

THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR SHOOTING & CONSERVATION

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT MARFORD MILL, ROSSETT, WREXHAM, ON THURSDAY 26th JANUARY 2006

Present:	John Graham	Chairman
	Michael Alldis	
	Jan Andrews	
	Eric Begbie	
	Simon Breasley	
	Graham Crompton-Howe	
	Michael Evans	
	Lee Freeston	
	David Frost	
	Duncan Greaves	
	Robert Irvine	
	Andy Macfarlane	
	Peter Pursglove	
	Ray Walters	
	Tom Wylie	

Ex-Officio Members

John Swift	Chief Executive
Glynn Cook	Director, Wales
Christopher Graffius	Director of Communications
Roger Pollen,	Director, Northern Ireland
Philippa Marshall-Purves	Director of Business Management
Colin Shedden	Director, Scotland
Vivienne Jasper	IPS Secretary

Secretary:	Amanda Forshaw	Minute Secretary
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In part time	Stuart Scull	Head of Gamekeeping
Attendance:	In attendance to provide an update on Avian Influenza	

A1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Walter Cole, William Notton and Simon Hamlyn. Carl Eriksson and Ian Haddon were not in attendance.

A2 Confidential Agenda Items

Council considered an appropriate system for identifying confidential matters for Council meetings.

It was agreed that the contents of the Business Management Report would always be regarded as confidential.

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It was agreed that the Chairman, when preparing the Agenda, would mark those items he considered confidential.

It was also agreed that at the start of each meeting Council would determine the items that should remain confidential.

It was further agreed that future Minutes should be marked confidential until they were confirmed at which time the word confidential would be removed.

It was agreed that a definition of 'confidential' should be determined and to this end it was agreed that a paper would be produced by the Chief Executive and brought to the February meeting of Council.

It was agreed that a synopsis of the minutes of Advisory Committees could be placed on the website, at the discretion of the committee Chairman, before they were ratified by the relevant committee.

A3 Declaration of Interests

The Chairman declared an interest in item B1 on the Agenda and confirmed that he would hand the Chair over the Vice-Chairman for that part of the meeting. There were no other declarations of interest.

A4 To confirm the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 17th November 2005

The Minutes were duly accepted as a fair and accurate record of the proceedings.

A5 To take Matters Arising from the meeting held on 17th November 2005.

A5.01 BASC as a sporting agency.

Item on main agenda.

A5.02 Paper on gameshooting. A revised paper was distributed to Council members that incorporated appropriate comments received at the last Council meeting in November. Some of the required action points are relevant to BASC and some have a wider remit. The Chief Executive and Director of Communications will present a summary of the points at the February Council meeting.

To remain as an action point.

(a) Update on Langholm. It was noted that progress was being made and that as there was likely to be a shortfall in the funding; a request for further funds may be made.

To remain as an action point.

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(b) Consideration has been given in the Conservation and Land Management Dept. to whether there was an unequal balance between support of wildfowling over game shooting.
Noted that this issue has been considered and support is well-balanced at present. No further action.

A5.03 Analysis Paper on Animal Aid. – Head of Gamekeeping was still to complete the paper.

To be brought to the February meeting of Council.

A5.04 Re-development at Trochry

Item on main agenda.

A5.05 Position statement on wind farms and coastal erosion

(1) Literary reviews to be undertaken and posted on website.
It was noted that a review had been conducted and was too big to place on the website. A paper has been placed on the website instead.

(2) Expert on climate change research and development to be invited to a future meeting of Council.
Representative from English Nature to attend the March meeting of Council to provide a presentation on climate change.

A5.06 Proposed Communications Centre.

Item on main agenda.

A5.07 The provision of advice to membership on suitability of candidates for election to Council.

Item on main agenda.

A5.08 Review of BASC support to WHT

Presentation to be provided by WHT to the February 2006 Meeting of Council.

A5.09 Proposed DEFRA Code on snares.

To be placed on the agenda of the next Gameshooting Advisory Committee and a paper drawn up for submission to Council.

A5.10 Increase in Buzzards in Wales. A summary of a meeting held with CCW was read to Council. It was confirmed that all raptor species have increased in number but that the CCW have no concerns at this time.
It was noted that the BASC, Wales would continue to raise the issue with the relevant agencies.

