MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

Held at BMAA HQ, Adderbury

Date: Monday 21st September 2026

1. Welcome*: roll call, conflicts and confidentiality*

Present:	Apologies:
David Broom	Simon Heyes (Treasurer)
Tim Burrow (Chair)	
Brendan Digney	
Giles Fowler	
Rob Grinwood	
Owain Johns (CEO)	
Cath Spence (Vice chair)	
John Waite	

Meeting commenced at: 9:17

There was some preliminary admin

- Previous meetings have started at 9:30 when in person. Suggested we revert to that to allow people to get there.

2. Agenda Approval, additional items

Agreed with no additional items.

3. Approval of previous minutes & matters arising

Draft minutes for AGM were approved

Some minor changes to the minutes of 3rd July requested.

ACTION	Amendments to be made as noted	CS	Oct 26

For future meetings, it is requested that all Council members add comments directly onto the draft minutes document so CS can incorporate and a clean version can be approved at the meeting.

Council discussed how to manage the need to occasionally redact parts of the minutes (e.g. references to staff salary levels). The aim was to ensure maximum transparency

while ensuring any sensitive material was handled proportionately. Proposal is for future minutes be sent out with any suggested redactions so that these could be agreed at the next Council meeting alongside the full internal minutes.

Matters Arising

i. BD had not received the New Horizons link
ii. Investment paper to be caried to next meeting
iii. Interest summary detail to be carried to next meeting
iv. MOSAIC summary in DropBox
v. Only limited further work on board development has been possible. Will need to be discussed in more detail a future meeting

ACTION	New Horizons link to BD	OJ	Oct 26
ACTION	Add Investment Paper to next agenda	SH/TB	Nov 26
ACTION	Add interest summary detail to next agenda	SH/TB	Nov 26
ACTION	Add further discussion on board development to future agenda	CS/TB	Jan 27

4. CEO Report – Owain Johns

(Author: Owain Johns – Presented: Owain Johns)

Received & noted.

4.1: Leadership & Management

OJ flagged that the ongoing issue with the photocopier contract, raised in the previous meeting, had been brought to a resolution though an offer to settle, thus minimising the risk to BMAA. This was agreed to be a pragmatic solution to a difficult situation which Owain had inherited.

Council discussed what might be learned from this to reduce the risk of this kind of issue arising in the future. It was suggested that we should record all contracts on the risk register and ensure that all paperwork is read and understood.

ACTION	**Collate the contractual document list to add to Risk Register**	**OJ/SH?**	**TBD**

Insurance has been renewed with AON
OJ advised that AON will sponsor the community cohesion award for 2027 awards event

4.2: Finance and Resources

OJ noted that the preparation of a 5 year budget last year (cf a 1 yr) has been extremely helpful in planning.

Council discussed value of another strategy day/away day. Proposal is to focus on questions prepared by the Working Group looking at 2028 onwards but with opportunity for broader questions too.

DECISION	**Agreed to go ahead with Sun 17/Mon 18 Jan at St Albans as last year**		
ACTION	**Working group to convene to prepare the questions for strategy meeting**	**TB**	**TBD**

4.3: Engagement and Membership

Including 1. Ambition, 2. Communication, 13. Community Engagement

OJ noted a disappointing response to courses offered by JH. Rotax & SkyDemon courses ran but remainder were cancelled due to lack of signups. There was a lower interest in those offered in Manchester area than in the South.

Council discussed possible reasons for the lack of engagement. Cost, topics and in-person attendance requirement were considered the most likely reasons.

There was discussion about whether these courses should make money or not. It was suggested that new courses could be offered at a discounted rate to test popularity.

Intention is to continue the popular courses and OJ will speak to members on his regional visits to attempt to get a better understanding of needs.

There was a request for advertising beyond BMAA email, MF & Social Media as this only targets people we're already in touch with and does not drive new members. It would be possible to have a poster to give to GA schools with link to course schedule or could we email clubs/schools including GA schools to let them know.

We have invited BWPA, BHPA & BGA to share the offering. There was discussion as to whether we should include the LAA in that list, which was agreed, regardless of whether the offer was reciprocated or not.

DECISION	**All courses to be made available to LAA members as well as BWPA, BHPA etc**

There was a discussion around a letter received from a member. OJ welcomed member input and, following discussion, Council agreed to take two key points forward for further discussion, specifically around Youth Membership and self-dec for manufacturers. The latter will be picked up in the discussion about MOSAIC and the former will be considered in a future meeting.

ACTION	**Add consideration of Youth Membership to future agenda**	**TB**	**Jan 27**

4.4: Community
Including 3. Clubs and schools, 4. Competitions, Events & Pilot Development, 12. SSDR & Sub 70 Flexwing

Instructor Seminar will be at reduced cost this year.

