

BRITISH MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL

177-179 Burton Road
Manchester M20 2BB

Tel: 0161 445 6111
www.thebmc.co.uk
email: office@thebmc.co.uk

BMC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Draft minutes of the 2023 AGM held The White Swan Hotel, Alnwick
at 9.30am on Saturday 17 June 2023 (the Meeting)

Directors present:

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Andy Syme (AS) | President and chair of the Meeting (AGM Chair) |
| Paul Davies (PD) | CEO |
| Martyn Hurn (MH) | Nominated Director |
| Roger Murray (RM) | Chair |
| Peter Salenieks (PS) | Council Nominated Director (CND) |
| Fiona Sanders (FS) | CND |
| Carl Spencer (CS) | CND |

NB – all are BMC members

Voting Members and appointed proxies present (in alphabetical order):

| | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Mark Anstiss | Joshua Farrell | Jon Punshon (JP) |
| David Baker | Rose Gare-Simmons | Steve Quinton |
| Bill Beveridge | Agustin Guardiola | Lynn Robinson (LR) |
| John Booth | Alan Hinkes | Andy Say (AndS) |
| David Brown (DB) | Stuart Holmes (SH) | Trevor Smith |
| Ian Brown | Peter Judd | Douglas Spencer |
| Judith Brown | Richard Madgin | Jonathan White (JW) |
| Neil Brown | Mark McAuley | Anthony Williams (AW) |
| Catherine Calderwood | Lynsey McAuley (LM) | Katherine Williams (KW) |
| Steve Clark (SC) | Colin Lofthouse | Helen Wilson |
| Marcus Cross | Steve McClure | Philip Wilson |
| Mohammed Dhalech | Peter McCreedy | Ian Wyatt |
| Richard Eden | Mike Parsons | David Xiberras (DX) |
| | | Gabriella Xiberras |

BMC Staff Present: Gavin Finch (GF) – Chief Commercial Officer (CCO) (BMC Member)
Alvin Foy (AF) – IT & Database Manager (BMC Member)
Lucy Valerio (LV) – Company Secretary (CoSec) (Appointed a proxy)
Katy Shilladay (KS) – Digital Marketing Co-ordinator (BMC Member)
Arun Patel (AP) – Membership Manger (BMC Member)

In attendance: Fred Williams (FW)

NOTE: For ease of understanding, the minutes sequence below refer to the planned timetable. It should be noted that the items, specifically the CEO & Presidents Reports, are not recorded in chronological order due to technical and procedural issues. The actual order was 1, 2, 3, Members Q&A Part 1, 4, 5, 7, 6, 8, 9 & Members Q&A Part 2.

1. Welcome and Introduction

1.1 Andy Syme introduced himself, welcomed all those joining the first physical AGM of the BMC since 2019 and said he would be chairing the Meeting (the AGM Chair). He noted the start time on the agenda was 9.30am, but gave members a couple more minutes to get their seats.

1.2 The AGM Chair reported that the meeting was not currently quorate, and he therefore suggested that the proposed agenda be amended, and that to allow more members time to get to the Meeting, the members' question and answer session take place prior to the business of the Meeting.

1.3 He introduced himself, the CEO and the Chair (together the Panel) and noted that members had had the opportunity to write down questions as they were registering for the AGM, he proceeded to deal with various questions.

2 Members' Q&A

2.1 See Appendix

3 Opening of the AGM

3.1 The AGM Chair noted that there was a quorum present. He set out a number of housekeeping points prior to the presentations. He noted the Meeting was being broadcast.

He said a number of the Board were in attendance at the Meeting and available to speak to after the Meeting, but noted apologies from Flavia Alzetta, Neal Hockley, John Willmott and Caroline Worboys. He noted unfortunately no-one from finance was available to present at the Meeting and so the CEO would do this.

He said there would be a number of presentations and then the resolutions would be voted on. Then the volunteer awards would be held and then a further Q&A session would be held.

He then invited the Chair, Roger Murray, to present his report to the Meeting.

4 Chair's Report of 2022

4.1 The Chair gave his presentation which started with a slide on 'Strategy', the main points noted were:

- The purpose of the BMC was to create a better future for climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers
- There were five strategic themes, the strategy was on the website:
 - Access and conservation
 - Membership engagement
 - Education and training
 - Sector leadership and organisational development
 - GB Climbing
- The BMC had two major complimentary roles:
 - Representative body for all of the BMC's activities funded almost entirely by the membership
 - National Governing Body for competition climbing funded almost entirely by the public purse
- There had been successes and challenges in both roles
- For a relatively small business, the BMC had a huge range of activity which forced difficult choices

4.2 He then presented a slide called 'Foundations' the main points were:

- The BMC was coming from a low base with some processes and systems being the sort of thing seen 20 years ago
- There had been four major improvements:
 - New financial systems and processes had been implemented which enabled the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to be better and more rapidly informed about the financial health
 - Much improved quarterly performance reporting by the SLT to the Board
 - A modern digital infrastructure had started to be built

- A modern marketing and membership engagement system had started to be built
- The BMC was on a journey to take it to proper marketing systems and it would take time
- The first thing that members would have seen as part of the journey, was the new hill walking website, which was transformative

4.3 He moved on to the finances and gave a summary, the main points were:

- Revenue in 2022 of £4.1million made up of £3.3million from membership and £0.8million from grants (UK Sport and Sport England)
- Expenditure in 2022 of £4.4million
- Deficit in 2022 of £0.27million funded out of reserves
- Reserves at end of 2022 £0.84million
- Grant funding secured in 2022 was £2.79million for indoor climbing from Sport England – covering a 5-year investment programme, delivered through the BMC and its funded partners, some critical delivery was:
 - Indoor wall safety – through the Association of British Climbing Walls (ABC)
 - Support for safeguarding across the sector
 - Support for equality, diversity and inclusion across the sector
- The plan for 2023 was to run a budgeted deficit of £0.07million with break-even planned for 2024

4.4 He then set out a slide on ‘Organisational Development’, the main points were:

- The BMC was a complex organisation, especially given its size, the BMC had multiple trusts, multiple components and multiple sports, this created a massive activity set
- The Board had co-opted Neal Hockley as a director with a focus in Wales in October 2022, and the Chair was delighted he had applied to remain in this role, as he was a real asset
- The Board had appointed John Willmott as an Independent director in November 2022, he had a very strong business background in the insurance world
- There had been a large increase in staff numbers, almost all of whom were funded by grants from Sport England and UK Sport
- The BMC would not function without its volunteers working with staff, they were on the Board and committees, they worked in access and conservation and helped competitions run, there were about 700 active BMC volunteers
- A number of volunteer roles were close to being full time with considerable public responsibilities whilst being unpaid, this was not sustainable
- The Board was attempting to run the BMC professionally, in 2018 he had stood and told members that implementing the recommendations would take at least 5 years
- The BMC was like a medium sized business which spent both members’ and public money
- A requirement of receiving Sport England and UK Sport funding was that the BMC undergo financial and governance reviews, these had been undertaken in 2022. The findings were not a surprise and the Board has responded to them, setting out action to rectify
- The most important finding was a requirement to provide more clarity around roles and responsibilities of the Board, SLT and Council.

