

NORTH EAST MOUNTAIN TRUST
SCIO Scottish Charity no. SC 008783

Approved Minutes of Council Meeting held at 7.30 pm Tuesday 15 August 2023
at Sportsman's Club, Aberdeen

Present: Hamish Clunas (AHWC)**, Morna Harper (AMC)**, Catherine Lacy-Roberts (Culter HWC)**, Alison Mitchell (RS)**, Roger Owen (SMHC)**, Donald Thomas*, Ken Thomson (CC)*, Dave Windle* (Chair) [Charity Trustee as *Individual Member; as **Organisational Representative]

1. **Apologies:** Alistair Beeley (SMHWC/LINK), Mike Duguid (CC)**, Brian Heaton*, Andy McNicoll (MBA)**
2. **Conflicts of interest:** None declared; Ken to remove this item from standard agenda.
3. **Minutes of Council Meeting 16 May 2023:** the pre-circulated draft was approved.
4. **Matters Arising, other than as below:** None.
5. **NEMT Management**
 - 5.1. *Membership and Subscriptions:* Cath reported that three (later reduced to one) club(s) had not yet paid. Cath to supply Donald with a password-protected membership list.
 - 5.2. *Finance:* Alison reported that the Trust's bank balance stood at £14,346, after receipts of £25 each from Bailies of Bennachie and Ramblers Scotland. LINK subscription of £170 due for payment when invoice received.
 - 5.3. *Website:* Donald reported that no changes had been made.
 - 5.4. *Mountain Views:* Cath reported that nearly all material was now in, but that several more illustrations were wanted, e.g. high-resolution photographs. She was encouraged to ask Council members for relevant topics. She would shortly be busy and/or away, but hoped for publication by the end of September.
 - 5.5. *Lectures:* In Mike's absence, Ken reported that he had emailed Mike re progress. Cath said that she normally included Talks info with the Autumn issue of MV. Ken to ask Mike about progress, ideas, dates, etc. Roger said that he could offer a couple of "natural history" ideas. Dave hoped for progress via email, since next Council meeting on 3 October rather late; if necessary, a start could be made in November.
 - 5.6. *Help for Hill Tracks etc.:* Council considered George's request for help in this area. Council agreed that NEMT interest was "east of the A9", and primarily Donside/Deeside/Angus Glens. Dave to contact George re (i) monitoring/screening (though covered by Carlos/Sandy?) and (ii) comments/objections, with the latter to be dealt with on a "case-by-case" basis (e.g. Dave for Hill of Fare windfarm), with a nominee/volunteer to work with George.
 - 5.7. *Dates of Council Meetings:* These were agreed as: 3/10 (Donald not available), 5/12 and 23/1/2024 (post-AGM), all at Sportsman's Club.
6. **Glen Feshie Visit and Social Event:** Dave reported that he had received no response from Thomas McDonnell re Glen Feshie, and would approach Cairngorms Connect. Social Event in Aberdeen linked to Talks (see 5.5 above).
7. **NEMT Policies:** It was agreed to maintain the current wording for reserves, with Trustees to take a more active interest in the relevant Annual Report statement by the Treasurer.
8. **Consultations:** Alison to circulate info re a current Aberdeenshire coastal path consultation. [Post-meeting, it's a "strategy", not a consultation, so no further action needed]

9. Threats to Wild Land

- 9.1. *Hill and Hydro Tracks*: Council received with appreciation George's report, especially re "scraping" of Lord Arthur's Hill track. Roger to ascertain Beryl L's views. Re Glen Gairn mast, it was reported that Aberdeenshire Council had still not yet made a decision; Mountaineering Scotland's campaign against a "blanket" Scottish policy was noted with approval, but NEMT could not pursue judicial review. Re mast etc. on Sturdy Hill, Roger agreed to put this to South Esk Catchment Partnership for landscape consideration. Re pylons, it was thought that JMT (like MS and Ramblers) were unlikely to oppose overhead lines near Stronelarig, despite previous undergrounding nearby.
- 9.2. *Cairngorm Mountain*: no news.
- 9.3. *Wind Farms*: Dave suggested a financial contribution to the (non-charity) Hill of Fare Wind Farm Information Group, and a sum of £500 was approved, subject to Dave receiving suitable assurances as to the use of these funds. Some discussion ensued re developers requesting duration extension (beyond e.g. 25 years) immediately post-approval (as opposed to enlargement/re-powering via extra/taller turbines).

10. AOCB:

- 10.1. *Glen Dye Moor*: The public meeting in Strachan on 23 August was noted; KT to report back any new information.
- 10.2. *Eventbrite Charges*: Donald reported that a new structure would require payment for bookings over 25 in number (e.g. £8 per event; he would circulate a proposal/decision.
- 10.3. *JMT Event*: Donald circulated info re "Clear on Deer" film to be shown on Wed. 27 September at Kings College. Cath to circulate further.

Ken Thomson, 11 October 2023