

**MINUTES of the meeting of the LONSDALE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held on 25 March 2021 online.**

**Present:** T Andrews (Chair), M Sweet (DC), S Landles (Treasurer), A S Hague (Secretary), L Ash, D Bateman, J Carbert, B Goldsworthy, C Kellett, S Mather, L Maun, R Parker.

**Apologies Received:** H Greenwood.

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

"The Invisible Killer – Coronavirus, oh what a killer, It's like a movie, a horror, a thriller, It's funny to think, we're living real life history. A labyrinth, a maze, or a mystery. Oh what a killer, a life-threatening disease, NHS workers being strong but still not at ease, They work lots of hours till the break of dawn, Loads of worries and strife but don't let out a single yawn. Now when we can see each other again and give them help, Going to our favourite restaurants and rating them on 'Yelp', Even though it's not over, who are we to blame? Will it ever be normal, will things be the same?" Gurdas (a Year 6 pupil of Ribbleton Avenue Methodist Junior School, Preston).

**Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

**Matters Arising:**

**i. Lancaster BID**

The recent ballot, reported at the previous meeting, had affirmed the continuation of the initiative for a further 5 years. The Chair requested Louise Ash, as our appointed liaison, to sign up for the BID Newsletter and to advise the meeting of any appropriate developments.

**Action: Louise Ash**

**E980 Secretary's Report / Correspondence:**

No correspondence had been received. Just to note that the landlord had been advised of an issue with the rear exit door at DHQ, which was in a poor state of repair and needed attention. He had agreed to look into this and take any necessary action.

**E981 Annual Scout Census 2021**

The abstract of results, prepared by the Secretary, had been circulated for information. The spreadsheets recorded the differences in numbers of young people between 2020 and 2021. The actual decrease, resulting from the pandemic and loss of face-to-face Scouting, had been 20.7% as against 25% anticipated at a previous

meeting. Loss numbers in the County had ranged from 30% to 20%. The Chair wished to thank the DC and her team for work involved in encouraging Groups to contact their members to confirm their continuing membership.

The DC was pleased with the overall result compared to other Districts in the County. It was clear that those Groups and Units that had held meetings on Zoom and maintained contact with their members had fared better than those who hadn't. She felt that there were some questions over some of the numbers reported by some Groups. The Beaver section had lost most members overall, which was understandable, but should be the quickest to recover. As soon as face to face meetings could be resumed a priority would be to contact 'lost' members and encourage them to return. There were some positives in some section numbers. Her main concern at the present time was the loss in leader numbers, which needed to be addressed along with other particular issues in certain Groups e.g., finding a meeting place.

The meeting noted in the DC's report that the Odyssey ESU was now officially closed.

#### **E982 Governance:**

##### **i. Sub-Committee Terms of Reference**

The Chair presented his paper outlining that the Terms of Reference of the Executive's sub-Committees are scheduled to be reviewed in May 2021. At the present time (and in the current circumstances) he believed they were still currently fit for purpose.

He had therefore recommended that those for:

- Activity Centres Management Board
- Appointments Advisory Committee
- Awards Advisory Committee
- Finance sub-Committee

remain extant and be reviewed more comprehensively in time for a meeting of the Executive in May 2022.

All the current Terms of Reference are available to view on the [District website](#).

Following a meeting of interested parties, he was currently working on a draft of a revision of the Terms of Reference for the 14-25 Finance and Support Group, which he proposed to share in the near future with those who took part in the discussions earlier in the year. before submitting them to the Executive for approval.

The Chair's recommendation was approved.

##### **ii. Annual General Meeting**

Following the established pattern, the AGM should take place on 24 June 2021. Everything was in place to hold the meeting on that date. Covid restrictions, all being well, would be released only days before and so the Chair's recommendation was to hold the meeting virtually, again. Members felt that

realistically this would be the best option owing to uncertainties over the Covid situation.

**iii. District Constitution**

For reasons outlined the District had its own constitution, based on POR, and this was due for review. As with the sub-Committee Terms of Reference the Chair was of the opinion that now was not the time to do that. However, one short amendment was proposed as a consequence of changes in POR. This was to include the following:

“Electronic voting (such as email) is allowed for decision making of the District Executive Committee and its sub-Committees when deemed appropriate by the Chair. In such instances at least 75% of committee members must approve the decision.

The District Executive Committee and its sub-Committees can meet by telephone conference, video conference as well as face to face in order to discharge their responsibilities when agreed by the appropriate Chair.”

The Chair’s proposal was accepted and would be put forward for approval at the AGM.

**E983 Finance Sub-Committee:**

**i Finance Officer’s Report**

The Treasurer wished to highlight the following: -

**a. Membership Subscriptions**

The report had recorded 3 Groups not having paid their dues. Two of these had subsequently paid and he did not anticipate a problem with the remaining one. It had not been necessary to use any of the funds put aside locally for loans to help struggling Groups.

The overall financial position was healthy and there should be adequate funds available to meet any initiatives that might be necessary to get Scouting in Lonsdale back up and running.

The Chair reported that four local Groups had requested and received support from the national fund set up to help needy Groups via the process outlined in the census returns. All four were Groups who did not have their own headquarters building and did not have access to the associated Retail Leisure & Hospitality support fund.