4.5. The Chair moved on to ‘Focus Areas in 2022’, upon joining the Board he had set down his areas of focus and several of these were areas focused on in 2022, the main points were:

- Wales
 - Increased focus through Neal Hockley as a director with a focus on Wales
 - Increased strength in the Access and Conservation team with a dedicated Wales Policy Officer
- Environment
 - New Environment Policy
 - First version of net zero policy had been presented to the Board, there was a lot more work to ensure the policy was realistic

- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
 - An EDI strategy had been developed and approved
 - A new full time EDI Manager had been appointed, and funding had been provided to the BMC's funded partners to help them in this space
- International – there had been an increased focus and co-ordination on the BMC's international activities
 - Successful hosting of the IFSC World Cup at Ratho in September 2022
 - Placing members in important positions within international mountaineering and climbing bodies
 - Successful hosting of UIAA and EUMA May 2023 meeting
- Competition climbing – understanding the scope and scale of competition climbing
 - The role of GB Climbing
 - The structure for both elite and grassroots competitions
 - The structure for paraclimbing, skimo and ice-dry tooling competitions

4.6 He then set out a summary for 2022 and thoughts for 2023:

- A lot had been achieved in 2022 against the strategy and in terms of developing the organisation
- Improvements had been made on:
 - How the BMC showed up in Wales
 - Environmental management
 - EDI
 - How the BMC showed up internationally
- More clarity was being gained on what GB Climbing should look like
- The challenges for 2023 were:
 - Substantially improving how the BMC works with its partners – the BMC was at a relatively immature stage in partnership working, the BMC would not function without its partners and it had a large number of stakeholders
 - Much improved engagement with members, partners and the competition world of athletes, parents and coaches, this was a two-way street and included the need for active listening
 - Much improved communication with all of the above

4.7 The Chair finished his report by giving a heartfelt thanks to the BMC's members, partners and stakeholders.

The AGM Chair thanked the Chair for his presentation. He noted that unfortunately the Chief Financial Officer was unable to be at the Meeting and that the finances would be presented by the CEO.

5 Finances 2022 – 2h 28mins

5.1 The CEO set out the context of the finance report, the main points were:

- 2022 was mainly free from the impact of the pandemic
- To aid recovery the 2022 budget was set at a deficit of £290k
- There had been income growth from membership, recovery of travel insurance sales and increased grants from UK Sport and Sport England
- Costs had increased in line with the increased revenue
- The largest increases in activity level were seen in Sport and Community Development (SCD) and GB Climbing. This was a direct result of increased grant funding. In particular:
 - GB Climbing continued to build the UK Sport funded world class program and the other non-funded areas of paraclimbing, skimo, ice climbing and domestic competitions
 - SCD was building capability in the following spaces: EDI, safeguarding, safety, workforce development, and clubs, all being delivered with sector partners

5.2 He moved on to the headlines:

- Recovery from covid was almost back to historical levels
- Income had increased by 22%
- Costs had increased by 21%
- Prudent financial management meant the budget was achieved, in particular the BMC had made leaps and bounds in respect of new financial processes and procedures, thanks to the CFO
- Membership recovered to within 2% of pre-pandemic level
- Sport England award for 2022-27 was £2.2million
- UK Sport award for 2021-25 amounted to £1.5million

5.3 He moved on to income for 2022:

- 22% increase in income from 2021
- 8% growth in membership income
- 169% increase in trading income with the recovery off travel insurance sales, this increase started from a low level due to the fact people were not travelling during the pandemic
- 19% increase in grant income from UK Sport for the World Class program and Sport England for sport, community and talent development

5.4 He then spoke about the expenditure for 2022:

- Costs had increased by 21%, this was as the BMC moved out of the pandemic
- 8% increase in membership and trading support costs
- 27% increase in GB Climbing costs to support the increase of 39% in revenue for GB Climbing
- 14% increase in partnership and heritage spend to build relations across the system
- 61% increase in international spend for expeditions and international federation relationship building, the large increase was due to the lack of international travel during the pandemic

5.5. The headlines from the accounts were:

- Audit – third year with Hurst Accountants Limited (Hurst) the Board, Finance & Audit Committee (FAC) and the CEO had no issues with the quality of the audit
- Cash in bank of £1.74m
- Profit and loss account loss of £0.27m
- Balance sheet net assets of £0.84m
- Accrued liability of £1.05m from membership fees – this was due to the way membership fees were processed

5.6 He moved on to a slide called 'Looking forward':

Business

- Grow membership – the aim was 100,000 members by the end of 2024
- Review/enhance membership propositions
- Improve users digital experience
- Strategic engagement with partners, which was key to making everything link together
- Diversify revenue streams
- Increase commercial revenue

Finance

- 2023 budget set at £71k loss
- Overall improvement/enhancement of financial management:
 - New financial system implemented for 2023
 - Financial controls and policies updated
 - Engaged budget holders with real time information and more effective budget monitoring and management

- Financial plan 20 2024 aligned with strategy

5.7 A number of members then asked some questions about the finances.

Q: JW – The IFSC event at Ratho was not part of the budget and the spend on it accounts for a third of the loss, so there was £80k - £90k of investment that did not take place. How was this allowed to happen and how was it justified?

Also on membership could the Panel explain the change in accounting policy to recognise membership revenue when received, instead of deferred revenue in line with cost and what impact this has had on the 2022 accounts? Was the change in policy used in order to balance the books?

A: The AGM Chair said that the Panel would have to come back to JW on this question, but all of the Panel said that the change in policy was not to balance the books. The CEO said to the best of his knowledge there had been no change, but they would need confirmation of this.

Action: To provide an answer to the question about the accounts.

5.8 Q – David Brown made an observation about the lack of a finance person being at the AGM.

A: The Chair explained why FA was not available to be at the AGM due to the fin-tech meeting taking place which she was required to attend as part of her full-time role.

Q: David Brown asked for clarification on membership numbers.

A: The AGM Chair said that at the end of 2022 there had been 83,018. The CCO then also provided further detail.

There was a discussion about how membership numbers are calculated and the fact that the figures provided to FAC may be different to those provided to the Meeting, this was because of how members are treated if they sign up to pay by direct debit.

Action: The BMC to provide further clarity on membership numbers and why there is discrepancy between the number of members as at year end 2022 and the number provided to FAC.

The AGM Chair then said the Meeting would move on to the voting.

6 CEO Report

6.1 The CEO presented to those members who had returned after a short break. He said he was going to review 2022, and look to the future.

