

## MINUTES

### SOCIETY OF MODEL AERONAUTICAL ENGINEERS LIMITED

(T/A British Model Flying Association)

Minutes of the Executive Meeting held on 5th March 2011 at Chacksfield House, 31 St Andrews Road, Leicester LE2 8RE.

Provisional until confirmed at the next Executive Meeting.

#### PRESENT

Robin Gowler FSMAE	Chairman
Chris Moynihan	Vice-Chairman
Robin Sleight MBE	Honorary Secretary
Keith Lomax FSMAE	Honorary Treasurer
Peter Halman FSMAE	FAI Delegate
Nigel Barker	PRO
John French	Records Officer
Dave Phipps	CEO
Liz Boswell	Minutes Clerk

#### AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Correction and Adoption of the Minutes of the Executive Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2011.
3. Matters/Actions Arising from the Meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> January 2011 which are not included elsewhere on this Agenda.
4. To receive reports from the Executive.
5. National Flying Site – to work on the broad outlines of a declaration of intent that will be submitted to the May Full Council Meeting.
6. Safety.
7. Chacksfield House.
8. Any Other Business.
9. Date of next meeting.

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#### MINUTES

The Chairman welcomed Jim Wright to the meeting.

#### E929/03/11 (1) Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Chris Bromley FSMAE (Technical Secretary) and Jo Halman FSMAE (Competition Secretary).

**E930/03/11 (2) Correction and Adoption of the Minutes of the Executive Meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2011.**

Page 6 – FAI Delegate Report

- Fourth paragraph, to add  
“Dave Cline and Mike Francis to attend 2011 plenary and the F3D Technical Committee.

**The Honorary Secretary proposed that the Minutes of the Executive Meeting held on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2011 be accepted as a true record.**

Seconded by the FAI Delegate

Vote: For: 8

Ags: 0

Abs: 0

Carried by a unanimous vote.

**E931/03/11 (3) Matters / Actions Arising from the Executive Meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> January which are not included elsewhere on this Agenda.**

None for this meeting.

**E932/03/11 (4) To receive reports from the Executive.**

The Executive were asked to report only urgent matters to this meeting.

**FAI Delegate**

The FAI Delegate reported that the Italians have removed their FAI Delegate, who is also the CIAM Secretary. This has currently left CIAM without a Secretary.

**Action:** The CEO is to provide figures on the UK contribution to CIAM- CEO

European championships for F4C are cancelled.

**Records Officer**

The Records Officer reported that he has produced a document regarding the introduction of new trophies; this will be presented to the May meeting.

**Honorary Secretary**

The Honorary Secretary reported that the draft of the Council Handbook update and appendices should be ready shortly; this will be presented to the May meeting.

**CEO**

On 14th February the CEO, Chairman and Development Officer met with an alternative Insurance Broker. They appear to be offering a very interesting proposition. The likely net outcome is that the BMFA will be paying less money and a more suited type of policy. There may be considerable cost savings; which generates other possibilities. The next step is to commence the taking up references with their customer base.

**E933/03/11 (5a) Proposal to Establish a BMFA National Museum of Aero-modelling.**

Report by Jim Wright and Martin Dilly FSMAE.

Jim Wright explained that the objective of the presentation was to obtain in principal support from the BMFA Executive to proceed with the investigation of the establishment of a BMFA National Museum of Aero-modelling. He asked the meeting to look at proposed objectives for a museum, these could include:

- i) To collect, preserve and record aero-modelling history in the UK up to the present.

- ii) To show through exhibits how aero-modelling has developed since the 1920's.
- iii) To educate and encourage aero-modelling as a life long sporting activity.
- iv) To establish a repository for donations of models, equipment and documents.
- v) To provide a library and archive for study research.
- vi) To promote the BMFA to a wider audience.

The meeting was then asked to consider potential target visitors, these could include:

- i) Current members of the BMFA.
- ii) Lapsed BMFA / SMAE members.
- iii) The casual purchaser of models (park flyers).
- iv) RAF Air Cadets, schools, colleges and youth groups.
- v) Family days out – general public and tourists.

Jim Wright then brought the meetings attention to the existing museum facilities around the world these included the:

- i) AMA Museum in Muncie, USA.
- ii) German Gilder Museum at Wasserkuppe.

The meeting was then asked to consider the following potential next steps:

- i) To appoint a "History Group" of about 8 people to identify potential.
- ii) To contact and meet with potential partners eg curators of existing UK establishments.
- iii) To request comments and approach Technical Committees for wish lists.
- iv) To identify storage facilities for donations.
- v) To produce a detailed plan.

The meeting was asked for initial financial support of £2000 to research and produce a detailed plan and monies to cover expenses for meetings with potential museum partners and for seeking funding.

Following the presentation members of the Executive discussed the proposal. A museum was not deemed to be feasible as a standalone facility, but could be part of an existing museum with already significant footfall and/or a mobile exhibition. A museum would need to promote BMFA in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, as an exhibition of old model aircraft alone would not attract large visitor numbers. Successful museums are interactive and so consideration would need to be given to engaging the public, perhaps via the installation of simulators and opportunity to take part in some "park" flying.

**Action:** To appoint Jim Wright as Museum Research Officer

**Action:** For the Museum Research Officer to approach the museums to see if there is a will to display a collection. From the results of the visits to then produce a feasibility study with particular regards to costs and maintenance.

