

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

177-179 Burton Road
Manchester M20 2BB

Tel: 0161 445 6111
www.thebmc.co.uk
email: office@thebmc.co.uk

BMC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Draft minutes of the 2021 AGM held entirely online using Zoom Webinar on Saturday 15 May 2021 at 9am
(the Meeting)

Directors Present:

Lynn Robinson (LR)	President and chair of the Meeting (AGM Chair)
Flavia Alzetta (FA)	Independent Director
Paul Davies (PDa)	Interim CEO
Paul Drew (PD)	Chair
Jonny Dry (JD)	Nominated Director (Fundraising)
Peter Saleniaks (PS)	Council Nominated Director (CND)
Fiona Sanders (FS)	CND
Carl Spencer (CS)	CND
Jonathan White (JW)	Nominated Director (Clubs)
Rosi Yule	Nominated Director (Finance)

Voting Members Present (in alphabetical order):

Stella Adams	Spenser Gray	Jonathan Phillips
Cressida Allwood	Michael Green	Emily Pitts
Mark Anstiss	David Harris	Andrew Potter
Tim Barrell	Andrew Higson	Julian Prieto
Bill Beveridge	Martyn Hurn	Dudley Pritchard
Tony Bird	Tim Jepson	Andy Reeve
Abbi Blakey	David Jones	John Roberts
Ed Brandley	Phillip Jones	Ted Rodgers
Alison Cairns	Peter Judd	Tanya Sage
Stephen Charles	Paul Justin	Claudia Sarnar
Anne Chevalier	Ana C Kaefer	Fabrizio Scaglione
Steve Clark	Nik Katsogiannis	Trevor Smith
Peter Culver	Colin Knowles	Angela Soper
Emmeline Dobson	Sherry Macliver	Kurt Spence
Robert Dufton	Chris Martin	Wendy Stirrup
Andrew Duxbury	David Matthews	Chris Stone
Gary Eisenhauer	John Muncaster	Andy Syme
Paul Evans	Roger Murray	Jane Thompson
John Firmin	Dave Musgrove	Rya Tibawi
Jon Garside	Elliot Nichols	Tim Waterhouse
Andrew Gerrard	Maris Paurs	Helen Wilson
John Gibbons	Rik Payne	Philip Wilson
Julian Goode	Robert Pettigrew MBE	Stephen Wilson

BMC Staff Present:	Alvin Foy (AF) – IT & Database Co-Ordinator
	Jon Garside (JG) – BMC/MTE Training Officer
	Paul McKoen (PM) – Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
	Lucy Valerio (LV) – Company Secretary (CoSec)

1 Welcome and Introduction

- 1.1 Lynn Robinson introduced herself, welcomed all those joining the second entirely virtual AGM of the BMC and said she would be chairing the Meeting (the AGM Chair). She noted the start time on the agenda was 9am, but gave members a couple more minutes to join.
- 1.2 The AGM Chair reported there were approximately 60 attendees and it was a couple of minutes after 9am, she therefore declared the Meeting formally open.
- 1.3 The AGM Chair said in order to ensure that those in attendance could participate in the Meeting, and that they could hear her, a quick poll would be launched. She asked the CoSec to launch the poll. The poll was launched, the question was “How many BMC Voting Members (over 18s) are watching the AGM on one device in your household?”. After a minute the poll was closed. The results were:

55 attendees answered the poll
 1 person – 52 attendees (94.5%)
 2 people – 3 attendees (5.5%)

The AGM Chair noted that this meant there was a quorum for the Meeting.

- 1.4 The AGM Chair set out some housekeeping points:
- the Meeting would be recorded;
 - if a member had a question they must type it in the Q&A box – the CoSec was monitoring the questions and she would put questions to the panellists during the Q&A sessions;
 - members had the ability to upvote a question so it would move to the top of the list;
 - if a member had a follow-up question they could raise their hand and they would be unmuted;
 - the chat function had been disabled;
 - if any members were sharing a computer it would be helpful if they could let the BMC know by emailing agm@thebmc.co.uk
 - all the resolutions and elections were being put to a poll;
 - the resolutions and elections would not be voted on one at a time, instead the AGM Chair would announce when the voting opened and members could then access the voting website using the details emailed or posted to them by Civica on 29 April;
 - if members had any problems they could email agm@thebmc.co.uk;
 - Civica were dealing with all the voting this year and voting would close at 12.30pm;
 - the results would be published on the BMC website as soon as possible after voting had closed.
- 1.5 The AGM Chair referred to the agenda for the Meeting and then introduced Paul Drew, the Chair of the BMC to give his review of the year.

2 Chair’s Report of the Past Year

- 2.1 The Chair started his report by introducing himself as he was a relatively new face to the BMC, he said:
- he started hill walking in 1979 and climbing in 1984;
 - he joined the BMC in the early 90s;
 - he was a long-standing member of various clubs: Chester Mountaineering Club, North London Mountaineering Club, Climbers’ Club;

- a keen and enthusiastic climber, he goes winter walking, ski mountaineering, alpine climbing and usually climbs 100 days a year with another 50 or so walking;
- he retired from full-time work in 2016 after 25 years in IT in a variety of senior executive roles;
- he now has experience as a non-executive director in various IT start-ups in Manchester and also as a director with the Boulder Hut, a climbing wall in Ellesmere Port and also Shrewsbury;
- he decided to put something back into climbing, he is treasurer of the Climbers' Club and he applied for the Independent Director role in 2019 and was appointed in November 2019;
- he became Senior Independent Director in July 2020 and Acting Chair in October 2020; and
- he does climb on grit but it is not his favourite rock.

