



MINUTES of the meeting of the LONSDALE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held on the 15 May 2018 at District Headquarters, Moor Street, Lancaster.

Present: T Andrews (Chair), C Dewar (DC), S Clarke (Treasurer), A S Hague (Secretary), D Bateman, J Carbert, H Greenwood, A Kayll, D Smith, T Wilkinson.

Apologies Received: R Bell, R Parker, D Squirrell.

Not Present: C Graham.

Chair's 'Thought for the Day':

"Because it is hard it doesn't mean that it's not right" - a Methodist Minister

Minutes of the Last Meeting:

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising:

Nil

E820 Secretary's Report / Correspondence

The Secretary reported that the DHQ fire equipment had received its annual service. Also, a warning sign had been fitted to the step from the meeting room into the DC's office area following a recent trip and injury to a member of the AAC. The question of revising the light switching in this area would be kept under review.

He also reported receipt of a cheque on behalf of the National Farmers Union Ladies Social Section 2 for £250 and one from the President's Plant Sale for £300 for the SilverHelme AC. He would send a letter of thanks.

Arrangements were proceeding for the District's AGM on 28 June, which it was hoped to hold at the Lancaster University Management School.

E821 Governance:

- Governance Document Review

The Governance Document had been updated as part of the 6-monthly assessment. Sections scheduled for review on this occasion were as follows:

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Registered Charity Number 1027167

a. District Executive:

Item 3 (Amber). Not all District Trustees have signed a Trustee Declaration and likewise not all have completed the mandatory training module. The Secretary was asked to send a link to the online training module to members so that they might complete this where necessary.

Action: Secretary

Item 10/11 (Amber). "A register of 'legal documents' (in relation to the Charity) and their location is maintained" - the Chair reported on some work with the SATC to obtain copies of Conveyances and Land Registry documents for the Activity Centres. These had shown some discrepancies regarding site boundaries (for SilverHelme) and it was agreed to approach the Silverdale Council to obtain their understanding of the line of the boundary. Regarding District records availability and storage, the Chair reported that along with the Secretary they would be reviewing what was held during the summer period.

Action: Chair/Secretary

Item 15 (Amber) "As Trustees, there is an oversight of Health & Safety both in relation to the Activity Centres and District Headquarters" – A District H&S Policy had recently been approved but some work is needed to be done regarding the Activity Centres. The Chair and ACMB Chair between them had been 'walking' the sites and would be drafting an appropriate H&S document, which it was intended would be included as a part of the booking procedures to be acknowledged by users (and possibly including a document to be handed to users on arrival).

b. 14-25 Finance & Support Group:

All categories remained Amber – the Support Group Chair highlighted the continuing need to take a tighter grip on finances but they now knew where weaknesses were and were working on these.

The DC expressed the opinion that the position on 'Gift Aid' should be reclassified as 'Red' owing to lack of progress over a long period – members agreed.

Item 3 (Amber) "A register of property and equipment purchased for Explorer Scout Units (and its location) is maintained" – it was reported that all purchasing was now going via the Network Commissioner but a complete inventory was still outstanding.

Howard Greenwood queried whether all the equipment held both centrally and in individual Units was insured and it was confirmed that that was the case. It was important to know where the equipment was stored.

Item 4 (Amber) "There is an annual review of the 'Explorer Scout Finance Policy'" – This was still outstanding and it was therefore agreed that this should be reclassified as 'Red'.

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c. Appointments Advisory Committee:

Item 4 (Red): "That there are meaningful reviews of all appointments at the appropriate time" – The AAC Chair concurred with the DC's view, previously expressed, that there needed to be an appointment of an Assistant Secretary to the Committee to deal with this specific point. The intention would be to advertise the position in the first instance.

d. Awards Advisory Committee:

The DC reported that the reviewing process for awards was now up to date and the committee was now in a position to carry-out an annual review. The Chair highlighted that some 50% of those members who were nominated for an award this year could not go forward to the next stage as their mandatory training had either expired or was absent.

The DC advised members of a change to the National Awards System from September this year where approvals for Chief Scout's Commendations and Awards for Merit would in future be delegated to DC's to approve. County Commissioners would be responsible for approving Silver Acorns and Bars to the Award for Merit. Awards of Silver Wolf and Bars to Silver Acorn would remain at national level.

e. Activity Centres Management Board:

Item 1 (Amber) "All buildings, equipment and facilities comply with statutory requirements with respect to fire safety" – this had been reclassified down to Amber along with several other of the identified risks following more careful scrutiny by the ACMB Chair, with the District Chair, of the buildings and associated documentation and an invited visit to the ACs by Lancashire Fire & Rescue Services staff.

