

Red Rope National Committee - Minutes Meeting June 11th 2022

St Martins Church Centre, Bull Ring, Birmingham

Apologies: Dave Doody, Esme Roslin, Adrian Jones, Sara Bates, Becky Bates, Humphrey Southall, Steve Wright

Present: Barbara Segal (Chair), Janet Saunders (Minutes), Pete Watson, David Symonds, Jon Marsden, Gill Platt

Discussion

	Topic	Action
1	Minutes of previous NC Meeting accepted	(already on website)
	Co-opting of National Secretary and Publicity Officer	
2	Thanks to David Symonds for his work as National Sec over the past 3.5 years – new National Secretary Pete Watson co-opted onto NC formally at this meeting – to be ratified at next AGM	-
3	Publicity Role – meeting has taken place between Janet Saunders and Esme Roslin – Esme will take over the publicity role, initially as a job-share with Esme doing the main ‘publicity’ part while Janet continues to maintain the website Janet raised a question about her position on the NC, having resigned the full publicity role at the AGM. Janet proposed she carry on in a transitional role and it was agreed she will remain on NC while this transition continues.	-
	Officer’s reports – matters arising	
4	IT Officer IT Officer Dave Doody has expressed a wish for someone else to be found to take over his role – Janet has already spoken to Bronwen Reid who said she could take it on <i>if needed</i> , so long as the duties were no more than at present. However it was thought a good idea to see if anyone else in the club would like to pick up the role and take it further. JS to liaise with DD and BR about what the whole role entails.	JS > DD, BR
5	National Finance Proposal to set up a notice term deposit account, so that some of the Club Funds earns interest – general agreement to go ahead	Humphrey
6	National Trips Treasurer – Adrian raised an issue that trips payments direct into the account often had no identifier or reference. BS would like access to the trips account in order to verify what payments needed to be sent onto LMC. We discussed whether online access would be a good idea for the trips account, given the difficulties of verifying trip payments via paper statements, making life difficult for BS, AJ and trips officers. The meeting agreed that online access would enable speedier checking of the amounts paid in. Action – Barbara to investigate with Adrian / Humphrey getting online access to the trips account. Humphrey had some years ago trialled payments through Webcollect – Action for Barbara to ask HS if this would be a useful solution for	Barbara to action

	some of these issues	
7	Membership – We discussed the ‘greener cards’ suggestion from West Midlands. The meeting would like to have greener cards but initial investigations had identified a number of obstacles: • Do members really need a card? – Scotland members certainly do as they do not receive a card from Mountaineering Scotland – everyone else gets a BMC card • No laminating – it is very difficult to get printing card that will go through a household printer, even more difficult to get red card – currently red paper is used • Sending a ‘virtual card’ by email, perhaps with an image of the card and details would be cheaper than posting one (stamp @ 70p) – however, this could mean subscribing to a software service to generate the e-cards with members’ details – JS reported these services were an additional cost and this would be another system for the Membership Sec to learn and use • A digital option for smart phones is probably available as a service – but not all our members use these. • We need a system that a Membership Sec can keep control of and use for the annual batch, AND one by one through the year. The task already has a level of technical know-how – and we do not want to add further complexity. • Gill already has a stock of paper and laminating sheets, which it is greener to use than to waste Action – JS to find out actual costs of the systems available and report back to NC	JS
8	Bulletin – significant cost savings have taken place in people saying they wish to only have online version.	
9	MIS – nil (but see further items below affecting MIS)	
10	Publicity – Esme’s document Pete – Esme’s idea to concentrate on Bristol first is a good one. It was agreed by all that the document contained lots of excellent suggestions – and we will give as much support as possible.	
11	Pete will speak to regions individually, i.e., phone regional contact/ or rep/secretary to ask them about regional activity, publicity and developing the club. The aim is to get regions more involved in running the club and in doing publicity.	PW
12	Facebook - Regional secs could be enabled to post to national Facebook site - PW to ask if someone in their region would be interested in doing that. JM suggested using the Events posting on our Facebook page. JS said it had not been used much at all recently, (not really picked up since COVID) but could be utilised more to drive interest.	PW to ask regions JS to make more posts about events of interest as they occur
13	Meetup – Esme’s report suggested investigating Meetup. JM	JS

