

# MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING



**Meeting Title** OutdoorLads Board Meeting January 2019  
**Location:** Teleconference  
**Date and Time** Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at 8pm

## Attendees

Peter Walter (chair)  
Matt Tennant (vice-chair)  
Brett Monaghan (treasurer) Absent  
Steven Allen  
Neil Sharp  
Danny Mckeown  
Dan Barcroft  
Danny Ballatyne  
  
Liam Russell (staff)

## 19/1 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Jonathan Moore, who was abroad on holiday. Jon had nevertheless provided a written update on Web 3.0 for the meeting. Trustees agreed to this absence.

## 19/2 Approval of previous minutes

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018 were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Actions from the meeting are covered by the agenda for this meeting.

## 19/3 Office Board Report

Trustees had received copies of the board report for review in advance of the meeting, and were asked if they had any comments or questions to make.

Neil mentioned an issue that had arisen that day with a member trying to pay for the Norfolk hostel in March. Liam confirmed that the issue was known about and had been resolved.

Peter asked for future board reports to include a summary on leader applications in progress.

Trustees discussed the profit figures in relation to 2018's BIG events, which are very pleasing, and additional events profitability was raised. Trustees noted thanks to Tashi in securing the Boyz magazine article and a nomination into the Boyz awards.

Danny commented on the amount of green showing on the RAG rated bums in beds report, showing that events are selling well and that capacity is good.

## **19/4 Finance Update**

Peter thanked Brett for his hard work on financial monitoring and for preparing the report to trustees.

Brett talked re his updated projection of our financial situation, providing explanation where necessary. Currently there is £106k in the bank, of which £7k is ringfenced funds for the Foundation. There are three large invoices expected before the end of the financial year for the previously agreed web investment.

Brett explained that membership income is currently plateauing out at £5k per month. The membership fee has remained static at £55 since 2012. As an exercise, Brett informed Trustees that an online inflation calculator showed that £55 in 2012 was worth £65 in 2019.

Trustees discussed a potential increase in the membership fee, including an option to increase it for new members only.

Trustees agreed that this would be discussed in more detail at the next meeting, when further analysis had been undertaken and there was more information on which to make a decision. Brett agreed to undertake this further analysis.

**BM**

Trustees also discussed the idea of providing an option for members to pay more than the required membership fee, as a charitable donation, as anecdotally many members had mentioned that they would like to have this option. A further option of having a "donation" button on the website, and to perhaps include a donation link on event survey messages was further discussed.

Liam communicated the suggestion from Jon Moore to increase the concession membership fee from £10 to £11. This is to enable identification of these amounts accurately within the accounts, as currently it clashes with the PAYG day event fee. Trustees agreed this price increase to £11 per annum for concession members with effect from 1 February 2019.

Brett highlighted that income is increasing, by 1% for membership and 7% for events, but that costs were increasing significantly, including for website related expenditure.

Brett said that he was to ask Jonathan to document what work is completed by Microserve for the monthly spend on web maintenance, as it's important for all to be clear on what is being achieved for our money. Peter asked why it is that cost of sales has increased. Brett and Liam to look at this together.

**BM  
JM  
LR**

The projection shows the money in the bank is predicted to be down to £50k by the end of March 2020. Currently we are spending £500 more per

month than we make, and are still forecasting to lose money into the next financial year. With the increased event capacity, including the BIG New Year event, this will then start to climb again.

Neil asked if projections are based upon BSC being full. It was confirmed that it is. BSC has been full for a couple of years now and so far around 40% of places have been bought.

## **19/5 Additional Income Paper**

Liam presented the paper on increasing income through increasing hostels and camping events, and explained the methodology used to arrive at the figures set out in the paper, which would result in £10k more profit.

Neil raised the point about how this is communicated to regional coordinators and organisers. Dan Barcroft raised a point about regional communications, and Neil confirmed that this is on the agenda for discussion at the Regional Co-ordinators meeting in February.

Neil asked for clarification on the pricing for BIG Summer Camp. Liam confirmed that the standard price is £40, which is more realistic pricing for the event and still offers good value for members.

Matt commented that the increased capacity paper was challenging but is achievable, and also means that there will be events on the website that newer members will see and can book – often cited as a problem when people see events that are sold out months in advance. also means that members will have events that are bookable.

Neil said that there are lots of venues we use for a fixed event – for example, YHA Langdale for BIG North Christmas - and that they are different at different times of the year. A suggestion was made that we experiment with using a popular venue twice in a year, to help meet some of this demand.

Trustees discussed the process leaders go through to put events on, in terms of finding suitable venues. Liam and Matt are to discuss how this can be made easier for members to find good venues, especially a list of those we have used before and know are good.

**LR  
MT**

It was further suggested that we ask some locations where we are well known and liked to provide a “reference” for us, which can be used if we find resistance from a venue in allowing us to book. Liam said that this has not been a particular problem we have experienced, but agreed it was a sensible suggestions and will progress this with known venues.

