



MINUTES of the meeting of the LONSDALE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE held on the 24 January 2019 at District Headquarters, Moor Street, Lancaster.

Present: T Andrews (Chair), Mandy Sweet (DC), A S Hague (Secretary), S Clarke (Treasurer), D Bateman, J Carbert, H Greenwood, R Parker, D Smith, T Wilkinson.

Apologies Received: D Squirrell.

Not Present: L Maun.

Welcome:

The Chair welcomed Mandy Sweet to her first Executive meeting as DC. On behalf of the Executive he also extended congratulations to Becky Parker on the opening of 1st Carnforth's new headquarters, which he highlighted exhibited drive and enthusiasm in the fund raising needed plus completing its construction.

Chair's 'Thought for the Day':

Pope Francis- message for World Communications Day 2018 (an extract) -

“Where there is shouting, let us practice listening;
 Where there is confusion, let us inspire harmony;
 Where there is ambiguity, let us bring clarity;
 Where there is exclusion, let us offer solidarity;
 Where there is sensationalism, let us use sobriety;
 Where there is superficiality, let us raise real questions;
 Where there is prejudice, let us awaken trust;
 Where there is hostility, let us bring respect;
 Where there is falsehood, let us bring truth.”

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2018 were agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising:

With regard to the unpaid contribution by Silverhelme Explorers for their use of the Mortimer Lodge, Howard Greenwood reported that the Unit's leader had accepted the amount agreed by the Executive of £150 pa. There was a consensus view that contributions outstanding for previous years to 2019 should be cancelled.

Action: Chair/Treasurer ACMB

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E856 Secretary's Report / Correspondence

Nothing to report on this occasion.

E857 Governance:**a. District Headquarters**

The report prepared by the Chair concerning the lease (currently expiring on 31 July 2020) on the District Headquarters building was received. It was pointed-out that, under the current lease, there was no security of tenure beyond this date (which we had agreed to when signing the lease in 2014). If the Landlord was not minded to offer us a new lease then we would have to vacate the premises by 31 July 2020. Following discussion (which concluded that the current premises would still be suited for the majority of our requirements), it was agreed as a first step that the District Treasurer should approach the landlord to ascertain his possible intentions regarding the property at the end of the current lease.

Action: District Treasurer

b. Governance Document Review

Due to a number of circumstances (not-the-least the appointment a new DC), the Chair proposed that this now be undertaken as one review for the year at the May meeting; this was agreed.

c. Chair, Activity Centres Management Board

The Chair reported that Craig Dewar-Willox had offered to chair the ACMB until the next AGM. He was not intending to attend Executive meetings but would submit written reports.

It was agreed that Craig Dewar-Willox be co-opted as a member of the District Executive and that he be appointed Chair of the ACMB.

E858 Treasurer's Report:

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

i. Debtors

Scout & Guide Shop, monthly payment due 1st January 2019 £100, plus LDSC share of any surplus for the year to 31 March 2018. The Chair reported that the annual accounts had been promised to be submitted by that weekend.

ii. Creditors

Galgate Group £201.75, which was being treated as an advance payment on account of the Group's 2019 membership fees. As far as he was aware, this Group has not yet been able to open a bank account. The DC indicated that she would speak to the GSL regarding expediting progress on this.

Action: DC

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iii. Accounts year ended 31 December 2018

The ACMB Treasurer and himself were busy getting their records ready to take to the District's accountants. The indications were that the Activity Centres had realised a surplus of around £15,000, and the HQ operating account a deficit of around £3,000, compared with a budgeted deficit of £12,755. The difference being largely due to underspends by budget holders.

In round sum amounts the net out-turn on activities was a surplus of £1250. The largest constituents were surpluses on Cubs' events £1,100 and County Rally £850, and a loss on the social of £500. Discussion took place on a comment from Howard Greenwood that he felt that this latter was a loss of such significance that the Executive in their role as Trustees needed to consider it. The extent of the loss was acknowledged and reasons outlined. However, there was a consensus view that the event was primarily a 'thank you' one [for leaders] and whilst there was a loss it might be justified.

iv. Current funds

A spreadsheet was attached to the report.

v. Membership fees

The Treasurer was relieved to note that the deadline for payment of fees had been set at 28 February 2019, which would give enough time for Groups' and Units' payments to be cleared through the banking system before payment was due to County, the deadline for which was usually the first week in April.

