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OutdoorLads 2018 Annual General Meeting

Date: Saturday 29th September 2018

Location: The Old Library
Gibb Street
Digbeth
Birmingham
B9 4AT

Opened: 14.07

Closed: 16.22

Attended 121 (99 in person/ 22 online)

Board and Staff Attendance

Board Members:

Peter Walter (PW) Chairman
Matt Tennant (MT) Vice Chair
Brett Monaghan (BM) Treasurer
Neil Sharp (NS)
Steven Allen (SA)
Danny McKeown (DM)
Craig Owen (CO)

Co-opted Members: (elected to Trustees during meeting)

Jonathan Moore (JM)
Dan Barcroft (DB)

Staff Members:

Liam Russell (LR)
Tashi Acton (TA)
Yvonne Goldsmith-Rybka (YGR)

Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Peter Walter opened the meeting and thanked all for attending. The meeting was also live streamed on Facebook.

PW outlined the proceedings of the meeting and introduced the trustees and staff members to the audience.

PW presented the main points for discussion with the aims of the meeting as follows:

- Dispatch our legal obligations
- Celebrate
- Give confidence
- Inspire

PW explained our charitable purpose and values:

- Friendly and welcoming
- Fun
- Professional

- Adventurous

With its core aim:

- To improve the physical and mental wellbeing of gay, bi and trans guys and have a great time doing so

And why the organization is needed (using figures from Stonewall):

- Gay or bi guys are twice as likely to suffer from depression or to self-harm
- 50% of gay and bi men said they have felt life was not worth living compared to 17% of men in general
- Suicide attempts among gay men are seven times more common than among men in general

PW highlighted our success so far with the results taken from the annual members survey emailed out to all members this August 2018:

- 92% said OutdoorLads events are fun
- 88% said OutdoorLads are friendly and welcoming
- 88% said they could try new things
- 79% said they had made new friends
- 77% said they were proud to be a member
- 69% said they felt more part of a community
- 59% said they were fitter
- 59% said they felt less isolated

Questions were then invited from those in attendance (and those on the live stream):

Q: Why have you not shown the statistics from the survey results of the previous year?

PW: The figures are of a very similar level with only slight fluctuations, generally not statistically significant. The figures are still high, and we are confident we are doing a good job.

Volunteers and Leaders

Neil Sharp (Trustee responsible for volunteers) took the floor for this section. He thanked all the amazing volunteers and leaders for all of their effort, time and passion that are the lifeline of the organisation. All leaders present were asked to stand up and the room applauded in thanks.

NS talked about what had been achieved in 2018 following a survey in 2017 asking for feedback from all leaders. Clear goals were set, as a result of which:

- Better expenses procedures for hostel and camping leaders
- Now operating automated leader rewards
- Improved leader training and development with a budget now set aside for this
- Web 3.0 allowing more convenient set-up of events, including cloning and mobile use

- Bigger and better ideas for events with all suggestions welcomed from leaders

With key goals for 2019:

- Better communication and social media with leaders
- Encouraging future leader recruitment and enabling new volunteers
- Active leader development
- And growing portfolio of events through third party providers

Leader statistics were looked at:

- There are now 295 leaders, rising from 276 in 2017
- With current leader applications in progress there will be 300 leaders by Christmas 2018

As well as events:

- There have been 1491 events over the last year, up from 1209 in the previous year
- Looking at comparisons in types of events, most have increased with the biggest increase in climbing events up to 547 from 394
- Walking and running events were the only type of event that saw a slight decrease, down from 442 to 430. It was noted this is the 'bread and the butter' of the organisation and that more ideas were needed to increase the number of day-walks over the coming year

Paid membership statistics:

- Current full paid members numbering at around 2000, which doesn't consider all pay-as-you-go members that pay for all events

Questions were then invited:

Q: Out of the near 300 leaders, how many are active?

NS: Currently the website does not track this. We are investigation methods for capturing this in future. Need to consider what is the time frame for those that haven't run events in a while, and for how long they are still classified as leaders? We need to concentrate on active leaders and what they need to grow the organisation.

