BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

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Board of Directors

Redacted minutes of the Board meeting held as a hybrid meeting using Zoom, and also at the BMC Office on Thursday 11 May at 9am

Directors Present:	Roger Murray (RM) Flavia Alzetta (FA) Paul Davies (PD) Neal Hockley (NH) Martyn Hurn (MH) Peter Salenieks (PS) Fiona Sanders (FS) Carl Spencer (CS) Andy Syme (AS) John Willmott (JW) Caroline Worboys (CW)	Chair Independent Director ^{left at end of minute 12.1} CEO Nominated Director Nominated Director Council Nominated Director (CND) CND CND President Independent Director Senior Independent Director (SID) ^{left at end of minute 13}
In attendance:	Lucy Valerio (LV) Joelie Chisholm (JC) Gavin Finch (GF) Helen Murphy (HM) Christine Scarborough (Cl Steve Quinton (SQ) Paul Ratcliffe (PR) Mariella Sullivan (MS)	Company Secretary (CoSec) Chief Financial Officer (CFO) ^{joined at minute 4.1} Chief Commercial Officer (CCO) ^{online, left at end of Item 11} Safeguarding Manager (D&IM) ^{for Item 5 only} hS) Chair of the Case Management Group (Case Chair) ^{for Item 5 only} Chair of the Participation Statement Review Task & Finish Group ^{online, for Item 7 only} Chair of the Competition Climbing Performance Group (CCPG Chair) ^{online, for Item 8 only} Hill Walking & Volunteer Co-ordinator ^{for item 10 only}

* denotes supporting paper(s) circulated prior to meeting

Item Topic and Main Aspects Considered

1 Welcome, apologies & declaration of interests

1.1

The Chair reported that due notice of the meeting had been given. He noted that there were no apologies, the meeting was therefore quorate and he declared it open.

The following conflicts of interest were declared:

- CS a family member is a member of a GB Climbing development squad
- Four members of staff present in relation to any staffing issues

Item Topic and Main Aspects Considered

- 1.2 The Chair noted the core business of the meeting was to approve the documents required for the AGM, there were also key items on quarter 1 reporting, financial information and the future of competition climbing at elite and grassroots levels, safeguarding, Wales, the participation statement and working with Members' Council (Council). He asked if there was any AOB, there was none mentioned.
- 2 Approval of previous meeting's minutes*
- 2.1 The Chair referred to the paper uploaded to Teamwork called 'Item 2_Board mins 22 Mar 2023 for board approval'.

The Chair asked if the Board approved the minutes, the minutes were unanimously approved.

The CoSec would provide a set of minutes for redaction to the Chair and CEO.

3 Outstanding Actions Review*

- 3.1 The CoSec referred to the paper uploaded to Teamwork called 'Item 3_Outstanding Actions review'. She noted the following:
 - A couple of actions had been completed since the paper was prepared.

The meeting discussed the report and made the following points:

• The CEO had added comments to a couple of the actions, these could be accessed on Teamwork and provided an update on progress

The meeting agreed the format of the paper was helpful and so the CoSec would prepare such a paper for each meeting moving forward.

The President raised the issue of outstanding board minutes. It was noted it was good that they were now being published, but there were numerous people raising the issue of the backlog, as it resulted in a breach of the articles. The Chair noted he had started had process of working through these and they would be dealt with before the AGM.

4 AGM Documents

4.3 Annual Report*

4.3.1 The Chair noted that as the CFO was unable to join at present, the meeting would discuss the Annual Report. He said he had some amendments to make to the Chair's Report following comments received and get these to the CoSec for Monday morning at the latest.

Chair to amend Chair's Report in the Annual Report and send to the CoSec

Board minutes from 22 March approved.

CoSec to prepare set of minutes for redaction and send them to the Chair and CEO.

Item Topic and Main Aspects Considered

- In the President's report the word 'concerns' when used about GB Climbing was appropriate, as it was good to be honest
- There was little mention of the subsidiaries or the numerous partners the BMC worked with, it was noted that the subsidiaries were mentioned in the Annual Governance Statement (see minute 4.4 below).
- The main report contained a lot of substance
- 4.3.2 The meeting agreed that the CCO would draft some positive wording and a note of thanks, to be included in the President's Report about the partners worked with and the relationships with the UIAA etc. He would send this to the President for him to check.

The agreed wording would be with the CoSec by Monday as the report then had to go to the designer.

The Chair asked the Board if they were happy to approve the report, subject to the small changes to be made.

The Board unanimously approved the Annual Report.

4.4 Annual Governance Statement*

4.4.1 The Chair noted this was a document the CoSec had prepared, which he had then added to. It was a document required to be prepared under the Code for Sports Governance (the Code) and it was a factual document.

The meeting discussed the statement and noted the following:

- The President should also be referred to as ex-officio in the directors' information
- There was inconsistency with the date format
- It should be Mountaineering Ireland, not Mountaineering Northern Ireland

The CoSec said she would make these amendments.

The Chair asked if the Board were happy to approve the statement, subject to the amendments noted above.

The Board unanimously approved the Annual Governance Statement

4.5 Notice of AGM*

4.5.1 The CoSec noted that the Notice of AGM (the Notice) was a communication to the members and therefore required Board approval. She noted the following:

CCO to prepare a paragraph on the partners the BMC works with and agree it with the President before sending it to the CoSec

Annual Report approved.

CoSec to amend the Annual Governance Statement as noted.

Annual Governance Statement approved.