All bookings for accommodation will be direct to the hotel giving increased choice for instructors and significantly less admin and risk for BMAA. It was noted that Kelly will continue to assist with evening meal plans for Sunday evening prior to the seminar

Panel of Examiners have been asked to help provide topics for the seminar.

There will be a manufacturers session prior to the awards dinner in March

ACTION	**Check manufacturer distribution list to ensure all included (e.g. JW)**	**OJ**	**Sep 26**

There was a discussion about the value of supporting County Show attendance. The consensus was that there seemed to be a poor return on investment and this was therefore not good use of BMAA time & funds.

DECISION	**BMAA will no longer support County Shows directly, but the trailer & other BMAA equipment will continue to be available on request**

Council raised concerns about the current numbers of members, which was not showing the hoped for growth. This led to a discussion about who was responsible for maintaining membership and what role was played by instructors. The suggestion that the instructors bring pilots onboard and that the BMAA was responsible for keeping them in membership was not universally agreed upon.

Further discussions centred on the lack of clubs available for people to join following completion of their training. The success of superclubs like Cheshire Flyers and Severn Valley Microlight Club indicate a possible need to adopt an LAA approach with a regional focus (‘struts’).

Council concluded that more data was needed on why people left. There were several volunteers to assist with calling former members to find out reasons for leaving.

ACTION	**Send out the contact lists for expired & cancelled memberships for volunteers to call.**	**OJ**	**Nov 26**

The pilot programme of 3 months free membership through schools is ongoing and so far this has attracted 8 new members with only 1 cancelling at the end of the trial period. An issue was raised that the offer appeared different from what had been expected by the schools with people being offered the 3 months free only when they signed up and paid for 12 months.

ACTION	**Confirm terms of offer – further discussion may be needed if this is a barrier to people signing up**	**OJ**	**Nov 26**

Council agreed that all club activity did require some HQ support but that resources were limited. Programme of regional visits by OJ were part of this. TB & OJ had both given talks at clubs on request.

There was also a noted vacuum following the closure of GASCo. Astral Aviation are not addressing microlights in most of their sessions.

Council asked that further data be gathered at the instructor seminar to determine whether instructors have plans for growth of their schools, plan to remain at a steady state or have plans to reduce engagement through either retirement or winding down.

ACTION	**Prepare questions for Instructor Seminar around Instructors' plans**	**OJ**	**Nov 26**

Significant increase in engagement with social media was noted and that this was at zero additional cost, focusing mainly on cross-posting to drive engagement.

OJ had worked with BGA and Stansted Aeronautical College to submit a Reach for the Sky bid which, would support work experience & work placements with the aim of encouraging young people to consider employment in aviation

New Horizons programme underway at Cranfield with quality control built in to the process. Three further expressions of interest have been received.

There was a discussion around whether we should go ahead with the proposal to purchase a second kit for start Sept 2027. Council discussed the financial risk and whether the additional workload to support another build was manageable. The conclusion was that the purchase of a kit could be considered an investment with the final aircraft providing a return to BMAA if the process was well-managed and the resulting build of good quality. It was agreed that the current process in place should deliver this.

DECISION	**Council approved the purchase of a second New Horizons kit in June 2027 for Sept 2027 start (WG of OJ, CS, JW & BD)**

It was suggested that other aircraft manufacturers should be approached for alternative proposals for kits to build but that this should not be done ahead of the purchase of the kit for Sept 2027.

There was some very positive PR around both the Ultimate Air Challenge and the STOL competition which Rees Keene, Owain Johns & Paul Dewhurst will attend at Popham.

4.5: Flight Training & Safety
Including 5. Training / Licensing / Medical, 6. Safety

The new print of the syllabus is almost ready and will be released shortly. This is very welcome.

There was discussion about how to mark Geoff Weighell's significant contribution to microlight flying. Council considered an additional Flexwing bursary which would be more money and more status than the standard bursary or an annual award, specifically around instructors who are generally not considered for awards when this is the sole reason for nomination. Both received support

DECISION	**A dedicated Geoff Weighell FlexWing bursary to be created**
DECISION	**A new Instructor Award will be added**

There was also discussion about a Flypast in Geoff's honour at Popham (May 27) since the weather had precluded this happening on the day on Geoff's funeral. Council had no objections but noted that this is not a Council decision.

OJ reported that FICI work continues to progress well. Two new candidates have progressed to the next stage of the process plus a SEP FICI.

The DTO process is also moving well with Exodus & Flylight already signed up plus others under discussion. Acceptance would be conditional on willingness to work to common safety and operational expectations as BMAA will be audited by CAA on this.

Council asked that all schools offering FIC courses be made aware of the opportunity and the attached conditions to ensure that all had equal chance to participate if they wished.

ACTION	**Send details of DTO opportunity to all FICI for their consideration**	**OJ**	**Nov 26**

There followed a discussion about standards. There are currently approximately 220 instructors and 100 schools offering microlight training. Students have had a wide range of experience depending on the school/instructor they work with.

