

November Scottish council executive committee minute

SCOTTISH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Minute of meeting held on Wednesday 14 November 2018, 4.30 – 8.30pm
at the Dewar's Centre, Perth**

74/18 ATTENDANCE

SCEC

Alison Mitchell – convener
Alistair Cant - hon treasurer
Trevor Jones
Ronnie Forbes

Andy Malby - vice convener
Catherine Watt
Linda Moyes
Douglas Tullis

Staff

Jess Dolan, director for Scotland
Van Griffiths, CEO Ramblers GB
Jocelyn Payne, areas & governance administrator
Jeannie Cranfield, delivery officer (until 6.45pm)
John Nicholls, volunteering & quality assurance officer (until 6.45pm)
Helen Todd, campaigns & policy manager (until 5.15pm)

75/18 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Alison Mitchell, convener, welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies from Ben Dolphin, Liz Lawie, and Elly Macdonald. SCEC congratulated Van and Catherine on recent milestone birthdays.

Alison mentioned the recent death of Ramblers Scotland Vice President Rennie McOwan and spoke about his important guidance and support during the access legislation campaign. There were no Declarations of Interest.

76/18 CHIEF EXEC'S UPDATE OF THE YEAR

Van Griffiths, Ramblers GB chief executive, gave a short presentation on Ramblers GB's achievements in 2018, including the transformation of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), becoming a PPL beneficiary, and the Agriculture Bill, and the aims for 2019 such as membership growth, campaigning and volunteer support. Van highlighted the importance of the Ramblers GB strategy and business plan allowing and supporting Ramblers Scotland to achieve on a national level.

AP1 Jocelyn to circulate Van's slides after the meeting to SCEC members who request it.

77/18 GUIDANCE TO AREAS AND GROUPS – ACCESS (APP 1)

Helen Todd, campaigns & policy manager presented the most recent draft of the paper 'Guidance to Areas and Groups'. She mentioned that the 'Speaking Out' document is an internal document and so this reference will be removed from the guidance that will be available to members who have the role of 'walking environment officer'.

Douglas suggested that SCEC write to the Stonehaven Group to thank them for raising the motion and precipitating this piece of work.

AP2 Alison to write to the Stonehaven Group and thank them.

It was agreed that the guidance paper would be stored on the website in a Volunteer Toolkit, and that it would be promoted through e-newsletters so that members know where to find it if required.

AP3 SCEC members to email Helen Todd if they have any further comments, questions or suggestions about the paper.

78/18 WALK LEADERSHIP UPDATE (APP 2)

John Nicholls, volunteering & quality assurance officer (walk leadership) spoke about how the Walk Leadership project fits into the direction of Ramblers GB and Ramblers Scotland's organisational progress. His paper covered key points which he then expanded on.

John described how the project, now well into its third year, is progressing, and how the courses developed in response to the requests of the participants who are both new and experienced walk leaders. He spoke about the role of the Area Training Coordinators, and about the new stage of the project where he is recruiting Volunteer Trainers who will deliver walk leadership training in the future. He is also working on the recruitment of mentors to support the learning of new walk leaders.

John highlighted that one of the project's strengths is the willingness to accept challenges, take time out to think and to find creative and flexible solutions that suit Ramblers members and staff.

PPL funding has allowed the Walk Leadership project to become a collaborative and GB-wide project.

It was noted that the Walk Leader Trainers would each be expected to provide 2 courses per area per year (although someone who wanted to give more would not be discouraged). Trevor raised the idea that there are Ramblers members who are Area members but not attached to a group, and that these people may also find the training useful.

Catherine praised the course content, having recently attended one of the courses, and highlighted the usefulness of having a set of competencies that demonstrate if someone can lead a walk to an agreed standard.

Douglas raised the question as to whether Scotland's geography and demographic affects take-up of available training. John advised that there is an even distribution of attendance across Scotland.

John advised that after Walk Leadership, the most popular training requests are navigation and first aid, which is being taken into account at a Ramblers GB level within the Development & Delivery team.

There was a concern that by providing the Walk Leadership training free of charge, this may be contributing to the high dropout rate. John stated that the Walk Leadership team are working to promote the messaging that those who sign up and don't attend are preventing someone else from going, rather than introducing a charge.

John urged SCEC members to get in contact with him if they have any questions or comments.

79/18 SCOTTISH COUNCIL 2019 UPDATE (APP 3)

Jeannie Cranfield, delivery officer, spoke to the papers which covered the Scottish Council Challenge, which will award £500 total. Jess suggested that SCEC could augment the prize fund if they would like to offer more.

