

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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BMC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Minutes of the 2017 AGM held at The National Mountain Sports Centre, Plas y Brenin, Capel Curig, 11.00 am, Saturday 22 April 2017.

Directors Present:

Rehan Siddiqui	President	Director & Chair (Items 1-8, final comments & Presidents closing statement)
John Simpson	Honorary Treasurer	Director
Rupert Davies	Vice-President	Director
Nick Kurth	Vice-President	Director
Brian Smith	Independent	Director
Simon McCalla	Independent	Director
Dave Turnbull	CEO	Company Secretary

Voting Members Present:

(Note: membership categories stated refer to those stated by registrants).

Les	Ainsworth	Club	Nick	Colton	Ind/Club
Yvonne	Alexander	Club	Matthew	Cooper	Ind
Steve	Andrews	Club	Mal	Creasey	Club
Mark	Anstiss	Club	Neil	Currie	Ind
Seb	Archer	Ind	Rupert	Davies	Ind
Inigo	Atkin	Ind	James	Derry	Ind
Michelle	Aukland	Club	Fiona	Devine	Club
Ray	Barnett	Club	Kevin	Devine	Club Upgrade
Philip	Bartlett	Club	Leo	Dickinson	Club
Louise	Beetlestone	Ind	Martin	Doyle	Club
Charlotte	Bell	Ind	Anthony	Eccles	Club
Roger	Bennion	Club	Paul	Exley	Club
Eddie	Birch	Club	Roger	Fanner	Ind
Oliver	Birkill	Club	Ollie	Foord	Ind
Nick	Bond	Club	Carlo	Forte	Ind
Chris	Bonner	Ind	Neil	Foster	Ind
John	Booth	Ind	Julian	Freeman-Attwood	Club
Matthew	Bradbury	Ind	Peter	Friend	Club
Vicki	Bradbury	Ind	Charles	Gameson	Ind
Paul	Braithwaite	Club	Dave	Garnett	Ind / Club
David	Brown	Club	Iwan	Geldart	Club
Jennie	Brown	Ind	Lyndon	Gill	Club
Judith	Brown	Club	KC	Gordon	Ind
Jackie	Bryson	Ind	Spencer	Gray	Ind / Club
Philip	Butler	Ind	Mick	Green	Club
Frank	Cannings	Ind	Ruth	Greenall	Club
Martyn	Carr	Club	Paul	Greenhow	Club
Rab	Carrington	Club Upgrade	Anne	Gregory	Ind
Jon	Chittenden	Ind	Jim	Gregson	Club
Steve	Clark	Ind	Sandra	Gregson	Club

Lindsay	Griffin	Club	Louise	Price	Ind
Graeme	Hammond	Club	Daphne	Pritchard	Ind
Rebecca	Hammond	Ind	Jon	Punshon	Club
Sally	Hancox	Club	Mike	Raine	Ind
David	Harborne	Ind	Spencer	Ramsey	Ind
Michelle	Hart	Club	Mike	Ratty	Ind
Mike	Hendry	Ind	Jason	Rawles	Ind
Neil	Hockley	Ind	Philip	Ralfs	Ind / Club
Duncan	Howard	Ind	Nick	Read	Club
Bill	Irving	Ind	Melinda	Reid	Ind
Julian	James	Club	Andrew	Richards	Club
Guy	Jarvis	AMI	Graham	Richmond	Club Upgrade
Tim	Jepson	AMI	Dave	Roberts	Club Upgrade
Pete	Johnson	Club	Eluned	Roberts	Ind
Dave	Jones	Club	John	Roberts	Ind / Club
Elfyn	Jones	Ind	Lynn	Robinson	Ind
Elizabeth	Jones	Club	Kelda	Roe	Ind
Will	Kilner	Ind	Christine	Rogers	Ind
Colin	Knowles	Ind	Ted	Rogers	Club
Nick	Kurth	Club	Peter	Salenieks	Club
Dai	Lampard	Club	Fiona	Sanders	Club
David	Latham	Ind	Keith	Sanders	Club
Craig	Letham	Ind	Andy	Say	Ind
Cindy	Lin	Ind	Jean	Scholes	Club
Pat	Littlejohn	Club / Patron	Steve	Scott	Club
Ian	Lonsdale	Club	Kamala	Sen	Ind
Sherry	MacLIVER	Ind	Beryl	Shaw	Ind
Nuno	Madeira	Ind	John	Shaw	Ind / Club
John	Mason	Ind / Club	Tarquin	Shiple	AMI
Nicholas	Mason	Ind	Rehan	Siddiqui	Club
Simon	McCalla	Ind	Phil	Simister	Club
John	McLaren	Club	John	Simpson	Ind
Karl	Midlane	AMI	Sam	Simpson	Ind
Brian	Molyneux	Club	Martin	Skinner	Ind
Chris	Moor	Ind	Christine	Sluman	Ind
Dave	Musgrove	Club Upgrade	Bob	Smith	Ind
Lyn	Musgrove	Club	Brian	Smith	Ind
Freddie	Naish	Ind	Ian	Smith	Club
Bernard	Newman	Club	Peter	Smith	Club
Jan	Newman	Club	Trevor	Smith	Club
Vic	Odell	Club	Vivienne	Smith	Ind
Colette	O'Neill	Club	Angela	Soper	Club
Gareth	Palmer	Ind	Carl	Spencer	Ind
Mike	Parsons	Ind	Laetitia	Sterling	Club
Iona	Pawson	Ind	Pete	Sterling	Club
Lisa	Payne	Club	Alison	Stockwell	Ind / Club
Rik	Payne	Club	Chris	Stone	Ind
Bob	Pettigrew	Club	Pete	Tapping	Ind
Zoe	Pickering	Club	Myfyr	Tomos	Ind / Club
John	Porter	Club	Dave	Turnbull	Club
Dave	Prior	Club	Julian	Turner	Ind
			Mark	Vallance	Club
			Anne	Vowles	Upgrade