Item Topic and Main Aspects Considered

- There had been no resolution put forward by the members the deadline for receipt of this was 2 May and the BMC had made members aware of the process to follow by uploading an article to the website and adding this to newsletters
- There had been no applications for the role of Constituency Councillor to represent club members, so there was no election to take place for this
- There had been one application for the Nominated Director Wales role and that person's name was now on the ballot paper
- There had been five applications for the Nominated Director Competition Sport role. Most of Nominations Committee (NomCom) had met the previous evening and decided to interview three of those, the names of the applicants to go on the ballot paper would therefore be added to the notice once NomCom had decided which names to add
- 4.5.2 The meeting discussed the AGM generally and noted that it would be a good idea to have a meeting to discuss any issues that members would raise. The Chair said it would be helpful if directors could provide details of any areas or questions that they were aware would be raised at the AGM.

The CoSec noted she was going to research how to deal with difficult AGMs and ensure that the President would have the right information to deal with any difficult points in the meeting.

It was agreed that this would be arranged for Monday 5 June at 7pm.

The meeting discussed ensuring that a PR push took place to ensure members were aware of the AGM and encouraging them to vote, it was noted that the Marketing & Communications team (MarComms) were already working on this. An idea for next year was that ambassadors could record videos encouraging members to vote at AGMs.

The Chair then asked if the Notice was approved, the Board unanimously approved the Notice.

4.1 Accounts & authorise signatories*

- 4.1.1 The CFO referred to the report prepared by Hurst Accountants Limited (the Auditor) which included the draft accounts for year end 31 December 2022 (the Accounts). She made the following points:
 - The Auditor had presented their report and the Accounts to the Finance & Audit Committee (FAC), during which the FAC asked lots of questions and challenged the Auditor
 - The Auditor told the FAC it was a clean audit, and praised the BMC on the audit
 - The Accounts showed the deficit of £267,000

Directors to provide the Chair/CoSec with questions they think will be raised at the AGM

CoSec to set up meeting to discuss the AGM.

Notice of AGM approved.

Item Topic and Main Aspects Considered

- There were some minor issues regarding bank reconciliations in respect of long-term deposit accounts where statements were only provided annually, these were immaterial and the CFO had now dealt with them
- The FAC recommended the Board approved the Accounts and authorised the appropriate directors to sign them on the Board's behalf
- 4.1.2 The Chair asked a question about trade debtors as this figure was up from the previous year by about £40k. The CFO said this was a timing issue and not something to worry about, and the debtors had now been paid.

The Chair asked if there were any further questions, there were none. He therefore asked the Board if they approved the Accounts and authorised the Chair and the CEO to sign them on behalf of the Board.

The Board unanimously approved the Accounts, and authorised the Chair and the CEO to sign them on behalf of the Board.

4.2 Letter of Representation*

CEO Report

6 6.1

6.1.1

Quarterly Performance Review – Q1

Item 6.1 could be moved forward. He therefore handed over to the CEO.

4.2.1 The CFO referred to the Letter Representation and noted this was a standard letter given to the Auditor by the Board. The Chair added the letter stated the directors had done everything required of them in order for the Auditor to do their job, he had no doubts that this was the case.

He asked the Board if they approved the letter and authorised either the Chair or the CEO to sign it on behalf of the Board.

The Board unanimously approved the Letter of Representation and authorised the Chair or the CEO to sign it on their behalf.

The Chair noted that as they were ahead of schedule and the Case Chair and HM were not due until 11am, that

Letter of Representation approved and the Chair or CEO authorised to sign it on the Board's behalf.

Decision / Action

Accounts approved and the Chair and the CEO authorised to sign them on the Board's behalf.

The CEO presented to the Board, and comments and questions were raised during the presentation. The key points to note were:

Organisational Development Group (ODG)

- The CEO and FS had been through the ODG recommendations again and had sorted them into three categories: completed; considered and disregarded; part of ongoing continuous improvement i.e. they were done in 2019, but were now part of business as usual and strategic action plans (SAPs)
- A formal summary paper would be provided to the Board
- Work had started on the migration of the ODG website to ensure information was archived or saved as appropriate

Challenges

- These capacity issues had demonstrated how thinly the BMC was spread
- The property contractor was on an agreed 3-month break, he had agreed this with the BMC pre being hired, and there was a referral system in place to ensure work was being dealt with
- There was a need to ensure that the work Tony Ryan had done for Council was being picked up

<u>Successes</u>

- The Deep Dive held the previous day was a great success the CEO thanked the Board for their attendance and engagement with the staff
- Many other successes were set out in the paper provided to the Board

6.1.2 <u>Anti-Doping</u>

- The BMC was compliant with the annual UKAD processes
- There was one para athlete on the whereabouts testing they were being provide with additional support both practical and moral by GB Climbing

Complaints/Legal

• No legal issues to report

• New complaints process was up and running and working well with complaints submitted via the website and then triaged centrally

<u>Appeals</u>

- There had been two selection events; one for boulder and one for lead this had resulted in 6 appeals from the boulder event and 4 from the lead
- All appeals had been unsuccessful
- The CEO thanked those who had sat on the Appeals Panel, which included JW, NH and AS

There then followed a discussion about the appeals, with the following points raised:

- The feedback provided by the Appeals Panel following the boulder appeal process had helped improve the lead selection process and following appeals process
- The fact that the appeals had been unsuccessful did not mean there were no issues with the selection events or policies and as noted the Appeals Panel had raised a number of these
- Climbing was difficult for selection as there was an element of subjectivity, it was therefore very important to ensure the selection process was clearly communicated to all athletes and parents
- A number of appeals had questioned whether GB Climbing had followed the correct process for the selection events and whether the routes were age and stage appropriate
- The Appeals Panel had not felt they were in a position where they could say the event had to be redone
- It would be useful for the Board to understand if the number of appeals was a high ratio of athletes and to also have information on trends and actions taken, so that these could be tracked, however it was not felt that the BMC had any higher number of appeals than other sports

More information to be provided on appeals in future CEO reports.

