SOUTH WEST ORIENTEERING ASSOCIATION

SECRETARY: Helen Kelsey: 07816367460 / 01278 723246

kelseys4@btinternet.com

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING Tuesday 19th October 2021 by zoom

PRESENT:

Christine Vince KERNO (chairman); Helen Kelsey BOK (secretary); Steve Robertson QO (treasurer); Richard Sansbury QO (fixtures); Dick Keighley WIM (cttee); Arthur Vince KERNO (cttee); Liz Yeadon SARUM; Andy Reynolds DEVON: Neil Fraser NWO; Alasdair Shaw QO; Kevin Pickering WIM; Richard Hudson BOK; Gavin Clegg WSX.

1. Apologies.

Pete Maliphant BOK (cttee and SWJOS); Julie Astin WSX (cttee); Carol Iddles BOK; Roger Hargreaves KERNO; Jolyon Medlock WSX; Paul Taunton NGOC.

1. Chairman’s update.

Nothing to report not covered elsewhere

1. Approval of minutes of last meeting. - approved
2. Matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda. - none
3. Review of 2021 AGM minutes – the discussion about the amount of SWOA levy was noted and agreed for discussion under item 6.
4. Treasurer and Membership Secretary’s report.

Grant applications were reported ***see Appendix 1***. All grants had now been paid. Tom Perry will be writing a report on the training camp which took place at Inverness (instead of Stockholm) in the summer.

Account summary details were reported ***see Appendix 2***, showing that there had been very few expenses apart from the grants and considerable income from levies. The differing amount of levy from WSX and WIM was queried as the recent very successful Caddihoe Chase had been staged by both clubs jointly. DK explained that all the registration had been arranged through WIM, and profits from the event were then shared between the two clubs.

Account status ***see Appendix 3***, showed that committee approval was required for the usual £1000 towards SWJOS – agreed unanimously and £784 contribution from the region for the English Orienteering Council. This represents £0.80 per senior SWOA member, which is the recommended rate. It was noted that the English Orienteering Council is the body which supports the fielding of an English team for home international events -agreed unanimously.

Amount of SWOA levy.

SWOA levy has been at £0.60 per adult (£0.20 per junior) for some years and there had been suggestion at the AGM that the committee should review this. An increase was discussed briefly, but given that SWOA accounts are healthy and we have sufficient to cover the likely grant requests for the year, and the huge raise in fees for permissions/land access that clubs have to cover, an increase was not felt to be appropriate. It was suggested that maybe we should be considering a reduction or possibly a temporary “holiday” from levy payments. Club reps were asked whether they could indicate the state of their club finances currently to establish whether a reduction would be useful. The general feeling was that whilst last year had been a drain on resources with few events and refunds paid out for cancelled events, most clubs were now in a better position and managing, some having made decent profits on recent big events. It was agreed that levy should remain at current level for 12 months and then be reviewed.

1. Fixtures Report

Recent events

RS reported on two recent successful major events in the region - the Caddihoe Chase and British Championships, and asked for feedback from the organising clubs.

Caddihoe- photos of each control site had to be submitted to Forestry England before and after the event, showing no damage at all. WIM/WSX had received an email from FE the night before the event asking for a change of route and for a control to be moved – however FE accepted that there would only be very few competitors using this control as it was only on junior courses. This sort of last minute request does highlight the lack of understanding about how events are run.

British Championships – Andy Reynolds thanked all those who had helped from all the SW clubs. The very bad weather caused the parking situation to become very difficult and had there been another 50 competitors, it would have caused major road disruption in the area. This reinforces the importance of having a backup plan which will really work – we can’t just hope that we won’t get bad weather.

Upcoming events

Compass Sport Cup regional round (QO) all permissions approved.

British Night Championships (NGOC) in a few weeks,

WIM hostng BNC in 2023, but this can no longer be in the New Forest (see permissions section).

Having attended a recent National Fixtures meeting, RS reported that the British Championships will again be in SW in 2025 (this year’s was an extra, standing in for a region unable to offer it) It will be back to the format of Long Race on Saturday and Relay on Sunday. RS would like to hear from clubs as to whether we feel we can offer this an hopefully a club willing to take the lead, it could be at any time of year depending upon area availability.

In 2022 it will be SW turn to host the Southern Championships, this will be held in conjunction with the Caddihoe Chase.