2.2 The Chair then moved on to 'What does the BMC do?'

The main points were:

- the BMC has a wide remit compared to other sporting bodies, as the representative body for climbers, hill walkers, ski mountaineers, and mountaineers in England and Wales and the National Governing Body (NGB) for competition climbing in the UK;
- it acts as an environmental campaign group as this impacts climbers and mountaineers, he showed before and after shots of the Mer de Glace glacier in the Alps demonstrating it was receding at an alarming rate. He mentioned the Mend Our Mountains campaigns;
- it does a lot of work around access, particularly in relation to agreements over nesting restrictions, without the work it is possible access could be banned;
- it does a lot on crag clean-ups and safety as well as local festivals;
- work is undertaken in relation to skills and training and working with Mountain Training as well as technical input on equipment being provided;
- travel insurance is provided;
- guidebooks have been produced;
- the hut network, and the support provided to clubs;
- competition climbing is supported, he referred to the Olympics and Shauna Coxsey having qualified to represent Team GB; and
- support for international mountaineering expeditions is provided.

2.3 He then set out 'How does the BMC Work?'

The main points were:

- it is a complicated structure, at its heart are the members, they own the BMC and ultimately have the final say on how it is run as the BMC is a member-led organisation. The Meeting is a key part of this as the Board report to the members and gets their input and approval on the way the BMC is moving forward;
- the Board of Directors (the Board) - there are 12 directors: four are directly elected by the members, which includes the President; three are elected by National Council; three independent directors are appointed by the Board; the Chair and the CEO. It is the ultimate decision-making body for the BMC and responsible for setting the strategy in consultation with Council and members, approving the budget and appointing the CEO;
- National Council, which will hopefully be called Members' Council later today (Council), which has some posts directly elected by members, and others elected via local areas. It represents members and is there to consult with and constructively challenge the Board and hold the Board to account on behalf of the members;
- the staff – currently 36 members of staff, 32 full-time, led by Paul Davies recently appointed as permanent CEO and they are responsible for the

delivery, in conjunction with volunteers particularly specialist committees, of the strategy;

- Board sub-committees – there are six;
- Local Areas – there are 10, they represent the members and report to the Council;
- Specialist Committees – they focus on particular areas e.g. technical, clubs, and they work with the staff; and
- volunteers – over 500 actively helping the BMC.

2.4 He then reported on ‘The Big Picture’ and what impacts on the work of the BMC:

- hill walking and indoor climbing are growing really fast and he showed the queues on the summit of Snowdon;
- hill walking: Sport England Active Life survey showed there are over 10 million people in England who go hill walking once a year and 3 million go at least twice a month, this is more than those who play football or go swimming;
- indoor climbing: there are large new walls being built everywhere and investment made in climbing walls, with the industry focussing on families and millennials, as the median age of those who climb indoors is 28 and about 1 million people a year now go indoor climbing and over 250,000 climb indoors twice a month or more, it is growing by over 10% a year; and
- outdoor climbing: there are about 600,000 people who climb outside every year and 180,000 twice a month.

Where the BMC is at:

- currently about 77,000 members, good representation of those who climb outdoors but more work needed to represent hill walkers and indoor climbers; and
- coronavirus had had a massive impact as it closed everything down.

2.5 He moved on to ‘What has happened to the BMC over the last 12 months’:

- it has been difficult, coronavirus closed access to the activities our members love;
- it has had a significant impact on the finances of the BMC, travel insurance income fell through the floor as no one could travel abroad, Mountain Training was forced to close which impacted on our membership, the BMC had to control its expenditure very carefully and utilise the Government’s furlough scheme;
- there were difficulties internally with six resignations on the Board, including the previous Chair, reasons for these have been provided via Open Forums held. It has been a challenge and he thanked all of the previous directors – Gareth Pierce, Matthew Bradbury, Amanda Parshall, Jon Punshon, Huw Jones and Chris Stone for all their work; and
- all the staff had to work remotely, some of them had never done this before. In addition to the furlough scheme there was an increased workload – a real challenge dealing with access, emergency Board and Council meetings, it has been a hectic and challenging year, but the BMC has come through it strongly.

2.6 This led the Chair to report on ‘Where are we now?’:

- the last year has been laying the foundations, it is not the end user impact things that people think are good, but the foundations for ensuring the BMC will work effectively;
- a big focus has been investing in the staff – a new CEO, Paul Davies, is now on board; a new CFO, Paul McKoen, started a couple of months ago part time; a new Head of Performance, Lorraine Brown, starts on Monday; Dave

Turnbull has moved to his new role as Head of Access Conservation and Environmental Sustainability; Nick Colton is taking up a new role focussing on safeguarding and international; and staff morale has improved;

- there is one role left to recruit for a Chief Operating and Commercial Officer;
- there has been a lot of effort in rebuilding the Board: three new independent directors have been appointed, Flavia Alzetta, Caroline Worboys and Di Hopper; two new Council Nominated Directors were appointed, Peter Salenieks and Carl Spencer; Rosi Yule was co-opted as a Nominated Director and her term comes to an end today, he thanked her for her work; and Paul Davies is an ex-officio director in his role as CEO;
- he stepped in to the role of Chair, but that is not long term the role he wants and so a recruitment process for a new Chair will commence at some point after the AGM;
- a lot of time has been spent on ensuring the Board moves away from day-to-day management and focuses more on strategy and oversight, and in providing the right information to the Board;
- strategic action plans (SAPs) have been put in place which are based on the 2020-24 Strategy, objectives and KPIs and targets are in place across the five strategic themes and foundations;
- a dashboard has been created which is provided to the Board and Senior Management Team (SMT) which sets out information on risk, finances, membership numbers, satisfaction levels of staff, volunteers and members and the SAPs, which gives a good view of what is happening on a day-to-day and month-to-month basis at the BMC;
- a lot of effort has been spent on the financial reporting and tracking income and expenditure against the budget on a monthly basis and using an activity-based budget which ties in to the 5 strategic themes;
- there has been a lot of time put in to improving the working relationship between Council, the Board, staff and the committees. This is still a work in progress, there are various face-to-face meetings coming up to work further on this; and
- a review of the Specialist Committees was undertaken to review their remit, identify any gaps and ensure their activity is linked to and driven by the strategy and linked to the staff.

2.7 The Chair closed his presentation by focusing on the BMC Values and made the following points:

- Community: we are the voice for our diverse community of climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers
- Adventure: we believe in the freedom to challenge ourselves, taking personal responsibility for the risks
- Sustainability: we protect our crags and mountains, campaign for improved access and promote environmental sustainability – this is ever more important
- Aspiration: we help people improve their skills, confidence and achieve personal ambitions
- Respect: we celebrate the rich variety of British climbing, hill walking and mountaineering; we build inclusive relationships and respect each other.