**b. Business Support Grant**

The City Council had recently written to the District Secretary, via email, seeking bids against these funds. The Finance Officer’s view was that he thought that the District did not qualify under the terms of the scheme as our shop income had not been that affected. As a Council representative had phoned again the Treasurer suggested that the District might apply anyway and let them decide on the facts as presented. There was a consensus view

that the District should apply as any funds granted could be used to help groups working with depleted resources, for example.  
The Treasurer would pursue the matter in liaison with the Finance Officer.

**Action: Treasurer**

**E984 Finance Sub-Committee:**

**i Approval of Annual Accounts for Year ended 31 December 2020**

The outstanding items reported at the previous meeting, viz the Scout & Guide Shop accounts and the Trustees' Report had subsequently been received and the accounts had been scrutinised by the Finance Sub-Comm. and examined by the Independent Examiner. Some minor amendments suggested had been actioned.

The Treasurer issued a caveat concerning the relatively positive position in the 'core' accounts in that the majority of the income came in before the pandemic started. The position was also flattered by the government grants received.

No issues or concerns were raised by the meeting.

**Proposed** that the annual accounts for the year ended 31 Dec 2020 be approved:  
Proposed by Stephen Landles, seconded by David Bateman

The draft accounts were approved with no dissensions and these would be signed on behalf of all trustees by the Chair and DC. These would be formally presented to the District at the AGM on 24 June. It was agreed that the accounts be placed on the District's website prior to the AGM.

**Action: Chair, DC, Treasurer, Secretary.**

**ii Fidelity Investment Application**

The updated application document, with the requested identity verification documents, had now been submitted.

**iii Minutes of FSC Meetings 14 Jan 2021, 11 March 2021**

The minutes of the March meeting were received. The minutes for the January meeting would be circulated once a necessary amendment had been made by the FSC Secretary.

**E985 Appointments Advisory Committee Report**

Firstly, the Chair wished to place on record his thanks to David Bateman, Tracy Seton and the committee for all the successful work carried out under changed circumstances during the preceding year.

The DC added her thanks also particularly in persuading committee members to embrace the Zoom platform.

The Committee Chair highlighted that one particular advantage in these revised arrangements had been the ability to hold two panels satisfactorily simultaneously.

Applications were now up to date and the committee's aspiration was that Groups should have sufficient leaders in place once face to face Scouting resumed.

#### **E986 Activity Centres Management Board:**

The minutes of the ACMB meeting held on 10 March 2021 were received. The Board was looking to develop a strategy document and a long-term plan and these would be brought to a future meeting for discussion.

Both Activity Centres remain closed, in line with current COVID-19 guidance. The Wardens, supported by a small team of volunteers, continue to visit both sites to carry out essential maintenance and ensure the sites are safe and secure.

It is envisaged that the sites would reopen for day visits on 29 March, in line with current guidance. Bookings should continue to be made via the current booking system.

A further Covid-19 grant amounting to £16,667 had been received.

In response to a question from the Treasurer regarding low level use of the sites by local Groups Steve Mather indicated that the ACMB were looking to appoint a marketing person and also to bring together in one place all of the information on the sites to facilitate easier reference. The ACMB were also looking to develop some more 'activities on a plate' to assist leaders with their camp programmes.

The DC highlighted that following a discussion at a recent meeting there had been a suggestion to run activity weekends for leaders and these might be used to introduce leaders to the sites and their facilities and to promote skills.

#### **E987 Explorer Report**

Jamie Carbert reported that since Christmas the majority of Units had continued to run programmes online. The District had held two District-wide Explorer activities; one was involving some Polish Scouts and the other a top awards evening. Leaders were currently planning their summer programmes. Earlier in the year the Explorer Scout Leader (Young Leader ESU) had stepped down and two new EYL leaders had been appointed. These should give an impetus to the EYL programme. Strides were being made with the D of E programme. Silver & Bronze expeditions were in the planning phase and options were being looked at to develop a better infrastructure to deliver the D of E programme.

Upcoming challenges included addressing Units' finances and leader shortages. The Chair highlighted that the District did have some 'hardship' funds available that might be applied where necessary.

#### **E988 Network Report**

Courtney Kellett reported that little activity had been able to take place whilst Covid-19 restrictions remained.

**E989 District Commissioner's Report**

Work was continuing to encourage Groups to involve their members in online activities and to plan for a return to face to face Scouting.

The District Team meeting had considered plans for the St. George's Day celebration.

County dates in the calendar included County Rally 8-10 October; County Explorer Camp 1-3 October; Reconnected 29 August, Beaver Fun Day 18 September, Cub Adventure Day 16 October. The District had been advised to concentrate on getting Groups up and running again rather than planning big events. The District Team would be focusing their work on this.

A number of members had been honoured by the Chief Scout with Good Service and Meritorious Conduct Awards. Discussion was ongoing on possibilities for holding an Awards Reception this year.

**E990 Health and Safety Report**

Nothing to report.

**E991 Any Other Business**

Nil.

Date of Next Meeting: 17 May 2021.