



MINUTES of the meeting of the LONSDALE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held on the 23 January 2020 at District Headquarters, Moor Street, Lancaster.

Present: T Andrews (Chair), M Sweet (DC), S Clarke (Treasurer), A S Hague (Secretary), D Bateman, J Carbert, H Greenwood, S Landles.

Apologies Received: K Caldicott, S. Mather, L Maun, R Parker, C Seton, D Smith.

Not Present: T Wilkinson.

Welcome:

On behalf of the Committee the Chair introduced and welcomed Steve Landles, newly appointed Chair of the Finance sub-Committee, to his first Executive meeting.

Chair's 'Thought for the Day':

"There's no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing." – HRH The Princess Royal (recent interview).

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2019 were agreed as an accurate record subject to the following amendment: -

Minute E908 Treasurer's Report: Regarding the DHQ rent, the Treasurer stated that he had mentioned that he had included within the budget an allowance for a 10% increase from August 2020.

Matters Arising:

Nil.

E919 Secretary's Report / Correspondence

Annual Scout Census

This was once again due on 31 January. The DC and himself had attended a meeting at County that had outlined a change to previous years to improve the quality of the information, which it was intended would provide more accurate data for future planning and to better understand the provision within the County. Information would be submitted to County via a dedicated new spreadsheet, which it was envisaged would make the GSLs role in the process a little easier.

Full details had recently been circulated to GSLs and others of what was required, timescales etc. Commenting on the latter Howard Greenwood wished it to be recorded that he felt that the current timescales gave too short notice to those filling in returns.

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Donation

The Secretary had been contacted by email by a lady who was, with her sister, executors of an elderly gentleman who has recently died. She had indicated that they would like to make a donation to the "local scouts" of £500. Although the District's bank details had been sent to her the Treasurer reported that he had not received any such donation to date. The Secretary agreed to contact the donor to check the position.

Action: Secretary

E920 Governance:

i. Communications Mast at SilverHelme

As agreed at the previous meeting the Chair reported that he had written to the District's solicitors to reflect the comments made on the draft Deed of Liability; the solicitor involved had been sympathetic to what had been said and she had communicated the comments to the SATC.

The Chair also reported that he had written himself to the SATC to express the District's concerns over the general poor handling of this whole matter, as recorded in a private minute E 918. He had taken the advice of the CC, who had commented that our experience was not unique. He had received a reply, which had expressed apologies for the delays and lack of service and indicated that changes were ongoing within the Corporation to improve future performance. He would be contacting our solicitor to progress the matter.

Action: Chair

E921 Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurer's report was received, a copy is attached to these minutes.

a. Debtors

- i. **Scout & Guide Shop**, monthly payment due 1 January 2020 £100, plus LDSC share of any surplus for the year to 31 March 2019. In response to a query from the Treasurer concerning the present position with the 'Shop' accounts the Chair indicated that he was liaising with Tracy Seton to expedite the production of these.
- ii. **Due from participators in events.** It appeared that a number of payments (possibly totalling several hundreds of pounds) were still outstanding from events which had taken place over the preceding 3 months. He would need to contact event's organisers to try to reconcile the amounts in issue. Although the numbers were small in relation to the total transactions over the course of the year, they caused a disproportionate amount of unnecessary correspondence. He suggested that perhaps a reminder was needed to those Groups that are habitually late in paying their dues either direct to event's organisers or by BACS, that all monies should be accounted for within two weeks of the event, which includes badge purchases, might improve the situation?

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The DC confirmed that this involved six Groups, three of whom had now paid what was owed, the rest would be chased.

By way of clarification it was confirmed that the Event Leader was responsible for invoicing and chasing fees and notifying the District Treasurer of progress. The Chair agreed to check if this situation was covered in financial procedures.

Action: Chair

b. Creditors

- i. **Yorkshire Energy** £99.50 due 2/1/20, not collected as the company had failed on three occasions since July '19 to set up a direct debit. No reply or acknowledgement had been received to a letter sent to the managing director on 28th November last enclosing a cheque covering the first five payments due. However, the cheque had been presented. It appeared that this company is under-resourced both financially and in staffing.
- ii. **Borwick & Priest Hutton Memorial Hall** (Knight Event 16/11/19) An invoice had now been received. Amount due was £108, less £25 for the premises having been left clean and tidy (according to the organiser). I am not aware of any other creditors.

c. **Accounts year ended 31st December 2019** There are more loose ends than usual in connection with the preparation of the accounts – please see i. and ii. above.

d. **Membership fees** The Treasurer hoped that the deadline for payment of fees would be or had been set at 29th February 2020, to enable the payment to County to be made by their deadline, usually the first week in April.

e. **Current funds** Spreadsheet attached.

E922 Finance Sub-Committee:

No meetings of the Committee had been held since the last Executive meeting.

With regard to Group accounts submitted the Chair indicated that the 2nd Bolton le Sands Group had now sent him some otherwise the position remained as minuted at the previous meeting. The DC agreed to chase progress.

Action: DC

E923 14-25 Finance and Support Group:

In the absence of the Group's Chair the District Chair reported from a meeting held that only two Units were not now using Barclays for banking as recommended. Unit finances were generally looking good. Explorer numbers were looking positive but there were some leader vacancies.

The DC reported the resignation with effect from 23 January of the DESComm for personal reasons, which also impacted on leadership of the Odyssey Unit.

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An issue had been identified with the storage, booking out and return of District Explorer equipment. It was suggested that an up to date inventory was needed and procedures introduced to effectively manage issue and return and maintenance of said equipment.

