



Council Meeting Tuesday 5th April 2022 Minutes

Meeting was held via Zoom

19.00 pm to 21:00 pm

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Next Meeting Important Agenda Items

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Council Positions, Attendance and Report Status Table

Voting Positions

Position	Name	Initials	Attn	Report	
			(y/n)	Last	New
BCA Executive					
Chair (2021-2024) 3 years	Russell Myers	RM	y	05/04/2022	y
Secretary (2021- 2024) 3 years	Allan Richardson	AR	y	05/04/2022	y
Treasurer (2020 - 2023) 3 years	Howard Jones	HJJ	y	05/04/2022	y
Group/Club Representatives					
Position 1 2021-2023 (2 years)	Josh White	JW	y	07/12/2021	n
Position 2 2021 – 2023 2 years)	Vacant				
Position 3 - (2020-2022 - 2 years)	Lydia Leather	LL	n		
Position 4 - (2020-2022 - 2 years)	Idris Williams	IW	y		
Individual Member Representatives					
Vacant					
Position 2 - (2021-2023 - 2 years)	Nigel Atkins	NA	y	01/02/2022	n
Position 3 - (2020-2022 - 2 years)	Jenny Potts	JP	y	05/04/2022	y
Position 4 - (2020-2022 - 2 years)	Andrew McLeod	AM	y		
Regional Council Representatives					

Cambrian Caving Council	Stuart France	SF	y		
Council of Northern Caving Clubs	Andrew Hinde	AH	y		
Council of Southern Caving Clubs	Linda Wilson	LW	y		
Derbyshire Caving Association	Mike Higgins	MH	y		
Devon and Cornwall Underground Council	David Jean	DJ	n		
Constituent Body Representatives					
William Pengelly Cave Studies Trust	Richard Vooght	RV	n		
Association of Caving Instructors	Stephan Natynczuk	SN	y		
National Caving Scout Active Support Unit	Tony Radmall	TR	n		
British Cave Research Association	John Gunn	JG	y		
National Association of Mining History Organisations	Steve Holding	SH	y		
Council of Higher Education Caving Clubs	Jennifer Ryder	JR	n		
Cave Diving Group	Claire Cohen	CC	n		
British Cave Rescue Council	Emma Porter	EP	n		

Non -Voting Positions

Position	Name	Initials	Atn	Report	
			(y/n)	Last	New
Working Group Convenors					
Training and Equipment	Steve Gray		n		
Conservation and Access	Vacant				
Information Technology	Ari Cooper-Davis	ACD	n	18/08/2020	n
Youth and Development	Josh White	JW	y	07/12/2021	n
CRoW	David Rose	DR	n	05/04/2022	y
Qualifications Management Committee (QMC)	George Plant	GP	n	05/04/2022	y
Vision Recommend removing this group and replacing it with COG.	Andrew McLeod	AM	y		
Radon	Vacant				
P & I	Vacant				
Additional BCA Appointments					
Insurance Manager	Howard Jones	HJJ	y	05/04/2022	y
Membership Administrator	Wendy Williams	WW	n	15/07/2021	n
Safeguarding Officer	Chris Boardman	CB	y	05/04/2022	y
Training Administrator	Mary Wild	MW	n		
Library Representative	Jenny Potts	JP	y	05/04/2022	y
Newsletter Editor	David Rose	DR	y		
UIS Representative	Andy Eavis	AE	n	05/04/2022	y

FSE Representative	Ged Campion	GC	y	05/04/2022	y
Rope Testing	Vacant	Recommendation to merge with Training & Equipment WG			
Artificial Cave	Katie Eavis	KE	n		
QMC Representative 1	BCA Chair				
QMC Representative 2	Chris Boardman	CB	y		
Observers					

Agenda item 1: Apologies for absence.

Andy Eavis, David Jean, Richard Vooght, David Rose, George Plant.

Agenda item 2: Acceptance of the 1st February 2022 Meeting Minutes Proposed Acceptance

prop Mike Higgins
2nd Idris Williams Passed nemcon

Agenda item 3: Matters arising/Action Plan

The action re the Mick Day memorial was removed by general agreement. Should the situation change the position will be revisited.

