

NORTH EAST MOUNTAIN TRUST

Approved Minutes of Council Meeting held 7.50pm Tuesday 28 November 2017

at the Aberdeen Grammar FP Club Centre, Queens Gate, Aberdeen

* Charity Trustee as Individual Member; ** Charity Trustee as Club Representative

Present: George Allan* (Acting Chair), Alex Brown** (Aberdeen Mountaineering Club), Brian Cornock (Bailies of Bennachie), Catherine Lacy ** (Ind. Mem. & Cults HWC), Susan Matthews (Cairngorms Campaign), Alison Mitchell** (Treasurer, Ramblers Scotland), Ruth Payne, Jean Robinson** (Cairngorm Club), Richard Spencer (Ind. Mem & Mountain Bothies Association), Maureen Stuchbury, Trevor Stuchbury, Donald Thomas*

1. Apologies: Peter Aikman, Alistair Beeley, Hamish Clunas, James Friend, Brian Heaton, Rob Mackay, David Milne, Carlos Oldani, Ken Thomson, Dave Windle (Chair).

2. Declaration of conflicts of interest: none declared

3. Appointments: The following appointments were made without dissension:

<i>Office</i>	<i>Appointee</i>	<i>Proposer</i>	<i>Seconder</i>
Chair	Dave Windle	George	Catherine
Secretary	Catherine Lacy	Maureen	George
Membership Secretary	Catherine Lacy	Maureen	George
Treasurer	Alison Mitchell	George	Donald
Minutes Secretary	Ken Thomson	Catherine	Alison
Lecture Organiser	Carlos Oldani	Catherine	Maureen
Webmaster	Donald Thomas	George	Alison

4. Minutes of Council Meeting 10 October 2017: Alison approved and Donald seconded approval of the draft minutes, after correction, under 4 iv) of “broad range of people are using bothies” to “should the range of people using bothies be broadened”.

5. Matters Arising from above Minutes

5.1 4 iv) *MBA questionnaire:* Richard commented that it is very unlikely landowners would agree to construction of new bothies, with the possible exception of the Forestry Commission. It is more important to broaden the range of people using the bothies eg to include those from BME backgrounds.

11.5 Jean Robinson, Donald Thomas and Ken Thomason invited Dougie Baird to attend a meeting to report back – nothing has been heard from Dougie.

6. Matters Arising from AGM 2017: none.

7. NEMT Management:

7.1 Membership: Catherine reported approx 18 non-renewers out of the individual members. Agreed to carry out one more follow-up early next year.

7.2 No further update available

7.3 Website: Donald asked for all (corrected) minutes after May to be sent to him for website – Ken. Agreed OSCR logo will not be included but Donald will put a link to OSCR from our website.

7.4 Annual Report: needs financial report and Malcolm’s approval before sending to OSCR.

8. Consultations:

8.1 *Cairngorm National Park*: MIR for the next LDP now published, see website for details, closing date for comment 3rd March 2018. Dave will coordinate our response – Donald, Ken and Roger Owen will probably be involved. Please look at it and pass your comments to Dave. (<http://cairngorms.co.uk/consultation/mir/>) Susan commented that Cairngorms Campaign is concerned about the concept of a decreasing population needing more houses, and building so-called “affordable” homes is not helpful. She also said that cases where a single house impinges on ancient woodland are often not called in by the Park – this is something CC will look into.

9. Threats to Wild Land:

9.1 *Lack of Cairngorm Masterplan*: Dave has written again to Grant Moir, who replied that “We’re trying to ensure longterm strategy...” George feels there may be considerable frustration amongst Park staff at the lack of action.

9.2 *Save the Ciste*: this is now morphing into the Aviemore and Glenmore Community Trust. They are hoping to mount a community buyout of the ski area. George attended their Open Day, and found them to be a mix of skiers and business interests. They have numerous plans including increasing the length of the ski season and improving skiing in Ciste and Cas, and providing more snow-making machines powered by very small hydro plants. They are aware of our concerns about the environmental impacts of mountain biking. We want to be kept well-informed of what’s going on but we remain neutral regarding current proposals as we await fuller information.

9.3 *Natural Retreats*: have put in an application for a snow factory, on a trial basis, in Coire Cas. NEMT didn’t object, the application was approved. It may become permanent.