Discussion took place on which Unit would be responsible for membership fees payment where an Explorer attended more than one Unit. It was well established that the Unit that received the member's subs should pay the capitation fee. In the case in question it was recommended that Units should decide between themselves on the proportion to be paid by each.

E924 Appointments Advisory Committee Report:

The Chair of the Committee's report was received for information.

The AAC had met on December 18th and on January 15th, on both occasions at 16th Lancaster HQ, which had enabled them to run two panels, and make recommendations to approve 11 applications. They planned to meet again on January 29th and February 25th. This had helped to reduce the number of applications pending and ready for interview to 9, 5 of whom were already booked in for the meetings in January or February. The number still awaiting references had reduced from 40 in November to 27 as at 12/01/2020, with 3 still awaiting DBS clearance. Tracy Seton's report to the AAC in November listed some of the issues which needed to be resolved. Briefly, these fell into three groups:

- Accuracy of information put on to 'Compass'
- Difficulty in obtaining references
- GSLs not understanding their role in the appointments process

He knew that the Appointments Secretary has discussed these issues with the DC, and that they would be raising them at the next GSLs meeting.

He wished to add that, as panel members, they continued to be impressed by the quality and enthusiasm of volunteers they saw at their meetings, and he would like to add that at each recent meeting, they had seen university students who have had considerable involvement in Scouting 'at home', and were keen to keep their involvement by offering their services to local Groups. Thanks were expressed again to 16th Lancaster for hosting the recent meetings – it was really helpful to be able to run two panels; and thanks to the panel members who have made themselves available at this very busy time of year.

E925 Activity Centres Management Board:

The minutes of the Board's meeting held on 9 January 2020 were received for information. In response to a query the District Chair confirmed that the new booking system would definitely be GDPR compliant. He also highlighted the very good work carried out recently during the environment weekend on the paths etc. at Littledale.

He expressed concern that actions/remedial work that had been identified in reports in years gone by had not been carried out, citing an asbestos survey report as an example. Following discussion at the Board meeting there had been agreement that the recommended course of action to leave such material undisturbed wherever possible was the way forward, whilst ensuring the Wardens were aware of its presence. It had been

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agreed that two doors in Helme Lodge that had been identified as containing asbestos should be replaced (they are not fire doors) and these doors be disposed of safely. Correspondence on the Limestone Preservation Order (LPO) covering the SilverHelme site had also been considered by the Board in relation to possible work to improve the main driveway. After consideration it was felt that in view of the time that had elapsed since the matter was first brought to the attention of the District there was nothing to be gained by raising the matter under consideration with the relevant authorities.

E926 Explorer Report:

The DC reported that Dave Squirrell (DESComm) had stepped down from that role and also leadership of the Odyssey ESU with effect from 23 January for personal reasons. He had agreed to continue to support the D of E programme. Other Explorer leaders would be covering the role until a new appointment could be made. The number of members at Odyssey had declined in recent times with most dispersing to other Units. A suggestion from the DC to perhaps move the base to Carnforth HQ was not felt to be a favoured option. A decision on a preferred way forward could be informed based on census numbers. Following the good work carried out at Littledale it was proposed to hold a similar Environment Weekend event this year at SilverHelme.

E927 Network Report:

The Network Commissioner was pleased to report that a programme of social events up to December 2020 had been drawn up by the members themselves, which was pleasing. Upcoming events included attendance at the County organised Founder's Feast, the annual Network Gathering at Great Tower and a top awards drop-in evening.

E928 District Commissioner's Report:

Programme –

There had been lots of Christmas events, all had been well attended.

The plans for St. George's Day 2020 were being finalized; this year our celebration would be held in Lancaster.

Loads of District and County camps were being planned for 2020, including District Camp at Bowley and the Lonsdale Social.

There were some new events in the programme this year, including a football competition and a 'Greenfield' camp.

Group Support –

District was still supporting 3rd Morecambe in Cubs and Scouts, but they are currently on the UK development resources trial and so there was hope that things would start to improve.

Also now supporting 1st Halton Beavers after Sarah MacDonald stood down. 2 new leaders were in place, currently going through the appointments process.

All GSL's now had an @lonsdalescouts.org.uk e-mail address and they were being supported to make sure that they have managed the log on process before the 'Information for GSL Day', being held by County, and the Census Information sent out.

Development and Growth –

1st Carnforth are holding an open night to promote second Beaver, Cub and Scout sections.

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Census was looming and meetings had been held to understand the new GDPR compliant online system that has been built by Jon Minshull and Andy Marsden.

Internationals -

Recruitment for the planned Lonsdale International trip to Sweden in 2021 had begun and currently 3 leader applications had been received.

Lonsdale had leaders on all the current County trips and Terry Bond had been selected to lead Explorer Belt in 2021.

The Chair highlighted again that no fee amounts should be published for locally organised events until budgets had been approved by the Finance sub-committee.

Appointments -

The DC was pleased to report that Craig Pyne had taken the role of GSL at 11th Morecambe and Yvonne Johnson moved over to be the Chair. These roles would be better suited to their strengths, with Craig having been a GSL previously. He has lots of management experience.

Awards -

The District Good Service Awards Reception held at Leighton Hall had been a fantastic success. The feedback to the DC had been all positive. The next awards were in the processing stage and some nominations had already been sent submitted to TSA.

E929 Health and Safety Report:

Nothing to report on this occasion.

E930 Any Other Business:

None raised.

Date of Next Meeting: 18 March 2020

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