

SCOTTISH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
Minute of meeting held on Saturday, 25 June 2016, 11.00 – 16.25
at sportscotland building, Edinburgh

62/16 ATTENDANCE

SCEC

Alison Mitchell – Convener	Vic Royce
Andy Malby – Vice Convener	Siggi Skulason
Alistair Cant – Hon Treasurer	Catherine Watt
John Andrews	Catriona Webster
Liz Lawie	

Staff

Jess Dolan, Director for Scotland
Katy Robinson, Project Officer – Walk Leadership
Danny Carden, Communication and Engagement officer
Faye Henderson, Areas and Governance Administrator

63/16 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Convener, Alison Mitchell, welcomed everyone to the meeting. As there were two new members of staff present, Danny Carden and Katy Robinson, everyone introduced themselves and their role as part of Ramblers Scotland.

Jess Dolan, Director for Scotland, stated that she will be going on maternity leave in September and recruitment is currently taking place for her maternity cover. Alison Mitchell will join Jess Dolan alongside another staff member to make up the interview panel.

Des Garrahan, Chair of Board of Trustees and Benedict Southworth, Chief Executive submitted their apologies and were unable to attend.

John Andrews gave his apologies for being delayed in traffic and arrived at 11.25

64/16 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Catherine Watt declared her interest in Item 8 on the Agenda 'Update on the Walk Leadership Project' as her husband has applied to be a member of the sounding board, currently being advertised and recruited for.

65/16 APPROVAL OF MINUTES, APRIL SCEC MEETING (APP1)

Minute was reviewed for factual inaccuracies and accepted by SCEC with no amendments required. The minute was proposed by Andy Malby and seconded by Siggi Skulason.

AP1 – Faye Henderson to send April SCEC meeting minute to Alison Mitchell to sign

66/16 ACTION POINTS FROM APRIL SCEC MEETING (APP1A)

- AP7 Alistair Cant provided an update regarding speaking with the Agenda Committee Convener, Barry Pottle, as to whether there is any flexibility in the returning comments on the Order Paper for Scottish Council. It was agreed that no changes to the timeline of the Order Paper would be made at this time.

- AP10 Jess Dolan stated that the KPMG sportscotland audit is now available of the SCEC wiki. This has also been made available to Des Garrahan and Alison Mitchell will mention this at the next Board meeting.
- AP14 Alison Mitchell contacted everyone on SCEC regarding the skills and experience framework which SCEC is currently reviewing. This has highlighted that skills in legal matters, marketing and promotion are lacking.
- AP15 Alison Mitchell noted the two current potential co-optees had submitted their skills and were aware of the SCEC meeting in June. However Alison noted that they did not have the specific skills that are currently missing from SCEC. Therefore it was agreed neither would be co-opted at this time. However encouraging them to stand for SCEC at the next Scottish Council if they wished to do so. It was agreed that the search sub-committee would pro-actively search for people with these skills and formally recommend them to SCEC for co-option approval. It was discussed that an advert could be placed internally and externally for people who have the required skills. It was agreed that Faye Henderson would support the search sub-committee as to where would be appropriate to advertise.
- AP16 Regarding the list of responsibilities it was agreed that Jess Dolan and Alison Mitchell are to look at staff involvement in an effort to include everyone.
- AP17 Siggie Skulason offered his office space for the next SCEC meeting.

AP2 – Faye Henderson to support search sub-committee in advertising

AP3 – Jess Dolan and Alison Mitchell to review list of responsibilities and align to appropriate member of staff

AP4 – Siggie Skulason to book meeting room for next SCEC meeting

AP5 – Repair and replacement of bridge paper is ongoing

67/16 REPORT AND DISCUSSION ON AREA SUPPORT WORK (APP2, APP2A, APP2B)

Faye Henderson, Area and Governance Administrator, updated SCEC on her findings on the current state of each Area. Recommendations were put forward to SCEC in regards as to how the Areas could be improved overall. Vic Royce commended Faye on an excellent report but suggested that a wider range of options would have enhanced it. Vic noted that some comments from Area Chairs appeared to be subjective personal comments. It was agreed that Areas needed to be more proactively engaged with Groups in order to build up relationships between the two. Groups also need to be made more aware about what support Areas can offer to them. It was agreed that more training and support needs to be given to Areas. Ideally there should be two training options available. One for Area Chair and Secretaries which is a very in-depth introduction to the Ramblers and educate how best Areas can function. Another wider seminar/training course should be available to all members of an Area Committee, or anyone interested in joining an Area Committee, which provides an overview of Ramblers GB with training opportunities. It was agreed that Faye Henderson look into both options for training and supporting Areas. It was also agreed that Faye Henderson is to work on a best practice document which could be offered to Areas to support them on governance and roles and responsibilities of an Area. Best governance practice can include how to engage members with Scottish Council and General Council. It can also indicate guidelines as to how best to deal with succession in Areas. Such as having a rotation system for Areas that struggle to recruit Chairs.

