

BMC Members' Council - Councillor Role Descriptions

Contents

Introduction	2
Structure of the Members' Council.....	2
Essential Additional Reading.....	2
1. Role Description for all Councillors.....	3
What is the commitment required as a Councillor?	3
What are the main responsibilities of the role?	3
Confidentiality & Impartiality.....	3
2. Area Representatives	4
What are the additional responsibilities of an Area Representative?	4
Sharing a Vote at the Members' Council	5
3. Constituency Councillor – Mountain Training	5
4. Constituency Councillor – Club Members.....	6
5. Nationally Elected Councillors (NECs).....	6
6. Specialist Councillors.....	6

Change Record

Changes	By	Date
Initial Draft	Alison Cairns, Helen Wilson, Roger Murray	26/11/19
Draft 2 incorporating feedback from R33 group	Alison Cairns	12/12/19
Draft 3 incorporating GJ update for MT	Alison Cairns	13/1/20
Draft 4 incorporating comments from R33	Alison Cairns	15/1/20
Draft 5 incorporating PS update for Clubs	Peter Salenieks	16/1/20

Introduction

The primary purpose of the Members' Council (MC) is:

- To act as a representative body of the Members, and to represent their interests to the Board
- To consult with and constructively challenge the Board, and to hold it to account on behalf of the Members
- To provide an intermediary forum and effective communications between the Board and the Membership
- To be consulted upon or provide agreement to the Reserved Matters (as per the Articles of Association)

MC is the primary interface between the BMC's Board of Directors (and senior operational staff) and the Membership. It provides the main conduit by which information is passed from the Board to Members and vice versa, and provides the mechanism by which this information can be discussed and debated, allowing the Members' views to be taken into account in the running of the BMC. It also has an important role in providing checks and balances over the activities of the Board as required for a Membership organisation.

Structure of the Members' Council

Voting Members

- President – also Chair of the MC
- Constituency Councillors
 - Up to 20 Area Representatives (1 or 2 per Area, with a single vote for each area)
 - Non-Area Constituency Councillors - currently 2 to represent Mountain Training & Club Members
- Nationally Elected Councillors – up to 4 to represent the Membership as a whole, and to provide particular skills to the MC
- Specialist Councillors – to provide skills, knowledge or expertise in specific areas of the BMC's work, currently 4 to represent Partners, Access Management Group, Clubs Strategy Group & Competitions

Non-Voting Members (Observers)

- Approximately 25 from the Specialist Committees, key Partner organisations, and Directors, Executives & Staff of the BMC (attendance on an ad-hoc basis, as required by agenda or requested by the MC)

There is also the potential for additional Councillors (either voting or non-voting) to be “Co-Opted” onto the MC to fill particular skills gaps, or to work on short time-span issues.

Additional Roles within the MC

- Council Nominated Directors (CNDs) – up to 3 Councillors are elected to sit on the Board along with the President, to represent MC on the Board and report back to MC on the relevant activities of the Board
- Deputy President (DP) – 1 Councillor is elected as a Deputy, to help the President with their duties and to act as an interim President if required
- Nominations Committee (Nomcom) - 1 Councillor is elected to sit as an MC representative

Essential Additional Reading

The purpose, structure and working practices of the MC are defined in the following documents, which should be required reading for all Councillors:

- Members' Council Code of Practice
- Articles of Association, in particular Sections 4 (BMC Objects) and 17 (Members' Council)
- Members' Council Terms of Reference
- Memorandum of Understanding
- BMC Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Members' Council Operations Manual

1. Role Description for all Councillors

What is the commitment required as a Councillor?

Councillors are volunteers and have limited free time. However, as a minimum they should make every effort to:

- Attend MC meetings – 4-5 per year (held around the country, Saturdays 9.30am till late afternoon)
- Read all emails & paperwork in order to discuss them at subsequent meetings, teleconference calls etc
- Participate in teleconference calls as required to discuss MC business (potentially up to 1-2 per month)
- Engage with any other form of inter-meeting discussions/polls etc as may occur
- Communicate with and act as a representative and intermediary for the constituency or BMC group that they represent (as detailed in the specific Role Description for each Councillor type described below)
- Periodically Councillors will be asked to volunteer to take on additional responsibilities including the roles of DP, CND & Nomcom rep referred to above, and also to participate in various *ad hoc* working groups.