Areas of concern noted were disabled access to the lodge at Littledale; statutory inspections of electrical supplies being grossly overdue; and action required to address the LFRS report recommendations.

The Booking Secretary had requested the provision of risk assessments for activities, for site users, and whilst it was considered that the leader of any particular activity was responsible for their own it was proposed to draw together generic ones for guidance.

Item 11 (Red) "There is a periodic review of publicity material and the booking procedure - to seek to maximise usage" – the need to review this was acknowledged and options were being considered by the ACMB Review Group.

Discussion took place on a review report prepared by Howard Greenwood, at the request of the Executive Committee, on the construction cost overrun of the SilverHelme toilet block. The Chair indicated that he had decided not to circulate this as an item on the current agenda suggesting it be considered at the next meeting when everyone had had a chance to study it. Nevertheless, the DC felt that an initial discussion on the report and its recommendations would be useful and helpful notwithstanding the fact that some members had not had an opportunity of reading it as yet.

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The ACMB Chair stated that, even with the facts, as known, detailed in the report he still found it difficult to comprehend how the significant cost overrun had managed to come about. One factor undoubtedly was that as the scheme progressed information was not shared fully by the then ACMB Chair with members of the Board or with the Executive.

The DC highlighted that, as an example, he recalled that at the first ACMB meeting that Andrew Kayll attended there was no conversation on finances; it was evident to him that nobody had control. There was a lack of knowledge outside the three main players – the then ACMB Chair, Treasurer and Warden (non-voting).

Howard Greenwood felt that it was still difficult to fully comprehend how what had happened had happened but they had to ensure that this never happened again. The DC proposed that for any future large capital scheme that the Executive should recommend the employment of a Project Manager.

Returning to the Governance Report (ACMB):-

Item 15 (Amber) “Actions are taken to ensure compliance with relevant regulations (particular with respect to safety) for those buildings, not owned by Lonsdale District Scout Council, that have been erected on Littledale Activity Centre. If appropriate, the continued location of the building on the site be reviewed” – It had been confirmed at the ACMB meeting that the owners of these huts did have automatic public liability insurance under TSA insurers. Regarding policy on the future of these buildings the ACMB Chair’s proposal would be that if they fell into disrepair at any stage then they would not be replaced.

Overall, on the ACMB section of the governance report, the DC emphasised that due diligence was needed on the part of members as trustees – who must be sure that statements in the reports were accurate, which had obviously not been the case in the past.

It was agreed that the ACMB be asked to report on a monthly basis on those risks presently classified ‘Red’. The Executive also wished to see ACMB management accounts prepared.

Action: ACMB Chair

E822 Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurer presented his report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

a. Financial results year ended 31 December 2017.

The draft accounts had been circulated to Committee members on 3rd May.

b. Debtors

- i. Membership fees: 11th Morecambe & Heysham Group £1947.80, Galgate Group £1241, The Eric’s ESU £111.
- ii. Events: Knight Hike – amount unknown, Patrol Leaders’ camp – amount thought to be £75 (now resolved)
- iii. Other - Scout & Guide Shop £200 (£100 now paid)

Creditors None, but the cheque to open Galgate Group’s bank account £1442.75 had not yet been presented because of a delay in opening the account.

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Current financial position Spreadsheet attached to report.

World Scout Jamboree: since preparing his report a further sum of £2500 had been paid to County.

In terms of liquidity the Treasurer reported that this was now improved with £20,000 moved to the Skipton Building Society on immediate access.

The Chair reported that with regard to the sum owing for The Eric's ESU £111, that he had been informed by the ESA that she had a cheque for this and would be banking it that week. The Acting GSL for Galgate had confirmed that their issue was still in hand. A new Account Controller was required as there had been issues on providing the necessary evidence for the originally proposed person.

E823 Finance Sub-Committee:

The minutes of the FSC meeting held on 3 May 2018 had been circulated for information. The following grants-in-aid had been approved:

- a. £100 each to two Leaders participating in West Lancs' visit to the Menin Gate.
- b. £200 each to three Explorer Scouts and two Leaders participating in the West Lancs' Expedition to Nepal.