He focussed on respect stating the BMC was a diverse group of members and run by a committed set of staff and volunteers, this meant that not everyone would agree on issues, but that the BMC was richer for this. He said it was vital that we all respect each other, that there was no room for politics in the BMC and that it has held the BMC back over the last 3 or 4 years. Respect needed to be shown particularly to the staff and those who volunteer for the BMC and put in countless hours of work. He noted there were two Q&A sessions for members to ask questions to the Board and put forward their opinions, and that no instances of personal attacks or lack of respect for anyone would be tolerated during these sessions.

The Chair then handed back to the AGM Chair and a short video was shown setting out the achievements of the BMC over the past year.

3 Accounts and Financial Matters

3.1 The AGM Chair thanked the Chair for his comprehensive report, she then introduced Paul McKoen the BMC's new Chief Financial Officer, who would report on the accounts and financial matters.

3.2 The CFO introduced himself to the members at the meeting. He said he had joined in February on a part-time (two days per week) basis and that he was enjoying working at the BMC. His first impressions were that he was hugely impressed with the enormous amount of enthusiasm that everybody from the Board right through to the executive have for the BMC and its goals, and that the finances of the BMC were in no way broken.

He then moved on to his report. The first slide showed the income during 2020, he reported:

- £2,353k or 73% from membership of which £1,895k was from individuals;
- £271k or 8.4% from trading of which £143k was from travel insurance;
- furlough income was £93k;
- GB Climbing grant income was £274k or 8.5%;
- all other income including training grants was £236k or 7.3%; and
- total income was £3,227k, which was about 5% down on the previous year.

3.3 He set out the expenditure of 2020:

- total expenditure of £3,027k for the year;
- membership support costs of £967k or 31.9% which includes the costs of the insurance programme;
- office, admin and trading costs of £691k, which includes the costs of running the head office in Didsbury and the Meeting;
- gross costs of £542k for GB Climbing were £286k net after income; and
- access and conservation costs of £283k.

The comparison of income and expenditure gave a net income surplus of £200k for 2020.

3.4 He then summarised the balance sheet as at end of December 2020 compared to end of December 2019 which showed:

- fixed assets of £350k – mainly the head office at Didsbury which is owned outright;
- significant cash reserves of £1.2million, these had grown £200k from 2019 due to the income surplus;
- current liabilities of £1.4million, which was mostly deferred income from the membership; and
- the net assets figure of £1.2million, which reflects the reserves.

3.5 He then set out the outlook for 2021:

- there were two expectations:
 - declining membership figures at least through until April 2021, which means a lower membership income; and
 - continued materially reduced income from sales of travel insurance due to coronavirus travel restrictions;

- the Board was seeking to protect expenditure in all key areas including access, membership support, communications and all the other key strategic priorities;
- cost reductions and efficiencies would be made where possible; and
- a deficit was therefore expected at the end of 2021, and this was expected to be about £200k which would result in reserves at year end 2021 being similar to those at year end 2019. This was a conscious decision and part of the strategy.

He then handed over to the AGM Chair.

4 In Memoriam

The AGM Chair reflected on the horrible year that everyone had been subjected to and referenced friends, family, colleagues and members have died. She introduced a short video about some of the BMC's members that had died over the past 12 months: Doug Scott, Hamish MacInnes, Joe Brown, Daphne Pritchard, John Allen, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, Phil Davidson and Lord Tony Greaves.

5 CEO's Report

- 5.1 The CEO then introduced himself and said he was delighted to be there today as the BMC's new CEO and that he recognised the privilege and responsibility that he has been given and he was looking forward to working with everyone to achieve the BMC's objectives.

He then said some thank yous:

- Dave Turnbull – for all the work he did as the previous CEO, and to acknowledge that in his new role the BMC were privileged to keep hold of his deep expertise in access and conservation;
- Nick Colton – for his contribution as Deputy CEO;
- the staff – for their commitment, flexibility and perseverance throughout the pandemic. They have all gone the extra mile;
- all our volunteers – the BMC could not function without them; and
- all our members – the BMC is here to serve our members.

- 5.2 The CEO then set out his presentation, starting with 'The Next Chapter' and 'Our Vision'.

The main points were:

- the focus of the BMC is to be both the representative body for all climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers and the NGB for competitive activities, representing the broad church of participants and members;
- the vision is to create a better future for climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers;
- this would be achieved by delivering on the 2020-24 strategy which members helped to write and were consulted on;
- key to this is understanding and focussing on what our members value the most. The latest members' survey showed that what was most important to members in order of importance was:
 - conserving and safeguarding the environment
 - negotiating access to crags, mountains
 - campaigns and lobbying the government
 - equipment advice and work on safety standards
 - conserving mountaineering heritage
 - training programmes and education
 - supporting clubs
 - supporting diversity programmes and encouraging youth
 - supporting volunteers

- National partnership and sector influence
- GB Climbing and competitions (grassroots to elite)
- supporting expeditions and hosting international events
- member events e.g. Wilton Fest, Hill Walking Event
- there is also a need to understand what potential (future) members want, are the focus areas the right things? or do different areas need to be considered as the sports and activities that the BMC is involved in progress and move over time?
- to engage across the full population and in particular a need to understand the barriers that prevent people from climbing, hill walking and mountaineering and to work to break those barriers down.

5.3 He set out the BMC's ongoing commitment stating the BMC would:

- always be run in the interests of its members;
- ensure its members are properly consulted;
- be accountable to its members;
- recognise and celebrate that its members are:
 - indoor climbers
 - rock climbers
 - hill walkers
 - mountaineers
 and often they are all four of the above, and rarely only one;
- focus time and energy on each activity and he set out the results of the members' survey to the question 'How satisfied are you with the amount of work the BMC puts into the following activities' which showed high levels of satisfaction in each activity but higher levels with rock climbing. The CEO wanted the other activities to be at the same level as rock climbing; and
- respect the past and understand how we have got to where we are and take that knowledge to embrace the future, the BMC cannot stay still. The Strategic Plan stated "The BMC will promote our shared values and the rich history and ethics of British climbing and mountaineering in all the work that it does."

