

**Suggested revisions to the Manual of Operations**

**(For 11<sup>th</sup> January 2020 BCA Council Meeting)**

I would like to propose (subject to and necessary tweaking/revision at the meeting itself) the following amendments to the BCA Manual of Operations, to bring it more in line with our current practice and more relevant to the organisation we have now. This document contains full copy-pasted sections of the current Manual of Operations where changes are needed, with amended/rewritten or added sections shown in red and deleted sections with strikethrough.

This was originally presented to the October BCA Council meeting, but time pressures meant it could not be considered. Further amendments have since been made, mostly to reflect outcomes and actions from the October meeting and the ballot results so please review carefully.

Matt Ewles, BCA Secretary

# Committees

Standing Committees are dealt with under Section 7 of the Constitution.

A Standing Committee is set up by an Annual General Meeting which shall specify its terms of reference.

BCA currently has **four** Standing Committees:

- Conservation & Access
- Equipment & Techniques
- Youth Development
- Training
- ~~Publications & Information~~

The Chair of a Standing Committee is often referred to as the 'Officer' for that Committee (for example, the Conservation and Access Officer) with respect to BCA Council.

In addition to this (as of the 2019 AGM), the BCA has a Publication and Information Officer, elected as per a Standing Committee Chair and serving the same term, but functioning as an autonomous Officer (no committee) who reports to BCA Council.

Standing Committees are open to a representative from each of BCA's Constituent Bodies and Regional Councils. In addition, they are free to co-opt such experts as they see fit.

Within the constraints of the standard operating procedures laid out below, each Standing Committee is free to regulate its own business.

## Standing Orders for Standing Committees

The purpose of these Standing Orders is to allow all Standing Committees working as part of BCA to regulate much of their own business whilst also ensuring BCA's interests are safeguarded.

## Notice of Meetings and Agenda

Notice of any meeting of a Standing Committee should be sent to each committee member, (including nominated Regional Council or Constituent Body participants), and all members of BCA Council at least two weeks before the meeting.

**Commented [ME1]:** Now abolished as a 'Standing Committee'

**Commented [ME2]:** Added to help clarify terminology

The agenda, including the date, time and venue (or online joining details), together with details of all items to be discussed and any relevant supporting papers should also be circulated to each committee member and BCA Council at least one week before.

As a general rule, an agenda should contain sections for reports from convenors or others with specific duties, specific headings for items of importance and the arrangements for the next meeting as well as items concerning apologies for absence, acceptance/discussion of previous minutes and any other business. If possible, the date for the next meeting should also be considered, although it is acknowledged that for some Standing Committees who meet on a 'when required' basis, this may not be appropriate.

Templates for an [Agenda](#) and [Minutes](#) are available to assist Standing Committee convenors.

## Venue for Meetings

Meetings should be arranged by general agreement of members of the Committee at a mutually convenient venue or using an appropriate online meeting platform suitable for the purpose of the committee. The Doodle website may be useful for arranging a convenient date.

## Frequency and Timing

Committees may meet as business demands, but this shall generally be at least once a year.

~~Where possible, it is suggested that the dates of meetings be agreed for a twelve month period in advance.~~

Timing of meetings may wish to be considered with respect to the dates of National Council meetings, bearing in mind the deadlines for submission of agenda items and reports. This is particularly important if any outcomes from the Standing Committee will need to go forward for Council consideration.

## Committee Membership & Voting Procedures

As well as the Standing Committee Convenor, who shall hold the casting vote at Standing Committees, each Constituent Body and Regional Council is entitled to a seat, and a vote, at a Standing Committee. The Constituent Body and Regional Council Representatives shall be confirmed by their organisation annually.

Soon after the AGM each year, BCA Council (which includes all Constituent Bodies and Regional Councils) should be emailed to encourage participation in the various Standing Committees and to ask for any new participants or points of contact to be made known. It may be more practical for a single email to be sent on behalf of all Standing Committees (for example, by the Secretary) to avoid individual emails from each Standing Committee.

**Commented [ME3]:** The current MoO has a lot of emphasis on locking down future Standing Committee dates a long way in advance; I suggest changing this to reflect the more ad-hoc nature of Standing Committee meetings these days and provide greater flexibility.

