

NORTH EAST MOUNTAIN TRUST
SCIO Scottish Charity no. SC 008783

Approved Minutes of Council Meeting held 7.30 pm Tuesday 3 December 2019
at the Sportsman's Club, 11 Queens Road, Aberdeen

Present: George Allan*, Brian Cornock (Bailies of Bennachie), Debbie Fielding (Cairngorm Club), Catherine Lacy-Roberts** (Secretary & Culter HWC), Roger Owen (Stonehaven MHC), Jean Robinson*, Alison Mitchell** (Treasurer and Ramblers Scotland), Carlos Oldani (Stockets HWC), Linda Smith (AMC), Richard Spencer (MBA), Donald Thomas*, Ken Thomson* (Minutes Secretary)

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

George Allan took the chair.

1. **Apologies:** Brian Heaton*, Dave Windle*
2. **Declaration of conflicts of interest:** none.
3. **Minutes of Council Meeting 8 October:** with the deletion of one sentence re website, the draft minutes were *approved*.
4. **Matters Arising from above Minutes other than as below:** George reported that the distribution of MV and leaflets had been sorted out. It was also reported that all mail was now to be received by Catherine (and not e.g. by Maureen Stuchbury), and that “eventually” the bank would report to Alison.
5. **Dates of Next Meetings:** *agreed* as 28/1 (post-AGM), 3/3, 21/4, 2/6, 25/8, 6/10, 1/12 and (after AGM) 26/1/2021 (all Tuesdays). Alison to book room.
6. **NEMT Management**
 - 6.1. *Arrangements for AGM 28/1/20:* Material to Catherine and Dave by 6/1/20; George to remind Dave. Alison reported that the accounts to year-end 30/9/19 had been prepared and balanced but would be fine-tuned before going to Malcolm Lamont for his approval/comments. NEMT Trustees would see them as part of AGM papers.
 - 6.2. *Membership and Subscriptions:* Catherine reported that the Granite City Hillwalkers had paid. The Adam Watson Event had not resulted in any immediate recruitment, but some interest had been expressed.
 - 6.3. *Finance:* Alison reported that digital access to the bank account was being requested, but bureaucratic barriers were being encountered. Donald reported that a card reader had been set up via a SquareUp account at a cost of 1.7%, and was available for use whenever wanted. The position over Dave making a NEMT payment to the LINK Environmental Rights Centre was not known. The possibility of making a The Mountains and The People donation was raised, but preference for a NE project was expressed, and George agreed to enquire about this. Ken raised the current work on the Clachnaben path (being overseen by Donald) as a possible donation target. It was agreed that any such donations would be re-considered at the January meeting, when more information of both possibilities would be available.
 - 6.4. *Website:* Donald had little to report; links would be provided to the Cairngorm Mountain Masterplan and to the Adam Watson Event.

- 6.5. *Mountain Views*: A date for material for the Spring 2020 issue was discussed; a decision would be taken at the January meeting. George would approach the BOOTS club for a possible article, and Roger would ask Will Boyd-Wallis for a piece on his Adam Watson presentation. It was expected that Dave would propose a framework for the 40th anniversary Autumn 2020 issue before or at the January meeting.
- 6.6. *Lectures*: Arrangements for the 11 December Lecture were agreed as: Alison to contact Liz Lindsey for the door (Cath and Alison to serve if needed); Roger to set up screen etc. (Alison has info boards); Dave to host the speaker. For 15 January, Jean would staff the door; Dave or Donald to host. George would check speaker arrangements with Alex.

It was reported that the Adam Watson event had gone very well, with around 130 attendants. Donald to approach Alex re contacting attenders to thank them, and encourage NEMT membership. Roger reported that Des Thompson had offered to speak at a future similar meeting; but it was decided that the AW event would not be repeated annually. He also reported that Jenny Watson had suggested an evening on Adam himself; but again it was decided that NEMT should not attempt to organise this. Debbie Fielding expressed her willingness to act as the NEMT Lecture Coordinator for 2020/21, provided that support would be provided with suggesting speakers and with staffing the lecture evenings. George would send her an outline of the work, which it was expected would mostly be carried out in May-July.

7. Consultations:

- 7.1. *Cairngorm Mountain*: George reported that HIE had appointed three consultants to prepare a Cairngorm/Glenmore Masterplan, but meanwhile planning applications on Cairngorm were being submitted, and the Scottish Government was likely to be asked very soon to support repair of the funicular, so that the scope and effect of the eventual Masterplan were likely to be very limited. A Vision Statement on Cairngorm Mountain (see parkswatchscotland.co.uk/2019/11/25/cairn-gorm-a-vision-for-the-future), drafted by George and supported by 5 NGOs (Cairngorms Campaign, Campaign for a Better Cairngorm, NEMT, Ramblers Scotland and Scottish Wild Land Group), had been sent to all the main organisations (e.g. HIE, the CNPA Board), personnel (e.g. MSPs) and media. The HIE CEO had offered a meeting in mid-January; although there was not much hope of affecting the funicular decision, there might be more hope on the Masterplan. George suggested a letter to the media early in the New Year. It was reported that Mountaineering Scotland had issued their own statement on Cairngorm (www.mountaineering.scot/conservation/policies/cairngorm-mountain-masterplan), and that the James Hutton Institute had issued a report (www.climatexchange.org.uk) which showed reducing snow cover on the mountain.
- 7.2. *Permitted Development Rights (PDRs)*: George reported that the Scottish Government had issued its consultation (www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-governments-proposed-work-programme-reviewing-extending-permitted-development-rights-pdr-scotland), with 700 pages but not all NEMT-relevant apart from e.g. mast tracks, and farm buildings. Currently, the response wanted was as to the scope of the review, not individual PDRs. A small NEMT group would meet with Dave on 16 December to draft a NEMT response.

8. Threats to Wild Land

8.1. *Cairngorm Mountain*: Little to add to the above (7.1): no decisions yet on current planning applications, e.g. for a beginner's ski area west of the base station. A CNPA report on carbon reduction is at <https://cairngorms.co.uk/resource/docs/boardpapers/06122019/191206CNPABdPaper2AANetZeroWithNature.pdf>

8.2. *Hill & Hydro Tracks*: George reported as follows:

- (i) The Minister (Kevin Stewart) had said that he would look again at the issue, possibly being minded to remove PDRs on tracks in the National Parks – which would not be much of an advance since hydro applications were drying up (ha ha), and the CNPA were now very much on the ball. George had met with Beryl Leatherhead and Helen Todd, who were drafting an options paper (e.g. no PDRs on agricultural tracks, and/or on holdings registered for sporting purposes), and hoped to meet with the Minister, probably in the Pentlands.
- (ii) *Glen Prosen/Clova Ridge Track*: Angus Council had decided that there had been no breach of planning conditions on the “repaired” track, but had given no reasons: George has written again, asking why.
- (iii) *Glen Markie*: A track west of the burn had been approved by Highland Council (not called in by CNPA), despite being in a Wild Land Area, a SSSI and a SAC. It was only 150m long, but what would vehicles do beyond its end? George had objected, on grounds of excessive width, and lack of a Wild Land assessment.

8.3. *Wind Farms*: Nothing reported.

9. AOCB: It was reported that:

9.1. The main bridge over the Quoich was being constructed.

9.2. Carlos was taking over from George re fortnightly scans of planning applications in the NEMT area.

Ken Thomson, 30 January 2020