

Mountaineering Ireland AGM
Aherlow House Hotel and Lodges, Tipperary
Saturday 24th March 2018

Present: As per attendance list.

The meeting was chaired by Paul Barron, Chairperson of Mountaineering Ireland who welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Agenda:

1. Adoption of Standing Orders
2. Adoption of Minutes of the 2017 AGM
3. President's Address
4. Honorary Secretary's Report
5. Approval of Financial Statements for 2017
6. Appointment of Auditor for 2018
7. Election to membership of Clubs
8. Statements regarding Safeguarding and Anti-Doping
9. Motions (4)
10. Elections to the Board

Adoption of Standing Orders:

These were adopted by the Delegates present.

Adoption of Minutes of the last AGM:

These were adopted by the Delegates present.

Address by Paul Kellagher, President of Mountaineering Ireland:

Welcome to Mountaineering Irelands 2018 Annual General Meeting. The AGM Forms a key part of our governance function.

The Board of Mountaineering Ireland is a dedicated group of volunteers who are committed to the representation and advancement of all aspects of mountaineering on the island of Ireland and in encouraging our members to participate beyond these shores. It is an immense privilege to serve in my role as President and work with colleagues on the Board on behalf of the mountaineering community.

I wish to pay tribute to outgoing members of the Board, former President and Board member; Ursula MacPherson, Board members Ross Millar, Francis Hackett, Honorary Treasurer Nicky Hore and former Chairperson of Bord Oiliúint Sléibhe (BOS) Shay Walsh. Between them they have contributed immeasurably to the development of mountaineering, the governance of our organisation and the promotion of skills and learning.

One of the major developments of the year has been the establishment of an All-Ireland Mountain Training Board, replacing the previous Bord Oiliúint Sléibhe and Mountain Training Northern Ireland.

The newly established Mountain Training Board Ireland is the fulfilment of one of the strategic aims in our last strategic plan. I wish to pay tribute to Board members Dawson Stelfox and Shay Walsh and our Training Officer Jane Carney, who worked alongside me in bringing this project to fruition.

As mountaineers, the desire to strive for independence, personal responsibility and adventure are key principles underpinned by the development of personal skills to keep ourselves and our friends safe in the mountains. Such training, both formal and informal, is a key aspect of Mountaineering Ireland's work. The new Mountain Training Board is a sub-committee of Mountaineering Ireland, it will be chaired by Dawson Stelfox and will provide essential governance and direction in supporting our membership and our training providers.

The growing popularity of all aspects of mountaineering provides both opportunity and threat. Whilst the increase in participation is to be welcomed, in certain aspects it brings an increased challenge, both in terms of pressure on access and the impact on the mountains themselves. The pressure of tourism and increasing footfall in our mountains is perhaps most visible along the west with the growing popularity of the Wild Atlantic Way. In some areas there also appears to be an increase in tensions related to access. I wish to commend the work of our Access and conservation Committee and our Hillwalking Access and Conservation Officer for their commitment to addressing these challenges.

Continued access to the places we love and ensuring they are used and managed in a sustainable way must be at the forefront of our work in the period ahead. "Mountaineering Ireland's vision for the future of Ireland's mountains and upland areas", a significant piece of work developed through consultation with our membership, provides the basis for proactive and strategic engagement with policymakers and others who share our concern for Ireland's mountains.

Mountaineering Ireland has also continued to support and develop our younger members who have seen success in climbing competitions throughout the past year. In Edinburgh last May, three of our young climbers took podium places against a very strong field. It is a testimony to the work of Damien O'Sullivan and his team.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Sport Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland for their continued financial commitment to our work. And welcome Colin Atkinson of Sport Northern Ireland to the meeting.

Can I also pay tribute to our CEO Murrough McDonagh, our entire staff team and all the volunteers who support our sub-committees and represent Mountaineering Ireland on a range of bodies. I would also welcome new staff members; Siobhán Quinn, Grainne O'Brien, Emer O'Leary and Kevin Kilroy to the staff team.

I would like to remember those members who have left us in the last year, in particular, Dublin/Wicklow Mountain Rescue team member Kevin Hallahan who died in a fall during a training exercise in North Wales. In a year that saw the tragic loss of Rescue 116 with its entire crew off the Mayo coast, I would like to pay tribute to all our emergency services, notably, our mountain rescue teams who come to our aid in times of need.

