

# SKI CLUB OF GREAT BRITAIN®

## Minutes of the Meeting of Council held via Zoom on the 28<sup>th</sup> May 2025

**In attendance:** Walter Macharg (Treasurer/Chair) (WM), Trevor Campbell Davis (TCD) (part of meeting), Rick Krajewski (RK), Kenny MacAllister (KMacA), Holly Boucher (HB) Elizabeth Morrison (ELM) (Secretariat), Chris Radford (CR) (part of meeting), Andy Lapham (AL), Mark Colston (MC) (part of meeting), Jean Lovett (JL)

**Apologies:** Angus Maciver (AM), James Gambrill (Chief Operating Officer) (JG), David Jenkins (DJ), Owen Chapman (Head of Membership) (OC)

**Observing:** Katy Ellis (Deputy Chief Operating Officer /Head of Holidays) (KE) Jitendra Shetty (Finance) (JtS), Pete Davies (Marketing Manager) (PD)

### 1 Chairman's welcome and introduction

WM welcomed Council and staff members to the online meeting. He noted apologies, including those of the Club chairman, Angus Maciver. He requested that anyone who is unable to attend to let the secretariat know. He also made a plea for all papers to be available and uploaded to the secure site for issue well in advance.

WM noted his intention to set up a regular semi-formal agenda review meeting in advance of Council meetings.

WM reported to Council that now the ski season has concluded, the Club had enjoyed a successful year. A Zoom call with members had been very positive and the recent social event at Hemel Hempstead a great success. IKON passes are now on sale and are selling well. The team are posting fantastic social media updates, and the Chairman had issued two letters to members

- a) A summary of the season
- b) Launch of Safeguarding policy and Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) policy, along with an updated Code of Conduct.

WM also alerted Council members to an emerging and significant issue on which Council needed to be informed, although a detailed discussion would need to await establishment of the full facts. This relates to significant over-reporting of the number of Households and number of Members, over the past year and possibly further back.

The figures reported to Council at the end of March 2025, were as follows:

Households	10,624
Members	15,832

However closer scrutiny of the numbers now suggests that the numbers were around:

Households	8,800
Members	12,900

WM stated he was confident that the financial results stated for membership income were correct as these are reconciled each month. The issue appears to date from the input of member data into Salesforce in October 2023. Since then, the number of joins is believed to be accurate, but the number of losses is incorrect. The attrition rate now appears to be in the region of 50% p.a. for new joiners, while for brought forward members it is around 17%.

Salesforce is a more complex membership database and depending on the data fields and filters used, it is possible that some members are not being picked up and some members are being duplicated. Some members may not be being generated as renewals. It now appears that the Club has lost circa 4,500 members over the past two years.

WM noted that as a result, it is likely that the number of members reported to members at the AGM in November 2024, and as stated in the Directors report of 2023/2024 was incorrect.

Investigation is ongoing with the Salesforce consultant, and further external audit of the system is not ruled out. Alliotts (external Auditors) would be informed of the issue. It was noted that issues had not arisen during the previous year's audit.

WM summarised the actions underway:

- Validate data transferred into the new system in Oct 2023
- Ensure valid reports of the changes since – agree to receipts per accounts
- Understand why what we reported was different
- Understand all the leavers - was there any system problem in renewing them

A full report would be provided as soon as possible, in time for the Council strategy meeting.

WM noted that as a team we have let ourselves down and that there was a collective responsibility to sort this. The challenge around membership is now significantly greater than Council previously thought. Members joining are not sticking/renewing membership.

KE in her role as Deputy Chief Operating Officer noted that a lot more digging into the data was required to establish an accurate picture.

CR noted that this had been discussed at the Membership and Marketing Advisory Group, and his initial concern was that the reconciliation of income was incorrect. CR he had been reassured that it was correct. He suggested an additional layer of reconciliation should be added by membership type. He also commented this new

information would have significant impact on the budgeting process and membership numbers should not be used for this process, the budget should be based on current revenue. The budget model developed by the Treasurer was based on an incorrect number of members.

Members of Council stressed the need for even more conservative and prudent budgeting, as it is likely that numbers are going to continue to decline. Council members stressed that it was essential that reported member numbers were correct, and that evidence-informed decisions could not be made without confidence in the numbers and data being presented.

