



THE MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL OF SCOTLAND

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Registered at the above address. Company number SC322717.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Mountaineering Council of Scotland held at Glenmore Lodge on Saturday 6 September 2008 at 16.30

Present:

Chair - Chris Townsend (IM)	Alison Higham (LSCC)
Treasurer - John Irving (Forth Valley MC)	Kate Ross (LSCC)
Company Secretary - David Gibson (MCofS / Grampian Club)	Alistair Young (IM)
John MacKenzie (SMC)	Dawn Rose (Guest)
Beryl Leatherland (Edinburgh JMCS)	Paul Webster (IM)
Brenda Clough (Perth MC)	Ann White (IM)
Ron Payne (Perth MC)	Janice Thomson (Glenrothes Hillwalkers)
Derek Edge (IM)	Alan Tees (Guest – MCI)
John Leftley (IM)	Margaret Tees (Guest – MCI)
John Donohoe (Glasgow Glenmore Club)	Susan Russell (Tayside Trekkers)
Peter Willimott (Kirkintilloch MC)	John Wylie (Blackrock MC / IM)
Duncan Gray (HM)	Scott Muir (SMC)
Ken Thomson (Cairngorm Club)	Caroline Fyfe (Guest – SNH)
Mike Newbury (Forth Valley / HM)	Eilidh Scobbie (Cairngorm Club)
George Smart (Grampian Club)	Douglas Blyth (Blackrock MC)
Stuart Garland (Guest – MCI)	David McVey (IM)
Bill Park (IM)	Kevin Howett (MCofS / SMC)
Morag Dodds (Grampian Club)	Bob Calvert (IM)
Jane Anderson (MCofS)	Matt Dent (Glasgow JMCS)
Eve Austin (IM)	Paul Russell (Tayside Trekkers)
Martin Menzies (Tayside Trekkers / IM)	Richard Davison (Perth MC)
Lesley Menzies (Tayside Trekkers)	Graeme Morrison (AMI)
Robin Forrest (Inverness MC)	Mike Raine (Guest – BMC Cymru)
Sonia Soutar (Blackrock MC)	Nic Bullivant (Scottish Midweek MC)
Roger Wild (MCofS / SMC)	Richard Spencer (IM)
Kevin Linklater (Tayside Trekkers)	Carol Mayes (Blackrock MC)
Linda Linklater (Tayside Trekkers)	Steve Long (Guest – MLTUK)
Lynsey Davidson (Blackrock MC)	Nick Colton (Guest – BMC)
James Steele (Blackrock MC)	Ruth Colton (Guest – BMC)
Richard Johnson (Blackrock MC)	Dave C???? (Edinburgh JMCS)

a. Welcome, Members attending, Apologies, Appointment of Tellers

Chris Townsend (President) welcomed members and guests to the meeting. Guests included Nick Colton, BMC; Caroline Fyfe, SNH; Stuart Garland, MCI; Steve Long, MLTUK; and Mike Raine, BMC Cymru.

Apologies had been received from Charles Clarke, BMC; Andy Cloquet, Ochils MC; Gail Crawford, Grampian Club; Enid Forsyth, Lothian Teachers Mountaineering Club; Alfie Ingram, MRCofS; Brian Linington, Individual Member; Louise Martin, sportscotland; Dougal Roy, Grampian Club; Andrew Thin, SNH; Dave Turnbull, BMC and Mary Webster, LSCC.

Jane Anderson, Brenda Clough, Morag Dodds and Duncan Gray were appointed as Tellers.

b. Approval of Minutes of the AGM 2007

Proposed by Bill Park, seconded by Richard Spencer. Approved by the meeting unanimously.

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c. Receipt of Annual Report for 2007/8

The Annual Report had been published in The Scottish Mountaineer, Issue 40, August 2008. The report was accepted unanimously by the meeting as published.

d. Approval of the Annual Financial Statement

John Irving (Treasurer) presented the Financial Statements and Accounts for the period 17/06/2007 to 31/03/2008. These were as published in the Annual Report (see c. above) and showed income of £251,335 and expenditure of £246,111. Expenditure included a contingency for a replacement IT system of £22,500. There was a resultant surplus of income over expenditure of £4,924.

The balance held at the bank at 31/03/2008 was £147,246. The Treasurer stated that this sum included trust funds of £25k held on deposit, including the Mountain Safety Trust and James Hewitt Bequest.

Following incorporation the Board had considered the costs associated with winding-up the company and approved reserves at the level of £90k, this being slightly higher than the 33.3% proportion of turnover recommended for companies with a turnover similar to that of the MCofS.

The Treasurer stated that there was a small amount of Corporation Tax due on bank interest.

In response to the Treasurer's statement that SNH funding for Access & Conservation work would not be renewed, Mike Newbury asked if there was any prospect of funding from SNH. Caroline Fyfe (SNH) stated potentially yes – MCofS can put in requests for projects. SNH now had other pressures and after funding MCofS for a period of 10-12 years SNH were now looking to fund new projects.

The Treasurer stated that the original plan for investment in a joint IT project with the BMC had been cancelled in December 2007 and that the contingency of £22,500 for a replacement IT system was on the basis that MCofS collaborate with other partners.

The Treasurer stated that trusts are considered to be independent of the parent body and that trust accounts will be published separately in future. He asked the meeting to note that there was an increase in premium for civil liability insurance of approximately 50p per member.

Ken Thomson of the Cairngorm Club stated that it was difficult to compare salary costs on a year on year basis due to the period of time covered by the accounts, and questioned the variance in salary costs. He stated that these appeared as £74k in the last accounts, £57k in the previous year and £88k this year. The President stated that the significant variance was due to the hiring gap for the Access & Conservation Officer, and that the latest accounts included the costs of the Senior Officer.

