



Berkshire Ornithological Club

Minutes of Committee Meeting

held on Tuesday 4th November 2014
at Park House, University of Reading

Present: (president), Tim Ball (chair), Mike Turton (Secretary), Bill Nicoll (Treasurer), Ted Rogers, Iain Oldcorn, Chris Foster, John Walker, Robin Dryden, Ray Reedman (RRe).

1. Apologies for absence: Neil Bucknell, Martin Sell, Renton Righelato (RRi), Becky Thomas.

2. **Minutes of the Committee meeting held on 5th June 2014**

The minutes were approved and signed.

3. **Matters Arising**

Item 3/11 (Archivist): MT and RRi have handed over archives to Peter Hutchins.

Action: BN to hand over financial archives

Item 5 (VAT exemption): The Club cannot claim VAT exemption on room hire

Item 12 (Sale of BofB artwork): actions not completed. MT has been advised that best way to sell these is via eBay. TR can handle this once reserve price known.

Action: MT/TR to arrange sale.

4. **Treasurer's Report**

Report was circulated prior to this meeting, but the general fund summary sheet was missing.

Action: BN to send the missing sheet to MT for circulation to committee

Approval of 2013/14 accounts

Due to the level of turnover, the Club only requires an independent examination rather than a full audit. BN has therefore asked for accountants to carry out independent examination instead of a full audit on the accounts. This was approved with one abstention. MT is checking with check with Charity Commission whether this acceptable given the wording in the constitution.

Action: MT to check and report back to committee

The wording in the constitution needs to be reviewed after the 2014 AGM and changed to give more flexibility. The committee should to look for a member who could carry out an independent examination for next year.

There is a discrepancy between the final figure in the accounts and the balance in the bank was discussed. The exact figure is unclear (possibly up to £1,000), but is probably not the same as the discrepancy last year, which was corrected by the auditors. The current discrepancy will be discussed with the auditors to try and identify the cause (to prevent it happening again) and correct the amount. BN assured the committee that no money had gone missing; the problem is most likely to be an accounting error (possibly historical) causing a discrepancy between the books and the bank balance.

Action: IO to review accounts with BN to try and find discrepancy.

Coach trips ran at a loss in 2013/14, a similar figure has been included in the budget for 2014/15.

Room hire costs keep rising significantly.

The discrepancy between the figure for the transfer to the BBAG under expenditure and in the closing statement for the BBAG account was due to a payment of £103 which had been entered twice.

On the Conservation Fund sheet, the 'Pangbourn barn owl group' needs to be changed to the 'Pang Valley Barn Owl Group'.

Action: BN to make change

If the discrepancy has not been resolved before the AGM, then it needs to be reported to the AGM that the Club is still in discussion with the auditor about this.

Approval of 2014/15 budget

The budget was circulated prior to this meeting and discussed.

There is no budget for the conservation fund as income and outgoings are all ad-hoc.

A budget of £1,000 has been included for website redevelopment.

The committee thanked BN for his work on the accounts and the budget.

Membership Secretary's Report

Report circulated prior to meeting.

Quite a lot of effort and postage cost goes into processing QMR permit applications. It is not clear how many permit holders use their permits, except when a rarity is present.

There has been no further contact from the University Ornithological Society about joint membership.

Action: IO to contact BT for an update.

Potential TVERC grants scheme

MT reported on this and RRI's response to it on behalf of the BOC. No further action required until TVERC publish proposals.

5. **Programme Sub-committee report**

The report was circulated prior to this meeting and discussed.

The balance of talks should be maintained – there are people who like travelogues and people who prefer more scientific/conservation based talks. Other speakers and topics were discussed.

There is a concern over falling attendances at talks.

The University offers BOC a discount on the room hire, but costs continue to increase.

Room 109 is not available for Sept 2015 meeting. Room at St Peter's will seat 60, but there isn't much parking. Suggestions welcome for alternative venues.

Action: RRe to check availability and costs for Maiden Place Community Centre.

Proposal: that the September meeting is retained for the next 2 years, but at an alternative cheaper venue with suitable facilities. All trustees present in favour; 2 absent trustees had expressed a view that it should be removed from programme.

Action: MT to confirm attendance at September 2014 meeting.

A request was made to reinstate asking members for their recent records at meetings.

A typo on the programme card for the date of the 2nd January meeting was noted. Action will be taken to notify members.

RRe notified the committee that he would like to stand down after this planning cycle.

6. **Conservation Sub-committee report**

Minutes of the July Conservation Committee meeting were circulated prior to this meeting.

If BBOWT are unable to take on the management of Padworth Lane GP, BOC would be able to assist in setting up an independent group to run it.

It was agreed that BOC should be represented on the BLNP.

There has been some shooting over Woolhampton pits. It was pointed out that this is not a nature reserve, but a facility shared with fishing and shooting groups.

A query was raised regarding the effect of recent clearance work at Field Farm which has destroyed habitat.

7. **Editorial Board Report**

The report was circulated prior to this meeting.

Secretary to sort out the distribution of the 2011 report once the publication date is finalised. Distribution should wait until after Christmas to avoid Christmas post and allow members to collect reports at indoor meetings.

Action: new Secretary.

The committee were reminded that a new editor is needed.

8. **Website Redevelopment**

Specifications and quotation were circulated prior to this meeting and discussed.

Action: MT to get answers to questions from Jason and the sub-committee.

Action: BN to investigate online payment facility.

Action: MT to confirm hosting requirements and whether we need to change host.

The specification and quotation were approved subject to satisfactory answers being obtained to the questions raised.

9. **County Recorder/BRC review**

NDOC to be represented on the review panel by John Swallow.

The panel will need to meet at least twice; the first meeting will be soon after the BOC AGM.

10. **Events**

Earley Green Fair went well. Some enquiries about the Club from non-members.

TVERC Berkshire Recorders day: not much new interest.

There is an event at Reading Museum in March in conjunction with exhibition. RRe doing talk and taking BOC stand.

11. **Elections to Committee and other vacancies**

Nomination of Sally Wearing for post of Secretary was approved for presentation to the AGM.

Action: MT to follow up suggestion of candidate for committee vacancy.

Committee were reminded of the need for people to handle publicity and for a new report editor. Need to approach people individually as there has been no response to general appeals.

12. **Reports for consideration:**

Social Media Update

The report was circulated prior to this meeting.

Facebook improves publicity for meetings. As of June, there were 69 members on the Facebook group, of whom only 32 are BOC members.

Action: TR to restart sending out reminders of meetings to BOC members.

13. **Any Other Business**

TR asked for contributions to the newsletter by end November.

14. **Date and venue for next meeting**

Thursday 15th January 2015 at 7.30pm, Park House, University of Reading.

Action: MT to check date with Sally Wearing and ask Becky to book the room.