



**MINUTES of the meeting of the LONSDALE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held on the 22nd November 2016 at District Headquarters, Moor Street, Lancaster.**

**Present:** T. Andrews (Chairman), S Clarke (Treasurer), A S Hague (Secretary), D Bateman, H. Butterfield, D Coulthard, J Edwards, H Greenwood, A Kayll, N Pullen, T Wilkinson.

**Apologies:** C Dewar (DC), S Cameron, C Graham, R Parker, D Smith.

**Chairman's 'Thought for the Day':**

The Chairman shared a quote by John Wesley "Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."

**Minutes of the Last Meeting:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd September 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising:

**Armed Forces Week 2017**

The Chairman reported that he had attended the meeting to consider this matter to which a Scout representative had been invited by the City Council. It had been agreed to hold two events, the first in Lancaster on 24 June 2017 and the second in Morecambe the following day. The Chairman would circulate more information when received.

**Action: Chairman**

**E732 Governance Document Review:**

The Governance Document had been updated and circulated for information and comment at the previous meeting. Members had been requested to contact the Chairman with any comments in relation to the identified risks (deletions, amendments or even additions). The Chairman reported that none had been received.

Sections scheduled for review on this occasion were as follows.

a. District Team:

All identified risks had now been rated 'Green' by the DC, with the exception of the one relating to a culture of safety being embedded within the programme, rated 'Amber'. A review of safety training was needed to embed for leaders renewing [their appointments]. In the absence of the DC no clarification of this statement was possible.

b. Finance Sub-Committee:

The sub-committee had reviewed the Governance Document at its meeting on 5 October 2016. For many there had been no change of the RAG status; of note, had been:

Risk 4 (Reserves Policy): Remained as 'Amber' as some work still needed to refine the policy.

Risk 6 (Financial Controls and Budget Management): Re-graded from 'Amber' to 'Green' in view of improved budget monitoring, particularly.

Risk 9 (Group Accounts): Remained as 'Red' in view of the difficulties in obtaining accounts from Groups (and in the required format).

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Risk 10 (Financial Planning): Had been re-graded from 'Amber' to 'Green' in view of improved financial planning (for District events especially).

c. 14–25 Finance and Support Group:

The Chairman proposed that as this Group had only recently been re-formed that review be deferred until May 2017. This proposal was agreed.

### **E733 Secretary's Report / Correspondence**

a. Trustee Declarations

Declarations were required to be completed annually by all Trustees. Pro-formas were circulated to members who had not so far returned declarations.

#### **Action: Committee members**

b. Business Rates

Notification had been received from the Valuation Office Agency of draft changes to rateable values for 2017/18 for 3/4 Moor Street. Online information indicated that the current RV was £8800, previously (2008) £6500, and draft RV would be £10250. Discretionary Rate Relief had been granted by the City Council for the full amount previously.

### **E734 Treasurer's Report**

a. Balances at 11th November 2016

The reduction in the Cubs' restricted fund balance followed a decision to transfer expenditure from the budget to the restricted fund, with a view to reducing the balance on this fund to nil by 31st December 2016.

b. Sharpe Bequest grant applications

Three Groups had been paid, and the other two applicants reminded of the 30th November time limit for submitting evidence of expenditure.

### **E735 Budget for 2017:**

**a. District** (other than Activity Centres)

The Treasurer reported that on the 'Receipts' side the Scout Association levy would be increasing by £1.00. The proposal was to keep the same total overall by reducing the District Levy from £10.50 to £9.50, making a total proposed levy per head of £36.50. Based on a total District membership of 1400, total receipts were estimated to be £16,103 (including shop contribution etc. as detailed).

On the 'Expenses' side £10,280 had been allocated to Budget Holders, HQ budgeted payments were estimated at £11,800 making a total of £22,080 – proposing a budgeted loss of £5977. It had been acknowledged by the Finance sub-Committee that in making these recommendations a deficit budget had been produced but they had recognised: There would be sufficient 'free cash' carried-forward at the end of this financial year. Historically, budgets had been under spent.