AP4 Jocelyn to send a Scottish Council Challenge flyer along with Area AGM briefing

AP5 Jeannie to send the Scottish Council Challenge flyer to Group Chairs and Secretaries

Jeannie advised of the changes in running order she has made to the programme for Scottish Council 2019 which will take place in Dunblane. This included the staff speakers, the postponement until later in the afternoon of the formal business, the use of 'learning sets' as a development of last years' speed workshops, and a potential speaker, Peter Cairns, for the Saturday evening after-dinner session.

Jess Dolan, director of Ramblers Scotland, spoke about inviting the Nizhny Novgorod Mountain Club (a young walkers group from Russia) to come and speak on the Sunday. SCEC are in support of this, and also of ensuring that we involve the group across the weekend to maximise their visit.

Van, Alistair, and Ronnie gave suggestions on programme content such as values (inclusivity and diversity) and learning how to maximise attendance at GC. SCEC gave some advice on the wording of the Eventbrite text.

Jeannie suggested an idea for future years, that the democratic function of SC should be 'one member one vote'.

AP6 Jeannie to send the draft agenda with suggested alterations to SCEC before it goes out with first mailing on 5th December 2018.

80/18 YOUNG ADULTS PROJECT UPDATE

Jess spoke about the new role of the Young Adult Development Officer for which recruitment is underway, following the provision of funding by the Scottish Government. This project will aim to engage 18-25 year olds in gaining walk skills and also giving something back to Ramblers through volunteering.

It is anticipated that the new staff member will commence a 12-month role in January 2019, following interviews in November 2018. Andy asked if this project will result in the creation of new Young Walkers Groups; Jess is hopeful but is cautious about attaching the formation of groups as a target.

81/18 BUSINESS PLAN ROLLING UPDATE 2107/18 Q4 (APP 4)

Jess spoke about the business plan progress tracker. She noted that where items are amber it is essentially to do with capacity issues and the fact that some projects and targets are slower to develop than others. She noted that reasonable progress has been made in all areas, even in those marked amber. She explained that some areas where good decisions had been made, for instance the wind-down of the Medal Routes project.

82/18 APPROVAL OF DRAFT MINUTE FROM SCEC AUGUST 2018 MEETING (APP 5)

The draft minute was approved. The minute was proposed by Catherine Watt and seconded by Trevor Jones.

83/18 ACTION REGISTER (APP 5A)

All action points were discharged with the exception of:

64/18 AP3 Jess to look into further promotion of 999 app via Ramblers Scotland staff
It has not yet been practicable for Jess to look into the 999 app. Douglas also suggested responding directly to the group who submitted the motion to SC18.

AP7 Douglas Tullis to respond directly to the Bearsden and Milngavie Group who presented the motion to SC18 on the provision of mobile phone signal.

67/18 AP 9 Jess to circulate Path to Impact power point to SCEC via email
AP8 Jocelyn to remind Jess to circulate Path to Impact power point to SCEC via email

67/18 AP10 Jess to share findings from November Path to Impact Conference with SCEC
This conference takes place later in November 2018, and Jess will report to the next meeting of SCEC in February.

73/18 AP 12 New convener of Access sub-committee to be appointed
This had not happened during the November meeting. Alistair and Douglas stated that this should be dealt with during the meeting in December, or alternatively a regular update to SCEC will be made by a representative of the access sub-committee.

There was a discussion around 60/18 AP1: Scottish Ramblers Gathering Working Group to report to the November SCEC meeting on decisions made and actions taken.

The group have agreed that they would like SCEC members to attend the Gathering 2019 and consider the future plan.

AP9 Ronnie Forbes to write brief report on Scottish Ramblers Gathering Working Group discussions and submit it to February 2019 SCEC meeting after approval by the SRG Working Group

84/18 CONVENER'S UPDATE ON SEPTEMBER 2019 BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Alison Mitchell gave an update on the latest Ramblers GB Board of Trustees meeting which took place on 26th September 2018. The points summarised included the death of Peter Melchett, Ramblers GB Vice-President, two of the newer members of SLT now being on permanent contracts with Ramblers (Beatrice and Rachael), an update on GC motions from 2018 and meetings ahead of GC19 to be held in Manchester. Alison noted that Trustee recruitment would be a focus in the Area AGM briefing notes, and also touched upon the Festival of Winter Walks, the Ramblers GB budget and business plan, and confirmed that the devolution agreement had been extended to September 2020.

85/18 FINANCE UPDATE (APP 6, APP 6A, APP 6B)

Alistair Cant, hon. treasurer, provided an explanation and update on both the Ramblers Scottish Council account and SCEC Management Report. These covered the whole financial year from October 2017 – September 2018. Alison requested that for SC19 Alistair pre-empt any questions by highlighting the reasons for the sub-group underspend.

