



Council of Southern Caving Clubs

A constituent member of the British Caving Association

www.csccl.org.uk

Minutes of General Meeting - Wednesday 15 July 2020 19:00 pm

Online Zoom meeting

Draft 21 July 2020

Please note,

Zoom meeting recording crashed towards the end of the meeting, end of section 10. The minutes have been produced from typed notes produced during the meeting, however the detail of who said what has been lost. Beyond section 10 the minutes were recorded by Alan Butcher although there may be a gap.

1 Attendance

Voting Attendees

Alan Butcher	SMCC	AB	Chairman
Alan Dempster	Avon Scouts		
Alan Grey	ACG	AG	
Barry Wilkinson	White Rabbit CC	BW	
Dan Mathews	MCG		
Dave Cooke	Cheddar CC		Treasurer / Webmaster
Dave King	MNRC		
Estelle Sandford	BEC		
Frank Tully	WCC	FT	Secretary
Geoff Dromitt	Buckfastleigh Caving Group		
Graham Price	Cerberus SS	GP	Assistant C&A Officer
Idris Williams	Shropshire Scouts CT	IW	
Judi Durber	Education in the Environment CC		
Linda Wilson	UBSS		
Paul Wilman	West Sussex Cave Club		
Tim Ball	Shepton CC	TB	

Non Voting

Andy Heratchki
Aubrey Newport
Bill Chadwick
Carmen Smith
Chris Binding
Ed Waters
Graham Price
Hayley Waters
Laurence Wilson
Malc Foyle
Pete Hall
Rostam Namaghi
Sam Richards
Stuart Lindsay
Tom Chapman
Tom Harrison
Graham Mullan

2 Apologies for Absence

Les Williams	WCC	LW	C&A Officer
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3 Approval of minutes from GM 15th Feb 2020

Minutes approved. With corrections to attendees list.

The minutes of the meeting were delayed by a number of months because the recording was inaccessible due to Covid19 lockdown.

Minutes of meeting were produced from audio recording.

Some attendees at the approving meeting were concerned that they only had 24 hours to check the minutes.

Barry Wilkinson questioned the accuracy of the minutes but accepted the explanation that these were in accordance with the recording.

FT to send Sam Richards, Barry Wilkinson and Haley Waters the recording of the meeting for checking.

4 Chairman's report

Alan Butcher

Things have been difficult over the last few months.

There is a BCA meeting this coming weekend. However as the BCA website is playing up and communication is being done by email, this is somewhat unsatisfactory. As a result of this a lot of information is only being disclosed to the participants at the last minute, limiting our time to read and digest what is happening.

4.1 CRoW Legal Challenge

One of the issues is the legal challenge against the Welsh government. 10K was allocated however this has now been revised upwards to a potential maximum of 55k, however we all know lawyers and this is likely to rise even higher.

Letter to BCA mailing list, Wed, 15 Jul 2020 from Howard Jones, BCA Treasurer.

Affordability of David's proposal regarding a Crow Legal challenge

The numbers below are round numbers and are prudent

Today (27/5/2020) BCA has a cash balance of £290,000.

It has a burn rate of £6,000 a month on salaries, insurance premium and small incidentals.

Assuming no more income for the rest of 2020 we therefore need £42,000 to pay for our fixed costs.

On top of that another £30,000 is expected on regional expense claims and other budgeted costs including £9,000 to BCRA for library expenses.

Hence we would close out 2020 with cash in the bank of just over £200,000 before the 2021 subscription income starts coming in.

The quoted legal costs are £35,000 plus vat (£42k) and if we lose we could pick up other costs of £5,000. Allowing for a small over run in legal costs the total could be £55k of which £12k has been spent to date, so another £45k is being asked for by David and his team.

As can be seen above this is affordable, what Council needs to decide is whether it wants to spend this money on this project.

