

MINUTES of the meeting of the LONSDALE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held on 17 May 2021 online.

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

Apologies Received: C Kellett.

Not Present: L Maun.

Chair's 'Thought for the Day':

"In the end satisfaction and contentment are created by the relationships between one individual and another at work, in the community and in the home."

HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, in *A Question of Balance*

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

E992 Secretary's Report / Correspondence:

No correspondence had been received since the previous meeting.

E993 Governance:

i. Chair's Action

At the DC's request the Chair reported that he had approved a new design for the neckerchief of the Hornby & Wray Group. The main colour was 'grape' with 2-borders in different shades of blue.

The Chair's Action was noted

ii. Notice of an application to register mines and minerals including whole powers of working for the land occupied by SilverHelme Activity Centre

The Chair presented a paper providing background information for Trustees on a notice received on 14 May 2021, from The Scout Association Trust Corporation (SATC), in this matter,

He was currently investigating this further with The Land Registry and the solicitors for the applicants and he was also in contact with the SATC. The applicants had applied to register ownership of mines and minerals under the Activity Centre (which it would appear they have proven that they are entitled so to do). The District could either object to the application, or consent to it - If the latter, there would be an additional entry in the Title Deeds: "The mines and minerals together with the ancillary powers of working are excepted."

The District had been requested to respond by 12 noon on 25 May 2021. He had yet to determine if this had to be done through the SATC. He had asked the Land Registry for an extension due to the complications he had encountered in his attempt to research the matter further, together with a copy of the document that demonstrated the applicant's rights. He was also attempting to contact the applicant's solicitors.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the District be minded to object in principle to the application pending receipt of the further information outlined.

Action: Chair

E994 Scout and Guide Shop

The Chair wished to inform the meeting that the shop had now reopened on an 'order and collect' basis; A Covid risk assessment had been approved for this. The shop now had the use of a card reader, which was proving useful. The charge relating to this was 1.69% and it had been agreed with the Girlguiding section, on an informal basis, that the District would absorb that cost for the time being. On line banking had also been instituted.

Trish Holland had given notice of her intention to stand down as the Shop Manageress when the shop closed in July. He had been in discussion with the Guides on whether to advertise the vacancy as a joint post or to continue as at present with the appointment being for the Scout side. Once he received an answer on this, he would then proceed to advertise the post.

Action: Chair

The Badge Secretary had indicated that he did not wish to do order & collect, preferring to work from home with ordering by telephone.

E995 Finance Officer's Report:

The Treasurer wished to highlight the following: -

a. Current Funds

We are now sitting on a cash pile exceeding £250,000, much of it earning very little interest. The Finance Officer had identified a couple of possibilities for doubling the rate of interest on funds at present with the Skipton BS.

The first question to be answered was whether our current policy of not exceeding £85K in any one institution is unduly cautious, bearing in mind that no depositors lost money in banks or building societies during recent financial crises (apart from holders of Permanent Interest-Bearing Shares in Co-operative Bank, when they were converted into ordinary shares) and the rules on the amount of reserves that these institutions were required to hold were strengthened.

The second was how much cash did we want to tie up and for how long. We have a total of £100,000 in one-year deposits maturing between June and

September, and at present a total of well over £150,000 in CAF Bank and Skipton BS, a large chunk of which could in his view be put on term deposit or in a notice account, without jeopardising our liquidity.

b. Electricity supply

Substantial difficulties had been encountered due to the incompetence of Scottish Power, following their takeover of Yorkshire Energy accounts. An insufficient credit from Yorkshire Energy has been applied to our Scottish Power account. The FO estimated that the further credit should be in the region of £56, in addition to which he had claimed compensation for the unnecessary mess which SP created, and he had threatened to complain to the Energy Ombudsman. The snag is that despite apparently failing to inform YE of the transfer date readings, SP will claim that the fault is YE's, and as that company is now in liquidation the Ombudsman is unable to take action against it. If that action fails, I think that the threat of more adverse publicity might possibly cause SP to give us our due.

E996 Finance Sub-Committee:

i. Minutes of FSC Meeting 29 April 2021

The Treasurer apologised that these had not been circulated owing to the meeting having taken place later than anticipated.

The Fidelity Investment account had now been started with a sum of £8,300 invested. The intention was to repeat this monthly, as agreed, for the next 6 months. The ISC would meet again thereafter to consider whether to recommend continuing to the full £100,000.

Referring to the limit of £85,000 referred to above, we had kept our bank accounts below that amount in any one institution because that was the level fixed for compensation. This was causing some problems with managing the funds. The FSC had concluded that it would be safe and a low risk to increase that limit to £120,000 in any one institution.

A new account had been opened with Redwood with £80,000 placed at 0.8% interest, the best that could be found on the market with institutions conforming to our ethical portfolio. This was a one-year bond to retain flexibility for spend should this be needed.

E997 Appointments Advisory Committee Report

The AAC meeting scheduled for 13th May had not taken place and so there was nothing to report therefrom.

