

Board Meeting – Approved Minutes

2pm, Thurs 20th August 2020 – Online Via Zoom

Directors: Jonathan Binny; Jennifer Cardno; Nigel Clark; Jo Dytch; Lucy Fraser; Steve Gough; Kat Jones; Ron Neville; Brian Shackleton (President).

CEO & Company Secretary: Stuart Younie.

Observers: Megan Griffiths (sportsotland); Alistair Todd (Associate for Snowsports Touring),

1.0 Welcome and Apologies

Jonathan Binny welcomed everyone and having received apologies from Brian Shackleton had agreed to Chair the meeting in his absence.

2.0 Declaration of Interests

No additional declarations of interest were noted

3.0 Draft Minutes of the meeting of 14th May 2020

The minutes were approved.

3.1 Additional board meetings on 26th June and 30th July

The action notes from both these meetings were approved.

4.0 Actions and matters arising not tabled elsewhere in the agenda

- **Actions from 14th May**

- Noted delay in getting the financial report to the accountants for review due to lockdown Denise is liaising with them to make arrangements.
- Discussions with snowsportsotland on joint membership on hold due to current situation. SY meeting Trafford Wilson on Fri 21st Aug.
- AT to contact JD and provide a report on the online hut bookings project at the next meeting.

- **Actions from 26th June - Completed**

- **Actions from 30th Jul – Completed**

5.0 Call for AOCB

- Under Item 6.1 - Additional paper on strategic priorities and review of operational plan to year end 2021.

- Following discussions at the FAG the board supported SY in signing up to a CPD programme – “Leading in Uncertain Times” which is being delivered with support from HIE.

6.0 Strategic and Operational updates – Combined report

6.1 CEO

SY provided an update on recent developments with the BMC and highlighted the need to review the existing strategic partnership agreement in the light of the development of GB Climbing and the funding application to UK Sport. Due to the ongoing shortfall in advertising revenue it was planned to deliver a digital edition of Scottish Mountaineer in August with a commitment to rolling the revenue generated to date forward to ensure the publication of a hard copy souvenir issue in November. There was also a need to review the remaining advertising revenue at the year end and consider the format of the publication in 2021.

A short paper was introduced setting out some of the strategic priorities for the next six months which had been identified in discussion with staff to support a review of the operational plan priorities in the light of the ongoing health emergency. NC flagged the opportunities around developing new resources and ways of engaging those who were new to the hills which had been a topic of discussion at the Mountain Safety Group and asked whether there was the potential to deliver more basic navigation training courses. SY explained that the costs of delivering lower ratio courses due to Covi-19 was being offset by the use of Bens time but there is a high demand at the moment and this would need to be reviewed if group sizes were allowed to increase under the new guidance.

JD fed back on a discussion about developing a marketing plan to target those new hillgoers and the development of specific communications using social media supporters. SG flagged the need to build time into the plan to take forward the application for the Intermediate Equality standard and in the light of experiences following the media coverage of the Black Lives Matter campaign. He also flagged the potential of offering female only navigation and safety courses.

KJ identified the potential to develop more online courses for mountain safety and AT highlighted the video resources produced by Glenmore Lodge and potential to look at midweek course opportunities. JT also identified the possibility of collaborating with Glenmore Lodge to provide additional training opportunities and signposting to other courses they might be delivering.

Action: Directors to email any additional comments to SY who will follow up with staff and review the operational plan priorities for the next 6 mths.

6.1.1 Scottish Sports Association – Collaborative Insurance Proposition

The board gave approval to enter into discussions with the Scottish Sports Association and Gallacher to explore the potential benefits of a collaborative insurance arrangement working with other SSA member organisations.

6.2 Member Services and Communication

No questions

6.3 ClimbScotland

No questions

6.4 Access and Conservation

6.4.1 Wild camping position statement

JB introduced the paper and asked the board for comments on the draft statement to support current campaign and future activities on camping in response to the issue of “dirty camping”. SG supported the paper with a suggested change in wording on the last sentence which should say “existing laws and regulations should be enforced.” KJ congratulated the team on the reach the campaign was having on social media and asked whether a clearer definition of informal camping was needed in the document. RN thanks the board for their support and suggested that the document should be approved and that any specific edits are forwarded to SY. JB thanked DB for his work on the document.

Action: The document was approved subject to minor amendments which should be sent to SY.

