

COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CAVING CLUBS

British Caving Association

Agenda for Committee Meeting 28th June 2014, Hellifield Village Institute, 9:30am

- (1) Apologies for absence
- (2) Acceptance of minutes from the January Committee meeting (on website, please review)
- (3) Matters arising from the January Committee meeting
 - a. Cave digging guidance for SSSI: Working group report on progress
 - b. Funding for finger bone dating: Update
 - c. Any other matters arising
- (4) Acceptance of minutes from the 31st May Committee meeting (on website, please review) and any matters arising.
- (5) Matters arising from the Annual General Meeting
 - a. Treasurer to update on response to financial questions posed at AGM
 - b. Request for CNCC funding (£1500) towards the Northern Sump Index. CNCC Treasurer to provide an update on this and, if necessary, a vote to be made by the Committee as to whether this funding should be granted. A summary of the CNCCs financial status was included with the AGM officers reports, on the CNCC website, which can be reviewed to help a decision to be reached on this matter.
 - c. Secretary to update the Committee on work to contact all full member clubs to seek permission to publish their club names. As a result of this work, the list of all active full member clubs is now available on the CNCC website.
- (6) Officers Reports
 - a. Chairman's report
 - b. Secretary's report
 - c. Treasurer's report
 - d. Conservation Officer's report
 - e. Training Officer's report
 - f. Access Officer's report
 - g. Technical Group report

(7) Meets Secretary's reports

- a. Leck Fell
- b. Casterton Fell
- c. Birks Fell/Stump Cross/Fairy Holes
- d. Penyghent and Fountains Fell
- e. Other areas (Excalibur, Bowland, Barbondale)

(8) Application received from Geoff Whittaker for full membership for Th'oud Skool Caving Club. The club have a website which confirms they are based in Lancashire and cave in the North of Britain. They have supplied the CNCC Secretary with a constitution. The club is registered with the BCA. A vote of the Committee shall be made to accept this application.

(9) Presentation by Webmaster of proposal, and to seek Committee approval for further website development to:

- a. Create an interactive back-end to which all full member clubs can log in
- b. Proposed future use of this area to facilitate interaction between the CNCC and all full member clubs. This could also form the precursor to a future electronic system to viewing permit availability or obtaining permits.

(10) Appointment of co-opted officers. See **Appendix A** for job descriptions for these.

- a. Minutes Secretary – Position currently vacant
- b. Assistant Conservation Officer – New position requested by Conservation Officer

The Conservation Officer has suggested that since Kay Easton (Bradford Pothole Club and Northern Boggarts Caving Club) is already carrying out part of this work, she would be a good candidate for the role. No offers received for the position of Minutes Secretary yet from anyone able to attend Saturday meetings, and if anyone can do this, please let the Secretary know. The roles of Webmaster and Meets Secretary will automatically stay with their current delegates unless word is received that these individuals wish to step down or another individual wishes to be considered to take on these roles, or the Committee specifically wishes to appoint an alternative individual.

(11) Discussion of constitutional review – Matt Ewles – See **Appendix B**

(12) Any update/actions required by CNCC on the 2016 International Caving Symposium?

(13) Date and time of next meeting.

(14) Any other business?

Appendix A – Co-opted officer job descriptions

Assistant Conservation Officer

The role is to assist the Conservation Officer (CO), including some or all of the following tasks:

(1) Raising awareness of conservation by publicising conservation work carried out by the CNCC Volunteer team

(2) Assistance with managing the CNCC team of volunteers:

- Maintain a contact list of volunteers
- At request of CO, select dates, raise a voluntary working party and issue joining instructions
- Coordinate claim of allowable travel and other expenses, and distribute to volunteers
- Liaise with CNCC Training Officer to provide necessary training
- Develop and maintain catalogue of Risk Assessments for specific conservation tasks

(3) Northern Caves Monitoring Project

- Administer Project Database
- Attend meetings of SSSI Cave Area Convenors with Natural England.