He set out a slide on '2022 context', the points made were:

- On 21 February 2022 the worst of the pandemic was over
- On 24 February 2022 Russia invaded Ukraine
- Dealing with record high inflation
- Everybody had been in really difficult times and that provided context to the operational environment of the BMC

6.2 He reported there had been good news and a bounce back of those participating in BMC activities.

The BMC's purpose was to create a better future for climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers and the people in the graph were BMC people and there was a lot of them that the BMC needed to represent and to help with their issues.

6.3 The CEO then set out challenges:

- There was a big increase in regular hill walking, and the BMC need to ask:
 - Are we relevant?
 - Are we visible?
 - Are we connecting? Did it understand what the audience in this space wanted?
- The same questions needed to be asked in respect of indoor climbing

6.4 He moved on to say that in order to continue to help with issues the BMC needed to build the foundations, and steps had been taken, including:

- Establishing the SLT and also a Senior Management Team (SMT) – this structure had been positive and allowed staff to link their work into the strategic action plans
- Post-covid strategic direction and staff development, in particular looking at ensuring what staff do every day helps the BMC reach its purpose, as part of this:
 - In June 2022 there was a post-covid staff planning day
 - It looked at learnings from the pandemic
 - Identified areas of focus and defining the culture

6.5 He then spoke about 'strategic focus':

- This was about translating the broad strategic themes into focussed goals for 2024:
 - To be a thought leader and an influencer in the sector
 - To build on strong business foundations and get financial processes right
 - Make the BMC more diverse and inclusive and making activities accessible to all – average member age was creeping up and the BMC was leaving the youth behind and so it needed to look at what to do to stop this and make the BMC relevant to youth
 - To get to 100,000 engaged members
- These goals had been discussed at Board level and approved.

6.6 He moved on to the success and highlights of 2022:

Access and Conservation

- New Environmental & Sustainability policy for the BMC
- Re-launch of Mend our Mountains campaign
- Continuation of Hills 2 Oceans and initiative partnership expansion with YHA and Cotswold, this looked at how the BMC reached out to those who were not members but had the same interests
- Campaigning and policy – the BMC had been influencing central government and working with communities, they had been to parliament and to Senedd and discussions were taking place with the right people to help influence manifestos

Membership

- The work done in 2022 to get the new hill walking website to go live in 2023, the CEO was very proud of the team and the work done
- Membership engagement and support:
 - BMC TV and in particular City Climb series of events in Sheffield, London, Cardiff and Liverpool
 - Women in Adventure film competitions
 - Finding Our Way podcast now in season 2 and speaking to diverse outdoor voices
- This information went on the BMC website and helped the BMC with its role as sector leader and getting the information out there

Sport England Support

- Sport England support not just about the funding, but the partnership between the BMC and the Funded Partners – ABC, Mountain Training, National Indoor Climbing Award Scheme (NICAS), and how they work together to look at safety, safeguarding, clubs, coaching and suitable venues
- SCD is the department most linked to the Sport England funding, and it allowed SCD to deliver on education and support:
 - Winter skills lecture
 - Coaching conference
 - Hill walking essentials webinars
 - Festival of walking
- And also deliver on partnerships.

GB Climbing

- UK Sport funding for volunteer development and major event strategy
- Delivery of the World Cup at Ratho which resulted in a lot of kudos for the BMC and gave the BMC an opportunity to show case all other areas of work
- Supported first British Ice Climbing event in Glasgow
- Delivered biggest ever domestic competition events programme

6.7 He then spoke about building on the foundations and looking to 2023-24:

- Membership numbers were on the up
- Awareness of the BMC amongst participants was low:
 - Only 24% of those who participated in a BMC activity were aware of GB Climbing
 - Only 23% of those who participated in a BMC activity were aware of the BMC
- Work was ongoing to look at how the BMC could connect with those who did a BMC activity but were not aware
- Awareness of the Ramblers in the same survey was 41%, this meant there was a large target audience for the BMC to reach out to
- The BMC needed to maintain its visibility and relevance with mountaineers and rock climbers, and grow its visibility and relevance with hill walkers and indoor climbers

6.8 He moved on to the focus for 2023-24:

- Sport England award allows a better indoor system to be created:
 - Clubs (youth focus)
 - Coaches, volunteers and officials
 - Competition
- Underpinned by safety and safeguarding and helping to deliver youth, equity, diversity and inclusion
- Sector Partners Assembly – included the Ramblers, ABC, NICAS, Mountain Training, the Camping and Caravanning Club, the Outdoor Association
- It was about the BMC delivering its strategy in partnership, it could sit in the middle of all the different parts of the system and help bring it together and make the connections

6.9 There followed some questions to the CEO.

DB asked about the target of 100,000 members as he felt this was unachievable.

The CEO said there were a lot of initiatives that were about to start or become more visible and he felt they would significantly impact on member numbers, in particular a focus on the youth that had not been targeted before.

The AGM Chair added that if they did not hit the 100,000 they would not stop the work to grow membership, because it was important the BMC grew its membership so that it could be more representative and he felt the target was viable.

- 6.10** LR asked about what 'engaged' meant and what definition was being used. The CEO said there was an ongoing conversation about this as it meant different things to different members. He felt it was about whether the BMC was engaging with members in the way they wanted to be engaged with, for some people this would mean attending AGMs, for others it would mean receiving emails. It was important the BMC and others recognised it meant different things to different people and by the BMC understanding this they could put in place a plan to engage members in the way they wanted and increase engagement.

The AGM Chair added the reason engaged was added was that you could get members by stating they would get a free t-shirt by joining, but the BMC wanted members who wanted to join, who wanted to support the BMC in its work. The BMC did not just want members.

7 Voting procedures

7.1 The AGM Chair noted the following points:

- To accurately reflect the views of the members, voting would be done by way of a poll on each of resolutions and elections
- Civica Election Services (Civica) were dealing with the voting and when members registered they should have been given a ballot paper
- Those members who had lodged a proxy did not need a ballot paper, unless they wanted to change their vote
- There were three options for each resolution and election – for against or abstain
- If a member abstained this was a vote withheld and not a vote in law and therefore would not be counted in the calculation of the proportion of votes for or against a resolution

All members who required a ballot paper had a ballot paper.

7.2 JW then asked to speak and made the following points/questions:

- That it had been established that there was an error in the accounts regarding the treatment of membership income, there should be an amendment to the accounts on p.10 he therefore proposed an amendment to the accounts
- The CoSec noted that the accounts could not be amended, they had been approved by the Board of directors as required under the Companies Act 2006. The vote at the Meeting was not to approve the accounts, but to receive them and JW could vote against this if he wished
- The CEO refuted the fact that it had been established there was an error, what the Panel had said was that they did not know the answer to his question and so would get back to him
- [Inaudible response]
- The Chair said the Panel had not said that, but that it might have been handled differently from prior years but they had not said there was anything in respect of an error in the accounts

7.3 JW then asked a procedural question around the Nominated Director positions as all eligible candidates should have been put forward to the members for them to elect, and for both positions there was only one candidate, but he understood there had been four applications for the Nominated Director focus on competition sport position.

