

NORTH EAST MOUNTAIN TRUST
SCIO Scottish Charity no. SC 008783

Approved Minutes of Council Meeting held 7.30 pm Tuesday 19 October 2021
held via Zoom

Present: Debbie Fielding**, Morna Harper**, Catherine Lacy**, Alison Mitchell**, Donald Thomas*, Ken Thomson*, Dave Windle* (Chair) [* Charity Trustee as Individual Member; ** Charity Trustee as Organisational Representative]

1. **Apologies:** Jackie Cumberbirch**, Roger Owen**, Alistair Beeley
2. **Declaration of conflicts of interest:** None.
3. **Minutes of Council Meeting 24 August 2021:** the circulated draft was approved without change.
4. **Matters Arising, other than as below:** none.

5. NEMT Management

- 5.1. *Membership and Subscriptions:* Cath reported that one new member had been recruited.
- 5.2. *Finance:* Alison reported that the bank balance at 30 Sept. (end of FY) stood at £10885, after receipt of £100 from the Ellon HWC. Since then, sales revenues of £5, £47.50 and £16.20 had been received for Adam Watson's book, *Mountain Views*, and Cairngorms District Guide respectively, while Imprint would be paid £560 for 360 copies of *MV*. She was now working on the FY audit, and would meet Donald next week re HMRC Gift Aid.
- 5.3. *Website:* Donald reported that *MV* no. 84 was now online, and also the Lectures list (also Eventbrite and Facebook). He would upload, or link to, the NS mountain hare survey report.
- 5.4. *Mountain Views:* Cath was congratulated on another good issue. Donald asked for an e-copy for the website. Cath reported that three of the main shop outlets had dropped out, and discussion then took place on the pros and cons of continuing with cash sales when alternatives were available, such as donations using a QR code linked to a charity website. It was agreed that Donald would explore what donation systems were available, liaising with Alison and Cath. Meanwhile, since it did not involve Cath in extra visits, the cash system would be continued for the spring 2022 issue.
- 5.5. *Lectures:* Debbie was congratulated on a good October talk by Grant Farquhar, to whom the offer of a fee was not thought necessary. Receipt of Eventbrite revenue was expected soon. It was agreed that the Zoom format should be continued for the whole of the 2021-22 season. Dave reported that he would be unable to chair the 9/12 and 20/1 Lectures, and Ken agreed to do this, with Donald continuing as Zoom host.
- 5.6. *Dates of Next Council Meetings* (via Zoom until further notice): 30/11 and 25/1/2022. Ken to propose dates for the rest of 2022 at the 30/11 meeting.

6. NEMT Policies

- 6.1. *Forestry:* Dave referred to his summary of 19 responses to the recent NEMT forestry questionnaire survey; perhaps the main point of interest was the lack of majority support for open spaces. He would await any further responses, and then finalise for December, and summarise for *Mountain Views* in spring.

7. Consultations:

- 7.1. *Aberdeenshire Access Officer Response:* nothing more had been heard, but it was agreed to keep this item on the agenda for 30/11 in case Roger Owen had more to report.

- 7.2. *CNPA Partnership Plan*: Dave had circulated this, and some Council input; he felt that any NEMT response should be at “high-level”, e.g. climate change and biodiversity loss, rather than specifics. However, Ken felt that some specifics (e.g. Cairngorm Mountain, Derry Lodge, Moine Mhor track) might be mentioned as sites worth attention/reminder. It was agreed that Dave would wait a week for further Council input, and then draft and circulate a NEMT response.
- 7.3. *RSPB Strathnethy/Loch Avon Planting*: Dave reported that RSPB had replied to the NEMT consultation response. It was felt that this was generally acceptable.

8. Threats to Wild Land:

- 8.1. *Corrievarkie Pumped Storage*: no more heard; it was agreed to drop this for the time being.
- 8.2. *Dalwhinnie Rail Crossing*: it was reported that discussions were ongoing, with Ministerial involvement, and it was agreed that NEMT should continue to monitor the issue.
- 8.3. *Tracks*: Council noted George’s report circulated with the agenda. Its item 5 (log storage/vehicle turning area in Glen Isla near Tulchan Lodge) was worrying, but would probably be approved by Angus Council.
- 8.4. *Cairngorm Mountain*: It was reported that (i) HIE had simplified access to the Coire na Ciste parking area, and (ii) Dave had reminded Audit Scotland re HIE use of public funds.
- 8.5. *Wind Farms*: nothing reported.

9. AOCB:

- 9.1. AM reported that she had received an invitation to attend the ACVO AGM, but felt that she need not go, and indeed proposed that NEMT’s subscription to this organisation should be ended: this was agreed.
- 9.2. Donald reported that he had attended the “Upland Futures” event at Perth, celebrating 20 years of the UHI Centre for Mountain Studies (from which Martin Price was standing down). He had found it a good meeting, but primarily focussed on land use and rural communities rather than on recreation.
- 9.3. Dave reported a campaign to save St. Fittick’s Park from development as part of Aberdeen’s second harbour. It was felt that this lay outside NEMT’s remit, but Dave agreed to circulate the campaign material to Council (done 20/10).

Ken Thomson, 4 December 2021