What are the main responsibilities of the role?

- Adhere at all times to the principles described in the MC Code of Practice
- Behave in ways that earn the trust of others, respect each other and those that we represent and work with, act with integrity, and value diversity of people and thought
- Make a positive and enthusiastic contribution to the development and delivery of the Objects of the BMC and its Values, Vision, Mission and Strategy
- Represent the interests of Mountaineering and all Mountaineers within the UK, as well as the Members of the BMC
- Be ambitious for the BMC and act in its best interests; act as a critical friend and advocate of the BMC
- Understand that this is a non-executive role; recognise the balance and interaction between this and the executive (i.e. the Board, CEO & Staff)
- Participate in all MC discussions in a positive, proactive & constructive manner, to enable it to work as a cohesive group with collective responsibilities
- Be prepared to analyse complex issues and apply strategic & analytical approaches to the collective decision-making process
- Assist the MC in its role of monitoring and critically reviewing the BMC's financial and strategic performance, ensuring that the BMC delivers for its Members
- Use judgement as to how best to represent both BMC Members and Mountaineering as a whole where issues are discussed and decisions made by the MC without any prior consultation with the Members
- Build good working relations with other Councillors and BMC volunteers generally to share knowledge, issues and best practices
- Become familiar with the technologies & working practices used by the MC, and be prepared to undertake such training as may be necessary
- Keep abreast of BMC communications generally and be aware of what is going on within the organisation (e.g. Board updates, ODG reports, newsletters, Facebook posts etc) and mountaineering generally

Confidentiality & Impartiality

These issues are covered in the MC Code of Practice but their importance is emphasised here. Whilst working to be as open and transparent as possible, as well as honouring their primary responsibility to the Members, Councillors will at times be privy to information that must be kept confidential. This is typically for the following reasons:

- commercial sensitivity – redacted documents should be released where possible

- timing – information should only be released in its final form after approval
- context – interlinked pieces of information often need to be released together to prevent misunderstanding
- people – where the information pertains to one or more named individuals for example staff appointments, HR issues, or involvement in a sensitive investigation.

Councillors should always aim to remain impartial irrespective of their own views, both when reflecting the views of the Members they represent to Council/Board, or communicating information from the BMC to the Membership.

2. Area Representatives

In addition to the responsibilities described above pertaining to all Councillors, Area Representatives are specifically tasked with representing their Local Area Members at a national level, via the MC. This works in two directions, to pass local issues and the views of Area Members to MC and thereby the Board, and to communicate information from the Board to Area Members.

Currently virtually all Local Area business is conducted at regular meetings held within the Area, typically 4-5 times per year. However these are only attended by a small number of the Area's Members (albeit often the most 'engaged' and active of them), and work is ongoing to explore ways in which a greater proportion of the Membership can be reached and their views taken into account. Area Representatives should be aware of this and be prepared to develop and take on new ways of communicating with Members within their Area.

What are the additional responsibilities of an Area Representative?

Each Area may (and is encouraged to) elect 2 Councillors to sit as their Area Representatives on the MC. This means that some of the duties can be shared between them, however this will require them to work closely together to decide who is doing what at any given time.

Different Areas have different ways of working, but in general Area Representatives are expected to:

- Attend as many of the regular Area meetings as possible (typically 4-5 per year)
- Engage with local Members at Area meetings to encourage representation of their views
- Consult with their Area on local issues to report to the MC. These could include:
 - Local issues which could have wider interest/impact e.g. access problems at a nationally significant crag; problems with a locally run youth competition which could be affecting other Areas
 - Local issues which aren't of national interest but with which the Area needs assistance from the MC or one of the Specialist Committees
- Report to Area Members on all relevant MC/Board activities - this may be as a verbal or written report as requested by the Area
- In advance of the meetings liaise with the Area Chair & Secretary about any information or papers from the MC or Board that need to be communicated to the Area Members, so that these can be added to the meeting agenda, and they can familiarise themselves with the material
- When required present such information/papers to Members at the meeting, answer questions (or undertake to find out the answers) and gather any feedback as necessary
- After each Area meeting provide a written report to MC summarising relevant issues and feedback.

Sharing a Vote at the Members' Council

In order to provide continuity and to stay abreast of all the issues it is expected that whenever possible both Area Representatives should attend all MC meetings, however they share a single vote for their Area between them.

