

ITEM 7.1 - REPORT TO DCA COUNCIL ON THE BCA AGM 12 MARCH 2005

This was well attended with 27 cavers present, including a number of Direct Individual Members of BCA as well as the usual Club and Constituent Body representatives. There was some confusion over who was entitled to vote because of the uncertainty of the status of Club Individual Members under the two-house system. This was resolved by a ruling of the Chairman that "*all persons present who believed they were members of BCA either by being a 'Direct Individual Member' (DIM) or a 'Club Individual Member' (CIM) were eligible to vote in the class of Individual Members for the duration of the meeting up to and including item 10*".

There was considerable discussion on the BCA P.L. Insurance scheme, and Nick Williams, BCA Insurance Manager, was able to give positive feedback on how things were proceeding this year. It was accepted that there had been unavoidable delays in setting up the insurance/membership administrative system this first year and efforts were being made to ensure that, once the initial effort had been made this year, things would run more smoothly next year.

The NCA Treasurer expressed concern at what he felt was the low take-up of BCA membership compared to the previous year's NCA membership, which in turn was down on the year before that. There was a general feeling that the number of clubs was declining for various reasons, although in DCA's region individual membership was increasing. Now that the NCA/BCA/BCRA consolidation was settling down and BCA was up and running with the "one stop shop operating", most people seemed to feel that things would now improve.

BCA elected its full complement of Officers, Special Committee Convenors and representatives for 2005/6. The four Club representatives have a 2-year term: two places - currently Masson C.G., (rep. Chris Broome) and Cwmbran C.C. are due for election in 2006, having already been in place for one year; the remaining two places - currently South Wales C.C. and Wessex C.C. are due for election in 2007. Two Individual Member representatives were elected to serve for a 2-year term: Emma Porter (a member of Dudley C. C.) and Simon Froude (a member of Bradford P.C.). There are still two Individual Member Representative places unfilled.

DCA proposal re. clarification of the status of Club Individual Members: This was discussed at considerable length and with some heat. Dave Cooke (Wessex C. C.) proposed an amendment to allow only those of a non-insured club's members who wished to become registered as CIMs, removing the requirement for the whole membership of the club to be covered by a block registration. There was some uncertainty as to whether implementing the proposal might lead to BCA being considered to be "selling" insurance, as opposed to "providing it as a benefit of membership" and Nick Williams undertook to look into the legal position on this in time for the June BCA Council meeting. It was also considered that the proposal, as originally worded, might commit BCA to calling an SGM at some expense if there was a requirement to have changes in place by 1st. Jan. 2006 and Nick Williams proposed an amendment to remove this requirement. Dave Cooke was persuaded to withdraw his amendment and Nick Williams' amendment was accepted. The proposal in its final form read:

1. *That Club Individual Membership of BCA be defined as individual members of member clubs whose club has either:
 - a) Taken out PL insurance via BCA and has paid an administrative fee for each member as part of their insurance charge;
 - or
 - b) Whilst not taking out PL insurance via BCA, has registered its members as wishing to have a say in the running of BCA by having a vote and has paid an administrative fee for each member via the club.*

In either case, the whole membership of the club must be covered as a block registration and the administrative fee should be sufficient to cover the necessary record keeping, the issue of CIM membership cards, the provision of a postal ballot and any other benefits defined as applicable to CIMs.

2. *That consideration be given to appropriate section(s) being added to the BCA Constitution to cover Club Individual Member status. If such addition(s) be deemed necessary, steps be taken to amend the Constitution.*

3. *That, regardless of discussion and agreement on the proposals above, the existing arrangements already agreed for BCA member subscriptions and insurance for 2005 should stand until 31 December 2005.*

Voting in the two "houses" was:

Individual Members	- 14 for, 1 against, 2 abst.
Group Members	- 16 for, 1 against, 1 abst.

Thus the motion was passed by an overwhelming majority, demonstrating that the 2-house voting system does work sensibly. BCA Council will now deal with this and, if necessary, make recommendations for constitutional changes. I already have the final draft copy of the Minutes and these should be circulated to all BCA members shortly.

Jenny Potts, 15 April 2005. DCA rep. to BCA AGM