



## **Council of Military Education Committees of the Universities of the United Kingdom**

### **Annual General Meeting 2021**

**held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 1430hrs – 1530hrs at Halton House, RAF  
Halton, Wendover, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP22 5PG.**

### **Draft Minute**

#### **Apologies**

Dr R Hall; Professor P Ivey; Mr A Smith; Col N Cheshire; Lt Col M Bishop; Dr Bertram;  
Dr F Ruddell

#### **1. Minutes**

- RECEIVED: The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 3 September 2020 (COMEC\_AGM\_2021\_A)
- RESOLVED: The Minutes were approved

#### **2. Matters Arising**

- NOTED: There were no matters arising

#### **3. Chairman's Report**

- RECEIVED: A report from the Chairman (COMEC\_AGM\_2021\_B)

#### ***Chairman's Report***

*I am going to keep this short. Whilst COMEC business continues, the main focus of the next couple of days is about the Conference and I do not want to detract from that. To this end, please find a bulleted list of activities/landmarks, with a few thoughts and comments thrown in:-*

- ***“5 Minutes”***

*I have been in post as Chairman, precisely one year, yet it seems like a mere few minutes. For me, this is usually a sign, that I am enjoying myself. Not in a, feet*

*up, beer in hand kind of way, but as someone who enjoys challenges and finding practical solutions.*

- ***The Conference Team***

*Huge thanks to Gp Capt Ian Sharrocks and his team and our own COMEC Sub, comprising Carol, Margi and Jason. They have managed, (through Covid) to put on something I hope you will find both enjoyable and thought-provoking. Needless to say, the Sub have not allowed me to do nothing. I am writing this, plus thinking up a Con Title, writing my bio' (which makes it an autobio') and a few other things.*

- ***5-Eyes***

*We are in the early stages of discussions regards the integration of COMEC into this international community. Carol and I have been speaking to their Chairman and a plan of action has been brought about for the mutual benefit of most importantly, the Veterans, Families and Armed Forces Community that we all serve as allies plus COMEC and 5-Eyes. I continue to engage with 5-Eyes as a whole and on an individual basis.*

- ***ToR's***

*A small SubC has been established to examine COMEC ToR's. This will be expanded to see how MEC ToR's fit into the wider picture.*

- ***Continued discussions***

*Conversations continue within the MEC Chairs' Forum. Chairs are encouraged to attend or send an MEC representative, where they are unable. Next meeting, there will be a single agenda item to discuss development of ToR's. MEC Chairs are encouraged to examine what they have and consider what (if any) changes may/need to be made.*

*Finally, I am looking forward to meeting you all in person. I look to everyone to contribute and in this way, make it memorable.*

*Whilst falling case numbers suggest this may be unnecessary, I would be prepared to have a Lateral Flow Test before you arrive. This is something that may be required by our hosts. DIY kit free from Chemists, and from personal experience, dead easy (apart from the "gagging").*

*Thank you*

*Jim C*

- NOTED: The Chairman noted the opportunity through "5-Eyes" to take COMEC / MEC work into a global space, as well as share research activities. The Chairman invited MECs to note any activities, including papers, that may be of interest through the COMEC Secretary.
- NOTED: The Chairman encouraged MECs to work with their affiliated Universities to sign up to the employer recognition scheme and aim for silver and gold status. It was noted that widening participation is a key metric for

Universities and supporting veterans and families in this way would help achieve that.

- NOTED: The Chairman noted recent discussion with the Director of the Defence College for Military Capability Integration and noted COMECs intent to work more closely together in future.
- NOTED: The Chairman had recent discussions with a University that was not part of a MEC, but had a number of students interested in joining a University Service Unit. The Chairman requested MECs think about their geography and affiliated Universities to ensure opportunity and representation are as wide as possible.

#### **4. Treasurer's Report**

- APPROVED: The Annual Statement of Accounts 2020-21 (COMEC\_AGM\_2021\_C)

#### ***Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2021***

##### ***Treasurer's Comments***

##### ***Income and Expenditure Account***

*Because of Covid-19, this was an exceptional financial year for COMEC (as for most organisations). In particular, as a result of travel restrictions, we have had a reduction in our normal travel and meeting costs for the year.*

*At the end of the financial year, four MEC subscriptions remained outstanding (presumably as a result of administrative issues during the lockdown period). On the assumption that these subscriptions will eventually come to hand, they are included as debtors in the accounts and balance sheet for the year.*

*The formal accounts thus show an excess of income over expenditure for the year.*

##### ***Balance Sheet***

*Our policy has for some time been that we should reduce our reserves (that is, our total net assets) over a period of years to the equivalent of one year's income (ordinarily around £6,650). The recent excess of income over expenditure this year has not been typical. However, even If our income and expenditure were to return to their previous pattern, I would anticipate that we will not achieve this target for several more years.*

