

NORTH EAST MOUNTAIN TRUST

Approved Minutes of Council Meeting held 7.50pm Tuesday 29 November. 2016

at the Aberdeen Grammar FP Club Centre, Queens Gate, Aberdeen

* Charity Trustee as Individual Member; ** Charity Trustee as Club Representative

Present: George Allan* (Vice Chair), Brian Cornock (Bailies of Bennachie), Paul Jackson** (Aberdeen MC), Catherine Lacy** (Cults HWC), Alison Mitchell** (Ramblers Scotland), Ruth Payne, Jean Robinson** (Cairngorm Club), Susan Smith (Treasurer), Maureen Stuchbury, Trevor Stuchbury, Donald Thomas, Ken Thomson* (Minutes Secretary), Marion White.

George Allan offered to chair, and this was unanimously accepted.

- 1. Apologies:** Peter Aikman, Alistair Beeley, James Friend, Brian Heaton*, Dave Windle* (Chair), David Milne, Della Russell** (Culter Hillwalking Club)
- 2. Declaration of conflicts of interest:** none declared
- 3. Appointments:** The following appointments were made without dissension:

<i>Office</i>	<i>Appointee</i>	<i>Proposer</i>	<i>Seconder</i>
Chair	Dave Windle	George	Catherine
Secretary	Catherine Lacy	George	Ken
Membership Secretary	Catherine Lacy	George	Ken
Treasurer	Alison Mitchell	Jean	Catherine
Minutes Secretary	Ken Thomson	Catherine	Alison

No appointment to Deputy Chair was made, but George agreed to chair the remainder of the meeting. It was hoped that reduced work commitments would enable Dave to attend more future Council meetings than had been possible for him recently.

- 4. Minutes of Council Meeting 11 October 2016:** the draft minutes were approved, though it was noted that OSCR had designated NEMT as a SCIO on 2 Sept. 2016.
- 5. Matters Arising from above Minutes**
 - 5.1 Membership Drive:** nothing to report
 - 5.2 Threats to Wild Land:**
 - 5.2.1. Glen Banchor track:** no more had been heard; it had probably been constructed before the new approval system had come into effect.
 - 5.2.2. CNPA Partnership Plan consultation:** not yet on the website, and no more had been heard about the production of the specific plans which will support the *Cairngorm and Glenmore Strategy*.
 - 5.2.3. Derry Lodge:** the planning application had been approved, with a considerable number of conditions, e.g. that the access track would not be widened, and that the public toilets would be open all year round. It was expected that NTS would open a funding appeal in due course.
 - 5.2.4. NEMT website:** the email address link appeared to be operating satisfactorily, although it had not yet triggered any real use.
 - 5.2.5. Bothies and CAPS:** no more to report on either
 - 5.2.6. Cairngorm Club:** Ken reported that he had been told that the new Quoich Punchbowl footbridge (funded by the Club) was to be installed in December.
 - 5.3 SCIO:** George and Alison had gone through the (very confusing) bank forms; once the remaining signature (from Dave Windle) had been obtained, these would be returned to the bank for the new account to be set up, after which standing orders could be changed (and new ones set up), and assets transferred. Some uncertainty

was expressed as to whether "automatic" SO transfer applied to incoming or outgoing SOs; this would be investigated.

5.4 *Threats to Wild Land*: it was reported that:

5.4.1. Highland Council had not yet reached a decision on the Glencoe ski area issue but many objections had been placed on the website.

5.4.2. Both outstanding windfarm refusals were still being appealed. Alison asked why windfarms outside North East Scotland were being considered unless as test cases; the Chair responded by saying that NEMT's focus was indeed NE Scotland but that it had a wider remit. It was agreed to re-visit this issue under Item 9 (Work Plan).

5.5 *Leaflets*: Once the new bank account number is known, George will ask Sandy McIntosh to reprint the membership leaflets.

5.6 *Pathwatch* information had been circulated; Alison reported that there had been over 100 downloading of the app, with 60 or 70 reports sent to Helen Todd. A *Pathwatch* article for the next issue of *Mountain Views* was endorsed.

6. Matters Arising from AGM 2016: none.

7. Responsibilities for Membership/Council/etc. Lists: It was agreed that the Secretary (Catherine) would hold the master spreadsheet with all lists. Others (e.g. the Council Minutes Secretary) would be responsible for sending to Catherine any changes in their own area of responsibility.

8. NEMT website design and responsibilities: Donald was willing to continue in this role, but asked that from time to time he should be advised on what should be included on the site. Discussion and decisions included the following:

8.1 *Mountain Views* should continue to be uploaded to the website (currently, it held contents lists since 1994 and issues from 2000 onwards except for the most recent issue), but with issues in complete form, i.e. with Editorials included. The use of member passwords, or payments, to enable "non-free" access also to the most recent issue was considered too complicated.