Q: How are you maintaining the quality of events and leaders. Are they evaluated along the way?

NS: We rely on our regional organisers and their leader teams to monitor this. We all work together to provide consistency but there are opportunities for development. We get together every six months to assess current leaders and events and there is a code of conduct we all adhere to.

Q: What events are being organized in North Wales to engage members?

Regional Organiser for North Wales, Mark House, answered:

We recently held our first ever social and watersports day in August, a two day event, and Wales is getting more attention with similar plans in coming months. Nearby Chester is also showing growth with regular socials and events.

Q: What about Scotland?

LR: There are quite a lot of events put on there, as it is remote there are less numbers, but there is stuff happening.

NS: And if there is nothing in your area, then step up and do it yourself. Give it a go, I started as a member, then a leader, and I'm now a trustee.

Staff Structure Overview

Vice Chair Matt Tennant is also the trustee responsible for managing staff on behalf of the board and took over here. Following a review between April-May 2018 three key areas were highlighted that resulted from a growing number of members and events, and that needed addressing:

- Admin requirements growing, especially in finance
- More capacity needed to devote to events and volunteers
- More capacity needed for digital reach and engagement

Therefore, in effect from August 2018 a new structure was put in place:

- Two members of staff previously employed - a Volunteer & Events Co-ordinator and a Membership Support Officer; has been increased to three members of staff - a Programme Manager who now oversees a Membership Engagement Officer and a Finance & Admin Assistant (Part-Time)

Whose responsibilities are:

- Work with volunteers to plan and book the paid event program
- Support leaders before/after events
- Plan and deliver Big Events with volunteers
- Member enquiries and support tickets – a on a whole range of things
- Social media and content creation
- Process invoices, payments, leader expenses
- Governance and compliance (financial reports for the board/ KPIs/ VAT/ pensions)

Questions were then invited:

Q: What is the digital and social media strategy? (Are there any groups being targeted?)

PW: We are developing the strategy with Tashi (Membership Engagement Officer) as part of this new role. She is currently getting into the thick of it, and this is one key objective just being written: it's a work in progress.

At this point MT makes a point of thanking Harry Prosser (previous Membership Support Officer) for his services as he has now left to return to university.

Foundation

Dan Barcroft talks here to explain that he, if elected, would take on the Foundation as his area of work as it is "not quite where we want it to be." Although it has received a small income of £1700 over the past year and helped 14 people, DB will be assisting over the coming year to help it grow as there is:

- A real desire to raise funds and support the Foundation
- It currently relies on people asking for help and there are those who may not realise they are eligible for help
- There has been limited progress on partnerships with other charities

DB will focus on:

- Raising the visibility of the Foundation
- To look at extending the reach to younger members
- Much more inclusion and diversity
- Establishing relationships with other charities the Foundation could work with

Questions were then invited, but none were asked.

Website 3.0

Project Manager Jonathan Moore took to the floor to discuss the new website (Website 3.0) that was launched in March this year. He explained that as every process and user experience is managed through the website, it has been a 'complex beast' and proved much more challenging than expected. The three main objectives were:

- Works well on a mobile
- Easier to find and book events
- Easier to create events

Three main bugs and dozens of minor ones have been dealt with since going live. There has been significant input from a number of volunteers and the supplier has also invested their own time and money in getting us to where we are today. Website 3.0 is stable and as futureproof as we can make it, built on an up to date platform that will not become obsolete soon.

The site certainly works, and since its launch on 15th March 2018 we've seen:

- 1151 new member sign-ups
- 12,436 total transactions
- 2,845 paid transactions totaling £125,800

It took 9 months to build, at a cost of £77k (which is £22k under the median expected cost of £99k.)

For the future JM explained there is a further £28k already available to pay for additional functionality beyond the original project scope – with a shopping list for what is needed suggested by members and leaders through support tickets. This can be viewed by leaders under the Leader Resources section of the website where they are listed in order of priority. JM asked that members keep raising any concerns through support tickets with any suggestions of things that could be better, and that these would be added to and managed within the priority list.