Martin	Wall	Club	Ray	Wood	Ind
Freddie	Waters	Ind	Kate	Worthington	Family
Denise	Waugh	Ind	Ross	Worthington	Family
Richard	Wells	Ind	Martin	Wragg	Ind
David	White	Club Upgrade	Jim	Yearsley	Ind
Jonathan	White	Ind / Club			
Rod	White	Ind			
Peter	Whittaker	Ind			
Chris	Williams	Ind			
Tony	Williams	Club			
John	Willson	Club			
Clair	Wilson	Club			
Harry	Wilson	Club			
Nigel	Wilson	Ind			
Stan	Winstanley	Club			

Others Present:

Richard Doubleday Perkins Slade

BMC Staff Present (in addition to those listed as voting members):

Kate Anwyl	HR & Office Manager
Lynda Buckley	Membership & Insurance Manager
Clonagh Delderfield	Membership Administrator
Alvin Foy	IT & Database Co-ordinator
Suzanne Jones	Marketing Co-ordinator
Jim Krawiecki	Membership Administrator
Alex Messenger	Head of Marketing & Communications
Arun Patel	Membership Co-ordinator
Tony Ryan	Publications Co-ordinator

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

Actions

- 1.1 Rehan Siddiqui (chair) opened the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies were received from: Gordon Adshead, John Allen, Malcolm Baxter, Dave Bishop, Sir Chris Bonington, Deirdre Collier (now Sanderson), Emma Flaherty, Henry Folkard, Mick Fowler, Lord Greaves, Brian Griffiths, Eric Jones, Dan Lane, Gwen Moffat, Bob Moulton, Mike Ratty, Doug Scott and Helen Wilson.
- 1.3 The chair began by clarifying the voting procedures for the meeting. He noted that with regard to Item 7 (Elections) the BMC is in the process of considering possible candidates for recommendation to fulfil the role of a vacant VP position. The BMC recognises that this should ideally be a female candidate. In the absence of an official BMC nomination the Memorandum & Articles of Association (M&AA) enables proposals to be made from the floor with a proposer and seconder. If there are no nominations from the floor the process will continue officially within the BMC.

2. Approval of the previous AGM minutes held on 16 April 2016

- 2.1 Nick Bond proposed the approval of the minutes, seconded by Dave Musgrove.