Council discussed how to support raising of standards. The issues under consideration were around business practice, customer service, policies etc rather than around standards of instruction. This matter has been discussed a number of times before without reaching conclusion, the issues being around how the BMAA could manage this without accruing additional liability. Some specific example scenarios were discussed. The consensus was that there needed to be no additional liability for BMAA.

It was agreed that a good initial approach would be for the BMAA to help clubs & schools put policies in place by providing templates and information on good practice.

There was broad support for the idea of some kind of accreditation but it was recognised that the practicalities would be a challenge.

After discussion, Council proposed working towards a 'Recognised School' Framework. This should be a gold standard for clubs/schools to work to with sample policies available from BMAA. It would define what good practice looked like and might include, for example, a DBS service and safeguarding policies. Council agreed that this would be a good starting point. The aim should be for schools to be able to self-declare that they meet criteria for Recognised School status rather than the BMAA conducting audits. The value of this should be tested at the Instructor seminar.

DECISION	**Council agreed to exploration of a Recognised School process, beginning with a Safeguarding & DBS package.**		
ACTION	**Validate the approach with Instructors at the Instructor Seminar in 2027 prior to launch**	**OJ**	**Jan 27**

4.6: Technical

Including 8. Inspector System, 9 Technical Office

Workload remains high and there is still a heavy dependence on contractors which OJ indicated cannot be a long term approach for the tech office. OJ intends to implement a lead and co-lead approach to project work to address both business continuity/resilience factors with regard to individual projects and staff development though exposure to a wider range of projects.

Steve Eyres (SE) now on temporary 3 day per week contract as previously agreed and this is bearing fruit. There is concern about both ensuring a common high standard across the inspectorate and bringing in new inspectors in at the same rate we are losing them to retirement.

It was reported that there is no documented process 'how to become an inspector' online. OJ shared intention to development a 'New Inspector' course with prior reading material. This would set a standardised level of entry. There would also be a period of 'apprenticeship' to ensure standard approach. This should also cover means of recognising existing skillsets/qualifications e.g. LAA inspectors.

It was suggested that the topic of how to become an inspector would be a good topic for the member conference.

ACTION	**Add the 'How to become an inspector' topic to member conference schedule**	**OJ/SE**	**Jan 27**

SE is pursuing an approach of firm scrutiny with strong support for any areas of concern. The aim is to identify poor practice, educate owners and inspectors and create a route back to compliance. Council were supportive of the approach presented.

Engine & airframe logbooks

OJ reported that the tech office team are exploring a more digital approach to all key paperwork such as permit applications, airframe and engine logbooks etc. Council supported this development.

OJ warned that there was an ongoing issue with some of our legacy systems which might hamper this development.

A number of airfields remain under threat. Over Farm is producing an Airfield Safeguarding Plan which will be shared widely. Plan is to run an Airfield Safeguarding session at the member conference to raise awareness.

There has been a low response to the Airfield Operators Forum but the intention is to proceed and publicise widely.

There are ongoing concerns about Wind Turbine effects and the lack of current evidence on safe operating distances.

Council needs to maintain a watching brief on other technological matters such as shared airspace and drone operations, particularly where these are operating out of existing airfields (Preston Capes, Deenethorpe & Yatesbury were named as examples). EVTOL could be an opportunity.

OJ continues to engage well with CAA and some progress was posted on a number of topics raised previously. Of particular note was Robb Mott's (RM) hard work in pursuing changes which would result in higher useable weights for some aircraft.

4.7 Regulation & Representation
Including 10. Regulatory Policy, 11 Representation

5. Reports

5.1 Treasurer's Report

Received and Noted

YTD position better than anticipated due to lower salaries bill, however there were some significant concerns about the membership numbers. While lower salaries have reduced the impact, nonetheless, membership figures remained static at 3550 compared to the 3700 targeted for this point.

It was noted that permits numbers continued to rise at around 5-6 per month. While lower staffing this year due to not having rehired the vacant admin role and the period of extended absence for Tom, this would not carry over to next year and it was recognised that there would be some operational challenges in next year's budget.

The main levers available to manage the finances are membership numbers, permits and tech office work on the income side and staff and MF magazine on the expenses side. This year's figures show a significant net positive from type approval work but this is likely to be a one off. This will be discussed further at both November (budget) and Jan (strategy) Council meetings.

ACTION	**Finance slides tabled at the meeting to be added to DropBox**	**OJ**	**Sep 26**

5.2 CTO report

Received and noted

Council were pleased to note the ongoing development of staff. Dave Simpson continues as Quality Manager at this stage.