It was suggested by JW that would be useful to utilise the Action Plan to remind people of their agreed actions.

JW queried why Rostam Namaghi's form for creating proposals wasn't used this year. RM reported that it had been deleted.

GC and JW queried their report status, this has been corrected.

Action plan

Issue	Who	By when	Signed off
Letter to DR	RM	Next meeting	

Agenda item 4: Vacancies

The following Council vacancies are still vacant:-

Conservation and Access Convenor

Publications and Information Convenor

Position 1 Group Representative

Position 2 Group Representative

Radon WG Convenor

Newsletter Editor

From 05/04/2022, there have been no volunteers yet.

A general discussion followed:-

RM had advertised the posts on UKCaving, no results.

RM suggested that the role of Conservation/Access convenor is split as it would be easier to fill the Conservation role, also as it is now a Working Group this would be a Council decision.

JP pointed out that the role has been effectively about Conservation for years, as Access is dealt with by the Regional Councils.

After a some discussion JP offered to set up a Conservation group this was accepted by the meeting. AM said that the groups terms of reference need to be worked out.

P & I Convenor, RM suggested that it might be a better idea to have a webmaster to disseminate information.

There were no other offers or suggestions re the vacancies.

Agenda item 5: Chair's Report

Ukraine

The Russian invasion of Ukraine gave us great concern for the people there and in particular, from our perspective, cavers. Following a request for support from the Ukraine Speleological Association in early March, we looked to the UIS to respond and when it came, the statement that had been produced left a lot to be desired. In conjunction with Professor John Gunn BCRA Chairman, we produced statements on behalf of our respective Associations and agreed to release them as close together as practical with the intention of getting the message of support they contained to the Ukrainians. At the same time, we circulated the statements to our respective Associations; BCA after consultation with the Executive Committee. Council was circulated with the statement on Thursday 24th March and the document posted on various media, 24 hours later.

A copy of the statement is attached below for the record.

Our primary contact in Ukraine is Dr. Alexander Klimchouk who received the statements and responded to the editors of Darkness Below with the following (reproduced with DB permission):

“The Ukrainian cavers and cave and karst scientists have welcomed the statements issued by BCA and BCRA regarding the Russian invasion of Ukraine with gratitude and satisfaction. We know about the fantastic help from many countries and their people, including very powerful support from the UK government, organisations, and the people of the UK. We know and highly appreciate this. We particularly value the expression of solidarity from people and institutions who share the passion for caves and karst with us. This solidarity means that we all also share the passion and dedication to freedom and democracy.

“Russia not only seeks to destroy Ukraine as an independent state and as a nation but attacks the civilized world and democracy as a whole. If Ukraine fails, the values of the civilised world will be damaged irreparably. We hope that the unprecedented global support for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people indicates that the world leaders and nations have eventually realised this threat and are ready to defeat it.

“High spirit is extremely important in critical situations, especially in such dramatic circumstances that the Ukrainian people are faced with. The strong and unequivocal statements of solidarity with us and our fight and of condemnation of evil do matter to maintain the high spirit no less than material support.

“Thank you, BCA and BCRA for your statements – it does help! The spirit and motivation of the Ukrainian army, the people and the caving/speleological community are focused on defending the country and our values are very high.

“The BCRA statement includes a notification about awarding me an honorary life membership. It is indeed a great honour and one of the highest awards in my speleological life. I accept it with gratitude and pleasure and I take it, first of all, as a sign of acknowledgment of the courage and persistence of the Ukrainian people shown in these dramatic times of the Russian onslaught.

“We are holding this fort of freedom and democracy!”

Alexander Klimchouk

BCA Statement

BCA Statement regarding the Russian Invasion of Ukraine

BCA (in conjunction with BCRA) absolutely deplores the aggressive invasion of Ukraine by Russia and the subsequent war which was entirely fabricated by the Russians without justification. In a civilized society, war has no place in resolving disputes and we stand shoulder to shoulder with the Ukrainian people and in particular their caving community in support of their efforts to resist the Russian aggression and reverse the invasion of their country in whatever ways we can.

In particular, we would like to extend a helping hand to Ukrainians in finding a safe haven in the UK and urge our 6,000+ members to do what they can to help these people by offering accommodation or making donations and everything in between.