There are various ways in which this can be approached, and Area Representatives will need to decide between themselves, possibly in consultation with their Area, how they wish to do this.

The most likely voting scenarios are:

1. Where the vote concerns an issue that has been discussed with the Area Members and a clear direction has been given there will be no conflict and the Area Representatives will vote as directed, provided that no further information has come to light during MC discussions that might change this direction
2. The MC aims to move towards increased inter-meeting discussion of issues leading to a more directed agenda at the meetings. This should provide an opportunity for Area Representatives to discuss and agree how they will vote on those issues in advance of the meeting
3. Where neither of the above applies and a vote is required at a Council meeting then the Representatives may choose to agree between themselves how to vote on a case by case basis (which may require a brief period of consultation prior to voting), or they may decide that the decision on how to vote will be the responsibility of one of them (for example if one has much more knowledge or experience of the issue, or feels more strongly about it).
4. If despite the above the Representatives still cannot come to an agreement on how to vote they would need to abstain.

However they choose to vote, as stated previously in this document Area Representatives must be prepared to use their judgment and work together to analyse issues as they arise, with or without prior discussion with the Membership, whilst always considering the best interests of the BMC and Mountaineering as a whole.

Note: The following new Councillor types have been introduced specifically for the reconstituted Members' Council, and as such their specific responsibilities, and how they will fulfil them, is still being developed (by this group in conjunction with the Membership Engagement ODG Workstream).

3. Constituency Councillor – Mountain Training

In addition to the responsibilities described above pertaining to all Councillors, the Mountain Training Constituency Councillor is specifically tasked with representing BMC Members who are part of the Mountain Training network, and the wider interests of Mountain Training as a whole.

The Mountain Training Councillor will need to:

- Have a good understanding and current knowledge of the Mountain Training network. They will need to be a registered candidate with a Mountain Training qualification scheme and to have a good working knowledge of the MTE, MTC and MTUK organisations, including their aims, values and strategic plans. It would be highly desirable for them to be involved at Council level with any of the three organisations.
- Engage with the Mountain Training populace (candidates, qualification holders and association members) in order to communicate relevant BMC matters to them, and vice versa, seeking their views on issues as required. In doing this they should pay due regard to the interests of both the professional and voluntary sector who use Mountain Training qualifications, as well as the wider stakeholder organisations that use and support these. The Councillor will need to liaise with the Siabod Cottage office staff to facilitate communication with the Mountain Training constituency.

4. Constituency Councillor – Club Members

In addition to the responsibilities described above pertaining to all Councillors, the Club Members Constituency Councillor is democratically elected by club members to represent the views of club members on Council. They are specifically tasked with representing BMC members who are members of one or more of the BMC affiliated clubs, working alongside the Specialist Councillor tasked with representing the Clubs Strategy Group (CSG).

The Club Members Councillor should have a good understanding and current knowledge of the clubs and how they sit within the wider BMC. They will need to:

- Provide an effective voice for club members on Members' Council.
- Act as a visible champion for the needs of club members.
- Ensure that the needs of club members are at the heart of CSG work and the BMC Clubs Strategy.
- Sit on the CSG to ensure that there is direct input from an elected club member into the strategic thinking & the BMC Clubs Strategy and to provide a direct feedback loop to club members.
- Engage with club members in order to communicate relevant BMC matters to them and seek their views on issues as required.

5. Nationally Elected Councillors (NECs)

In addition to the responsibilities described above pertaining to all Councillors, NECs are specifically tasked with:

- Representing BMC Membership as a whole, especially focussing on those Members who are not represented by the Constituency Councillors i.e. they do not see themselves as aligned to a specific Area, and are not either MT or Club members. This will require the development and use of a new toolset to engage and communicate with these Members.
- Bringing specific skills to MC, as agreed and defined periodically by the MC. These will be detailed in a separate document as part of the recruitment process for each specific vacancy.

6. Specialist Councillors

Specialist Councillors are there to represent specific bodies that are of particular relevance to large groups of BMC Members:

1. Partners
2. Access Management Group (AMG)
3. Clubs Strategy Group (CSG)
4. Competitions.

It is expected that each of these bodies will select a representative to become a Councillor on the MC who holds an active and responsible position within that body, and as such will bring the responsibilities of that role to the MC.