

## NORTH EAST MOUNTAIN TRUST

### **Approved Minutes of Council Meeting held 7.30 pm Tuesday 10 April 2018**

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

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

**Present:** Peter Aikman (MBA), George Allan\*, Alex Brown\*\* (AMC), Hamish Clunas (HWC), Brian Cornock (Bailies of Bennachie), Catherine Lacy-Roberts\*\* (Secretary and Cults HWC), Alison Mitchell\*\* (Ramblers Scotland), Carlos Oldani (Stockets HWC), Roger Owen (Stonehaven MHC), Jean Robinson\*\* (Cairngorm Club), Donald Thomas\*, Ken Thomson\* (Minutes Secretary), Stuart Young (XXL HWC)

In the absence of Dave Windle\*, George was elected to chair the meeting, *nem con.*

- 1. Apologies:** Alistair Beeley (Stonehaven MHW), Brian Heaton, Richard Spencer (MBA), Maureen Stuchbury, Dave Windle
- 2. Declaration of conflicts of interest:** none declared.
- 3. Minutes of Council Meeting 6 March 2018:** with a minor correction, the draft minutes were approved.
- 4. Matters Arising from above Minutes:** (Minute 5.7, Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016) It was noted that George had not yet circulated a draft note for Council members. He undertook to do so as soon as possible. [See note attached to these minutes]
- 5. NEMT Management**
  - 5.1. Membership and Subscriptions:** Catherine reported that she would distribute cards along with *Mountain Views* (see Minute 9 below).
  - 5.2. Finance:** It was clarified that the £25 in the accounts discussed on 6 March was the Trust's subscription to ACVO. It was agreed to accept Dave Windle's proposal (email to Council 26 March 2018) that (i) the accounts, as laid out and audited, should be immediately circulated (by Catherine) to all NEMT members for information, (ii) George should thereafter send the Annual Report with the accounts to OSCR, and (iii) Council should re-visit the accounts layout issue at an autumn 2018 meeting. Finally, Alison reported that current financial business was proceeding normally.
  - 5.3. Website:** Donald had nothing particular to report.
  - 5.4. Annual Report:** see item 5.2 (ii) above.
  - 5.5. Ramblers Scotland Meeting 10-11 March 2018:** Donald reported that the NEMT stand display, which he had manned, alongside those of the Cairngorms Campaign and the Bennachie Trust, seemed worthwhile, although no new NEMT members had been recruited directly. Alison reported that RS had been pleased to host these stands, and Council expressed its thanks to Donald for his efforts.
  - 5.6. Projector:** Dave's emailed proposals of 26 February were discussed. Donald said that he had a contact who could possibly effect repair to the current machine, and it was agreed that he should investigate this route. If repair proved impossible, then Council felt that up to £500 should be available for purchase of a high-quality model, rather than to rely on Dave's machine or a cheap new machine.
  - 5.7. GDPR:** Donald's note of 6 April 2018 was discussed; he explained that it had been prepared after contact with Mountaineering Scotland (MS) and the Information Commissioner's Scotland office. He said that four actions were needed: (i) document relevant data; (ii) justify why this data is needed; (iii) notify members; (iv) implement security measures such as passwords. It was agreed that a working

party consisting of Donald, Roger and Ken, who would liaise with Catherine and Alison as necessary, would draw up a procedures note for NEMT office-bearers and a privacy notice for members. Donald would be named as the NEMT Compliance Officer.

- 6. Consultations:** No relevant current consultation was reported. It was reported that Ken had submitted the NEMT's submission of the CNPA's Forest Strategy 2018 draft.

**7. Threats to Wild Land**

8.1. *Cairngorm:* George reported that he had submitted an objection to the renewed dry ski proposal, on two grounds: (i) there was still no overall strategy for Cairngorm Mountain; (ii) whatever colour was used at the site, it would be highly visible from a distance at certain times of year.

8.2. *Glendye Wind Farm:* This was reported as having been put back yet again, possibly to July.

8.3. *Hill Tracks:* George reported that:

