



**MINUTES of the meeting of the LONSDALE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held on the 20 March 2019 at District Headquarters, Moor Street, Lancaster.**

**Present:** T Andrews (Chair), Mandy Sweet (DC), A S Hague (Secretary), D Bateman, J Carbert, H Greenwood, D Squirrell, T Wilkinson.

**Apologies Received:** S Clarke, L Maun, R Parker, D Smith.

**In Attendance:** Jon Minshull.

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

Remember, 'For man to discover new oceans, he must have the courage to lose sight of the shore.' Anon.

**Congratulations:**

Hearty congratulations were extended to the District Secretary and David Wilkinson (SASU Manager) on the recent award of the Silver Wolf to both. The Silver Wolf is the highest award made by The Scout Association "for services of the most exceptional nature." It is the unrestricted gift of the Chief Scout.

**Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

**Matters Arising:**

**District Headquarters Building**

The Chair reported that the Treasurer, who had dealt with the landlord in the past, had spoken to him regarding his intentions on any future plans for the premises when the District's lease expired. It appeared likely that the lease might be renewed (subject to negotiation) as it was unlikely that the premises would be adapted for student accommodation (unlike the proposals for adjacent property, also owned by our landlord).

**E867 Secretary's Report / Correspondence**

The annual rate account for the Moor Street premises had been received from Lancaster City Council showing that discretionary rate relief entitlement had once more been granted for 12 months from 1 April 2019. The gross charge £5166.00; Mandatory Charitable Relief £4132.80; Discretionary Charitable Relief £1033.20. Amount due Nil.

Referring to a letter, forwarded by the District Treasurer, received from the Group Treasurer 53<sup>rd</sup> Lancaster complaining about not having received the Group's Membership subscription

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invoice in good time the Secretary indicated that he had checked his email records and these showed that a copy of the information sent to the Group's GSL had been sent at the same time to the Group's Treasurer at her correct address.

### **E868 Treasurer's Report:**

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

i. **Debtors**

Scout & Guide Shop, LDSC share of any surplus for the year to 31/3/18.  
Membership fees – see para. v. below.

ii. **Creditors**

None

iii. **Accounts year ended 31st December 2018**

The Chair reported that it was his understanding that the preparation of the Annual Report and Accounts [for the Charity Commission] was nearing completion.

iv. **Current funds**

Spreadsheet attached.

v. **Membership fees**

All Explorer Units have paid their dues, representing a substantial improvement over previous year.

Of the 24 Groups, 21 have paid, 2 have asked for, and have been granted, time to pay, and he had heard nothing from one Group. The total outstanding is £4788, about 9% of the total due from the District. Phased payment plans were to be considered where necessary.

A payment of £39,704 has been made to County, for 1418 members at £28 per head. This was paid in advance of the due date in order to reduce funds in CAF Bank to below the £85,000 compensation limit, in accordance with District policy.

### **E869 Finance Sub-Committee,**

The minutes of the FSC meeting held on 7 February 2019 were received.

#### **World Scout Jamboree:**

The Treasurer had noted that, at that stage, fund-raising receipts had been well below the anticipated level required. The Chair advised that a large contribution had been received in the meantime.

#### **Sharpe Bequest:**

With the £100,000 capital fund held in two accounts both due to mature in about six months' time, it had been agreed that the Treasurer should investigate the options available to moving some (or all) of this capital fund from cash deposits into equities (units trusts, OEICs or investment trusts). It had been agreed that the District should seek such an investment to yield income rather than capital increase. It had further been agreed to re-visit the matter of indexing the capital value of the fund by reference to the Consumer Price Index once this research has been conducted (and recommendations made to the District Executive Committee).

#### **Surpluses and Deficits - District Events and Activities:**

Arising from a recent question in relation to surpluses generated by District events and activities, the sub-Committee had re-visited and re-confirmed existing procedures:

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(1) The budgeting process is as set-out in the *Financial Management* document (approved by the District Executive Committee). It is acknowledged that on occasions, a number larger than the pessimistic estimate of likely number [as used in the budget calculations] does not result in a pro-rata increase in expenditure. As such a larger than anticipated surplus will be generated.

(2) There can be no carry-forward from one financial year to the next of such surpluses.

(3) In certain circumstances, a surplus generated by one Section event can be used to part-subsidise another event (in the same financial year) - subject to the approval of the DC and in consultation with the Treasurer.

(4) It should be noted that as District Funds will have to be used to underwrite possible losses incurred in organising events and activities, it is only reasonable that any surplus is absorbed into District funds. It should be noted that two events were run at a loss in the last financial year.

**The District Executive Committee re-confirmed this procedure**, as contained within the *Financial Management* document

#### **E870 14-25 Finance and Support Group:**

The notes of the meeting held on 6 March 2019 were received.

The increase reported in Explorer Scout numbers was welcomed as was the good progress being made in the Section. Units were now in a much better position financially.

