

# Birse Community Trust

## Minute of Board Meeting

19<sup>th</sup> January 2016

Trustees Present: Jean McLeod (Chair), Anita Stutter, Doug Boyle, John Hector, Mark White, Jonathan Kitching

Also Present: Robert Dinnie (Patron), Jane Winton (Book-keeper), Robin Callander (Adviser),

Apologies: Rick Paul (Secretary to Board)

### 1. Introduction

1.1 The agenda was confirmed. There were no apologies and one item noted for AOB.

### 2. Minutes of Previous Board Meetings

2.1 The Minutes of Meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2015 were approved and signed.

### 3. Matters Arising

3.1 Finzean Old School: It was confirmed that the fire safety checks were completed for December and January.

### 4. Finances

4.1 Management Accounts: The two previously circulated financial tables for 2015 were considered and endorsed. It was noted that if BCT had received the expected planting grant and the SLF grant for the land at Slewdrum, BCT's income in 2015 would have been £64K rather than £32K, while its expenditure would also have been over £55K rather than £41K. It was also noted that expenditure during 2015 had been approximately 56% on 'activities' and 44% on 'administration'.

4.2 Commony Accounts: The three previously circulated financial tables for 2015 for the Commony were considered and endorsed, recognising the concerns over the pine planting grants and recalling that £10K had been transferred from the Commony Accounts to BCT's others accounts in 2014.

4.3 Annual Accounts 2015: It was noted that JW plans to deliver the papers for BCT's Annual Accounts to Bain Henry Reid on 5.2.16.

### 5. Administration

5.1 Annual Plan and Outline Budget 2016: The previously circulated Plan was endorsed, subject to adding under 2.4 reference to making any physical changes to the circular saws that might be agreed as necessary for Health & Safety. The Outline Budget was also endorsed, noting that key variables include the possible donation from BTCo, the pine planting grants and the amounts allowed for the repairs required at the Sawmill and Bucket Mill following the spates.

5.2 Register of Assets: The previously circulated updated Register and its component documents were endorsed. It was agreed that RP should seek the return of the Old School key from Ann Fletcher if there is no longer a reason for her to have a key.

5.3 Contracts: It was agreed to continue the existing rolling contracts that BCT has with RP, JW, RC and IH.

5.4 Membership: It was agreed that previously circulated information about the membership at year end represented good progress. It confirmed that the targets for AGM and year end 2016 are 320+ and 450+ members respectively, recognising that the number of voters in the parish will increase when the updated Electoral Register is published.

5.5 Charitable Purposes: The previously circulated paper on BCT's Charitable Purposes was discussed with particular attention to the relief of poverty objective, and endorsed.

5.6 Strategic Plan 2016-20: RC apologised that, while he had updated the revised Schedule of Land and Buildings and the BCT Financial Tables, he has not managed yet to draft the core Strategic Plan document due to the amount of his time spent dealing with other BCT tasks. He agreed to make progress as soon as possible, recognising the importance of having an agreed document before BCT's AGM.

5.7 AGM and Annual Report: It was agreed that the provisional date for the AGM is 17.5.16 and that plans for the AGM will be discussed further at the next Board Meeting. It was confirmed that RC and Ellie Flather should produce BCT's Annual Report again.

5.8 Website: It was noted that papers continue to be added to the website from time to time, and that the site has been updated for the new year. The previously circulated site counter report was noted, recognising that an allowance could be calculated for BCT's own use of the site.

## 6. Properties

6.1 Flood Damage: The previously circulated paper on flood damage at BCT sites during the exceptional recent floods was discussed, in particular the damage at the Mills and the erosion at Slewdrum as noted in 6.2 and 6.3 below.

6.2 Finzean Mills: RC noted that he had been in contact with Historic Environment Scotland and Aberdeenshire Council staff during and since the floods, and that HES staff are meeting on 22.1.16 to consider if there are ways that they might be able to help with repairs to the damage at the Mills. It was noted that RC has agreed some repairs to lades and sluice gates with Davie Hector and Stan Moyes. It was recognised that considering how to repair the Sawmill weir represents a major challenge. It was confirmed that BCT is very unlikely to be able to make an insurance claim for damage at the Mills. It was agreed that JW and RP will follow up the £1.5K that should be available to BCT as a charity from the Council following the floods. RC noted that other HES staff are due to visit the Mills and Soutar's Shop in the week of 2.5.16 to do plan and photographic surveys of the sites and buildings. RC also reported that he is consulting BCT's HES and Council contacts about any Health & Safety implications of showing the video footage of the Sawmill and Turning Mill operating, that was shot in the summer for a new exhibit at the National Museums of Scotland.

6.3 Slewdrum: RC reported that he has had initial discussions about the bank erosion and other damage at the Commony Fishings with Malcolm Nicol for the Proprietors, and that he will be following this up with MN and reporting further. RC also reported that, despite several reminders in December, FCS has still not responded over the conveyancing of the 5 ha and that he is due to follow this up again as the timing for the grant is becoming increasingly urgent.

6.4 Commony Pinewoods: The previously circulated Site Works Report 2015 and Site Works Proposals 2016 were approved.

6.5 Finzean School Wood: It was noted that the planning application for the John Forster memorial has been approved and that RC is discussing a draft Agreement over the memorial with Guy Haslam.

## 7. Other Projects

7.1 Estates: RC reported that he had had regular annual meetings with Stuart Young (Birse Estate) on 2.12.15 and Malcolm Nicol (Ballogie Estate) on 19.1.15, and is due to have an annual Local Land Management Meeting with the three local estates on 20.1.16. It was noted that the minutes of these meetings will be circulated and discussed at the next Board Meeting.

## 8. Any Other Business

8.1 Insurance: It was agreed that MW will review BCT's current insurance arrangements and that RP will forward BCT's insurance renewal notice to MW when it arrives.

## 9. Trustees Meetings and Visits

9.1 2015: The previously circulated table of Trustees meetings and visits in 2015 was noted.

9.2 Board Meetings: It was confirmed that the Meetings in 2016 will be at 7 pm on the third Tuesday of each month, except July and December.

9.3 Visits: It was agreed to visit the Mills on Sunday 31.1.16, meeting at the Sawmill car park at 2 pm. It was noted that the BCT / BCo meeting in the Birse Shooting Hut is planned for Sunday 5.6.16, with walkers setting off from the Forest of Birse Kirk car park at 2 pm. It was agreed to arrange further Trustee site visits at the next Board Meeting, and confirmed that individual Trustees will be making Forest visits as per the existing list.



23rd February 2016

Signed.....

Date.....