Council members expressed their shock at the news about membership numbers and stressed the need for the issue to be resolved urgently. The known level of current receipts must be used as a starting point for any budget discussions. TCD considered that it was not defensible for member records to be inadequate and that the directors were not fulfilling their duties. He cautioned that the investigation should not adopt a defensive attitude.

AL requested to be more closely involved in the investigation.

## **ACTION**

Urgently clarify number of Households and Members	JG	AM/WM	Jun-25
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Council members moved on to discuss the proposed draft agenda for the strategy day in June 2025. Members who expressed views considered that the balance was too much on analysis of the current situation and believed that many items could be covered by appropriate papers in advance. Council members thought they had a good understanding of areas which had regular updates. TCD considered that the strategy needed re re-scale the business bottom-up and produce more efficiently for reduced cost.

Council felt many of the challenging issues should be more clearly prioritised. Council members stated that without accurate member numbers limited decisions could be made at the strategy day. WM indicated he would be meeting with JG and KE to finalise the strategy day agenda shortly.

## **ACTION**

Revise and issue draft agenda for strategy day	JG/KE	AM / WM	Jun-25
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## **2 Minutes of the meeting held on 29th April 2025**

The minutes were approved. Following appropriate redactions and a minor change these would be published.

### **3 Matters arising and agreed actions from previous meeting**

Please see the Action Tracker for more information.

- JL noted that nearly all HR items are complete, and she would liaise with the secretariat to update.
- WM asked about the letter to Stonegate, but in JG's absence it was unknown if this had been issued.
- A meeting with Marsh about insurance proposals was scheduled for early June.
- And a proposal for cataloguing resources would be coming to Council shortly.
- A query about taking early deposits remained. (This was covered later in the Minutes).

### **4 Holidays and Chalet Update**

KE reported to Council that April 2025 Holidays and Chalets had met revenue targets, but that the passenger numbers target had not been met.

KE highlighted that the Tignes Takeover was a real success, with positive feedback from members, reps and staff. The trip generally went well notwithstanding a few issues with the hotel and staff. New instructors were well received by those who skied with them. The holiday team would like to repeat next year, as well as adding two more similar style trips, throughout the season, to the Holiday offer.

Overall, the revenue target was exceeded by almost £50k. Prices per person have increased by around 5%, this has benefited from sale of lift passes and other extras. The holiday team are waiting for final confirmation of margin and expect to achieve the target.

Emails have continued to have a positive impact on sales, particularly reacting to late season snow and will continue throughout the summer.

Operations have been good overall. The late season snowfall caused a slight delay to the Easter Weekend trip but was well-managed and the group enjoyed the trip. The final NPS score of 67% for the season is very positive.

The team are starting to contract for winter 2025/2026. Many of our regular suppliers have already started reaching out for dates. The biggest issue is regarding increased flight prices and consequently the Club may offer less group flights.

KE noted that the Club is unable to take early deposits apart from three holidays which are currently on sale (Japan, and a couple of touring trips in Norway). Other holidays are due to go on sale around the 18<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> July 2025. KE highlighted that families and couples are currently unable to book holidays online. As over 80% of

passengers are travelling solo, this may be less relevant, however it is a planned improvement to the website.

Council briefly discussed the appropriateness of a physical holiday brochure and how this aligned with the Club's commitment to sustainability. Council agreed that many members like a Freshtracks brochure and further work needs to be done on the website before holidays are only online. KE noted that most of the big tour operators had stopped issuing physical brochures. Council agreed that eventually Freshtracks holidays would only be available online (possibly within five years).

JL suggested that with a shrinking rep offer, the Club should consider a push for two or three specific weeks which will have a guaranteed rep in resort. JL was also promoted the idea of larger style holidays for all abilities.

Council commented a member week in St Anton would work well. CR supported this idea and mentioned that the dates for Val d'Isere had already been announced. CR suggested two-week focused rep slots in resorts would be useful.

While the Club has secured a total of 298 Mountain Tracks participants over summer and winter excluding cancelled bookings for the winter season, the passenger target was not achieved. The winter season revenue target was achieved. The total revenue for the 2024/25 season was higher than 2023/2024. A conservative approach is being applied to planning for the 2025/26 season.

More information is available in Appendix A

## **5 [Redacted]**

*[Redacted]*

## **6 Membership and Marketing Update**

Council members commended the end of year Marketing review. Council noted it is balanced and well-summarised. PD reported that the videos had been successful in driving people to the website, however this was not translating into new members. He also commented that paid adverts in newspapers and on websites had not been successful.