9.4 *Glendye Windfarm*: Nothing more – application likely next spring.

9.5 *GFG Alliance, Glenshero*: GFG Alliance has taken over the smelter at Fort William; they are looking to create a major windfarm in eastern Scotland. Scoping report is newly issued, on Highland Council website. 40 very large turbines next to Stronelairg, Likely to be a Public Inquiry.

9.6 *Hilltracks*:

9.6.1 Drumochter: likely to go to CNP Planning committee in Dec. George will speak unless CNP supports him.

9.6.2 Feshie, new tracks: George emailed Thomas MacDonnell, no reply, will try again.

9.6.3 Loch Quoich, hydro: George had submitted a number of queries. Application refused by Highland Council.

9.6.4 LINK Hilltracks Group: George attended a meeting to discuss outline of report and the future campaigning. Report is due out next spring, outlining the benefits of the Prior Notification scheme, also highlighting the difficulties and limitations of PN. Monitoring of PNs ends 31st Jan 2018, but George and Sandy McIntosh are considering continuing for Aberdeenshire. LINK hopes that the existing trackers across Scotland may continue and take on contact planning authorities in their areas. Any work more than tidying of existing tracks requires PN but this is not being adhered to.

Richard commented on the Carn an Leth-choin track in the Monadhliaths (referred to in latest MV), saying that nothing has happened here yet.

9.6.5 Dualling A96: 3 public sessions have been held, but little new information given out. The preferred option will be brought forward in 2018, with more detailed work and consultation to follow. Donald noted the need to get

environmental information into the public arena. Save Bennachie are very low on funds – Jean to sound them out to see if they are in need of donations.

9.6.6 Planning Bill: JMT and others are campaigning on 2 issues in particular: (i) 3rd Party Right of Appeal (currently 3rd parties ie objectors, can't appeal whereas developers etc can) and (ii) SNH Wild Land Areas should be put on same footing as NSAs and National Parks regarding windfarms (eg none). George had drafted a letter to all local MSPs in support of these issues, in addition expressing concerns about how independent environmental and other specialists can be when they are contracted to write reports by the applicant. He suggested that planning authorities should contract these and then charge the applicant.

10. Mountain Views

All material to Catherine by 15th March, to be published April 2018.

11. Lectures

The November lecturer had to pull out at the last minute as he was called to court and couldn't come, so rather than cancel, George put on a very well-received talk on the work of NEMT. It was agreed that, as Catherine is at work on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, with limited access only to a mobile phone, and only able to contact NEMT members, that cancelling lectures by email on the day is not realistic, and it would be helpful if we had other people to call on for last minute failures.

Dave will host the next lecturer (Tom Wallace), George will put out flyers, Catherine will email individuals and clubs and Liz will do the door. (NB Dave had reported he has renewed 3 memberships of the Sportsman's Club for himself, Liz and Catherine).

12. AOCB:

12.1 *Maureen: Mail:* Rural Scotland and Scotways magazine.

12.2 *Susan: CPNA Board* is open for nominations – if anyone knows people who are interested in this opportunity, please contact the Cairngorm Campaign.

12.3 *Donald: Coul Links:* Donald proposed we object to the planning application for the golf development at Coul Links. Agreed Donald to object on NEMT's behalf.

12.4 *Helen Todd:* is standing down as convenor of LINK. Agreed £20 donation, action Alison.

12.5 *Ramblers Scotland:* their Annual Meeting on 10/11 March 2018 will be at the Treetops Aberdeen. NEMT will be approached to man a stand or display advertising material.

12.6 *Work Plan 2018:* to be discussed at next meeting – put on agenda – Ken.

12.7 *LINK expenses:* agreed George's travel costs of £25 for attending LINK meeting be reimbursed.

12.8 *Dates of 2018 meetings:* agreed as suggested - 16 Jan, 6 Mar, 10 Apr, 22 May, 10 Jul, 28 Aug, 9 Oct, 27 Nov (all Tuesdays). AGM date to be fixed at next meeting. Alison to book.

Next Meeting: 7:30pm, Tuesday 16 January 2018

Catherine Lacy, 12th December 2017, and Ken Thomson, 18 January 2018