Tech office can see a high level of work for at least the next two years. There is a steady flow of people coming to Microlighting from GA aircraft

Civi continues to be an issue. Current suppliers, Circle Interactive, are not doing a good job and the contract is being reviewed. This will vey likely impede progress in streamlining Tech Office processes in the near term.

Significant concerns were raised around Safety Recommendation 2024-014. Council asked for any move towards TBO to be resisted and for BMAA to fight against this approach strongly.

5.3 CI report

Received and noted

All items have been discussed elsewhere.

5.4 Admin & BM report

Received and noted

Council raised concerns about the relative cost of the NEC event.

Budget request seemed high. This will be considered as part of November's meeting.

5.5 Safety Officer report

Received and noted

6. Decisions required

All Decisions & Actions logged in the minutes as made
See '2026-09-21 Decision Log' for summary document

7. BMAA risk register review

The risk register was reviewed and approved without change. It was requested that a current version be added to the Dropbox each month for ease of reference

There was a request for a full list of contractual obligations to be collated and appended to the risk register.

ACTION	**Ensure Risk Register is added to Dropbox**	**OJ**	**Sep 26**
ACTION	**Compile contracts list to append to Risk Register**	**OJ/SH**	**Nov 26**

8. Board Development Discussion

There had been limited time to make progress on this. CS had done some further investigation and had identified some courses which were sensibly priced (£30 per course) which covered some key material such as Understanding Finances. She will audit these and report back

CS has been speaking with a consultant in board development who has offered free advice (to date). Immediate recommendations were

a) Collate a formal onboarding document for all new directors
b) Complete a skills audit so we can target both training and succession planning

BD reported that he had received some details from SH on joining which would form the basis for an onboarding pack.

It was agreed that we needed to spend more time on looking into this together, perhaps in Jan meeting. It was also suggested that some better understanding of the inner workings of the organisation would facilitate Council discussions. OJ suggested we should invite individuals to provide details of some key processes e.g. RM to present on the process of a type approval. This was agreed.

ACTION	**Share link to onboarding info received**	**BD**	**Sep 26**
ACTION	**Schedule further discussion for Jan board meeting**	**TB**	**Jan 27**
ACTION	**Arrange schedule of key presentations for Council**	**OJ**	**Nov 26**

9. Any other Business (submitted before meeting)

i. Royal Aero Club update – TB

TB reported some challenges with RaeC. Jenny Buck will be standing down. Finances are in poor state and they are running a deficit each year. Council expressed concerns about the situation because we rely on RAeC (GB NAC) for access to international competitions. However, all agreed that the current situation is not tenable. It was noted that LAA have withdrawn and some organisations are paying reduced rate. Costs are set by number of members per organisation which we share in Nov/Dec each year.

There is no concrete proposal on how to improve this, but Council noted that some of the lobbying activity which RAeC used to engage with is now being delivered by GAAC of which OJ is a part.

There is also the Royal Aero Club Trust which may be an area in which BMAA might be able to help.

ii. Complaints procedure, feedback – OJ/TB

TB/OJ shared the details of an issue which had been raised as a complaint with the intention of reviewing how it had been handled and confirming if the procedure worked or required adjustment.

The situation was considered to be no direct risk to BMAA but the potential for non-payment of funds due to the organisation.

Council agreed that the appropriate level of information expected where there was reputational risk, or financial or legal implications was

- Notification of receipt of a complaint, from whom and a high-level summary of the nature of the complaint.
- Clear indication of any potential for legal action or financial risk in either direction.
- In the unlikely event that there were concerns about impartiality in subsequent investigations as a result of revealing this detail, a suitable external party might be found to lead
- Any details shared with Council will not be logged in the minutes but kept as a separate document to ensure confidentiality of parties.
- On receipt of a complaint, all directors will be emailed the above info

ACTION	**Amend Complaints procedure to show the details required**	**OJ**	**Sep 26**

iii. Value of member survey – TB

Council discussed the value of the current member surveys. The preference was for deeper insights and wider participation. Currently 3% response rate to requests.

Incentives (e.g. Pooley's voucher) might help encourage participation

The consensus was that we need to review the questions as it was not clear whether these were the right questions. Also important to feedback to members on the basis of what they share with us.

ACTION	**Redesign the survey with a view to sending to all members along with an incentive to try to encourage responses**	**OJ**	**Sep 26**

10. Review of Actions Register

The Actions Register was reviewed and updated

No further business was recorded.

The meeting closed at 1643

11. Date & time of next meetings:

DATE (2026)	**Reports**	**VENUE**	**Scheduled Agenda Topics**
16th November	Full	In person (HQ)	• Budget
DATE (2027)			
18th January	CEO	In person (St Albans)	• Strategy review • risk register full update • award nomination reviews
15th March	Full	In person (BMAA HQ)	• Pre-AGM prep
17th May	CEO	Virtual (Teams)	• Roles & responsibilities review • matters reserved for the board review • audit letter signoff