MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

Held via Teams

16th March 2025 09:05

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

Present:	Apologies:
Tim Burrow (Chair) Brendan Digney Giles Fowler Rob Grinwood Simon Heyes (Treasurer) Owain Johns (CEO) Cath Spence (Vice chair) John Waite	None

All directors were reminded of their duty to maintain confidentiality

2. Agenda Approval, additional items

Agreed with no additional items

3. Approval of previous minutes 19th January 2026

Minor adjustment to text. Correction made and now ready for publication.

a. Matters Arising

Reviewed which items were completed and which needed to be added to the action log.
Completion noted in minutes for 19/1/26 meeting
The following need to be put on the action log

1. A question was raised about Safeguarding support for schools/clubs taking under-18s. The BMAA will consult with other orgs e.g. BGA, Air Cadets who also work extensively with under 18s.
   Note that Northern Ireland & Scotland have different legislation from England & Wales, and we need to be able to offer support to all our regions.
2. The ATO/DTO question remains open. Awaiting clarity from the CAA on the details.
3. 3rd party liability insurance in progress with further updates in this meeting
4. Youth bursary funds have been accepted, and review of terms is in progress

5. Contracts list for risk register is in progress
6. Update to strategy document is in progress

4. Reports

a. CEO report – Owain Johns

(Author: Owain Johns – Presented: Owain Johns)

1: Leadership & Management

Received & noted

2: Finance and Resources

Received & noted.

ACTION: Add ongoing unresolved phone contract payments to risk register

a. Events

The proposal to remove the risk associated with hotel bookings for awards, instructor & inspector seminars was well received, as it is easier for members to choose their preferred accommodation and significantly reduces risk and admin for BMAA staff.

Council congratulated the CEO on the excellent idea & organisation of the Awards evening and noted the event was fully booked, as well as having a third sponsor from T-LAC (in addition to JMB aircraft & Fun Flying Aerosport) for the evening.

Council offered some suggestions on a couple of items for consideration for next year

- Timing of announcement of awards to encourage people to come
- Consideration of the cost of attendance for more remote regions

3: Engagement and Membership
Including 1. Ambition, 2. Communication, 13. Community Engagement

Received & noted

a. Online/social media

Council were very pleased to note a significant increase in engagement online with the website as well as on Instagram, this latter targeting additional younger audiences.

Council discussed other formats of Social Media but recognised a limit on capacity to engage with these at present. Some useful contacts were offered by BD to obtain more insight into how to use other forms effectively & Owain will have a conversation to explore how we might progress in the future. A number of suggestions were considered on how to leverage ‘influencers’ & collaborative posts for future consideration.

DECISION: BMAA will not pursue other Social Media channels at this stage due to resource constraints. Approach may change in the future – at the CEO's discretion

b. Affiliate Membership

Affiliate Membership proposals, on hold until confirmation on age restrictions for paid-for flight training had been received from CAA, can now go ahead following confirmation from Justin Wilcocks (CAA) that no age restrictions exist.

DECISION: Affiliate membership for BYP students approved

ACTION: OJ to create this class of membership and advise BYP

c. Insurance

This is 3rd party liability insurance that members of the BMAA can purchase for their aircraft. A Working Group (OJ, SH, GF) has been formed to guide the 3rd party proposals. Expect a soft launch at Microlight Trade Show in May

Other discussions on looking into airfield operators/owners/schools insurance were well received. Focus to remain on delivering members' 3rd party liability insurance first.

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

Received & noted

a. Introductory membership

There was discussion about the financial implications and practicalities for the proposal. Council agreed with the principle of testing this by running a limited pilot initially to iron out any issues with a view to offering it widely if successful.

DECISION: PROCEED with a review at a future Council meeting of the impact and outcomes prior to full roll

b. Diary/events

Council is supportive of the proposals.

DECISION: PROCEED with Wings proposals as stated

ACTION: CS, OJ & Jeremy to communicate further about Wings, BMAA courses and BMAA Club nights

There was some discussion about the possibility of moving the AGM from the Popham Trade Show, but concern that, historically, a separate AGM has failed to achieve a quorum.