6.1.3 <u>Disciplines</u>

- The jointly-created paper, with Mountaineering Scotland and Mountaineering Ireland, had been submitted to the NGB Recognition Panel
- This was a panel led by Sport England, but involved all devolved nations' Sports Councils
- This was to ensure that the disciplines 'allocated to' the BMC were the right ones, the paper set these out as: climbing, bouldering, hill walking, mountaineering and snow sports touring. There were various activities under each discipline.

Mountain Training Trust (MTT) and Plas y Brenin

• The CEO and Chair were in conversation with Mountain Training England (MTE) and Mountain Training UK & Ireland (MTUKI) as the three members of MTT

- They agreed that a strategy needed to be put in place and then a new CEO hired who could deliver the strategy, and the BMC, MTE and MTUKI wanted to rethink the strategy and be part of creating it
- The present board of MTT were not in agreement with this, the BMC's representative and MTE's representative on the board were now in agreement with this as a proposal
- An interim CEO and chair were in position, at least one of these positions should be filled by someone with a strong training background in mountaineering
- Communications to MTT have been jointly from the BMC, MTE and MTUKI
- There were two nuclear options to take if the MTT board did not agree with the suggested approach: an extraordinary general meeting could be called, or the members (i.e. the BMC, MTE and MTUKI) could use s.168 of the Companies Act 2006 to remove board members
- The meeting agreed that Plas y Brenin should not just be another outdoor centre, it needed to focus on skills and training provided to outdoor professionals

6.1.4 <u>Risk Register and Foundations</u>

- There were a number of unacceptable risks prior to mitigation:
 - Reduced financial projections downturn in travel insurance sales and membership income
 - Significant reduction in membership
 - Loss of key commercial partners
 - Failure to react quickly in decision making during a crisis
 - \circ Loss of directors
- These were largely managed and mitigated, but one remained unacceptable after mitigation which was failure to react quickly in decision making during a crisis
- The insurance claim was due to be settled the following week as it was at court, it was likely to be near the £10m amount
- The current infrastructure work would help mitigate risks, the infrastructure for the finance systems was almost there.

The meeting discussed the risk register which raised the following points:

- A risk should be added difficult relations between Board and Council
- The CCO noted that there were four big project areas and they were all significant pieces of work, the systems inherited were from the last century and it was taking longer than envisaged to replace them and was not where the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) had wanted them to be
- The current membership system required human intervention to produce reports and could result in different results if different people prepared the report, this meant time was then taken to work out what had caused the differences

CCO and CW to speak further about the membership system

- It was also a bespoke system, the BMC was now looking at an 'off the shelf' system, as companies were out there that produced these based on their experts and good practice, an 'off the shelf' system would then be easier to plug into other systems, it would also mean that automatic security updates were provided
- Any new system would require investment and a scoping and feasibility exercise should also be undertaken

The Chair then said that it was now 11am and so time for the safeguarding item, he therefore brought this discussion to a close, for it to be picked up again after the safeguarding agenda item.

5 Safeguarding

5.1 The Chair welcomed HM and the Case Chair to the meeting. He noted he had met with them previously to discuss safeguarding and also worked on the paper provided to the Board. He had invited them to speak to the Board as he felt what they had to say was important. He handed over to the Case Chair.

ChS introduced herself, and made the following points:

- Her background was as a social worker who had worked on frontline services throughout her career including being the lead at an NHS trust which was responsible for 1.4m people
- She had been a BMC member since 1984 and was chair of the Safeguarding Group from 2008 2020, she currently chaired the Case Management Group
- During her time in these roles at the BMC a number of safeguarding issues had arisen, and they had been dealt with, she had always made sure children were protected and no safeguarding concerns or issues had been brushed under the carpet
- She was pleased to see the Board were now taking safeguarding seriously, they may not have been aware of the safeguarding work being undertaken, but the executive had always taken it seriously and acted as necessary
- Climbing was not like other sports such as swimming or athletics, where to qualify you had to get a certain time during a certain window of time, it involved judgements and parents were heavily invested and sensitive to this
- There had been a few issues in 2017 following a selection event, these were dealt with, and the Case Chair met with parents and an anonymous questionnaire was sent to parents and athletes. The results did not indicate any underlying issues of abuse. There were complaints about foreign trips and so how these were managed was looked at.
- A duty of care to the staff needed to be acknowledged, coaches were often terrified and worried that their career was on the line, they needed to be provided with appropriate training
- The biggest issue facing the BMC was unregistered coaches and those working at climbing walls, some walls did not undertake DBS checks and the current BMC database did not allow HM to search club members to see what qualifications they had, or what safeguarding training they had done, or if DBS checks had been undertaken

Decision / Action

Updated digital roadmap to be shared in advance of the next Board meeting.