	reported he ran a Meetup group privately about something else – from 300 members only 4 people ever attended in person Notwithstanding some mixed reports about Meetup’s efficacy in previous discussions we agreed to consider the cost of a National Meetup group to pursue the idea. Action: JS to check and communicate her own experiences also with Esme	
14	Future Trespass events and other like-minded events. John suggested a new section in MIS for related events that RR’ers could be interested in - agreed	JM
15	LMC Hut LMC Discount – BS suggested that the members discount on region’s LMC hut trips should be ditched because very few regions used it and it was complicated – agreed	BS to revise rules and JS to update website
16	Access to weekends – BS suggested we scrap our entitlement to a bank holiday trip to be replaced with a trip of up to 5 nights – agreed	BS to follow up with LMC
17	Proposals relating to National Trips (<i>Trip Sec proposals are in italics</i>) We were very pleased to have a full list of topics to discuss. BS proposed the ‘voting slip’ supplied should not be treated as a ballot paper, as this was not constitutional – votes should be taken at the meeting after a full discussion – this was agreed	-
18	Trip finances – <i>“Breaking even is still a challenge owing to relaxing rules during Covid - under occupancy of huts and cars. Trips Account balance is approx £1200. A transfer of £1500 from Admin account is expected soon.”</i> Suggested bank transfer from Admin account: BS had phoned Humphrey and she reported that this transfer is not going to happen yet – until Humphrey has seen some Trip accounts – BS to ask Adrian to send them.	BS to ask Adrian to send them.
19	“We are pleased to see some new names on upcoming trips and are starting the reserving 2 places for new/new to national trips members from 1/23 “ Idea of saving 2 places for new members on each trip – we agreed this should be for all trips from Jan 2023 as proposed – but need clarification on how it is going to be operated. Can it be publicised for any trips not yet advertised in MIS? We propose places are held for one month – can Trips Secretaries think about this to advise if that would be reasonable and come up with a clear procedure that can be indicated in MIS and for trip organisers to understand what they have to do? JM to ask them	JM to seek clarification Becky and Sarah to clarify a clear guideline
20	Food costs <i>“Food costs have risen and it isn't always possible to use Aldi so the group of 8 Red Ropers on last weeks Stag Lodge trip came up with an</i>	JS to communicate with Trips secs

	<i>idea to split any costs after we reached the £5 daily allowance for food (approx. £2 for breakfast/lunch, £2 main course, £1 dessert). We didn't actually do any top up shopping but everyone agreed to it in principle. We need to focus attention on our limited budget and let people know how much they are expected to spend so that when they shop for their meal they will choose the cheaper brands"</i> The meeting was unhappy about the proposal for a whip round if the 'guideline' was exceeded – if necessary, we should increase the food allowance guideline. We agreed that people should be focused on the budget and choose cheaper brands where possible BUT without degrading the quality of trip food, as nice food was often a valued part of the trip for participants. It was pointed out that the AGM had agreed to a 10% increase already – go back to trips secs to suggest a review if these prices are enough	
21	Allergies – <i>"Another food question was over reimbursing people who bring their own food owing to allergies e.g. gluten/lactose free. This could get expensive but we suggest the amount could be capped at half of the £5 allowance so we offer either a reimbursement of £2.50 a day or the bill for food brought whichever is the lowest cost."</i> The meeting did not agree with this quantification of reimbursement. We need to ensure there are no special financial barriers to accessing trips for members with food allergies. We encourage communication prior to each trip so that food meets the needs of the group – actual allergies should be accommodated and reimbursed at cost, but not individual preferences unless it's a group preference. (An example was given where the recent navigation trip bought less dairy milk, because group preferences were for other types of milk).	
22	Covid guidelines <i>"Members continue to do a LFT before a trip but no other precautions"</i> This proposal was agreed but 'no other precautions' seemed too vague, presuming it was about under-occupancy, good ventilation, eating outside etc. On this we felt agreement in general, BUT it was important to continue the process of discussing the group's particular concerns at a pre-trip meeting – as COVID situation may change.	
23	Trip cancellation – any infectious illness should get a full refund (Disagreed with the 50% proposal)	
24	Under occupancy – the meeting had some reservations about returning to packing huts to capacity, depending on the actual facilities of the hut. With some huts the stated capacity exceeded the actual facilities, and members might be put off going on a trip. Agreed	