Offers still needed for

Caddihoe 2023,

Veteran Home International 2023 (Autumn fixture needing a long distance and relay event (could be held in conjunction with Caddihoe)

Junior Inter Regional Championship 2024

Permissions

DK reported that the New Forest heathland areas have now been banned for use from February, rather than March, as ground nesting birds are nesting earlier.

Night events are no longer allowed in the New Forest as a report from Natural England states that night orienteering disturbs wildlife, so this ban could spread to other areas.

Liz Yeadon reported that the ranger at Hampton was not happy after the event, claiming that orienteers had parked on the verges.

British Orienteering has appointed a new Access and Environment Officer Emma Monkton, who has been involved in negotiating New Forest permissions and there is a hope that British Orienteering will now get involved in negotiating with FE to relieve some of the permissions difficulties.

Some members of SWOA continue to write to their MPs, some of whom chase it up with FE, but replies from FE are very unhelpful, saying that orienteering clubs are cancelling their permissions requests, whereas the reasons for this were FE not passing on relevant information in time, FE increasing the fees making junior events impossible, FE giving an initial response claiming the request wouldn’t get anywhere.

The one optimistic point in the letter from FE was that there is a possibility of restarting meetings with local FE representatives, which means that clubs will be in a better position to find out FE’s plans, thus giving us a better chance of success with applications.

QO has a meeting scheduled with local rangers for the Quantocks and Blackdowns.

Permissions from FE are often very late making it very difficult to advertise events in good time.

Fixtures policies

RS asked for the committee to approve the policy for agreeing precedence of events. Forest season is now quite short (Sep – Jan) so it may be time to consider a change in policy.

Kevin Pickering asked whether we could have a copy of these policies and discuss at the next meeting. **Action : RS to circulate fixtures policy before next meeting, HK to add to agenda.**

1. Recorder of Controller’s Report

Nothing new to report.

HK had been asked by Carol Iddles to suggest that it would be easier to contact controllers if we had easy access to controllers’ email addresses. AV was not happy to put these on the website as some people had been the victim of scams when email addresses were readily available to public. AV suggested that someone in the club should have access to the BOF membership list which includes email addresses.

1. SWJOS report.

Nothing new to report since AGM

1. Coaching

CV and LY have agreed to organise a National Coaching Conference in 2023

1. Increasing club membership – how BOK has succeeded Carol Iddles circulated a report on the factors that had affected increase in membership, ***See Appendix 4.*** Club reps thanked her for this and would take it back to their clubs to discuss. Richard Hudson said that probably the most important factor was the momentum of events. Alaisdair Shaw said that QO had suffered because JOG evens had fallen foul of the new FE pricing system and permissions difficulty, which has affected their membership numbers.
2. AOB.

Kevin Pickering has the Caddihoe Trophies – need to consider what to do with them. **Action HK to add to next agenda**

1. Club reps report to clubs.
2. Date of next meeting.

16th November 2021 (needs to be 3rd Tuesday in month as CV unable to attend on 2nd Tuesday)

Appendices

Appendix 1: SWOA Grant Applications July – Oct 2021



Appendix 2: SWOA Account Summary



Appendix 3: SWOA Account Status



Appendix 4: Report from BOK about how their membership has increased by 10% over the last year.

I believe that BOK has bucked the trend this year by:

1. Emailing all lapsed members twice – once in late January, once in early March
2. Welcoming all new members personally with a phone call, usually within 24 hours of them joining. That is then followed up with a welcome email.
3. Answering all queries promptly, usually within a few hours of receiving an email.
4. Having a strong junior section led by Jamie Hayward which has brought many new juniors and their families into the club.
5. Having a strong publicity team who email members (and others on the mailing list) each month giving details of ‘what’s on’.
6. Having an excellent website that has all the necessary information for beginners/members, and ensuring that newcomers are directed to it.
7. Having a good presence on social media, and using it regularly to inform members.
8. Setting up many virtual orienteering courses using Usynlig O within the Bristol area during the lockdown which are still available - in addition to the POCs.
9. Having Zoom strength and conditioning classes when we could not have the weekly training runs during lockdown (now due to re-start in addition to training runs)
10. Finally, but most importantly - putting on 23 events of all types since lockdown was lifted at the beginning of April this year. Ensuring that almost all of those had courses suitable for juniors.

Of course, Bristol OK has a natural advantage as it has access to a large population base within its area, and Bristol City Council has readily given permission for events within the city.

Carol Iddles Oct 2021