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A5.11 Consideration of the provision of relevant papers to Council members wishing to attend committee meetings as observers.

Item on main agenda.

A5.12 Provision of draft statement on Avian Influenza prior to insertion onto website has been completed.

A5.13 Provision of press release prior to release has been completed.

A5.14 Meeting organised by CLA to discuss the Shoot Summit.

Item in Chief Executive's Report

A5.15 Memorandum of Understanding between BASC and Countryside Foundation for Education. It was noted that a number of drafts had been dealt with.

It was agreed that the document would be circulated to Council members in its final form prior to signature.

Additional Agenda Item – Update on Avian Influenza

It was noted that publicity had been focussed on the recent outbreak in Turkey and that DEFRA continued to push their advice. BASC had made 3 press releases, pushed their campaign to urge members to 'buy British', and were in the process of holding 8 roadshows across the country targeted at gamekeeper members. It was reported that the roadshows were well attended with around 50 members each evening. It was noted that information was to be circulated to 1800 clubs and syndicates. The deadline for registering flocks of 50 or more birds, which applies to England, Wales and Scotland, was 28th February. In Northern Ireland, collections of 1 or more birds must be registered.

A5.1 Verbal Up-date on Redevelopment at Trochry

It was confirmed that the building is now practically finished and in the snagging stage prior to the issue of a practical completion certificate by the architect and the completion certificate from the local authority. It was expected that the car park and drainage work would be complete by Monday. It was reported that fundraising efforts continued with a recent donation of £4k being made, bringing the total funds raised to some £70k. It is hoped that the official opening will be in Spring. It was noted that photographs would be e-mailed to Council members.

To remain as an action point for the February agenda.

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A5.2 Verbal up-date on proposed Communications Centre

It was reported that the Planning Office had reviewed the plans prior to their submission for formal approval and that they were content with the proposal subject to comments from the Highways Agency, who had visited the site. It was hoped to make a formal submission before the end of the month with consent expected at the end of March. During this period production information would be drawn up, contractors would be identified and the tendering process would begin. It is then anticipated that groundwork will commence in 5 to 6 months. It was reported that fundraising efforts were now underway.

To remain as an action point

B1 To receive a paper on Confidentiality of Council business

The Chairman stood down for this item and the debate was conducted by the Vice-Chairman.

Council considered a paper which proposed an addition to the Council section of the Role & Operations Paper advocating that Council meetings be conducted under the Chatham House Rule.

Following a lengthy debate:

It was resolved that except where Council has decided that a matter will be treated as confidential, Council meetings shall be conducted under the Chatham House rules.

One Council member voted against the resolution but agreed to abide by it whilst retaining the right to resign from Council at anytime if he felt that there was something so fundamental that he had to speak out.

B2 To receive a paper on a review of the number of Council meetings

Council received a paper which reviewed the number of current Council meetings against the historical number. Following discussion:

It was noted that the current format would remain until at least June 2006, with the new Council left to decide if change was required.

B3 To receive a paper on the succession of Chairman

Council considered a paper outlining the workload and time commitment of the current Chairman and the impact of this in appointing a successor.

It was agreed that this is an important issue and there is a need to consider the desired role of Chairman in the future.

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B4 To receive a paper on the provision of relevant papers to Council members wishing to attend committee meetings as observers

A paper was presented to Council on the provision of relevant papers to members wishing to attend Committees as observers. It was noted that prior to circulation the paper had been considered by the organisation's legal adviser who highlighted issues for discussion and decision.

It was agreed that this issue will be included in the paper on confidentiality which will be presented to the February meeting of Council.

B5 To receive a paper on the provision of advice to the membership regarding the suitability of candidates for Council election

Council considered a paper regarding advice to membership on the suitability of candidates for Council election. Following discussion it was agreed that the instigation of a weekend workshop and the attendance at a future Council meeting would be useful to members considering standing for election.

It was agreed that the Chief Executive would provide a format for the induction of new Council members and produce a timescale and agenda for the training of prospective Council members.

It was agreed that candidates standing for this year's election would be invited to the February meeting of Council.

B6 To receive a report on BASC as a Sporting Agency

Council received a paper on BASC as a sporting agency and noted that work was underway with regard to the provision of an opportunities and benefits database together with an ideas forum. Further updates would be provided at future Council meetings.

