

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE HELD ON

Wednesday 11th January 2006

7.30 PM

GC Members Present: Ken Smith, Norman Mitchell, Bill Beattie, Kevin Webb, Diana Webb, Andrew Murray, Jack Morrison, Iona Anthony and Tony Carter

Other ScotSAC Members: Representatives of West End Divers.
Robert Hunter, Martin Howe, Tom Lynass, James Hughes and Allan Reader.

Apologies: Frank Connor.

Election Nomination Forms:

Ken Smith introduced members of West End Divers to the General Committee. He presented them with the election nomination forms that had been sent in from members of their branch. There were serious irregularities in the way they had been filled in.

All nomination forms require an original signature by the nominated member, in addition to signatures of the proposer and seconder. The signatures on these forms do not match those on SSAC records and as such are invalid. This constitutes a breach of our constitution. We as the general committee are duty bound do something about this.

Some members of West End Divers vehemently objected to Ken's remarks and the discussion had to be abandoned because of this. Ken thanked them for attending.

After they had left all the members of the committee had a full and frank discussion of the issue. It was agreed on Bill Beattie's suggestion that in an effort to conclude the issue a letter is sent to the members of West End Divers involved with a request for a formal apology.

December 2005 GC minutes

Proposed: Jack Morrison.

Seconded: Kevin Webb.

Correspondence:

Bill Beattie reported that the correspondence he had received for the period consisted of e-mail from:

- The SAA Scottish Sports association about personnel changes.
- SNH Scottish Natural Heritage about Scottish Marine National Parks (passed to Jack Morrison for Magazine article)
- The Big Lottery Fund update.

It was agreed that the lottery "Awards for All" scheme could provide suitable funding for a new "try-a dive" pool for ScotSAC.

Ken Smith presented some additional correspondence consisting of:

- Members request for membership information (passed to Bill Beattie)
- Scottish Renewables Marine Energy Stakeholder Briefing.
- Letter of thanks from Kelsac for election nominee's "personal profiles".
- "Seasearch" – offer of courses.
- Environmental crime document from Friends of the Earth (Scotland).
- An annual report from the SAA (Scottish Sports Association)

There was also a General Branch membership issue that had not been answered to the member's satisfaction. It was suggested that they come to the next GC meeting to discuss the matter.

Treasurers Report:

Diana Webb reported that:

- Final accounts for 2005 have been sent to the accountants.
- Block membership insurance policy paid - £16,600 no increase on last year.
- We made a small financial surplus for the year.

It was also mentioned that Office bearers/Directors liability insurance would be paid later this month. If we incorporate later in the year we would receive a pro-rata rebate for this as the corporate policy is in fact cheaper.

National Diving Officers Report:

Kevin Webb reported that the review of the open water training schedule sent to Branch Diving officers was in the wrong format. The corrected version will be duly sent out for discussion and approval at the Oban conference.

In the morning session of the conference we will have a presentation by the MCA (Marine and Coastguard Agency) and a "Try a Dive" procedure proposal by George Burns. The afternoon session will be dedicated to a Q & A session with the DO's.

Kevin added that 10 rooms had been booked in advance at £35 / head. These are offered to GC, NDC members, Regional Coaches and Examiners. He asked for 2K to be allocated against conference costs.

Approved by the committee

Diana reported that 3K had been allocated in the grant provision for this type of event.

Ken Smith added that this concept of free accommodation was not new and was based on Gus Furrie's principle that honorariums should be replaced with this type of reward.

Policies:

Norman Mitchell reported that he was working on a draft version of our Anti-Smoking policy. Various signs will be displayed to this effect. Alicia will be the point of contact for this and will have overall responsibility for its implementation in March this year.

Approved by the committee

Iona Anthony:

Nothing to report, other than, she recently formed her own personal sub-committee with Andy Murray and are now happily engaged to be married later in the year.

Unanimously approved by the committee

Andy Murray:

There had been a website “have your say” question relating to data protection. It would seem that there is no requirement for ScotSAC to have a formal policy

The committee then generally discussed the issue. It was thought that a guideline document on Data Protection was probably enough.

It was confirmed that the membership database was password protected.

Andy said he would also check with “Sportscotlands” data protection consultant.

He also asked Diana for a copy of the 2006 grant application.

Tony Carter:

Tony reported that over the past 4 years the CDA (combined diving agencies) have been taking a synergistic approach to dive training and safety. The CDA “diver coxswain award” which involved our consultation has actually been approved by the MCA (Maritime and Coastguard Agency)

Some commercial operators in England have been offering this course with the approval/commission of BSAC (British Sub Aqua Club).

Tony added that, notwithstanding our technical issues with the course, as it stood ScotSAC might be able to do the same and franchise them in Scotland. There are already 6 facilities that operate RYA type boat handling schemes. However, any decision should be deferred till we decide about incorporation.

ScotSAC Limited:

Jack Morrison presented the committee with daft copies of the bylaws for discussion. Copies of these and the “Memorandum of Articles” will be posted out to all. He added that the meeting on the 1st of February was to be in open forum and for consultation with our members.

Ken Smith stated that the time scale to do this was far too tight for the members to review the documents. The move towards incorporation was far too important to rush.

Tony Carter thought the committee should review the document first.

After general discussion it was agreed that the committee members would review the document and suggest suitable changes. We should then have a review meeting at HQ with the "Sportscotland" appointed solicitor Alan Grosset in about 2 weeks time. Copies then should be sent out to the membership with the "open forum" meeting 3 weeks later.

Jack Morrison agreed to put the meeting back. He would arrange with Alicia to notify members of the change.

Jack was also asked for an electronic copy of the by-laws.

Ken Smith mentioned that we should set aside up to 5K against the printing/postage costs of M&A's and the bylaws.

A. O. C. B.

ScotSAC to pass on its condolences on the death of Penny Glover that was recently reported through "Divernet"

Membership fees:

After discussion, it was agreed that membership subscriptions should be increased by 5% across the board. The joining fee would remain the same.

Meeting Closed at 10.30pm

Proposed Calendar of 2005 General Committee Meetings:

Start time 7.30pm

Weds 15th February

" 15th March

" 12th April

" 17th May

" 14th June

" 12th July

" 16th August

" 13th September

" 11th October

" 15th November

" 13th December