2.2 **For: 1978 Against: 20 Abstentions: 502**

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record and signed by the chair. **Agreed**

3. Presentation & adoption of the 2016 Annual Report

3.1 Dave Turnbull (CEO) gave a detailed PowerPoint presentation summarising the key events of the last 12 months and highlighting some of the main challenges facing the organisation in the coming months; this included a summary of BMC membership demographics, an outline of the organisational and decision making structure, lessons learnt from the re-branding exercise and the follow up to the successful Mend our Mountains campaign which raised £110k. In conclusion he emphasised that the BMC must respect the history, ethics and heritage of mountaineering; maintain a strong focus on the needs of present members, and at the same time; remain relevant and influential amongst new and future generations coming into climbing and mountaineering. Questions from the floor then followed.

3.2 Phil Bartlett (Alpine Club) stated his issue was lack of trust in the BMC's decision-making processes following the re-branding exercise. Jonathon White (Individual, Lanchester MC and Alpine Club) highlighted the need for real independence on any future review and that it should be by members and for members. He added that the last 'independent review' (i.e. that undertaken by consultants) had resulted in the Climb Britain rebrand.

3.3 Rupert Davies clarified the use of the term 'independence', stating that in the context of the review 'independence' means it is not directly influenced by the BMC Executive or National Council. He added that National Council would however have to agree the Terms of Reference and Chair for the review process.

3.4 Steve Clark remarked on the apparently low total volunteer figures (500+) shown in the CEO's presentation and suggested the BMC should find out who they are, specifically what they do and the number of hours they put into the BMC. Peter Friend asked why the geographical distribution of membership did not include Scotland and Ireland and it was explained that the slide in question showed the BMC's 10 regional groupings (Areas) which cover England and Wales only. **Noted**

3.5 Neil Foster proposed the adoption of the Annual Report, seconded by Lynn Robinson.

For: 2051 Against: 15 Abstentions: 426 **Agreed**

At this point the Chair asked if the meeting wished to change the running order of the remaining agenda items, specifically to bring forward agenda Item 9 to immediately before Item 6. After discussion the meeting voted overwhelmingly to leave the agenda unchanged (proposed by Dai Lampard, seconded by Peter Friend).

4. Presentation & adoption of the 2016 Annual Accounts and Auditors Report

4.1 John Simpson (Honorary Treasurer) presented the accounts.

- 4.2 In response to a question from Ross Worthington, it was confirmed that the MTE administration fee relates to a contribution towards the accountancy services provided by the BMC and elements of the BMC/MTE Training Officer costs. Dai Lampard queried the spend on specialist committees and the Treasurer explained that a more detailed breakdown was shown on page 19 of the accounts.
- 4.3 Pete Sterling asked where the office refurbishment costs are shown and it was confirmed that as they were additions to fixed assets they appear in the notes to the accounts. Tony Williams suggested a written report from the Treasurer would be useful and the chair welcomed this as a good idea. Dave Brown expressed thanks for the work of the Finance Committee and the outgoing Treasurer John Simpson. Noted
- 4.4 Vic Odell proposed the adoption of the Annual Accounts and Auditors Report, seconded by Steve Scott.
- For: 2071 Against: 11 Abstentions: 421** **Agreed**
- 5. Appointment of Auditors**
- 5.1 The Finance Committee recommended the appointment of DonnellyBentley Chartered Accountants as auditors for the year ending 31 December 2017.
- 5.2 Nick Bond proposed the appointment, seconded by Colin Knowles.
- For: 2103 Against: 19 Abstentions: 381** **Agreed**
- 6. Re-elections**
- The following candidates were eligible for re-election:
- 6.a **Rehan Siddiqui: President** (eligible until April 2018)
Rab Carrington proposed the re-election, seconded by Rebecca Hammond.
- For: 2019 Against: 109 Abstentions: 429** **Agreed**
- 6.b **Nick Kurth: Vice-President** (eligible until April 2018)
Dave Musgrove proposed the re-election, seconded by Will Kilner
- For: 2005 Against: 96 Abstentions: 409** **Agreed**
- 6.c **Emma Flaherty: Vice-President** (eligible until April 2019)
Lynn Robinson proposed the re-election, seconded by Dave Brown.
- For: 2043 Against: 77 Abstentions: 432** **Agreed**
- 7 Elections**
- The following candidates were eligible for election:
- 7.a **Graham Richmond: Honorary Treasurer** (eligible until 2022)
Andy Say proposed the election, seconded by Pete Sterling.
- For: 1915 Against: 49 Abstentions: 412** **Agreed**