PW added that JM has put in over 160 full days alone (as a volunteer) and thanked him for so much of his time and commitment to the project.

Questions were invited:

- Q Why can't we use calendar view like in the old website 2.0?
- JM The calendar view we used to have is too much information to be displayable on a mobile. There are three ways to look at events though, NEW (in order of most recently published), MAP and CALENDAR (listed chronologically.) This calendar view is being improved soon so that the months are initially collapsed and only expand when you pick the month you want to look at in detail. That will work well on a mobile and is as close to the calendar view from the old desktop site as we can get.
- Q: I work in website technology and what you have received for the money is amazing. However, the messaging function is underwhelming. Are there any plans to improve this?
- JM: There are certain things on messaging to improve. Email notifications of messages are now working for everyone (around 20 people had reported not receiving them.) The messaging functionality though is still not as good as we would like, but was the only messaging module available off the shelf when we launched. So if a better messaging module becomes available in the future we can consider it, assuming that the cost of implementation can be covered and is worthwhile.
- Q: This is just a suggestion really; when you log on to the site you get a message saying 'Do you want to update your profile?' - are there any plans to get rid of this?
- JM: Yes, it will be disappearing soon. When the GDPR regulations came in we needed to get people to update their profiles and say if they wanted to opt in/out of marketing. We simply haven't got around to removing it yet. Incidentally, have you though updated your profile?!
- Q: We heard that there are 2000 members, but 1200 have signed up on the new website – that seems high, can you clarify please?
- JM: The 2000 is the number of Full Members (including Concession Members.) The 1200 figure is different, it's the number of people that have visited the site and chosen to create a profile since the launch of 3.0
- Q: Will there be further updates to the website such as Web 3.1, 3.2 etc. – or will Web 4.0 be needed eventually?
- JM: We've very nearly finished the main project now and will work through additional functionality that's on the shopping list as funds and volunteer time allow, so that's effectively Web 3.1, 3.2 etc... We'll also be working on maintenance issues (such as the impact of browser updates, operating system updates, and platform updates.) Web 4.0 will only be needed when we need a whole new website again, which is unlikely to be for at least 5 years, when either the platform we are built on starts to become obsolete, or some other external factor changes the world of web.
- Q: Can members influence the shopping list?
- JM: Yes, send a support ticket with ideas (as a leader if you look through the shopping list you might find your idea is already on there), we consider all suggestions but do have to make priorities (and there are lots of different consumer journeys depending on which type of user you are so the priorities reflect the needs of many different users.)
- Q: The previous site showed the hometown of other members, making offering lifts to events easier. Will this return?
- JM: There are so many different opinions about this. With new data management regulations (GDPR), we decided to only hold data we really need, and one consequence is that we don't hold addresses anymore. Even if we did, some

members don't want their home town info published, but the benefit of car sharing is clear to us and to our members, and so we need to find a new way round this. On the shopping list there is an option to have a voluntary field where a member who is willing to give lifts can write as much info as they are comfortable with, e.g. for someone who lives in Central Salford they could write Central Salford, Salford, Greater Manchester or North West. I think we should be able to make that happen as it's high on the list of things we would like and we do have some funds available and approved by the board already for additional functionality.

Q: Do you still collect data on where people live?

JM: No, at the moment profiles only have a region and a postcode. The less data we hold the better in terms of data security, which is why we currently don't hold addresses. We may change this in the future (though we wouldn't display any of the address publicly) and it would, for example, then enable us to mail things to members.

PW wraps up this section, congratulates the success of what has been a massive project and states it is great to have the website functioning as it is now.

Financial Review and Annual Accounts

Treasurer Brett Monaghan takes over and stresses the main aim as a non-profit charity is to generate income to cover expenses, to be able to invest and develop the organization, and to keep the event and membership charges as low as possible for its members. Highlighting:

- Membership Income up 43%
- Event Income down 5%
- Events Cost up 1%
- Overheads up 6%

Charts to illustrate these finances in further detail were shown to members.