Further information will be needed and some feasibility studies to ensure risks are quantified for Festival of Flight and BMAA Conference proposals and that these are assessed prior to committing the BMAA to these.

ACTION: OJ to create feasibility studies for the Festival of Flight & BMAA Conference proposals for review at a future Council meeting

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

Received & noted

a. Instructor Bursaries

Instructor bursary applications now stand at 3, with KT triaging incoming to ensure they meet criteria. The new form is working better.

Bursary Group will need to review applications after 31/3 close date.

b. Inspector/Instructor Seminars

Council congratulated OJ on positive feedback received for these

There was some discussion about potential further improvements

Concerns were raised about the inequitable cost for people travelling from remote regions. Consideration was given to creating a small number of bursaries to support travel.

The issue of how to encourage instructors to join the seminar from GA schools teaching on Microlights was raised. Likely to be an increasing challenge.

c. FICI working group

Clarification of the ATO/DTO position (already raised) was noted as time-critical. OJ will push hard on this with CAA.

6: Technical
Including 8. Inspector System, 9 Technical Office

Received & noted

a. Inspector seminar

Positive development and good engagement

Suggestion of including some 'how to be an inspector' material as a means to encourage people to consider taking up an inspector role as well as promoting good practice with existing inspector body.

7: Regulation & Representation
Including 10. Regulatory Policy, 11 Representation

Received & noted

a. Request for funding

There was extensive discussion about Plaistows' request for funding to contribute towards the legal costs incurred in preparing a formal Aerodrome Safeguarding document.

The Conflict of Interest for RG, JW & GF was noted for this item, and they were therefore excluded from voting on the matter.

Concerns were raised about how to manage requests like these equitably. It was noted that the Fighting Fund existed for this sort of thing but not well known.
The BMAA website states "The fighting fund was set up to provide assistance for members or groups whose flying is under threat. A good use may be to help fight against the unreasonable closure of an airstrip used by microlights or to help promote microlighting where otherwise it may not be welcomed."
The balance is currently **£18.525k,** which will not go far compared to the number of airfields under threat however, this is the purpose for which the funds are intended. There may need to be a focus on raisng additional funds.
Council concluded that the request was reasonable and appororiate use of the funding held and we would therefore approve it.
It was concluded that we should publicise the Fighting Fund along with a more detailed guidance on the framework for decision making to ensure funds are distributed equitably.
It was also suggested that we should contact the consultant used by Plaistows' to see if there is any opportunity to have an outline document which is available to all airfields.

DECISION: Approve the request from Plaistows as proposed

ACTION: Publicise Fighting Fund to membership and invite applications for approval at Council – CS to write a short article for MF about this

ACTION: Create a formal guidance document for decision-making across all applications to the fund, to be reviewed at the next Council meeting and publicised once approved.

There was further discussion about forming an Airfield Owners group to support airfields by sharing information and adopting a best-practice approach to this kind of issue. NO action at this stage.

d. *Other Reports*

a. Treasurer's report – Simon Heyes

(Author: Simon Heyes – Presented: Simon Heyes)

Received & Noted

a. Financial Controls

There was unanimous support for the proposed financial governance changes, noting that Council had previously attempted to propose them but had not achieved unanimous support so the change was warmly welcomed.

DECISION: Proposal for amendment to HSBC mandate requiring dual signatory was agreed, and Council requested that this be actioned immediately and the same be applied to Flagstone account as soon as the facility becomes available.

ACTION: SH to complete the HSBC mandate change

ACTION: SH to modify the SOP for finance to require that a hard copy letter be produced for any transactions removing funds from the Flagstone account until the 2nd signatory approach can be added to this account.

b. Investment of cash reserves

There were concerns about this proposal, after lengthy discussion, it was felt that considerably more information was required to understand how this might work and the risks of such a course of action

ACTION: SH to prepare explanatory document for review at next Council meeting

b. CTO report

(Author: Rob Mott – Presented: Owain Johns)

Received & Noted

It was noted that the workload remained high and that the new additions to the team, while able to contribute to addressing the backlog, initially caused an expected slowdown due to the need to bring the new hires up to speed.