5.4 He then talked about how the above would be achieved, reporting that:

- stability and security were required to deliver the strategy; and
- financial security was at the heart of that and the key areas that the BMC would focus on over the coming years would be:
 - to pursue grant funding – this allows the BMC to increase its delivery in areas that would traditionally have been funded from membership fees, and so the funds from membership fees can be redistributed to other areas;
 - to increase revenue through commercial partnerships and activity;
 - growing the membership.

He focused on membership growth and said this was important for a number of reasons:

- it supports financial security, and if the BMC achieves greater income it can do more good causes work; and
- to become a stronger voice for our members. The members' survey showed that campaign and lobbying on our members' behalf was the third most important aspect of the BMC.

5.5 The CEO moved on to participation figures provided by Sport England (for England only) and noted:

- there has been an increase in rock climbing and bouldering from 148,200 participating in this at least twice a month in November 2017-18 to 178,800 in November 2018-19;
- indoor climbing has increased from 221,900 participating in this at least twice a month in November 2017-18 to 251,300 in November 2018-19;
- there has been a huge increase in hill walking with just over 3 million people stating they go hill walking at least twice a month in November 2018-19;
- these increases in participation mapped against BMC membership figures for the same period, showed that BMC membership growth had been stable. This meant that effectively the BMC was eroding its ability to represent.

5.6 He stated that unfortunately as a clubs-based organisation the BMC was seeing a slow gradual reduction in club membership, but clubs were key places where people could go and learn new skills and understand the heritage and history.

He said membership growth was also important to create the next generation. The data showed that both individual and club members' average age was increasing with the overall average age of a BMC member now being 46. There were low numbers of under 27-year-old members, and this needed to be addressed.

He then set out some of the solutions:

- a redoubling of efforts to support clubs to increase their growth: there is a real increase in interest in the outdoors and in BMC activities, especially in the younger age groups and the BMC needs to capture this.
- pilot schemes to explore "Clubs 2.0": what does a modern club look like? Does the club membership model need to be more flexible for a digital age?
- focus on future generations: we need to understand their interests and drivers and be relevant to them;
- U27 digital membership already launched;
- Specialist Committee review just completed which highlighted the fact there needs to be a cross BMC youth strategy;
- focus on all four activities;
- be relevant to each of the activities – and this means having a tailored offer for each of the activities. He gave the example of Black Diamond and how they have different offerings for gym climbing and trad climbing and hill walking. The BMC can learn from other organisations, the way the BMC speaks to the different activities needs to change; and
- new membership pages are waiting to be formally launched for each of the activities.

5.7 He then summarised his report stating:

- a new chapter was about to start – building on what has gone before;
- the 2020-24 strategy would be rolled out;
- we would get through Covid and get back to financial stability by maximising our ability to get grants, commercial income and membership growth;
- the BMC would grow the membership by being more representative to all people;
- the BMC would focus on all four key groups of members: indoor climbers, rock climbers, mountaineers and hill walkers;
- the BMC would be relevant to each group across all age ranges and demographics by understanding who they are, where they are and what they want; and
- the BMC would support and harness the club network.

A short video was then shown about Anna Taylor's expedition to Mount Roraima in Guyana.

6 Members' Q&A

- 6.1 The CEO stated that the Q&A would now start for questions on the presentations just given. He asked that questions were submitted using the Q&A function and that questions not be duplicated, but that members use the upvote function so the most popular questions could be answered first. He then handed over to JW for a brief update on the position of the Chair.

JW reported the following:

- when a new chair was being recruited in the autumn of 2020 it was being recruited alongside two independent director vacancies;
- this resulted in a very strong field of applicants for the independent director positions, but not the chair;
- in December 2020 the Board agreed that PD would remain as Acting Chair until the AGM as it was hoped someone would take over at the AGM, but personal circumstances and a number of other reasons meant this was no longer possible; and
- the Board therefore agreed in January that PD would be appointed Chair and in April they agreed that in the interim PD would continue as Chair post-AGM whilst a new chair was recruited via an open recruitment process. This process would start shortly after the AGM.

He added that the key points for members to be aware of in relation to the role of Chair were:

- it was a big role that currently required an undue time commitment;
- the BMC is a complex organisation and it is a challenging role to fill;
- the Board is reviewing the duties of Chair; and
- it will not be an independent position and so the recruitment process will welcome applications from all those currently or previously involved with the BMC.

- 6.2 The AGM Chair handed over to the CoSec to read out members' questions for the panel to answer.

Q.1. came from Emily Pitts who asked if there was demographic information from the members' survey, so if respondents were representative of the full membership or whether a specific sub grouping self-selected in completing the survey. She also asked what was the demographic of the BMC membership and what information the BMC had and how had it been collected.

The CEO answered it was a representative sample and the results would be published. He had a 98% confidence that it matched to the BMC membership.

Q.2. also came from Emily who asked if there was a staffing list which outlined the roles/responsibilities so that members can see the different things that staff do, and how much time is spent on different parts of the work of the BMC.

The CEO answered that the website was in the process of being updated in respect of the staff list. In terms of work undertaken and how this is broken down, the annual report for 2020 allocated staff time more clearly against each delivery area, and so this provided a better understanding of the financial and total resource allocated to each area.

- 6.3 Q.3. came from Robert Dufton who thanked the presenters for four excellent presentations and asked if the BMC was making it unnecessarily hard for itself to persuade people to join an organisation which wishes (and needs) to give equal emphasis to hill walking, indoor climbing, mountaineering and trad climbing when it was called the British Mountaineering Council and was mainly branded BMC.

The Chair said this was a very valid point, but the BMC brand had a lot of history particularly in 2017 when a change in brand was attempted. He said he felt the BMC needed to move forward and retain its existing brand, but take advantage of other branding to target different segments. The BMC had started to do this as GB Climbing was a brand which had its own website and was targeted at indoor climbing and competitions. Sub-brands should be used to target certain demographics.