My thanks to Limerick Climbing Club for hosting the meet, all of today's walk leaders for a wonderful, if longer than stated day. To last night's speakers, Dave McDonnell, (chairperson of the Limerick Climbing Club), Jimmy Barry and Maureen O'Brien.

Finally, can I wish all our members a safe and adventurous year ahead in the mountains.

Report of the Honorary Secretary, Irene Sorohan:

In summary, Mountaineering Ireland's governance activities during 2017 were:

- The last Annual General Meeting / Spring Gathering was held in March 2017 in Kilkenny and it was hosted by the Tyndall Mountain Club
- There were 7 meetings of the Board of Mountaineering Ireland in 2017 for normal board matters
- There were an additional 3 meetings of the Board relating to the development of the new Strategic Plan for 2018 – 2022 – this was in addition to the establishment of a Strategic Plan sub-committee, consisting of 4 board members and 3 members of the executive
- We have undertaken a review of our governance policy in the past 12 months and are currently updating & improving some of our processes and structures to reflect best practice in governance
- All legal and procedural requirements have been followed, including reporting and submissions to the Companies Registration Office
- The Board has taken full account of the necessary skills base in terms of voluntary Governance and will continue to refine this

MI is a company limited by guarantee and is a sporting organisation supported by both the Irish Sports Council and Sport Northern Ireland. All the directors are very focussed & clear about our duties to Mountaineering Ireland. We are cognisant that we act at all times in the best interest and to the best of our capability with regard to the MI organisation & its members & other stakeholders.

The report was proposed and seconded and approved unanimously by Delegates

Report of the Honorary Treasurer, Nicky Hoare and Presentation and Approval of Financial Statements for 2017:

Nicky Hoare drew attention to the following key features of the 2017 Financial Statements -

- The accounts reflect an income of €1,034,746 and expenditure of €1,068,377 with a deficit of €33,631. The deficit has decreased from 2016 and the aim is to have a break even figure for 2018, while maintaining services.
- Sport Ireland Core funding remained consistent with 2016 funding allocation of €193,000 and €8,000 for Women In Sport.
- New funding was secured from Sport Northern Ireland of approximately £48,500 per annum over a total of four years (a total of £194,000 or approx. €215,000). This fund is specifically for a youth climbing initiative in Northern Ireland.
- Sport Ireland and Healthy Ireland have significantly increased funding for GIW.
- Overall Mountaineering Ireland's financial management and governance is recognised as sound and we received no queries from our auditors or funders.

Mountaineering Ireland has continued to operate appropriate Financial Systems, this has included having:

- Approved Financial Policy and Procedures in place
- A financial year reflecting reporting requirement of key funder

- Maintaining healthy financial reserves to ensure the financial sustainability
- Clearer budgets and reporting against set budgets programmes

Special thanks to our accountants, IFT, and our auditors, Whiteside Cullinan.

The report and accounts were proposed, seconded and approved unanimously by the Delegates present.

Appointment of Auditor for 2018:

David Buggy of Whiteside Cullinan, Chartered Accountants was proposed for re-appointment for 2018. The proposal was duly seconded and approved unanimously by Delegates

Election to membership of Clubs:

The following aspirant clubs were proposed to be granted full membership. The proposal was duly seconded and approved unanimously by Delegates.

- Ramblers Country Track
- Walking Waterford and Beyond
- The Sligo Climbing Club
- Belfast Climbing Club
- Na Sléibhte Hillwalking Club
- Skerries Walking Group
- Tuesday Trekkers

Statements regarding Safeguarding and Anti-Doping:

Delegates approved the following statement –

Mountaineering Ireland is committed to best practice and upholding and implementing appropriate levels of behaviour, practice and conduct required from young participants, officials, coaches, trainers, mentors, parents/guardians and clubs.

Mountaineering Ireland's Safeguarding Policy complements the joint Sport Ireland & Sport NI Code of Ethics & Good Practice for Children's Sport.

Mountaineering Ireland and affiliated clubs with youth members must each appoint a representative with the responsibility to safeguard the welfare of young participants, ensuring Mountaineering Ireland and clubs operate in an environment that welcomes and encourages children in the sport – this role is carried out by the Children's Officer.