Of course if we win the cost will be lower and there are lower costs options even if we lose, having said that lawyers are notorious for over spend as we have seen already in this case. My suggestion therefore is Council is asked by David and his team to approve a maximum cost of £60k (including £12k already approved) and that gives him a working authority without hopefully having to come back to Council again.

Howard Jones BCA Treasurer 27/5/2020



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CSCC accept that the message may have been delayed because there have been two changes of BCA secretary in the last few months.

People at the meeting are reticent about the amount of money and the lateness of the notifications.

Linda Wilson, Asked; Has the legal counsel indicated that any adjudication in the Welsh courts also applies to England?

Rostam Namaghi; The legal counsel has already indicated that it applies to England and Wales

Dave Cooke, operating costs for running BCA is approximately £110K per year.

Dave Cooke Stated; The case is to allow Stuart France to attend the Welsh Government's Access Reform Advisory Group meetings, but the horse riders who have no CRoW rights, apparently attend, so even if Stuart France is allowed to attend it might not settle the point of whether CRoW applies to caving and we do not want this legal case to complete giving us nothing useful.

Rosram Namaghi; I cannot answer this.

Linda Wilson; If there are doubts that this legal result is not going to settle the problem, then I recommend we do not go ahead. This could be a waste of a lot of money. Without knowing exactly what decision is being challenged it is impossible to tell whether it will have the desired effect or not.

Rosdam Namagi; This is on the agenda for the next BCA council meeting so I expect the legal team will want a decision to move forward

Alan Butcher, We need council to clarify this before a vote on continuing.

Our representative at the meeting will have to ask clarification of this issue at the next council meeting.

4.2 Proposals for the BAC AGM

The proposals were submitted from Alan Butcher and Dave Cooke personally, it appears the BCA secretary made a mistake and attributed them to the CSCC

Rostam Namaghi; If Matt Ewles mis-attributed them to CSCC why did you not contact Matt and get them changed sooner. You asked Russell [Myers] to correct the proposals in an email on the 10th June. Why was not earlier?

Alan Butcher; Had we had our AGM in May this would have been sorted out at that meeting.

Alan Butcher; If people would like to put a motion of no confidence I am happy to stand down with immediate effect.

Linda Wilson; If it was clear on the emails that these were personal proposals then it was a mistake of the BCA secretary and not Alan Butcher.

Estelle Sandford; Alan Butcher forwarded the email to Babs BEC and it was clear that the proposals were from Alan Butcher personally.

Alan Butcher; I am happy to withdraw the proposals if CSCC feel that they should be retracted.



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4.3 Letter from the Cheddar CC to the Secretary of CSCC

Hi Frank,

The Cheddar had a very long meeting about all of this.

As the ChCC Rep I'm passing on the 2 questions and 2 proposals that the Club would like to put before the CSCC meeting.

There is a concern that due process wasn't followed.

They are:

1. Who was at the February CSCC meeting?
2. Please can the Chair clarify if the proposals as they appeared on the British Caving Association (BCA) AGM Agenda when first submitted where sent and meant to be in the name of the CSCC or Alan Butcher in an individual capacity? If they were submitted in the individual name, Alan Butcher, when the BCA AGM Agenda was published at the beginning of April, why didn't the CSCC Chair immediately email the BCA secretary to have the BCA AGM Agenda corrected?
3. Does the CSCC (i.e. all the member clubs) believe that due democratic process was followed when the attendees of the February CSCC meeting instructed the chair to write the proposals and then to circulate them only to the members present at the February meeting.
4. In the absence of the minutes from the CSCC February meeting the Cheddar Caving Club (ChCC) propose that Alan Butcher is suspended from his position as Chairman of the CSCC and CSCC representative to the BCA until the CSCC Annual General Meeting due to incomplete facts around the submission of proposals to the BCA

Cookie

ChCC Rep to CSCC

Email Tue, 14 Jul 2020 at 12:38

Answers to the questions given at the meeting:

- 1 The minutes of the meeting were circulated at 18:00 14 July 2020, the meeting attendees was clarified at the start of this meeting
- 2 Alan Butcher; A mistake.
- 3 Frank Tully; That was not what was agreed on the meeting recording.
- 4 A discussion took place as to suspension of a vote of no confidence, the CSCC constitution does not reference either. So the meeting decides.