Full accounts can be viewed on the website and BM noted there were adjustments to accounts from an error identified in the previous years accounts.

PW had asked for any specific detailed financial questions to be emailed and opened the floor to general questions:

Q What is depreciation?

BM: Depreciation is a reduction in the value of our assets, most notably from the previous website

Q: Why are marketing costs so low?

LR: We don't actively advertise or pay for any marketing, the marketing costs incurred were for promotional material at events for people to see – eg stickers, flags, flyers etc. There are future plans for marketing using Google Ads campaigns, with bespoke landing pages to target particular audiences. Very much an idea in development.

Golden Tickets

Tashi Acton then awarded OutdoorLads hoodies to two members attending the AGM who had found a Golden Ticket underneath their seat.

- Andrew Forsyth

- Steven Henderson

Motions and Election of Trustees

PW presented the motions:

- The motion to approve the minutes from last year (2017) AGM was proposed by Simon Hawthorne, seconded by Steve Sorrell, and passed as presented by a show of hands with a clear majority, none against and no abstentions.
- The motion to approve the accounts was proposed by Damian Oakley, seconded by Neil Phillips, and passed as presented by a show of hands with a clear majority, with none against and no abstentions.
- To appoint an auditor was not put to motion – instead it was stated that this would be put out to tender in order to make sure the charity was getting the best value for money. A question was asked regarding a time frame for auditors to be appointed, to which BM answered that a decision would be made by the end of the year.

Turning to the election of trustees, members were informed that three people were standing - Danny McKeown, Dan Barcroft and Jonathan Moore. There is no fixed number of positions and so the candidates were not competing against each other.

Each of the candidates introduced themselves and spoke about their reasons for standing and what they would bring to the board. Manifestos had been made available prior to the meeting.

- DM was re-standing and wanted to develop his role, as well as to continue to put on and help run big events
- DB explained how OutdoorLads had changed his life over the past two and a half years and how he wanted to help others through the Foundation, especially focusing on equality and diversion
- JM has spent the last six and a half months as project manager of Website 3.0 and wants to continue to make the site futureproof as well as attracting new members

The motion to approve all three candidates as board members was approved by a show of hands with a clear majority, with none against and no abstentions.

PW welcomed the new and returning trustees to the board.

Aims for the Current Year

PW talked through the focus for the coming year:

- Continuously improve Website 3.0
- Provide more staff support to leaders
- Run more events at cost to offer more diverse experiences that may not necessarily make a profit
- Provide more training
- Make more of the Foundation

Questions were invited:

- Q Will board approval be needed for all new events
- LR I (Liam Russell) have delegated authority to approve events.
- Q What plans are there to include more people with physical or mental issues?
- JM We are working with the Foundation to reach out to other organisations to collaborate with, enabling us to offer further specialist events and to integrate and include these members more

Thank Volunteers/ Awards

The OutdoorLads Volunteer Awards were then presented. These were presented to individuals nominated by members, and then shortlisted by a committee. There were lots of nominations, but only five could be given out. Framed certificates were presented to the following people for their hard work on behalf of the group:

- Skippy Evans
- Jonathan Moore
- Paul Ridealgh
- Simon Hawthorn
- Kieren Hollingsworth (not present at AGM)

PW then congratulated all the leaders and gave a special mention to Michael Walker who sadly passed away earlier this year.

A final thanks were also given to two of the trustees who were stepping down from the board, Craig Owen, and Daniel Burford (who was attending but not sitting on the board today.) Champagne was given to both, to DB who was instrumental in both setting up the organization and building the original website, without whose contribution ODL would not be here today; and to CO for his energy and commitment to running events - CO then spoke a few very heartfelt words about what belonging to the organisation had meant to him over the years.

Video

The closing OutdoorLads video edited by Tashi Acton was then shown and instructions for the evenings social event given.

The meeting closed at 16.22