Mountaineering Ireland and affiliated clubs also appoint a person to liaise and report directly to the Statutory Authorities.

Mountaineering Ireland fully subscribes to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) procedures and promotes a drug free sport.

Mountaineering Ireland is developing an anti-doping education programme for members of the talent development squad, those competing internationally and as part of coach education.

Delegates were advised that James Hale has stepped down as the Anti-Doping Officer and the role has been taken on by Damien O’Sullivan.

Motions 1-3 proposed by the Board of Mountaineering Ireland to amend the Constitution of Mountaineering Ireland;

Motion 1: (Re. Board Membership)

Amend Article 30 (a) and (b) to read as follows:

- a) Mountaineering Ireland shall be administered by a Board consisting of the President and 9 ordinary members.
- b) The Board may co-opt up to 3 additional members as it deems appropriate.

In Article 3, amend the definition of “The Directors” to read as follows – “The Directors” means the directors of Mountaineering Ireland for the purposes of the Acts, and shall consist of the President and other elected or co-opted members of the Board.

In Article 3, amend the definition of “The Board” to read as follows – “The Board” means the governing body of Mountaineering Ireland elected or co-opted to the Board to administer the affairs of Mountaineering Ireland consisting of the Directors as provided for in these Articles.

In Article 11, substitute “Company Secretary” for “Honorary Secretary”.

In Article 18, substitute “Company Secretary” for “Honorary Secretary”.

In Article 20, substitute “Company Secretary” for “Honorary Secretary”.

Motion 1 was duly seconded and approved by Delegates .

Motion 2 (Re. Terms of office)

Amend Article 30 (c) to read as follows:

“The term of office of the President and each ordinary member shall be 3 years. At the end of a first term, the President and each ordinary member shall be eligible for re-election to the Board for a further term of 3 years. At the end of a second term, the President and each ordinary member shall not be eligible for election to the Board for a period of 2 years.

The term of office of a person co-opted to the Board in accordance with Article 30 (b) shall be not more than 3 years, as determined by the Board at the time of co-option. At the end of that period, the person shall be eligible for co-option to the Board for a further period or periods which shall not exceed 6 years cumulatively. Where a person has been co-opted for a period or periods which cumulatively total 6 years, he or she shall not be eligible for co-option to the Board for a period of 2 years.

No person shall be eligible to be a member to the Board, whether as ab elected or co-opted member, for any period in excess of 12 years.

Amend Article 31 to read as follows:

The Board has the power to co-opt to fill casual vacancies. Where a person is co-opted to fill a casual vacancy, he or she shall hold office until the next AGM. Any period of service in filling a casual vacancy shall be counted for the purposes of Article 30”.

Motion 2 was duly seconded and approved by Delegates.

Motion 3 (Re. Board Sub-Committees and other Groups)

Amend Article 32 to read as follows:

“The Board may appoint sub-committees, working groups, steering groups and consultative groups, whose membership, terms of reference, rules and aims shall be set by the Board, and may be changed from time to time by the Board”

Motion 3 was duly seconded and approved by Delegates.

Motion 4 proposed by the Irish Ramblers Club

That the Board of Mountaineering Ireland will create and support a Hillwalking Committee in recognition of the strategic importance of developing hillwalking. The Board will ensure that the committee has agreed terms of reference, support by all Mountaineering Ireland’s media, coordination with clubs, support by the office and financial support.

Should any part of this motion, if passed, be in conflict or arguably in conflict with the Strategic Development Plan 2018- 2022 then, for the avoidance of doubt, the Board will ensure the plan and its actions will be amended to include the substance of the motion.

Motion 4 was duly seconded and approved by Delegates.

Elections to the Board:

Paul Kellagher was elected unanimously as President.

It was clarified that Trish Kane was nominated by three individual members.

Delegates unanimously elected the following nine Ordinary Board Members – Paul Barron, Imelda Buckley, Trish Kane, Colette Mahon, Michael Maunsell, Gráinne McLaughlin, Clare O’Connor, Irene Sorohan , Geoff Thomas.

End of the Meeting

Paul Barron closed the meeting and thanked all for attending.