Having seen the response from the UK caving community in one man's hour of need during the recent South Wales rescue, I can only imagine the huge amounts of kindness and generosity which can be offered to significantly more people in their hour of need.

Whilst clearly writing this for the benefit of all Ukrainians, it would be even more heartening to think we could extend that helping hand to anyone from the Ukraine caving community and offer them some solace of normality and support knowing they are amongst like-minded people.

To say this situation is unbelievable is an understatement and not something I imagined could ever happen in my lifetime. I hope that the UK caving community will respond in the best possible way. My heartfelt support goes to the Ukrainian people and cavers in particular with a wish that this whole ghastly situation is soon resolved in their favour.

Russell Myers

Chair

BCA

24th March 2022

Link to the BCRA statement : BCRA statement on the war against Ukraine and the offer of honorary membership to Dr Alexander Klimchouk - The British Caving Association (british-caving.org.uk)

The situation continues to develop and I envisage a need to adapt the statement accordingly and will inform Council of developments.

Eli "Cymie" Simpson

A group of cavers have organised the installation of a “Blue Plaque” on Cragdale, the former Police Station in Settle North Yorkshire. This is to commemorate Eli Simpson occupying the building and establishing it as the headquarters of the British Speleological Association from 1935 to 1939. As BSA was one of the forerunners of what is now the British Caving Association, I have been asked to attend the unveiling ceremony in my capacity as Chair of the British Caving Association.

Russell Myers Chair 28th March 2022

Comments

Dr Alexander Klimchouk from the Ukraine has responded to the BCA statement and thanked us for our support.

RM has requested ideas as to how we could help and would pull together the suggestions. One idea from RM was to try to get some money to the Ukraine Speleological Association, by individuals or BCA joining the Association.

Message from Emma Porter (BCRC), thanking BCA for the donation, the equipment has been purchased and RM has been invited to their pre AGM training Day next Saturday.

JW said to get a picture of the Casbag and to create an article on the BCA website with information from the BCRC.

Agenda item 6: BCA Secretaries Report

I have received a request for more detailed Minutes, this would entail a considerable amount of work, distilling down the cut and thrust of the discussions to produce a succinct report. The obvious solution is to make the Zoom recording available on the website.

The BCA documentation is being looked at and updated as required, this is an ongoing process, thanks to Andrew McLeod for the following update:-

“The Constitution on the website is AFAIK up to date; I have updated it with respect to the 2021 AGM.

<https://british-caving.org.uk/about-bca/constitution/>

I have also updated the Anchor Policy and the Equality and Diversity policies with respect to the 2021 AGM.

<https://british-caving.org.uk/about-bca/bca-council/official-documents/>

I have not looked at the Manual of Operations, however... Also the website 'Standing Committees' parts needs reorganizing by either a keen webmaster or all the new Working Groups”

Allan Richardson

Comments

AH asked that more detail was put into the minutes.

JP pointed out that the BCA Library was storing recordings already.

Various people voiced concerns over amount of storage required and long term viability of current formats.

Agenda item 7: BCA Treasurer Report

Current bank balances: as at 18/3/2022 was £245,000. Of which £88,000 is in medium term interest bearing accounts and £76,000 is in a short term deposit account.

Bank charges:

As at 1/1/2022 HSBC has decided to inflict bank charges on all charities. This brings them into line with most other retail banks. I estimate this will cost BCA around £300 a year.

Unusual spend since last Council:

BCRA 1st quarter donation for 2022 at £3,000. BCRC donation £1,500, FES affiliation for 2022 £625

BCA accounts result for 2021

I have started the above work and they have been sent to the independent reviewer. They show the following (round numbers):

Reduced income by £10k (Covid and reduced club membership fee Council decision 2021)

CRoW legal costs of £45k, total over the 2 years £80k.

QMC break even position (income and expenditure both £15k)

Record regional support due to increased C&A activity especially CSCC and DCA regions.

Deficit £60k (lower than I predicted)

Net assets £155k.

Once reviewed and signed I will bring to the BCA AGM in June for approval. And to the next Council meeting for noting. Once approved I will submit the tax return. No tax due.