The CEO added that there is a good spread of the BMC membership that is participating in the activities Robert listed.

- 6.4 Q.4. came from Bob Pettigrew who asked where the minutes of Board meetings could be located.

The Chair did acknowledge that they had been slow to publish the minutes. He set out the process that is followed:

- there are currently monthly meetings and the CoSec provides a first draft within a few days;
- the first draft goes to the Chair to check for accuracy;
- the second draft then goes to the rest of the Board for them to comment on;
- a third draft is prepared which then goes to the next available Board meeting for approval. This process can take up to two months or longer;
- once approved the minutes go back to the Chair so they can be redacted, they then go to the CEO to check the redactions; and
- the minutes are then uploaded to the website.

He said the Board was behind and that there were four sets of minutes from November, December and January which were at the last stage, four sets of minutes to be approved at the Board meeting the following week and about four sets of minutes to be commented on by Board members. He apologised that the amount of work that had been ongoing in respect of recruitment had impacted on Board minutes being redacted, as the Chair he had prioritised the recruitment work over the redaction of the minutes.

- 6.5 Q.5. came from Dave Matthews who asked if there was any information on what non-members (or those who have recently left) thought of the value of the BMC and if there were any insights from other outdoor activity organisations.

The CEO replied that the BMC worked closely with partner organisations and a CEO forum across other sports. He said there had been a considerable loss of membership across all of the sporting membership organisations and that the BMC's loss had been low in comparison. He stated that regular member surveys are sent out, some of which give information as to why people are no longer members. There was some insight provided via conversations had with members and the Membership Service Team and marketing. He said the BMC did struggle to get to the bottom of this though and that there was not as much data into the reasons as he would like. He added it was an area that he wanted to address as the question why are potential members not choosing to join the BMC was key to growing the membership.

- 6.6 Q.6. came from Peter Judd who thanked the panel for their clear presentations and stated if the BMC was to address membership decline and the large number participating in some areas it sought to represent, the BMC needed to be seen and recognised by those wider communities. He asked how the BMC planned to get itself noticed and the value of its work for those sectors recognised by the large number of participants who don't even know it exists and if a stronger press officer function would be of value, to seek to place positive stories in the wider media.

The CEO said it was a challenge for the BMC and he was keen to do something about it so that the huge amount of work that the BMC does for climbers, hill walkers

and mountaineers does not go unrecognised. He said that the lack of visibility has led to a lower membership than was expected. He set out some of the things the BMC needed to do to get itself noticed:

- look at the four different key groups as set out in his presentation;
- focus on different age groups – this was more complicated, but good work has been done so far in respect of the lower age groups and the BMC embracing social media. How the message was to reach an older audience was less clear; and
- a press officer is a conversation being had internally as it was important that the BMC gets its name out in the wider press so that the work it does is celebrated.

6.7 Q.7. came from Spenser Gray who asked what the BMC proposed to do about poor/abusive behaviour of members towards other members, volunteers and staff.

JW answered this question and stated it was an area that had been given a lot of thought to especially over the past year. Standards needed to be established as the BMC was a debating society and it used to be very good at debating the issues and not the personalities, but this had changed and since 2017, when a Motion of No Confidence was defeated at the AGM, all the Presidents had had a hard time, along with some other volunteers.

He said that Council has a code of practice, and that earlier in the year the Board had adopted an aligned code of practice but that the missing piece was one for members. He added that numerous members had given some thought to the issue and one had spoken to the National Bullying Helpline, but that what was needed now was a working group to pull together the thoughts and to work out how to apply the standards sought. He said if Andy Syme was elected as President that this was an area on his agenda and that Council would discuss it further as the Board felt that peer to peer assessment was more powerful than the Board assessing members.

6.8 Q.8. came from Emily Pitts who asked what work was being done in terms of volunteers – managing, co-ordinating, training, supporting, and enabling them (particularly area representatives) to communicate with each other more easily.

The AGM Chair said that she was going to cover volunteering in her presentation, that this was an area she had been working on with Jane Thompson but it was still a work in progress. She said she would love to talk to Emily further as she knew she had done some great work in this area.

6.9 Q.9. came from John Roberts who said it was great to see that the recommendations of the Organisational Review Group (ORG) were now largely implemented. He said that transparency was a key issue that members had been concerned about for a number of years and asked if the proxy voting record would be disclosed for this AGM in line with the recommendations put forward by the Board and Governance Working Group and if not, why not. He also asked what membership growth targets over the next 3-5 years the BMC had.

The AGM Chair said that the votes would be reported on this year and handed over to the CoSec who said that anyone holding over 10% of the votes, if that person was the AGM Chair, the votes would be published. She was not sure when but she would work with Civica to get this information published as soon as possible.

The CoSec added she was conscious of time and suggested that John's second question be answered in the second Q&A session, adding that he had also asked if the meeting had remained quorate throughout and that JW wanted to answer this question live.

JW said that there were over 50 members when the meeting started and had risen to 74 but that it had not dropped below 50 at any point. The CoSec added that there were a number of members in the office at the studio and that the Board panellists were also members so the meeting had remained quorate throughout.

The AGM Chair thanked the members for their questions and said that any unanswered ones would be dealt with in the second Q&A session but that a short comfort break of five minutes would now be taken.

During the break a short video was shown which was an interview with Rehna Yaseen as she had been nominated for a BMC volunteer award.

7 Voting Opens

7.1 The AGM Chair stated she would now start the formal proceedings of the Meeting and said that:

- notice of the Meeting was sent to members and published on the BMC website on 29 April, accordingly the requisite notice of the Meeting had been given and it would be taken as read;
- the resolutions and elections would not be read out individually, instead the voting website was now open and members could access it using the login details sent to them by Civica;
- resolutions 2 to 12 were ordinary resolutions and so required a simple majority to pass;
- resolutions 1 and 13 were special resolutions and so required 75% to pass;
- all the resolutions were being voted on by way of a poll;
- there were three options next to each resolution – ‘for’ ‘against’ and ‘abstain’. If a member abstained this was a vote withheld which was not a vote in law and would not be counted in the calculation of the proportion of the votes for or against a resolution;
- elections 14, 17 and 18 had one candidate standing and so the options were the same as per a resolution – ‘for’, ‘against’ and ‘abstain’;
- election 15 had two candidates and so the options were to vote for either candidate. If a member did not vote for either candidate this was an abstention;
- election 16 had three candidates standing and so members were asked to rank their choices with their first preference being 1, second preference 2 and third preference 3. Members did not have to rank all the candidates if they did not want to, if they did not choose any candidates this was an abstention; and
- voting would remain open until 12.30pm.