**Commented [ME4]:** I will update these templates; drafts have already been circulated to Officers and feedback received.

**Commented [ME5]:** Added.

**Commented [ME6]:** Not realistic anymore so remove this.

**Commented [ME7]:** Slight rewrite of the current paragraph

Once this email is sent, the onus is on the various Bodies/Councils to nominate participants (or to confirm continuation of previous participants, the latter being assumed if no reply).

It is the responsibility of the Standing Committee convenor to ensure an up-to-date mailing list of participants (including co-opted members) is maintained. All meeting notifications, agendas and minutes should be circulated to this mailing list.

The successful functioning of a Standing Committee requires a two-way effort; by the Convenor to encourage participation and communicate clearly meeting details to the right people, and by potential participants (all Regional Councils and Constituent Bodies) to keep the Convenor up to date with relevant contact details and to get involved.

Other Committee members may be co-opted by the Standing Committee, either to fulfil specific roles, or because they bring special skills. These co-opted members are full members of the Standing Committee and also hold a vote. The Standing Committee Convenor should inform Council of any new co-options in their next written report.

Any casting vote by the Convenor will normally be in favour of a status quo.

**Commented [ME8]:** Details about how a Standing Committee Chair should encourage participation is missing from the current MoO, so I have written this to help clarify some reasonable expectations/guidelines.

**Commented [ME9]:** Why does the MoO appear to dictate how a convenor should use their vote??? I suggest this is deleted.

## Recording of Meetings

Minutes of **Standing Committee** meetings should include:

- Details of those present.
- Apologies for absence.
- Any matters arising from previous minutes.
- **Outcomes of any actions arising from the previous meeting.**
- **Any discussions regarding** reports to the Committee (reports should be attached to or distributed alongside the minutes).
- Details of discussions on specific issues, points raised and decisions taken including, where appropriate, records of votes for and votes against.
- A means of indicating actions to be taken outside of the meeting, such as an action log; **it is suggested to include this clearly at the end of the minutes.**

Minutes should be distributed as soon as practical after meetings. It is considered good practice to distribute draft minutes before they are accepted by the next meeting. Before publication, draft minutes should be agreed by at least two participants. If any of the points within the minutes are considered sensitive or controversial, it may be advisable to seek input from the Executive before they are published.

**Commented [ME10]:** A slight amendment to the existing wording (currently requires approval from one executive prior to being published, which seems over the top to me for Standing Committee minutes... I have replaced with some advisory text instead).

Once checked, draft minutes should be sent to:

- All members of the Standing Committee.
- The BCA Secretary ~~(who will then distribute them to all National Council Members)~~ **(who will arrange publication on the BCA website).**
- Any other interested parties.

Draft minutes should be upgraded to final minutes after approval at the next Standing Committee meeting, and the final document provided to the BCA Secretary to publish on the BCA website, replacing the draft minutes. It remains the responsibility of the Standing Committee Convenor to ensure minutes on the BCA website are kept up to date.

## Council

### Annual Appointments

The following posts are appointed annually by Council. This is usually done in the Council Meeting following the AGM.

1. Media-Liaison
2. UIS Representative
3. FSE Representative
4. British Caving Library Representative
5. Safeguarding Officer

Additionally, Council ratifies the following appointments annually, based on a recommendation from the Committee/**Officer** shown. This is usually done in the Council Meeting following the AGM. These appointments are:

1. Newsletter Editor (P&I **Officer**)
2. Publications Sales (P&I **Officer**)
3. Rope-Test Officer (E&T Committee)
4. Webmaster (P&I **Officer**)
5. Web Services Officer (P&I **Officer**)

**Commented [ME11]:** Does Publications Sales exist anymore??? I don't think this was appointed in 2019. Can this be removed?

Finally, Council must confirm the continued operation of Working Groups at the Council Meeting following the AGM. This is typically done by appointing a convenor of each Working Group. See Working Groups for more information.