	that the places available should be the responsibility of the region or the national trip organiser, when booking the hut, depending on the comfortable capacity and cost of the hut.	
25	<i>"Paying drivers for 3 when cars have 2 people in them is very costly to the club over long distances and we feel it is now unnecessary. We propose returning to 3 in a car being the minimum for drivers in shared cars. If people are anxious about sharing a car with 2 others they can opt out and drive themselves or get a train. "</i> Meeting agreed the proposal to end the temporary measure.	
26	Bank transfers – <i>"We understand concerns expressed by Barbara on the challenges of online payments and will not promote this method. It won't be possible however to stop the gradual drift away from cheques so we need to get some systems in place to prepare for more online payments e.g., Adrian to check payments made before each trip and let the trip organiser know".</i> The meeting felt they had discussed this above under National Trips Treasurer and did not address this as a separate matter. Getting online access to the Trips Account was one thing that should be pursued. In the meantime, cheques are still the preferred option. We also noted there had been a trial of Webcollect payments for one trip and Annual gathering – but were not clear whether that had been successful or not. (see discussion above) (Note from minute taker – I do not think we addressed this point fully – it needs to be an Agenda item for next time.)	PW to ensure this is an agenda item for next NC Trips secs and trip treasurer to implement any systems they feel workable
27	Trip Transport <i>"The more flexible approach has been working well and is popular - of the 4 cars on the trip last week only one was banded for the whole journey. People have very understandable reasons for not choosing to travel on set days, or in cars that they often don't feel safe in. We want to keep the rules as they stand and avoid banded charges for those opting out of shared cars. "</i> The meeting agreed the one-year trial should be pursued this year and then reviewed as to how it affects trip costs.	-
28	NC Procedures We did not really discuss this topic fully as Humphrey was not present. We did however discuss 'accountability'. JM suggested that decisions made over email or sub-committee Zoom meetings should be formally minuted and posted on the website, as was the case with formal meetings. It was agreed that any matter for decision should either be taken to the next NC <i>or if more urgent</i> then an urgent zoom meeting be held to discuss and decide – and this to be formally minuted and posted on the website in the Minutes.	Action – PW to ensure this happens
29	NC meetings for the coming year	Action PW

	This item was a little rushed due to time constraints. It was agreed that 3 meetings of NC per were necessary. A discussion took place as to the regional spread and location of future meetings – rotating around regions was thought to be a good idea we should revive. We agreed that face to face meetings were ‘a good thing’, communication face to face being more effective than over online meetings. Zoom meetings however have also proved useful in that they save the Club money and individual’s time and encourage attendance from more regions. It was suggested a Face to face ‘on-trip’ meeting of NC is also useful to bring in non-NC members and helps team-working. Meetings for the coming year proposed as follows: Region reps zoom meeting in Sept? – aim to get regions more involved – PW to organise. Annual Gathering – (not an AGM) Traditionally September/October This was discussed but the necessity was queried as the Hathersage meeting had filled this role. It would need a Zoom meeting perhaps to organise the event and activities – TBC (Pete Watson as Nat Sec to consider) 2 face-to-face NC meets: (1 of which takes place on a CY trip) proposed October 2022 CY NC – Oct 14th – Sunday – BS to discuss with London region initially (Note: traditionally there has been a November NC meeting) 1 x Zoom NC meeting in the New Year 2023 (possibly Feb 11 or earlier), 4 pm – (PW/JM) Zoom AGM – April 2023 – date needed Pete Watson to circulate dates for forthcoming NCs for approval Meeting closed 4 pm.	(National Sec) BS to discuss October CY meeting with London