8 President’s Report

8.1 The AGM Chair then presented her review of the year in her capacity as President. She started with a brief overview of the work she had undertaken in 2020/21:

- Covid-19 had impacted on her work;
- being a director and Chair of the Council;
- being a member of the Nominations Committee (NomCom), which had been very busy with the appointment of the three new Independent Directors and a new CEO. She thanked Robert Dufton for his work on NomCom as he had been co-opted on to it to assist with the Independent Director recruitment, and Mick Green who had decided to stand down as the Council’s representative on NomCom;
- being a part of the R33 Working Group considering the restructuring and role redefinition of Council;
- working on the development of a volunteer strategy;
- her role as Equity Champion; and

- attendance at Area Meetings.

8.2 The AGM Chair then moved on to the work of Council:

- since the previous AGM it had held four full meetings and 13 interim meetings, all of which had taken place virtually;
- she thanked Tony Ryan for all his work and assistance with the administration of the Council and she had enjoyed working with him;
- the Council stepped up in the Summer of 2020 to assist the Board following the spate of resignations and suggested that a number of observers should take part in Board meetings;
- in December 2020 and January 2021 joint meetings were held with the Board to hear from the specialist committees and the work they had undertaken;
- she thanked Roger Murray and David Brown for their work in reviewing the structure of the specialist committees.

8.3 The AGM Chair then set out details of the work the R33 Working Group had been doing:

- the changes to the terms of reference of Council and the name change which would hopefully be voted on today;
- a Council Code of Practice, role descriptions for the Councillor positions and the election processes for the positions; and
- work on the documentation and videos which were presented to the members as part of the elections being held today for the new positions of Nationally Elected Councillors (NECs). She thanked Chris Stone for his work in respect of the interviews for the NEC candidates.

She added the R33 Working Group had some ongoing work:

- looking at the Deputy President's role;
- reviewing the President's role and that of the CNDs;
- looking at the implementation of the new Council terms of reference.

She thanked all the members of R33 for their hard work and in particular Helen Wilson who was Chair of the R33 Working Group.

8.4 The AGM Chair then provided more details in respect of the BMC Volunteer Strategy, and noted:

- volunteers were essential to the BMC;
- the strategy was looking at ways to improve the processes, training and support of volunteers so that the volunteer experience would be more positive, she wanted to continue working on this after her Presidency had finished and the priorities for this work were:
 - to continue to update and add content to the BMC website;
 - to continue to update and add content to the BMC Volunteers Handbook;
 - to enhance the reward and recognition of the volunteers;
 - to undertake a training needs analysis and analyse the results for implementation;
 - to review the induction process of volunteers;
 - to produce role descriptions for all key roles in a standardised format;
 - to improve the systems to manage enquiries from potential volunteers;
 - to review how volunteer roles were promoted;
 - to use the Investors in Volunteers awards as a framework to develop an action plan.

8.5 The AGM Chair then moved on the BMC's Volunteer Awards 2021, she noted the awards were:

- George Band Award – for exceptional voluntary contribution to mountaineering;
- Rehan Siddiqui Award – for exceptional voluntary contribution towards promoting equality and diversity in the BMC;
- Young Persons Award – for exceptional voluntary contribution for people under the age of 27;
- Lord Greaves Award – a one-off award in 2021 for a volunteer who has contributed huge amounts towards access and conservation. Council would review this award to see if it would be continued in the future.

A short video was then played to introduce the 2021 winners of the awards:

- George Band Award – Alan Huyton and Bob Moulton
- Rehan Siddiqui Award – Graeme Hill and Andy Higson
- Young Persons Award – Rehna Yaseen and Lewis Perrin Williams
- Lord Greaves Award – Louise Hawson

She congratulated all the recipients and said she looked forward to a face-to-face celebration with each of those, and the winners of the awards in 2020. She thanked all those that submitted nominations and extended her thanks to the hundreds of volunteers for all their hard work.

8.6 The AGM Chair noted that there was lots of information on volunteering on the BMC website, which now has its own volunteers tab. She said if anyone had any suggestions as to what else was needed they could contact her using the office email address – office@thebmc.co.uk.

8.7 The AGM Chair then set out details of the work she had undertaken as the BMC's Equity Champion:

- she was on the panel of the Women in Adventure films competition;
- the panel was flooded with 32 entries;
- she recommended that people go and watch the films on the website as some were very inspirational;
- the winners would be announced at the Sheffield Adventure Film Festival.

8.8 She then moved on to some of the campaigns and work undertaken by the BMC:

- The Climate Project – in particular the fact that it was now possible to purchase square metres of sphagnum moss from the BMC online shop for planting in the Peak District by the Moors for the Future organisation, which made an ideal birthday or anniversary present;
- Hills2Oceans – the shop was also selling litter pickers to assist with the litter picks;
- No Moor BBQs campaign;
- BMC Insurance;
- Regional access database (RAD) app – managed by volunteers who had information such as bird nesting restrictions and she asked members to check the RAD before they head out climbing;
- Publication of the Peak District Wired Guide – she thanked Ian Carr who had chaired the Guidebook Committee and Niall Grimes who had now moved from Guidebook Co-ordinator to a new role within the BMC;
- Wild Horizons podcasts – the new BMC hill walking podcast in which Niall interviewed various hill walking representatives from around England and Wales;
- Women's Trad Festival – the BMC is supporting this festival again; and

- The Olympics – she wished Shauna Coxsey the best of luck and all other climbing competitors at various other competitions.