The District Chair reported that he had received a number of applications for assistance from the **Scouting4All Fund**. These far exceeded the money included within the budget and he had been in conversation with the President of the Rotary Club of Carnforth to gain access to the money which we originally had been told was to facilitate camping at SilverHelme Activity Centre. It was indicated that such a request would be favourably considered. Sub-Committee members had been reminded that the allocation of funds from Scoutign4All Fund is delegated to the DC and District Chair. The applications received had been considered by both and redacted information would be passed-on to the President.

The DC proposed, and it was agreed, that in respect of the Red Rose Camp, if the above approach was not successful that the District would find the necessary funds.

Concerning the **District International Trip to Zellhof** in 2019 it was noted that the event organiser had requested that a separate bank account be opened for this. The District Treasurer had indicated that he did not favour this proposal and the DC agreed likewise detailing his reasons. The request was therefore declined.

The District Chair had provided a draft letter (plus other documents) to be sent to Scout Groups in relation to the completion and submission of their annual accounts. A small number of textural changes had been made to the documents that had been issued the previous year. The FSC agreed that the documents would be circulated and also made available on the District website and this had now been actioned. Groups had been

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requested to provide overall Group accounts that incorporated any separate Section accounts.

A similar process to the above had been actioned in regard to the annual application process for the Sharpe Bequest.

Scout Group with Financial Difficulties:

The District Treasurer had provided information in relation to the membership fees outstanding for the 11th Morecambe and Heysham Scout Group, namely for 2017: The total fees due were £1961.00 of which £961.00 was outstanding and for 2018: The total fees due were £1443.00 of which £986.80 was outstanding. The Group had had some Sectional accounts but some fees had not been banked. One Section could not provide any accounts and had c. £2k in unbanked cheques. The DC reported on appropriate action he had taken to address this with the leader concerned.

The DC provided background information in relation to the situation. Both a new GSL had been appointed and a Group Executive Committee established. One of the problems that had been identified the previous year was that, with no treasurer, the Sections had been controlling their funds separately. The DC updated members in relation to some on-going work in this context. The Group's HQ building was not in the best state of repair/decoration and, for this reason, the Guide Unit had opted not to meet in the building. The DC also highlighted that the Scout Group was situated in a deprived area of the town. He felt that there was a renewed impetus, with parents also helping to repair and redecorate the building. From seeing recent posts on social media and from other information, the District Chair had been able to confirm some aspects of the DC's input. It had been felt that the District should not burden the new Group Executive Committee (and Leaders) with, essentially, their inherited debt.

There were various courses of action and after discussion it had agreed to recommend to the District Executive that the outstanding membership fees owed for 2017 be written off. It had been noted that this course of action was not without precedent.

The District Executive accepted the recommendation. The DC and District Chair would write to the Group Chair and GSL and ask that a payment plan be drawn-up in respect of the outstanding balance of £986.80.

Indicating his satisfaction with this conclusion the Treasurer raised a note of caution regarding a similar situation occurring at other Groups suggesting the possible setting up of an 'early warning system' for the Executive. The DC felt that a better way forward would be a review of Group Executive Committee's minutes and a check on Groups who were not holding an AGM.

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Approval of Annual Accounts for Year ended 31 December 2017

The draft accounts had been considered formally and agreed by the Finance sub-Committee on 3rd May. These had been circulated to members of the Executive and no issues or concerns had been raised.

The draft accounts were therefore approved nem con and these were signed on behalf of all trustees by the Chair and Treasurer. These would be formally presented to the District at the AGM on 28th June. It was agreed that the accounts be placed on the District's website prior to the AGM.

E824 14-25 Finance and Support Group:

The Group had not held a meeting in the period and so there was nothing specific to report. The proposed meeting was being rescheduled.

E825 Appointments Advisory Committee Report:

David Bateman reported that the committee had met on 28th March and had recommended approval for applications for 2 Assistant Beaver Scout Leaders, 1 GSL and 1 Assistant GSL. In the absence of the Training Officer, Tracy Seton had carried out the training role. They had been particularly impressed by the enthusiasm of the applicants from 11th Morecambe, who had pledged to work together as a new management team to re-invigorate the Group. The committee had felt that they should have the encouragement and support, as necessary, from the Executive.

The committee had recommended 6 changes of role without further interview and confirmed a recommendation from the previous meeting for which they had requested a further reference.