- 7.b **Roger Fanner: National Council rep on Executive Committee (Director)**
Michelle Hart proposed the election, seconded by Andrew Syme.
For: 2027 Against: 50 Abstentions: 432 **Agreed**
- 7.c **Will Kilner: National Council rep on Executive Committee (Director)**
Michelle Hart proposed the election, seconded by Andrew Syme.
For: 2031 Against: 46 Abstentions: 432 **Agreed**
- 7.d **Rik Payne: National Council rep on Executive Committee (Director)**
Michelle Hart proposed the election, seconded by Andrew Syme.
For: 2076 Against: 48 Abstentions: 445 **Agreed**
- 7.e **Simon McCalla: Independent Director**
Simon gave a brief overview of his professional and outdoor background.
Nick Bond proposed the election, seconded by Lisa Payne.
For: 2022 Against: 51 Abstentions: 427 **Agreed**
- 7.f **Matthew Bradbury: Independent Director**
Matthew gave a brief overview of his professional and outdoor background.
Pete Sterling proposed the election, seconded by Roger Fanner.
For: 2040 Against: 45 Abstentions: 425 **Agreed**
- 7.1 The Chair then repeated his earlier statement regarding the vice-president vacancy.
Lynn Robinson was proposed by Angela Soper, seconded by Rebecca Hammond.
Fiona Sanders was proposed by Brian Smith, seconded by Roger Fanner.
- 7.2 The candidates were then invited to explain their professional and outdoor backgrounds, and what felt they could bring to the BMC. They left the room during the voting.
It was noted that the vote would be via a show of hands.
Show of hands in support of Lynn Robinson: 80
Show of hands in support of Fiona Sanders: 74
- 7.3 The Chair noted the very close vote between two very capable individuals and welcomed Lynn Robinson as a new vice-president. **Agreed**
- 7.4 In response to a question from David Prior, it was clarified that proxy votes did not count towards this election as the nominations had been made from the floor of the meeting in accordance with the BMC M&AA.

Jim Gregson asked how many proxy votes had been registered for the AGM overall and was told the information would be available at the end of the proceedings.

8. Membership subscriptions for 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018

National Council recommended subscription rates for 2018 should be increased by £2.50 per person and club members (senior & students), students, the unwaged and under 18s by £1.00 per person from 1 January 2018. Other rates (e.g. family membership) will be adjusted on a pro-rata basis.

8.1 The Treasurer highlighted the reasons behind the proposed increase. Organisational running costs continue to rise and the BMC has only had one subscriptions increase since 2009. Pete Sterling felt the increase had been proposed without adequate consideration of the additional income potential from membership growth; he felt that without fully investigating expenditure and income, the proposal was premature.

8.2 Jonathan White asked whether the increase would be sufficient to achieve financial independence from Sport England. The Treasurer responded that complete independence would require a larger level of increase.

8.3 Dai Lampard questioned the BMC's salary bill which he felt seemed high for 33 staff. Michelle Hart suggested a strategy was needed to explain how the BMC would tackle large overheads e.g. the cost of producing and posting Summit magazine, as well as the recent office refurbishment, which she felt was well overdue.

8.4 Bernard Newman asked what the Government gets for the Sport England grant (20% of BMC income) it gives the BMC; he felt the Government does not understand representative bodies such as the BMC and asked whether we should seek independence. Eddie Birch asked if there was a commercial strategy in place should the subscriptions increase not be supported. It was noted that the BMC now has a Commercial Manager in post and that efforts are being made to diversify income streams.

8.5 Rebecca Hammond explained that subscriptions had been held over a number of years and suggested it may be less controversial if smaller increases are made each year.

8.6 Will Kilner felt his individual membership of £31.95 was good value and he would be happy to pay more to ensure the continued good work of the BMC. Others also voiced support for the current subscriptions structure and cost, noting the benefits of membership and the importance of the BMC's work for members.

8.7 Will Kilner proposed the subscriptions increase, seconded by Rebecca Hammond.

For: 1664 Against: 520 Abstentions: 322

Agreed

8.8 Nigel Wilson asked if the BMC has a policy for membership subscriptions and a value for money statement and if so could they be published. Nick Kurth acknowledged this as a valuable idea. The CEO noted that there is a policy in place regarding subscriptions based on the annual RPI rates.