Concerning the Jamboree fund levy the Chairman outlined that it had been proposed to retain the existing 50p per head for reasons outlined and with a view to sending (an) additional Scout(s) to the next event (in the USA).

It was proposed by Steve Clarke, seconded by Tom Wilkinson, that the Budget for 2017 be accepted. Carried Nem Con.

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#### b. Activity Centres

The Chairman reported that the Finance Sub-Committee had reviewed the proposed budget statement and were satisfied with this.

Nigel Pullen highlighted various aspects of the statement.

It was proposed by Nigel Pullen, seconded by Howard Greenwood, that the Activity Centres Budget for 2017 be accepted. Carried Nem Con.

#### c. Activity Centres Charges:

The proposals for Activity Centres charges for 2017 were considered. These were generally felt to be reasonable and appeared, in the main, comparable with other similar facilities in the North West.

It was proposed by Nigel Pullen, seconded by John Edwards, that the Activity Centres Charges for 2017 be accepted. Carried Nem Con.

It was agreed that the revised charges would apply to new bookings for 2017 made after 22 November 2016; Prior bookings for 2017 would be charged at the 2015 rate.

### **E736 Finance sub-Committee Report:**

**a. The minutes of the FSC meetings** held on 5 October 2016 (confirmed) and on 10 November 2016 (draft) were received.

Howard Greenwood raised a query regarding the functionality of the 'Compass' system in view of the recommendation made to the FSC to purchase 10 licences for the Online Scout Manager (OSM) system - for use by Explorer Scout Units and for Young Leaders - at an ongoing annual commitment of £430. Members of the committee were not aware of any recent updates on 'Compass' or whether there was an intention for that system to provide the range of functions currently available on OSM. The Chairman agreed to make enquiries in this respect.

#### **Action: Chairman**

The recommendation to purchase 10 licences for OSM Gold+ to be funded from District Funds was approved.

#### **b. Annual Expenses Policy Review:**

It had previously been agreed that this policy would be reviewed each year at the time of the preparation of the District budget. The recommendation from the FSC to the District Executive that the policy be re-approved without amendment and that the mileage rate paid remain at 25p per mile, was accepted.

### **E737 14-25 Finance and Support Group Report:**

The minutes of meetings held on 20 September 2016 and 9 November 2016 were received.

The Chairman of the Group, David Bateman, highlighted that, in relation to Explorer Scout Units' funds, from the reports presented to the Group by the District Explorer Scout Administrator, it was evident that progress was being made in resolving financial matters for several of the Explorer Scout Units. Difficulties were being encountered with banks both in closing an old account and changing one of the signatories for another. It was the intention to transfer all accounts to Barclays Bank (all using on-line banking - thus enabling the District Explorer Scout Administrator to readily monitor all accounts). The introduction of the OSM system would be a valuable aid in managing these matters in the future.

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He asked that his thanks be recorded to members of the Group in helping his understanding of the situation and also of their appreciation of the work that the ES Administrator had undertaken. The District Chairman echoed these comments and thanked David Bateman for taking on this important role.

### **E738 Appointments Advisory Committee Report:**

John Edwards apologised for not having presented a written report owing to computer problems. He reported that 13 appointments had been recommended from the October and November meetings. There were currently 28 outstanding DBS requests; the Committee Secretary had contacted all concerned and offered help if required; 3 had contacted her, which was a positive start.

Howard Greenwood outlined some problems concerning the inter-connectivity of the 'Compass' and 'Atlantic Data' systems. The Chairman asked that details of a specific case be sent to him, and along with the DC, he would follow this up.

#### **Action: Howard Greenwood, Chairman, DC**

As promised at an earlier meeting John Edwards distributed for comment a Leader Appointment Process flow chart (confidential for now). He intended that this might be the first of a suite in this area.

He also highlighted the fact that Appointment Certificates were not currently being issued locally. On querying this with Scout HQ they had stated that they had not issued any such for the last 2 years. The Chairman agreed to discuss this with the DC and to report back.