Ronnie asked about the apparent zero spend on staff training. Jess explained how the different budget lines in the report are an amalgamation of different streams on her budget, and that this may make actual spending areas less clear. Additionally, until October 2018 the training budget sat with HR rather than with the Scotland budget. In the new finance system this should be more transparent.

Trevor asked why the membership income has decreased over the year when Scotland's membership has remained relatively static. Van and Alistair explained that Ramblers Scotland's membership income is a fixed percentage of the total income to Ramblers GB, not reflective of Scotland's membership trends.

App 6B relates to The Gathering finances. Alison explained that the £900 grant came from the PPL WalkAbout project; and was used for coach hire and room hire for evening activities at the Gathering.

86/18 CONSTITUTIONAL MOTIONS (APP 7)

Alistair Cant presented the paper detailing the motions which will be formally presented to SC19 amending the Ramblers Scotland constitution. Alistair and Douglas will propose and second these motions as individuals rather than on behalf of SCEC.

SCEC recorded their agreement with the motions.

87/18 GOVERNANCE REVIEW (APP 8, APP 8A)

Jocelyn presented the Briefing Pack for SCEC members attending Area AGMs. Some minor changes were made to the members who are attending each one on behalf of SCEC.

AP10 Jocelyn to send out the full GB briefing to those who want it ahead of Area AGMs.

Jess and Jocelyn spoke about paper 8A, the Governance Update. In response to the recommendations from the Path to Impact and KPMG reports, Alison asked each member to assess what skills and value they bring to the committee.

Jess encouraged SCEC to search for members outside Ramblers membership in order to fill some of the skills gaps, since internal elections haven't been able to source members with all of the necessary skills and experience. Ronnie highlighted the importance of identifying exactly what SCEC is missing and what is needed. Alistair highlighted some of the challenges of co-opting members.

Jocelyn spoke about the Scottish Sports Association's Trustee Week and how advertising online and in a broad range of places such as GoodMoves.com and Third Force News may attract younger individuals with useful skillsets. Van advised on how the Ramblers GB Board of Trustees have co-opted members to fill gaps over recent years.

Jess described the benefit of having the right balance of "challenge and push" within committee discussions. She suggested that SCEC could benefit from having on the committee a 'critical friend' who knows about fundraising, as she is concerned that Ramblers Scotland is missing opportunities and lacking a breadth of perspective in this sector, another specialist in policy, advocacy, and campaigning who could advise alongside Helen, especially in the area of mass engagement, and an expert in public health policy at all levels.

There was a discussion around the optimum length of term to sit on SCEC between elections. Trevor highlighted the weakness of having one-year terms, in that in principle the entire committee could be voted off in one year which would pose a risk to continuity.

Jess stressed that SCEC and Ramblers Scotland need to show progress against recommendations in order to safely secure funding for the future from some of the external organisations.

AP11 Jocelyn to commence research around advertising SCEC co-option opportunities in the agreed specialism areas

88/18 AOCB

Linda Moyes attended 'The Ochils – A Special Place' Conference on 10th November. She reported that there had been a wealth of information about biodiversity and tree planting in the areas as well as visitor statistics. There were organisations present that specialise in recreation as well as conservation. Linda noted how useful and interesting the day had been.

Ronnie Forbes attended the Ramblers GB all-staff away-day on 6th November as part of his role on the Board of Trustees. The whole day focussed on Ramblers' values, and was an engagement and revision journey. Ronnie highlighted the importance of having values that are enacted not just espoused because of increased visibility and transparency in a digital age. He suggested this could be a useful topic to discuss at Scottish Council or a similar volunteer event.

Jocelyn noted that the current SCEC wiki will no longer be active by January 2019, and that the new wiki will be available in the coming weeks. There will then need to be collaboration about which documents are stored on the wiki and which are stored centrally at Ramblers Scotland office to be available on request.

Douglas asked for an update on safeguarding. Jess reported that Jeannie worked with Children 1st, and that the action plan is underway. Van assured SCEC that the higher-level policy work is currently with Ramblers GB D&D and HR. Douglas drew attention to an interim safeguarding document which is on the website but is unconstitutional.

AP12 Jess to look at the interim safeguarding document and take appropriate action

Jess spoke about the coalition of organisations led by Scottish Environment LINK, of which Ramblers Scotland is a part, which is calling for a Scottish Environment Act. She had attended an event at the Scottish Parliament on 13th November to 'Fight for Scotland's Nature'. More information about the campaign can be found here:

<https://www.fightforscotlandsnature.scot/>

Linda had a query about a Hilltrack in her locality. SCEC advised her to consult directly with Helen Todd.

Jocelyn Payne, area & governance administrator, (15 November 2018)