

Minutes of Western Region Committee Meeting

14th June 2009

The Rope Walk, Bristol

Apologies

Ed, NotAvon; Taff, Mid-Wilts; Andy M, Committee Chair; Robbie, Forest of Dean.

Attending

Denny, Glos MAG; Debs, W&NS MAG; George, Political/Events et al; Andy K, Clubs; Di, Membership; Bill, Regional NC Liaison; Kath, Regional Treasurer; Geoff Mills, Observing; Steve B, Officer without Portfolio; Anne, Admin; Trace, vice NCL.

In the absence of Andy M, Steve Bradford was elected as Chairman for the meeting.

Minutes of the April Meeting / Correctness

The draft, previously emailed out, was deemed as correct.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

Officers Reports

Andy K - Clubs

Somerset Motorcycle Group require a presentation from MAG - Andy K will visit

Troll has been approached by the Bike & Trike Riding Club with a view to possible affiliation.

A38rs MCC, did not receive their renewal for affiliation in March or June

Five Valleys - Den will check re their contact details.

Kath - Treasurer

Present balance is £1706.66.

Di - Membership Sec

Has received no lapsed members list but once received will send letters.

Steve P - Web-master

Website has been updated with Trolls material. Steve has also taken over the Glos MAG web-site for a while.

Trace - Vice NC Liaison

Nothing to report.

George, the Troll,

Political:-

Lack of information coming down from Central for Euro elections. In the past we have been serviced with information on what various candidates are likely to do to benefit riders but for these elections - nothing.

Events:-

Groups seem to be filtering information through and there is a list on the website.

WRAG Editor:-

Has trouble getting people to send material through for this publication. Nevertheless it is published each month with whatever Troll can dig up relevant to the Region.

Group Reps Reports

Debs - W&NS MAG

GWR

Marquees have been collected. T- shirts are available at a fiver each. £7 on the actual weekend; large sizes must be ordered in advance. **One night Stand** scheduled for the Rose & Crown, Huish Episcopi, at end of June - camping is free.

Mid-Wilts

Taff - sent prior to meeting

Only a regular 3 or 4 member attending meetings.

Space is booked for the MAG stand at the Calne Bike Show on 25th July.

Glos MAG

Denny

Decent turnout every week due to the fine weather - 10-20.

Glos MAG did a surprise Ride-Out for a biker with cancer, who sadly passed away a couple of weeks later, as a special treat. They went to the Red Lion.

Swindon MAG (currently no meeting venue)

Trace

Trace will be contacting the Treasurer to close the Group Account and pass any monies up to Region. Steve B asked if there was any specific reason for the closure. It was decided to close because despite there being between 80-85 members in the Swindon area there was little or no attendance at the local meeting.

Geoff said that there needs to be a local contact for Swindon Borough Council in order that the Riders may be represented.

NotAvon (Anne, who has attended the last few meetings, in Ed's absence)

Really good monthly attendance of between 8 & 15.

Bristol (Anne, in the absence of Andy D)

Numbers are building up at the new venue with between 10 and 25.
Group made a profit on the recent BBQ held at the last meeting at the Mayors.
Lots going on and the events have gone to Troll for the Regional list.

Bristol Bike Show – St Nichols Market, 15th August

Bristol MAG After Show Party, The Saracens Rugby Club. £5 in advance, £6 OTG.

NC/Board Report from Bill Pugsley

The next NC Meeting will be held at the Yorkshire Pudding Rally in August. Neither Bill nor Trace can make this and it was decided (muted at the meeting and then discussed on email) that Denny will represent Western Region whilst Steve Peake, due to Eddie Lowe not being well, would represent West Midlands.

NC Report 13/6/09

Very close to not being quorate, we had to wait for Jez (Southern) to arrive (after his bike broke down on the way) before any decisions were taken.

Correction to advert in the Road. Wales demo run leaves Aberystwyth at 9.00 for 9.15 not 10.00 for 10.15.

Officers Reports

Reports circulated by e-mail. Josef Dunne was invited to talk about scooters/scooterists and his background, he was then co-opted to the position of Scooter Rep (non-voting)

Campaigns

Nich is doing a lot of work that does not require local group support

New Bike Test fiasco.

The focus on this is moving away from the number of test centres, speed of construction etc. to the practicality and safety of the test. In the first four weeks there were 2500 tests and 25 crashes, six of which needed an ambulance. The brake/swerve part is the issue.

Travelling at 50kmh (32 mph), 14 Metres are covered every second. From the radar point of the test there is 10m before the swerve and 3m in which to complete the swerve. This means it is all done within a second. In wet weather there is no relaxation.

At a meeting where the Transport Minister was present, the DSA finally agreed to look at the way the test was conducted, but later (after the minister had left) when pressed to give timescales, the DSA would not until Nich threatened to go to the press. DSA reluctantly agreed to circulate timescales by the middle of the following week (Wednesday 10th June) by the time of the NC meeting (13th June) this has not happened. If none of the other groups who were at that meeting have received anything on Monday 15th then there will be a press release highlighting the DSA's shortcomings.

There is a petition, hopefully the link will be circulated in the next couple of days, to get the brake/swerve manoeuvre removed from the test. Sign up.

3rd DLD

Consultation coming up, MAG and others in discussion on how this will happen.

Major part of this is the extra stage in the test.

- Moped at 16
- Take test on at least a 120cc at 18 (or 2 years) to ride a 125 (direct access at 19)
- Take test on at least a 400cc at 20 (or 2 years) to ride a 50bhp/400cc (direct access at 24)
- Take test on at least a 600cc at 22 (or 2 years) to ride anything

In the consultation there is a request for suggestions on how to cover sidecars and trikes.

