathway to illustrate where climbscotland activities sit in wider context of the disciplines promoted by Mountaineering Scotland and acknowledging the growth in indoor climbing as a stand-alone activity. A workshop was planned with the team facilitated by sportscotland to develop the pathway. Following the child protection audit JS was going through the process of ensuring all coaches and volunteers meet a set of minimum standards with the target of completing that work by the end of this year. It was noted that all directors were required to undertake appropriate child

protection training and SY would discuss this with AG. Partnership and collaboration continued to be a strength of the team and ClimbScotland had ensured representation at the sportscotland regional network meetings in Central, West and East. SY also highlighted the Youth Climbing Competition at Ratho on Sat the 15th Sep and Directors were invited to attend the event if they were in the area.

Action SY / AG

8.3.3 School Club membership report

A report had been submitted by Calum McBain proposing the establishment of a new membership category for school clubs. This proposal had been highlighted in the ClimbScotland review and although it tied into both the ClimbScotland review and the membership strategy the request was made to consider this as an action which could be implemented at this time given the potential benefits which could be delivered. KJ mentioned the proposal made by JD to review the administrative arrangements for club membership and whether this could be used as a pilot. MG emphasized the need to more robust and sustainable clubs and also highlighted a potential issue with pupils having to agree to “opt in” to memberships of MS. DM acknowledged the need to align this proposal with the membership strategy.

It was agreed that:

- this proposal was a more effective way to target and link with schools through membership.
- the initiative should be piloted as a possible model for all clubs with input from JD.
- the team should proceed subject to ensuring the proposal is consistent with the membership strategy.
- A report on progress would be made to the board.

Action SY/JS/JD

8.3.4 Climbing Development Group

MW provided a verbal update on the proposals to establish a CDG with an initial meeting planned to discuss potential terms of reference. MW to chair the initial meeting with further report to the board in November.

8.2.5 ClimbScotland Strategic Review

DM provided a progress update on the ClimbScotland review and that a series of consultation meetings had taken place with directors, staff and senior management to gather background information. An emerging priority had been identified as membership alongside setting out the strategic priorities for the future. DM to meet with MG with a view to drafting a final report to be considered at the Nov board and to be signed off in Dec.

AG highlighted the proposals by the Association of British Climbing walls to introduce a membership scheme and the potential opportunities for membership linked to the growth in the indoor climbing market. There were concerns between walls about the standards of competency in delivering basic training for wall users. The provision of personal accident insurance was thought to be an important potential benefit for indoor climbers. MG encouraged some wider consultation with stakeholders and to be clear about what it is that only we can do through ClimbScotland.

Action DM

8.4.1 Directors report - Membership

KJ had nothing further to add to the report.

8.4.2 Directors report – Clubs

JD had provided an update which had been incorporated into section 3 of the operational report highlighting an ongoing need to improve engagement with clubs

8.4.3 Operational report - Member Services and Communications

SY reported that after a slow start it had been a consistent performance over Q1 and although up on last years figures memberships were slightly below target. Statistics continue to show an issue with members leaving after their first year of membership and further action is needed to reduce this number. The social media audit had been completed and the report was available on request key issues were increasing the use of high quality video content, the use of Instagram and investment in audio visual equipment to improve the quality of video content including Facebook live.

Following the departure of the Team Leader Member Services and Communication this has impacted on the capacity to take the membership strategy forward in the short term. The CEO has reviewed the document and developed some additional strategic drivers for the strategy which are to be discussed with the Directors for Membership and Clubs on the 17th of September.

Action SY/ JD/ KJ

8.5.1 Directors report – Landscape and planning

JB provided a report on activities since that last meeting which had largely centered on hydro schemes and more specifically the restoration of tracks. The Munro society were continuing to be a source of valuable information about what's happening on the ground and it was noted that many of the tracks which were now appearing have had approval 4-6 years ago. Over 130 schemes had submitted applications with only 2 declined and it was recommended that a policy statement is developed which encourages best practice. AT raised a local issue in Dalwhinnie linked to the Beauly – Denny line. JB went on to highlight the need to review Respecting Scotland's Mountains and ensure that is updated to reflect the current situation on hydro schemes. SR noted the potential common interest with paddlesports on the impact of hydro schemes.

8.5.2 Directors report – Access and conservation

Nothing to report.