AL noted the importance of gathering email addresses as soon as the website is visited to enable an email database to be built up and website surfers contacted.

PD described the collaboration with The Telegraph whereby The Telegraph had received snow report videos. There is perhaps scope to extend this further.

CR reported on the Membership and Marketing Advisory Group meeting and discussions on a premium tier of membership.

ELM highlighted that the Ski Club FaceBook pages did not appear to promote membership.

Council agreed many of the areas discussed under Memberships and Marketing linked into the proposed digital strategy, with exciting content on the website and social media being used to drive the strategy.

## 7 Reps and Resorts Update

KMacA provided Council with a summary of the discussion at the recent RARAG meeting. The minutes were also shared with Council.

Council heard that the RARAG were updated on the critical member records related issues which require addressing. They are also heard that rep feedback is almost universally positive, and the small number of complaints are dealt with. Alpines joins have increased significantly. Any reductions to reps would likely result in fewer members joining.

KMacA described the discussion in the RARAG around the need to reduce the number of rep resorts by around the equivalent of £100K. He reported on the discussion which had focused on the bottom nine performing resorts. Council queried if there were other ways to retain exposure without having a rep in resort for the whole season, could reps be in resort for only two or three weeks? It was noted that one proposal involved reducing the rep in Zermatt to one, KMacA strongly advocated that two reps were required and suggested a way round this might be to share a room. There was a brief discussion around resort optimisation and combining resorts which are near to one another. RK proposed that seasonnaires could be used in place of reps in some areas eg France. Concerns were expressed about making decisions about resorts when there were questions around the validity of the member data. WM noted his understanding that a question on the accuracy of the numbers skiing with reps had been asked and answered in RRAG, but that an action could be taken if any doubt remained.

## ACTIONS

KMacA to meet with AM, OC, JG to discuss options for rep resorts	OC/JG	AM/KMacA	Jun-25
Confirm source of reported numbers skiing with reps, and that the figures are not impacted by current Salesforce issues.	OC	KMacA	Jun 25

## 8 Digital Tech Update

AL took Council through his presentation which covered the strategic drivers and digital tech opportunities:

- **Win / Keep / Grow Membership**
  - Make it quick and easy to join the club digitally, renew automatically and engage with other members in resort
- **Tools to understand our Data**
  - Enable easy access to the data, insights and information that will enable the executive team and council to make evidence-informed decisions
- **Drive Club Efficiency**
  - Automate significant manual administration activities and provide the best tools to enhance value to members

AL also covered a review of the member App, possible revisions to the *Join Journey* on the website and highlighted a forthcoming data workshop for staff and Council. Throughout he highlighted the need for areas to be measurable. AL stressed the need for staff to double check and reconcile all data. AL highlighted areas such as reasons for members joining/leaving, which discounts are being used and which rep resorts are most profitable, as areas for further investigation.

All reps will be training in the use of the App which will be improved in advance of next season. AL noted reps might need to email reports as well as use the App to record members skiing with them. A plan for informing members about the App is also key.

## ACTIONS

Progress the improvements in the User Experience of the Join Journey and prepare change form for investment if required	HJ	AL	Sep-25
Confirm proportion of members paying by GoCardless and by other methods.	JtS	WM	Jun-25

## 9 Finance Update

WM reported to Council members on the most recent Finance report, these are the draft management accounts for the financial year ended 30 April 2025. He stated that the Annual Audit by Alliotts would be starting shortly, and he would be asking the Auditors to review member income more closely. A final report from Alliotts would be available for the July 2025 meeting.

Year-end reconciliations are continuing, including of irrecoverable VAT, French VAT, an expected refund from Chalet Flaine, and staff bonus.

The forecast operating profit has deteriorated by £10k from last month. The latest figures are:

	Forecast	Budget	Last year
	£	£	£
Operating loss	(278,081)	88,228	(138,205)
Depreciation	(98,672)	(96,098)	(44,300)
Exceptional: 120 <sup>th</sup>	<u>(35,279)</u>	<u>(10,000)</u>	<u>(51,427)</u>
Loss before interest	<u>(412,032)</u>	<u>(17,870)</u>	<u>(233,932)</u>

Membership income is now over half a million below budget, almost entirely due to lower-than-budgeted sales of platinum membership. WM reiterated his confidence in the reconciliation of membership subscriptions and income.