A suggestion from the sub-Committee to write off the sums of £183.00 for Membership Subscriptions for 2016 and £255.50 for 2017 incurred for Saints ESU was noted (subject to research by the District Chair). These had originally been paid from the District Explorer Scout Fund. It had been the feeling that these sums should not be a burden on the current Explorer Scouts who were not members when these debts were incurred.

The records of Lonsdale Network members shown on Compass had been reviewed by the Network Commissioner and he had now revised these to show only current members.

The DC agreed to notify the Network Commissioner of any leaders leaving their roles who might be approached to become/remain as Network members.

**Action: DC**

#### **E871 Appointments Advisory Committee Report:**

David Bateman reported that he had met with Tracy (AAC Secretary) and the DC to go through the list of outstanding applications. Using guidance from POR, (and with reference to discussion at the January Executive meeting) they were able to reduce the number of applicants for whom an interview was required, and therefore recommended immediate approval of a number of outstanding applications.

The AAC had met in January at 1st Carnforth's new HQ, and twice in February at DHQ. and had been able to recommend approval of 12 applications. A panel had also met with DDC Andrew Blenkinsip in February, to review a suspension, and had made an appropriate recommendation to the DC.

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In line with best practice as described in POR, the AAC Secretary had managed to recruit two members under 25, one of whom attended the meeting at Carnforth as an observer. They continued to look for additional members of the AAC with a view to widening the demographic. They also continued to explore the use of other venues, and the April meeting was scheduled for 17th April at 16th Lancaster HQ.

The AAC had met on the preceding Tuesday when four more appointments had been able to be recommended. Six applications were awaiting interview. Approx. forty applications were awaiting DBS clearance or references.

Mark Bleasdale had attended as an observer and would be joining the committee.

### **E872 Activity Centres Management Board:**

The minutes of the ACMB Meeting held on 5 March 2019 were received. The District Chair highlighted the following:

#### **Minute 3.b. Donation to SilverHelme AC.:**

The ACMB Secretary had drawn up a costed list of proposed items of activity equipment that might be purchased in line with the donors' suggestions. This was being progressed.

#### **Minute 3.d. Making Activities Self-Fund:**

The ACMB had proposed that a higher charge be made to users of on-site activities when they used Lonsdale-provided instructors. It had been agreed that the charge to users providing their own instructor should be £20 for a maximum 3-hour period and £30 when using Lonsdale instructors (same period). The decision was noted.

#### **Minute 9. Bookings Secretary's report:**

Discussion had taken place on the situation where some Groups coming for the weekend, to save money, were only booking one night in the lodge with some Leaders camping on the Friday. Alternatively, a booking would be made for a Saturday night but the party arrived early on the Saturday morning and did not leave until late afternoon on the Sunday. It had been agreed to recommend to the Executive that lodge charges should be made per 24 hours or per day rather than per night to address this anomaly. **The Executive supported this proposal** (for implementation at an appropriate point).

Regarding a proposition that the scale of charges might be adjusted to allow for smaller groups to use the lodges, in discussion Howard Greenwood suggested that it might be left to the Booking Secretary's discretion to assess individual circumstances and to possibly allow short notice bookings where the lodges would otherwise be vacant. It was agreed to refer the matter back to the ACMB with the Executive's comments.

#### **Action: Chair**

The Chair highlighted that £7,000 had been spent at Littledale recently to provide 2 new gas boilers for hot water and also a new cooker. Grants had been secured to meet this cost. The meeting acknowledged the work of the District Secretary and Chair in facilitating these purchases. The Chair indicated that there was still work to do including PAT testing and electrical inspection condition reports and fully implementing the Fire Officer's report. This was ongoing.

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It had been agreed to hold Open Days at Littledale on 1 June and SilverHelme on 2 June 2019 to promote the centres and to tap a gap in the market. The Chair had agreed to write a letter of invite to schools and DofE Award Providers; Lonsdale's leaders would be informed through the established channels.

Finally, the Health & Safety documents and booking conditions agreed at the previous meeting had now been placed on the District's website together with site Risk Assessments for both centres. Copies of these documents would be placed on the Lodges' notice boards.

### **E873 Explorer Section:**

Dave Squirrell reported that the formation of a new Unit in Caton (name yet to be decided by members) was progressing well. The Section had recently held a successful all Units' meeting, which had been very positive. Leaders had been identified for the County Explorer Camp and a proposal to hold the District's own Environment Camp at SilverHelme was being progressed.

The system for Explorer Scouts gaining awards had not functioned well in the past but this had now been addressed and it was anticipated that this would be much better in the future.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award had been rolled out, delivered by the District, and there had been excellent take up with 18 Scouts working on the Bronze Award and 12 on the Silver.

Regarding contact that had been made by Ulverston Rotary looking to promote contact with Explorer Units the Chair, from his knowledge of the organisation, outlined the particular aspect of the initiative for this age group, known as the Interact Club. After discussion, the DC proposed that working in parallel might be a consideration but not a partnership.

Dave Squirrell also reported on a workshop that he had attended recently along with the Network Commissioner on a possible partnership between The Scouts and the National Citizen Service (NCS). He outlined the pros and cons of such an arrangement. A view was expressed that the NCS were "moving onto our turf" and that Scouting should be promoting our own excellent and well tested programme. The Chair suggested the District should keep a watching brief, which was agreed.