It was noted that a longer discussion is required regarding the structure of Areas. Therefore it was agreed that the August SCEC meeting (10th) should proceed with a focus on Area structure.

Faye Henderson provided an update regarding Renfrewshire, Cowal and Bute Area. It was agreed that the Area should be put into temporary abeyance until a wider conversation can be had regarding the structure of Areas at the next SCEC meeting in August. It was agreed that Faye Henderson should start the abeyance procedure and communicate to all groups in the Renfrewshire, Cowal and Bute Area.

AP6 – Faye Henderson to look into organising two training courses for Areas

AP7 – Faye Henderson to draft a best practice document to support Areas

AP8 – Faye Henderson to send out abeyance communications to Area and its Groups

BREAK FOR LUNCH 12.35 – 13.00

68/16 AGREEMENT OF BUDGET SETTING FOR THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR (APP3, APP3A, APP3B, APP3C)

Treasurer, Alistair Cant, provided an update on the Ramblers Scottish Council Account and answered questions. It was noted that Alistair Cant will revise the SCEC budget and submit to Central Office in London. SCEC accepted his report on the accounts.

Alistair Cant noted a communication went out from the Central Office in London which stated there will now be additional charges for every bank account open under the Ramblers. The increase in bank charges originated from a decision by Unity Bank and not Ramblers Central Office. Therefore Alistair asked if any unnecessary accounts could please be closed. It was agreed that the Scottish Council campaign fund should be closed, although it was noted that the fund would still be identifiable.

Jess Dolan, Director for Scotland, delivered an update regarding the operational budget for the next financial year, staff structure and implications of submitting two legacy business cases for staff roles. SCEC accepted Jess's report.

Jess Dolan asked for SCEC's approval for the Scottish Council budget to be brought into the operational budget. It was agreed that that it would ease event management if staff could control this budget when organising the event. It was noted that if there was an underspend of the Scottish Council budget SCEC would discuss where this extra money would be best spent. Treasurer, Alistair Cant, had no objection to moving the Scottish Council budget into the operational budget to be controlled by Ramblers Scotland staff. John Andrews formally proposed this decision and Andy Malby seconded.

AP9 – Alistair Cant to close campaign fund account

69/16 UPDATE ON SCOTTISH COUNCIL 2017 (APP3C, APP4, APP4A, APP4B)

Alistair Cant noted that the consideration of expenses was missing from the draft budget for Scottish Council 2017 (App3C). It was noted that Jeannie Cranfield, Delivery Officer, would factor this into the budget. Jeannie Cranfield provided an update on the draft programme for Scottish Council 2017 and possible locations. SCEC made suggestions and amendments to the draft programme and it was

agreed that Jeannie will bring a revised programme to SCEC meeting in November. SCEC also agreed on guest speakers for Jeannie to approach and check if available for Scottish Council 2017. The possible locations for Scottish Council 2017 were explored and it was agreed by SCEC that it will be held in Dunblane Hydro. SCEC agreed that the dates and location of Scottish Council 2017 should be published in the e-newsletter.

AP10 – Jeannie Cranfield to amend draft Scottish Council budget 2017 to include expenses

AP11 – Jeannie Cranfield to bring revised programme to SCEC in November

AP12 – Date and location of Scottish Council 2017 to be published

70/16 UPDATE ON WALK ABOUT FESTIVAL AND COMMUNICATIONS WORK

Danny Carden, Communications and Engagement Officer, as a new member of staff introduced himself to SCEC and spoke about his background in previous positions. Danny also gave an update on the Walk About Festival being held in September 2016. He noted that there would be a flagship event in Balloch along with other walks in various locations throughout the week. Danny answered questions from SCEC regarding the walking festival.

Danny also spoke about his role in communications. This included understanding how to communicate to our members and understanding the audience. Danny confirmed that more targeted communications to Areas and Groups is necessary and he has been doing work reviewing the effectiveness of our current media.

71/16 UPDATE ON WALK LEADERSHIP PROJECT (APP6)

Katy Robinson, Project Officer – Walk Leadership, also as a new member of staff introduced herself to SCEC and spoke about her background in previous positions. As Katy's position is project funded by sportscotland she gave background as to what her budget would be spent on and what her objectives are for the next year (until March 2017). At which time more funding will be applied for. Katy updated SCEC on her project proposal and current recruitment for a sounding board. Catherine Watt stressed the need for soft skills to be included in Walk Leadership training. Katy also highlighted how she is capturing all of the data regarding current walk leaders. After running through her budget Katy asked SCEC if they would provide £5,000 support in this project. SCEC confirmed they are happy to provide this money.

BREAK

72/16 DISCUSSION AND ENDORSEMENT OF RAMBLERS SCOTLAND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND TOP-LINE BUSINESS PLAN 2016-2017 (APP5, APP5A)

Jess Dolan, Director for Scotland, provided an update on Ramblers Scotland Strategic Framework documents and asked for SCEC approval of Ramblers Scotland: Vision and Strategic Framework 2016-2026 (App5). Jess Dolan ran through the changes she had made to this document since the previous SCEC meeting (April). SCEC agreed that this document was well worded and the content of the document was approved. This document will be made available to Ramblers Scotland members as a public facing document and will be discussed at Scottish Council 2017 for approval.