Noted

At this point the Chair stated he did not feel it appropriate for him to chair agenda Item 9 and that in accordance with Article 54 of the BMC M&AA, National Council member Rik Payne would now take over to chair this item.

Rik Payne began by clearly explaining the process and procedure for Item 9, confirming that Robert Pettigrew would have 15 minutes to speak in support of the motion and Rupert Davies 15 minutes to give the counter view. Thereafter, questions would be limited to 2 minutes per person and sufficient time would be allowed to enable anyone who wanted to raise points to do so.

9. Robert Pettigrew MBE and others will request the AGM to pass a resolution in the following terms:

'That this motion of No Confidence is brought against the Executive Committee of the BMC and in particular because of the wilful and deliberate 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'.

- 9.1 Mr Pettigrew outlined why members should support his no-confidence motion, noting that AGMs must fulfil two functions – accountability and transparency. He went on to discuss the inclusion of sport climbing in the 2020 Olympics and queried why the BMC's decision to back Olympic inclusion was taken by the National Council in 2008 rather than an AGM. He described the Olympics as a 'disease' and went on to say that the President of the International Federation of Sport Climbing (IFSC), Marco Scolari, had written to all member federations including the BMC requesting them to change their names to include 'sport climbing' in their titles.

Mr Pettigrew then moved onto the re-brand, noting his view that £75k of tax payers' money had been spent on the exercise; that the re-branding had been dishonest as the Executive and key figures within the BMC had already made decisions about it prior to the 2016 AGM, his evidence being that the BMC had registered several 'Climb Britain' URLs in March 2016.

Mr Pettigrew rounded off by stating that it had been a failure of the Executive not to obtain membership approval for 2020 Olympic inclusion at the 2016 AGM. He added that he did not have sufficient time to properly finish his speech but that his text was available on request.

- 9.2 Outgoing vice-president Rupert Davies responded on behalf of the Executive Committee, noting that it was now clear the main issue underlying the motion was the Olympics. He added that (with the exception of the CEO) the members of the Executive are all volunteers who hold a maximum term of 3 years, noted that some of the criticisms related to events that happened prior to the current Executive's term of office. He also felt that the overall reason for bringing forward the motion of no confidence remained unclear.

- 9.3 Mr Davies stated it was inappropriate to vote on a motion that the whole membership had not had the opportunity to hear, only very limited advance information having been made available by Mr Pettigrew in the run up to the AGM. He added that the motion was not a positive action and that it was a targeted attack on current volunteers who had not been part of the decision-making process back in 2008. Regarding the re-brand, he stated that the exercise had been undertaken in good faith and had been quickly reversed following membership feedback and consultation at area meetings.
- 9.4 He added that the Executive was not aware of any letter from Marco Scholaris regarding federations changing their names. He concluded by asking the floor to have confidence in the newly elected Executive and by reporting that an independent governance review had been agreed by National Council on 11 February 2017 – amongst other things – to ensure the BMC’s decision-making processes are clear and fit for purpose. He finished by asking members not to destroy the BMC for a moment of glory.
- Rik Payne then opened it up to the floor for statements and questions.
- 9.5 Ross Worthington began by asking the CEO if there had ever been any communication from the IFSC suggesting the BMC should change its name? Dave Turnbull responded by saying ‘absolutely not’; he had no knowledge of any such letter or communication from the IFSC.
- 9.6 Ian Smith read out a 2005 UIAA document that showed the then UIAA President Ian McNaught-Davis and also Alan Blackshaw supported the inclusion of climbing in future Olympics, adding that on this basis the motion of no confidence is a complete red herring.
- 9.7 Inigo Atkin: noted that in 1995 Will Carling referred to the then RFU committee as ‘57 old farts’ and this current motion has similarities. The motion does not put forward any improvements to the organisation; the BMC has been trying to modernise and the motion appears to be a general complaint against that process.
- 9.8 Phil Bartlett: the BMC is in an impossible situation, trying to serve too many different interest groups. It feels as if Doug Scott and others want the BMC to go back to its origins whilst the organisation itself feels a need to move forwards and encompass all aspects of the ‘mountaineering’. But can it move forwards for all the different groups? Can one organisation transparently and honestly represent all of these diverse groups?
- 9.9 Rebecca Hammond read out a note from Henry Folkard, BMC Peak Area volunteer, honorary member and George Band Award recipient in 2012, who was currently representing the BMC at the Kinder Mass trespass anniversary. Henry strongly opposed the motion which he felt was totally unfounded and denigrates BMC volunteers.
- 9.10 Fiona Sanders (Chair of BMC Clubs Committee): noted that overall she felt clubs are generally supportive of the Executive Committee.
- 9.11 Lyndon Gill: stated that during his time on the Executive and National Council (c.2005-9) he felt there was a democratic deficit on National Council; there was little effort to consult with membership, inaccuracy of the minutes and National Council members felt overruled by the Executive.