The Financial Statements were proposed by John Leftley, seconded by Beryl Leatherland and approved by the meeting unanimously.

e. The Fixing of Members' Annual Subscriptions

The Treasurer introduced the proposed increase in the per capita subscription for members of clubs to £13.00, and stated that there was no change for individual members.

The Treasurer stated that the increase was primarily to cover the costs of Access & Conservation work no longer covered by SNH funding, and an increase in civil liability insurance premiums. The increase in insurance costs related principally to additional cover provided for officials of club members and had been agreed by the Board following information received from MCofS insurers, Perkins Slade. The Treasurer cited an example where a significant claim was had been brought against a club for an incident which occurred on a social activity. Given this background to the increase, the Board believed it to be appropriate that clubs funded the increase in the insurance premium.

The Treasurer stated that the estimated expenditure per member (calculated on the basis of individual members and the number of members of clubs) was circa £18.00. With current subscriptions at £27.60 and £10.60 respectively, there was a significant disparity.

He stated that one club – Orion MC – had requested clarification of the rationale for the increase, but that he had received no other responses to his letter stating the need for an increase and requesting feedback, which was mailed by email and post to club secretaries at the beginning of May 2008. He had in fact received two responses supporting the proposed increase.

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Ken Thomson (Cairngorm Club) stated that there was unhappiness amongst certain of his members concerning the increase and that the explanation provided prior to the AGM had been inadequate. He stated that if the facts concerning staffing costs and civil liability insurance had been known, that their reaction might have been different. He stated that the Cairngorm Club will be paying the equivalent of ten times more per vote than individual members. He had been given carte blanche by his colleagues on the Cairngorm Club committee to vote as he wished and that he was minded to vote against the increase.

The Treasurer restated that the reasons had been stated on the MCofS website and in his letter to club secretaries. On the basis of fairness he asked Ken Thomson if he was able to defend the differential between £10.60 and £27.30.

The Company Secretary stated that there were significant additional benefits enjoyed by club members compared with individual members including membership of the Huts Working Group, advertising of their club and club huts on the MCofS website, and that the majority of administrative work and enquiries relating to insurance originated with club members.

Robin Forest of Inverness MC stated that his club now found itself in a position where it had to raise membership fees by a corresponding amount to the proposed increase, and that his membership as a whole were unhappy.

George Smart of the Grampian Club asked for clarification of the estimated expenditure of £18 per member. The Treasurer stated that this was based on the total expenditure of the MCofS divided by the total number of individual members and members of clubs, and was used to demonstrate the relationship between the current subscriptions for the two membership categories and the overall expenditure of the MCofS divided by the number in both categories.

The Treasurer proposed that the per capita subscription for members of clubs be increased to £13.00. The motion was seconded by John Leftley. On the initial show of hands there were 32 in favour and 2 against. A subsequent show of voting cards demonstrated that there was an overwhelming majority in favour and the motion was carried.

f. Election of President, Vice Presidents and Treasurer

The President introduced the elections and stated that there were four directors previously appointed and who were eligible to continue, subject to being elected at the meeting. These were Chris Townsend (President), Brenda Clough (Vice President), Richard Spencer (Vice President) and John Irving (Treasurer). In addition there were two further nominees for the two vacant positions for Vice President; these were Brian Linington, an individual member who was appointed as a Vice President by the Board following the resignation of Martin Middleton, and Graeme Morrison (Association of Mountain Instructors).

The Company Secretary then read out a statement from Brian Linington, and Graeme Morrison made a statement from the floor, in support of their nominations.

The President stated that there were no competing nominations and asked the meeting if it was prepared to accept the nominations en bloc, and these were approved unanimously by the meeting.

g. Election of other members of the Executive

The President introduced the elections and stated that there were six members of the Executive previously appointed and eligible to continue, subject to being elected by the meeting. These were John Leftley, Bill Park, Ron Payne, Paul Russell, George Smart and John Wylie.

There were also three vacancies, for which there were three nominees, being Gail Crawford (Grampian Club), Scott Muir (SMC) and Martin Menzies (Tayside Trekkers / IM).

The Company Secretary then read out a statement from Gail Crawford, and Scott Muir and Martin Menzies made statements from the floor, in support of their nominations.

The President stated that there were no competing nominations and asked the meeting if it was prepared to accept the nominations en bloc, and these were approved unanimously by the meeting.

h. Appointment of Accountants

The Treasurer recommended that the meeting approve the appointment of Johnson & Co, a two partner company based in Bo'ness. He had found them to be a small firm offering a personal service. The appointment was approved unanimously by the meeting.

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i. Policies – no adoptions or amendments notified

j. Any Other Business

The date and time of the next AGM was proposed at 5 September 2009 at Glenmore Lodge and this was approved unanimously by the meeting.

The President then closed formal business of the AGM.

David Gibson
Company Secretary
12 September 2008

The President also thanked the following for their support during the year:

- sportscotland for £155k investment in Mountain Safety, MWIS, MLTS and MCoS work
- Scottish Natural Heritage & The BMC for their investment in Access & Conservation work
- The Scottish Mountaineering Trust – notably for increased funding of £10k per annum for 3 years for Access & Conservation work and their continued support for the Visually Impaired Course
- Tim Walker, the Principal of Glenmore Lodge who is retiring in 2008, and Glenmore Lodge staff for help and support relating to the AGM and Gathering
- The Cairngorm Club and other members for their help with Club Safety and Liability Guidance documentation
- MCoS Volunteers and Staff for their work during the year, and John Wylie and colleagues on the Membership Services Committee for their help in organising the Gathering
- And finally Arrochar Mountain Rescue Team for the evening's raffle prizes