Note any CRoW legal cost refund decision has not been reflected in the 2021 accounts as they stand. (See below)

CRoW financial situation.

A previous Council meeting agreed we could spend up to £90k pursuing this claim on the basis of its details and likely impact for UK caving as a whole. To date we have paid £67k and there is a further £13k due to the lawyers for recent work, taking the total cost to £80k as budgeted on our own lawyer (which he acknowledges). There is a court deliberation over costs in the matter due in the next few weeks and it is possible we could be awarded up to £35k in costs; at the maximum award it would mean a refund to BCA of some £20k.

BCA Budget 2022.

Has been approved and distributed to Council. If all the assumptions come true it's a break even budget.

HJJ March 2022.

Comments

No comments or questions to the Treasurer

Agenda Item 8: BCA Insurance Manager's report

Claims

We have no outstanding claims. Hence we have received a no claims bonus of £1,200 for 2021.

Public Liability Policy renewal as at 1/1/2022

We have updated the necessary documents on the BCA website including the FAQs document.

BCA travel policy

We have renewed the above for 2022 with no price increase for policies over 2021. However the war in Eastern Europe will affect some travel and hence insurance.

Howard Jones BCA Insurance Manager 20/03/2022

Comments

Nothing to add, no comments or questions.

Agenda Item 9: Membership Report

Please find below reports from Katie Eavis and David Gibson regarding BCA membership matters

H J Jones March 2022.

BCA club membership report.

2022 Club Membership renewals

2020 vs 2021 vs 2022 Membership levels

	2020 (up until the 31st December)	2021 (up until the 31st December)	2022 (up until the 16th March)
Groups (including Member Clubs, Associates and Access Controlling Bodies	166	162	162
CIMs (including Cavers, Non- Cavers, Students, Under 18s and CDG)	5308	5049	5137

Of the 162 group members 151 of these were BCA members in 2021. One is a new Access controlling body. A further ten have previously been BCA members but were not members in 2021, but have re-joined for 2022. Without access to more of Wendy's data I can't say if this is more than in a normal year – however I strongly suspect it is, and that certain clubs did not re-join in 2021 due

to covid restrictions. However as things look more promising in 2022 these clubs are renewing their BCA membership.

There are 11 groups that were 2021 members that have yet to renew for 2022. These have all had a reminder that their renewal is due and I am confident at least half of them will re-join BCA. One has emailed to let me know they won't be renewing this year.

Overall it looks as though things are looking up for club caving in 2022. Total number of CIMs has already exceeded the number in 2021, and there is still over 9 months for cavers to renew and new members to join. Anecdotal many caving clubs are reporting record levels of enquiries and interest in joining a caving club.

AN Members

AN members are members of a caving club who have stated they get their BCA membership and insurance through another route, either directly as a DIM or via another caving club. So far I have recorded about 1400 AN members for 2022. Now that most clubs and DIMs have renewed I am checking on the status of these to ensure they really are BCA members by some route. There are about 100 I can't currently find as BCA members and I am just starting to contact club secretaries to ask them to contact these members and ask to renew their membership, or confirm how and when they have renewed if they believe they have done.

Card Printing and Posting

Membership cards are being printed and posted out within 2 weeks of us receiving a club's renewal/update spreadsheet.

DIM cards are also being printed and posted out within 2 weeks.

Regional councils.

I am not sure what Wendy did with the list of which clubs want to affiliate to which regional councils. This information is requested on the renewal paperwork each year. I plan to contact the regional councils to ask if they would like a list of affiliated clubs and their contact details.

2021 payments

All 2021 club payments have now been received except one. This is a payment for an associate member club (£25) who appears not to have paid. I have chased many times and am no longer getting replies to my emails. I suspect we will not get this payment now. However if they try and renew for 2022 I will get both year's payments before they can re-join!

Things to do:

- Chase up remaining 'AN' members who I can't find as 2022 BCA members
- Contact regional councils to pass on affiliated clubs list and contact details
- Chase club payments as they start to become more than a month overdue.