The Chair reported agreement to hold a 'Committee Meeting', involving the DC, the AAC Secretary and himself later that week. This was another aspect they were following up from a recent training webinar. The meeting would focus on the way ahead for panel meetings, recruitment of AAC panel members, adult appointment reviews and compliance with training for panel members (Module 37).

The Chair wished to place on record his thanks to Mike Nelson, who was leaving the area, and he acknowledged his help and support as a member of the AAC, who embraced the Zoom meetings to continue his already long service with the ACC. He had given a great deal of service to the District over many years, and he was sure the Executive would wish to acknowledge his contribution to Scouting in Lonsdale.

The committee was always looking for new members, particularly in the under 25 age group and any nominations/offers would be welcomed.

E998 Activity Centres Management Board:

The minutes of the ACMB meeting held on 6 May 2021 were received.

Howard Greenwood reported that he was pursuing the contractor who was working on renovating the water system at Littledale as it was not clear whether he had finished the work, and he had not presented his invoice. This would be followed up.

The Activity Centres had reopened for day visits on 29th March; however, usage had been low. Bookings needed to be made via the new on-line booking system, to ensure that the number of users on site at any one time was controlled in line with current guidance.

The Wardens and a small team of volunteers, had continued to carry out essential maintenance and ensure the sites are safe and secure.

The total amount of Covid-19 grants received so far this year was £37,474. (including the recently received Restart Grant of £16,000). The ACMB would be considering a project or projects that might be put in hand to utilise some of these 'windfall' funds appropriately.

The District Chair extended thanks to Darren Phillips for the extensive work that he had carried out in building the new AC's booking system. This appeared to be working very well with just one or two teething issues that were being addressed. Members who had used the new system confirmed that it was working very well.

The Chair presented the ACMB Activities Centre Strategy document and The Long-Term Plan for approval.

The Treasurer welcomed the plans but felt they were a little light on costs and dates, acknowledging that it had been stated that that would be the next stage. The Executive would wish to see these in due course. He encouraged the ACMB to be bold in terms of addressing the reported condition of the lodges and perhaps look at the feasibility of replacing at least one of them. This might be long term better value for the District. He also felt that day time use of the sites might be highlighted more. The District Chair highlighted possible difficulties with gaining planning permission at SilverHelme for any new buildings. Acknowledging this, the ACMB Chair stated that the intention would be to look at basic structures.

Highlighting that both sites provided basically similar facilities the District Chair raised the question of whether each site might have different characteristics in the future; For example, looking at usage statistics it would be possible at the present time to accommodate all lodge bookings on one site. Options that might be considered might include providing camping pods or static camping facilities – the accent being on ‘camping made easy’.

Accepting the comments made, the committee approved the two documents charging the ACMB to add more detail as noted.

E999 Explorer Report

Jamie Carbert reported that all Explorer Units had met at least once face to face since the last meeting. District had organised some online activities over the Easter period and had recently held another international activity following on from the previous Poland experience. This time they had met with some Scouts from New Zealand, the time difference on that occasion proving quite challenging. Practice expeditions had recently been held for the Duke of Edinburgh’s award and qualifying expeditions for the bronze and silver categories were being held later in the month. Work was continuing with the new Young Leader leaders to bring them up to speed with a view to plan some deliverables before the end of this term.

Potential challenges faced included leader recruitment for several Units and there were capacity issues at Silverhelme, which plans were in hand to address. Another issue was in running the Duke of Edinburgh expeditions as Martin Lyde had indicated that he wished to step down from organizing these large events for the District.

If a new Unit was to be considered to relieve capacity issues the Chair proposed that this might be approved on behalf of the executive under Chair’s action, and this was agreed.

E1000 Network Report

No report on this occasion.

E1001 District Commissioner's Report

Face to Face Scouting

Most of the Groups were now showing signs of getting back into action following the Covid restrictions. Risk assessments had been flooding in and the Chair wished thanks to again be recorded to Howard Greenwood for dealing with the approval of these. Up to December last 166 had been approved since April over 100 had been approved.

There were leadership issues at Caton Church and the DC was looking to offer support from the District Team.

The 3rd Morecambe and Westgate Groups had been meeting together to address the meeting place issues for Westgate and this was going well with support from District with member numbers being quite strong.

The DC had met recently with Mark Waddington from Lancaster District CVS to discuss support for Scouting locally and he was looking at what might be offered. One possibility mentioned was for work parties from Littledale Hall Recovery Trust to assist at the Activity Centre.

Want to Join enquiries were flooding in which was very encouraging although there were some capacity issues to manage.

The Centurion with Westgate Group had been involved in the recent tragic incident at Heysham and along with other District members had been offering assistance to residents and relief workers. The Group had agreed to a request from the City Council to use their HQ as a temporary Community Hub.

Members agreed that the Executive's thanks be sent to the Group for the splendid job they were doing.

Action: Secretary

E1002 Health and Safety Report

Nothing to report.

E1003 Any Other Business

The Chair thanked members for their work and contributions during the past difficult year.

Date of Next Meeting: tba