



2023 Annual General Meeting of the BHPA

Minutes of the meeting held on Saturday 25th February 2023 at Holywell Park Conference Centre, Loughborough, commencing at 10am.

These minutes are not to be taken as an accurate record without referring to the minutes of the Executive Council meeting at which they were approved.

Present

Marc Asquith
Martin Baxter
Bill Bell
Ed Cunliffe
Ian Curren
Martin Heywood
Angus Langford
Michelle Lanman
Angus Pinkerton
Tom Prideaux-Brune
Joe Schofield
Mark Shaw
Dave Thompson

In attendance:

Brett Janaway
Steve Young
15 voting members of
the Association

Apologies:

Jenny Buck
Paul Dancey
Julie Drake

ITEM 1: CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

BHPA Chairman, Marc Asquith, welcomed everyone to the 31st AGM and his last AGM as Chairman. He informed those present that a GoTo Meeting link would be published on Facebook for members to join remotely, the Facebook streaming service being unavailable.

Marc apologised for the mix up with the start time of the meeting and explained that he would begin with awards and Officers Reports and leave the formal agenda until 11.00am so all that wanted could attend.

ITEM 2: AWARDS

2.1 BHPA Awards of Merit were awarded to Mark Bignell, Dave Cowan, Norman McNeil, and Barney Townsend. All were present to receive their awards personally.

2.2 The Wings Over a Cloud award for the best article in Skywings during 2022 was awarded to Robin Wallace for '50K or Splash' printed in November. As Robin was unable to collect the award in person it was presented to Tom Prideaux-Brune on Robin's behalf.

2.3 A framed copy of December 1992 Skywings, the first he edited, was awarded to Joe Schofield to mark 30 years of editorship.

ITEM 3: OFFICERS' REPORTS

3.1 FSC

3.1.1 Angus Pinkerton began by stressing the importance of submitting Incident Reports. We now have 20 years worth of reports which can be searched online. Submitting a report is easy. It allows us to collate similar types of incidents and track them over time. This allows us to develop our training systems, advise pilots of higher risk activities and informs the development of equipment standards.

3.1.2 The Technical Team have been busy completing school inspections, examinations, and training. There are plans to hold a Trainers' Conference specifically for power instructors later this year.

3.1.3 There has been a comprehensive overhaul and redesign of the Pilot Handbook. Mark Dale's extensive rewrite, with substantial contributions from all three members of the BHPA Tech Team has resulted in a bang-up-to-date handbook. It is due off the press around now and will be available by the end of April at the latest.

3.1.4 Angus finished by expressing his thanks to all the people who volunteer to work on, and with, the FSC.

3.2 Insurance

3.2.1 Martin Heywood reported that there has been a spot of turbulence in our insurance position, and we have seen another significant hike in our insurance premium. Our claims history has taken a bit of a battering and given the reluctance of underwriters generally, in the current cold insurance market, we are not really surprised about the

rise, it could have been worse.

3.2.2 Martin stressed the importance of preserving video evidence if involved in an incident. Where there has been an injury or death, camcorder images become 'evidence' meaning that wilful disposal could be a criminal offence. It doesn't matter whether the main case is an insurance claim in the civil court process, or it is a criminal prosecution, you could be in hot water if it disappears or looks as though it has been edited or erased.

Steve Young asked why you must not alter a recording. Martin explained that the recording is legally classed as a document and any editing could be classed as tampering.

3.2.3 Martin Baxter commented that we have had requests from some landowners for £10 million cover, but when we've gone back and said no, they have accepted it.

3.2.4 Marc Asquith added that we have two claims, one large and one small, which have just gone past the three year four month time limit without a claim. They have been removed from insurers reserves.

3.3 Sites

Martin Baxter's sites report was included in the AGM pack.

3.4 Competitions

3.4.1 In Jenny Buck's absence Bill Bell reported that it had been a good year for competitions. We now have a World Champion, in Russ Ogden, and a winning British Team. It is important that we capitalise on this success.

3.4.2 Bill congratulated Jennie Buck on successfully completing her first year as Comps Director.

3.5 Paramotor Liaison

Ed Cunliffe's paramotor report was included in the AGM pack.

3.6 Admin

The Admin report was included in the AGM pack, the Chairman expressed his thanks to all the office staff for their work during the year.

3.7 Skywings

Paul Dancey's report was included in the AGM pack.

3.8 Website

Paul Dancey's report was included in the AGM pack.

ITEM 4: RESOLUTIONS

At 11.00 am the formal part of the meeting commenced.

4.1 Chairman's Report

Marc Asquith explained that the flags and signs were on show because we had hosted the EHPU annual AGM in the Lake District earlier in the month.

4.2 That the Accounts and Report of the Executive Council for the year ended 31 March 2021 be approved.

Angus Langford presented his finance report.

In the financial year ending 31st March 2022 we saw the end of covid lockdowns and experienced a surge in participation in outdoor activities. Our sport attracted a lot of attention resulting in a doubling of the number of day tickets and a growth in membership of 7%. This increase in volumes together with fee increases gave a rise in revenue of 12% compared with the previous year. Our costs returned to pre-covid levels, except for insurance which increased by 14%. The net effect was a surplus of £88K which has been added to reserves.

In the current year we are seeing a steep increase in costs, and we expect to end the year with a loss of around £50K. This is not unexpected, as Exec took the view last year that some of the surplus the Association had made could be used to cushion the impact of rapidly increasing costs of subscriptions.

Looking forward to 2023/2024 we again face difficult decisions over the level of subscriptions. Inflation is at 11.1%, and we are expecting a further £40K increase in our third party insurance premium. All on Exec share the desire to keep subscriptions at a minimum, but it is likely that they will need to increase by around 10% from March 2023.

Members voted unanimously in favour of approving the accounts and the resolution was carried.

4.3 That six members be elected to the Executive Council from the following six candidates: M Asquith, J Buck, P Dancey, B Janaway, T Prideaux-Brune & S Young.

Marc Asquith explained that Gareth Bird had departed mid-term and that Julie Drake had decided not to stand for re-election. He expressed his thanks to both.

As it was an un-contested election the chairman dealt with this matter *en bloc*. All six candidates were unanimously elected.

Marc welcomed Brett Janaway and Steve Young to the Executive Council.

4.4 That Fortus Audit LLP be appointed as auditors and the Executive Council be authorised to fix their remuneration.

Members voted unanimously in favour and the resolution was carried.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 11.15am.