

NORTH EAST MOUNTAIN TRUST
Minutes of Council Meeting held 7.30 pm Tuesday 30 May 2017
at the Aberdeen Grammar FP Club Centre, Queens Road, Aberdeen

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

Present: Hamish Clunas (Aberdeen HWC), Alison Mitchell** (Treasurer and Ramblers Scotland), Catherine Lacy** (Secretary and Cults HWC), Carlos Oldani (Stockets HWC), Donald Thomas*, Ken Thomson* (Minutes Secretary), Dave Windle* (Chair)

1. Apologies: Peter Aikman (MBA), George Allan*, Alistair Beeley (Stonehaven M&HWC), Brian Heaton, Jean Robinson** (Cairngorm Club)

2. Declaration of conflicts of interest: none declared

3. Minutes of Council Meeting 18 April 2017: the draft minutes were approved.

4. Matters Arising from above Minutes: Actions were reported as follows:

4.1: Dave had circulated NEMT members on the SNH online paths survey response.

4.2: Although no planning application from Natural Retreats for Cairngorm was as yet forthcoming, George had suggested that Council “formulate initial views”. Discussion centred on the likely negative visual effects of a dry ski slope above the base station, and the drainage and machinery works. Less concern was expressed as to expansion of the Ptarmigan Restaurant. It was agreed that Dave would collate these ideas, and any others sent to him. Meanwhile, George [now Dave – KJT] would write to CNPA, asserting that any planning permission in the area would need a masterplan which could not be claimed as “business confidential”. It was thought that NR would not “clear up” damage already caused, if only for lack of cash.

5. NEMT Management: George had reported that OSCR had confirmed completion of all required SCIO work.

5.1. *Financial Update:* Alison reported that the end-April bank balance stood at some £11099; subsequent expenditures included £588 to Imprint for 400 copies of *Mountain Views*, and £222 for MV postage. MV sales receipts of £36 and £86 had been received from Maureen Stuchbury and Catherine respectively, and incoming membership cheques had not yet been cashed. Catherine had donated the cost of printing membership cards, and George had done the same for DD slips; both were thanked for their generosity. Donald asked if the web-hosting subscription had been paid: Alison thought not, but would investigate.

5.2. *Room bookings:* The following procedure for AGS FP Club Centre room bookings was agreed: Catherine to book dates in advance; Alison to pay by cheque if at the meeting; otherwise, A N Other to pay, and be reimbursed subsequently.

6. Consultations

6.1 *SG Peatland and Energy Policy Statement:* Dave had submitted a response on behalf of NEMT, and would summarise this for *Mountain Views*

7. Threats to Wild Land

7.1 *Glendye Wind Farm:* Still no formal application, but the local group had approached (e.g.) AMC for support. Donald to reply with NEMT support.

7.2 *Wind Farms and Wild Land:*

a. No report had been received from Brian H., but George had reported that JMT had settled with SSE as regards court costs for the Stronelairg appeal, and would therefore not be needing previously pledged monies.

b. George had had a response from the Heads of Planning Scotland (HoPS) regarding developments which might be designated as permitted (April Minute 8.2). The HoPS report to SG did not cover areas of NEMT interest, but HoPS had advised

that SG is to launch a consultation later in the year on the whole issue of permitted development, and he would keep an eye out for this. However, George had discovered that SG had undertaken a consultation a while back on whether communications infrastructure, which currently requires full consent, might be placed under the Prior Notification arrangements; George felt that this, if implemented, would be a significant weakening of current arrangements.

- c. There was no update on the Lochluichart wind farm.
- d. It was felt that the track to the “small-scale hydro” in Glen Gour was outside NEMT’s normal area of interest, but that the 1 km loch seemed equally significant.
- e. As regards the MBA proposals to “work with like-minded organisations to provide new, simple, innovative shelters, e.g. on long distance trails where there is little other shelter available”, and “to broaden the range of people who can enjoy or benefit from use of our mountain shelters”, it was felt that NEMT should object to these ideas, on the grounds that they would reduce “wildness” and remoteness, and that they represented “mission creep”. George [now Dave – KJT] to reply to MBA.

7.3 *Deer Management*: It was felt that the recent Scottish Parliament Committee report had been reported favourably in the media as pushing for “something to be done”. Dave to report back on any further developments.

8. **Hill Tracks**: George had reported that: a) Mel Nicoll has started to co-ordinate LINK volunteers (George and Sandy McI. for Aberdeenshire) checking planning websites for tracks (and hydro). She will advise George, Helen Todd and Beryl Leatherland of any concerns, and these three will then decide whether to object/comment; b) LINK had written to the Park about an unsightly track that had appeared on the hill side NE of the Clova Hotel; George had also acted in relation to c) Prior Notification of a track for sporting purposes in the glen to the west of Sourlies bothy (in a wild land area); and d) a proposed track at Ardtalnaig farm south of Loch Tay (April minute 8.2).

9. **Mountain Views**: Catherine reported that the Spring 2017 issue had gone out (but Donald to check on AMC copies); she would send an electronic version to Donald. Dave said that the Autumn 2017 issue would be smaller but would contain colour; it would contain a number of “general updates” and summaries of NEMT consultation responses. Dave to circulate contents ideas, for all to comment and/or contribute. It was agreed that MSs should reach Catherine by 25 August 2017.

10. **Lectures**: Carlos outlined his nearly complete plans for the Winter 2017/18 season, with dates 25/10, 22/11, 13/12, 24/1, 22/2 and March 2018. He would contact speakers in July/August over more detailed arrangements (e.g. titles, for publicity in September). Carlos to book Sportsman Club room in June (no fee expected).

11. **AOCB**:

- 12.1: George had asked for a £25 subscription to be made to ACVO. Despite some doubts, it was agreed to go ahead for this year: Alison to pursue with George.
- 12.2: It was felt that the Trust could not accept Drennan Watson’s papers for archiving, and that he should approach CMS in Perth for this purpose.
- 12.3: Catherine reported that 46 members were to be chased for subs changes or renewals; there had been 3 resignations. Donald reported that one organisation wished to pay by bank transfer; Catherine to send bank details to such members.
- 12.4: Core Path Mapping: Alison reported that the Ramblers petition had gone well.

12. **Dates of Next Meeting**: Several office-bearers reported that they could not attend the scheduled Council meeting on 11 July, which was therefore cancelled. The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 29 August.

Ken Thomson, 02 June 2017