E859 Finance Sub-Committee, 14-25 Finance and Support Group:

No meetings held to report on.

E860 Appointments Advisory Committee Report:

David Bateman reported that the Committee had met in November and December, continuing to use the format which had been suggested by the former DC. In November, they had met at 16th Morecambe HQ. Having 2 panels meant that they were able to interview 8 applicants, all of whom they had been happy to recommend to the DC for appointment. The HQ proved a reasonably successful venue, although it could not provide two small rooms for the individual interviews, which meant that one panel held interviews in the corner of the main room, where other activities were going on, which some found distracting.

The December meeting was held at District HQ. Again, they were able to get two panels, but one had to meet in the main room where other activities continued. He had divided the applicants into those applying for a change of role and those applying for a first role, and we interviewed the new applicants in the small room. This was particularly important because one of the interviews was of a quite sensitive nature. Once again, however, the other panel felt that being in the main room with other applicants waiting for interview and conversations between the Training Officer and applicants, there were too many distractions to make the interviews a satisfactory experience for the panel members or the applicants. Once again, they were able to interview 8 applicants, and make suitable recommendations to the DC.

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As AAC Secretary, Tracy Seton had been trying to organise further meetings using the same format; the Committee were due to meet again on Tuesday 22nd January. Tracy was experiencing two main problems:

- Finding 6 panel members who were available on the same evening, and a suitable person to do the initial presentation;
- Finding a suitable venue which was available on the evenings when panel members were available.

The Committee were still hoping to recruit more panel members, which would help to address the first point.

Suitable venues were proving more difficult to find.

He would have a conversation with the DC, when they could look again at the format of the meetings and look for any practical ways to reduce the backlog of applicants.

Discussion took place on a need perhaps to be 'smarter' on who and why candidates/leaders required to be interviewed perhaps not having to formally interview leaders who had held roles previously, for example.

The Chair proposed a new appointment of **District Funding Adviser**. Becky Parker had been approached and had agreed to take on the role.

- **The appointment of Becky Parker to the post of District Funding Adviser was approved.**

E861 Activity Centres Management Board:

The minutes of the ACMB Meeting held on 8 January 2019 were received.

i. Risk Assessments and Review of Health and Safety Paper

The District Chair, latterly as Acting Chair of the ACMB, reported that he had been working for some time on a Health & Safety Policy and individual Risk Assessments for the two Activity Centres and these were presented for comment. The Committee noted the Risk Assessment documents and approved the Health & Safety Policy and a liability exclusion statement.

Work was proceeding on implementing the Fire Officer's report recommendations, one of which was to have some form of fire training for those occupying the lodges. He introduced the concept of a Fire Warden; the instructions would have to be read and signed by the appointed person for each visiting group. These were included in his report and it was proposed these be added to the booking page on the website where it would have to be acknowledged as read before a booking could proceed. The Committee were content with this proposal.

ii. Usage Statistics 2018

This report was received. Discussion took place on associated issues regarding marketing strategy etc. The Chair indicated that in association with the DC they would be reviewing usage of the sites by Lonsdale groups and sections. The ACMB was also considering

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options to introduce more flexibility into the booking arrangements such as possibilities for smaller groups to access the lodge accommodation.

The ACMB was also proposing to organise 'open days' at the two sites, probably in May/June, to promote the use of the sites within the District and to schools, DofE Award Groups and also potential funders.

A recent claim by a user of the Mortimer Lodge for compensation in respect of damage sustained to his vehicle etc. had been considered by the ACMB. This had been challenged with the individual concerned but no response had been received to date.

iii. Woodland Management, Stobart Forestry

The Chair outlined an approach that had been made by Stobart Forestry regarding a proposal surrounding woodland management on the sites.

It was the Government's target to have 66% of England's woodlands in active management (currently 58%). Stobart Forestry's key objective - in working with land owners - was to bring under-managed woodlands into active management. As part of this process Stobart Forestry received a Government grant to assist landowners with the first steps in moving away from undermanaged woodland.