Katie Eavis – acting club membership administrator

BCA DIM membership update

BCA's DIM membership is currently 687 including 59 non-cavers. Additionally there are 331 overdue members, due to expire at the end of March. There are 491 "superseded" entries, indicating people who were members in 2021 and who have now renewed. From this, we can see that there must be 196 new DIM members this year. It is unlikely that many more of the 331 will renew. They have received reminders and have not acted. This is not a cause for alarm, as BCA has always had an extraordinarily high turnover rate for DIMs. Viz: this year, 331 not renewing, but 196 new members so far. Part of this is migration between CIMs and DIMs, but I think a large part of the 331 must be due to people joining in order to obtain insurance cover for one particular trip. There could be other causes, but investigating them would be very time-consuming. Regarding the membership software, development continues, and this year the customer-facing form will be re-designed to make it easier to use, and more phone-friendly.

David Gibson.

Comments

Nothing to add, no comments or questions.

Agenda Item 10: Other Reports

Safeguarding

No safeguarding issues have been raised.

I've produced a 1-page guide for how BCA can provide a DBS check for instructors (at their expense). Still pending is how they will pay for it - I have to pay for the check online with a credit card, so a method needs to be found for instructors to transfer payment to BCA, and then BCA to me, for this process.

I continue to attend QMC meetings as a council representative.

Someone e-mailed to say they think the wording on the safeguarding page on the website could be clarified a bit, so that is on my to-do list.

Chris Boardman
Safeguarding Officer

Comments.

Nothing to add.

JW spoke about getting clubs involved with children and caving

Newsletter

Hi all,

It is with some regret that I feel I must submit my resignation as BCA newsletter editor.

I have a new job which is quite demanding in terms of time, and meanwhile, there remains the CROW campaign. I am determined to see this through to the end, one way or another, but it has already required many hours of work. Drawing up the representations we submitted a few weeks ago was quite a big job, as was managing the latter stages of the litigation that ended up in the settlement.

If we succeed in getting a new review body set up to examine our case – and I think the chances are quite good – it's going to take a lot more work to coordinate our relationship with and further representations to it. If we are refused this, then we will want to consider a possible second judicial review, and that would also need considerable effort.

As you will be aware, I haven't produced an issue of the newsletter since shortly before the first lockdown. The first year of the pandemic, so little was happening, it hardly seemed worth it. In the second, the CROW issue just dominated the time I had available.

I think the Association should consider whether we actually need a newsletter at all, or whether it would be better to focus on putting news items on the website as and when they occur. If it's agreed that that this is a more sensible course, then all we would need to do is send round an occasional email drawing attention to important posts.

I would be very happy to discuss this with the executive, the council, or at the AGM, and will give every assistance I can to whoever is doing the website and/or future newsletter job.

Best regards

David Rose

Comments

JP said that she found the BMC online reports were very good and it would be an idea to try this idea. LW pointed out that few people clicked on the link after seeing the headline, the importance was in the wording of the headline.

JW pointed out that BMC and BCU used a quick online report system.

RM pointed out there was nobody in post to do this. SF pointed out that BMC had paid employees to do this, HJ said the BMC had 8 full time and 4 part time employees.

LW suggested we used MailChimp to create quick Newsletters.

RM to write a thank you letter to DR.

Library Report to BCA Council, 5 April 2022

The Library has now returned to almost our usual working pattern with visitors welcomed and the full range of services available once again.

As well as the normal continuing work of cataloguing foreign and UK periodicals, books, newspaper articles, archive materials, etc. the Librarian and I continue to deal with enquiries and are now recording how long we take to deal with each one and whether it is a simple scan-and-email or a full scale research job.

An increasing amount of archive material is being deposited with us so that Glutton Bridge is now effectively the British Caving Library and Archive. In many cases we receive collections belonging to deceased cavers but we have also been given the complete archive collection of the Yorkshire Ramblers Club, withdrawn from the public library where it had languished unread, now passed to BCL as the obvious source for cavers to access the material. Where possible suitable archive material is scanned and placed online as part of the BCRA Online Archive, so making it available for anyone to access it via the BCL website; otherwise we can make it available to read on site or can scan and email specific items.

The Library was the host for the start and end of the BCRA Field Trip to the Upper Dove Valley on 19th. March and will host a BCRA Council meeting on 3rd. July. DCA is planning to hold a Council meeting at the Library on the morning of Saturday, 21st. May, possibly including a DCA surface walk around the Upper Dove Valley in the afternoon as well as other activities based at a nearby caving club HQ. We look forward to hosting other cavers' gatherings, as we have done in the past.

