

Appendix II - Clubs Feedback - Representation & Influence

Feedback has been received via...

- Direct verbal 1:1 conversation with focus clubs
- Direct email communication with focus clubs
- Clubs Forum over the AGM weekend
- Discussion with BMC Clubs' Committee

Local Areas

There are strong views that the Area system doesn't work for clubs and so clubs don't engage with their local Areas. This is especially highlighted with National clubs as they don't tend to have a 'home' Area.

Those responses that were positive towards Areas were focused more towards club member support rather than club support and/or to engagement with local issues ... "Local reps rarely consider a club view".

Clubs Comm did note that improving the engagement between clubs and local areas would help to strengthen the local areas as well as providing support for the clubs.

A commonly suggested solution to this issue was to have a Club Forum (or Club Forums)....."An open forum would serve as a place for clubs to share ideas, and also to help each other out in areas of management, IT, regulations etc."

There were suggestions that these forums could be offered in one or more guises – including online, annual face-to-face meetings, focus on specific club characteristics (national / student / large / small / huts etc.)

There was an awareness that moderation of a forum would be required and that there could be an associated cost..

Clubs Comm Reps

Most clubs don't know who their rep is, nor do they recall receiving mailings from them.

CAUTION: Some of the responses showed a misunderstanding as to what the rep role is and how the rep fits in to the bigger structure.

Clubs questioned the suitability of those doing the role "They could be appointed because they were the only choice on the day.' Plus it was noted that they felt that any engagement was 'reliant on us approaching them".

The BMC Clubs' Comm noted that the engagement between clubs and local reps was the weakest link in the chain.

There was acceptance that "To be fair I am not engaged enough to know" but clubs felt that as the engagement with their rep on Clubs Comm didn't happen the reps wouldn't be able to feed views up to Clubs Comm and higher. It was requested that relevant contacts be more widely published.

BMC Board & National Council

There were very negative views about the potential for clubs to have their voice heard within the BMC. Many concerns were raised about the lack of direct input that Clubs Comm has on to the Board and/or on to National Council feeling that “the reality is that clubs have little or no say in policy and decisions.....highlighted by the fact that there is no vote on National Council”.

Other comments included.....”There seems to be a top down approach of BMC deciding what it wants to promote / support rather than asking members for their views” and “decision making is getting further away from the general membership”.

Focus of Clubs Officer

CAUTION: Some of the comments made suggest that clubs may be confusing the Clubs Officer and the Clubs Comm reps.

It is suggested that the Clubs Officer role should include being an active gatherer “of information about what the clubs want” and this would then feed into the Clubs Comm who should “have a major role in defining operating strategy”

Future Structure

Although there was a feeling that the proposed structure “looks quite complex” there is support from clubs as it offers the key points that clubs feel are important – to have a voice at all levels, and to have a support structure through forums.

Additional ideas were proposed that included ‘coffee-shop style’ meeting around the country to meet with key people, to have a system for all club committee members to receive mailings from the BMC

Summary - Key Points

- The establishment of a Clubs Forum has much support
- Clubs want a voice for clubs at both Board and National Council level, with a voting rep on each
- Local support doesn’t happen (at least in most Areas) leading to clubs feeling disengaged

However, in the whole process it is important to note these riders.....”the club is quite hands-off with BMC things” and “I have to admit that it is very difficult to obtain much feedback from club members” and “Club members join a club as they want to go climbing, they’re not fussed at how things work and aren’t aware or engaged in what the BMC does”.