- Safeguarding was an ongoing process, the BMC now employed coaches, and new improved procedures had been put in place, and HM had been hired
- She reiterated that safeguarding had never been brushed under the carpet by the BMC
- 5.2 HM then presented to the Board, the key points made were:
 - A massive plus for the BMC was the existence of the Safeguarding Group and the Case Management Group
 - Since 2023 there had been seven Level 2 cases, eight Level 1 cases and ten Advice cases, this was a low number and as the sport increased in popularity and more people were more confident that raising a concern would not impact on selection, this would probably increase
 - In 2023 there was one Level 2 case open and two advice cases closed
 - Since joining in September 2022, she had undertaken the following:
 - o Delivered social media training to the majority of GB Climbing staff
 - Attended a GB Teams training weekend where she spoke to all parents and athletes about safeguarding and how to report concerns
 - Written a Code of Conduct with sanctions if breached
 - Arranged for the Funded Partners (MTE, MTUKI, the Association of British Climbing Walls and the National Indoor Award Scheme) to have access to Globocol at no additional cost, so they could log their cases and the BMC have sight of these (they would not have sight of BMC cases)
 - Submitted two audit responses Ann Craft Trust and the CPSU
 - Applied for and been accepted on to Sport England funded Sport Lead Safeguarding Officer training commencing September 2023
 - Attended the Coaches Conference
 - Attended case management training for safeguarding panels
- 5.3 The main risks to the BMC in respect of safeguarding were:
 - A recent statement made in a public arena that concerns had been brushed under the carpet for 20 years, when there was no evidence of this
 - Lack of safeguarding regulations which meant cases or decisions could be overturned if challenged
 - Inability to check compliance and record information i.e. qualifications, DBS checks for individual and club
 members
 - Lack of understanding of what constitutes a safeguarding concern across the sector a mental health issue is not always linked to safeguarding, it could be to do with discipline or poor practice
 - Perception of a lack of trust held by some parents who were worried that if they raised a concern it would impact on their child's selection
 - Policies, procedures and guidance were out of date across the sector

Managing risk short term would involve:

- Reviewing and updating safeguarding policies, adult and child
- Adoption of a Code of Conduct
- Updating information on the BMC and GB Climbing websites
- Running proactive communication with various stakeholders once the new webform for reporting concerns was up and running
- Utilising the new Volunteer Management System

Managing risk long term would involve:

- Educating all staff on basic safeguarding and what to do if they have a concern
- Developing an induction process for all athletes and parents in GB Teams
- Increasing safeguarding visibility and having a trained safeguarding officer at all competitions
- Working with the Funded Partners to ensure safeguarding is threaded throughout processes and visibility is increased
- Ensuring safeguarding is included in detail in the next strategy
- Ensuring that updated safeguarding compliance data was held for individuals and clubs
- Developing a membership for unaffiliated areas of the sport utilising the Funded Partners
- 5.4 The meeting discussed the presentation and the following points were raised:
 - There was noise out there about safeguarding, could it be it was a misperception that issues fell under safeguarding, but they were not actually safeguarding?
 - Safeguarding in the wider world meant to protect children from harm. There would be members out there who would want to harm children, but there was no evidence of that happening within the BMC, so it could be the noise was in relation to welfare or well-being, so still a concern, but not safeguarding
 - Risk mitigation such as providing guidance on weight management, strength conditioning etc was being provided and once this was in place at the BMC it could be cascaded down to clubs
 - The current policy on the website contained outdated contact details
 - The biggest area of exposure for the BMC was unaffiliated clubs and walls, but part of the bid with Sport England was the need for wall accreditation (which was being led by the Association of British Climbing Walls (ABC)), which would include safeguarding and so this was the BMC's attempt to get the whole sector up to speed with safeguarding
 - HM reviewed risk assessments as part of the event approval system, and so she was able to ask further questions regarding events to ensure that safeguarding issues had been thought of and dealt with

HM to update safeguarding policy on the website

- It would be good if the Case Chair and HM could provide the presentation to Council
- CS also noted that at no point had he ever said that the BMC had brushed safeguarding issues under the carpet

The Chair thanked the Case Chair and HM for their work and their time.

6 CEO Report – continued*

6.1.5 The CCO reported on the work he had been leading on, he made the following points:

<u>Membership</u>

- Work was progressing, but the numbers were some way off where he wanted it to be
- The target for individual members in April 2023 was 60,749 and the actual was 58,176
- Total member numbers at April 2023 was 81,286
- Membership retention was at 82%
- There had been a dip in membership numbers at the beginning of 2023, but it was now picking up. This was not because of any one thing in particular, and the work being done to improve the customer journey should help
- The target had not been hit, this was likely a combination of the target being too optimistic and the work taking longer than anticipated.
- Work was ongoing with business to business propositions e.g. Cotswold staff members would get BMC membership at cost
- 700 members a month were being lost and work was being done to look at this and to move members onto payment by direct debit

The meeting discussed the above and noted the following:

- The model of membership and how membership was declining generally across all membership organisations. There were numerous organisations where people would pay e.g. £10 per month for an app, and that would provide them with all the content they needed.
- It was important to think how to sustain the membership before the necessary systems etc. were in place which could facilitate a flip to an app.

Decision / Action

- 6.1.6 The CCO handed over to the CFO to go through the Q1 results. The CFO referred to the papers uploaded to Teamwork and made the following points:
 - March figures showed the BMC was on budget, revenue was ahead of budget because of the grant drawdowns and travel insurance sales
 - Overall total costs were greater than budget, this was a combination of membership revenue being down, budget phasing and funded partner grant drawdown
 - The figures showed:

To 31.03.23	Budget £'000	Actual £'000	Variance £'000
Revenue	1239	1278	40
Cost of sales	(24)	(247)	(7)
Expenditure	(962)	(991)	(29)
Surplus/Deficit	37	40	3

- Numerous departments were ahead of budget, due to staff being hired later than budgeted and staff on sick leave
- GB Climbing was on budget, but the international season had started which meant there would be high activity, and so they would need to be monitored closely
- Marcomms was behind budget, this was due to timing differences with the cost of their work being frontloaded
- Commercial revenue was down on budget, but new deals were in the process of being signed and there would be an uplift in the budget for 2024
- The balance sheet was healthy with £900k in reserves, which was above the minimum of £500k
- The SLT was meeting on Monday 15 May to discuss the reforecasts

The Chair noted that due to the good discussion on safeguarding and the need to ensure that item 7 was discussed at 1pm that the meeting would take a short break for a working lunch.