Minutes Secretary

The core duties of the Minutes Secretary are set out below. Where the Minutes Secretary is unable to fulfil any of these duties (for example, due to not being able to make a meeting) they should take appropriate steps to ensure a stand-in is appointed.

- Attend committee and general meetings, take minutes and a list of attendees, identifying the voting individuals for each club
- Write up minutes (including attendance details) and circulate for proofreading to all officers present at the meeting.
- Issue the finished minutes by the current preferred means (e.g. post on the CNCC website and/or send an email)

Appendix B – Proposal from Matt Ewles to review CNCC constitution

I would like to commence a process of reviewing the CNCC constitution. I believe there are many areas of the constitution which could now benefit from greater definition, for example:

- (1) How much notice should clubs receive of matters on which they vote?
- (2) How is voting conducted if more than 14 clubs wish to be on the Committee?
- (3) Who is the Committee; is it the 14 voting club reps, or is it 14 club reps plus co-opted non-voting members (current constitution has the potential to be interpreted both ways)?
- (4) When is a letter of authentication needed for voting at a meeting?
- (5) What is the procedure for applying for full membership?

The aim of this project is not to introduce any sweeping or controversial changes, but simply to help clarify the way we currently work. More controversial questions such as involvement of DIMs, how the CNCC is structured and who we represent, can be discussed at a later date, as these require a much more extensive amount of consultation.

Proposed actions

Ahead of this meeting, the CNCC officers will work together to review the constitution and highlight any areas they feel could benefit from review.

At the meeting the Committee should decide whether they are happy to pursue this project, and if so I will put together a working group to be involved. I suggest this group meet immediately after the Committee meeting (in the pub in Hellifield) to work through this and aim to deliver a first draft document at the following Committee meeting.

If you would like to be involved (and can be available after the meeting) please let me know.

Although the majority of anticipated changes are minor, and simply clarify or add 'meat to the bones' of existing constitutional wording or current processes, there are a few more significant changes which I would like to see considered. These are listed below. I would like to discuss each of these at the meeting on June 28th, and to see if the Committee support these proposals.

Therefore please consider your clubs thoughts on the following:

- (1) Upgrading of the Access Officer role from co-opted to full elected officer
- (2) Removal of any constitutionally defined geographic boundary to where a club is based for full CNCC membership. The current wording may deter clubs who are active in the north, but who are not based in the geographic boundary (we saw this at the AGM). Instead, I propose that each application should be reviewed by the Committee on a case-by-case basis, with regular **caving** in the North of England being the main prerequisite.

- (3) A number of people have suggested greater representation for university clubs on the CNCC Committee (perhaps via CHECC). This was raised at the AGM. I would like to debate if this is something we would like to pursue and if so, how this could be best achieved.
- (4) The current constitution was designed around a system in which the majority of officers are also Committee club representatives. This is not how the CNCC is currently operating. While this is not in itself unconstitutional, it does mean that constitutional changes are needed to make the document more practical (for example, the statement "A quorum at a committee meeting shall consist of six committee members, at least one of whom shall be an Officer of the Council" is no longer practical and must be changed). Are we happy to make changes to reflect the current situation? Or is there a feeling that in the longer term we should look at changing the system (by redefining the Committee, and who can and cannot vote)?
- (5) Should we make it a requirement for clubs standing for Committee, or individuals standing for full officer posts to make their intentions to do so known six weeks ahead of the meeting at which this is to be voted on (typically the AGM), to allow details to be circulated to full members with one month notice? Later applications would then only be accepted if insufficient applications are made in advance to fill the required positions.
- (6) The membership system currently has Honorary, Associate and Full membership categories. From my understanding, the reason for having different categories dates back to when CNCC membership was a requirement to get permits. Now that the requirement to get permits is BCA club membership (rather than CNCC), and only full members can actually vote at CNCC general meetings, do we still need to retain Honorary and Associate membership? Can we drop these to create greater simplicity, and perhaps rename 'Full Membership' as just 'Membership' ... with this being the only category?