8.9 The AGM Chair then presented a slide on behalf of the Pinnacle Club, a women's climbing club which was celebrating its 100th birthday. She set out the ways in which the Pinnacle Club was celebrating this:

- they had developed a fantastic web archive of photos, articles and recordings which was on their centenary website – www.pc100.org
- a free exhibition was being launched on 5 July to run until November 2021 at the Sticklebarn, Langdale, Cumbria. This was in conjunction with Mountain Heritage Trust and the National Trust; and
- they were looking to foster the future legacy of the club by sponsoring opportunities for individuals or groups.

8.10 The AGM Chair then reflected on her time as President of the BMC, noting she was coming to the end of her three-year term. When she started her Presidency she said she would focus on three things and she reflected on the work she had done on those areas:

- support for members at all levels – hopefully she had achieved this via face-to-face meetings with members, answering emails from hundreds of volunteers and members. She thanked all those that had contacted her.
- encouraging volunteering – she had developed the volunteer award and recognition scheme;
- a modern BMC with a rich history – it was vital to understand the history and she had always taken this into account when taking decisions.

8.11 The AGM Chair summarised her Presidency:

- it had been an honour and a privilege to serve as the BMC President;
- the past year had been very challenging for everyone;
- she could not wait to see people again; walking in the hills, at the crag, on the mountains, at events, festivals and climbing competitions.

She then thanked everyone for being there for the BMC:

- all the BMC members for their continued support and membership, and asked them to spread the word about the great work the BMC does;
- all the volunteers who had continued to do amazing work despite the many challenges the pandemic had thrown their way;
- all the BMC's partner organisations, working relationships had strengthened over the past year;
- all the BMC staff, she could not have hoped to work alongside such a committed and hard-working bunch of people; and
- all her friends and family, in particular her husband.

9 Members' Q&A

9.1 The AGM Chair stated it was now time for some more members' questions and handed over to the CEO.

The CEO said he had pulled off the data in respect of a question about the members' survey:

- there were just over 1,000 responses;
- 95% confidence in the results;

- the breakdown of female to male members of the BMC was 29 to 70 and in the survey sample it was 32 to 66, so the survey was fairly representative and he thanked all those who took part.

The CEO then handed over to the CoSec for more members' questions. The CoSec noted Robert Dufton had requested a round of applause for Lynn and the CoSec thanked Lynn for all her work.

- 9.2 Q.1. returned to the question John Roberts had asked previously which was what membership growth targets over the next 3-5 years did the BMC have.

The CEO answered this and noted that things had changed since the profiling which had happened in December 2020 which set out an ambition of 4%-6% growth. This would be reviewed and monitored, as this was a new approach by the BMC and so there would be a learning process along the way.

The Chair added that he personally wanted the BMC to be more ambitious because of the size of the target markets, and he had a goal of 200,000 members in five years' time. He was not sure if this was achievable but a step change was needed from historic membership numbers just to keep track with what was happening in the wider sports and activities the BMC represents.

- 9.3 The CoSec said Alison Cairns had posted a comment in relation to the Pinnacle Club centenary, which was that the superb website and exhibition was only able to be pulled together with the help of a generous grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

- 9.4 Q.2 came from Bob Pettigrew who asked since the head of governance at the BMC is the Chair, should this position not also be the President to remove all doubt of accountability. The CoSec noted Andy Syme had typed in an answer to this question which stated that the splitting of the role of President and Chair was part of the changes made to the Articles of Association in 2018 as recommended by the ORG and agreed by a massive majority of voting members. The workload for the Chair and the President was in Andy's opinion too much for a single volunteer to do and combining it would be a retrograde step if the BMC was to continue to keep the roles as volunteer roles and be able to attract people who are not independently wealthy or retired. The CoSec asked if any of the panellists had anything else to add.

The Chair said that the role of President was being reviewed by a task and finish group. Its aim was to come up with some proposals for discussion ahead of the 2022 AGM and if anyone had any opinions on this they should let the BMC know. FS added that Roger Fanner was leading this group and they were going to present their findings to Council in the autumn.

- 9.5 Q.3. came from Chris Stone who thanked the panellists for their clear and detailed presentations and Lynn for everything she had done, and noted that as mentioned in the Annual Report, the BMC website and BMC Communities website contain lots of great information but they are not well designed. He asked if there were plans to improve the websites and if so, what the timeline was for this given this was going to be fundamental to member recruitment.

The Chair said there were plans and these had recently been reviewed by the Chair, the CEO and the Head of Marketing. A lot of work had already been undertaken on the underlying back end including an update to the membership funnel. The plan was to have a revamped website by the end of the year which is mobile friendly and more navigable, there was budget assigned to this and a work plan in place.

- 9.6 Q.4 came from Robert Dufton who said there was rightly a focus on growth in membership numbers. He asked how the Board thinks this growth could be achieved in a way which attracts members for the benefits they receive, but also in a way that

makes them feel part of an organisation for which they care passionately and for which they are prepared to lend their voice e.g. campaigning.

The Chair said that key to this was to have targeted messages to the different groups of diverse members. This meant that the BMC should not only highlight the benefits of joining, but the altruism piece that goes with this. He gave the example of the National Trust which people joined for two reasons: free car parking, and it was a good organisation to join. He said the BMC needs to get the message out about all the great work it does in respect of access and conservation, so that hill walkers and those who climb outdoors know the BMC is relevant to those people and aligns with their own personal goals and values.

Indoor climbers were a different audience and so they needed a different message, they were a younger audience and the BMC needed to take advantage of GB Climbing, the competitions and the Olympics. The BMC needed to get its name out there as interest in climbing increases, due to the Olympics and the BBC showing climbing competitions on its website, and so people want to join because they want to be associated with the BMC and the work it does in competition climbing and the get benefits such as information on training and nutrition and access to GB Climbing coaches through walls. This would need collaboration with the Association of British Climbing Walls (ABC) and climbing walls.

There was also the Club 2.0 strategy and so it was a multi-faceted strategy, not a one size fits all. It needed to be developed further and then rolled out.

