

NORTH EAST MOUNTAIN TRUST

SCIO Scottish Charity no. SC 008783

Approved Minutes of Council Meeting held at 7.30 pm Tuesday 1 October 2024 at the Sportsman's Club, Aberdeen

Present: Mike Duguid**, Morna Harper (AMC)**, Catherine Lacy-Roberts (Culter HWC)**, Allan Moore (MBA)**, Alison Mitchell (RS)**, Roger Owen (SMHWC)**, Ken Thomson (CC)*, [Charity Trustee as *Individual Member; as **Organisational Representative]

In the absence of the NEMT Chair, Roger was elected as meeting chair, *nem con*.

1. **Apologies:** Hamish Clunas (AHWC)**, Donald Thomas*, Dave Windle* (NEMT Chair)
2. **Minutes of Council Meeting 20 August 2024:** the pre-circulated draft was approved.
3. **Matters Arising, other than as below:** None.

4. NEMT Management

- 4.1. *Membership and Subscriptions:* Cath reported that she was still chasing unpaid subscriptions, including that from AMC. She hoped to do better next year.
- 4.2. *Finance:* Alison reported that the Trust's bank balance stood at £14258, following payment of annual SELink subscription (£170), Sportsman's Club room hire and two memberships (£25 + 2*£12), and receipt of £51 from shop sales of *Mountain Views*. The FY having ended, she would be preparing the 2023/24 accounts, in time for the next Council/Trustee meeting (on 3/12). Roger asked if the bank balance was considered somewhat excessive; his attention was drawn to Minute 4.3 of 20/8/2024.
- 4.3. *Website:* Mike reported that he was preparing more material on masts, for that website page to be expanded and updated. Ken suggested that NEMT activity, e.g. mast objections etc., be included. Some discussion then took place on the relative merits of the website vs. Facebook (initiated by Roger a couple of years ago, but not much used) and other social media. General opinion was that the website was best for NEMT "information", while FB or other media were best for "discussion". (e.g. on masts: see 6.4 below)
- 4.4. *Mountain Views:* Cath produced copies of the Autumn/Winter 24/25 issue (no. 90), whose production had not presented unusual problems despite a new printer (McKenzie of Dyce). She has sent the Spring 2024 issue along with photo-links to Donald for the website. The Editors were congratulated on the issue. Some discussion then ensued on LWSs (see 6.6 below).
- 4.5. *Lectures:* None were planned, but Roger proposed Shaila Rao or her nominee to talk on the work of Mar Lodge Estate volunteers. It was agreed that this might go ahead, subject to (i) location (Sportsman's Club if available, (ii) date (Ken to send Roger "JWS-available" Tues/Weds over the winter, for (a) Roger to put to Shaila and (b) Alison(?) to check with Sportsman's Club); (iii) entry charge (none); (iv) use of Eventbrite (no). Alternative events considered were (i) Chris Soulsby on LWSs (see 6.6 below), (ii) a Quiz Night as arranged annually by Dundee clubs, and (iii) Roger on Climbing in Serbia.
- 4.6. *Future Council Meetings:* 3/12 (booked), and 28/1/2025 after the AGM. Ken to supply "equivalent" dates later in 2025, for Alison to book on or after 3/12.

5. Consultations

- 5.1. *CNPA Fire Management*: No further information (see Minute 6.1 of 20/8/2024).
- 5.2. *Earba Pumped Storage Scheme*: No further information.
- 5.3. *Loch Quoich Pumped Storage Scheme*: No further information (see Minute 6.3 of 20/8/2024).
- 5.4. *Cairngorm Capercaillie Project Emergency Plan 2024-30*: No further information, although recent but somewhat vague press reports noted.
- 5.5. *Cairngorms Future Land Use Study*: Ken had attended an online meeting with a researcher and two “local” attendees; with somewhat vague scope and objectives, this had not proved very informative, but a further event was planned in 2025.

6. Threats to Wild Land

- 6.1. *Peatland*: No further information, but some discussion on scope, restoration, etc.
 - 6.2. *Tracks*: George’s report was considered: no new applications. Roger raised ATV-made “tracks”.
 - 6.3. *Pylons*: Cath’s recent email to all NEMT members re public consultation meetings on the Glen Dye Wind Farm. The Kintore-Fetteresso-Tealing line of “monster” pylons was noted but was not thought likely to concern NEMT.
 - 6.4. *Masts*: George’s report was considered, with its tally of 67 NEMT objections as of 24/9/2024. Ken reported that the question put to the NTS AGM on 20/9/2024 (with over 40 NEMT/NTS co-signatories) had been handled somewhat superficially, although private conversation had elicited a stronger NTS attitude. He would send a suitable report to Cath for dissemination to NEMT members. Mike drew attention to the SRN Mast Action Group FB group.
 - 6.5. *Wind Farms*: It was noted that 3 local Council committees had objected to the Hill of Fare proposal, and that the local MP had been active. Other WF developments were noted: Beinn Bheag (SE of Loch Quoich), Findhorn, near Kerloch, and Creag Meall (off the Slug Road).
 - 6.6. *Other*: Large Woody Structures (LWSs) were noted as an active threat on several River Dee tributaries. Roger reported that he was involved in assessing an evidence-gathering exercise. Ken offered to add LWSs as a regular “Threat” agenda item.
7. **AOCB**: Allan reported some MBA activity, e.g. new MOs at Corroul and Tarf. The MBA AGM was to be held on 12/10/2024.

Ken Thomson, 3 December 2024