

(7) Action over ongoing BCA IT situation – Request for Council intervention

ME said that everyone has had the chance to read his agenda item and called for input. DC added that he had circulated his perspective to the BCA Council mailing list the night before the meeting, and read parts of this out (the full document is uploaded as separate file on the BCA website).

DC said all BCA passwords are held in a password safe, accessible to several other people, and asked BCA Council to condemn ME for raising this matter on a public forum (UKCaving). He felt the real issue here is that the AGM set up a situation where we don't know who is in charge of BCA's IT infrastructure, and which conflicts with the terms of reference of the IT Working Group. He suggested that one option would be to change these terms of reference.

DC felt the issues were exaggerated by the webmaster (GD) not clearly communicating his intentions. ME said it was preposterous to say that GD had not communicated clearly, emphasising an unsuccessful face to face meeting at Hidden Earth, and the relentless barriers he felt DC kept putting up to every new idea that he and GD had presented to him.

HA said that at the last meeting, DC was instructed by BCA Council to provide GD with the information and access he requested, remarking that we are all answerable to Council. HA felt that DC should be given one week to comply with Council request, or relinquished of his position.

JP said she was fed up of discussing IT matters at Council and this needs to be taken out of Council and left to the IT Working Group to sort out. She has spoken to other members of the IT Working Group who feel that Council is interfering too much.

JP continued to say that the AGM put DC and GD into an impossible position, and the IT Working Group should be tasked with dealing with this. This is nothing to do with Council, caving, and must not be dealt with at Council level. HA said she understood JP's sentiments, but attempts to sort this within the IT Working Party have clearly failed and the key issue is the precedent we set if we say that people can disregard Council instruction.

RN felt that taking these things out of Council to keep them quiet isn't good; he believed that this needed Council discussion.

GD asked JP what she felt should happen if the IT Working Group cannot agree? JP said she has been in touch with members of the IT Working Group, who feel the way forward is to clarify who does what. She reiterated that this has to be dealt with via the IT Working Group, and that Council instructing people one way or another isn't the right way forward. She reiterated her belief that the AGM made a bad mistake in putting GD and DC in this situation. TR added to JP's comments with the suggestion that an arbitrator could be brought in to help deal with the situation. DC agreed that for the IT Working Group to sort this out would require appointment of an arbitrator.

RN emphasised that we've lost good people to a parallel situation to this in the past.

TR suggested that we are asking DC to do something illegal.

SF said that what we have here is insubordination by DC and this must be dealt with accordingly.

JA said she doesn't believe the IT Working Group will be able to sort this out and backed HA's suggestion of a way forward (i.e. one week for DC to comply or removed from post).

AH said that the AGM has given an instruction which has so far been ignored. Now Council instruction has been ignored. This makes DC's position untenable. DC said that if he was forced to hand over all the requested accesses to GD he would resign. AH commented that it was entirely DC who has put himself in this position.

SF expressed that BCA's IT infrastructure needs complete restructuring.

DB said he is so bored of listening to this argument; it is personal, unresolvable and wants it dealt with now, not pushed out to a Working Group, so that it doesn't come up at the next meeting.

DC said that he doesn't disagree with any of what ME has said he wants in his agenda item. However, GD expressed that he has encountered nothing but negativity from DC for all the ideas he has tried to put forward to enact these things, emphasising that he didn't get involved in BCA to deal with these kinds of politics, just to do what he is good at doing.

DC felt a decision on this matter was needed today.

HA asked whether DC was going to be willing to hand over passwords; DC said no, not until he knows who is going to be in charge of BCA IT after this meeting. HA felt DC has no choice in handing over the passwords, as he had been instructed to do so, and if he doesn't comply, he needs to be asked to stand down.

GD emphasised that he wants to build something totally new for membership information, databases and other systems and put it forward for testing and discussion. But he cannot do this unless he can access existing systems. He said he was no longer willing to put up with having his hands tied like this.

Proposal: Unappoint DC as IT Working Party convenor effective immediately.

Proposed by HA, Seconded by AH

Votes in favour: 10

Votes against: 3

Abstentions: 7

HA emphasised that this is the last thing she wanted to have to happen but there was no choice.

DC handed GD the password to the BCA members cPanel and then left the meeting.

HJ suggested that GD brings to the next meeting his thoughts on how we should proceed. LW emphasised that BCA Online need to be kept updated, and there are several aspects of DC's role relating to ongoing membership which GD will need to pick up immediately. He proposed that GD is temporarily put into the IT Working Party convenor position.

GD to be appointed IT Working Party Convenor on acting basis

No objections

Action: GD to put together suggestions for way forward with BCA IT systems for April meeting.