7 Participation Statement*

- 7.1 SQ joined the meeting and introduced himself to the Board. He referred to the paper that had been uploaded to Teamwork and made the following points:
 - A lot of work had been done to revise the participation statement (the Statement) amidst concerns by some stakeholders that the current statement was too negative and putting people off trying various climbing activities

- The group set up to review the Statement consulted with numerous stakeholders and as a result a new Statement had been drafted which referred to the benefits of the various activities
- The words 'or death' had been debated at length and it was felt that they should remain, particularly as this negativity was now balanced out with the more positive words on health benefits
- The new Statement set out in the paper, had been approved by Council at their meeting on 28 March

The meeting discussed the Statement and noted:

- It could be amended to also be used in climbing walls, i.e. not refer to the BMC, but the wall
- The Training Walls and Youth Committee had met and they had accepted that the words 'or death' should remain
- SQ and the CCO should talk about how to launch the new Statement
- 7.2 The Chair asked the Board if they approved the Statement the Board unanimously approved the new Statement.

It was noted there were no ramifications if people wanted to use the 'old' Statement as it did not conflict with the new Statement – it would just mean that there was an inconsistency, as opposed to a risk.

The Chair thanked SQ for his work on this, and asked that he pass the Board's gratitude to those who had worked on preparing the new Statement.

8 CCPG T&F Group Recommendations follow up*

8.1 The Chair welcomed the CCPG Chair to the meeting and handed over to the CEO to present the suggested way forward in respect of elite and grassroots climbing.

The CEO referred to the paper uploaded to Teamwork and presented to the Board, the key points made were:

- Numerous people had contributed to the paper and the work, this included the CCPG Chair, the Chair, GB Climbing, the Competition Climbing Performance Group (CCPG), Rod Carr, Colin Knowles and UK Sport, he thanked them for their input and work
- The paper set out a new approach as to how the BMC should lead across all competition elements of SkiMo, ice-climbing and indoor climbing
- One of the key findings of the CCPG Review, was that the CCPG should be performance only, the result of this was the proposal that CCPG be discontinued, and a new committee be established, called the GB Climbing Performance Group (the GBC Performance Group)
- The GBC Performance Group should have delegated authority from the Board, it should focus on the performance and talent aspects of the BMC's responsibility as the National Governing Body (NGB) for sport climbing (which included para), SkiMo and ice climbing.

SQ and GF to speak about how to roll out new participation statement.

New participation statement approved.

- The GBC Performance Group should be an expert group that supported decision making, it should steer the work done to support the performance of GB Teams in all the activities and provide oversight and reassurance to the Board and CEO
- Membership of the GBC Performance Group should be based upon skills and experience needed, this should include from the following areas:
 - o Elite coaching
 - o Route-setting
 - o Athlete experience
 - Performance support
 - o Programme design and delivery
 - People development and culture

- 8.2
- The GBC Performance Group would approve 4-year plans, an annual plan to include budgets and event calendar, and selection policies and processes
 - Commissions would be set up for sport climbing, ice climbing and SkiMo, a commission being a group of people who have been formally chosen and given the authority to perform special duties, they are led by a Programme Manager who would sit on and report to the GBC Performance Group
 - Competitions a domestic structure would need to be put in place so it functions and was run by volunteers, so similar to all the football competitions that take place on weekends
 - There were no staff dedicated to SkiMo and ice climbing at present, there was a suggestion that there could be a part time staff member to be a point of contact to co-ordinate competitions etc. this was still to be worked through
 - There had been meetings with Di Gilbert who organised SkiMo competitions in Scotland
 - A lot of what was set out in the paper was being done anyway, the paper provided clarity as to the structure to be used
 - The BMC should focus on more than just talent and performance pathways for competition grassroots opportunities should be available to introduce people to competition in their sport. The BMC should aspire to have competitive structures that span from grassroots to masters to social competitions to those that help prepare athletes to compete at World and Olympic level
 - Grassroots competitions were happening now, they were however nothing to do with the BMC
 - The Board were being asked to approve the following:
 - The establishment of the GBC Performance Group
 - The GBC Performance Group terms of reference
 - The concept of Commissions, and for Board guidance on whether the Commissions would need Board approval

- 8.3 The CCPG Chair added the following points:
 - Performance should be ring-fenced with better links to participation
 - Paid BMC staff would never cover everything, so it was important to work out how volunteers could help
 - The Commissions could be set up so that they could function with or without staff support
 - The proposed structure provided more clarity as to what GB Climbing should do

The meeting discussed the paper and proposals and the following opinions and points were raised:

- It would be good to cross reference the paper with the outcome of the CCPG Review, so that it was clear how the proposals addressed the concerns raised in the review
- It was hoped that the GBC Performance Group could be set up by this autumn, in respect of the Commissions consultation on them could start in the summer, with working groups being established in the interim. It would be a lot of work to get the right people involved
- Grassroots side would be driven via the activity already ongoing, as competitions were taking place, and the aim was to have people at those competitions who would be able to inform athletes of any next steps they could take
- The idea of a national ranking system for juniors, seniors, veterans etc. was being looked at
- The partners were vital and they should be engaged with and consulted with along the way
- Whether the discussion with partners was 'here's the direction we're proposing, how can you help make it work?' or whether it was 'here's our proposal, how can you enhance it?
- There still needed to be communication with various stakeholders as to the outcome of the CCPG Review, and of the task and finish group set up to review the CCPG Review. This should be done as soon as possible and prior to any consultation on the current paper. It was agreed the best way to do this was for a one-page summary to be prepared which set out they key findings of each group. CS volunteered to do this.
- The consultation could take a long time and involve a lot of people, the alternative was to hold a number of open forums in which stakeholders could be asked if they had any strong objections or if there was anything missing from the proposals
- 8.4 The Chair brought the discussion to a close and asked the Board if they were happy to approve the principles set out in the paper. The Board unanimously approved the principles set out therein i.e. the establishment of the GBC Performance Group and the use of Commissions.