#### **Action: Chairman, DC.**

### **E739 Activity Centres Management Board Report:**

The minutes of the ACMB meeting held on 15 November 2016 were received. Nigel Pullen reported that the Caton Emergency Plan discussed at a previous meeting was more about knowing where people might be for evacuation purposes.

The rent for the use of the Mortimer Centre at Silverhelme by Silverhelme ESU had now been agreed at £150 p.a. The Chairman indicated that he would ask the ES Administrator to communicate this to the ESU.

With regard to recent donations received in memory of former Scouts etc. Nigel had asked his Group for suggestions on how best to use this money. The £700 received following the funeral of Andrew Buckley would be used to replace archery equipment at Littledale; his family were happy with this. The sum would be supplemented by £500 from District funds – this sum to be spent by the end of the year.

Some severe maintenance problems had arisen at the Activity Centres:-

Littledale – the soak away for the drains from the lodge and warden's cabin needed attention at a cost of £2600. He had authorised the work to go ahead from the budget.

SilverHelme - in the lodge, the floor joists between the toilet in the girls' toilet, under the boys' toilet and up to, but not under the kitchen, were rotten and suffering wet rot. The partition walls were also affected and had been removed as had the shower walls. The work was being done by the Warden and his volunteers, for the cost of materials, saving the District in the order of £6,000 if the work had been done by contractor.

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**SilverHelme toilet block** replacement has suffered a delay in that in the drawings there was not one for the slab. Acknowledging Tony Pilling's illness he had still responded to a request to provide this. Details were passed to Andrew Kayll to pursue quotations.

From the financial point of view Nigel believed that there were sufficient funds to cover the - as yet unknown - total building costs. The calculations included a grant-in-aid of £20,000 (which remains valid, although approval for it had been given some time ago).

The District Chairman indicated that he was still pursuing the possibility of a further grant. VAT exemption was also being looked at. He requested that representatives of the ACMB meet with him to finalise budget once full costings had been obtained.. Chairman's action could be instigated if urgency to proceed was a factor.

#### **Action: Chairman ACMB, District Chairman**

#### **E740 Network Commissioner's Report:**

Harriet Butterfield gave a final report as she was moving to Bath. Members would be taking part in the 2017 Explorer Belt expedition to Finland. Queen's Scout expeditions were also being planned for next year. Network neckerchiefs had been ordered. A joint Explorer/Network Christmas Camp was being held at SilverHelme from 10/11 December.

Wishing her well in her new situation the Chairman thanked Harriet for her valuable contribution to the work of the District.

#### **E741 District Headquarters Lease:**

A new lease for the District's occupancy of 3-4 Moor Street commenced on 1 August 2014 and runs for six years (to 31 July 2020). As reported to the Executive Committee previously, there is provision for either side to terminate the lease after three years (at the time of the rent review). It is required that either party shall give the other at least six months' notice, in writing, of such intent. In this context, notice must be given (by either party) by 31 January 2017.

The Chairman reported that he had conducted a survey of users to determine to what extent the premises met our (current, perceived) needs. Whilst not everyone responded to the questionnaire the conclusion had been that the premises met the District's requirements for most purposes. Some comments had highlighted a car parking issue and there were some problems with storage. Nevertheless it was agreed that the District should not take up the option to terminate the lease at this stage.

#### **E742 District Commissioner's Report:**

As the DC had been unavoidably detained at work the Chairman presented his report, which was taken as read.

The Chairman reinforced the DC's comments regarding the success of the District Camp and the enjoyment of the District Ball.

#### **E743 Health and Safety Report:**

Two incidents were reported to the committee.

Two accidents, correctly reported, at Silverhelme AC.

The collapse of a chair in DHQ involving minor injury ('accident reported', as required).

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**E744 Any Other Business****Private Minute:**

The Chairman outlined a matter for the information of the committee, which is reported in a 'Private' minute, for reasons of confidentiality (at this stage).

**Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 18 January 2017.**

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