Karen Slatcher, our Library Assistant, has taken on the mammoth task of cataloguing the main part of the Library's collection of modern cave surveys, maps, etc. The results of her work are made available via the Online Bibliography/Catalogue and this aspect is now being used by enquirers

very successfully. She has also taken on the task of keeping track of all the duplicate items we acquire and, once again, we have received a donation for some items sent to a Scottish club and the rest will go down to Mendip to help re-stock a Club library lost due to a flood. The duplicates continue to arrive with donations of collections so we will continue with our policy of moving these on to cavers who want them.

Our two volunteers have now completed the cataloguing of the John Beck Legacy - taking 2 years to deal with over 1000 surveys and maps of the Peak District. The most important surveys are now online as part of the Derbyshire Cave Registry, having been scanned by DCA, so are now available for all cavers to access and download. The two volunteers are now about to start on the collection of archive surveys and maps passed on from the BSA and CRG days.

Jenny Potts
21-3-22

Comments

Nothing to add, no comments or questions.

QMC Report

There's not a great deal to report from QMC – it doesn't seem long since my last report! Most of my time is spent figuring out the details of how things are done. Personally I've had a few chats with various members of QMC which has been really interesting; and Mary, Gethin and Rich are great at keeping me in check.

Engagement is picking up in the sector with a large number of new candidates from Mendip as well as across the country. A number of prospective Trainer Assessors are undergoing their apprenticeship, mostly in the North of England, so there will hopefully be some new faces in the teams soon.

There are still a few niggles with the JustGo candidate management system and these are being dealt with as they crop up. There are also a few people who struggle with IT and need a bit more help accessing the system – Mary is really supportive in this respect.

The finances appear to have picked up – I'm told that we broke even, which is an improvement from what I've heard about the last couple of years.

George Plant

Comments

No comments

Query from JP re Training and Equipment report. RM to look into it.

UIS Report to BCA Council For the meeting on 5th April 2022

First of all, please accept my apologies for not being at the meeting, with luck, I will be on my way to Mulu, although Malaysian entry requirements are making life very difficult.

Everything within the UIS at the moment is geared towards the International Congress, which is in Lyon from July 24th to July 31st, please get all details from the website: <https://uis2021.speleos.fr/>

As ever, it will be a fantastic affair for keen cavers, there will be an excellent variety of local caves to visit, to all standards, and details will be available on the website. Everything seems reasonably priced, although of course transport is going up dramatically in cost. It is an ideal opportunity to

make international contacts which are always useful when organising foreign expeditions, getting ideas on other gear, international cave science etc etc.

The other big topic of course is the war in Ukraine. Both Russia and Ukraine are members of the International Union of Speleology. Initially the UIS were taking a middle of the road line on how to handle the situation, but things have got so extreme in Ukraine that attitudes are hardening, many international organisations and academic institutions are ostracising Russia. Let's hope things calm down in Eastern Europe as soon as possible.

Please look on the International Congress of Speleology website <https://uis2021.speleos.fr/> and also the International Union of Speleology website: <https://uis-speleo.org/>

Have a very good meeting.

Andy Eavis
March 22

FSE delegate report to BCA Council April 2022.

The invasion of Ukraine has dominated the European issues and the FSE bureau posted a statement on 11th March condemning the actions of Russian army and asking cavers throughout Europe to try and assist the Ukrainian people in any way possible. Ukraine's delegate to the FSE is Bogdan Ridush a palaeontologist at the Chernvtsti National University in Western Ukraine near the Romanian border and provides updates on social media.

This summer will be a busy time for international congresses and gatherings due to the backlog caused by the pandemic.

Planning the FSE's part in the International Year of the Caves and Karst (IYCK) and the International Congress of Speleology (ICS) 24th - 31st July in France continues. FSE scholarships to encourage young cavers to attend the ICS are being offered by the FSE. The offer ends on 17th April.

The Berger camp (20th July to 10th August) is also open to registrations.

The General Assembly Meeting (GAM) in October was held as a virtual meeting. The members of the bureau have remained the same with no new additions.