The Chair set out the reason for this:

- There were five applications for the role
- Nominations Committee (NomCom) reviewed the applications and discounted two of them as they did not meet the criteria set out in the role description
- NomCom then interviewed the remaining three candidates, all three independent directors were involved in the interview process, and from those interviews NomCom decided two further applicants did not meet the criteria and were therefore not eligible to go forward to

the members

- A formal process had been undertaken and this resulted in only one person being eligible to go on the ballot paper

The Chair noted the reason for the position was that the Board felt it was important to have someone, who was not a member of staff, who had expertise in competition in sports. The candidate also went hill walking, did some bouldering and ticked a lot of other boxes.

The Chair said she would be a big asset to the Board and the BMC.

There were some comments about her lack of competition climbing experience.

The Chair said that JW had reasonably criticised the BMC in the past for not having suitable experience at Board level, and this time the Board had tried really hard to get someone with competition climbing experience, but that had not been possible and this was why they had sought someone with experience of competitive sport instead.

- 6.4 The AGM Chair returned to the query JW had raised about the accounts and noted that ultimately the Board had signed the accounts off and were happy with them and the accounts had been audited, but that JW did not agree with them and so he could vote against them if he wished to do so.

The Chair noted that Hurst appeared to be mini big 4 accounting firm, they had done a really good job and so he expected that they would have picked something up if they were wrong.

The AGM Chair said noted that if the members voted against receiving the accounts, then the Board would have to listen to the members and look at them again.

7 Voting

- 7.1 The AGM Chair then proceeded to the vote on the resolutions and elections, and asked members to complete their ballot papers. They could use a cross or a tick.

The ballot papers were collected and given to Civica so that they could prepare the results.

The AGM Chair then presented the BMC Volunteer Awards 2023.

8 Presidents Report

- 8.1 The AGM Chair said that in 2018 there was a clear vote by the members of the BMC that showed they wanted the BMC to be a broad church and to do all the bits of climbing – indoor, elite mountaineering, skimo, ice etc

The BMC had been on that journey for 5 years now and been through a huge change programme. The BMC was very good at talking about the parts it had not got right, but very bad at saying it had actually done X well, or achieved Y. The parts that had gone wrong should not be ignored, they should be learned from, but the BMC did need to celebrate some of the stuff done well.

He gave a few of examples:

- BMC helped get Victor Saunders on the Mountaineering Commission of UIAA?
- BMC helped Tom Livingstone set up with Young Alpinists Group
- Crag restoration fund which complements the Mend our Mountains
- Employing a full-time policy officer in Wales
- Contracting a part time land manager
- Access networks – used by the access reps they are good way of getting information across and engaging in debates
- Hill walking events run by Rose Gare-Simmons
- New festivals e.g. Climb Out

He recognised that competitions was a challenging space. One of the key successes was the recruitment of Paul Ratcliffe as the chair of CCPG, he was really good and trying to understand how to make the difference.

CS then made a comment that CCPG was not doing the functioning oversight it should because those on CCPG did not have the experience

The BMC went through massive upheaval in order to ensure it was Tier 3 compliant for the Sport England funding, but this year 117 athletes were put forward compared to 163? Last year. He was pretty sure when the membership voted to be a broad church it was to not to result in fewer athletes being put forward.

He added that a selling point for Ratho was that GB would get 10 competitors, but in the competitions in Europe over the last few months, GB had been putting one athlete forward, whereas France, Spain and Germany had been putting four. He felt there was therefore something deeply wrong and that the value for money from GB Climbing was poor.

The AGM Chair noted that in respect of putting athletes forward it was not about filling quotas, but about putting the right people forward.

CS added that the debate about what the criteria was for the right people had not been had, the decision had been made by GB Climbing, with no input from CCPG.

8.2 The AGM Chair returned to the successes and spoke more about Ratho, they had been hoping for more cash from UK Sport, but the Board and Council had discussed holding the event and agreed it was justified as the BMC would get benefits back re presence, and it had had a positive effect on the work the CCO was doing with sponsors.

JW said it was a massive investment of £80-90k, when it was supposed to be £52k, if sponsorship had not been secured as a result of Ratho by now then it would not happen, so what tangible benefits had Ratho provided.

The AGM Chair disagreed with JW's assertion and said that tangible benefits were being seen in conversations with sponsors and organisations, but accepted the financial benefits were not able, yet, to be clearly identified.

8.3 The AGM Chair noted the good news story about Toby winning medals. This led to a discussion, with DX making the following points:

- parents were told that they had to travel and had to attend certain sessions, even when their children were coming up to important exams
- Toby trained at Innsbruck for 3 months, flexibility DIDN'T CATCH – he broke with the GB Climbing programme and used someone who was previously a GB Climbing coach
- There was nothing wrong with the GB Climbing coaches they were arena coaches, but in respect of the development of athletes, this was done by a small handful of very talented coaches who did not work under GB Climbing, and they had written an open letter to GB Climbing about the selection event in which they said it was not fit for purpose.
- There had been some warming in relationships but GB Climbing must not kid itself that the massive expansion was delivering
- Toby had won medals in spite of the BMC not because of it

The AGM Chair noted that the BMC did not have national coaches yet, this was something that BCU – IS THIS RIGHT? had done and Paul Ratcliffe had knowledge of this and the BMC could learn from it, but they system put in place took time and it was a collaborative process.

DX continued:

- every child who had to enter a BMC competition had to be a BMC member
- costs for BMC competitions had trebled in the last 5 years which was particularly difficult

during a cost of living crisis, this meant families had to pick and choose which competitions to attend without knowing what the selection policy for the following year was

- the BMC was a massive organisation with huge scope, and he suspected that all the successes were office led with volunteer input, GB Climbing was the opposite and it was the problem child of the family

The AGM Chair agreed work was required.

8.4 There was then a discussion about CCPG with the following points being made:

- CEO defining CCPG as a group of experts there to provide advice and oversight to the department of GB Climbing
- JW noting that CCPG was not an advisory group, it was to be treated as if they were directors and to run GB Climbing as if it was a separate company

8.5 The AGM Chair then spoke about volunteers and made the following points:

- Volunteers made a huge difference to the BMC
- It was difficult to recruit volunteers, and it was getting more difficult
- Elements of communication and collaboration between different parts of the BMC had been fractious and people tended to be looking at what they were losing, not what the BMC was gaining
- Those asked to volunteer e.g. as chairs of committees often thought that it would be a lot of hassle and that they would not get anything back from it
- The BMC, officers and volunteers, needed to improve the volunteer experience and be open and transparent
- Equally people needed to recognise that there was nobody, not officers who work at the BMC, nor volunteers who give up their time, who thought 'how do I bugger up the BMC today?', that did not happen, no-one was doing that
- The one thing for people to take away was to recognise that people are trying to do the right thing
- The BMC needed to get concerns in and understand them, sometimes they might not be accepted and in those cases the BMC needed to explain why
- The BMC needed to be open and collaborative and there needed to be dialogue taking place

9 Close of Meeting

The AGM Chair formally closed the Meeting.