**Action:** An initial fund of £500.00 to be made available. – CEO

#### **E934/03/11 (5b) Proposal to Establish a BMFA National Flying Site.**

The meeting was given the remit to work on the broad outlines of a declaration of intent for the future of the BMFA. The strategic plan will be submitted to the May Full Council Meeting.

The development of a National Flying Site has been under discussion for some time. It is considered to be a prudent measure to formulate a plan; so that if a suitable site should come on to the market the BMFA will be in a position to progress a potential purchase.

The meeting discussed that should a BMFA National Flying Site be established that in an ideal world the facility would include the following attributes:

- i) An Education Centre.
- ii) Flight Training facility.
- iii) Ability to hold major competitions – including internationals for several disciplines.
- iv) A centre of excellence.
- v) Youth training facility.
- vi) Museum.
- vii) 1000 metres from nearest dwelling.
- viii) Maximum size of 250 hectares in size.
- ix) Minimum size of 7 hectares.
- x) Good access.
- xi) Situated across the middle band of England.

The meeting looked at the potential capital finance cost implications:

- i) Renting an airfield - rent in the region of £85,000 - £100,000
- ii) Buying an airfield - potential airfield sites £10 million plus, other land types may be less.

The project could be funded by a mix of income streams these may include:

- i) Monies currently held as a deposit £1 million (not all in development fund).
- ii) Grant Monies – match funding of three to one.
- iii) Specialist grant consultant – cost £20,000 to £30,000.
- iv) Potential mortgage of £5 million would require repayments of £500,000 per annum.
- v) There would be need for the facility to generate it's own income stream/s.
- vi) There will be major considerations for staff costs, maintenance, and other on-site costs.
- vii) Membership increase in fees – how to make income from a site so that there is not a large increase in membership fees.
- viii) Savings from insurance.
- ix) Property in centre of Leicester.
- x) Potential bond scheme.
- xi) Income to service loan – rent out storage space in hangars, truck parking, motor sports, crop returns, one-off event income.

When and if a piece of land is sited a working party should be quickly established to look at all issues including planning permission and to draw up a draft business plan and put sensible budgets together. .

**Action:** To look at land prices across middle band of England - CEO

**Action:** To approach a commercial land agent – CEO

**Action:** To contact the National Trust - CEO

**Action:** To look at potential fields near Southam – HONORARY SECRETARY

**Action:** To see if there is any update on airfields that may be available for rental or purchase - CHAIRMAN

**Action:** To talk to the bank - CEO

**Action:** Once the above matters have been actioned, then the feasibility of the potential project can then assessed. To report back by email and for the item to be placed on the agenda for the May Meeting.

## **E935/03/11 (5c) Other Areas for Strategic Planning**

### **International Teams**

The training and excellence budget needs to be considered.

**Action:** Competition Secretary and Honorary Treasurer to discuss.

### **Council Members and Elected Officers**

The BMFA need to look towards continuity for the future. The meeting looked at how to encourage younger members to have greater participation in the running of the organisation. The meeting considered why “younger” members are not engaged. It could be high levels of organisation bureaucracy including the number of meetings and committees. Meetings are sometimes unwieldy and involve a large time commitment. Would shorter more pertinent meetings and the ability for things to be able to happen at a faster pace encourage greater participation?

Length of Service was discussed and whether there should be a limit as to how long an elected member can stand continuously. The advantage of a limit is that it would encourage a flow of new ideas; however there is already the difficulty in finding replacements.

A new Membership Survey is to be considered.

### **National Championship Venues**

Some of the larger model clubs have excellent flying facilities. The meeting discussed how to encourage the clubs to host national championship events. There is a need for facilities and the clubs would benefit from a new income stream.

**Action:** For the Clubs to be contacted via a questionnaire in the Club Bulletin - CEO

### **Public Parks**

A few years ago a campaign resulted in DEFRA allowing unrestricted use of 500 gram model aircraft in Country Parks. At present, it is perhaps easier for Council's to say no to model flying. Actions to attempt to open up public parks to model flying were discussed. Parks are governed by local bye-laws with the purpose to prevent nuisance. It was deemed to be problematic to approach each District Council within the UK.

### **Website**

The meeting considered making better use of the website. The inclusion of classified advertisements on a busy website could potentially generate some revenue. The website is generating 20 million page views per month. The level of traffic in the evenings is problematic as the system becomes very slow. There are issues with the navigation of the site. The site was hacked and priority needs to be given to site security.

\*\*\* **Post meeting note:** The Webmaster has indicated that he will be retiring from his duties at some point during 2011. \*\*\*

### **Growing Membership**

At present the BMFA is contacting unaffiliated clubs, with the intention of increasing membership.

## **E936/03/11 (6) Safety.**

To be discussed at the May meeting.

**E937/03/11 (7) Chacksfield House.**

To be discussed at the May meeting.

**E938/03/11 (8) Any Other Business.**

None.

**E939/03/11 (9) Date of Next Meeting.**

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2011 at 11.00am

Transcribed from notes and recording by Liz Boswell, Minutes Clerk.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 4.00pm.

**CIRCULATION:**

All Council Members  
Fellows (Selected)

**COPIES TO:**

All Area Chairmen  
All Tech Comm Chair  
Flying Site Adviser  
BMFA News Editor  
PAS/SFAS Controller