- 9.12 Spencer Gray: to remain healthy and recruit club committee volunteers, clubs need to engage with new members and participants, many of whom start out on climbing walls. Mr Pettigrew's closed-door consultation showed a lack of confidence in his own motion.
- 9.13 Matt Cooper: the motion contains few facts and much hearsay. The BMC has been making positive steps in recent years and recognising when errors are made is a sign of good leadership. Let's move on in a positive manner.
- 9.14 Charles Gameson: the motion is badly worded but a debate is needed as to whether the BMC should continue to accept Sport England funding.
- 9.15 Neil Foster: offered some anecdotal evidence regarding points made by Lyndon Gill. During his time on the Executive and National Council he felt the minutes did in fact accurately reflect meeting discussions.
- 9.16 Anthony Eccles: agreed with Neil Foster's comments. At each and every meeting, including the AGM, there is an opportunity to discuss and approve the previous minutes. The motion seems to be about the Olympics and not the re-brand.
- 9.17 Carl Spencer: further to Lyndon Gill's comments, referred to inaccuracies in National Council (then the Management Committee) minutes pre-2002 and noted that he had stood down from the Management Committee over 10 years ago partly due to this. He said that inaccuracies still occurs today, the 11 February 2017 minutes for example required seven amendments. He said that others had stood down for similar reasons over the last 10 years.
- 9.18 Jim Gregson: noted that he is one of the signatories on the motion. The BMC is giving a good impression of being reactionary to the motion. Would there be any reforms taking place had it not been submitted? The BMC seems happy to jump on bandwagons without considering members views.
- 9.19 Neil Hopley: some reasonable points have been made about government funding and the Olympics. It would have been good to debate these matters but the motion is about the 2016 AGM, not these matters. He looked forward to the independent review and more focused discussions at the 2018 AGM.
- 9.20 John Mason: noted that he was a BMC vice-president during the financial difficulties of 2002-3 and estimated that he did 65 voluntary days per year for the BMC at that time. The diversity of the BMC's activities is a strength and we should be proud of this. This motion has probably cost the BMC more than the £75k alleged to have been spent on the re-brand. Please let the Executive get on with its work.
- 9.21 Phil Simister: felt there are governance issues in the BMC that need to be addressed. The review is not a reaction to the motion of no confidence. The Executive Committee and National Council discussed the need to better define their roles and responsibilities in December 2016 and February 2017.

- 9.22 Jonathan White: explained that he was involved with the Alpine Club discussions about the motion and the AC's Special General Meeting about the BMC's governance. There was no opportunity at the 2016 BMC AGM to discuss the re-brand yet Climb Britain URLs were registered in early March 2016 so why wasn't it raised at the AGM?
- 9.23 Martin Wragg: in response, some URLs were registered on 16 March 2016 following a draft report from the consultancy company. This report was discussed at the Executive meeting of 18 May 2016 and at National Council on 18 June 2016. A total of 28 URL's were registered between March and June with the trademark registration commencing more than one month after the 2016 AGM. Confidentiality was required during the trademarking process to avoid the name being hijacked.
- 9.24 Dai Lampard: the BMC is a fantastic organisation, I was initially in favour of the motion, but I am also supportive of the BMC's position having listened to the discussion and the Annual Report presentation. I believe lessons have been learnt.
- 9.25 Steve Andrews: noted that he did not support the motion; felt it was time to let the BMC to get on with its work and the independent review.
- 9.26 Graeme Hammond: queried that if governance is the issue, why Mr Pettigrew had declined an invitation to attend his local BMC area meeting to explain his concerns.
- 9.27 Chris Moor: noted he was on the National Council during the Olympic debates of 2008-9. National Council was nearly unanimous in its support of inclusion of climbing in the Olympics; it was discussed at area meetings and Rab Carrington openly discussed the Olympics during his Presidency.
- 9.28 Paul Braithwaite: there should be greater transparency on critical decisions; not being informed of the re-brand had left him feeling very disappointed with the BMC.
- 9.29 John Booth: agreed with Paul Braithwaite that there should be greater transparency, but not with the wording of the motion; appealed to Bob Pettigrew to withdraw your motion and support his local area meeting.
- 9.30 Bob Pettigrew (in response to John Booth): noted that he had been unable to attend area meetings due to his commitment to attend UIAA meetings over the years as a BMC representative.
- 9.31 David Prior: asked, following the re-brand debacle did any members of the Executive resign?
- Rik Payne responded that the rebrand had been a collective decision which was ultimately made by National Council. It was noted that Deirdre Collier had stood down from the Executive and National Council*.
- 9.32 At this point Rik Payne drew matters to a close and asked if members were happy to go to a vote. A show of hands indicated the great majority were happy for the vote to proceed. Rik Payne reminded the AGM that if attendees agreed with the motion then they should vote 'for' it and if they disagree with it they should vote 'against' it.