Jess Dolan also discussed the 2016 – 2017 Ramblers Scotland Business Plan within Strategic Framework (App5A). Vic Royce queried the absence of detail under the heading 'Inspiring People' however Jess noted that there was not sufficient staff capacity in order to make any real progress under this section in a year. Jess noted this is a one year plan and highlights the realistic goals that the current staff capacity can achieve. This one year plan details which member of staff will report to SCEC and take the lead on this aspect of work. The document also hopes to manage expectations of what will be achieved in the next year.

73/16 UPDATE ON THE GATHERING

Alison Mitchell gave an update to SCEC on the Gathering. This year it was supported by 106 Ramblers from 12 different Groups across Scotland. The largest contingents were from Dundee and Cumbernauld and Kilsyth groups, there were also individual Ramblers who do not walk with a local group. There were approximately 70% who had been at a Gathering before, therefore a good proportion were "first timers". There were 7 walks on offer over the weekend in the local area with a hired coach being used for the walk on Sunday when they travelled to Rosemarkie and Avoch on the Black Isle. There was the annual Ceilidh on Saturday evening and a talk on the History of Strathpeffer on Sunday evening. Good weather prevailed until Monday when it was overcast and raining.

There is a surplus of £926.55, the income was 104 @ £15 registration + £190 from the raffle, the expenditure was £823.45. Alison received numerous cards and comments from those who attended thanking her for organising the Gathering and how successful it had been. Alison also mentioned there has been contact from Cumbernauld and Kilsyth Group who are considering hosting a Gathering in the future.

74/16 NATIONAL YOUNG RAMBLERS WEEKEND

Andy Malby, Vice Convener, updated SCEC on the first National Young Ramblers Weekend that took place in Cardiff earlier this year. 80 members attended from groups across the 3 nations and Board members attended on the second day. The weekend consisted of walks, socialising and speed workshops. Overall it was a very successful weekend. Edinburgh Young Walkers have agreed to organise the event next year and this might also be a useful tool to attract younger Ramblers members to other formal events such as Scottish Council. Andy asked SCEC for the money to place a deposit for Edinburgh Youth Hostel which would cost roughly £1,000. It was agreed that Andy will send the Treasurer, Alistair Cant, a full run down of the budget in due course. SCEC agreed that the deposit would be paid to the SYHA from the surplus of money made from the Gathering 2016 should be given to Andy to secure accommodation at the Edinburgh Youth Hostel.

It was noted that there are currently a wide range of events available to Ramblers members, such as the National Young Ramblers Weekend, the Gathering and Scottish Council. Growing and engaging membership is a priority for the organisation however it is important that each event is different and therefore caters to a wide variety of needs of the membership.

AP13 – Andy Malby to email National Young Ramblers Weekend budget to Alistair Cant

75/16 AOBs

As John Andrew was delayed in traffic he updated SCEC on his action points from the previous SCEC meeting.

- AP1 John Andrews updated SCEC on the ongoing Walnut Grove legal situation. It was concluded that there might be a legal case to consider. Jess Dolan outlined the procedure that SCEC would have to follow in order to get sufficient legal funding from the Board of Trustees. It was agreed that as an interim solution John should have more conversations with Harper McLeod.
- AP2 John Andrews stated that he was still waiting to hear an update from David Thomson. SCEC concluded that this matter will be held pending until David gets in touch.
- AP18 Helen Todd and John Andrews are still working together on the repair and replacement of bridges paper and will bring this to a future SCEC meeting.

Siggi Skulason stated he had been in touch with a retired solicitor who had an interest in walking. He will look into this and provide an update at the next SCEC meeting.

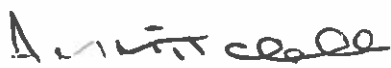
As the Scotland Devolution Agreement needs to be agreed upon this year Benedict Southworth, Chief Executive, is doing a lot of work on this before he leaves the Ramblers at the end of July. Des Garrahan, Chair of the Board of Trustees, will be in touch with Alison Mitchell to provide a timeline for the year. The Devolution Committee will next meet in August/September 2016 and a paper will be presented to the Board of Trustees to agree the next 3 – 5 years. This paper will also require SCEC's approval and will be brought to the August SCEC meeting.

Jess Dolan stated there was nothing further to add to her previous update (66/16) on the sportscotland KPMG audit.

As previously discussed it was agreed there was a necessity to hold the next SCEC meeting on Wednesday 10th August. This meeting will focus mainly on discussing Areas in Scotland.

As discussed at Scottish Council 2016, an anniversary card was sent to Scottish Youth Hostels Association. Jess Dolan stated she had received an acknowledgement from the Director and they will be meeting in August to discuss how the two bodies can work together.

AP14 – John Andrews to continue legal discussion regarding Walnut Grove

SIGNED:  DATE: 16 August 2016
Alison Mitchell
Ramblers Scotland Convener