### Council Members

Council is made up of the following voting Officers and Representatives. **These should form part of the BCA's Council mailing list and should receive all BCA Council circulars including meeting notifications.**

**Executive:** **Chair**, Treasurer and Secretary

**Standing-Committee Chairs (aka Officers):**

Conservation & Access Officer  
Equipment & Techniques Officer  
Youth Development Officer  
Training Officer

## Other Officers (without Committees):

Publications and Information Officer

### Regional Council Reps

Regional Councils should appoint a representative to BCA Council. It is recommended that this is done as soon as possible after each AGM. A regular representative is shown on the website contacts page. If the usual named representative is unable to attend a Council meeting, an alternative representative may take their place. It is the responsibility of the named representative to find a replacement should they not be able to attend and to ensure any relevant documents are passed on.

Regional Councils currently include:

Cambrian Caving Council  
Council of Northern Caving Clubs  
Council of Southern Caving Clubs  
Derbyshire Caving Association  
Devon and Cornwall Underground Council

### Constituent Body Reps:

Constituent Bodies should appoint a representative to BCA Council. It is recommended that this is done as soon as possible after each AGM. A regular representative is shown on the website contacts page. If the usual named representative is unable to attend a Council meeting, an alternative representative may take their place. It is the responsibility of the named representative to find a replacement should they not be able to attend and to ensure any relevant documents are passed on.

Constituent bodies currently include:

William Pengelly Cave Studies Trust  
Association of Caving Instructors  
National Caving Scout Active Support Unit  
British Cave Research Association  
National Association of Mining History Organisations  
Council of Higher Education Caving Clubs  
Cave Diving Group  
British Cave Rescue Council

### Club Representatives:

Up to four representatives of clubs (two-year terms). Current post-holders are listed on the website contacts page.

### Individual Member Representatives:

Up to four representatives of individual members (two-year terms). Current post-holders are listed on the website contacts page.

**Commented [ME12]:** New text added. The current MoO states the specific representative. This has been removed and added to the main BCA website contacts page instead, thus the MoO does not need to be revisited each time a contact changes.

**Commented [ME13]:** As above

**Commented [ME14]:** Again, the names of those in-post are on the main website contacts page and will no longer be in the MoO.

In addition, the following members are invited to meetings and encouraged to take part in all discussions, but do not hold a formal vote on BCA Council:

**Working Party Convenors:**

Currently these include:

- Cave Registry
- IT (Information Technology)
- CRoW (Countryside Rights of Way)
- QMC (Qualifications Management Committee)
- Radon
- Vision

**Other appointed positions:**

Currently there include:

- Rope-Test Officer (Appointed by Council on recommendation of E&T Officer)
- Newsletter Editor (Appointed by Council on recommendation of P&I Officer)
- Webmaster (Appointed by Council on recommendation of P&I Officer)
- Web Services Officer (Appointed by Council on recommendation of P&I Officer)
- Insurance Manager
- British Caving Library Rep
- UIS Rep
- FSE Rep
- Media-Liaison Officer
- Safeguarding Officer
- Membership Administrator
- Training Administrator

**It should be noted that, although an individual is free to represent more than one Group, no one individual is entitled to more than one vote.**

## Meeting Procedures

Council meets four times a year, typically in January, March, June and October with the dates for the year set by the June meeting.

Full meetings are held in January, March and October. The June meeting is traditionally a short one that follows the AGM (after a short break).

This schedule has evolved around the need to meet [Constitutional requirements](#) for the AGM, as well as avoiding “difficult” times of the year, such as [July](#)/[August](#) (holidays), [December](#) (Christmas) and [September](#) (Hidden Earth).

## Timeline

**Commented [ME15]:** The contacts page on the website has been updated with these names; they will no longer appear in the MoO

**Commented [ME16]:** The contacts page on the website has been updated with these names; they will no longer appear in the MoO

**Commented [ME17]:** You will note in the agenda a discussion of combining the January and April meetings into a single meeting in February for future years, which would mean amending this text accordingly to say ‘three times a year, typically ‘February, June and October’.

**Commented [ME18]:** If change to three meetings is accepted, add ‘and to ensure more equal spacing of the meetings to help manage workload for BCA Officers.’