The Chair noted the amount of work that had been undertaken to prepare the paper and said it was a really good piece of work. He thanked all those involved.

CS to prepare a summary on the key findings of the CCPG Review, the CCPG Review T&F Group and the paper presented here at Item 8.

Principles of how to move forward with grassroots and elite climbing. Commissions to be used to help the BMC deliver competition structures for sport climbing, SkiMo and ice climbing.

Topic and Main Aspects Considered Item

It was agreed that it would be a good idea to hold sessions with partners to engage with them on the proposed way forward, with the context that a lot of work had been done already and that major changes to the proposals were not with stakeholders. being sought.

It was also felt that the CEO and CCPG Chair should set out proposed next steps and timelines in respect of the principles in the agreed paper.

6 Quarterly Performance Review – Q1

6.2 Outside of budget course corrections

- 6.2.1 The Chair returned to this agenda item and handed over to the CFO. The CFO noted that due to staff sickness the Q1 reforecast had not been completed, however membership revenue was not as budgeted and so some course corrections would be required. The CFO and CEO made the following points to the Board:
 - The SLT were meeting on Monday 15 May to review the reforecasts and discuss which course corrections they felt should be actioned
 - As SLT had not yet met, it was difficult to provide the Board with any more information and so it was suggested a task and finish group be established which would meet following the SLT meeting. This should comprise of the SLT, FA, the President and either the FAC chair, or Rosi Yule (an independent FAC member).
 - The group would then provide the Board with a paper for them to agree using electronic communication prior to the end of May, as any course corrections would need to be implemented as soon as possible

The Board approved the establishment of the task and finish group, and with the proposal that any course corrections to be made would be approved by the Board using electronic communication.

Task and finish group be established to review course corrections and to prepare a paper for the Board on the recommended course corrections to take, for the Board to then approve.

9 Wales*

9.1 NH referred to the documents which had been uploaded to Teamwork and said that the Wales Committee was looking for approval of its strategy and the next steps it proposed, being the development of a more detailed case for the creation of a legal BMC entity in Wales and the development of a formal partnership with Mountain Training Cymru (MTC) to seek funds from Sport Wales.

He added the proposal was that a separate entity would be created which nested within the BMC structure, but which had those who lived in Wales as the members.

The meeting discussed the paper and the proposals with the following points being raised

Decision / Action

CEO and CCPG Chair to engage

Item Topic and Main Aspects Considered

- The consultation carried out so far was at present sufficient to stop someone 'gazumping' the BMC and stepping into this space, that was because this was likely to be MTC, who were involved in the consultation
- The question as to whether Welsh members would be able to fund the entity themselves, this would depend on numerous factors
- There was a risk a new entity could get Sport Wales funding for a few years, and then not receive any further funding and this could create liabilities for the BMC
- The purpose of a separate entity would not solely be to get Sport Wales funding, it would also ensure the BMC was a sector leader in Wales
- The question of how any entity would sit within the BMC's structure if the members were those BMC members who lived in Wales, as this would mean that the entity was not within the BMC structure – further work was required on this
- 9.2 The Chair summarised the discussion and said he felt that the proposals had the support of the Board, the Board agreed.

NH then turned to the draft letter to go to the Welsh Sports Minister, Dawn Boden. He noted this was a draft letter and he would welcome comments from the Board on the messages contained therein.

The meeting discussed who should sign the letter on behalf of the BMC, and it was agreed that NH and the CEO should sign it.

10 Volunteer Strategy*

10.1 The Chair welcomed MS to the meeting and noted the important of the piece of work she had been undertaking.

MS referred to the paper which had been uploaded to Teamwork, which set out the draft Volunteer Strategy, and made the following points:

- The strategy had been created collaboratively with staff and volunteers and good practice described by Investing in Volunteers
- It would support the BMC's network of 700 volunteers and guide its work as it sought to improve opportunities, resources, support, training and recognition for the volunteers

The meeting discussed the strategy and asked MS questions, which resulted in the following points being raised:

- There were 700 volunteers now, but what did success look like, what was the goal?
- The aim was to improve the volunteer experience and journey and to get staff and volunteers working together to deliver the operational plan

NH and the CoSec to speak about legal entities and how this could work

Approval of the direction of travel of the Wales Committee.

NH and CEO authorised to sign letter to Dawn Bowden on behalf of the BMC.

Page 19 of 25

Item Topic and Main Aspects Considered

- The document needed to set out how it would reach its goal and what was needed to make this happen
- The new volunteer management system would help with ensuring that the BMC knew the skills its volunteers had
- MS was planning to implement volunteer agreements and welcome packs, a volunteer induction and updates to the volunteer handbook
- It was suggested that volunteers should also have a sort of exit interview, they should be asked why they were no longer volunteering, even if this was just a question on a survey
- 10.2 The Chair summarised the discussion and noted that the document should be called the ambition and vision, and further work was required to turn it into a strategy. He said the Board were fully supportive of the document and approved it.

He asked that MS came back to the Board with an action plan showing how the ambition would be delivered at some later date.

