BIRSE COMMUNITY TRUST

Minutes of Board Meeting
26th March 2015

Trustees Present: Jean McLeod (Chair), Doug Boyle, Jonathan Kitching, John Hector.
Apologies: Anita Stutter, Robert Dinnie (Patron)
In Attendance: Jane Winton (Book-keeper), Robin Callander (Adviser), Rick Paul (Secretary to Board)

1. Introduction.

The Agenda was confirmed, subject to changing the title of item 5.4. There were two apologies and two extra items for Any Other Business were noted.

2. Minutes of Previous Board Meetings.

The Minutes of Meeting on 24th February 2015 were approved and signed.

3. Matters Arising.

- Finzean Old School: It was noted the fire safety check has been done for March.

4. Finances.

4.1 Endowment Fund: It was noted that the bank is completing its credit checks and that the new account is expected to be operational in a fortnight.

4.2 Annual Accounts 2014: It was noted that the revised draft Accounts for 2014 will be circulated on 27th March to Trustees for checking and potential approval.

5. Administration.

5.1 BTCo: The previously circulated Minutes from the BTCo AGM on 5th March were noted.

5.2 AGM: It was confirmed that JW is liaising with Maree Christie and others about a performance of local tradition music after the formal business of the AGM. JW also reported that, while the Electoral Register is not available yet, she expects it to be available in time for BCT's mailing. It was agreed that ensuring a turn out of at least 50 local members is particularly important at this AGM, and that closer to the time, each Trustee should encourage members to attend.

5.3 Annual Report 2014: The previously circulated text for the Trustees Report was agreed. It was noted that the layout of the Annual Report is well advanced and the Report due to be printed on schedule.

5.4 Memorandum and Articles: RC recalled the changes being made to BCT's membership arrangements and reported on the latest draft received from Colin Liddell. The proposed changes to Articles 3-11 were agreed in principle, together with the proposed change in Article 45 to enable a co-opted Trustee to form part of a quorum. It was agreed that the revised draft M&As will be circulated to Trustees after the meeting, for any comments and/or endorsement. It was noted that RC will be sending the proposed amendments to the Scottish Land Fund, to check that the changes meet the SLF's requirements.

5.5 Annual Plan 2015: It was noted that progress is being made in developing the document list into a monthly schedule.

5.6 BPLG: The previously circulated minutes of the Birse Parish Liaison Group meeting on 10th March were noted.

5.7 Trustee Seminar: It was noted that no Trustees will be attending the J&H Mitchell charity seminar in April, and agreed that RP will send apologies on behalf of the Trustees.

5.8 Insurance: It was noted that the schedules for BCT's woodland insurance have been reviewed and updated. It was also noted that the annual helicopter use consent forms for each of the three forests from the Fire Services, have been completed.

5.9 Data Protection: It was noted that RP attended a Data Protection awareness course presented by the Information Commissioner's Office on 24th March. RP reported that this confirmed that, whilst BCT must comply with data protection principles, it is exempt from the requirement to register as it is a 'not-for-profit' organisation.

6. Properties.

6.1 Forest of Birse Commonty: The previously circulated Record of BCT's annual Commonty Meeting with Birse and Ballogie Estates on 25th February, was noted. RC reported that this year's pine planting has been completed and that there may be no planting in spring 2016, as the final area in the current plan now has sufficient natural regeneration. He also reported that some damage had been caused recently to tracks in the Commonty Pinewoods and Balfour Forest by trail bikers.

6.2 Balfour and Slewdrum Forests: It was confirmed that the draft Minutes of BTCo's Directors Meetings are circulated to Trustees, to help keep them informed of BTCo's operations.

7. Other Projects.

7.1 Land Acquisitions: RC reported on the lack of contact from the Scottish Land Fund case officer for BCT's application for a grant towards the purchase of the 5 ha at Slewdrum, and quoted the apology received from the SLF. The terms of BCT's application were discussed and agreed. It was confirmed that the application will be submitted on schedule in a week's time.

7.2 Place Names: It was noted that the BCT/CNPA Place Names meeting on 11th March had been a very successful event, as reflected in the article about it in the Deeside Piper. RC reported on initiatives since the meeting, including the plan to translate the 1511 Birse Rental Roll, record all the known names in the Forest of Birse and start collecting unrecorded traditional names on local farms. It was agreed that place names should be developed as a project topic, including the possibility of hosting another place names event in Finzean Hall.

8. Any Other Business.

8.1 Members' Site Visits: JW reported that an advert has been sent to the Ballogie Bugle for sites visits to Slewdrum (26th April) and the Soutar's Shop (3rd May), and that an advert has also been sent to the Finzean Rabbit for a Mills visit (23rd May).

8.2 Rural Parliament: It was noted that a copy of the Report on Scotland's First Rural Parliament has been received.

8.3 Finzean Community Woods: RP reported that Peter Hopkins (Crannach) has expressed concern that grey water from the developments at the old Post Office would adversely the ditch between his property and the Knowes Wood. It was agreed that RP should recommend that PH contacts Finzean Community Council, as they deal with planning issues. It was agreed that if a problem does arise with the ditch, RC will become involved.

8.4 Community Land Ownership: It was noted that RC is hosting a visit to BCT on 31st March by three members of the Scottish Government's Working Group on achieving the target of a million acres of community owned land by 2020.

9. Board Meetings and Visits.

9.1 Future Board Meetings: It was confirmed that the next meetings will be on Tuesday 21st April at 7.15pm in Birse Hall, and Tuesday 26th May at 7:15pm in the Soup Kitchen.

Signed..... Date.....