The subject had been discussed with the Activity Centres Management Board and it had been agreed that we should explore this in more detail.

It should be noted that the next step in the process would be to allow Stobart Forestry to undertake a survey of each site (carried out by a professional woodland surveyor). As a result of the survey we would discuss with Stobart Forestry how and if we wished to proceed further. If we do the Forestry Commission would also have to be consulted, for approval, before any work could proceed.

After discussion it was agreed to invite Stobart Forestry to undertake a free of charge survey of each woodland with - at this stage - no commitment to progress to a full Woodland Management Plan. Members were concerned that if we did decide to proceed further there would not be extensive clearance of our woodlands.

Action: Act. Chair, ACMB

iv. Other Matters

The Chair referred to discussion on the functions and operation of the ACMB suggesting a 3-part structure: ACMB -Management function; Trustees – Strategic overview; Operational Group – day to day operation (and noted that as the latter was not operating the ACMB was, therefore, forced to deal with some matters which were a distraction away from key management functions). He proposed that the DC, the new ACMB Chair, the District Secretary and himself should meet to consider possibilities and report back.

Action: Chair, DC

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Howard Greenwood advised of the recent passing of Barry Woodburn. This was noted with sadness. Barry, who lived on The Row by the side of the camp entrance, had been active in supporting the SilverHelme site almost from its inception, having acted as warden on occasion and helping with many other tasks over the years.

E862 Explorer Section:

Dave Squirrell had been unable to attend the meeting but had sent a report as follows: - The District Explorer Scout Administrator had requested accounts from all Units. She would also be requesting all Unit leaders to review their OSM records prior to annual census production.

The District roll-out of the D of E scheme was continuing.

He was hopeful that a couple of section linking events could be organised in 2019.

Howard Greenwood observed that the District was 'not good' at promoting achievement of top awards in the section.

The decision by the ACMB not to refund a deposit paid by the Lonsdale Explorer Section in respect of a cancelled event at SilverHelme, and in line with the published booking policy, was endorsed.

E863 Network Report

The Network Commissioner was awaiting information on the County's process for registering for Queen's Scouts Awards. Each District Network within the County was now organising an event monthly, which had been successful so far.

He had reviewed Network members records on 'Compass' to delete leavers and numbers had been reduced from 94 to 50+ active members.

E864 District Commissioner's Report:

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

She started by thanking everyone in the District for the very warm response to her appointment and her hope that together we could build on the great work her predecessor had carried out over the preceding 5½ years.

District Events and Programme –

A fabulous awards ceremony had been held at Leighton Hall with 18 members receiving their awards and 30 people in attendance, including the County Commissioner, County President and the Regional Commissioner. She wished to record the District's thanks to the President Suzie Reynolds for the hospitality afforded even though she had had a bad month with the recent passing of her husband.

Upcoming Highlights – St. George's Day celebration, this year being held in Morecambe. Most sections are holding camps; the District International trip to Zellhoff and Leaders 'Skills and Chills' event.

The Youth Commissioner Team has been very active and has attended lots of events and run a forum in the District. They have 'Mission Possible' week coming up in February.

We have had members of District, lead and be participants in the County Nepal trip, and the Menin Gate trip.

Lonsdale has had 4 Leaders selected as Leaders for County trips to Croatia and Iceland.

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Group Support –

A couple of the 'Red Groups' had moved to the 'Amber' classification, but one Group has been moved as 'Red'.

The Ridge School project is still on-going with tasters being run mid-week to see if that would be a more successful time to run.

Development and Growth –

We held a successful 'Bring a Friend Month' and hopefully the results of this will be shown in the census that is looming.

This year she would like to spend some time concentrating on adult recruitment, along with a few projects that the Regional Development Team are going to look at for us.

Appointments –

New DC!

Risks – The need to recruit more members onto the Finance Committee. Also, the Appointments Advisory Committee.

We have had one informal complaint that has been handled at low level and should now be completed.

We have 4 pending suspensions due to DBS non-compliance.

E865 Health and Safety Report:

Nothing new to report.

E866 Any Other Business

Nil.

Date of Next Meeting: 20 March 2019

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