12 Members' Council

12.1 The Chair asked the President to update the Board following some unrest at Council, he wanted to ensure all directors were present which is why he had moved this ahead of Item 11.

The President updated the Board:

- About 2 weeks ago six Councillors had signed a Letter of Concern and they had tried to get Chris Stone, the Deputy President, to run an extraordinary Council meeting with no CNDs or himself asked to attend
- They had asked for this based on the events of 2020, but that was different as in 2020 the CNDs were not excluded from any meetings, and so the President had said such a meeting should not be held.
- A Council meeting was held, and it did not exclude the CNDs or President.
- Unfortunately Chris Stone had resigned from Council
- The Councillors should have followed the Memorandum of Understanding between the Board and Council and raised their concerns with the CNDs or the Board, but they had not done so
- Their concerns were that the Board was not sharing certain information, so some of their concerns were valid but the process they had used to raise them was not
- It was likely at the upcoming Council meeting that a Letter of Concern would be submitted
- 12.2 The meeting discussed this and raised the following points:
 - The definition of 'holding the Board to account' was an issue, as it could be interpreted in different ways, this needed to be defined and agreed to by all concerned

Decision / Action

Volunteer ambition and vison approved

An action plan setting out how the vision would be delivered to be prepared.

- As noted in the BDO review it was important for the BMC to work out how the Board, Council and SLT worked together, initial discussions had taken place with Feria as to how to achieve this
- Feria had said that there were too many people on Council to have at any session, even if nominal grouping was used, so thought needed to be given as to who should participate in the session to discuss an agreed way of working
- Lack of trust was also an issue
- The Board needed to ensure its own house was in order, particularly in respect of the backlog of board minutes, as this was a breach of the articles
- Council should be used as a sounding board
- There was a risk if the Board were taking directions and instructions from Councillors, that the Councillors would be shadow directors, and therefore bound by the Companies Act 2006
- The Board would need to respond to the Letter of Concern expected, the Chair would prepare a response and email it to the Board for approval
- Planning should get start on the facilitated session, in particular a plan was needed on how to engage with Council and the facilitator to ensure that the facilitated session worked

11 Governance Matters

11.1 Hill Walking Group Terms of Reference*

The Chair asked the Board if they approved the ToR uploaded to Teamwork. The Board discussed it and agreed that there should be some wording added to clause 14.1 to ensure that no duty of confidentiality was breached.

Subject to the above addition, the Board unanimously approved the ToR.

It was agreed the CoSec would add the appropriate wording and provide the approve ToR to the chair of the Hill Walking Group.

11.2 Training Walls and Youth Committee Terms of Reference*

The Chair asked the Board if they approved the ToR uploaded to Teamwork. The Board discussed it and agreed that there should be some wording added to clause 11.1 to ensure that no duty of confidentiality was breached.

Subject to the above addition, the Board unanimously approved the ToR.

It was agreed the CoSec would add the appropriate wording and provide the approve ToR to the chair of the Training Walls and Youth Committee.

Planning work to start on the facilitated session

Hill Walking Group ToR approved

Training Youth and Walls Committee ToR approved.

11.3 Technical Committee Chair Role description*

The Chair referred to the role description uploaded to Teamwork, it was noted Council had previously approved this.

The Board unanimously approved the role description.

11.4 Lone Working Policy

The Chair referred to the amended wording which was to deal with the point previously raised by the Board. It was agreed that this wording dealt with the concern.

A further concern was then raised about the clause which stated 'ensuring an outside individual will take action if the lone worker does not return home when expected', as this might be difficult for those who lived alone and did not have an outside individual.

It was agreed that it was not for the BMC to be the outside individual or to manage this. It was discussed that this should be in relation to undertaking any work that exposed the lone worker to a higher degree of risk than that encountered in normal daily activities.

It was agreed that the CoSec and Chair would look at wording and liaise with the chair of the Health & Safety Group to agree some wording to then be approved by the Board using electronic communication.

11.5 Expenses Policy*

The Chair asked the Board if they had any comments on the policy uploaded to Teamwork. It was noted that the clauses about subsistence and accommodation referred to staff only, they should also include volunteers. The CFO agreed to make this amendment.

The Chair asked the Board if they approved the policy, subject to the amendment referred to. The Board unanimously approved the expenses policy.

11.6 Procurement Policy*

The Chair asked the Board if they had any comments on the policy uploaded to Teamwork. There were no comments. The Chair therefore asked the Board if they approved the policy, the Board unanimously approved the procurement Policy approved. Procurement Policy.

Technical Chair Role description approved.

Chair and CoSec to work on wording to deal with concern raised on Lone Working Policy and liaise with HSG chair.

Expenses policy approved

11.7 Credit Card Policy*

The Chair as the Board if they had any comments on the policy uploaded to Teamwork. It was asked how many credit cards were in operation. The CFO reported there were five roving credit cards, for use at international competitions etc. and seven members of staff who had a credit card, being the CEO, the CCO, the HR & Office Manager, the Financial Controller, the Head of Performance, the Competitions Manager and the Head Coach.

11.8 Financial Delegations*

The CFO noted that there were two parts to the document, the first was to fit into the large BMC delegations document which was still being worked on.

The second part set out the power that officers had to make decisions on spending and other finance issues across the BMC.

The FAC had reviewed the document and they were happy with it. The CFO said that the requirement for the FAC, in consultation with the CEO and CFO to review expenditure of £50,000 or more, was not that the FAC could approve such expenditure, but that they would review it, and if they felt it could be approved, they would recommend it to the Board for approval. Final approval would always sit with the Board.

