

Mountaineering Ireland AGM
Irish Sport HQ, National Sports Campus, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15
Saturday 30th March 2019

MINUTES

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 2018 AGM
3. President's Address
4. Company Secretary's Report
5. Approval of Financial Statements for 2018
6. Appointment of Auditor for 2019
7. Election to Full Membership of Aspirant Clubs
8. Statements regarding Safeguarding and Anti-Doping
9. Motions (1) proposed by the Board of Mountaineering Ireland

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:

Good Afternoon. Can I extend a sincere welcome to you all at this year's Annual General Meeting and thank you for your attendance.

We all journey to the Mountains and crags for a wide variety of reasons; Peace and solitude from an ever-pressured world, company and companionship with likeminded people, challenge, serenity, a sense of adventure. Like a painter on a blank canvas we chart out lines on a map, tread carefully along a narrow ridge or link lines of gear on a crag.

And so, it is, as a National Governing Body, we often walk a line, rightly pressing for improved access to the places we love, whilst respecting the landscape in which we play out our games and those who live and work there.

That sense of Adventure and uncertainty of outcome that we hold as a key value in our Strategic plan is closely balanced with the skills we have and aspire to in order to balance our feet on the landscape beneath.

2018 saw Mountaineering Ireland produce our new Strategic Development Plan 2018-2021. This plan followed a period of consultation around the country in face to face meetings and through online feedback from our members. This plan sets out our Purpose, Vision, Values and 5 Strategic pillars for the years ahead.

During our consultation many of our members emphasised the importance of continued Access to our mountains. Without this access, hillwalking and climbing become impossible. Continued free access to our mountains is at the heart of what we do. The growing pressure on our landscape has seen a challenging year. Whilst the recent issues with the planned sale of Luggala Estate brings the fragility of access into sharp focus, there are a myriad of other challenges across the country.

But Access also comes with responsibility. With increasing footfall on Ireland's mountains, trampling and path erosion are ever more evident. It is a challenge that will not go away and one that will require a coordinated response. Indeed, one that we will all need to play a part in.

2018 also saw the successful 1st full year of operation for the new Mountain Training Board of Ireland. The new structures will allow the sharing of knowledge and experience across the island of Ireland to the benefit of candidates on our training schemes.

The introduction of the new Rock Skills scheme at the beginning of this year complements our extremely popular Mountain Skills scheme. It recognises and addresses the needs of a rapidly growing population of climbers whose introduction is mainly on indoor climbing walls. The new scheme will assist climbers in making a safe transition to our mountain and coastal crags gaining the necessary skills for independence.

The rapidly growing popularity of this aspect of our sport is evidenced through attendance at three very popular climbing gatherings, Climbfest, the Fair Head and Burren meets. The increasing number of Climbing Walls and climbers using the now excellent facilities presents opportunities for engaging a whole new generation of participants.

I want to pay particular thanks to Murrough and the staff team who make all the services we deliver to our members possible.

I also acknowledge and thank our funders, Sport Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland and all our membership who make what we do possible.

At the heart of Mountaineering Ireland are volunteers who drive every aspect of what we do, can I pay tribute to my colleagues on the Board, our Subcommittees and representatives on other bodies. I also want to pay tribute to the officers and volunteers in our clubs, they are the powerhouse that make so much of what we enjoy possible. I ask you all to acknowledge their contribution.

Whilst on the subject of volunteers, I want to pay a very special thanks to one volunteer in particular. A sort of unsung hero if you like. I would like to invite my Board colleague Mike Maunsell to the podium to say a few words on behalf of us all about this person;

Mike Maunsell gave a brief outline of the enormous contribution that Patrick O'Sullivan has made to Mountaineering Ireland over many years. He said that as a token of our appreciation, the Board had decided to confer him with Honorary Membership of Mountaineering Ireland. A presentation was

made to Patrick to sustained applause from all present. Patrick expressed his thanks to the Board of Mountaineering Ireland and said that he accepted this great honour of honorary membership with sincere thanks.

Paul Kellagher completed his address by wishing all our members a safe and adventurous year ahead in the mountains.