All the necessary references were obtained prior to the meeting, thanks to the hard work of their Secretary. As there were no outstanding applications, there were no interviews in April. The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 17th May.

The Group's Secretary was working on the appointment review process, and they were hoping that the new database programme which was being developed, would help to ensure that dates for reviews were identified more easily, and take place within the expected time limit. Acknowledging the workload involved the DC again highlighted the proposal for the appointment of an Assistant Secretary to be responsible for appointment reviews. He also indicated that he would be attending the next committee meeting to observe proceedings highlighting his proposal for a new format for the evenings, to be implemented in September, more on the lines of a 'New Leaders Welcome Night'.

The DC also pointed out that POR required that all Section Assistants should be interviewed and the District needed to implement this.

Concerning the accidental injury to a member of the committee at a previous meeting this had been duly reported and measures taken to help avoid a recurrence. A sign had been

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placed on the steps concerned and it was agreed that a proposal to re-switch a light circuit would be kept under review.

E826 Activity Centres Management Board:

The minutes of the ACMB Meeting held on 2 May 2018 were received.

The ACMB Chair presented his report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

On a positive note the ACMB had received the deposit on a rather large booking at Littledale which it was hoped in one form or another to be repeated annually. The ACMB had been looking for ways to increase the typically quiet times and/or make full use of the sites where multiple bookings could co-exist. He hoped that this booking would give a much-needed confidence boost to the ACMB, also to the Executive, that a little marketing and PR could bring in some much-required income to cover costs.

Recently it had emerged that the building inspector was asking for engineering calculations and drawings and evidence of this for the concrete slab and for the timber frame for the new toilet block at SilverHelme. He would be attempting to contact the builder for this but, based on history, it might be necessary to employ the services of a structural engineer before the building could be signed off.

The fire inspectors report was now looking slightly more manageable than anticipated but was an additional cost with funds already significantly reduced by the toilet block. The ACMB budget included two new tractor/mowers for both sites to replace the costly maintenance of the existing machines. This would unfortunately have to happen sooner than anticipated for both sites as both machines are in a sorry state.

Based on the history of spending, now was the time for the Board to carefully manage the finances of the ACMB and as such any spending would be looked at very closely before approval. Whilst this all sounded a little sepulchral the bookings were looking healthy with Littledale alone set to bring in circa £30k (assuming all bookings turn up) and we are very grateful to the Executive for allowing us to include the mast income in our budget.

Some interest had been shown in the proposed weekend warden scheme for SilverHelme that he was confident would assist the Warden and allow him to work on a more project orientated level and allow smaller jobs to be allocated to weekend wardens. The Warden scheme at Littledale was working well where there was a job list for the Warden and his team. Howard Greenwood stated that a similar list of jobs would be helpful for anyone wishing to assist at SilverHelme. Dorothy Ryan has now resigned as bookings secretary due to work and family commitments. He appreciated the role was more than just taking bookings and chasing payments so the ACMB were looking at methods to make this role more manageable.

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service Inspections of Activity Centres:

The Chair outlined that at an earlier meeting the District Executive had asked that LFRS be invited to undertake fire safety inspections of the buildings at both of our Activity Centres.

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These took place on 9 November 2017. Despite assurances given to him, by the previous Chair of the ACMB, the reports were not forwarded on to him, as requested (of him). They were finally received on 22 March 2018.

As he had not been able to be present on the day of the inspections, he had taken the initiative to request a meeting with the Fire Officer who had undertaken the inspections (and prepared the reports). It was for this reason that, at the request of the Chair of the ACMB, he had prepared the report for the District Executive. The report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes, was received by the meeting.

The key points listed by the inspecting officer in the reports were noted.

The ACMB had discussed the way ahead and the priority order for action was envisaged to be:

- Provision and fitting of Fire/Smoke Resisting Doors
- Electrical Work
- Protection of Escape Route in Mortimer Lodge
- Self-Help

All work as detailed in the report.

Separately, the ACMB was working on:

- Fire Risk Assessment: Some of this has already been carried-out by the Fire Officer but a more thorough, documented approach was envisaged.
- Information for Users: It could not be assumed that all users - particularly of the Lodges - would be familiar with the buildings and fire procedures, so the plan was to introduce a documented briefing.

The Executive Committee endorsed the approach outlined.

Authorisation to Increase Budget for Activity Centres:

The Chair explained that since the Executive Committee had approved the budget for the ACMB there had been a number of developments:

- An urgent need to replace the tractor/mowers for both sites.
- Work following the inspections by Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service.