He said there would be a short break followed by a further Q&A session.

Results

| | Resolution/Election | For | Against | Abstain | Passed |
|----|---|------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1. | To approve the minutes of the previous AGM held on 18 May 2022. | 560 | 1 | 6 | 99.8% |
| 2. | To receive the Annual Report and Accounts for the year end 31 December 2022. | 561 | 13 | 33 | 97.7% |
| 3. | To approve the re-appointment of Hurst Accountants Limited as auditors of the Company. | 569 | 9 | 29 | 98.4% |
| 4. | To approve the appointment of John Willmott as an Independent Director of the BMC whose term of office as | 565 | 10 | 32 | 98.3% |

| | Resolution/Election | For | Against | Abstain | Passed |
|----|---|------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Chair took effect from 1 December 2021. | | | | |
| 5. | To elect a Nominated Director with a focus on Wales for a three-year term to start with effect from 18 June 2023. The candidate is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neal Hockley | 574 | 12 | 21 | 98% |
| 6. | To elect a Nominated Director with a focus on competition sport for a three-year term to start with effect from 18 June 2023. The candidate is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laura Needham | 551 | 25 | 31 | 95.6% |

Appendix 1

This appendix contains the Q&A sessions as they were not formally part of the Meeting.

Member Q&A

Pre AGM

Q: FW - Would the Board look at lowering the voting age for members at an AGM?

A: The Board would look at this, if the Board did decide to do this then it would mean that the articles of association would need to be amended to accommodate this.

There was some support in the room for this to be looked at.

Q: Andy Say - In the accounts for the year end 31 December 2022 (the Accounts) there is reference to an interest-free loan of £7,952 made as part of a cycle to work scheme to a director. Which cycle to work scheme is this, or are these (a similar loan was made in 2021 to the same director) simply interest free loans camouflaged? Have the loans been approved by the Board?

A: The Chair said that every company he was aware of has a cycle to work scheme and under such schemes, employees could go and buy expensive bikes if they wanted. The director in question was the CEO and the Board approved, via the Remuneration Committee, the remuneration package of the CEO so in that sense it had been approved.

The BMC bought the bike and the loan was repaid by way of salary sacrifice and because the CEO was a director, it was also declared in the accounts. The CEO was a staff member and therefore eligible to partake in the scheme which was a benefit for staff members.

Action: It was noted a previous director was not aware of approval of the loan and so the AGM Chair agreed to look into it further and provide the members with further details regarding approval of the loan and how the scheme worked. They would also provide details of the limits of such schemes.

The Chair noted the cycle to work scheme had been in place for some time and was probably implemented at the same time the scheme was introduced across the UK.

Q: Deficits for 2021 and 2022 and the project deficit for 2023 totalled £440k – nearly half a million pounds taken from reserves. This will reduce BMC reserves to £770k, this is well below 20% of annual expenditure and a risky position. This looks like a financial car crash, when do the alarm bells ring?

A: The Chair replied that the approach taken for budgeting in 2023 was that the Board knew the level reserves could go down to and they could go as low as £500k. The BMC was a not for profit organisation and so the ideal position for it to be in was to break even. There would be times when there were positives and negatives and the reserves were for the negative times. Numerous systems the BMC runs on were at least 20 years old, and so the Board were building from this position as part of rebuilding the foundations which meant there was an investment programme ongoing. There was a substantial amount of work to do.

The work had already transformed its financial reporting and so the Board were now receiving financial reports that were not available a year ago.

The Board was aware of the financial situation, they were on top of it and did not view the financial situation as a car crash. The Board had no intention of going any lower and there was a plan to break even in 2024 and steps were being taken to meet this.

Q: What changes to member services and benefits did the Board expect to lose to achieve break even?

A: The AGM Chair said that this year there were some course corrections being implemented,

where possible these were not directly member facing e.g. not as many crag grants had been received so there was a saving there, and Summit would be moved online for autumn this year.

Action: To share the course correction paper more widely.

The CEO said there were two main principles in relation to the course corrections:

- 1 – minimise impact on member facing services or member benefit
- 2 – the course corrections being done at the moment were based on what the BMC would like to have spent, if it had had the extra revenue in

Work was taking place to ensure the stuff already being done (the work of 2022) was protected, but extra stuff i.e. things the BMC might have liked to have done, could not be done as the BMC was not seeing an uptick in revenue. The budget had been readjusted, mostly to the levels seen in 2022. There was also an increased focus on revenue coming in and revenue generation.

Action: The Meeting then discussed the crag restoration fund and it was agreed the Panel should check when the closing date for applications was.

The Meeting then discussed the fact that Summit, which was a tangible benefit for members, was moving online only and one member (JW) expressed the view this was almost like cutting it and that figures from 2020, when Summit had to move online because of covid, showed that only 200 people opened it in digital version and the board in place at the time had said that that should not be done again and moving Summit online would discourage members.

The CEO responded noting that when Summit was moved online during covid it was a late decision without much planning time. In this case there was lead in time to look at how to deliver, and it would most likely be a mix with some people getting a hard copy. The environmental impact needed to be considered and so the BMC was looking at members telling them if they wanted hard or soft copy.

Q: JP - Funding is being cut from Areas with all meetings moving online, this is a serious setback for membership engagement.

A: Funding was not being cut from Areas, there was a need to continue to look at how best to engage with the full membership. There was a desire to get more engagement full stop, but it was not a case of one size fits all, different members would want to engage in different ways.

Q: In the minutes of the 2022 AGM the Chair and CEO said they would share a copy of the grant application to Sport England (re GB Climbing), where has this been made available?

A: It was agreed that this had not been done, but would be actioned.

Action: The Panel to ensure that the grant application to Sport England be uploaded to the website.

Q: TW - When is the CCPG report (the Report) going to be shared with contributors and stakeholders?

A: The AGM Chair explained the Report had been shared with the people affected and they had provided comments to him the previous day, he had not had chance to review these. The next step was that those comments would be provided to Paul Dewhurst (who had chaired the group that prepared the Report) and the Report would then go back to the Board for the Board to decide what could be released publicly. The intent was to publish as much as possible.

Various steps taken regarding the Report were set out:

- The Board commissioned the Report – Paul Dewhurst had led on this
- The Board received the Report
- The Board set up a task and finish group to review the Report, Rod Carr ex Royal

Yachting Association director had helped with this (the Review)

- The Board approved the Review subject to looking at the Competition Climbing Performance Group (CCPG) focussing on what it needed to, as it was currently too broad
- The Board asked the CEO and the chair of CCPG to prepare a proposal as to how to deal with competitions from grassroots to elite (the Proposal)
- The Proposal had been presented to the Board and had been shared with Members' Council (Council)

The outputs from the Report were therefore in progress and the Review was going through a maximalisation process.