**Commented [ME19]:** I have overhauled this entire section to try to provide clearer guidance and improve democracy.

The following timelines are intended to enable enough time for the Secretary to prepare documents and for Council members to review them ahead of meetings and, if necessary, to refer to their organisations for discussion on how they should vote. The deadlines below are not set in stone (and may need to be adjusted due to Secretary vacations for example), so cannot be used to invalidate a meeting, but should be considered normal practice.

**At least six weeks prior:** Secretary to request reports and agenda items by email to Council. It is recommended to include a reminder to Council of the deadline.

**Three weeks prior:** Deadline for submission of agenda items from Council members to the Secretary.

**At least two weeks prior:** Secretary to upload agenda to website and notify Council members and ensure that the draft minutes from the last meeting are also available for review on the website.

**Two weeks prior:** Deadline for submission of reports to the Secretary.

**At least one week prior:** Secretary to collate and post reports on the website and notify Council members. Council members attending the meeting are expected to have read these reports prior to coming to the meeting wherever possible.

**No later than eight weeks after (preferably sooner):** Secretary to publish draft minutes (for details see [Meeting Minutes](#) section below).

It is expected that all Council members make every effort to deliver their agenda items and reports in the timeframe set out by the Secretary; failure to do so hampers democracy, complicates meeting and creates extra work for others.

## Venue

Meetings may be held at any suitable location. It is desirable to choose somewhere relatively central and with suitable WIFI to allow participants to join remotely via video link. The venue should be available all day and have the capacity for at least 40 people (based on usual maximum attendance). Proximity to amenities (e.g. for lunch) and on-site parking and hot drinks facilities (tea/coffee) is recommended.

## Agenda Items

A sample agenda with standing items can be found [here](#).

**Commented [ME20]:** To be updated separately

The agenda should contain, as a minimum:

- Welcome/apologies.
- Acceptance of minutes from previous meeting.
- Matters arising from the previous meeting including review of action log.
- Reports including opportunity for questions/discussion and a vote to accept.

- Items/proposals for discussion/voting submitted by BCA Council members.
- Any other business.

Any items for discussion which are not on the agenda should be declared no later than the start of the meeting, to be added to 'any other business' which will be included only at the discretion of the Chair come the end of the meeting. It is expected that there is good reason for why the item was not included on the advanced agenda or in an appropriate report (i.e. why it has not been put out for advanced consideration).

The June meeting is shorter and typically makes Council's annual appointments and sets the meeting dates for the year ahead, as well as dealing with any urgent business. If necessary, it will also formally record a change to bank mandates. Non-urgent business will usually be held over to the following meeting. The same procedures nonetheless apply. A sample Agenda for the June Council meeting can be found [here](#).

Commented [ME21]: To be updated

## Written Reports

To ensure the efficient running of the meeting, and most importantly, to allow representatives to be fully prepared for the decisions they may be required to make, **Officers, Working Party Convenors, Standing Committee Chairs, and those with additional appointed roles on BCA Council, are expected to provide written reports to the Secretary within the timeframe specified above.**

Reports should typically include:

- An update on progress since the last report.
- Proposals for Council's consideration, including the necessary background and any recommendations of the author.
- For Standing Committees, details of any new co-opted members of the Committee.

Reports should identify anything that **may**:

- **For Standing Committees, anything that may constitute a material change to the Terms of Reference and business of that committee.**
- Involve other Association Committees or members.
- Have legal implications for the Association.
- Have financial implications for the Association beyond those already agreed.
- Involve the Association in a change to established policies or require the Association to agree a new policy or procedure.

Commented [ME22]: Slightly reworded

Please ensure reports are fully comprehensive, clearly identifying (ideally at the start of the report) whether there are any specific actions/decisions for Council arising within. Doing so will help expedite meetings and focus attention on areas in need of consideration. Note that reports should not be used as a media to present major proposals; these should appear on the agenda which is published earlier.