It was noted that the situation had considerably improved compared to last year, while acknowledging that there was still work to do to reach the levels of service that all staff and members desired.

There were discussions about how long it might take to deal with the backlog, which had resulted from the previous lack of resources, now that the investment in new staff had taken place.
Council asked, with reference to two known mods, that OJ consider whether there may be an opportunity to enhance services by identifying areas where a repeat mod might be progressed in a less complex manner when the parameters were already known.

The tighter view of budget from the tech office was welcomed

c. CI report

(Author: Steve Eyers– Presented: Owain Johns)

Received & Noted

Positive reaction to SE's ability to take on more regular Inspector Audits and that issues were being found and addressed.

It was suggested that it might be helpful to make connections to Council or former Council members locally, ahead of any inspector audits, to facilitate SE's task.

d. *Admin & business manager report*

(Author: Kelly Thacker – Presented: Owain Johns)

Received & Noted

a. Membership

There was a discussion about the team's point on the cost of manual renewals. It was concluded that it would be reasonable to reward any member who chose to renew by direct debit for the reduction in admin staff time required.
There was further discussion about renewals, with clarification being reached that anyone who did not renew immediately would be reinstated from the expiry date of membership and not the date of renewal UNLESS they had specifically written to cancel membership.

DECISION: Proposal to AGM that membership fees should increase by £10 plus 4% to reflect the admin burden of renewal, but that anyone renewing by direct debit would be given a £10 discount due to not needing admin staff time to complete the renewal.

b. Bursaries

Positive news that a YP bursary has been made available through a donation from SVMC.
Bursaries group will need to meet to review and propose new process for administering the funds. (See roles and responsibilities document for members)

c. Youth initiatives

There was a lengthy discussion about our strategy with regard to Youth flying. This is not yet fully joined up and this presents both reputational and delivery risk.
AL has expressions of interest for 15 extra clubs for a Youth Day event compared to last year but some clubs who ran an event last year have not been approached for input. OJ will ask that this happens so learning from these clubs is incorporated into this year's plans.
It was suggested that we bring the topic of Strategy for Youth Initiatives to a future Council meeting (possibly Nov 26). This should include assessment of risk and outline of essential areas for consideration, such as Safeguarding guidelines.
Council were asked to volunteer direct to KT for events over the coming year.

e. *Safety officer report*

(Author: Jeremy Hoyland – Presented: Owain Johns)

Received & Noted

Jeremy's addition to the team welcomed and noted as very positive

Objective assessment of effectiveness of this role is hard to measure but expectations are about creating behavioural and cultural change in the Microlighting community. It was agreed that we should create an annual Council review of this.

5. Risk Register

Other than the point raised earlier in the minutes concerning the ongoing issue of the phone contract termination, no further matters were raised.

6. Any other Business

a. Process for mods
This was covered at some length under CTO report discussions.

b. Safeguarding
While this was covered above, it was noted that Safeguarding extended beyond Young People. It was suggested that a paper on this was required and that a working group was needed to progress this but with current workload, and given that creating appropriate guidance would require considerable time and effort, this task was best scheduled for next calendar year where it could be given could be given appropriate focus.

7. Action List review

Review of action list was completed and list updated noting that 'completed actions' needed to be retained as an audit trail.

Meeting closed at 16:30

8. Date & time of next meetings:

AGM – 2nd May 2026 – Popham

Outline proposal for all meetings to be the 3rd Monday of alternate months with the exception of July which will need to be changed to accommodate CEO's leave plans.

18th May *Virtual* (no board pack)– review matters for board consideration document, audit letter & roles & responsibilities document

13th July *Virtual*

21st September

16th November – budget

2027

18th January – strategy, full risk register review & awards

15th March – pre-AGM

17th May – review matters for board consideration document, audit letter & roles & responsibilities document