Mowers - The budget included £5,000 for each mower; recent research would indicate that the maximum (including VAT) could be within the region of £6,000 each.

Work Following Fire Inspection - As yet the ACMB did not have a quotation for the installation of the fire doors nor the essential electrical work.

Income – The ACMB have an up-to-date analysis of the projected income for the year, based on current bookings:

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- Littledale: £28,578 (compared with a budget figure of £18,000 for the year).
- SilverHelme: £18,174 (compared with a budget figure of £20,000 for the year).

It was being proposed that the ACMB be permitted to increase their budget by taking at risk the expenditure outlined above. Members would be notified by e-mail when the cost of installing the fire doors was known to seek their approval. It was proposed to off-set this expenditure by applying for a grant-in-aid.

The Executive Committee agreed to the proposal.

Responding to a query from Howard Greenwood as to whether there was any credible risk that the new toilet block might be found to be not up to the required building standard the ACMB Chair indicated that he would be contacting the ACMB Treasurer to provide bills to prove that the works in question were to the standard.

The Chair also highlighted a further potential saving against budget in respect of telephone line charges at the Activity Centres. These were historically provided by BT. A local company had offered a much cheaper rate involving a saving of some £800 pa (the ACMB Chair declared an interest at this stage). The DC reaffirmed the need for such lines at the Centres in terms of safety considerations.

This proposal was also agreed.

E827 Explorer Report:

The report from the DESComm, who was unable to attend the meeting, was received.

Duke of Edinburgh's Award

District roll-out of a Duke of Edinburgh Award (DofE) programme had been drafted for 2018/19, for comment amongst those running it, some training costs were expected to ensure DofE supervisors and assessors are up to date with current procedures and policy. Costs to be submitted, once known, for approval through the correct channels. A number of Explorers from Odyssey and Silverhelme ESU's are completing their bronze DofE jointly, this is acting as a precursor for the DofE 18/19 programme.

Saints ESU

Saints had successfully transitioned to 5th Lancaster's HQ.

'Red Rose' 2018

Numbers remained around the 60 mark from Lonsdale Explorers and leaders.

Leaders for RR18 have had their records checked for compliance, 2 required Safety training, which has now been completed.

'Triton 2018'

Triton 18 is now on the horizon, to be run over the summer solstice weekend, needed to request support of this event from Network.

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E828 Network Report

The Network Commissioner reported an increased uptake on activities as evidenced by the recent Network Gathering and at the Comedy Club event. The 'birthday card' scheme to encourage Explorers to join Network was working well.

E829 District Commissioner's Report:

The DC presented his report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

District Team - New Structure working well. Announcing appointment of new ADC Activities shortly. Current priorities: GDPR action plan, promoting new HQ brand and strategy, developing local strategy.

Programme – St. George's Day celebration went well promoting Scouting in the area; Recent & future Sections' events noted. Priorities for the team: consistency in quality of programmes across Groups; strengthen links between Sections; increase nights away and top awards.

People & Perception – External comms plan for next year agreed, press releases will now be issued every month; Lead and SASU Manager have met to discuss ways in which SASU and Network can link together more closely to offer support to our Activity Centres; Uptake in leader training since costs covered by District and online booking system set up. Facing issues within the training team, flagged to the County Training Manager. Priorities for the team: Promote the new brand launch, communicate the new strategic plan to members, ensure that all leaders are compliant with their training requirements, ensure steps are taken to improve the volunteer journey.

Group Support – Lead has held meetings with GSL's to offer support. He is chairing GSL's meeting and has introduced a guest speaker to each meeting. Priorities: ensure every Group has an effective GSL and Executive Committee.

Development, Strategy & Growth – Development projects for the next twelve months have been agreed (listed in his report).

Risks – A decline in DBS compliance, significant number of leaders not meeting their training requirements, a small finance committee, historical abuse case.

E830 Health and Safety Report:

The recent accident at DHQ to a member of the AAC (previously noted).

With regard to accident reporting/recording at the Activity Centres and acknowledging GDPR the documentation should be in line with the Accident Book at DHQ. The DC advised that TSA were intending to move to an electronic system.

E831 Any Other Business**Chair's Thanks**

The Chair extended his thanks to all concerned for all their work and contributions this year.

Date of Next Meeting: to be confirmed.

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