MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

Held at BMMA HQ, Adderbury

18th November 2025 09:30

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

ACTION: All directors complete annual conflict declaration before Jan meeting

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 21st July 2025

Minutes were sent out on October 3rd - Minor changes noted
In future, minutes will be sent out ahead of the next meeting with any amendments to be flagged so that minutes may be agreed and published more rapidly.
No matters arising which are not covered elsewhere in the agenda.

4. Reports

a. CEO report – Owain Johns

(Author: Owain Johns – Presented: Owain Johns)

1: Leadership & Management

Received & noted

The complaints procedure is nearly complete and requires only minor refinements, with the target implementation date set for January 2026.

ACTION: OJ to complete - Council to review by email ahead of Jan meeting

2: Finance and Resources

Received & noted. See the detailed budget proposal in agenda item 5

Council supported the proposal to increase staffing in the Admin team and noted this in the budget proposal. Recruitment to commence with the role in place in the new year to ensure training can take place in the Winter months ahead of the summer season.

DECISION: ALL agreed to proceed with hiring part-time admin team member

ACTION: OJ to ask KT to implement this

Discussion on proposal for 'domestic' insurance, i.e., home & motor, from Howdens, as a member benefit, noting that the cover may not extend to Northern Ireland.

DECISION: ALL agreed to the implementation of the insurance benefit, with any financial benefit to BMAA to be retained for development activities

ACTION: OJ to implement as agreed

The question of flying insurance was raised and will be investigated further.

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

Noted

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

Discussion on MOU presented to BMAA from the BHPA re CIMA representation and clarifying roles and responsibilities.

ACTION: OJ to provide feedback to BHPA and seek clarification on wording before agreeing.

Discussion on GASCO request for funding. Council did not feel that GASCO were serving the microlight community well and chose to discontinue funding to them at the same level as it has done for the past 5 years.

DECISION: Reduce funding contribution to GASCO

ACTION: OJ to feedback discussion and decision to GASCo

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

Noted

Discussion on the Instructor Bursary and an improved proposal for 2026. A more thorough process of evaluation of applications has been set up.

Agreed on a figure of £1000 as the standard bursary, with an additional £1500 for under 35-year-olds, to be made available to successful candidates. The sum will be guaranteed at the start of the instructor's training but will be the final payment for the course.

Bursaries for fixed-wing now available. Proposal for increased rigour and visibility on the application process to attract more successful candidates. 3-month application cycle agreed. 6 bursaries available each year with up to the same number of top-ups if all successful applicants are under 35.

MF magazine is supporting driving interest through a new instructor spotlight article.

DECISION: New Instructor bursary process and amounts agreed at £1k per instructor with an additional £1.5k available to under 35s

ACTION: OJ to implement and embed in 2026

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

Continued discussion and update on orphan aircraft types.

Rob Mott (CTO) joined the meeting for discussion and debate on strategy for adopting new types. Council supported the view that, at present, the Tech office lacks capacity for more complex types, although this situation may change.

Discussion about potential Orphan aircraft: this could apply to a large percentage of the fleet if an importer / manufacturer were to cease trading. Challenging times for some manufacturers.

BMAA/LAA will need to work together on this as some types are approved by both organisations.

Possible solution - Should we offer a membership + approach to cover the costs of a dedicated resource (contractor) for this issue?

ACTION: Add note to risk register

Perhaps a permit plus approach would be better, as we can offer different fees for different aircraft. Big issue is the CAA £8k fee – need to address this with them

ACTION: RM or OJ to raise concerns about the £8k fee with CAA

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

All noted

b. Treasurer's report

(Author: Simon Heyes – Presented: Simon Heyes)
The treasurer's report was received and noted.
Year to date is positive, and finances present no risk. The BMAA is ahead of budget by £12k as of September 2025, with a net profit of £50.4k against a budget of £38k.
The budget is running to forecast. There are still some outstanding items to spend, connected with infrastructure, simulator upgrade, server migration and Drupal work. It is expected that these will be completed this year.

BMAA annual salary review

Salary Review: After evaluating various inflation indices (CPI, CPI-H, etc.), the board agreed on a [redacted] salary increase for staff effective from 1st January 2026. This decision balances inflationary pressures with the organisation's financial health.

DECISION: [redacted] salary increase for staff effective from 1st Jan 26

ACTION: OJ to inform staff of salary increase before 31st Dec 25

2026 budget and strategic planning

The treasurer and the CEO prepared a detailed budget for 2026 and modelled a 4-year plan to 2029 with various scenarios modelled, focusing on membership and the size of the aircraft fleet.
This was well received, and it was noted that this was a significant improvement and enabled the board to make informed decisions.
The various scenarios on growth and decline were discussed at length.