There will not be a Eurospeleo Forum in name at the International Congress of Speleology (ICS) this year because of issues around French sponsorship though the GAM of the FSE will be held at the ICS. This year's Forum (ESF) will be held in Burgos, Spain in September.

Bureau meetings have given us the opportunity to reflect upon the structure of the bureau, our roles and responsibilities in a changing world and the statutes that support our federation. A small working group will be established to look at this in more detail.

Opportunities to offer ESP project money recently has been seriously limited due to travel restrictions and expeditions being postponed.

Considerable work continues to be invested in maintaining the system of sponsoring European projects, through the EuroSpeleo Projects (ESP), the EuroSpeleo Forums (ESF), as well as the EuroSpeleo Protection Label (ESPL).

Our strongest commission, the European Cave Protection Commission (ECPC) continues to effectively engage in issues that are vital to protect our caves and karst. The 6th EuroSpeleo Protection Symposium "Assessing, monitoring and protecting cave biotopes and geotopes through Natura 2000" was held in Germany from 26.10.21. to 30.10.21. This was a very successful event.

Ged Campion.

BCA delegate to FSE

Comments

GC reported that the closing date for grant support from FSE to attend the International Congress has been extended to 17th April.

BCA are promoting a Grant, with a closing date of the 11th April, JW reported no takers as yet.

Agenda Item 11:

AGM 2022 will be on the 12 June by Zoom.

Timeline

Notification was sent out before 6/2/22, this was posted on the BCA website and on UKCaving.

Agenda has been posted on the BCA website

Deadline for receipt of nominations, proposals etc passed at midnight on 20/3/22

Deadline for reports 29/5/22

Deadline for posting reports 5/6/22

Voting until midnight 26/6/22

Proposal from Josh White

Removal of 2 Individual and 2 group representatives

Over the last few AGMS council has struggled to fully fill these roles, and when they have the roles there is very little output from these members.

I propose that we reduce the number of individual representatives to 2 and group representatives to 2, with one representative of each to be elected at each AGM with a term of two years.

If this proposal is accepted, the individual and group representative with the highest number of votes at this AGM will accept the role.

The relevant constitutional changes would be as follows:

6.2 The Association shall have a National Council comprised of the Officers of the Association, up to ~~four~~ two representatives from the class of Group Members, up to ~~four~~ two representatives from the class o Individual Members.

Proposed: Josh White (14859)

Seconded: Howard Jones (18515)

Agenda Item 12: CRoW

The Welsh Government has responded, Stuart France updated the meeting.

The case was compromised on the steps of the Court House in Dec 2021.

The Welsh Government would respond to cavers submissions.

The effect was that by abandoning the case, we allowed the other side to decide the outcome of the case so we effectively lost.

The opportunity has gone, the Welsh Government is happy with the status quo.

SF's opinion was that our best chance is now with the Glover Report.

Costs are still to be decided.

In his opinion the case should have gone ahead as we had a chance of winning, it all went wrong at the last minute.

AH said he thought we could have a Judicial Review if we failed, SF replied that there were no legal grounds for a Review.

AM have we had a professional look at this yet and been given an opinion, our Solicitor thought we had grounds for appeal, we are waiting for the Barristers response.

SF's opinion was that we don't have a case anymore.

LW agreed with what SF had said and that spending money to argue over costs would simply cost us more money.

AH asked I assume this doesn't make any difference to BCA's position on CROW, SF said that it doesn't change our position.

SF said that NRW and the Welsh Government had encouraged us to bring the case to establish the position on CROW and caving.

JW we need to wait and see what our legal advisors say.

RM agreed with JW, there will be another Council Meeting before the AGM where we can ask if they want to proceed further.

LW said they should be giving their opinion for free.

RM will circulate the council when any further information comes out.

SF and JP very unhappy with the result.

AM said we need to wait until we get the answer from the legal team.

SF asked to be changed as client from DR, LW said that this would be unlikely to happen, HJ agreed with this.

RM suggested that the Executive take control and try to work something out, no objections from the meeting.

Agenda Item 13: Any Other Business

None

Agenda Item 14: Date of next Council meeting

7th June (tbc)