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4.4 Vote of no confidence in the Chairman Alan Butcher

Judi Durbar; This whole debacle has brought the CSCC into disrepute, Chris Binding agrees.

Dan Mathews MCG; Would like to propose a vote of no confidence in the chairman.

Dave Cooke Cheddar CC; Would like to second this. As the Cheddar letter has mandated.

Linda Wilson; I would like to speak strongly against this meeting voting the chairman out of his position. The clubs who have an issue with Alan Butcher have filled the meeting with observers and I think this is unfair on clubs who had no prior notice of these concerns and so have been unable to consult internally. Removal of the chairman would leave the CSCC with no effective representation at BCA. I would urge the clubs to vote against this proposal.

Alan Butcher	SMCC	Cannot Vote
Alan Dempster	Avon Scouts	Against
Alan Grey	ACG	Abstention
Barry Wilkinson	White Rabbit CC	For
Dan Mathews	MCG	For
Dave Cooke	Cheddar CC	For
Dave King	MNRC	Abstention
Estelle	BEC	Against
Frank Tully	WCC	Abstention
Geoff Dromitt	Buckfastleigh Caving Group	Against
Graham Price	Cerberus SS	Against
Idris Williams	Shropshire Scouts	Against
Judi Durbar	Education in the Environment	For
Linda Wilson	UBSS	Against
Paul Wilman	West Sussex Caving Club	Left meeting before Vote
Tim Ball	Shepton CC	Against

Results for the vote of 'No Confidence in the chairman of CSCC'.

For	4
Against	7
Abstentions	3

Vote of 'No Confidence in the chairman of CSCC', Failed.

5 Secretary's report

Frank Tully

Nothing to report not raised elsewhere

6 Conservation & access officer's report

Graham Price; Not a lot has happened because of Covid19, hopefully things will be slowly be returning to normal in the coming months. Where I have been notified about caves being closed I have updated the website, so check there first.

Dave King

Elm hole is still to be gated

Hobnail has had the dangerous boulder made safe and all being well will be opened soon.

Dave Cooke has modified database to allow GP to add caves.



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7 Honorary treasurer's report

The treasurers report including the draft accounts were circulated a few hours before the meeting. Could everyone put in their expenses, it is distorting the accounts. Could someone chase up Dave Speed for the Viaduct gate.

Treasurer's Report,

There are membership applications from Devon Spelaeological Society, Imperial College Caving Club, University of Leeds Speleological Association. These clubs are all BCA members.

A draft set of account for 2019 is attached.

All the BCA Claims are paid up to date.

Virtually no expenditure in the accounts would suggest no work is being done. This is not the case. It is due to Officers failing to claim their expenses.

The current list of agreed expenditure is shown below. Some of this work is complete but yet to be claimed.

	Meeting	Remaining Budget
Swildon's Entrance Causeway	Feb-13	150
Windsor Hill Flood Sink 1 - Gate - Dave Speed	Aug-14	300
Nettle Pot. New gate.	May-17	600
Concrete entrance tubes. 2nd hand. - Transport	May-17	100
Loxtern Cavern. Further stabilisation works.	Sep-17	500
Masburt Swallet. New gate	Sep-17	600
Ubley Warren - New Gate	Sep-17	600
Stock Lane - Land Search	Feb-18	100
Wookey Hole - Access works - CDG	May-18	128
Maesbury Swallet - Entrance Surface Works	May-18	200
Pigtail Risers	Sep-18	200
Ubley Warren - Boulder Stabalisation - Increased from £150 (Nov-17) to £400.		
	Feb-19	400
Extra 20 CSCC Locks	May-19	300
Hunters Lodge Inn Sink - Fixed Ladder	Sep-19	50
Stal Pressure Washers	Nov-19	500
Candidates for agreed expenditure. Viaduct Sink Gate, BCA AGM.		