- a. The "worst ever" Amulree proposal had nonetheless been approved by Perth & Kinross Council.
- b. As expected, the landowner had asked to keep the Garvamore track constructed for Stronelairg purposes, with the upper two sections reduced to Argocat size. George had objected that the reason for the upper sections, beyond a forest plantation – possible future peat restoration work, though not by that estate – were insufficient.
- c. An application had been made to Aberdeenshire Council for a replacement mast on Morrone above Braemar, using the existing footprint. While there was no objection to this, there had been a (good) application last year to repair the old mast track. Since vehicles might well damage this track, George had contacted the planners to warn them of this, and to ask for appropriate scheduling of track work.
- d. On Pressendye above Tarland, the estate had proposed a bike track which would cross the hill quite high up, near an existing landrover track. While new bike tracks in the woods were acceptable, a highly visible track across the open hill was not, and questions of walker/biker precedence also arose. George has objected regarding the one track.
- e. George also reported that the LINK hill tracks campaign report would be comprehensive, with two themes: (i) full planning consent should be needed; and (ii) operation of the current system should be improved. The report would be finalised in early May, but the decision to publish would depend on some further consultation (e.g. with SNH, and the National Parks) and the need to avoid conflict with the Planning Bill, and so might be delayed until the autumn. It was agreed that George should be reimbursed for his travel cost to Perth for LINK purposes.
- f. George expected that monitoring on hill tracks would continue on a voluntary basis, reporting to the Scottish Wild Land Group. He would continue with tracks in Wild Land Areas and the Cairngorms National Park but this covers a wider area than Aberdeenshire, and volunteers to monitor the planning website were needed. Details of future monitoring to be decided at the next meeting (viz. 22<sup>nd</sup> May).

- g. Catherine asked about more and/or larger wind turbines at Mid Hill near Kerloch. George replied that he thought that this referred to 2 or 3 more erections, but asked for further investigation.
  - h. Donald reported that the proposal to build a golf course on the Coul links had been modified; the consultation had closed on 1 April, and the outcome was awaited.
  - i. Ken asked whether NEMT had a procedure to monitor wind farm applications in its area, in parallel to the hill tracks system; he was told that reliance was placed on the John Muir Trust and others to alert others to new proposals.
  - j. Ken reported that NTS Mar Lodge Estate had submitted a planning application for a replacement road bridge over the Quoich, a little upstream of the present (old) site. Roger wondered if SEPA had been consulted beforehand; Ken thought that this was so.
- 8. Bennachie:** Jean reported that the Campaign had published its annual report, with a summary to appear in *Mountain Views*, and was grateful for NEMT's support.
- 9. Mountain Views:** Catherine reported that the forthcoming issue would be with the printers this week, and so should go to NEMT members by the end of April.
- 10. Lectures:** Carlos reported that he had started to contact speakers, with a couple already arranged. George asked Council members to send any suggestions to Carlos by the end of May.
- 11. Clachnaben Path:** Ken reported that a recent Cairngorm Club committee had considered a cost estimate from OATS of about £10K for repair to the current path, and had agreed to commit the Club financially so that the project could go ahead, ideally with contributions from the existing but moribund path trust and from elsewhere, e.g. Aberdeenshire Council, and possibly sister clubs in the region. Donald had kindly agreed to pursue this project with OATS.
- 12. AOCB:** Peter reported some outcomes of a recent East Highlands MBA meeting (although he himself had not attended): (i) the new Feshie bothy was complete but not yet signed off, and might be "rather too palatial"; (ii) materials for the refurbishment of the Garbh Choire refuge would be helicoptered in when conditions allowed; it was hoped that the upgrading of the Corrour toilets could be assisted at the same time; (iii) materials were to be taken in to the Shieling of Mark for unknown purposes; (iv) the Red House bothy work on the Geldie was now on the back burner, since evidence of an earlier cruck structure had been discovered, and archaeological work nearby was planned; however, it was still on the MBA's 2019 programme.
- 13. Date of Next Meeting:** 7:30pm, 22 May

Ken Thomson, 11 April 2018

*Note attached to NEMT Council minutes 10 April 2018*

### **The Lobbying Scotland Act 2016**

NEMT does not need to register under the Act (it is too small) and so it is exempt from the need to keep a register of lobbying. This exemption does not apply if lobbying for a third party (which people acting on behalf of NEMT should never do).

However, Scottish Environmental LINK is keeping a register, and asks that all its members advise it if they are ‘advocating a LINK position’. What is covered is in LINK’s statement below:

*In any instance where you are advocating a LINK position during face-to-face contact with an MSP, Minister, Special Adviser or the Permanent Secretary, please let LINK know.*

*We are asking everyone to do this, including members who do not have to register their own activities due to the small organisation exemption, and those holding unpaid honorary positions with LINK. Please email [information@scotlink.org](mailto:information@scotlink.org), and state:*

- *The date, time and location of your lobbying*
- *Whom you spoke to and if you were alone or with others*
- *Description of the meeting or event*
- *Purpose of the lobbying/ what you discussed*

I think that the easiest way to avoid any problems would be for NEMT members, when campaigning, to always say that they are advocating an NEMT position, but, where relevant, that this position is also supported by other bodies (e.g. Mountaineering Scotland, LINK; John Muir Trust etc.). If a member states that it is also a LINK position, this should be reported to LINK as above.

George Allan (Trustee) April 2018