

NORTH EAST MOUNTAIN TRUST
SCIO Scottish Charity no. SC 008783

Minutes of Council Meeting held 7.50 pm Tuesday 29 January 2019
at the Sportsman's Club, 11 Queens Road, Aberdeen

Present: George Allan*, Alex Brown** (AMC), Brian Cornock (Bailies of Bennachie), Robert Dawson, Debbie Fielding (Cairngorm Club), Brian Heaton*, Alison Mitchell** (Treasurer and Ramblers Scotland), Carlos Oldani (Stockets HWC), Donald Thomas*, Ken Thomson* (Minutes Secretary), Dave Windle* (Chair). Ruth Payne in attendance.

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

1. **Apologies:** Alistair Beeley (Stonehaven MHW), Catherine Lacy-Roberts (Secretary & Culter HWC), David Milne, Richard Spencer (MBA), Maureen Stuchbury, Trevor Stuchbury.

2. **Declaration of conflicts of interest:** none.

3. **Minutes of Council Meeting 27 November 2018:** these were approved.

4. **Matters Arising from above Minutes:**

Minute 5.1: It was reported that the bank was still using Norfolk Road as the NEMT address for certain purposes; it was decided not to try to alter this.

Minute 5.6: It was noted that these correctly recorded the agreed dates of 2019 Council meetings, and not those at the end of the 29 January Agenda.

Minute 6.3: Donald reported that he had not received Ken's NEMT submission to the SG's draft Scottish Forestry Strategy, for uploading to the website. Ken to investigate.

5. **NEMT Management**

- (i) *Membership and Subscriptions:* (i) Alison reported that she had obtained from the bank a list of recent SO/DD payments, and had sent these to Catherine for checking; Catherine to check.

- (ii) George noted that the current letterhead included the number of NEMT supporters, which the withdrawal of Cults HWC would change; George to recalculate, and recirculate the letterhead.

5.1. *Finance:* Alison reported that things "ticking along", with subscriptions expected soon. Thanks were expressed to Alison for preparing the accounts for the AGM.

5.2. *Website:* Donald reported that there were no outstanding issues.

5.3. *Mountain Views:* Dave reported no outstanding issues, though the second edition of *Hostile Habitats* had been received for review. He would write an obituary for Adam Watson. The contents list had been circulated, with all contributions requested by 15 March. It was agreed that Ramblers Scotland would occupy the "club spot" in the September 2019 issue, with Alison to approach Helen Todd about this.

5.4. *Lectures:* Carlos reported that the next would be held on 20 February, and that the flyers would be sent soon to Catherine for distribution. He announced his intention to step down from his post as Lectures Organiser at the end of the year.

5.5. *Leaflet Distribution:* George undertook to investigate this, e.g. to Hilltrek, and it was agreed to discuss the matter at the next Council meeting (Ken to note). Brian offered to play a greater role next year. It was agreed that Lecture attendees should be orally urged to join NEMT.

5.6. *AGM Matters Arising:*

- (i) *Adam Watson*: The question of a special lecture or event next autumn/winter was discussed, with agreement that this should be pursued, but with uncertainty over nature (e.g. cheese and wine?), venue, speaker, sister organisation plans, etc. Ken noted that a short video about (and partly by) Adam was available via the Fort William Mountain Festival website. It was agreed to explore the issue further at the March Council meeting, by which time parallel events and perhaps ideas would have become clearer.
- (ii) *Office-Bearers*: The following appointments were made: Chair, Treasurer and Secretary: Dave Windle, Alison Mitchell and Catherine Lacy-Roberts; and Donald Thomas (Webmaster), Carlos Oldani (Lecture Organiser), Ken Thomson (Minutes Secretary), Catherine Lacy-Roberts (Mountain Views).
- (iii) *Expenditure*: It was agreed to continue the current strategy of slowly reducing the Trust's reserves, e.g. by flat subscription rates and more generous donations.
- (iv) *Work Plan*: It was agreed to use the current version for 2019/20 (Ken to update).

6. Consultations: no current ones were noted.

- 6.1. *Mar Lodge Estate Vision & Plan*: Dave reported that he had submitted NEMT's "generally supportive" response. A number of issues were noted, including: the need to balance books via more visitors; management of the negative impacts of increased numbers; signage review; engagement with volunteers and communities, including NEMT.
- 6.2. *CNPA Local Development Plan (LDP)*: Dave undertook to progress the drafting of a NEMT response with the aid of several Council members, e.g. George, Alex, Debbie, Ken. A draft by 5 March would enable Council consideration on that date.
- 6.3. *CNPA Economic Strategy*: Ken reported that, at Dave's suggestion, he had looked at this, but had decided that no NEMT response would be useful.

7. Threats to Wild Land

7.1 *Cairngorm Mountain*: George reported that things had been "remarkably quiet" (though others noted a recent media report that the funicular would be out of action for summer 2019 at least). A joint statement by NEMT, Cairngorms Campaign, etc. on the consultants' report (a "masterplan"?) had been suggested but seemed unlikely at this point. A large snow-making machine had appeared. CM finances remained very obscure.

7.2 *Wind Farms*: It was reported that:

- (i) JMT had commented on the Cloiche extension (currently at the scoping stage) to Stronelarig, which, in addition to Glen Shero (if approved), would mean yet further industrialisation of the Monadhliaths (totalling 145 turbines over 70 sq. km.).
- (ii) A "Save Wild Moray" appeal had, focussed on a Clashgour proposal NW of Dufftown: Ken to circulate.
- (iii) Glen Dye was due for imminent decision by Aberdeenshire Infrastructure Committee.

7.3 *Hill & Hydro Tracks*: George reported as follows:

- (i) Planning Bill: Andy Wightman intended to bring forward his amendment (perhaps slightly altered) at Stage 3 in March, with LINK examples, although this was unlikely to pass unless SNP relented.

- (ii) Glen Etive: the developers had altered the proposal nearest Ben Starav, but he had again objected.
- (iii) Ardtalnaig: the estate had accepted Perth and Kinross's decision to uphold the condition of removal of the "causeway" (actually of concrete tubes) but has asked for more time to undertake its removal.
- (iv) Glen Clova: CNPA were likely to comment on the tracks above the hotel.
- (v) Ben More: developer had offered to "reduce" track on the north slopes, but objection maintained since track "unnecessary"
- (vi) Carn Elrig (Carn na Drochaide, NW of Braemar): recently notified to NEMT; Dave or George may contact NTS (David Frew) or CNPA.
- (vii) Balavil, Monadhliaths: old footpath chewed up by ATVs, and track "improvement" alleged to protect juniper via fewer deer (but more sheep?); application approved at CNPA Planning Committee by 9 to 6, but after strenuous debate. Need to develop Park policy in this area (ATV generation).

8. AOCB: none.

9. Date of Next Meeting: 5 March 2019, in the Sportsman's Club. Dates of future meetings: 23/4, 4/6, 27/8, 8/10, 26/11, and (unless altered to suit Catherine) 28/1/20 (AGM and Council).

Ken Thomson, 8 March 2019