For: 359 Against: 2100 Abstentions: 62

**Not
agreed**

Rik Payne thanked the audience for what had been a well-behaved debate.

*post meeting note of clarification: DC stood down from the Executive Committee and National Council due to her feeling that membership should have been consulted on the re-brand.

The formal business of the meeting concluded at 2.15pm.

While the final votes were being counted Rehan Siddiqui then returned to the front table and took the chair to make some final comments and a closing statement.

He thanked everyone for attending the meeting and presented some awards to outgoing Executive Committee members Rupert Davies, Colin Knowles, John Simpson and Brian Smith as a note of thanks for their contributions to the BMC; he noted that a gift would also be sent to Deirdre Collier.

A statement was then read out on behalf of the president by Louise Price, wife of Rehan Siddiqui. The full statement is attached as a formal appendix to the minutes. The statement concluded that Rehan had decided to resign as President of the BMC but would remain in position until a new or acting president could be appointed.

Alison Stockwell expressed a strong note of support and gratitude to Rehan and asked that he reconsider his decision.

Colin Knowles noted that the structure of AGM does not allow for AOB items and asked if this could be addressed in the future with AOB items being submitted in advance?

Bob Pettigrew said the Open Forum (preceding the AGM) is a 'talking shop' and that because there is no requirement for the BMC to follow up points raised, it should be abolished.

Former BMC President Dave Musgrove concluded with strong statement in opposition to Bob Pettigrew and the Motion of No Confidence and the damaging effect he felt it had had on the BMC.

End 2.40pm.

Appendix 1

2017 BMC AGM – STATEMENT BY BMC PRESIDENT REHAN SIDDIQUI

This motion of no confidence by Bob Pettigrew, Doug Scott, Dennis Gray and supporters has been a targeted politically motivated attack to take control of the BMC, effectively an attempted coup. This has been to impose their views regarding their dislike for the Olympics, competition climbing, the International Federation of Sport Climbing, promoting & attracting membership from hill walkers and a long-standing perceived issue regarding the maintenance of a toilet block at Harrisons Rocks.

Doug Scott himself told me on my attaining the Presidency of the BMC that “Climbing is far too important for democracy”. A sentiment that I definitely do not share. I firmly believe that the BMC is a modern inclusive and member-led organisation representing all our interests and not those of a colonial elite from a by gone era.

The BMC admitted that the Sport England funded rebrand was a mistake and following widespread membership disapproval, the BMC reacted quickly to rectify this. I feel it is now appropriate to inform you that I personally was against the rebrand in Executive Committee discussions. When the majority decision was reached to go ahead with the rebranding. As President of the BMC, I felt duty bound to publicly support the democratic decision of the Executive Committee in mid-May and also that of National Council in mid-June 2016.

Following the widespread disapproval of the rebrand I and other voluntary directors and the CEO personally spent significant time touring the country to attend BMC area meetings, club meetings and meet with individuals in the consultation process which in hindsight should have happened before the rebrand. I have endured unjustified and highly personal attacks over the issue since.

I feel it is important to point out that the Executive Committee is not composed of long-standing, entrenched members. The Executive, with exception of the salaried CEO) is actually composed of hard working volunteers who are highly respected in their various professional fields and who each stand for three year periods with the treasurer standing for five years. The membership of Executive regularly changes as tenures are generally staggered.