B7 To receive a paper on regenerating ownership, participation and commitment

Council received this paper and were in agreement that the proposals contained within it were worth further exploration.

It was agreed that paper's author would attend the next Country and Regional Directors operations meeting to discuss the ideas further and then to liaise with the Chief Executive, the Director of Operations and the Director of Communications in order to progress the idea.

C1 To take the Minutes of the Advisory Committees

C1.1 Deer Advisory Committee – 25.10.05

The Minutes of the Deer Advisory Committee were accepted as presented.

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C1.2 Training Advisory Committee – 2.11.05

The Minutes of the Training Advisory Committee were accepted as presented.

It was agreed to change the name of this committee to the Shooting Standards Advisory Committee

C1.3 Game Shooting Advisory Committee – 11.11.05

The Minutes of the Game Shooting Advisory Committee were accepted as presented. Noted that the recommendations of the Game-Shooting Advisory Committee to be incorporated in the paper on the Future of Game Shooting.

C1.4 Northern Ireland Committee – 22.11.05

The Minutes of the Northern Ireland Committee were accepted as presented.

C1.5 Scottish Committee – 8.12.05

The Minutes of the Scottish Committee were accepted as presented.

C2 To take the Chairman's Activities Report

The Chairman's Activities Report was accepted as presented.

C3 To take the Chief Executive's Report

Council were taken through the minutes of a meeting held on the 16 January 2006, with the CLA, BASC, CA and GCT in attendance.

Council agreed to the principle of continuing discussions in relation to the future of the Shoot Summit meetings.

Council noted that a paper would be circulated to them regarding a meeting between HMRC, BASC and CLA and that a member's pack was being produced in relation to the VAT compliance by shoot businesses across the UK.

The Chief Executive provided a brief report on the shoot assurance scheme. He said that the CLA executive committee were to discuss the matter but there are still some issues to sort out with partners, and that when that had been done he would bring the matter back to council.

The Chief Executive's Report was accepted as presented.

C.4. To take the Director of Communications' Report

An update regarding cage laying systems was provided to Council. It was noted that the Minister had given assurance that BASC's position would be included in the Code of Practice.

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An update regarding the Animal Welfare Bill and specifically tail docking was provided to Council. The Communications team had sent briefing notes and photographs to MP's and were planning to lobby Parliament in February. It was noted that a postcard would be included in the next issue of Shooting and Conservation and that members would be encouraged to post these to their MP. It was noted that a discussion had been held with ACPO as they too would require an exemption for sniffer dogs and that they had been urged to make representations. It was also noted that the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Bill still retained the provision allowing the docking of working and sniffer dogs.

The Director of Communications Report was accepted as presented.

C.5. To take the Director of Business Management's Report

It was noted that changes may be introduced to the way VAT is charged and that this may be applied to membership subscriptions. Caution on spending was currently being exercised.

It was reported that the pattern to membership remained erratic and that the net effect of this on income was flat.

It was noted that a set of final figures would be provided to the February meeting of Council.

The Director of Business Management's Report was accepted as presented.

C.6. To take the Director of Operation's Report

The Director of Operation's Report was accepted as presented.

D.1 To take Any Other Business by Leave of the Chairman

Council were reminded of the need to ensure that their requirements for overnight accommodation before the AGM were communicated to the IPS Secretary before 31 January 2006, as a room could not be guaranteed after that date.

The Chairman of FAWAC reminded Council that it had previously ruled that he was to be kept informed whenever BASC was to support a member in a court case. The Director of Operations report mentioned two instances of support for members that hadn't been advised to the Chairman of FAWAC, contrary to the agreement. It was confirmed that the agreed procedure must be followed.

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A query was raised regarding the travel arrangements for BASC staff as it had been brought to the attention of a Council member that a member of staff had been using 1st class to travel by train to London. It was noted that it can be cheaper to travel 1st class rather than economy class when advance bookings were made.

Council members were asked to let the Director of Communications know if they were planning to attend the gundog lobby on the 8th February.

D.2. Date of Next Meeting.

It was confirmed that the next meeting of Council will be held on Thursday 23rd February, 2006, commencing at 9.00 am.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 3.30 pm.

Signed.....Date.....
Chairman