The CEO added that the data shows that people join organisations for different reasons and that as they age, they become more altruistic and want to be pro-social. The message therefore needed to be different for not only the different demographics but also for the different sports and activities that people participate in. Younger members are more likely to be interested in the benefits of joining and what is in it for them e.g. a discount, but this means the BMC can then tell them about the other work it does. Cross-fertilising opportunities was very important, so the Olympics was a great opportunity to highlight the sport, but from this the BMC could show what underpins this and what it was here to do. Each opportunity to talk about all the great work the BMC does needed to be maximised.

JW also responded that there was a lot of work ongoing in respect of the idea of belonging as part of a new club growth strategy. This would launch in line with the removal of Covid restrictions, there would be an advertising campaign to tap into the burst of interest in the outdoors during the various lockdowns. He said this was being driven by the volunteers on the Clubs Committee so it was clubs doing it for themselves and it was team effort. He then said the next stage would be to look to widen the BMC's reach of clubs, so those that did not meet the 1944 definition of a club such as social media clubs, or director-led clubs. This would be looked at once the growth programme was well under way.

The CoSec noted Robert had thanked the panel for their answers.

- 9.7 Q.5. came from Fabrizio Scaglione who thanked everyone for their presentations and said there had been a long-lasting discussion about the BMC and social media involvement. He asked if there were any plans to invest more in social media (time and resources) possibly with a dedicated team of professionals e.g. a social media manager, SEO etc.

The CEO said he was a little surprised by this question as he felt the BMC did a good job and had a good reach on social media, with figures of views on YouTube or likes on Twitter and Instagram being high. He would like to link resources in the Areas so that there could be collective messaging on key aspects, but the staff at the BMC did a good job. If this was not being seen then members could drop him a line to let him know what they felt was missing.

The Chair added there was a Social Media Manager and the marketing team were focused on social media and had a good understanding of what was required. More could always be invested, but a decision needs to be made as to where to invest money to get the best return and he felt the BMC was at least as good as similar organisations in respect of its social media reach and output.

- 9.8 The CoSec said that next there was a statement from Bob Pettigrew which was relevant to the question Spenser Gray had asked about cyber bullying, it was taken from the policy of the BMC: it may be necessary at times for the BMC to resist trends which it considers as being detrimental to the long-term interests of the sport (such as hate mail).

JW commented on this stating he agreed with this and noted the Board had issued a statement in September 2020 after Huw resigned as a result of trolling, and that disciplinary action had been taken against a member due to hate mail sent to other Board members, but these were dealt with on a case-by-case basis and there needed to be a proper structure in place to deal with such instances.

The Board and the Council needed to continue to take a strong lead and stance that such behaviour was completely inappropriate.

- 9.9 The CoSec stated there were no further questions or comments in the Q&A box so she asked if any of the members had any further points to raise.

No other comments or questions were forthcoming.

10 Close of Meeting

The AGM Chair thanked everyone for their questions and comments and said that this concluded the AGM. She thanked everyone for their attention and interest and declared the meeting closed.

She added the voting would remain open until 12.30pm and the results would be published on the website as soon as practicable.

If members had any further questions or comments they could email them to agm@thebmc.co.uk

Results

	Resolution/Election	For	Against	Abstain	Passed
1.	To approve the AGM being held as a virtual meeting and confirm that the business transacted at the Meeting be validly conducted.	961	1	8	99.90%
2.	To approve the minutes of the previous AGM held on 13 June 2020.	903	2	65	99.78%
3.	To receive the Annual Report and Accounts for the year end 31 December 2020.	920	9	41	99.03%
4.	To approve the re-appointment of Hurst Accountants Limited as auditors of the Company.	914	7	49	99.24%
5.	To approve the appointment of Paul Drew as Chair of the BMC whose term of office as Chair took effect from 13 January 2021.	921	14	35	98.50%
6.	To approve the appointment of Caroline Worboys as an Independent Director from 13 January 2021.	902	21	47	97.72%
7.	To approve the appointment of Flavia Alzetta as an Independent Director from 6 January 2021.	903	21	46	97.73%
8.	To approve the appointment of Diane Hopper as an Independent Director from 6 January 2021.	897	22	51	97.61%
9.	To approve the appointment of Carl Spencer as a Council Nominated Director from 29 October 2020.	901	24	45	97.41%
10.	To approve the appointment of Peter Salenieks as a Council Nominated Director from 29 October 2020.	905	22	43	97.63%
11.	That, with effect from the conclusion of the Meeting, the Members' Council Terms of Reference, a copy of which is annexed hereto, be and are hereby adopted as the Terms of Reference for the Members' Council.	910	6	54	99.34%
12.	That, with effect from the conclusion of the Meeting, the Area Terms of Reference, a copy of which is annexed hereto, be and are hereby adopted as the Terms of Reference for the Areas.	910	9	51	99.02%
13.	That, with effect from the conclusion of the Meeting the Articles of Association annexed hereto and presented to the Meeting, be and are hereby adopted as the Articles of Association of the Company for and to the exclusion of the existing Articles of Association of the Company.	902	7	61	99.23%
14.	To elect a President for a three-year term to start with effect from 16 May 2021. The candidate is Andrew Syme.	913	32	25	96.61%

	Resolution/Election	For	Against	Abstain	Passed
15.	To elect a Nominated Director for three-year term to start with effect from the 16 May 2021. The candidates are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martyn Hurn • David Matthews 	For Martyn 444	For David 382	134	Martyn elected
16.	To elect a Nationally Elected Councillor to represent hill walking for a three-year term to start with effect from 16 May 2021. The candidates are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rose Gare-Simmons • Tony Bird • Fabrizio Scaglione 	This was a STV – the vote went to the second round which featured Rose and Fabrizio, Rose won the second round with 453 votes to Fabrizio's 323. Rose Gare-Simmons elected			
17.	To elect a Nationally Elected Councillor to represent rock climbing for a three-year term to start with effect from 16 May 2021. The candidate is Steve Clark.	876	57	37	93.89%
18.	To elect a Nationally Elected Councillor to represent mountaineering for a three-year term to start with effect from 16 May 2021. The candidate is Aaron Hodgson.	899	29	42	96.88%