David Cooke, July 2020, Circulated by email Wed 15/07/2020 16:55



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7.1 Vote to accept the above clubs into CSCC

Devon Spelaeological Society,
Imperial College Caving Club,
University of Leeds Speleological Association,
Accepted unanimously.

7.2 Draft Accounts attached to end of minutes.

8 Acting Training officer's report

Alan Butcher

No new news

9 Equipment officer's report

Andrew Atkinson

FT to approach Andrew Atkinson regarding supply of new bolts.

10 BCA rep report

Alan Butcher; I don't believe that it is possible for CSCC to host a party on the BCA AGM weekend. Most caving huts will be still restricting visitors, pubs will likely to be still restricted in the services they can offer, it is unlikely that a disco will be allowed.

Meeting is generally happy to cancel the party and events associated with the BCA AGM

Rostam Namaghi; It is still not decided that the BCA AGM will take place in October it could still be pushed back further into the future.

Alan Butcher; Perhaps it would be useful for BCA to get everything running again and back up to date before having the AGM.

10.1 BCA Committee meeting - 25 July 2020 - Online Webex Meeting

Alan Butcher, Is anyone willing to attend as the CSCC representative in lieu of Alan Butcher attending, no volunteers came forward.

Linda Wilson, it is important that our representative understands all the issues, there is a lot going on at the present time.

Alan Butcher to attend Webex meeting.

Alan Butcher read out a list of items from the BCA committee Agenda. The agenda has been circulated but has not been published on the website yet, because the website is not functioning well at the moment.

Court case with the Welsh government addressed earlier.



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Removal of the one stop shop for IT services

Dave Cooke; The BCA provides hosting for caving club websites, BCRA BCA and other caving web sites. Due to me being forced out, BCA no longer has the skills to host these services and is therefore planning to outsource them. It doesn't have much of a choice.

The meeting is unhappy that the one stop shop for caving clubs appears to be being eroded.

Estelle Sandford, we need to see what BCA feel they are going to do at the meeting next weekend.

BCA AGM Proposals

Alan Butcher, Proposals to BCA AGM will be affected by decisions made at the BCA Council meeting on the 18 July.

I propose that we have another CSCC meeting on Wednesday 29 July after the BCA committee meeting but before the deadline for submission of proposals to BCA AGM, which I believe is the 31st July.

I will endeavour to distribute a quick report on the BCA committee meeting before the CSCC meeting.

Judi Durber; This doesn't leave much time for us to read the report let alone canvas opinion of our club members. Alan Butcher said he would attempt to circulate a report the day after the BCA meeting.

11 Webmasters report

Dave Cooke

During the coronavirus outbreak I have been posting the notices from MCR, BCRC, BCA and posting local access details to the website to keep members informed of the current and rapidly changing situation.

The software that provides the CSCC Access Guide (<https://access-guide.csccl.org.uk>) has been completely re-written. The new user interface is designed to make it easier to search the information. A new and hopefully useful feature is that the most recent updates can be found by sorting the "Last Modified" column by clicking on the heading. Both C&A Officers have a login so that they can update it at will. Any feedback is welcome.

For obvious reasons I will not put myself forward again as Web Services Manager at the BCA AGM. So after the AGM the BCA is unlikely to have the capacity to run Web Services. The CSCC website is currently hosted on BCA's server and will therefore need to be re-homed. I'm happy to host the website on my own virtual server (VPS) for free. The other option is to be hosted on a BCA funded shared server. The VPS is the technically better solution and my preference.

Given that CSCC now has a Facebook presence I thought it might be time to close the CSCC announce mailing list. I asked the users. They very much wanted to keep the mailing list so it'll be retained. CSCC Officers should feel free to use both Facebook and the mailing list for announcements, etc.

