

NORTH EAST MOUNTAIN TRUST
SCIO Scottish Charity no. SC 008783

Approved Minutes of Council Meeting held at 7.30 pm Tuesday 16 May 2023
at Sportsman's Club, Aberdeen

Present: Hamish Clunas (AHWC)**, Alison Mitchell (RS)**, Donald Thomas*, Ken Thomson (CC)*, Dave Windle* (Chair), Mike Duguid (CC)**, Catherine Lacy-Roberts (Culter HWC)**, Andy McNicoll (MBA)** [Charity Trustee as *Individual Member; as **Organisational Representative]

1. Apologies: Alistair Beeley (SMHWC/LINK), Debbie Fielding*, Morna Harper (AMC)**, Brian Heaton*, Roger Owen (SMHC)**

2. Conflicts of interest: None declared.

3. Minutes of Council Meeting 7 March 2023: the pre-circulated draft was approved.

4. Matters Arising, other than as below: None.

5. NEMT Management

5.1. *Membership and Subscriptions:* It was reported that all clubs had paid except the Stockets; cheque-payment requests/reminders to IMs were to be sent out soon. A database for HMRC Gift Aid purposes had been compiled by Alison and Donald (to whom grateful thanks were due); this would be kept up to date by Cath (as Secretary) advising Alison (as Treasurer). Mike asked about disaster recovery arrangements Cath said that she carried out monthly back-ups at home. It was agreed that Cath would supply Donald with a password-protected membership list at least annually.

5.2. *Finance:* Alison reported that the Trust's bank balance stood at £14,244, after payments of £75 for 3 Sportsman Club memberships, £13 for a Zoom licence, £489 for the printing of *Mountain Views* and £189 for posting of same, £150 to Snowdonia First Aid as a speaker's fee; and receipts of £42 from EventBrite, £87 for shop sales of *Mountain Views*, and £1385 from HMRC as Gift Aid. Some club/organisational subscription receipts were reported, but not from the Ramblers, the Rights of Way Society, or BOOTS (now believed to be dormant).

5.3. *Website:* Donald requested that Cath send him a copy of *Mountain Views* for uploading.

5.4. *Mountain Views:* Publication had been achieved on time in mid-April. It was discussed whether clubs were receiving too many or too few copies, or should receive an email copy; it was agreed that no change in current arrangements need be made although of course clubs could request a different number of copies. It was reported that a copyright issue was being sent to the British Library. Dave undertook to circulate during the summer a draft contents list for the Autumn 2023 issue.

5.5. *Lectures:* Debbie reported by email that the 16 March (Geomorphology) and 20 April (Capercaillie) talks had gone well. Mike agreed to take over from Debbie for the 2023/24 season, and was assured of Council support in finding speakers etc. Ken would liaise re suitable dates. It was agreed that future talks should be in person at the Sportsman's Club, and that recordings (not announced beforehand) might be made. Entry charges (currently £2 and £4) were discussed, but a decision on these, and on chairing/door-staffing, was postponed to the next Council meeting. Ken reported on how clubs disseminated information on NEMT talks to their members; this varied quite widely.

5.6. *Shop Discounts:* Cath reported these as having been established.

- 5.7. *Dates of Council Meetings*: These were agreed as: 22/8, 3/10, 5/12 and 23/1/2024 (post-AGM), all at Sportsman's Club.
- 6. Social Event**: Dave, Alison and Ken suggested that new members should be encouraged by holding a "social" talk at the Sportsman's Club in autumn 2023, either in October or towards Christmas, with a suitable topic and speaker (e.g. someone from a local shop talking about recent items of gear) and with the offer of a free drink afterwards. This might cost up to £200 more than the usual room hire, but could be partly offset by a higher entry charge. This was agreed, details being initially left to Mike as regards date and speaker/topic.
- 7. NEMT Policies**
- 7.1. *Reserves*: The current wording in the Annual Report, i.e. "Each year the trustees will consider when the size of reserves reduces to a level at which, going forward, no further reductions are prudent", was briefly discussed; possible re-wordings to be considered at next Council meeting.
- 7.2. *Biking*: Mike reported that he had examined updated Strava maps (for the past year) for Ben Macdhui, Braeriach, Ben a'Bhuird, etc.: no significant changes were apparent.
- 8. Consultations**
- 8.1. *Glen Gairn Mast*: It was reported that Aberdeenshire Council had not yet made a decision.
- 8.2. *RSPB Abernethy*: The visit on 7 April was reported positively, and future RSPB-NEMT links were discussed. It was agreed that these might include: (i) a RSPB staff member talk in winter 2023/24 (Mike); (ii) an Autumn 2023 *MV* article on the April visit (Ken/Dave); (iii) a semi-regular RSPB *MV* news "snippet" (by invitation/reminder).
- 9. Threats to Wild Land**
- 9.1. *Hill and Hydro Tracks*: Council received with appreciation George's report.
- 9.2. *Loch Earba Storage Scheme*: Dave's *MV* article was noted.
- 9.3. *Cairngorm Mountain*: an eye to kept on HIE/CM proposals to change extra-Ptarmigan arrangements.
- 9.4. *Wind Farms*: Dave reported that the Hill of Fare proposal had been slightly reduced (e.g. 16 instead of 17 turbines, and a lower height). He was in contact with the local group, who would be expected to make the running, and request any help from NEMT.
- 10. AOCB**: Mike suggested more trips/visits such as that to Abernethy, e.g. to Mar Lodge, Glentannar, Glen Ey, Dinnet or Glen Feshie. Dave to circulate Council with ideas/proposals.

Ken Thomson, 16 August 2023