***Professor James Patton Taylor MBE TD VR MA MTh PhD FHEA  
Honorary Treasurer***

***1 August 2021***

***Income and Expenditure Account  
For the year ended 31 July 2021***

|  | <b>2021</b>  | <b>2020</b>  |
|--|--------------|--------------|
|  | <b>£</b>     | <b>£</b>     |
| <b><i>Income</i></b>   |              |              |
| <i>MEC Subscriptions due</i>                                 | 6,650        | 6,650        |
| <i>Bank interest</i>   | 1            | 4            |
| <b><i>Total income</i></b>                                   | <b>6,651</b> | <b>6,654</b> |
| <b><i>Expenditure</i></b>                                    |              |              |
| <i>Annual Meeting and Conference (Sep 2020)</i>              |              | 165          |
| <i>Executive meetings (general costs)</i>                    | 110          | 198          |
| <i>Travel</i>  | 555          | 2,818        |
| <i>COMEC Prize</i>   | 517          | 512          |
| <i>COMEC Occasional Papers</i>                               | 280          | 18           |
| <i>Website</i>   | 331          | 611          |
| <i>Administrator honorarium</i>                              | 1,500        | 1,500        |
| <i>Postage and stationery</i>                                |              | 16           |
| <b><i>Total expenditure</i></b>                              | <b>3,293</b> | <b>5,838</b> |
| <b><i>Excess of income over expenditure for the year</i></b> | <b>3,358</b> | <b>816</b>   |

***Balance Sheet  
As at 31 July 2021***

|  | <b>2021</b>    | <b>2020</b>   |
|--|----------------|---------------|
|  | <b>£</b>       | <b>£</b>      |
| <b><i>Opening balance at 1 August 2020</i></b> | <b>9,255</b>   | <b>8,439</b>  |
| <i>Income / (expenditure) for the year</i>     | 3,358          | 816           |
| <b><i>Closing balance at 31 July 2021</i></b>  | <b>£12,613</b> | <b>£9,255</b> |
| <b><i>Represented by:</i></b>                  |                |               |
| <i>Current account</i>                         | 8,401          | 4,448         |
| <i>Savings account</i>                         | 2,358          | 2,357         |
| <i>Debtors and prepayments</i>                 | 1,964          | 2,450         |
| <i>Creditors</i>                               | -110           |               |
| <b><i>Total net assets at 31 July 2021</i></b> | <b>£12,613</b> | <b>£9,255</b> |

- NOTED: The Treasurer noted the ongoing difficulty of collecting subscription payments due to the difference and complexity of each University and MEC and how they process invoices. The Treasurer requested MEC Chairs and Secretaries support COMEC process these invoices and liaise with the appropriate finance offices to ensure the payment is processed.
- NOTED: The Treasurer noted that two MECs have subscription payments outstanding and requested MECs try and facilitate payment as soon as the invoice is received.
- NOTED: The Treasurer noted a surplus this year due to the pandemic and reduced travel. The Treasurer expects this will revert back to a managed deficit to reduce reserves.

#### **5. COMEC Prize**

- REPORTED: The COMEC Prize Winner 2020-21 is APO Sam Baker of University of Birmingham University Air Squadron. The runners up are OCdt Osian Davies of Wales UOTC and OCdt Gerard Murphy of Leeds UOTC.
- NOTED: Ms C Kinkead noted on behalf of the prize nominations group the exceptionally high standard of applications and the outstanding achievements of the students nominated.
- RECEIVED: An excellent presentation was received by the prize winner APO Sam Baker which will be uploaded to the COMEC website.

#### **6. COMEC President**

- NOTED: General Sir Peter Wall has agreed to remain in post until September 2022 with thanks from the Chairman and Council.
- NOTED: The President noted his thanks to the RAF for hosting the conference at RAF Halton. The President also noted how much he had learnt about the relationship between military and academia, and passed his thanks to all involved in supporting closer links.

#### **7. Nominations to the Executive Committee**

- NOTED: Following the recent resignation of Dr J Smith, there are now two vacancies on the Executive following the completion of term of office for Ms Carol Kinkead (eligible for re-election).
- NOTED: Nominations have been received by the due date in respect of the following:

##### Executive Committee Member

Ms Carol Kinkead (Queen's Belfast MEC; COMEC\_AGM\_2021\_D1)  
 Dr Gerardine (Gerri) Matthews-Smith (Edinburgh MEC;  
 COMEC\_AGM\_2021\_D2)

- RESOLVED: There being two nominations received by the due date for two vacancies both Ms Carol Kinkead and Dr Gerardine Matthews-Smith are duly elected for a term of four years.

#### **8. Any Other Business**

- NOTED: Questions were taken from the floor. The Chairman noted that COMEC will continue to engage both online and in person going forward noting the advantages of both activities. The Chairman confirmed one of the Executive meetings (normally held in person in February) will be moved online and that the COMEC / MEC Forum will continue over Microsoft Teams. MECs and COs also noted continuation of online and virtual activities noting ongoing restrictions and ability to widen reach.
- NOTED: The Chairman asked MECs to think about linking / recording guest lectures for other members to engage in. This was done very successfully at Queens Belfast and at other MECs. Details should be provided to the COMEC Secretary who can add to the COMEC website and inform colleagues.

#### **9. Dates of Next Meeting**

- NOTED: The date and location of the next Conference and AGM will be announced after confirmation of the arrangements with the Army.