~~Should any of these latter points be included, then it is expected that papers shall be sent to the Secretary a minimum of two weeks before the date of the meeting to allow representatives sufficient time for consultation. In this situation the attendance of the Convenor or other committee member would generally be required at the National Council Meeting.~~

~~Should this process not be followed, then the Chairman may well decide to postpone discussion of the item until the following meeting.~~

~~Committees will be formally advised of decisions reached or policies instituted or amended via the Minutes of the relevant National Council Meeting.~~

**Commented [ME23]:** This is all unnecessary waffle in my opinion.

## Applications for Club Membership:

The Membership Administrator is empowered to provisionally accept new Club Members provided they meet our criteria for a properly constituted Club. The Club will then become a Member once we have received their membership fee, but this is provisional pending acceptance by the next Council Meeting ~~(or AGM, whichever comes first).~~

**Commented [ME24]:** Removed as no longer accepting new members at AGMs following constitutional changes.

At each meeting the Membership Administrator should make Council (or the AGM) aware of clubs that have been provisionally accepted since the previous meeting so that any concerns can be raised. Council ~~(or the AGM)~~ should then vote on whether or not to accept the Club as a full BCA Member Club.

**Commented [ME25]:** Ditto

## Procedure for Accepting Reports:

~~Once the meeting has finished discussing the contents of an Officer's Report, and is happy with everything reported that has not been discussed, the Chairman should ask if everyone present is happy to accept the remaining items of the report? Anyone with anything further to add should raise it at that point. If not, then the Chairman will move to the next Report. In the interests of a smooth meeting, it is not necessary to formally propose and second each acceptance. It is important to note that in accepting a Report, Council is indicating its agreement with everything mentioned that has not been separately discussed.~~

~~Reports must be formally accepted by BCA Council. This may be done on a report-by-report basis or all together (at the Chair's discretion which may be based on the opinions of those in the room). Reports do not need to be proposed and are accepted by a majority in a show of hands of Council members present. Acceptance of a report indicates Council acceptance of what has been included. Any exceptions to this should be noted and included in the minutes.~~

**Commented [ME26]:** A slight rewrite of the above paragraph

## Meeting Minutes

Minutes of meetings should include:

- Date, time and location.

- Details of those present.
- Apologies given for absence.
- Any matters arising from previous minutes.
- **Outcomes of any actions from the previous meeting.**
- **Details of discussions regarding the reports including a record of their acceptance. The reports themselves may be attached or included within the minutes, or they may be included in a separate document available alongside the minutes.**
- Details of discussions on specific issues, points raised, and decisions taken including, where appropriate, records of proposers, seconds, votes for and votes against.
- A means of indicating actions to be taken outside of the meeting, such as an action log; **it is suggested to include this clearly at the end of the minutes.**

Minutes and other papers should be distributed as soon as practical after meetings, but within eight weeks maximum. Before publication, draft minutes should be agreed by at least two participants, ideally one of which being a member of BCA Executive. The minutes may be reviewed by anyone the minute-taker feels appropriate to ensure their accuracy.

On publishing draft minutes, the Secretary should:

- Upload them to the BCA website, ensuring clarity that they are a draft.
- Broadcast their availability via email to all BCA Council members.

Minutes must be approved at the next Council meeting. Only in the event of significant changes being made should approved minutes also be broadcast, although they should always be updated to a 'final' document on the BCA website.

## Voting Procedures

Voting is by simple majority of those present and eligible to vote with no minimum number necessary for the meeting to be quorate. The **Chair** shall hold the casting vote. The [Council Members](#) page gives a list of those eligible to vote. Although an individual is free to represent more than one Group, nobody is entitled to more than one vote.

**Commented [ME27]:** I have replaced Chairman with Chair throughout.

## Representatives

Representatives are vital to the smooth running of BCA. They help ensure the interests of all Constituent Bodies, Regional Councils and Committees are accommodated. However the role can be very demanding, particularly when immediate spur-of-the-moment decisions are requested at meetings. Therefore the following principles should apply to representatives:

1. A representative is empowered to agree matters on behalf of the Body they represent, unless instructed specifically to the contrary by that Body.
2. However, a representative can also say that they do not feel able to express the view of the Body they represent. In this case, if at all possible, they should be given a chance to refer the matter back to their Body for clarification.
3. In view of the delays resulting from a referral back, it is sensible to avoid the need for this by effective communication in advance. Therefore prior warning of potential

areas of discussion and decisions that will need to be made should be given if at all possible, **ideally on the meeting agenda. The onus here is on whoever is requesting a decision to ensure it is communicated to the Secretary to put onto the agenda.**

## **Executive**

BCA Executive is governed by Section 6.14 of the Constitution.

