

CONSIDERED RESPONSE TO THE BMC NEWSLETTER ARTICLE: "BOMBSHELL AT THE BMC AGM" by Alex Messenger.

My attention has been drawn to the article entitled above which was posted by Alex Messenger, an employee of the BMC and chief editor of "Summit", the BMC house journal. It was posted on the 26th April 2017 and as well as similar misleading comments in BMC newsletters. In the light of the Code of Good Governance of the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and the requirements of the Independent Press Standards Organisation I claim the right of reply to be published in the same medium and With the same prominence.

The article in question is a heavily biased account of the debate on Item 9 of the BMC AGM agenda that took place in the Lecture hall of the National Mountain Centre Plas y Brenin on the evening of Saturday 22nd April 2017.

It is a propaganda exercise written by a professional officer of the BMC with the clear intention of denigrating and discrediting not only the thirty proposers of the Motion of No Confidence in the Executive Committee, all accredited members of the BMC and associated clubs, but also the nearly 400 or so members of the BMC who cast their vote in favour of the Motion, and the 62 members who abstained.

Messenger's main and misleading theme is that the Motion moved by me was unclear". On the contrary the Motion was crystal clear and is set out below to remove doubt.

MOTION OF NO CONFIDENCE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

That this motion of No Confidence is brought against the Executive Committee of the BMC and in particular because of the withholding of future policy decisions from the members in attendance at the Annual General Meeting held at Lhosehill Hall, Castleton, Derbyshire on Saturday 16th April 2016. Further, this withholding of key and vital information to the membership is an example of very poor governance by the Executive Committee in their role as Company Directors, in a registered company limited by

guarantee, and does not conform to the recently published Sport England Code for Sports Governance.

The policy decisions in question resulted, or would have resulted, in profound and momentous changes to the BMC as summarized below:

(a) The change of name from the British Mountaineering Council to Climb Britain .

(b) The change in status from Representative Body to a Governing Body, a prospect anathema to the majority of mountaineers, and inimical to the concept of 'Freedom of the Hills'.

(c) The change of title from Competition Climbing (well understood by the mountaineering community) to Sport Climbing". Long practised as aided rock climbing.

(d) The abject failure to support the UIAA as the international representative body for mountaineering, whilst becoming subservient to the falsely titled

International Federation of Sport Climbing" (see 'c' above) .

(e) Permitting paid members of staff to attend Area Meetings of the BMC in a voting capacity thus executing a collective vested interest at grassroots level.

(f) Subsequent to the historic and dramatic refusal of the BMC membership at large in the autumn of 2016 to accept the management's attempt to bypass the AGM of April 2016, there has been no satisfactory explanation forthcoming for such a serious breach of the constitutional process, major financial loss, nor has there been an apology to the membership. (g) In the light of the above, the BMC is clearly not fit for purpose. The BMC Thirty" therefore welcomes the Review Process and has given evidence to the Wigglesworth Review.

The impression given that those proposing the Motion had not previously explained their profound concerns with the operational processes of the BMC is not true as evidenced by CEO D. Turnbull's statement to me on the 24 February 2017. QUOTE:

"The BMC fully accepts there are ongoing issues concerning the governance operation and future development of the organization (we are in a very complex and changing times), and that there must be an opportunity to discuss these at the AGM weekend and in the AGM meeting itself...This new approach was agreed at a meeting with the BMC Patrons held in September 2016 at which Doug Scott made the strong and convincing case that BMC AGMs must be more transparent, give notice of major projects in the pipeline and allow for active engagement with

members on important future policy issues. To me this is a very positive step forward and one which will hopefully stimulate a much more lively debate than has tended to be the case at recent BMC AGMs."

Dave Turnbull Chief Executive. Letter to Robert Pettigrew, Mover of the Motion.

Finally, although the Motion of No Confidence was defeated last April 2017, it has succeeded in influencing the necessity of a Review - a reform that the BMC refused to countenance in 2015 when it was first proposed by the then AC President Lyndsay Griffin.

For comparison BMC members might care to read an accurate and fair report of the debate on the Motion of No Confidence carried by the on-line climbing magazine 'Grough' dated 23rd April 2017.

Robert Pettigrew, MBE

Former President and Hon. Member BMC