Although the motion of no confidence has not been successful, The BMC faces significant challenges going forward. Executive Committee and National Council have agreed that a review of governance is required and the best way forward on this is to have an independently chaired review group which will report to National Council and the Executive Committee. This effort is also supported by major clubs such as the Alpine Club, Climbers Club and others. This review is likely to lead to recommendations for major changes to the articles of association. Today’s BMC is much larger than when the current Articles of Association were written.

Independently of this decision Sport England have expressed concerns on the BMC’S Governance linked in the main to the relationship between the Executive committee and National Council. This in turn is linked to complying with the Companies Act. The motion of no confidence has done the BMC no favours with our image with Sport England and in general. The BMC receive funding from Sport England and many aspects our operations will be at risk if the governance issues are not quickly resolved.

The work load on the President and members of the Executive Committee is significant and regularly goes way beyond what is reasonable for voluntary unpaid roles. The Presidents role in particular is not sustainable with regular requirements to have to deal with day to day operational matters. The board of most representative or governing sporting bodies deal with strategic direction rather than operational matters. This is not the case with the BMC. The motion of no confidence has added to the existing pressure and I have been consumed in BMC matters from dawn to late into the night for extended periods of time. It is essential that the review group looks at the roles, responsibilities and time commitments of the volunteer executive to ensure that the BMC has the capability to recruit as wide-a-

range of talent as possible. The BMC needs to be able to attract current professional people to Executive positions as well as retired individuals.

As many of you know, my theme as BMC President has been to encourage the wide and diverse range of activities that the BMC is involved with. The BMC is rightly proud to promote the rich heritage of British mountaineering and traditional climbing values. It is the representative body for traditional climbing and mountaineering, hill walking, sport climbing, bouldering, clubs et al as well as acting as the governing body for competition climbing. By having a balanced and inclusive approach based on consultation and consensus, we are collectively stronger. As Aristotle said "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts". I firmly believe that by being inclusive enables us to educate our younger generation of the rich heritage of British climbing, traditional values and protecting the environment. I also believe that it is important that we embrace youth, support competition climbing on artificial structures and find ways to engage with users of climbing walls.

My Presidency and involvement with the BMC has been eventful to say the least. The day of my election as President a large earthquake hit the mountain regions of Nepal. I immediately put forward a plan to hold charity auction of mountaineering memorabilia, days out with climbing legends and tea with national celebrities amongst many other generously donated items. It brought together the BMC with major clubs such as the Alpine Club and Climbers Club in support of a common aim to provide vital funds to the people of Nepal, in the main, via Doug Scott's charity.

A major BMC staff restructure had already been agreed prior to my Presidency which had to be implemented shortly after my election. This involved me winning the support of BMC staff to ensure a happy working environment. A major reconfiguration of the BMC headquarters was also undertaken. A happy working environment means better productivity and delivery of all that the BMC does and an office fit for the future.

During my years of involvement with the BMC in different voluntary roles, I was instrumental in the setting up of the equity steering group and acted as its first chair. I served as Vice President from 2008 – 2011, canvassed support and campaigned for the purchase of Wilton quarry and Crookrise crags, pushed the outdoor agenda with regular meetings with political figures via the APPG. I supported Mountain Heritage Trust and their move to the Blencartha Centre as well as encouraged the series of Alex Honnold lectures. A successful mend our mountains crowd funding effort raised in the region of £100,000. I have promoted and developed a culture of inclusion for the wide range of sectors that we cover, aiming to achieve a BMC for all with a common mindset without elitism.

After successfully leading the BMC through the biggest challenge to its existence in its entire history, I have decided that the time is right to stand down as President of the BMC. The last few months in particular have been very difficult and I have been frustrated that the motion of no confidence has meant that energy and focus of both volunteers and staff has been directed away from the many positive areas which members benefit. I have a business to run and a young family to provide for and cannot reasonably make such a huge sacrifice anymore. I have immense pride in the BMC and utmost respect for the excellent and hard-working fellow executives and BMC staff that I have had the pleasure of working with. I will not leave the organisation leaderless and will stay on in the role until a new President or acting President can be appointed.

I will be addressing National Council tomorrow morning prior to the main meeting which will then be chaired by Vice President Nick Kurth.

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