- *Budget Planning for FY26:* The budget for FY26 includes investments in staff capacity to address operational bottlenecks and improve service delivery. This includes hiring additional administrative support on a fixed-term basis to enhance membership engagement and succession planning.
- *Fee Increases:* Proposed [redacted] increase across all fees (including permit renewal fees) was agreed upon to align with staff salary increases and maintain financial balance.
- *Consultancy Fees Adjustment:* Consultancy fees for FY26 are set at £15k due to ongoing needs but will be reduced in subsequent years as new staff become operationally effective.
- *Membership Growth Strategy:* The organisation aims for steady growth in membership, targeting an increase of 100 members annually to reach 4,000 members by the end of 2029. This aligns with the five-year strategic plan.
- *Investment in Staff Capacity:* The board acknowledged the need to invest in staff capacity to address current operational challenges in the technical office and support future growth initiatives.

- *Financial Reserves Utilisation:* The board agreed that using cash reserves for strategic investments in staffing and operational improvements is vital to ensure long-term sustainability.

Decisions and Budget approval

As noted in 4a-2, a fixed-term administrative support role (0.6 FTE) was approved as part of the FY26 budget for membership engagement and succession planning purposes

DECISION: [redacted] increase across all fees (including permit renewal fees) was approved, subject to approval at AGM, effective from 1st January 2026.

There was a lengthy discussion about the FY26 budget presented which shows an anticipated deficit of approximately £60k–£70k as part of a strategic decision to invest in staffing capacity and operational improvements.
The 4-year budget shows a return to a balanced budget within 3 years, thus maintaining adequate reserves.

DECISION: FY26 budget agreed at this deficit with careful monitoring

ACTION: OJ/SH prepare a communication plan to explain fee increases and investment strategy to members ahead of the AGM.

Other areas of finance were discussed, and it was agreed that some additional work was needed to clarify some more complex areas.

ACTION: SH/OJ conduct a review of cost categorisation between operating expenses and cost of sales over the next 12 months.

There was further discussion about the retention of tech office staff

ACTION: OJ, develop a structured proposal for salary progression increments for technical office staff by Jan 26

The annual confirmation statement is due to Companies House. Directors need to provide their ID information to allow this to be filed.

ACTION: SH/OJ ensure annual confirmation statement filed by 14th Jan 26.

c. CTO/CI report

(Author: Rob Mott – Presented: Owain Johns)
Received and noted

d. Admin & Business manager report – plus membership survey data

(Author: Kelly Thacker – Presented: Owain Johns)
Received and noted

5. Review of Risk Register

Initial draft was presented by the treasurer for initial discussion on format, principles and risks. This was a major step forward and the treasurer was thanked for their time and diligence in completing a comprehensive document. The final Risk register will be reviewed and adopted at the next meeting.

ACTION: All to consider between meetings – will be finalised at next meeting

6. Timeframe for BMAA AGM and election of council members

This process was discussed and clarified with 1 vacancy to fill and therefore 2 board members up for re-election as per the Articles of Association.

7. Review of Actions Register

Updated with status and next actions

8. Any other Business

Discussion on strategy review. Board development and using time effectively.

ACTION: Change the January meeting to a face-to-face at a new venue to enable more time to review the 2025 strategy and identify priorities for 2026 and beyond.

Meeting closed at 15.45

9. Date & time of next meetings:

18/19th January 2026 – In person - offsite

16th March 2026 – Virtual

AGM – 2nd May 2026 - Popham

Appendix – summary of CEO report

1: Leadership & Management

Staffing

We have run a successful recruitment campaign since the last meeting and held interviews on the 23rd and 24th of October. Interest in posts was higher than expected and for the DAE post we had to close the applications early.

We've been successful in appointing the following positions

Chief Inspector: Steve Eyers, Start date early December
Safety Officer: Jeremy Hoyland, Start date January
Design Approval Engineer: Thomas Dean, start February

Induction activities are planned

Worksmarter HR management software in place and being used for holiday request management and absence management.

Hybrid working policy has worked well and staff report positive impact on this initiative.

Christmas social planned on 16th December and uniform refresh taken place.

Appraisals are planned for December and RM and KT to receive training on impactful appraisals.

Contract review with Peninsula scheduled to take place 18th November to ensure contracts reflect current employment law.

Professional development and Charted Engineer Status

This is being researched regarding feasibility and cost, as several members of staff have stated an interest in this for their professional development.

Vivek attended the RAeS Light Aircraft Design Conference as BMAA representative on 10th November.

2: Finance and Resources

Main agenda item re Budget approval.