The Meeting discussed the answer and the following points were raised:

- The Report and Review had not been kicked into the long grass
- SMART objectives should be put in place, in particular timelines should be implemented because if dates were committed to then that would inspire confidence
- Not all those affected by the Report had been communicated with e.g. the athletes, and parents and athletes had not even received a thank you for the time and responses they had provided
- The Panel noted the Report had gone to previous CCPG members, not all those who had helped Paul Dewhurst
- The consultation following the Review would go back to the Board at its meeting on 2 August

Action: All those who helped with the Report, particularly athletes and parents, to be thanked.

Q: SH - How was the tender process conducted regarding facilities for athletes? And was there a conflict of interest raised? There was nothing on the website about Unit E, or the tender process and there were a number of walls that had expressed concerns that they did not get the chance to tender as it was done with a very short application time period. Is it for a fixed term? When will it be renewed? Some wall owners felt it was pre-selected.

A: The Chair said that the answer provided was that Unit E was tendered for via an open public tender process against set criteria. Five walls applied and were evaluated against the criteria. The evaluation was reviewed by a panel that included the then deputy CEO, Competitions Manager, Head Coach and an external independent. There was one internal declaration of interest from a BMC member of staff, but they played no part in any of the tender process.

The CEO noted he had checked on the validity of this and was satisfied the appropriate process had been followed.

Action: The Meeting discussed the answer and it was agreed that the Panel would find out the term limit of the Unit E contract and put information about the tender process on the website.

The Meeting discussed Unit E further and the following points were raised:

- How was Unit E paid for? Where were the decisions made – did the decision to use Unit E go beyond the delegated authority of those who made the decision? Were BMC procedures around delegated authority and conflicts of interest followed?
- Shauna Coxsey had opted not to use Unit E, but had gone to Warwick instead which brought the use of Unit E into question
- Some athletes were unhappy with Unit E, it was not fit for purpose
- Had the use of Unit E been reviewed? Had the process of how it was chosen been reviewed? Because it looked suspect that it had not and there needed to be clarity as to what had occurred, as there were suggestions that numerous BMC policies and procedures had been breached
- Unit E was part of The Climb Works in Sheffield which is the facility used by GB Climbing
- If the auditors were happy with the contract and had signed it off?
- As part of the finance and governance review, BDO had recommended tightening up

- commercial contract management and improvements had been made
- The CEO noted that contracts would be reviewed to ensure good value, still serving purpose as a matter of good practice

Action: The timescales involved in the Unit E tender process to be included in the information put on the website, which would also include when its term ran out, when it would be reviewed etc.

Q: SH - Is there any reason why jobs, particularly route setting roles, were advertised at short notice? It was sometimes the day before the closing date for application. Also, information should be provided on the qualifications of the coaches employed, in particular members should be told if they have the national qualifications.

A: The Panel did not know the answer to this and said they would look into it.

Action: List of coaches and the qualifications they have to be put on the website and the Panel to look into the question on job applications and lead times and provide this information.

The Meeting then discussed how the Q&A would be dealt with and it was agreed it would be an appendix to the minutes.

Q: Does the BMC have any plans to split with GB Climbing and allow that to become its own legal entity and passing the NGB status to this new entity? Or if there was the possibility that the NGB function could be taken away? What is the Board's view and has it been considered?

A: The AGM Chair said this was something that had been considered. The International Federation of Sport Climbing (IFSC) and UK Sport (via a cross-nation recognition panel) define what a National Governing Body (NGB) is, he understood that the NGB function could not just be passed from one body to another. There was a process to becoming an NGB and you had to get the sign off from the international bodies, you could not just do it.

Yes there was a risk that it might have to be given up, or that it be taken away, however, the BMC had no plans to establish GB Climbing as a separate entity. In 2018 it was argued very strongly that the BMC needed to be the NGB and to be a broad church, and there was no change to that opinion. Work was ongoing with skimo and ice climbing to improve the work the BMC needed to do as it was the NGB for these disciplines as well and it needed to do a better job for them.

The AGM Chair said the BMC was in a much more positive place now as NGB, but it had taken a lot of work as the BMC had not been doing the job very well, but there was no intent to split GB Climbing from the BMC.

Q: The Chair stated in his statement in the Annual Report that competitions were virtually all funded by the Sports Councils, but the finance report shows that they are 61% funded, which is it?

A: The Chair said the answer was the finance report was correct and so he should have said 'mostly funded' in the Annual Report.

The way that figures are reported was consistent, so the way overheads were reported on was consistent for GB Climbing and other departments. The CEO had tried to drill down in to costs when he started, but the systems in place did not allow that level of granularity.

Q: JW - The donut charts in the Annual Report were calculated on different basis and therefore were not comparable, as the costs were not split into hypothecated and non-hypothecated. What proportion of non-hypothecated funds is going into the different areas of the BMC? Because the expenditure of 22% on GB Climbing compared to 6% on access and conservation did not align with the priorities for most of the members.

A: The CEO provided some clarity on the role of GB Climbing, it was about preparing the GB Team, about preparing the England talent pathway and also delivering the various competitions

such as YCS, BBCs etc. This created a challenge as grant funding and BMC funding was then mixed. He said every member put about £2.18 into the GB Climbing space, and this was turned into about £11. This was because of the contribution into GB Climbing made by the BMC which allowed it to get value out.

Action: The Meeting asked how much of membership fees went on access and conservation work, the Panel agreed to find this out as it did not know.

Q: Is the BMC aware that visitors spending two nights or more in Innsbruck get free public transport for the duration of their stay?

A: The AGM Chair said he was not aware of that, and he did not know if GB Climbing were aware of that, but an answer could be provided. The AGM Chair said there was a wider question around the cost management and control of the BMC. A lot of work had been undertaken to put in place better financial processes to ensure that costs were understood controlled and managed going forward.

Action: Answer to the question about Innsbruck to be found out and provided.

Linked to this was a question about the spending of £27,000 on hire cars, which was a figure provided by a BMC officer to parents via email.

Action: The CEO said he would seek to clarify this figure and provide further information.

He added that there were other considerations that had to be taken into account when taking teams abroad, particularly those wearing GB badges, and the BMC had to follow recommendations it was given by the government and by the British Olympic Association (BOA) as there are times when it is not recommended for teams to use public transport.

Q: JB - Was it true that a child had been transported in the footwell of a car when they could have travelled on a bus for free safely?

Is it right that having spent £27,000 on hire cars, children had been told to use scooters on unfamiliar roads to get to a wall and to pay for it themselves?

What happens when such incidents are reported and what feedback is given to those who raise concerns/issues? What information goes to the Board? When will members see the nine months of missing board minutes from 2022?

A: The AGM Chair said that the minutes were being dealt with and the Chair was working through them.

LM noted they were concerned to hear about these events and asked what training staff had been provided with and what qualifications they had.

The AGM Chair said that the Safeguarding Group had suggested more training for GB Climbing staff in respect of taking large numbers of children on foreign trips, so more training had been put in place. A number of issues had been raised and gone through the Safeguarding Group, and as he understood it, what the members were asking was could they see the results of why they were not seen as safeguarding incidents.