### **E874 Network Report**

Reporting on the proposal that each District Network within the County was to organise an event monthly, the Network Commissioner stated that the first one had been held at Blackpool, the next would be in Lonsdale. His feeling was that, mainly because of logistics, these were unlikely to work.

Regarding Network members offering to volunteer at the Activity Centres the DC reported that she had requested Wardens to draw up a list of jobs that volunteers might do.

### **E875 District Commissioner's Report:**

The DC presented her report as follows: -

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## Programme

The St. George's Day celebration is planned and being run by the District Youth Commissioners. This year it is taking place on Sunday 28th April in Morecambe. We will parade from The Battery to the Dome area. We have booked 'Batala' again.

All Sections have district camps planned for this year.

Unfortunately, the Chess Competition had to be cancelled due to lack of interest.

## Group Support

We are currently supporting 3rd Morecambe in Cubs and Scouts and Silverdale Beavers.

## Development and Growth

The Census showed a growth of Young People: all except Cubs had growth with Explorers showing the biggest growth.

We have been asked by Morecambe Carnival Committee to run some activities, and we are hopefully running fencing and axe throwing (August 10 & 11). We are going to use this as an opportunity for recruitment. We would like to hire a mobile climbing wall.

The embryo ESU based in Caton has a taster session planned for 1st April, opening fully on 29th April. There has been good response to the visits that we have made to Hornby, Caton and Halton Scouts. Steve Sweet and Paul Geddes will lead on this for us with the hope of finding a permanent leader.

We have decided to leave The Ridge project due to lack of interest both by parents and young people.

## Appointments

Want to Join Enquiries - Carole Wilkinson has stepped down from this role and I would like to record our thanks for all her hard work. **Nikki Orton** will be taking over the role.

**Callum Seton, Drew Holland and Mark Bleasdale** have all agreed to join the Appointments Advisory Committee. This has boosted their numbers and they are now able to run two panels whenever possible. **The Executive approved these appointments.**

## Awards

Alan Hague and David Wilkinson have both been awarded The Silver Wolf. The Silver Wolf is the highest award made by The Scout Association "for services of the most exceptional nature." It is the unrestricted gift of the Chief Scout. Congratulations to them both.

## Risks

We currently need GSL's at 3rd Morecambe, 1st Slyne-with-Hest, 2nd Bolton-le-Sands, 16th Lancaster and 3rd Hornby. Possible appointments were in train at 3rd Morecambe and 3rd Hornby.

## E876 Health and Safety Report:

### SilverHelme Toilet Block:

Howard Greenwood asked if the Building Regulations had yet been signed off. The Chair stated that he had emailed the builder to ascertain if he had replied to the Council's queries but had received no reply. He undertook to write formally to him. Regarding a query on the safety of the structure supporting the water tank Dave Squirrell agreed to investigate.

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## Action: Chair, Dave Squirrel

### E877 2018-2023 strategy: Skills for Life:

Jon Minshull outlined details of the national strategy 2018-2023.

*“Our Vision - By 2023 we will have prepared more young people with skills for life, supported by amazing leaders delivering an inspiring programme. We will be growing, more inclusive, shaped by young people and making a bigger impact in our communities.”*

Between 2014-2018, the movement had worked towards the ‘Scouting for All’ plan that focused on four strategic objectives: Growth, Inclusivity, Community Impact and Youth Shaped. The latest strategy, which was felt to be more succinct, included a plan of action to increase volunteer support and extend the movement’s reach to more young people. This plan of action included three pillars of work; **programme, people** and **perception**.

The County were in the process of developing their strategy based on the above and the District now needed to do likewise. The launch of the County strategy document was imminent and this would be in the form of a glossy brochure. County had added a fourth ‘pillar’ – **places**.

Jon indicated that his current role in Lonsdale had changed from managing to a task based one to facilitate the development of the strategy.

The proposed timeline for developing the Lonsdale strategy document was as follows: -

- 1 April Deputy DC’s meeting
- 8 April Strategy Planning Launch (with cross section of District members) -  
This meeting to be held at 16th Morecambe’s HQ in the evening. Members were encouraged to pre-read the County strategy prior to this meeting.

‘Pillar’ owners would be identified to be responsible for a particular pillar. A consolidation meeting was planned for 7 May with first draft and consultation by 20 May.

The DC stated that this strategy would be more succinct with set aims that were more do-able. It would be easier to check progress against and be more measurable.

Jon also explained the background to the adoption of **MS Office 365** by West Lancs County and the features that would be available to Lonsdale members.

### E878 Any Other Business

#### District President:

The Chair reported that he had an appointment shortly to see Suzie Reynolds to see if she now wished to continue. Both Suzie and he had a person in mind if she did not and was authorised to take appropriate actions.

#### District Constitution:

The Chair indicated that the DC and himself would be considering possibilities as one of the current under-25 trustees that the constitution required would shortly attain the age of 25.

**Date of Next Meeting:** 21 May 2019.

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