## **Members**

The Constitution states that the Executive is made up of: **Chair**, Treasurer and Secretary but that [Council](#) may then add further members, as may be deemed necessary.

## **Role**

The Executive's main role is to manage the affairs of the Association between Council meetings. In practice this means:

- Assisting with, and advising on, the running of Standing Committees and Working Groups, as needed;
- Facilitating efficient working of the Association by acting as a 'filter' through which proposed changes are initially run;
- Making any urgent decisions, and subsequent actions, that may become necessary for the good of the Association;
- Calling an [Emergency General Meeting](#), should the situation require it.

## **Method of Working**

By its very nature, the work of the Executive is varied and, therefore, dealt with by the appropriate means at the time. This includes face-to-face meetings; phone calls; e-mail; and **online conferencing**.

When decisions or advice involve the work of a Standing Committee or Working Party, Executive will normally consult as many specialists (usually members of the appropriate Standing Committee or Working Party) as possible, given the required timescale for decision making. The final decision will then normally be made following the advice of the Standing Committee Convenor. It is extremely unlikely that a decision involving a Standing Committee would ever need to be taken by the Executive only.

## **Decision Making**

Decision making is almost exclusively by discussion and mutual agreement. However, in the event that a vote becomes necessary, the Secretary and Treasurer shall have one vote each, and the **Chair** the casting vote.

## Procedure for Absence

In the event of one of more Members of the Executive being away and out of contact, the remaining Member, or Members, should aim to deal only with the most urgent, or non-controversial business. Should something urgent arise, then no one single member of Executive should deal with it on their own. Instead they should liaise with at least two other appropriate Council Members first and make their decision on the basis of this. It is recommended that a record of these discussions be kept.

## General Meetings

### AGMs

The [Constitution](#) requires that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) be held annually in June (or as soon as reasonable thereafter).

### Timeline

**At least 18 weeks before:** Secretary to publish time, date and place of meeting. This is a Constitutional requirement. **Best effort should be made to ensure this information reaches as many members as possible. This should ideally include direct email communication with those members with who we can communicate, as well as through use of the BCA website and/or social media platforms.**

**Midnight on Day of Council Meeting Preceding AGM:** Deadline for receipt of nominations for **Executive, Officer (Standing Committee Convenors) and Club/Individual Representative** posts by Secretary, as well as any items **or proposals** to be raised at the AGM. This is a Constitutional requirement. **The constitution makes no requirement for nominations or proposals to be seconded before being put to an AGM, although it will expedite the meeting and help support the case if a seconder is in place at the point of submitting the nomination /proposal, so it is recommended practice. Nominations and proposals may be submitted to the Secretary in any reasonable format providing they are legible. It is the responsibility of the person submitting to ensure it reaches the Secretary by the deadline. The Secretary should acknowledge all nominations and proposals upon receipt.**

**At least 6 weeks before:** Secretary to circulate Agenda to members. This is a Constitutional requirement. **Current interpretation of 'circulate' is to publish the document online and to make members aware by email communication (where technology allows) with those who have opted to receive emails, as well as through use of BCA website and appropriate social media platforms.**

**At least 14 days before:** Officers, Standing Committee Chairs, Working Group Convenors and all other appointees to send written reports to Secretary.

**Commented [ME28]:** An action item from the AGM was to address this lack of procedural clarity in the MoO. I prefer a liberal and simple approach. This wording reflects how I propose to do so.

**At least 1 week before:** Secretary to publish online the reports document for the meeting, together with any other supporting documentation. **It is recommended to once again email members and use appropriate social media to inform members that the reports are now available and to also serve as a meeting reminder.**

**Up to 8 weeks after:** Secretary to publish draft minutes online following the process below.

## Agenda Items

Section 8.13 of the Constitution lists the purposes of an AGM. It is good practice to adhere to the content and the order of these in writing the Agenda. ~~The [2011 Agenda](#) is available as an example of current practice.~~

**Commented [ME29]:** 2011 isn't very current... I will prepare a new one in due course.

**The constitution is unclear on who can submit an agenda item or proposal for an AGM and who can second motions. Thus a liberal interpretation should be taken that any member (Group or Individual) or constituent body, or BCA Council can do this.**

## Written Reports

These should be prepared and forwarded to the Secretary at least 14 days prior to the AGM. This ensures timely publication and, therefore, communication with members. Reports should be included from:

- Chairman
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- **Publications and Information Officer**
- Standing Committee **Convenors (Officers)**
- Working Party Convenors
- [Council appointees](#)
- Any other individual or group specifically requested to do so by either Council or an AGM. Currently this is the British Caving Library.