6.5 Mountain Safety

No questions

7.0 Finance Report

7.1 Treasurers Report - Management accounts to Q1

JD confirmed that the budget was being monitored on a monthly basis due to the current situation and will be reviewed at Q2. The budget has been revised and the projected deficit is an improved position of £17k for the full year. This does not take account of any insurance rebates which may be received. Membership income is expected to be below budget for the full year although further updated figures available to 31/07/20 will be discussed in item 7.2.

Due to lockdown, mountain safety and sports development income suffered in the first quarter due to all courses being cancelled however one-day courses have restarted which will help to recover some of the lost income.

Salary costs are projected to be below budget due to reduced staff expenses as a result of lockdown and the £4k employment allowance grant. Marketing costs were also reduced in the first quarter and member services costs are under budget compared to the same period last year. The decision to postpone the work on the website was noted but directors were asked to bear this in mind for the future since investment in IT and the database will be required at some point in the future.

Action: The Q1 report as considered by the FAG on 10th July was approved and the budget will be reviewed again at Q2.

7.2 Update to July 2020

Total members have increased by 6% compared at 31/07/20 compared to 31/07/19 – a total of 14591 members. There was a 0.5% increase in members in July which is the first time since March 2020 that this has been the case. The lapse rate has also reduced from 29% in April to 18% in July.

This is reflected in the figures to date with total membership income 28.2% higher compared to the same period last year (also helped with the new club affiliations). However, it is projected that membership income will be 5.7% down compared to last year.

JB explained the background to the BMC grant support for grant for access and conservation which as a result of the financial pressures faced by the BMC is due to cease next year. This grant of £10k has been used to offset the costs of the full time Access and Conservation Officers post. Following discussion at the FAG the feeling was that DB had become a valued member of the team and his experience and knowledge was making a significant contribution to the work of Mountaineering Scotland and this shortfall in funding should be found from elsewhere to ensure he continues in post. The board were asked whether they would support this proposal?

The board were supportive of the proposal although it was recognised that this may place an additional financial pressure and mean reducing expenditure in another area of the organisation. On the basis that the work of the Access and Conservation Officer was a significant enough priority for the organisation to consider this approach it was unanimously agreed.

Action: SY to confirm with DB the support of the board for the continuation of his post and also their recognition of the quality of the work he was delivering on behalf of the organisation.

8.0 Governance

8.1 Board Vacancies

SY updated on the need to finalise role descriptions with support of outgoing directors and advertise positions.

Action: SY to progress this as a priority and liaise with BS

8.2 AGM 2020 – Planning and format

SY outlined the two options of holding the meeting virtually online or, if guidance allows, face to face at a suitable venue. Due to the ongoing uncertainty the virtual meeting was recommended as the preferred option and this was supported by the board. JD suggested the board getting together to go for a walk together before the end of the year as the restrictions allowed.

Action: SY to work with the team to initiate planning for a virtual AGM on the 21st Dec.

8.2 sportscotland – Future funding and strategic planning cycle 2021

MG updated on the payment of the second part of sportscotland investment funding and that this was predicated on the completion of a post Covid-19 return to sport plan but without the usual targets. SGB's will also be asked to complete a tracker asking for high level information on the impact of Covid -19 and how this year's investment has been allocated.

sportscotland were still reacting to the situation as it changes in response to announcements from the Scottish Govt. and trying to influence where they can. The current priority was on the implementation of track and trace. A working group has been set up to examine what sport might look like in the medium term with representatives from Tennis and Badminton reporting into the wider CEO forum.

In the longer term the existing strategic plan will be extended for another year with the expectation that an updated plan for the next 3 year will be produced next year to align with the Olympic planning cycle. Any change to that as a result of the ongoing uncertainty will be informed by discussions with SGB's. The new plan is expected to be developed in consultation with members & stakeholders highlighting where Mountaineering Scotlands work overlaps with sportscotlands priorities and will be presented in conjunction with Mountain Training Scotland.

8.3 Policies and Procedures Review Schedule status report

There were a number of outstanding updates which will be addressed once more normal business resumes and integrated with the actions from the development audit report.

9.0 Standing Agenda Items

9.1 Risk Register

The risks relating to Covid 19 and insurance had been split into separate risks. SY highlighted the need to include some further details around the potential medium term risks relating to Covid -19 .

9.2 Health & Safety

Nothing to report

9.3 General Data Protection Regulation

Nothing to report

9.4 Child Protection

Nothing to report

10.0 Future meetings

- It was agreed to bring the meeting planned for the 19th of November forward to Thurs the 5th of November
- AGM – 21 Nov 2020

Issued by Stuart Younie, CEO & Company Secretary

Final version – 29 October 2020