8.5.3 Operational report access and conservation

SY updated on a very busy period which in addition to hydro schemes had also centered on carparking charges noting that a reply had been received from Argyll and Bute Council which indicated they were unlikely to reconsider their position. Also to note were issues relating to raptor disturbance with a view to reviewing the current approach to restricting access to affected crags, and also bolting at Beinn an Lochain at a crag know as "The Bunker" which had tested the current policy and also raised an issue about consultation with local climbers. It was also noted that the ski touring advisory booklet had been updated in consultation with eh Ski Touring Advisory Group to be launched in early Nov.

8.5.4 Conservation Strategy - Draft

DB talked through the draft conservation strategy explaining the background and intent behind each section of the document before MW invited comments from the board. KJ suggested a change in title to "Landscape and nature conservation strategy". SG felt the paper took the organisation a step forward but asked whether fish should also be referred to as part of the strategy given they as an important part of the wildlife in rivers and lochs. AT felt it was an excellent paper and as it was so comprehensive there may be a risk that some key messages were lost. MW confirmed that a 3 year timeframe for the strategy was the initial proposal. JB suggested that the strategy would need to be revised on an ongoing basis depending on external factors but it was a very good document. He suggested that detailed comments were fed back to DB via email for collation and circulation of an updated draft before Christmas for final approval in February 2019. KJ suggested additional consideration be given to the impact of mountaineering activity and asked if a position statement on conservation should be included in the update of Respecting Scotland's Mountains. JB felt that a more general statement could be included but as the strategy was still indraft it would be difficult to include a detailed statement. It was agreed to have a focused discussion on both Respecting Scotland's Mountains and the Conservation Strategy at the November Board meeting.

Action – Board / JB / DB

9.0 Governance

9.1 Annual General meeting, Glenmore Lodge 24th November 2018.

SY tabled a paper updating the board on the additional costs associated with this years AGM and this was approved. It was also agreed that accommodation would be provided for the board on the Sat night as the board meeting would be held at GL on the Sunday, which would deliver a saving on transport expenses. The board were asked to pay for their own evening meal and accommodation on the Friday night if that was required. It was also agreed to invite the new President of the BMC Lynn Robinson to attend the AGM.

Action - SY

9.2 BMC Update

MW confirmed that he had contacted the new BMC President Lynn Robinson and that SY was due to visit the BMC offices the following week to meet the senior management team. There was still an ongoing case to make to the BMC about how the BMC engage with Mountaineering Scotland following their organisational review. It was important that there was recognition of the place that Scotland has within the UK mountaineering community given the significant investment that goes to supporting services like the Scottish Avalanche Service, Mountain Weather Information Service and Glenmore Lodge as the national centre. MW / SY would continue to engage with the BMC on the issue of representation and report back to the Nov board.

Action MW/ SY

9.3 Policies and Procedures Review Schedule status report

SY noted the reference to updating Respective Scotlands Mountains which had been highlighted by JB was due in Q3 2018

Action JB

9.4 sportscotland – Development Audit follow up, KPMG

SY noted that this was due to take place and he was in the process of confirming a date and would report back to the board on the outcome.

Action - SY

10.0 Standing Agenda Items

10.1 Risk Register

The risk in relation to Item 9 Loss of data had been updated as a online back up to a cloud based server of the office servers was now in place. An additional risk 25 had been added in relation to the need for a business continuity plan to cover the office refurbishment.

For information

10.2 Health & Safety

Nothing to report

For information

10.3 General Data Protection Regulation

Update provided under Item 8.4.3

11 Information Items

11.1 sportscotland mid – point review

It was noted that this was due to take place on Mon 24th Sep and SY / MW would attend.

Action – SY / MW

11.0 AOCB

MW confirmed that he had received notification of Chris Todds resignation from the board and given the timescales there was need to issue an “invitation to nominate notice” to members before the cut off of Sat 15th Sep if a new appointment was to be confirmed at the AGM. It was agreed that a revised specification for the position would be developed with an emphasis on ensuring the candidates skill set complimented those already on the board and that a legal background may be advantageous. A notice would be issued to members on Fri the 31st inviting nomination to be put forward for the AGM with agreement that the board should adopt a preferred candidate before the AGM.

Action - SY

13.0 Future meetings

- Sunday, 25th November, Glenmore Lodge
- Thurs 14th February, The Granary

Draft Version issued by Stuart Younie, 7th September 2018