July 2020

David Cooke

12 Regional registry officer's report

Alan Gray

Nothing to report



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13 Forthcoming events

Sunday 11 November BCA AGM

Dates of future CSCC meetings,

Alan Butcher; Issues which may affect proposals to the BCA AGM will be addressed at the next BCA council meeting, Sat 18 July 2020. I suggest we have another CSCC meeting to discuss BCA AGM proposals, before the deadline for BCA AGM submissions.

Proposed date is Wednesday 29 July 2020. This will allow CSCC members to consult their committees, if not their members.

Alan Butcher We need an AGM soon. I suggest Saturday 26 September 2020.

Because the AGM is mandated to be in May by the constitution this would be an EGM.

14 Dates of meetings 2019-20

Saturday	23 rd November 2019 (GM)	10:30 Hunters
Saturday	15 th February 2020 (GM)	10:30 Hunters
Wednesday	15 th July 2020 (GM)	19:00 Online Zoom Meeting
Wednesday	29 th July 2020 (GM)	19:00 Online Zoom Meeting
Saturday	26 th September 2020 (EGM in lieu of AGM)	Online Zoom Meeting

15 Any other business

Aubrey Newport; With the newly increased turnout to CSCC meetings, can we bring the constitutional changes, which have failed numerous times previously, because previous AGM's and EGMs were not quorate.

Alan Butcher; Yes, Frank Tully to look at when generating the Agenda.

Dan Mathews; Concerning Covid19, my club was looking to CSCC for advice. The advice was just not there.

Alan Butcher, There was a great deal of discussion at the BCA regarding Covid19 advice, however just like the government we dithered.

Dan Mathews; CNCC offered a wealth of advice.

Dave Cooke; MCR advised everyone not to go caving, CSCC could not really offer advice contrary to this. Once caving started opening up again I started posting this on the website.

Chris Binding stated that as he felt this meeting had worked well that all future meetings should be held this way.

Alan Butcher state that the attendance of this meeting was very Good

Other attendees had reservations about this and felt this was still a place for face to face meetings. The technology had not worked well for everyone involved. A mixed real and web meeting might require someone asking Rodger for the Hunters WiFi password!

Meeting duration 2h30m



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CSCC Accounts Summary 2019

DRAFT

Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31st December 2019

		2019	2018
		£	£
Income			
Subs		15.00	15.00
Donations	note 2	70.00	63.25
Net interest		1.03	0.44
BCA funding	note 3	3,648.44	1,793.92
Total income		3,734.47	1,872.61
Expenditure			
	note 1	Core	
Officer travel expenses		70.00	87.25
C&A Pigtales	-	-	180.00
Loxton Entrance Stabilisation	-	-	2,188.74
Replacement Padlocks & Keys	-	-	441.44
Hunter's Lodge Gate	-	-	840.00
Total Expenditure		70.00	3,737.43
Surplus / (Deficit)		3,664.47	(1,864.82)

Statement of Funds Available as at 31st December 2019

	2019	2018
	£	£
Balance brought forwards from previous year		
Current account	2,132.23	3,997.49
Reserve account	504.06	503.62
Cash	-	-
	2,636.29	4,501.11
Surplus / (Deficit)	3,664.47	(1,864.82)
Balance carried forwards to next year	6,300.76	2,636.29
At 31st December		
Current account	5,795.67	2,132.23
Reserve account	505.09	504.06
Cash	-	-
Funds Available	6,300.76	2,636.29

Notes

1. Core expenditure is claimable from BCA.
2. Officer travel expenses.
3. Prior year's BCA claim paid in full.
4. The 2019 BCA claim will be £70.00.
5. At the year end, membership was 42 clubs of which 41 were also BCA members.

Honorary Scrutineer's Report

I have examined the above accounts. In my opinion they are in accordance with the Council's accounting records and explanations provided.

Aubrey Newport