**Reports from Regional Councils and Constituent Bodies are not normally included but may be presented if they include information of national relevance.**

The reports should include a summary of the work completed that year, together with any particular successes or difficulties that have been encountered. They should also give an indication of work planned for the coming 12 months. It is important to remember that reports are written for the general membership rather than Council Members and, therefore, need to assume a less in-depth knowledge of BCA's workings. They should also cover the whole of the previous year, rather than simply the period since the last Council meeting.

## Attendance

Anyone may attend the AGM, although the **Chair** has the right to exclude anyone if the meeting so decides.

## Voting Procedures

Voting at General Meetings is done by a show of membership cards of individual **members present at the meeting**.

The following items of business will require voting:

(1) Appointment of Honorary Members and an Honorary President (50% majority of all votes required with no subsequent online voting).

(2) Accepting minutes, reports and other regular 'housekeeping' duties or matters arising that would not be considered 'motions' (50% majority of all votes required with no subsequent online voting).

(3) Submitted motions. It is suggested that before any voting occurs, those attending the meeting should debate any presented motions and, if necessary (and with the permission of the proposer), refine or consolidate them. The final motions must then receive the support of  $\geq 20\%$  of all individual members present and eligible to vote, or  $\geq 10$  individuals, whichever is lowest, to pass at the meeting. Motions passed at the meeting must then be progressed to an online vote of all individual members.

Motions are considered to be items put forward that would make any change to the constitution or involve taking a significant action or making a significant change to BCA operations, policy, procedure or position. They are expected to be submitted in advance on the agenda. In the event of uncertainty as to whether something should be a 'motion' or a 'housekeeping' matter, the Chair shall make the final decision, and the idea is that common sense should prevail here. The default position, in the event of indecision or dispute should be to consider the item a 'motion' and process accordingly.

The constitution states that 'uncontested candidates' for Council position 'will be elected'. This wording was based on the pre-2019 status quo of appointing unopposed candidates without a vote. This should therefore be the default interpretation.

It is very desirable for contested Council positions to be resolved at the meeting by mutual agreement between the candidates. The Chair is encouraged to try to facilitate discussions of this nature. However, if this is not possible, then the contested position and candidates will be progressed automatically to an online vote, in which it would be good practice to provide the candidates the opportunity to include a statement.

The quorum for a General Meeting is 10 individual members eligible to vote.

Online voting should be available to all BCA Individual Members for a 30-day period commencing as soon as is possible after the General Meeting. It is good practice to ensure this is well communicated to all members by email (if possible) and through the BCA website

and social media. Motions must receive 50% support of all votes cast (70% for changes to constitution) to be accepted. For contested positions or multi-choice option motions, the candidate or option with the most support will be appointed/accepted.

**Commented [ME30]:** Entire section rewritten following ballot results.

For the purposes of all voting, abstentions are not considered a 'vote'.

## Meeting Minutes

Minutes of meetings should be prepared by the recorder (who is appointed by the Council meeting preceding the AGM). The Minutes should include:

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- **Date, time and location.**
- Details of those present.
- Apologies for absence.
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- Details of discussions on specific issues, points raised, and decisions taken including, where appropriate, records of proposers, seconds, votes for and votes against.
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On publishing draft minutes, the Secretary should:

- Upload them to the BCA website, ensuring clarity that they are a draft.
- Ensure a prominent notification that the draft minutes are available is placed on the BCA website and broadcast via relevant email, social media and in the next edition of the newsletter where possible.

Minutes must be approved at the next AGM. Only in the event of significant changes being made should approved minutes also be broadcast as above, although they should always be updated to a 'final' document on the BCA website.