Cost of implementing the new test will be £13 million across all government departments.

DfT consultation 'Future safety for Transport'

Targets for beyond 2010, rural speed limits etc. Briefing document to follow, will feature in the next Network.

Bikers are voters

There will be a general election in the next year so this campaign is to be updated and set in motion, with the title probably changed to 'Riders are Voters'.

Parliamentary All Party Motorcycle group

The way this is run has been changed. To allow the group to do work, various organisations (like MAG) have now joined. Three issues they are looking at:

- How local authorities implement motorcycle friendly items
- Driving licence issues
- Rallies and other social events

Marketing

Steve Jones gave an informal presentation on what he can offer.

Board Meeting

Appointments & Resignations

Still one Director down, ideally someone with financial background to support Justine, or someone willing to become Treasurer when Justine stands down at the next AGC.

Finance

Report will follow. £85,000 in bank, expenditure back to normal and income is slightly down. Projected to breakeven at end of year (End July)

Reviewing Sage upgrade

Still working on electronic banking

Ask NC for calendar of fund raising events to try and give some kind of financial planning, also a plea for donations to be sent as soon as possible.

Membership Fees - (see Committee discussion below)**

Cost to service a membership is £14/15. Proposal put to NC for increase to £25 individual, £37.50 joint, £375 life, £550 joint life, £4 children, £18 under 25's from 1st November 2009.

Agreed by NC

(Nich is going to try and get a Direct Debit system set up before increase date)

Central Office

Membership figures

Jan-May we have not done as well as last year in recruitment, retention is still good.

Buildings

Landlord requires we do some exterior repairs, lease to be checked and quotes being obtained

Public Affairs Monitoring

Costs £12k pa, alternatives being investigated.

Workload

Admin is at annual peak. Ticket sales diminish in the next few weeks freeing up some time. Some members of NC are taking on or sharing tasks/projects.

Contractors

The Road, nothing to add.

Commercial approaches

These are fairly regular, should have a work group with negotiation skills and standard response prepared. Offer corporate membership?

AOB

Mutch has produced a letter for corporate members who have lapsed to see if they will rejoin.

Westminster No to Parking Fees update

Josef Dunne gave a report on the importance of the next demo. It will be on Wednesday 1st July, and is important because the deadline for objections to charging is a couple of days later. Objections can be registered by post, e-mail or by turning up for the demo and you do not have to live in Westminster to object.

All info is on the web site www.notobikeparkingfees.com/

This is the thin end of the wedge, both Camden and Hastings council have had talks with Westminster.

Foundation Report

Steve Wykes has attended a road safety event on behalf of the foundation.

The second Ganton Gathering happens over the weekend of 17-19th July.

Pothole cards need revamping (wallet size with web site information), could be done under the banner of the foundation.

FEMA

Internal politics have been taking up an ever greater part of the meetings. Voting has been changed to Nich's suggestion and things seem to be going smoother. There has not been a good response to the Activists Training weekend in October. **A heated discussion ensued on the revelation that NC had decided to increase Membership subscription by 25%. The main reason for the dissent was that it was ill-timed in such an economic climate where people are losing their jobs or on short time and we are in the grip of a severe recession. Everyone was very angry about this decision; particularly in light of the fact that the Board admit it costs £14/£15 to service a membership! The question was asked 'why couldn't this be phased in over several years?' Di, as a Director of the Board of MAG UK Limited, was asked why the Board felt that they should present this proposed increase to the National Committee to ratify at such a time. Di said that sums of £25 & £30 had been suggested at AGC (AGC Minutes note suggestions of £22 & £25) and the Board felt that the 25% increase was justified. Regarding NC meeting at YP rally, it was felt even more important for the Region to have representation at the next NC meeting to try to impart to the rest of the NC the Regional Committee's feelings and the impact this would undoubtedly have on a reduction in membership numbers.**

Slippit Inn feedback

as per Den's report after the event.

GWR Update

as per Deb's report in 5 above.

Beach Race

Date is 24/25 October when MAG manages the secure Bike Park.

Calne Bike Show

as in Andy Kerr & Taff's Report

Any Other Business

- Bike Congestion Charges proposed by Westminster - next Demo is Wednesday 1 July – timed for 1 day prior to the Council's decision
- MAG FOUNDATION I Anne asked what the outcome was from her question as to 'what the Foundation were doing currently as she was afraid that, if they weren't seen to be doing something, they would possibly lose their Charitable status'. Bill – what is/was the answer to this & what was the feedback from Steve Peake's previous suggestion for Foundation work?)
- ABS & FEMA Report in Network - Steve Peake voiced serious concerns as to the validity of the FEMA report on ABS on motorcycles. ACTION - Bill to look into this and get back to us.
- ID Cards for Regional Officers - We sent photo's via our Regional Rep once we were elected, as in the past. However, elected Officers have not received them. George made a valid point that it is good to have one in your wallet when you are either meeting officials or manning the stand at an event. In the absence of any card or reason for same, George felt we should do our own.
- Proposal from Anne Gale. Seconded by Steve Bradford:-I That Steve Peake makes them for elected Regional Officers. Carried unanimously. ACTION:- Steve Peake to produce ID cards from either the photos he took or those submitted

NEXT MEETING

Due to the geographical siting of the August NC, it was decided to hold the next Regional Committee Meeting on Sunday 23rd August.

June meeting closed at 4.10.