**LR**

## **19/6 Foundation**

Dan Barcroft spoke re his previously circulated presentation and report on the Foundation, and noted thanks to Tashi who had supported with this. Dan stated that the intention was to re-group around the Foundation and to be absolutely clear about what we are trying to do, and to do it a lot more.

There is also a need to consider longer term sustainability of the Foundation.

A new logo has been devised to assist in highlighting the Foundation to members and when contacting external organisations as well.

Dan highlighted the key points on the PowerPoint slides, and would like to discuss and agree these principles, which will help ensure we are helping more people, and where there is a genuine need. It is also important that members become aware that the Foundation can help with travel to day walks, climbing, etc, and not just weekend hostel and camping events. Trustees agreed that the proposals were fair, and in particular the limit of £200 per person per year was agreed as a way of ensuring access and ensuring there are funds to help a larger number of people. Trustees discussed possible exceptions to this, and it was agreed that in exceptional circumstances, special dispensation to exceed the £200 per person limit could be agreed. Examples of this could be where additional spend would enable someone to become a leader themselves. There would always need to be a solid reason for exceeding this annual per person limit.

Danny Ballantyne asked if we could have another drop-down menu on the website for the Foundation? Liam confirmed that this isn't currently possible, but all were agreed that the Foundation needs higher visibility on the website, and these pages will be moved to a more prominent position. Brett raised a question about longer term sustainability of these funds.

More events like the K2B event are needed. Suggestions such as a raffle at BIG Spring Camp were put forward.

Dan Barcroft raised a point of discussion on the very popular events which sell out quickly, and so preventing Foundation applications. An idea put forward was to reserve a limited number of places on some events for Foundation applications, for a limited period of time – two weeks was suggested. All agreed that this was a good idea and agreed to implement this change. The success of this approach will be monitored closely.

To help raise awareness of the Foundation, we'll start to talk more about it on social media, including using testimonials. Liam to discuss with Tashi and to ask her to include in her social media plan.

LR  
TA

Brett confirmed that all had agreed the £200 limit per annum per person Foundation spend. All confirmed their agreement.

## **19/7 Governance**

Matt gave a verbal update on the constitution review. Several trustees and members have got together to look at the document. At the next meeting, a paper is to be presented setting out the core areas that we think we should move forwards with. The ultimate idea is to present the changes for agreement at the 2019 AGM.

Matt went through the key points identified so far:

- 1) We should mention that all members have to pay £1 towards costs incurred should the charity wind up.

- 2) The current constitution says that the organisation is for UK-based members only – but this could be widened.
- 3) Rules around AGM quoracy and the use of technology (eg members attending the AGM remotely using technology) to be clarified.
- 4) Directors and trustees. Currently there is no provision for lay trustees, which could be relaxed. Tenure limits for Trustees could also be considered, and will be discussed at the next meeting.
- 5) Members code of conduct to be discussed, including provision for membership termination.

All the proposals are relatively minor changes rather than substantive. A clear direction for the changes will be presented to the next meeting in a proposal document. Matt to progress this. **MT**

## **19/8 AGM**

Liam has not heard back from his enquiries with Virgin Holidays about use of their space in central London. Liam to chase for a response. **LR**

Neil put forward a proposal for following AGM's to follow a new format as a BIG Event in a hostel, so that it is more a celebration of what OutdoorLads is. This was especially in relation to the AGM in 2021 for our 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The idea was received warmly and will be considered later as a proposal. Mount Cook in Matlock was suggested as a venue.

Danny McKeown asked if someone else can take up the search for a venue for the AGM this September 2019 due to other pressures. Peter agreed to do some research on this. Danny is to send information on venues investigated so far to Peter. Liam will ask Yvonne to help with this search also. **PW  
LR  
YgR**

## **19/9 Any Other Business**

Danny Ballantyne gave an update on the youth project he has been progressing. Danny has had a conversation with the Foundation, and it has been suggested that we apply for £3k in the first year, and can ask for £5k - £6k in later years if that is successful. This is to assist those aged under 25. Having spoken to younger members, event costs are part of their issue with fully engaging with the group. Danny Ballantyne will document the proposals and then form a subgroup to flesh the application out. **DB**

Neil provided an update on the Bristol leaders meeting attended by Neil and Liam, which was very well attended and productive.

Trustees discussed the need to broaden our reach amongst younger people. Ideas included liaising with graduate schemes for companies, and circulating information amongst employers, including video content. Neil informed Trustees that John Proctor is stepping down as climbing co-ordinator. Neil proposed, and trustees agreed, that role is not required and so would not be recruited to. However, there is an inventory of climbing gear that needs maintaining and Liam will ask Yvonne to take this task on. **LR  
YgR**

Neil also informed Trustees that the Leader data project with co-ordinators has just started in last couple of weeks, and will give us a clearer picture of the active leaders we have. **NS**

Neil will include a piece in the March leader's newsletter to celebrate the first birthday of Web 3.0 – this has been a big achievement and is worth celebrating.

Peter is to contact the member who expressed interest in supporting the group with work with trans members. **PW**

**The meeting closed at 9.15pm**