8.2 Council minutes should be sent to Donald for uploading once approved.

8.3 Only the most recent Annual Report should be held.

8.4 The News/Blog/Snippets component of the website having fallen into abeyance, it was decided not to try to resuscitate this feature. The use of Facebook might prove more popular (as the Bailies of Bennachie had found), it was agreed to consider this medium at a future Council meeting. Ken to place on future agenda.

8.5 The website's new "About" link would be promoted to the Home page. Donald

9. NEMT Work Plan 2016-17: in view of the shortage of time, it was agreed to place this high on the agenda of the next Council meeting, e.g. in respect of NEMT's geographical focus, range of interests, and website. Ken to place on future agenda.

10. Threats to Wild Land:

10.1: *Cairngorm Damage*:

10.1.1. In response to a single posting by George on Nick Kempe's Parkwatchscotland blogsite, Adam Gough of Natural Retreats had threatened to cease communication with NEMT. George had pointed out that Parkwatch was open to all (including Natural Retreats) and was not a NEMT vehicle.

10.1.2. New work on the west wall Poma was in a very sensitive area, but had been reported by Nick Kempe as resulting in a "building site", with no call-in by CNPA, or action by HIE.

10.1.3. Nothing had been heard on the lack of planning consent for recent NR tracks, but these might come up at a December CNPA Planning meeting.

10.1.4. Ken reported that the Cairngorm Club was shortly to send a letter of protest/enquiry to NR.

10.2: *Farragon Hill*: The barites mine had been approved, but without anything on reinstating the old mine track as a footpath. George is considering asking Perth and Kinross Council whether a separate application re the removal of the old mine is to be submitted.

10.3 *Windfarm Approval on Wild Land Area 37 east of Foinaven*: George suggested writing to the Minister about the principle of allowing windfarms in any part of a Wild Land Area, and will ask Brian if he wants to do this.

11. Hill Tracks:

11.1 *LINK* was seeking funds from BMC, SMT, etc. to enable the employment of a part-time Hill Tracks investigator. NEMT might be approached for £200 or so.

11.2 *Hill of Wirren*: two ugly tracks, one on either side of an estate boundary, had been noted, but it was not clear when (e.g. since the new approval arrangements).

11.3 *A Perthshire hill*: a Facebook posting had shown a digger illegally at work; the situation as regards retrospective planning permission from Perth & Kinross Council was unknown. LINK is pursuing this issue.

11.4 *Dinnet Estate*: The CNPA has issued enforcement notices after failure to undertake restoration work.

11.5 *Candacraig* (south of Cockbridge): George had written to Aberdeenshire Council (copied to the Park) about aspects of this Prior Notification for maintenance of existing tracks. This was not an objection, but raised issues such as whether two short sections were in fact new, and whether a central vegetation strip would be created.

11.6 *Balavil* (in the Monadhliaths, 2 miles west of the Wildlife Park): George made comments (not an objection) to Highland Council re a prior Notification for maintenance work on a four-mile section of existing track. The work has been approved, with aspects of NEMT's comments taken into account.

12. Mountain Hares: no more heard; a Lecture would take place in January.

13. Mountain Views: It was agreed that:

13.1 Manuscripts should be supplied by mid-March 2017, for publication by end-April.

13.2 The Club spot should be occupied by Aberdeen MC. Paul Jackson

13.3 An article on Derry Lodge would be timely (Ken to draft) (see also Item 5.6).

13.4 Receipt of future issues by email should be offered, as an option, to Individual NEMT Members.

14. Lectures: The December lecture is all organised, with Liz and Susie in the door, and an upstairs room to be used since numbers are expected to be high. It was already being advertised on Facebook. For the 2017/18 season, a Lectures Organiser would be needed by June 2017 at the latest. It was agreed to consider a rise in entry fee for the 2017/18 season at a future Council meeting (Ken to place on future agenda)

15. AOCB: Maureen supplied copies of the SNH magazine *Natural Scotland* (the last in paper form), and the ScotWays Annual Report.

16. Council Meetings 2017: The following dates were agreed (all Tuesdays): 17 January, 7 March, 11 April, 23 May, 11 July, 29 August, 10 October, 28 November (with AGM 2017). Ken to book these with the AGS FP Club, for *ad hoc* payment until an annual payment could be arranged for the Treasurer to deal with.

Next Meeting: 7:30pm, Tuesday 17 January 2017.

Ken Thomson, 26 January 2017