LM said she could provide support with ensuring suitable staff competency was in place on trips and volunteered her time to help. The CEO thanked her for her kind offer.

The CEO said the BMC had been able to put in place significant additional safeguarding experience and now had the equivalent of 7 days per week capacity. This was important as the sport grew as safeguarding, welfare etc. was all part of the athlete experience and that was vital.

The Chair noted that in his experience as BMC Chair and in the university sector, until someone

reported an issue saying e.g. 'it was me, it was them, it was here, it was now' then it was very difficult to instigate a safeguarding investigation and if individuals were not prepared to raise the concerns then it was difficult to make progress in this area. Safeguarding concerns needed to be reported.

Q: KW - The CEO has said that on reflection staff were not suitably trained to take their children on trips to Europe, so why weren't parents allowed to travel with their children? Also, there was fear amongst parents that if they complained, or raised concerns about the competency of staff to look after their children, that raising concerns would affect their child's chance of selection – what policies and processes were in place to ensure that there was no bias, which must exist because people are human, in the selection decision?

A member (DX) added that parents had been called 'noise', in an email sent by BMC officers. Another added that the safeguarding policies were shocking. There was a huge amount of mistrust.

A: The reason a Safeguarding Manager was employed was to deal with such issues and to ensure that the BMC operated safely in respect of competitions and young athletes. They wanted a team model to be used eventually. The Panel agreed that competitions needed to be run safely and to use a model in which the parents were confident.

The AGM Chair clarified that what had been said about GB Climbing staff was that they needed more training to ensure improvements, not that they were incapable of taking children abroad or that it was unsafe for them to take children abroad.

Action: The Panel agreed to look at the use of parent chaperones.

Q: Booth said that what he heard across spectrum so far had been: there was a problem, the Panel accepted there was a problem and their answer was it was a bit crap at present, but it would get better.

As a member of 20+ years what he wanted to see, in order to build trust with the members, was the issues being raised today be tested against the policies in place at the time, with people being held to account and then the changes needed to be made could be looked at.

Q: JW - The issue of people raising concerns was only one part of organisational management, and it was reactive. The BMC needed to be more proactive, it had some policies and procedures in place, but what it lacked was an internal audit function. When is the BMC going to introduce internal audits i.e. the proactive measures to put in? Where is the Audit & Risk Committee which is the missing bit of the puzzle?

A: The CEO said that when there is an issue that needs to be resolved is raised, processes are in place to resolve it. There are some areas that still require work, but there had been huge improvements e.g. in safeguarding.

The BMC was not sitting on its hands. There were some issues raised at the meeting which the CEO could confirm had been resolved, but because of the nature of such concerns or the consequences, some things could not be put in front of a public forum, such as safeguarding concerns or staffing concerns, but the BMC was being proactive. It could possibly find a better way to say which issues had been dealt with and provide reassurance, that seemed to be an error in communication and could be resolved.

The CEO did not want members to think that the BMC was not being proactive.

Q: DX - At a selection event the route set was the same for juniors and seniors, yet parents were told the IFSC guidelines say that all settings needed to be age and stage appropriate in order to avoid injury. Children were put on blocks which were World Cup semi-final standard. Some of the athletes were capable of that, but most of them were not and the scores reflected this. In particular one problem went from a dino to a pebble and five children were injured as a result of

that setting.

Parents asked, prior to the event, how could this be right that the setting was so difficult and they were told the athletes could have as many goes as they liked, but this was inviting injury, they felt it was complete lack of care by the BMC. The issue was raised before the event, but was ignored and the event continued at World-Cup semi-final standard.

At the event a BMC member of staff has a conversation with a parent, and the member of staff was not aware that the routes should have been set for the different age categories as they had not been told to do that.

Once the issue had been raised with Head of Performance, and the safeguarding lead, the responses received were defensive and said nothing of any substance and parents were told it was not a safeguarding issue.

The member said when you put children in harm's way and then they get harmed, that was a safeguarding issue. He added that staff should be disciplined in such a situation, but it was reasonable if staff were disciplined that this was not made public.

However parents have had no assurances since the event that this would not happen again. It should be treated as a near miss with polices reviewed, and protocols and training looked at so that the root cause of the injuries is found and the problem could be sorted out permanently.

He had spoken to the Safeguarding Manager when she was seven days into the job and got the same defensive attitude, he was very concerned she was defending the organisation rather than taking the correct line of listening to what he said, recording it and then coming back to him.

He added he felt the Report should be published more widely.

A: The CEO said that the BMC was always looking for areas of improvement. He understood where the concerns were and in respect of standards, these were set ultimately with a view to try and get podium finished. The question of whether the BMC had done that in the right way or moved to quickly, needed to be looked at and analysed. That reflection was going on and lessons were being learnt.

A full review on the injuries had been carried out, and although not a safeguarding issue, that did not mean that the BMC did not want to resolve it. The CEO said would take that block out if felt – the BMC was now asking questions whether that should have been the better thing to do.

The member then said that at the selection event parents and private coaches had not been allowed to enter and so if the space was too small then it was not fit for purpose. The CEO said this had been changed, and he agreed it should not have happened as it did not create the right impression. The technology existed to allow parents and private coaches to be able to watch selection events even if insufficient space in the wall itself. This was an example of a lesson being learned and change being implemented as quickly as possible.

A point of order was then raised by FS who noted that those attending the Meeting were a mixed group and so it should not all be about GB Climbing, she therefore requested that the Meeting start and those who wanted to ask more questions could do so after the Meeting.

The CoSec was then informed that there were now over 50 members present in person or by proxy and so the AGM could proceed.

Post AGM

DX then made following points

- He has had defensive responses, lack of acceptance of responsibility and there was definitely an issue of accountability
- The proposal to replace CCPG decreased, not increased accountability
- There were no effective checks and balances

- Selection policies had changed and changed, sometimes retrospectively
- He was there giving up his weekend as he wanted to make things better, he was there to speak for all parents who had had enough, he had taken that position unilaterally because he understood what they were going through
- He wanted to see the level of engagement the AGM Chair had spoken about, but parents had been banging their heads against a brick wall for years on end
- Parents had had nothing but defensiveness, lack of respect, obvious positioning in emails, manipulation and lots of other negative behaviours
- Fundamental change was needed, from the top down as at present the behaviour was unconstrained and there were no checks on it
- The Meeting had been hijacked by those with negative feelings and the engagement was low, that could not be right

John ? – asked how many people on council, asked if they were aware of this - AS said yes

This led to a discussion about the Report (being the CCPG Report as defined in minute 2.7 of the Meeting above). The following points were made:

- The Board had set up a review of CCPG, which resulted in the Report
- The Report was then reviewed by a Task & Finish Group which resulted in the Review, which included a set of recommendations
- The Report had not been shared with Council, but had been shared with CCPG, which would include people outside of the BMC, including a UK Sport representative, so this person would also have seen the Report but UK Sport as an organisation
- The Report could not yet be shared with Council, Council had seen the Review which included some recommendations, this meant that Council did not fully understand where the recommendations came from because they had not seen the Report
- The reason Council had not seen the Report was because it needed “Maxwellisation” so needed to go through process happy would not put the BMC in worse position than needed to be
- The AGM Chair said they needed to confirm with people affected by the Report that they were aware and happy with the Report, he had received these comments the previous day and these will be sent to Paul Dewhurst to review
- This should have been done a long time ago, but it was not so it was being done now
- The key bit was that the BMC was hearing what was being said

DX then made the following comments

- The level of resistance within GB Climbing was very high to do what was right and do a professional job
- The direction of travel would reduce accountability and expertise and not increase it and it would create separation of elite and grassroots and this raised safeguarding questions
- There had been selective interpretation of the Report and so there was a problem for the BMC
- There was a risk to the reputation of the BMC and he did not see this being addressed
- Ever year that that happened resulted in a reduced opportunity for athletes

The AGM Chair noted that CCPG was too big and broad and the new proposal which would be consulted on dealt with grassroots through to elite, carrying on with CCPG in its current guise was not an option. The BMC therefore had to find the right way forward that was better for the athletes, which was why the proposal was being consulted on.

DX continued:

- Paul Dewhurst was threatened with legal sanctions by BMC officers presumably with the say so of someone above them in the BMC
- Paul Dewhurst had done a professional job and played a well thought out role and should be applauded

- It was a kick in the teeth for Paul Dewhurst to be asked to review the Report

The CEO noted that the “Maxwellisation” was to protect both sides and to protect the integrity of the Report it was right that the opportunity was provided to ensure that the author of the Report was happy to stand by comments made based on any new information that had come to light.

The AGM Chair noted that the request was not for the Report to be rewritten, but for factual errors to be corrected and for the authors to be sure they were happy to stand by comments made in the Report. The issue was this should have been done in January.

TW made the following comments:

- There was the need for proper parent and athlete representation on CCPG, as they would bring knowledge and expertise with them
- Parents were not allowed to see the risk assessments carried out and they did not understand why they could not see them

The AGM Chair noted it was difficult to get athlete representation on CCPG and he did not understand why parents could not see risk assessments.

Action: The Panel to look at why parents could not see risk assessments.

The CEO said that a separate conversation needed to take place between the CEO and DX as the BMC had done a lot of what he had said and investigated a lot of stuff, and it sounded like parents were not hearing about or seeing these improvements, so it was a communication issue. The BMC should be able to reassure parents action had been taken.

Action: DX and CEO to have separate conversation.

DX noted that one of the biggest sponsors of athletes was parents.

There was a further discussion with the following points noted:

- The process regarding the Report had taken too long and it felt like a cover up and that it had been kicked into the long grass
- The issues were affecting athletes now, and their career was now
- The AGM Chair would send the further comments on the Report to Paul Dewhurst on Monday and he would request that Paul Dewhurst try and turn it around in 2 weeks
- The Board then needed to review the updated Report and decide what they could publish, this could be done ex-committee so that it was dealt with prior to 2 August Board meeting
- The Board had found the Report a difficult read
- The Board had broadly accepted the Report and the fundamental headlines raised were accepted
- There were several areas that were backed up by other reviews and so action was being taken to address these

The Chair made the following points:

- he was a fan of member experts and had seen this work well in other areas and be successful
- line management needed to work its way s up through the staff side though, members could not line manage staff
- the way to get really good co-creation was to have a staff member working with volunteers and it being a joined-up effort

The CEO noted there were good examples internally where it worked really well and he wanted to take that and get it to work across the areas of the BMC where it was not working so well.

JW comments best practice model clubs, huts bringing lots of expertise together

No of hours of knowledge within the BMC have been through no end of reviews but we have not been capturing knowledge and transferring through to other people.

Taking the experience parents have, volunteers should be seen as part of the solution

The Chair made the following points:

- he had read the Bob Holton (?) report and there was some good stuff in it
- this was an area in which the BMC could always improve
- he agreed re clubs, huts and access etc. but added that they were a long way further up the curve than the rest of the BMC, and they had had more time to get there
- One of his observations was there was a lot to learn from other sports, which is why Rod Carr was brought in to help with the Review (as defined in minute 2.7 of the Meeting) as there was a lot of crossover between climbing and sailing,
- There was a piece around the foundations being copied from other sports – whilst recognising that it was still important to have expertise in competition climbing
- How that balance was achieved was a work in progress

Chair made the point that UK Sport also recognised elite competition world needed to change.

The Chair made the following points:

- The Safeguarding Manager and Safety Manager now report into the Board twice a year,
- Paul Ratcliffe had also attended board meetings and reported back on CCPG work
- The Chair was as guilty as everyone else mixing up the terms GB Climbing and CCPG
- He used his corporate background to determine what should go to the Board on regular basis
- He felt the BMC was on a journey, and it was in a better position, but there was still work to do

The Chair said that his opinion of the day as that although it had taken a long time it had been extremely valuable.

He said that there were areas the BMC knew it was doing well, and areas where it was struggling and that no-one would deny that GB Climbing was in the struggling area.

The AGM Chair made the following points:

- Competition climbing took a big chunk of money
- Members were investing in it, and members were concerned that they were getting value for money

SH asked about the long term viability of the BMC

The AGM Chair said he did not disagree, but there was not agreement on what all the problems were at the BMC

The CEO added that the only increase in expenditure in terms of the member contribution had been in line with inflationary costs.

JW then asked about the fact that a number of times the five strategic themes had been referred to but there were ten strategic themes.

The Chair said there was not, there were five strategic pillars and five foundation themes which were very different. The reason why they were different was that you had to get the foundations right in order to run an organisation e.g. money, people.

The strategic themes showed where an organisation wanted to utilise its resources.

JW said that the BMC needed to be much better at building its foundations. The Chair referred to a paper he presented when he joined the Board as to where he was hoping to focus on, and two had been improved on: financial management and Wales.

He agreed with JW that there was still work to do around people and that they had not replaced the skills lost when the previous director with this experience had resigned.

CS asked about the possibility of purchasing Kilnsley.

The Panel made the following points:

- Conversations had taken place with Savills and with a group that were taking about a crowdfunding approach, to see what the BMC could do to approach
- The chances of losing access were small as it was on CROW land
- It was an iconic crag and if a sensible opportunity arose the BMC would review it
- At present the BMC had no plans to purchase the crag
- The BMC had to be careful not to artificially inflate the asking price of £150,000
- It was not just a question of purchasing a crag, once purchased a crag had to be maintained so there was an ongoing cost and a long-term commitment
- More would be known in a couple of weeks' time
- It was an SSI so rules might be broken if bolts were put in, it could be a breach of Natural England's rules
- The BMC was therefore seeking guidance as to what Natural England's rules were on bolting

