

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING



Meeting Title OutdoorLads Board Meeting
Location: Online
Date and Time Tuesday 27th February 2024 at 7:30pm

Attendees		RM	Rob Mitchell, chair
('A' indicates absent)		JB	Joe Bailey, vice-Chair
		JH	Jake Higgins, treasurer
		DN	David Norris
		DB	Dan Blackwell
		IW	Ian Williams (SE regional co-ordinator)
		LR	Liam Russell (secretary/ staff)
	A	YGR	Yvonne Goldsmith-Rybka
	A	DBY	Dan Byrnes

01/24	Welcome and apologies	
	<p>Rob Mitchell welcomed all to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies had been received from Yvonne Goldsmith-Rybka (non-working day) and Dan Byrnes (annual leave.) The apologies were accepted.</p> <p>Liam Russell took the minutes of the meeting.</p>	
02/24	Declarations of Conflict of Interest	
	There were no declarations of interest arising for matters on the agenda.	
03/24	Confirmation of receipt of papers / references / reading	
	Liam Russell confirmed that five of the ten requested references had been received, all of which were satisfactory. Trustees with outstanding references had been informed and asked to provide alternative contact details for their referees, and asked to encourage their early response.	
	All five trustees have returned their conflict of interest forms and provided the checklist information. Two trustees have been reminded to confirm in writing that they have read the "Public Benefit: An Overview" document from the Charity Commission.	
04/24	Confidential Matter	

	<i>This matter was considered confidential and has been minuted separately. The minute and related correspondence will not be published.</i>	
05/24	Review and approval of Finance Policy and Expenses Policy	
	<p>The new Finance Policy and separate expenses policy had been made available prior to the meeting for review.</p> <p>The Finance Policy was discussed and approved during item 04/24.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the finance policy incorporates the previous delegated authority paper and supersedes it.</p> <p>Liam explained the contents of the Finance Policy and noted that this reflected current practice but was it being recorded in writing and various matters brought together.</p> <p>Jake confirmed that he was comfortable with the contents of the Finance Policy.</p> <p>Trustees approved the Finance Policy version 2, subject to a change for a 2 year review period.</p>	
	<i>The meeting then returned to the remainder of item 04/24, before then returning to this point to discuss the Expenses Policy.</i>	
	<p>Trustees discussed the Expenses Policy version 1. It was noted that this reflected current practice, and the section on staff expenses supersedes the same section in the staff handbook.</p> <p>Trustees unanimously approved the Expenses Policy version 1 dated February 2024.</p>	
	It was further agreed that these two policies and all other OutdoorLads polices will have a two-year review period.	
	It was noted that these policies will ultimately be put into a standard OutdoorLads template, yet to be developed, but it was the content which is being approved.	
06/24	Approval of mileage rate increase	
	The papers for the meeting included a paper on increasing the mileage rate paid to all volunteers from 14p per mile to 25p per mile for expenditure incurred from 1 March 2024.	
	Liam gave an overview of the paper's contents, including the fact that the new rate is aligned with the HMRC maximum rate for over 10,000 miles per year, as at that point, all "wear and tear" costs are deemed to have been recovered and it is the fuel / direct costs which are being recovered.	

	Trustees agreed with the sentiment that direct costs but not wear and tear should be recovered by volunteers.	
	A question was asked about how much was spent on travel last year, which was around £3000. It was commented that the mileage rate was a theme in the recent leaders' survey and it is good to show decisive action on increasing that rate in response.	
	Trustees approved the increase as proposed from 14p per mile to 25p per mile for volunteers for mileage incurred on or after 1 March 2024.	
07/24	Approval of 2024-25 budget and outline future budgets	
	Liam outlined the process that has been gone through to write the budget, which involved examining all costs for the year. It is based on what we know, plus certain assumptions.	
	It was acknowledged that it will be monitored and adjusted throughout the year as things change and develop.	
	Jake confirmed that he and Rob had examined it previously and were happy with the budget.	
	In response to a question, it was confirmed that it is based on similar event numbers and membership numbers as the current year.	
	It will be used to monitor the organisation's finances at board meetings throughout the year, and any significant variances will be explained.	
	It was confirmed that there is investment in the committees in the budget, which will be funded from existing reserves. There is a nominal £10k per committee however there may well be some overlap on spend with the organisational budget. It was confirmed that committee spending will be monitored by the office, who will do the actual purchasing. Any spending which is not felt by the office to be appropriate will be flagged to the board for approval or to decline. The board approved the 2024-25 budget as presented, with outline budgets for 2025-26 and 2026-27.	
08/24	Opening of new savings account with Vernon Building Society	
	Liam reminded trustees that a new savings account was required as the Virgin Money current account has more than the FCSA protected limit of £85k in it. The Vernon Building Society has been selected as it is a mutual and offered a charity savings account with a good rate of interest and easy access.	