Insurance policy is in place with approx. 9k saving. Increased levels of cover and Cyber policy added to schedule. This is a more robust set of policies with one broker and joined up approach. Simon and I are confident with the insurance we have in place.

Resources

Migration to 365 online servers has been successfully completed. It is envisaged the old onsite server will be completely redundant in January once the Printer and virus software is fully migrated.

Drupal project has commenced with move to latest version of Drupal V11 being implemented.

Rationalisation of filing cabinets has begun with Barry Taylor (membership volunteer) working through aircraft data and scanning as appropriate.

Office clear out took place on 11th November involving the whole team and creating space.

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

CEO update to members ‘Autumn Update’ sent on Sept 25th well received. Christmas update planned to members.

Flyer live – OJ attended Flyer live on 16th October, 2.2k views and positive feedback on online chats and in discussion, the theme was affordable flying.

Website tech area redesigned and improved; 1st step in gradual targeted improvements to website and ease of navigation.

Instructor and inspector conference

Bookings now been taken – support from CFS and Pooleys in place.

New Horizons (Build a Plane)

Rugby Skyranger now sold. Cost neutral

2026 applications (New Horizons)

2 strong applications received, and subcommittee set up, interviews to follow at date to be identified. With outcome before the end of the year.

600kg aircraft GA campaign for flying schools

Suggested format for campaign being discussed, thoughts are a around a number of case studies and costing examples. Work in progress

Collaboration

OJ met with Pete Stratton, CEO BGA and discussed possible collaboration and good practice

OJ attended GASCO meeting

OJ meeting with Mike Pearson (GAA & Popham misc.) Friday 14th November

OJ attended Leicester meeting hosted by BHPA, with BGA and British Skydiving in attendance, useful in sharing common goals and sharing best practice. Good working relationships in place and working well on EC, airspace etc.

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

OJ attended and spoke at Exodus, attended SVMC, Cheshire.

OJ approached by Victor Carmichael from Ireland who is interested in supporting a Flexwing focus group. Current number of permitted Flexwings in the BMAA fleet is 515(35%) and 940 (65%) three axis.

John Hunt visited on 6th November for feedback re BMAA, tech office and possible volunteer work and support. Owain also met virtually with Pat Fenn (Mid Anglia Microlights)

5.	**Flight Training & Safety**
Including 5. Training / licencing / Medical, 6. Safety	

Licensing changes went live on October 1st, Webinar to members on October 2nd, 30 attendees with positive feedback and response from attendees, a model we intend to use going forward.

CAP3181, an interim document released by the CAA, included an **incorrect** version of the microlight syllabus. AB, FL, GW and OJ attended subsequent meetings on 30th October

Panel meeting on 24th November and First working group meeting on 1st December at Adderbury to work on FICI guide.

Consortium approach and Basic instructor work are ongoing. Relationships are positive.

Bursary

Aaron has produced the following stats for context on the current instructors.

Aircraft types on register

Flexwing	515	35%
3 Axis	940	65%
	1455	

Current Instructors -working in 107 schools

	No	%	3 axis	Flex	both
Current Flexwing FI[R]s	1	0.4%		0.4%	
Current 3 axis FI[R]s	16	5.7%	5.7%		
Current Flexwing FIs	58	20.5%		20.5%	
Current 3 axis FIs	165	58.3%	58.3%		
Current FIs qualified on both control types	43	15.2%			15.2%
	283		**64%**	**20%**	

Since 2020 - FI[R]s			
Successful initial FI[R]	39		
Subsequently lapsed	5	12.8%	retention?
Subsequently upgrade to FI	21	53.8%	
Remaining current FI [R]	14	35.9%	a number have qualified since 2023 and will sit in initial currency
Current Flexwing	5	13%	
Current 3 axis	31	79%	
Current Fi[R]s qualified on both control types	3	7.7%	
	39		

Thanks to GF for visiting on the 14th of November to meet with KT and OJ to refresh the application process, update from GF in meeting.

6.	**Technical**
Including 8. Inspector system, 9 Technical office	

See CTO / CI report for more details.

On site Strategy and Policy Day with Roger Patrick, Paul Welsh and Dave Simpson attended a team meeting working through policy and procedure, section s working group and other certification challenges especially concerning latest breed of 600kg ‘light sport microlights’

We need to continue to improve systems further in particular billing to manufacturers or long-term projects. Plan is to bill monthly from now on to ensure less risk, better tracking of expenditure and spend.

CAA Audit findings (12th & 13th November) will be a verbal report in meeting.

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

OJ attended NATMAC 1st October at CAA

EC proposal responded to on time and combined BHPA response.

Meeting with SAC (shared airspace council) – Ian Sweetland

OJ represented members in consultation with planning consultant for Chatteris.