It was felt that this should be made more explicit in the second part of the document. The CFO agreed to add wording to make this clear.

The Chair asked if there were any other comments on the document, there were none. He therefore asked if the Board were happy to approve the financial delegations subject to the amendment above being made, the Board unanimously approved the financial delegations.

13 Specialist Committees

13.1 Huts Group

PS reported that there had been no applications for the position of chair of Huts Group and so at their meeting on 23 March they had accepted Lynsey McAuley's (LM) offer to step into the post for the interim. PS was the director with portfolio responsibility for huts and he attested to her suitability. He asked the Board to approve her appointment

The meeting discussed this and it was felt that LM could be co-opted by the Huts Group as chair, but that they could then run the recruitment process again getting LM to apply, and therefore appoint her not on an interim basis.

The Board approved the co-option of LM as chair of Huts Group.

Credit Card Policy approved.

CFO to amend second part of the financial delegations to make it clear the FAC only recommends expenditure for approval to the Board.

Co-option of LM as chair of Huts

Group approved.

13.2 Specialist Committees and budgets

13.2.1 PS asked that the FAC be provided with budgetary information for each specialist committee, and that any course corrections be shared with the specialist committee chairs.

The Chair asked the CFO to respond, as she had prepared a paper about the budget process for 2023. The CFO noted the following:

- The 2023 budget was built on achieving strategic outcomes, this meant each specialist committee did not have its own budget
- Specialist committee chairs were not budget holders, it was the officers and staff who were the budget holders
- Where relevant, the specialist committees had worked with the member of staff to develop operational plans as to how they were going to achieve the SAPs, no specialist committee chair came directly to the finance team with an 'ask'
- The staff and the finance team developed a budget that fell within the parameters set by the Board and FAC
- 13.2.2 The President corrected the statement that the Specialist Committees were there to assist the staff in achieving the strategic outcomes by adding their skills and expertise and reminded the Meeting that the Specialist Committees were committees of the Board with delegated authority.

It was agreed that there needed to be better communication with the specialist committee chairs in respect of budgets and finances.

14 AOB and feedback of meeting

- 14.1 It was noted that it should be minuted that since the previous Board meeting on 22 March, the following documents had been approved by the Board using electronic communication:
 - BMC responses to the BDO Governance Review
 - Sport England Continued Compliance Statement
 - Sport England Factcheck Questionnaire

The CoSec confirmed that the Sport England documents had been provided to Sport England prior to the deadline of 30 April and that the responses to the BDO Governance Review had been sent to Sport England and UK Sport, and a response was awaited from them.

14.2 The CEO noted the following regarding events:

- Funding had been received from UK Sport to develop the long-term major event strategy
- There were a number of IFSC events the BMC could bid for prior to the end of August
- A decision had been taken not to bid for the Wold Championships 2027, final bids were to be submitted by December 2023 and it was felt the BMC was not in a position to deliver what was required by this timeline
- If an item could be added to the agenda for the 2 August meeting to discuss further
- 14.3 The Chair then asked for feedback on the meeting. The following points were raised:
 - The meeting had got tied up on safeguarding and some of the QPR
 - Whether some documents could be dealt with electronically in between meetings, these would be lower level documents that should not require too much discussion
 - Face to face made a difference
 - The meeting had covered a lot
 - There were still some operational elements being discussed e.g. how to role out the agreed Statement
 - It would be helpful at the end of each meeting to know what was going to be covered in the next so that the CNDs could seek Council's opinion
 - There was no real tackling of risks

15 Date and time of next meeting

The Chair noted the next meeting was to be held on 2 August, it was an all-day meeting at the BMC office.

16 Close of meeting

There being no other business, the Chair closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their time.

Item	Action	Involving	Target date
2.1	CoSec to prepare set of minutes for redaction and send them to the Chair and CEO.	LV	18.05.23
4.3.1	Chair to amend Chair's Report in the Annual Report and send to the CoSec	RM	15.05.23
4.3.2	CCO to prepare a paragraph on the partners the BMC works with and agree it with the President before sending it to the CoSec	GF	15.05.23
4.4.1	CoSec to amend the Annual Governance Statement as noted.	LV	15.05.23
4.5.2	Directors to provide the Chair/CoSec with questions they think will be raised at the AGM	All	31.05.23
4.5.2	CoSec to set up meeting to discuss the AGM.	LV	18.05.23
6.1.4	CCO and CW to speak further about the membership system	GF,CW	
6.1.4	Updated digital road map to be shared in advance of next board meeting	GF	26.07.23
5.4	HM to update safeguarding policy on the website	HM	18.05.23

CoSec to add item on to 2 August agenda to deal with events

ltem	Action	Involving	Target date
7.1	SQ and GF to speak about how to roll out new participation statement.	SQ,GF	
8.3	CS to prepare a summary on the key findings of the CCPG Review, the CCPG Review T&F Group and the paper presented here at Item 8	CS	21.05.23
8.4	CEO and CCPG Chair to engage with stakeholders in respect of the new proposal for CCPG.	PD, PR	Ongoing
6.2.1	Task and finish group be established to review course corrections and to prepare a paper for the Board on the recommended course corrections to take, for the Board to then approve.	PD, JC, GF, FA, AS and FAC member	18.05.23
12.2	Planning work to start on the facilitated session	JC, CW and JW	
11.4	Chair and CoSec to work on wording to deal with concern raised and liaise with HSG chair.	RM, LV	31.05.23
11.8	CFO to amend second part of the financial delegations to make it clear the FAC only recommends expenditure for approval to the Board	JC	31.05.23
14.2	CoSec to add item on to 2 August agenda to deal with events	LV	20.07.23