	The proposed signatories are Liam Russell, Jake Higgins, Rob Mitchell, and Yvonne Goldsmith-Rybka.	
	Trustees unanimously agreed that a savings account with the Vernon Building Society be opened with the proposed signatories.	
09/24	Confirm changes to bank account mandates	
	Liam asked that as a matter of good governance, trustees note the signatory changes currently being made to the organisation's bank accounts. Trustees reviewed the following signatories list:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virgin Money – Current Account. Liam Russell, Rob Mitchell, Jake Higgins. Admin signatory – Yvonne Goldsmith-Rybka • Aldermore – Savings. Liam Russell, Yvonne Goldsmith-Rybka, Jake Higgins, • Nationwide – Savings. Liam Russell, Rob Mitchell, Jake Higgins • Monmouthshire Building Society – Savings. Liam Russell, Rob Mitchell, Jake Higgins • Vernon Building Society – Savings. Liam Russell, Rob Mitchell, Jake Higgins, Yvonne Goldsmith-Rybka • Barclaycard – Credit Card. Liam Russell, Dan Brynes, Yvonne Goldsmith-Rybka, Steven Allan are all cardholders. Main account owner – Liam Russell 	
	A question was asked about why Steven Allan has a Barclaycard. It was explained that this was mainly for use for bar purchases at BIG Spring Camp and for other external bar events. The credit limit for Steven is £2k. It is also used monthly to purchase our Xero subscription, which we get cheaper as a result of Steven having another Xero subscription elsewhere.	
	Trustees approved the above signatories list, which is also noted in the Finance Policy approved earlier in the meeting.	
10/24	Confirmation of dates	
	The following meeting dates were confirmed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday 8th April 2024, 7:30pm, online • Saturday 8th June 2024, face to face, Manchester – 1pm at Northern Wine School, Suite 4b, 113-115 Portland St, Manchester M1 6DW • Monday 12th August 2024, 7:30pm, online • AGM 2024 – Saturday 21st September, after AGM, face to face and online, Location TBA • Monday 11th November 2024, 7:30pm, online 	
	Trustees discussed the AGM location this year. It was felt that Manchester is suitable as it is easily accessible, and there is a strong membership base there who are very engaged.	LR

	Trustees suggested that staff could now look for a suitable venue for the AGM in Manchester.	LR
11/24	Any Other Business	
	<i>Organisational Responsibilities</i> Joe Bailey shared his diagram for Structure of the organisation, showing board delegating functions to the sub-committees and staff.	
	The diagram was prepared following feedback from some committee members that uncertainty remained, and concern over there being no strategy. We are going forwards with a “strategy” which is different to the previous one, but we call it a Plan, to reduce confusion.	
	Trustees agreed that all are on message with this document and suggested that we share this with regional co-ordinators at the meeting with them in April.	
	Dan Blackwell said that there are some concerns about the structure of the regions, and can this be added to the agenda for the regional co-ordinator session in April. RM confirmed this is a key theme for the weekend.	
	<i>Trustee recruitment</i> Trustees discussed further trustee recruitment - there is a role for paid events previously identified by the interim board and there has also been discussion over a role for a technical / IT trustee.	
	Trustees discussed the merits of the paid events position and the priorities in the organisation, much of which focussed on regional co-ordinators. Suggestion made that additional trustee roles be discussed more at the regional co-ordinations meeting.	RM
	An IT trustee may be a skill set area that could be useful.	
	Liam said that we need to look for someone to support rather than someone to do the IT - someone with experience of what we need but it is vital that any new systems remain owned by the office to ensure longevity and accessibility.	
	It was suggested that this role may not have to be a trustee but could be a sub-committee member. Liam made a suggestion about involving Richard Reid, who was instrumental in developing the brief when we were looking for a new website company. It was agreed that Liam is to discuss with Rich on the skills needed for that role and feedback to the board.	LR
	<i>Charity donations</i>	

	<p>Rob reported that he has received an e-mail from a member asking if we could make a donation to another charity in memory of one of our event leaders who sadly passed away.</p> <p>Trustees discussed and noted concerns about donating to other charities. It was agreed that we will post about it and encourage our members to support financially.</p> <p><i>Future agendas</i></p> <p>It was agreed that future agendas will have space for each trustee to give a brief update on work in their area of responsibility. – quick round table – include on future agendas</p> <p>Rob is to arrange one to ones with trustees in next few weeks, likely to take place in March.</p>	<p>RM LR RM</p>
	<p>The Meeting closed at 9:07pm.</p>	