The consolidated bank balance on 30 April includes a £300k a short-term loan from Rathbones. The borrowed funds will be returned in October or November 2025.

In the following months the main source of receipts will be from memberships and a few partnerships. The holiday deposits will start coming in from July 2025. In the meantime, additional borrowing of £200k has been agreed with Rathbones to support outflow of funds towards deposits, salaries, and statutory payments. Spending significant capital expenditure is not planned in the short term however, a small amount of spending maybe required to set up the interface between the Salesforce and Xero accounting system.

Council returned to a discussion about the strategy day and the need for four or five firm proposals for initiatives in advance. A pre-meeting was requested by Council members, and it was noted that development and progressing of actions from the strategy meeting would require delegation to sub-committees and possibly several subsequent half-day discussions. Concerns were expressed that this re-enforced a London-centric viewpoint and there was a need to hear views and comments from all Council members, it was agreed that pre-meetings could be held online.

WM reiterated the challenges in developing a budget that delivered break-even while reducing member services and attempting to avoid a self-fulfilling further loss of members. TCD expressed the view that the business was highly scalable.

KMcaA and HB advocated strongly that there should be no reductions in the staff team, but that cash should be raised by a significant increase in membership subscription. Both felt that the staff were a great team and that it would be a shame to disrupt things further when momentum was growing.

AL considered that the focus should be on optimisation more that cuts, achieving greater efficiencies.

It was suggested that paying by a monthly membership subscription should attract an increased fee.

## **ACTIONS**

Finalise agenda and proposals for Council to discuss at strategy day	JG/KE	AM/WM	Jun-25
Consider an online pre-meeting to review the papers to be tabled at the strategy meeting	JG	WM	Jun-25

### **10 Chief Operating Officer Report**

In the absence of the Chief Operating Officer and the meeting overrunning the Chair invited comments on the report and it was noted with there was no further discussion.

### **11 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 1000 in-person.

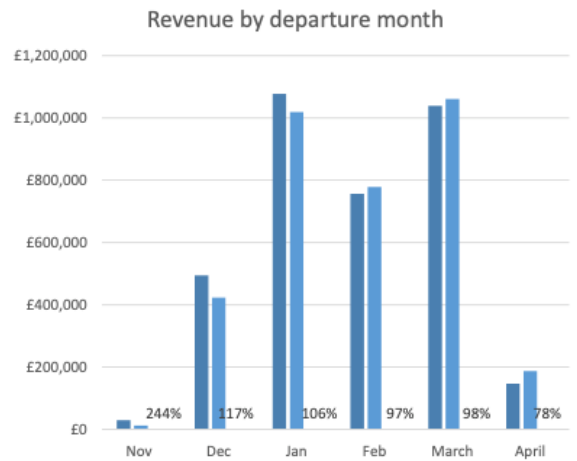
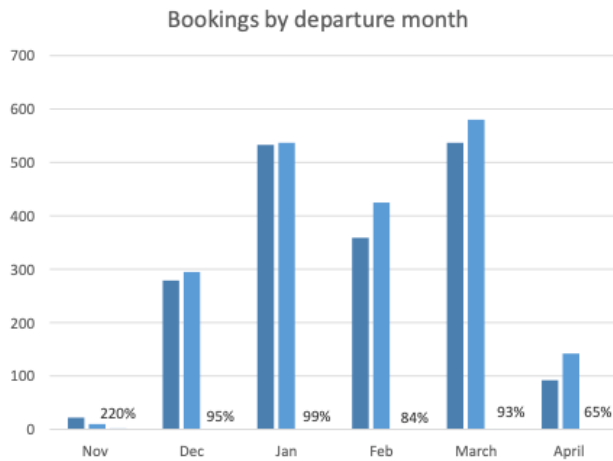
There being no other business the Council meeting closed at 20:08.

*Where the minutes contain commercially sensitive or personal information, the relevant extract will not be included in the published online record and will be marked as redacted.*

# Appendix A

Figures as of 01/05/25

Target Passengers	Current Passengers	Target Revenue	Current Total Revenue
2000	1816 (9%)	£3,493,851	£3,516,570 (101%)



# Mountain Tracks

Figures as of 01/05/2025  
Winter only

Target Passengers	Current Passengers	Target Revenue	Current Revenue
321	291 (91%)	£413,680	£458,012 (110%)