Report of Company Secretary for 2018, Murrough McDonagh:

The Company Secretary/CEO, Murrough McDonagh, reported on the following:

- The last Annual General Meeting / Spring Gathering was held on the 24th March 2018 in the Aherlow House Hotel and Lodge, Co. Tipperary and it was hosted by the Limerick Climbing Club
- Following the AGM, the amendments to our Constitution, agreed at the AGM, were notified to the Company Registration Office, as were the elections to the Board
- There were 8 meetings of the Board of Mountaineering Ireland in 2018
- We have continued to review our governance policy in the past 12 months and are currently updating and improving some of our processes and structures to reflect best practice in governance
- We have created a new Board sub-committee dealing with Finance, Audit and Risk
- We have met the compliance standards of the Governance Code in 2018
- 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

Mountaineering Ireland is a company limited by guarantee and is a sporting organisation supported by both Sport Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland. All the directors are extremely focussed and clear about their duties to Mountaineering Ireland. The Board of Directors act at all times in the best interest and to the best of their capability with regard to the Mountaineering Ireland organisation, its members and other stakeholders.

The report of the Company Secretary was approved unanimously.

Approval of Financial Statements for 2018:

Imelda Buckley, Chairperson of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee reported as follows:

- Financial Statements relate to the year ending 31 December 2018.
- The deficit for the year, after depreciation, amounts to €45,108; primarily driven by some exceptional expenses and unforeseen operational costs. Total assets are €615,193 and liabilities of €417,353 (net assets have decreased by €45,108).
- Sport Ireland Core funding amounted to €193,000 (2019 €225,000) and €8,000 for Women In Sport. Sport Ireland and Healthy Ireland funding for Get Ireland Walking programmes amounted to €285,000.

- New funding was secured from Sport Northern Ireland by approximately £48,500 per annum for four years (a total of £194,000 or approx. €215,000). This fund is primarily for youth participation and engagement initiatives in Northern Ireland.
- Overall Mountaineering Ireland's financial management and governance is recognised as sound and no queries have been received from our auditors or funders.

During 2018, Mountaineering Ireland has continued to operate appropriate financial processes, this has included:

- Establishment of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, continuing robust oversight of Financial operations and Risk;
- Enhanced Risk Register;
- Approved Financial Policy and Procedures in-place;
- Meeting the financial reporting requirements of our key funder;
- Budgets in-place for all programmes;
- Improving revenue and cost income streams to ensure financial sustainability is maintained.

Imelda concluded by thanking her fellow FAR Committee Members, Board Members, our Accountants IFT and Whiteside Cullinan (Auditors).

A number of delegates raised questions about the Financial Statements. These were answered by Imelda and following that the Financial Statements for 2018 were approved unanimously.

Appointment of Auditor for 2019:

David Buggy of Whiteside Cullinan, Chartered Accountants was proposed for re-appointment for 2019 and the proposal was agreed.

Election to membership of Clubs:

The following clubs were proposed to be granted full membership of the organisation and this was agreed by delegates.

- Hell Fire Rangers
- Pathfinders Mountaineering Club
- Mourne Youth Climbing Club
- Gilford Youth Climbing Club
- Glenree Walkers
- We Walk Together
- Kick Ass Adventures
- Barryroe Walking Club
- International Women's Club
- Shannon Trekkers

Statements regarding Safeguarding and Anti-Doping:

Safeguarding:

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.

Anti-Doping:

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.

Motions 1 proposed by the Board of Mountaineering Ireland to change;

“The Annual Subscription payable by Club members in respect of the subscription year beginning on 1 November 2019 and each subscription year thereafter shall be as follows:

- Club member aged 23 years and over - €35.00
- Club member aged under 23 years (no change) - €20.50
- Where a Club member aged under 23 years is the daughter or son of a registered member of that Club, a special rate of €7.60 shall apply”

Board member, Simon Walsh, proposed the Motion. He referred to the note that had been circulated by the Board in advance of the AGM which outlined the reasons why the Board had found it necessary to bring forward the proposed increase in membership fees. Following some debate, the Motion was approved overwhelmingly by the delegates.

End of the Meeting

Paul Barron closed the meeting and thanked all for attending.